

Tidy Towns Competition 2025

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilmaine - Cill Mheáin** Ref: **1094**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **352**
Category: **A** Date(s): **15/06/2025**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44	45
Streetscape & Public Places	80	43	45
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	44	45
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	43	44
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	26	29
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	70	71
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	38	39
TOTAL MARK	550	341	352

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 and map(s) with projects numbered. You are a committee of seven with twelve who volunteer when extra hands are needed. We're delighted to see that in addition to state and semi state organisations you also have support from community groups and local businesses. We visited your page Facebook page which has 810 friends and see at the last posting was March. In order to keep the interest of the community you need to update social media regularly. Take photographs of events, flowers, nature, little pick up volunteers etc. and post these on the page. This is your 15th year entering the Tidy Towns competition and we read that it has increased public awareness of your environment and that there is an increased pride of place which has led to an excellent community spirit. This is the true spirit of tidy towns

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

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

Your streetscape is a mix of single and two-story residences and businesses sitting side by side. We loved that the footpaths varied in width which gave an additional interest to the streetscape. We admired Saint Patrick's RC church, set in a beautiful landscaped garden which is well maintained. The interior of the church, with its stunning stained-glass windows, was admired. The adjacent car park is in need of attention which hopefully will include a few trees to break up the car parking spaces. Kilmaine Community Centre is a fine building and we noted that the Community Library was open when we were there. The sign on the building is damaged and needs to be replaced. We admired the new murals at the school which are quite stunning. Compliments to the artist. Beautiful bright vibrant colours have been used, and we love the simplicity of the designs. While you have unoccupancy and dereliction this is being addressed, and we read that this year a shop premises is being converted into two houses. Please retain the fascia and name as this is part of your architectural and social heritage. In addition, a house which was vacant for seven years has recently been sold. It's wonderful to see new businesses opening in villages and we wish them every success. We noticed some lovely flat iron gates in and around the village which is wonderful to see, as these too are part of our heritage. Some needed to be painted. The recently painted walls, piers and gates surrounding your Kilmaine graveyard presented well. We admired the variety of flowers in the tubs but add some trailing plants to the tubs next year. The playground, which was being well used when we visited, is excellent.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Wouldn't it be lovely if the village square could become a Village Park in the centre of the village? At present it's just a carpark but truthfully you need a village park. Something to think about and bring to the community? Car parking spaces can always be found elsewhere. You have quite a number of planters along the streetscape with a variety of pollinator plants and shrubs. Stone-surround permanent planting beds are a better option, and we suggest you do an audit of the town and see where these might be possible to install. If a Village Park is not an option for the village square then here is a location we'd suggest for large permanent stone surround planting beds. You could grow shrubs and flowers of varying heights for interest. The added bonus being that you will have beauty on the street all your round. We see you are still dealing with the damage caused to some of the trees in the communal green spaces in the housing estates by storm Eowyn. We admired the planting beds on the Galway Road, on the Ballinrobe Road and at the school entrance which you maintain. We see that you've added new planters to the center of the village and also window boxes at the Garda barracks, which were all very beautiful. We read that the green spaces and the entrance roads are maintained by the helpers in the rural social scheme – see below for advice on these. You take part in the No Mow May scheme which we are happy to see, as it allows late spring flowers to continue to bloom for our pollinators. It's disappointing that you lost three of your fifteen-year-old mature trees during the recent storm Eowyn. But it's also wonderful that some trees which were damaged during the storm were able to be saved by your committee member – we saw them in the photos submitted. The photographs of the planters with spring flowers are delightful – great colour after the long dark days of winter. Remember to check for suckers and ties on all the young trees you've planted.

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

The idea of sewing a wildlife corridor through the village is wonderful. We noticed it along the entrance road from the north. What have you discovered since sewing the corridor? Have you new species of butterflies or bees? It might be interesting to do a FIT Count every year and see the changes that ever resulted from the wildflower corridor. See the website for details on how to do this <https://biodiversityireland.ie/surveys/fit-counts/>. Your nature walk is maintained by the committee and unfortunately you lost some trees during the storm which had to be removed. We see you are interested in having a five-year biodiversity plan, and attended talks aimed at commencing this. We look forward to seeing your plan. Don't make it too onerous or too long or otherwise you won't implement it. The large wide green area on the Galway Road was completely trimmed. This is a very wide grass margin and so we suggest that here you allow large areas to grow and produce wildflowers and grasses. Just trim a metre wide strip along the inside edge of the bollards which will show that the area beyond is deliberately left wild for biodiversity. The old graveyard with the wildflowers growing looks great. We loved that you've cut narrow paths so that people can meander and enjoy the buzzing insects and visiting butterflies. Remove the sign from the gate as it detracts from this very beautiful arched structure.

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

Your Community Garden is wonderful – compliments to those who began this venture. Raised planting bed, the polytunnel, picnic area (the seat from the palettes is perfect), compost bins, cloches etc. What a lovely oasis with the wildflowers and grasses growing along the headland. Well done on organizing a full day gardening course which was attended by 20 people from the local area, and it's brilliant that four new young families have since joined the community garden scheme. You have sown apple trees, current and raspberry bushes, in addition to a variety of vegetables - carrots parsnips potatoes rhubarb tomatoes and courgettes. The photos you included of the of the community garden are wonderful. It certainly has advanced and seeing it full of people was brilliant. You are lucky that you have a nearby mushroom producer from whom you receive the compost used in your community garden. In addition, we see you collect leaves in autumn to add to this. We're guessing your compost is extremely rich and fertile with that combination! We are amazed to see that 5.3 tons of electrical items were collected on the WEEE collection date in 2024. That is some number of electrical items being recycled. We're assuming they were all beyond reuse? We read you have evening classes in the Community Center. Classes about wool from the sheep to weaving or knitting for wear, in addition to chocolate making and reusing materials for Christmas decorations are available. We love the idea of the Kilmaine connect WhatsApp group where items be given away for free are allowed to be posted. Great that the Community Center supplies items such as tables, chairs, dishes etc. for anyone who wants to borrow them for a special occasion. We read that the project this year where a particular effort was applied, was organizing gardening courses to boost the numbers in the community garden and to help with biodiversity and sustainability. We see this was successful for you and that the community garden membership has grown in strength - well done.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We're delighted to read that you took part in the annual An Taisce Spring Clean event and that in addition to you and your volunteers, the National School children also took part. Great to see the high vis jackets on the small children as they prepared for this work. This event highlights the importance of vigilance with regards to litter, flight tipping and weed control. When you are seen with your high viz jackets the villagers know that it's time to be extra vigilant with their waste disposal. We read that you have a weekly litter pickup in addition to weed removal. When we visited the village was virtually litter free but we noticed quite an amount of weed growth. Ask the volunteers to bring a hoe and stiff brush with them when they do the litter pick-up. It's disappointing that that bring banks attract fly tipping but truthfully this is a problem with many communities. CCTV cameras are needed and then those caught on camera can be prosecuted. We see that you have erected signs for dog owners reminding them to take dog litter home. Generally, it is now accepted 'Any bag Any bin' so we encourage you to take this on board and remove the signs asking dog owners to take the litter home. Remember signage is clutter in the streetscape. We also suggest that you paint 'Clean up after your Dog' on pavements in areas where you find dog fouling a problem. Sometimes signage is unnecessary, and we refer to the Nature Walk signs on the Galway Road and Ballinrobe

Road. It's obvious the direction of the walk when we see the green and red Arrows and so these additional signs are clutter in the landscape. Please also remove signs which are out of date, the ice cream sign which is tied to the Walking Trails information board, and the one on the wall in the village square. The corner of the stone surround planting bed at the Walking Trail sign has been damaged and needs to be rebuilt.

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

Set in rural south Mayo the residents of the village have contributed positively to making the village extremely pleasant, welcoming the visitor. Along the streetscape many had painted their properties which gave them a fresh look and kerb appeal. Along the entrance roads many had neatly kept gardens with colourful herbaceous borders and flowering shrubs. It's great to see that properties which were vacant have now been purchased and will soon become residences again. We read that the green communal areas in the housing estates are maintained by the rural social scheme. We suggest that spaces not required for ball play are let grow long so that wildflowers and grasses are available to our pollinators and small mammals. We read that the trees and shrubs planted in the recent years are doing well. We're assuming that you are checking on stakes and ties and also removing suckers when noticed. The Roadside boundary wall at Riverside Close looked good. Remove the ivy that is now growing over the wall and also trimmed back the bushes. The houses here were well generally well maintained but weed growth was noted on footpaths and at the roadside kerbs. We admired one of the gardens which had a variety of pollinator plants and shrubs and also had specimen trees growing adding drama to the estate. The small estate of An Cluain was neat and tidy, and one or two residents had pollinator friendly hanging baskets and window boxes. We liked the idea of the plants growing along the back boundary wall of the communal green open space. We admired the trees which form a beautiful canopy along the road boundary at Riverside Close. We see there is a seat for those who'd like to sit in this sylvan environment. We suggest you add some more seats here and allow the grass to grow as advised elsewhere.

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

The approach roads to Kilmaine are extremely pleasant lined with well-tended trees. Which are maturing nicely. All of the planting beds were full of a variety of colourful flowers and shrubs and presented well. See Nature and Biodiversity above for suggestions on grass cutting for the Galway Road entrance. We see a path extends from the village to the river on the Galway side of the village which is one of your looped walks. Unfortunately, time did not allow us to enjoy the sylvan nature walk – a reason to return. Nice to see access was permitted by a local family and with the sign, we see that they are thanked for their generosity. We particularly admired the entrance along the Ballinrobe Road with the sloping bank of wildflowers, planting beds and narrow grass margin. We see that a footpath extends almost as far as the church on the L5659. Is it planned to extend this the whole way which would encourage people to walk from the village to attend the various services? We love the 'Protecting our Precious Pollinators' sign which we saw under the green Mayo Co Co Kilmaine village name sign on the approach road.

Concluding Remarks:

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

- While you tell us New (N) and Maintained (M) projects you don't number them. In the Application Form please number the projects New (N1, N2, N3 etc) and M (M1, M2, M3 etc). This same numbering system is to be used to indicate the locations of these projects on your map(s) – 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 see you have a Kilmaine Village Enhancement Plan but it would be clearer if you used the categories in the Tidy Towns Application Form and had activities/projects using these categories. It needn't be onerous – just one or two activities/projects under the various categories are sufficient for a small community. 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. An Excel document is best for this rather than a Word document and you can then update it annually and put a tick in a column if the activity/project has been undertaken.
- All FUTURE PROJECTS will be in your plan. When they have been completed, then, and only then, will you include them in your Application Form, and then as a NEW project.

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 Kilmaine. Keep up the good work which is reaping its just rewards.