

Tidy Towns Competition 2025

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Ballindine - Baile an Daighin** Ref: **1011**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **330**
Category: **B** Date(s): **12/06/2025**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	41	43
Streetscape & Public Places	80	44	45
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	47	49
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	34	35
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	21	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	62	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	39	41
TOTAL MARK	550	319	330

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Bailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2025. Go raibh maith agaibh as d'iontráil a sheoladh chugainn. Maith sibh as an obair atá déanta i bhur cheantar go dtí seo - guímid gach rath oraibh i bhúr thionscadail amach anseo. Ádh mór.

Thank you for your application form which included photos and map. Great to see that you have four young adults on your committee of twenty and neighbours volunteer their time when help is needed. You have a Facebook Page which has 600 followers and we're delighted to see that you update it regularly. As you have four young adults on your committee, we suggest that you open an Instagram account too as this is used more by our youth. He/she could be your PRO and in charge of all social media and publicity for your group. It will look good on their C.V. – PRO for Ballindine Tidy Towns. You engage with state and semi-state organisations as well as local organisations and businesses which is great as a considerable number of the activities and projects undertaken by Tidy Towns groups need collaborators. Well done on twenty five years of participation in the Tidy Towns competition and we hope the adjudicators' reports have been beneficial to you over those years.

See Concluding Remarks for advice on filling out the application form and producing a map.

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

Your village has grown up at the junction of four roads, National, Regional and Local, which gives a great strength to the central area. The layout provides for junctions which you have used well in your streetscape and your neat, tidy streets give a very good first impression to the visitor. The buildings along your main street are single, two and three storey vernacular structures with some modern interventions located between which gives further interest. In addition, St. Joseph's RC Church, Ballindine NS, Davitts GAA Club, and the Community Centre complete the architectural merit of the village. What a lovely joyous mural in the centre of Ballindine - butterflies, birds and a honey bee along with flowers and an ornate 'Ballindine'. We also admired the photo mural. Compliments to the artists. For quite a small village (population 468), it was great to see the number of industries located in your village all who presented well and added to the streetscape. Compliments on the beautifully maintained GAA building – GAA CLG na Daibhéidi. We loved the white, black and red paintwork. The stand with the red and black crowd barriers was also well maintained. Like every village and town, you have your share of unoccupancy/dereliction. We noticed work was being undertaken on one so hopeful others will also be given a new lease of life. We hope the stone wall at the roadside will be rebuilt when the work is complete. What happened to the Sun Catcher near the school? Please replace this or remove the sign as it's quite unsightly at present. The colourful window cills and reveals at the school are lovely – an attractive and thoughtful idea. Compliments to the school principal.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The Community Garden is a wonderful green space for all to enjoy and we loved it. What a generous donation of the land to the community. It's good to see that the community take pride in the garden and maintain it to the standard we found it. We admired the trees growing near the GAA and Medical Centre and also those on buildouts along the N17. Perhaps see other areas in and around the village where trees could be planted e.g. in some of the carparks? Trees are known to have a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing. By planting and caring for trees, you help reduce pollution, improve your surroundings, improve the appearance of your community and increase the value of your property. In addition, they provide shade for humans, food for insects and food, roosting sites and nesting sites for birds. The church grounds were beautifully maintained. We loved the mature trees framing the gable of the church. We recommend trimming the greenery from around the base of the tree at the road junction – it would be nice to expose the tree trunk similar to the others along the streetscape. We admire the white tree surrounds here. We generally don't advise on planting under trees as the trees and plants vie for water – but yours are fine so we're guessing you water these regularly. It was good to read that some young adults enjoy helping by watering plants and weeding in the Pollinator Garden. We are really against tyres being used as planters. While we appreciate they symbolise your rural location and connections, it would be MUCH better if you built stone surround planting beds. Tyres should be recycled and made into objects – planters, seating etc. We know building stone surround planting beds is hard work but so too is painting tyres on an annual basis so that they look good (which yours did in the red and green of Mayo).

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

The aim of this category is to encourage people to recognise, engage and celebrate the biodiversity and richness of the wildlife habitats in their surroundings. We read that you were alerted to Mayo's Biodiversity Officer. We suggest you engage with her and prepare a small Biodiversity Plan for your village. Don't make it too onerous – only what you can achieve. To promote biodiversity we need to manage habitats in such a way that we provide food and shelter for our fauna and a place to grow and thrive for our flora. The actions which you can put into the plan will provide a template for the local community. Many of these actions will simply require you to manage the land/gardens in a different way than you are used to. Your community pollinator garden was buzzing when we visited – different bees and butterfly species which was great to see. Well done to the local farmer on advising you on the benefit of leaving nettles to flowers. All around Ballindine you have hedgerows, mature trees, stone walls and the embankments of the railway line which provide habitats and food sources for mammals, insects and birds. We noted nesting boxes – have you had any success with these?

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

We are delighted to read that you engage with the principal of the local Ballindine National school who has a keen interest in your work and is also very supportive. We read that the children are encouraged to undertake actions/activities and learn about sustainability. We noted that the colourful raised planting beds at the school weren't used this year and need attention. It would be rewarding if you helped here. We have no doubt that the teachers would gladly appreciate if you would grow vegetables etc in the planting beds with say 5th class every year. In that way every child leaving national school would have seen seeds planted and grow outdoors. We love that a tree is planted every year by the sixth class before they leave – in years to come they will revisit and see the growth and hopefully will have fond memories of their time in NS. We mentioned earlier of the industries you have locally one of which is PEL who manufacture waste reduction equipment. We're delighted to read that this company in addition to manufacturing the equipment also advises their customers about waste management best practices and helps them 'develop customised waste reduction strategies tailored to their specific needs and goals'. But you need to tell us what you and the local community are doing in terms of Sustainability - doing more with less. Find out and let us know next year.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Like many communities you are involved in the An Taisce Annual Spring Clean and here it took place on April 13th this year with a local business sponsoring refreshments for all. What a wonderful gesture of appreciation. Your litter pick rota is working well and your village was extremely clean and tidy when we visited. We noted the gravel areas where the tyre planters were and this area was also very neat – not a simple task with loose gravel. Compliments to the team of workers and to your volunteers. Cobble lock, which is extremely difficult to maintain weed free, was also neat and while we spotted a weed or two generally it was in pristine condition. We noted a few posters on poles – these should be removed as soon as they're noticed and this will stop individuals/ community groups/ businesses doing this. While we know signage is needed, please select carefully and only put up those that are absolutely necessary. Signage clutters a streetscape and also clutters green spaces and should always be discrete. The Marian Year 1954 sign at the beautiful grotto needs repainting.

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

The residences along the main street are generally terraced and were well maintained. Those on approach roads were set back on individual sites and had well landscaped gardens. Some with wonderful specimen trees which added drama to the gardens. You also have a number of small estates which are located off your approach roads and which we visited. Here many residents had painted their house, boundary walls or fences and presented well. We noted that all of the communal green spaces were tightly mown. If some of the area in these spaces isn't needed for ball play, then we suggest they be allowed develop into a meadow and a border of say 600 around be trimmed. This will show that the wilderness/ long grass behind is deliberate. Ask the resident associations to check the trees which exist on the communal open spaces – remove suckers, check tree ties and remove them when they

are no longer needed etc. They may need your advice in this matter. The Liosamble name sign needs to be raised on a large boulder so that it can be seen.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

You are located on the wide, busy, Castlebar to Tuam road (N17) which is a challenge for you in terms of safety of your volunteers while undertaking work. On entering the village motorists are warned of 'Traffic Calming' and so, hopefully, begin to reduce speed. Your name signs are clear and legible as too were other road and directional signage. Grass margins on approach roads were neatly trimmed and planting beds well-tended with gravel used as weed block. Some of the road markings in the village were worn and will need to be repainted - this is something you should follow up with the area office. The Lugalishen Village Walk is beautiful – a quiet peaceful stroll which we have no doubt is well used. The pedestrian crossing in the centre is clear and easily seen by the oncoming motorist. We hope that it is successful. You maintain the area around the old railway line – is it used as a walkway by the community?

Concluding Remarks:

We thoroughly enjoyed visiting your village ... but we have a few suggestions for 2026.

- In the Application Form please number the projects New (N1, N2, N3 etc) and M (M1, M2, M3 etc). This same numbering system to be used to indicate the locations of these projects on a map – N1, N2, N3 etc and M1, M2, M3 etc. This is to help the adjudicators to negotiate their way around your village and see the various projects or locations of projects.
- The map could be bigger – next year make it the full size of an A4 page.

We wish to state that this is not a criticism of your work but to explain to you that as adjudicators we rely on a clear application form and accompanying map to inform us of your projects and make our visit rewarding.

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2025 competition. It was a pleasure to adjudicate Ballindine.