

Tidy Towns Competition 2025

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Birdhill - Cnocán an Éin
Finn**

Ref: **587**

County: **Tipperary(North)**

Mark: **382**

Category: **A**

Date(s): **18/06/2025**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	56	57
Streetscape & Public Places	80	48	49
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	53	55
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	43	45
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	29	30
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	66	68
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	34	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	43	44
TOTAL MARK	550	372	382

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Bhailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2025. Go raibh maith agaibh as bhur iarratas a chur isteach. Maith sibh don obair atá déanta agaibh in bhur cheantar go dtí seo - guímid gach rath oraibh i bhur dtionscadail amach anseo. Ádh mó.

My visit to Birdhill this year for the first time in the role of adjudicator gave me a great appreciation of how your Tidy Town community, commitment and pride contributes to making it such a pleasurable experience. Your longevity in the Supervalu Tidy Town competition is reflected in the pristine status of the village and your experienced approach to using all the resources you can including your business, community, schools, local and public bodies network. You show great ability to layer all your projects with value. You include not just an environmental focus but also manage to harvest social and community benefit through all your great community events such as your art exhibitions and your seasonal festivities. Many are located within the great public and civic spaces you have developed over the years. Operating currently without CE Scheme personnel demonstrates your capacity to invoke community activism through your innovative recruitment campaigns, tailored to suit both the skills and the challenging time commitments your volunteers might have. Having good communication channels which include a newsletter, Facebook page, Instagram account all allows for you to capture a wide community audience. I see you have already a good number of followers on social media and note that you document your work well with great photos. The "One Small Change at Home" adds significantly to your focus on the SDG's, well done. It is commendable also that you are so proactive in encouraging the integration of new neighbours with your coffee morning. This reflects your continued approach to inclusion which is also reflected in your Autism friendly initiatives and your encouragement of youth participation. It may be time to reflect on what your next great period of project building will be by planning for the longer term perhaps a 3-year period which will be beneficial also for securing additional sponsorship and grants. Your application form was well structured and the inclusion of a range of seasonal photographs gave testimony to both your work and the enjoyment of all your community and Tidy Town activities. Congratulations.

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

The core of the village is well defined by your three commercial premises all of which reflect a high standard of upkeep, good hard and soft landscaping with a notable restraint on excessive signage. They present an attractive aspect and pride in historical legacy. Of note also was that all boundary walls, residential buildings and ancillary buildings are maintained well and painted nicely. The public realm is also well enhanced by the adjacency of the Green, the Community Park and the links to the Railway station. Street furniture was all in excellent condition and there is a nice balance of functional features such as benches, planters with artistic sculptural features and historic artefacts. Other community buildings the school, community centre were well presented and maintained. The pump

and seating near the school has been refreshed beautifully. The local church, adjoining car park and graveyard reflect huge community pride and were very neat and tidy and nicely landscaped. The site of the old Creamery and Post Office where recent demolition and site hoarding has occurred suggest commencement of the ambitious "Lough Derg Welcome Centre". You are addressing this interim stage of the site with nicely painted bollards and planters. As such a project would be of a significant scale and have a long-term construction stage it might be good to engage now with the developers to negotiate an aesthetically pleasing site screening, possibly to include for new murals. The village is blessed with good public transport links and both the bus stop and train station area are well linked within the area and maintained. In contrast the road surfacing in the immediate area of the village is in poor condition and as witnessed a difficulty for pedestrians crossing. It would be good to see if there is any possibility of pursuing improvements in this regard and also to seek some traffic calming measures that would better link the commercial premises, car and cycle parking areas, the Green and Community Park.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glas a agus Tírdhreachú:

Birdhill on the day of the adjudicator's visit was bursting with colour and life from all your interventions. The planters, the pocket park spaces, the green verges, building curtilages, the well-maintained tree cover along approach roads, the community park and the Sli na Coille contribute to a fantastic green network. They all reflected judicious selection of species, container design and focused location selection combined with a good maintenance regime. Your photographs highlight the colours of nature in Spring and Autumn too in the village - The green elements are well complemented by the art installations, historical artefacts and historical information boards. Species planted show how you balance the benefits of pollinator friendly perennials with complementary colourful annual bulbs. The spaces too provide a good hierarchy of amenity, recreation and education. The Green functions well as a primary civic space while the Community Park offers a more intimate experience with nature. Although the park is small in scale it supports a wide range of habitats which support a rich biodiversity. The recreational facilities are a delight too including the fairy trail where I dispensed with all my worries. The Community Orchard is well managed for nature and the trees and berries (which tasted delicious) are flourishing. It was a delight to see the apples emerging on the tree dedicated to my native county. Sli na Coille, linear park provides an interesting meander to the train station. I wonder could a literary quote in the Irish language be added to your thoughtful selection of citations. The railway garden is a nice oasis framed by the cut stone railway bridge and supporting lovely beds with rose bushes and overhanging trees with historical information boards. I took my bike to explore the Pollagh Trail which is a huge woodland resource. Great to see that the experience enhanced by the information boards and markers highlighting the tree species, the meadowlands and the river species. This is a great community natural and recreational amenity. It is wonderful to read that it also functions as an Art Hub for your annual art competition. Good to see also at the entry point to the trails the parking controls, picnic seating, available information leaflets and bins. Noted also were your other small park pocket parks such as that at the Fountain, seating area on R445 north approach, at the old pump and the Moon garden near the bus stop. Maintenance in all green spaces was exemplary.

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

The efforts to embed biodiversity in your planting and maintenance projects combined with your community education initiatives is enlightening. This is particularly apparent from your diligent commitment regarding increasing pollinator friendly perennials and reducing your mowing regimes and management of your treed areas as well as installation of bug hotels, bat and bird boxes. The Community Park, the Orchard and the Pollagh Trail area management and information on habitats and species show how your ongoing management is contributing to enriching biodiversity. The recording of flora and fauna spotting on your website gives a measure to this. It might be good also to start measuring the effect of your work by using the downloadable FIT app (flower insect timed) or to upload information on specific areas to the National Biodiversity Data base. This could link in with work on An Taisce Green School initiative. In general, your overall approach to nature education is commendable. Great to hear of community nature walks – have you contacted the Biodiversity Officer /Heritage Officer in Tipperary CoCo to expand on these community education initiatives?

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

Great to see that you are celebrating the circular economy at your community Christmas events and inspiring your young people to be creative in reuse and recycling. The use of brown mulch from recycled branches appears successful in your orchard and parks. Your compost recycling facility – grass and leaf litter are combined for reuse also. It is not clear if you make use of water re-cycling. The project with the school on food education and the practical project of planting the seed beds is excellent and looks great in the orchard. Is there a chance the school would follow the community hall and install solar panels too? The Climate Action office/ Environment Office in Tipperary Co.Co. might facilitate with grant applications. Good to see the opportunity for cycling infrastructure improving in the area with the extension of the cycle network to the station, a public water refill station and bike repair kit. As referenced previously pedestrian priority would be good to have within the village and also hopefully linked paths would be delivered should the "Lough Derg Welcome Centre" advance. Any EV charging stations planned? Your initiative to dispense sustainability advice tips to the community is a great idea as they appear easy to follow and are quick wins. Have you embarked on any initiatives with the local businesses? Is there any opportunity to organise a deposit return scheme collectively with them? Your recycling facilities looked well established. Great to hear you have access to a polytunnel to grow some flowers from plugs & seedlings. Is there an opportunity to expand this initiative into a community allotment? Your lovely re-cycled telephone box allowed me to peep in to see if any books grabbed my attention.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht a agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your application details describing your litter pick regime, your photographs in combination with your social media

sites indicates how conscientious your committee and volunteers are at maintaining a tidy litter free environment in Birdhill. On the day of the adjudicators visit the village, parks, the curtilage of the commercial premises and the local public buildings were all very neat, tidy and generally weed free. Signage referenced by last year's adjudicator was clean only suffering from a bit of weathering. A small element of litter was spotted on the Pollagh Trail and at the Station Garden. Although generally very clean the recycle area had an overflowing clothes unit, which if windy could have generated spill. All in all, the village reflected the efforts of the community to keep Birdhill litter free, tidy and with a high standard of upkeep.

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

Birdhill village, as indicated in your application hasn't a traditional village street pattern and is more focused on a commercial hub and community spaces with a number of low-density residential developments along the approach roads. The three main buildings in the core of the village street including their supporting curtilages are maintained to a high standard. They are well complemented by their attractive natural setting and the local Green and links to the park and train station. Other small structures, walling and street furniture are all well maintained and integrate well with the character of the village. Other elements such as the bus stop area, telephone kiosk area contribute too to this public realm. The houses and gardens on the approaches are all maintained very well, with those on the Nenagh road having the added visual appeal of large mature trees. Similar to last year's adjudicator I would agree that a dedication to less management of garden areas of these large sites could give added biodiversity and visual value, even if that was just small set aside areas. Perhaps this could be a communal project for next year, encouraged by competition. The southern side of the village reflects the legacy of the old creamery and now demolished P.O. These are currently being addressed well and don't detract from the general high standard of the village.

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

Roadside margins are maintained on all approaches and clear of clutter. The Bus stop sign on the righthand side from Limerick still needs an update as its quite faded. Your verges as you approach the village are managed well with large sections left unmown. Birdhill has good accessibility along all routes with local information panels everywhere to make your walk around even more interesting. The road surfaces, paths and road edges are well maintained. The approaches to Birdhill include for attractive village signage and planting and are clear of any unnecessary advertising features. The roundabout on the Nenagh side linking to the historical agricultural legacy of the area with farm machinery could have given more of the manicured grassed area over to nature. However, this is in contrast with the verges on all approach roads which are managed well with a restraint mowing regime. The link road with the train station is an attractive treed walk/cycle. The road from the school site (Newport) is flanked by a group of trees near the village and meets at the park junction, celebrated with flowerpots and nice stone walling. The Limerick road approach includes for embankments managed for nature and perennial beds. In general road surfaces are of a good standard and facilitates sustainable modes along some stretches. The centre of the village as previously referenced does need some surface treatment. The O'Brien's Bridge approach affords a lovely canopy of trees. In general, all approaches are good, reflective of biodiversity enhancement and visually clear of clutter.

Concluding Remarks:

Birdhill has a nice and proud built environment with a strong natural and historical heritage. The dedication, strong presence and impact of the Tidy Town group, supported by the community, business network and public bodies is very much in evidence. Much credit is due to the creative use of the adjacent natural heritage opportunities to embellish the town further through enhancing biodiversity, setting goals for sustainability and making investing that will benefit future communities. Well done to you all and to your colleagues who collaborate with your great work.