

Tidy Towns Competition 2025

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Carracastle - Ceathrú an Chaisil** Ref: **2185**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **278**
Category: **B** Date(s): **16/06/2025**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	36	37
Streetscape & Public Places	80	37	39
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	34	36
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	25	25
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	20	22
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	31	32
TOTAL MARK	550	266	278

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 completed application form, a very clear hand drawn map with legend, your Three-Five Year Plan, and photos of various projects and events. Your committee of six has the help of an additional twelve when jobs need extra hands. Good to see that you engage with state, semi-state and local groups and businesses as the work to be done, in every village and town, needs collaborators. You are actively engaged with the local NS principal who supports your work. With the exception of two years, you have been active participants in the Tidy Towns competition which has resulted in an increase in community spirit in the village, and a dramatic improvement in the state and appearance of the village. Well done on the accolades you have garnished since then – it's always good to be recognised for voluntary work. Well done on referencing the SDGs – important to see how our actions are contributing to /helping these. Like other Tidy Towns adjudicators, we encourage you to post Tidy Towns activities on the Community Facebook Page. Unfortunately, due to pressure of time to visit communities and write reports we don't have time to open all the web links in an Application Form.

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

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

You are a dispersed rural community with the beautiful St Jame's RC church the dominant building in the village. We admired the low plinth and silver painted railings separating the site from the roadway. Good to hear that new seating had been installed but when we visited it had been removed. Outdoor seating at commercial premises is always good for a community, as it encourages interconnection between members of that community who otherwise wouldn't interact. The hurling wall is a wonderful facility to have in your village and we read that since its installation the local team has rapidly progressed. It would be great to see the ivy removed from the derelict cottage at the junction of the L1331 and L4504 before it causes damage to the structure leading to its collapse. Ivy should never be allowed to grow on stone structures as the roots penetrate between the joints and cause structural failure and collapse. The school boundary wall with its fresh white coat of paint and blue plinth and capping looked great. The school's name on the stone sign should be carefully picked out in white paint as white paint on a dark stone is best. We visited the rural rental development – we admired the red galvanised roofing with white details. The Community Centre with its card, music and karate signage is a wonderful facility for the village. Interesting to see the signage of the rural schools (church grounds) – quite a few now demolished in your area. Maybe its time for a history document about them?

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Good that you take part in No Mow May as it not only is good for our pollinators but also looks good with the variety of spring flowers still allowed to bloom. When we visited work was being undertaken at the Community Centre and luckily your hanging baskets were surviving well. There are some wonderful mature trees in private lands along the village streetscape which give an air of opulence to the area. Davey's pub with the stone surrounded planted beds, window boxes and hanging baskets is a wonderful asset to your village. We admired the planting beds which had a great variety of flowers and plants of different height which gave interest in the streetscape. Advice for Davey's – remove the ivy before it goes into the attic and it causes damage to roof timbers. The church pot plants looked good. It's important to keep the containers fresh and replacements are necessary when they become dilapidated and unsightly. There were other planters and trees in pots located here ... we assume that they have now found a permanent home. Don't clutter the front of the church with a variety of pots/planters – just three or four is sufficient.

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

You have a great number of stone walls, hedgerows, beautiful mature trees and wide, open farmland and so have a variety of habitats and food sources for insects, mammals and birds in your locality. We love to read about local products and see that you have a bee keeper in your area who supplies honey to the local shop. We have no doubt this is very popular, as it's known that local raw honey helps with seasonal allergies. Scoil Íosa National School have a Green Schools Committee who are working towards their 8th Green Flag. Good to read that the graveyard committee is aware of the Faith Communities Actions to Help Pollinators. We noted a sea of buttercups and other wildflowers in the old graveyard so have they stopped cutting here? Let us know next year what change the committee have taken since they have become aware of this document. There was also a great display of wildflowers at the rear of the school on the sloping bank. It would be great if the children were shown these and maybe painted posters of them.

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

Educating both young and old in 'Sustainability – doing more with less' is crucial so that we advance our knowledge in how we use the resources of the planet in order to cut down on our waste. This category is about looking at how a community as a whole can reduce waste and save on water, energy and transport. We look to see how you as a committee help to promote and achieve this. It's wonderful to read that the NS is pro-active in terms of sustainability with four raised planting beds where children grow herbs, vegetables and flowers. The beds needed a little attention. We also noted the fruit trees close by. You sent details to the principal when you heard about 'The Big Grow' initiative with Innocent Drinks and the 'Incredible Edibles' from Agri Aware. There are a number of websites that now encourage children to take part in growing their own vegetables etc., they just need help from the adults. The childcare facility has a young active committee and we see from your photos that they grow seeds with the children in their care. It's never too young to introduce Grow Your Own! Congratulations to the local cheese maker and honey producer – award winning sustainable businesses. You also have others who through their businesses encourage a sustainable lifestyle – we commend all.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

As a dispersed rural community, the houses are located on individual sites surrounding by large gardens. The majority were well presented and some had been recently painted giving a brightness to the streetscape. Generally, the residents have contributed positively to making the village extremely pleasant and welcoming for the visitor. The beautiful unoccupied presbytery (an RPS) was noted. While we understand that it is not in your ownership it would be good to paint the boundary wall, trim the hedge and remove the ivy as the wall is quite long and there very important on the streetscape. The small housing estate of S. Jame's Drive is very beautiful with well-kept houses and here some colourful flowers were noted. In the immediate vicinity of the village and along the approach roads farm houses with well-kept farmyards were noted and some had well-built stone walls as roadside boundaries. Boundary hedges were neatly trimmed giving good visibility to the motorist.

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

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

By-passed by the N5 has made your village a wonderful calm location for the community to enjoy. It's great that Foróige were involved in landscaping on the approach roads and now you have an annual display of daffodils brightening up the area after the long dark winter. Trim back the hedging and grass growth for at least 200m before the village name sign so that it is visible and easily read by the approaching motorist. This informs them that they are entering a settlement and so need to reduce speed. We see that a gravel footpath extends to the north of the village. This is difficult to maintain and also unpleasant for those with mobility issues. Are you in line to have this finished by Mayo Co Co in tarmacadam? We noted a very beautiful freshly mown pathway along the headland of a field near the village. We believe this to be in private ownership but wouldn't it be wonderful if paths such as this could be opened up to the community and a circular walk provided? The road signs were quite dirty, barely legible in some instances. We read that you extend beyond the village in your work and we caution care is needed, as roads, even local roads, can be quite busy. Some of the bi-lingual townland signs need to be repainted as they were illegible. We noted a stone wall had collapsed (something crashed into it?) and we wonder if there are plans to rebuild it as its location at the road junction is important on your approach roads.

Concluding Remarks:

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

- If you're going to put a circle around the numbers on the map, make sure it's around the outside of the numbers so as not to obscure the numbers, as it was in places this year.
- Let us know what are New Projects and what projects are Maintained – N1, N2, etc and M1, M2 etc.
- All Future Projects should only be in your plan and NOT in your Application Form. When they have been completed will they be in your Application Form – as a NEW project.
- Please put the photos into the relevant categories in the Application Form and not as a separate document. Get a young person to do this if you don't know how – PRO for Carracastle will look good on their C.V.
- We suggest you make a Five-Year Plan for your village with topics under each category of the Tidy Towns Application Form – it needn't be long or onerous, just what you decide is possible to achieve. Add the name of one committee member to lead/advance the project and put the names of collaborators after each activity/project as you'll need help with many of the projects - financial or otherwise.

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 visit and adjudicate Carracastle.