

Tidy Towns Competition 2025

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilkeeran - Cill Chiaráin** Ref: **562**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **350**
Category: **A** Date(s): **10/06/2025**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	45	46
Streetscape & Public Places	80	43	45
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	48	49
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	40	42
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	23	25
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	68	69
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	36	38
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	35	36
TOTAL MARK	550	338	350

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.

Welcome to the 2025 Supervalu Tidy Towns competition and thank you for your application form, photos, maps and Three-Year Plan. Compliments to the photographer for the wonderful photos. You are a committee of six who have the help from twenty volunteers when jobs need doing. For a community of sixty this is a wonderful achievement and it shows the respect you have in the community. Good to see that you attended PPN and LEADER workshops. We're delighted to read that you look for support from state and semi-state organisations in addition to local businesses. Participation encourages a pride of place amongst the residents, which is the true spirit of Tidy Towns. Your success in this competition is a result of your drive, determination and the hard work by you and your volunteers. We are delighted to read that the Tidy Towns competition has resulted in the visual improvement of the village due to the projects undertaken for the competition.

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

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

The village located to the east of the N84 is a beautiful peaceful area overlooking Lough Carra. The narrow road through your village meanders from the N84 through the village, passing the lake and harbour area, and exiting again onto the N84. In between are residences and farm buildings with sit happily side by side. We were struck by the tranquillity of the whole area and in particular of the area at Kilkeeran Harbour. We are delighted to read that you carry out maintenance on your dry-stone walls. These are special and add greatly to the beauty of your streetscape/area. The streetscape near the harbour area with neatly kept houses and outbuildings is particularly beautiful – walls, houses and outbuildings randomly jutting into the meandering road ensuring a slow journey be motorists. The lack of footpaths hopefully also ensuring this. We visited Ballyovley graveyard and church and from this site saw your Crannog but not the Causeway (which we assume is under water?). Perhaps a discrete sign informing the visitor about these sites could be erected at this location? Put it inside the entrance gate to the graveyard. We admired your TidyTowns Endeavour Award proudly displayed. Hopefully in time you'll add another award to this. We admired the little grotto but suggest that the foliage around it is trimmed back to make it more visible. The information panel of Kilkeeran Resident's Association makes for interesting reading. We admired the flat iron gates we saw which were all well maintained and painted.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

For such a small community your communal green space located along the entrance road is quite beautiful. Neatly mown grass in the centre and long grass allowed to grow along the perimeter is a perfect way to manage this space. Remove the dead trees in the central bed to improve the visual appearance of this space. Equally the Harbour area is quite splendid. We took time to walk around it and take in the views out to the lake. The area around the well with the variety of wildflowers is beautiful. But remove the ivy from the stone structure. We also suggest trimming a pathway around the well from the Harbour area. What is the history of the well? We read that, like many Irish communities, you lost trees during Storm Eowyn. Have you plans to replace these? Is Clydagh Wood (Portroyal) accessible to your community as an amenity or is it in private ownership? We looked for access along the road but didn't see any. Maggie's Boreen needs some attention – access to it is very overgrown. Trim back all of the ivy growth and other bushes to allow access via the stone stile. To be honest we tried but couldn't access it. The planters at the entrance to the graveyard are superfluous – the piers, gates and walls are beautiful in themselves.

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

You have a wonderful location and with the great number of dry-stone walls, established hedgerows, wonderful mature trees and the beautiful Lough Carra, you have a great variety of habitats for insects, mammals and aquatic life. When we visited the hedge rows were very colourful with a variety of wildflowers in bloom and were buzzing with insect life – honeysuckle, roses, foxglove, ox-eyed daises, etc. We see that you are aware of the importance of Lough Carra as Europe's largest example of a limestone bottomed lake. But we also note that you have Lough Carra SPA and Lough Carra/Mask Complex SAC. We read about the Lough Carra Life project 'In 2018 the LCCA was formed by local people, with the aims to restore, protect, and conserve the ecological integrity of Lough Carra and its lakeshore habitats, and to ensure the quality of drinking water from the lake'. Have you any data on the success of this project so far? Find out and let us know next year. We love that you are cultivating native wildflowers in your area and remember the best ones, and those to best succeed, are those which grow naturally in your area, so we encourage you to collect seeds and plant them. It's wonderful to hear that the farmers are using the Dock Beetles as a natural method of weed control in their grasslands. A natural solution in terms of nature is always the best solution. Have all of the farmers signed up to this? Thanks for the photo – interesting that such a tiny insect can do such damage to the Dock.

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

For a small community you are certainly embracing Sustainability – doing more with less. We are very supportive of the idea of growing your own seeds, plant swapping etc. We see that you also swap the products of your harvests. One of your residents also shares her surplus apple harvest in addition to making jam, pies and apple juice. We're delighted to read that windfalls and damaged apples feed local deer. You mentioned that you hold sustainable workshops – send us photos next year and tell us more about these. We suggest that you contact other Tidy Towns groups in your area, combine ideas and also attend any workshops they organise. It's always good to share knowledge. We had a look at the locally produced Hawthorn Skin Care website – congratulations to the maker Elaine. We wish her well in her new venture. Foraging walks are wonderful – children and adults learning about the food that nature provides for free along our hedgerows and in our fields - elderflowers, elderberries, wild strawberries, mushrooms, blackberries, rose hips, apples etc. We're delighted to read that bees are kept locally. We looked for the bee hives but couldn't find them – perhaps they've been moved.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We admire that as a community you engage in the An Taisce Annual Spring Clean as this focuses the attention of a community on the need to be vigilant on litter, fly-tipping and weed growth. When we visited the village was virtually litter free which is a commendation of how the villagers view your work. Due to the nature of the area there was weed growth along the roadside but this is acceptable where there are no footpaths. The trees which were uprooted by Storm Eowyn were cleared/made safe in the Harbour Area, which was a task for all. Litter is removed from the harbour area and surrounding roads by those taking a walk. We admire that the villagers take care of their area in this manner as this will ensure a clean safe environment. Have you encountered a problem with litter, jetsam along the lough shore? It would be important to remove any waste /plastics etc which might injury the aquatic life. Please commend the Junior Litter Patrol team – we love to see children involved in the upkeep of their village, as it gives them a sense of respect and pride of place. We noted the use of chemical weedkiller along the road (long dead brown grass) – we encourage you to request that this practice ceases. Grass along a country road is totally acceptable. Like in many other villages we noted ivy on quite a number of stone walls. As we know, ivy is wonderful for insect life and is acceptable/good on rendered (plastered) walls. However, it is NOT acceptable on stone structures as here the roots penetrate between the joints in the stones, making the walls unstable, leading to their collapse. And remember natural stone structures are themselves great habitats for insect life.

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

As stated earlier the layout of your village is quite beautiful with meandering roads leading to the harbour area. The villagers have made a positive contribution into making the area very special. Houses are set in large well-kept mature gardens with flowers, shrubs and ornamental trees growing side by side vegetable plots, fruit bushes and fruit trees. Many had painted their premises recently including boundary walls and fences which added to the beauty of the area. Other had well maintained stone boundary walls some capped with cut limestone. We admired the repairs to the dry-stone walls which are part of your heritage and important in your streetscape. We see that grass is either mulched or used in compost. We didn't see any water butts on houses but as you are a community aware of sustainability and nature, we're assuming that many of the villagers have them installed? Let us know next

year. There are many residences that need mentioning but as we don't know the names of some, it's best we name none, but just to say compliments to those who have made a wonderful contribution to the village – stunning roadside shrubs and flowers, climbing roses at entrance doors, archways of fuchsia to pedestrian gates, etc.

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

We entered from the road to the south and came to your freshly painted Welcome to Kilkeeran sign set in a stone surround planting bed. While the bed had some weeds you had planted a lovely variety of flowers and shrubs some of which were in bloom when we visited. Take care to trim the planting in front of the village Welcome Sign. Your new Kilkeeran's Natural Heritage panel showing your natural flora, insects, birds, mammals and information about Lough Carra was read – interesting reading. The grass margin nearer to the village centre were neatly mown informing the motorists that they are entering an urban location and so need to reduce speed. The beautiful stone surround bed at the road junction (New Line) is perfectly located and the mix of colour and height of flowers/bushes is perfect. In the centre of the village there are no footpaths and instead neatly trimmed grass margins allow the walkers to step in off the road when cars approach. This is quite beautiful and unique. While some hedgerows were neatly trimmed others blocked the view of the road and were in need of a severe breasting. We suggest you do a survey of your roadside hedgerows and have this carried out during the appropriate time of the year. The new road surface at the graveyard carpark was noted.

Concluding Remarks:

We thoroughly enjoyed visiting your village and compliment you on your very clear map ... but we have a few suggestions for 2026.

- Your handrawn map is totally acceptable, however a north point and also direction arrows on the main road to Castlebar and Ballinrobe would be helpful.
- Next year put the photos into the relevant categories rather than a separate document. Ask a young person to do this if you don't know how. PRO for Kilkeeran Tidy Towns will look good on their C.V.
- 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. If you wish you can colour code the various categories to make it even clearer. This is to help the adjudicators to negotiate their way around your village and see the various projects or locations of projects.

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. We thoroughly enjoyed our meander around the village. Please commend the volunteers, residents and school children for their work which made your village a beautiful place to visit. It was a pleasure to adjudicate Kilkeeran.