

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Ballsbridge - Droichead na Dothra	Ref:	2249
County:	Dublin	Mark:	275
Category:	G	Date(s):	06/06/2026

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	35	37
Streetscape & Public Places	80	35	37
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	35	37
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	18	20
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	16	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	56	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	34	35
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	31	33
TOTAL MARK	600	260	275

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

“Fáilte go Comórtas Bailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2026. Go raibh maith agaibh as bhur n-iarratas a chur isteach. Maith sibh as an obair atá déanta agaibh in bhur gceantar go dtí seo - guíonn muid gach rath oraibh in bhur dtionscadail amach anseo.”

Welcome to the 2026 Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition. We are happy to report the committee of 6 has the backing of 36 volunteers which between both can successfully run many local activities depending on their size. BTT's embodies a whole community approach with participants coming from all corners of the world. Ranging in ages from 5 to 85 years old, they bring great energy and a diverse skill range to the group's activities but check the groups insurance covers everyone involved. It's a great approach and will make everyone feel valued and responsible when they plan and run projects. Partnership with St. Marys Pembroke Park IPAS Centre and St. Conleth's school in joint clean up days is noted positively. To make it work better invite residents to help for just one single hour and continue to celebrate small wins by showing the town pictures of what your team accomplishes. Hopefully it more encourages more to participate in simple tasks. Strong support from the Local Authority, businesses and community groups brings clear and lasting benefits to a community.

All form of social media is used but you find the community noticeboard is an effective communication tool providing a centralised space for local updates often attracting the attention of visitors. Good to note the strong involvement of the local students and this year you have added a Tidy Tots group. A talk in Old Belvedere Men's Shed in December received a great attendance and is praiseworthy.

This year the group has placed a special emphasis on improving the streetscape through cleaning, planting and a thematic focus on local heritage like rugby and showjumping. It's a super way to boost local pride and it will make a real difference to the look and feel of the village.

Raising hundreds of thousands of euros for charities in the last 6 years since you joined the competition is outstanding and creates a massive positive impact for those in need and a steady and reliable support for the charities and their families.

Many thanks for all your lovely photographs, entry form and supporting material.

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

Enhancing the streetscape is a very worthy project and pretty streets encourages us to explore.

The visual rhythm of repeating electric blue planters at regular intervals guides the eye around the village and makes the streets feel connected. You have chosen recyclables materials that are easily refreshed and will look good all year round. They add a pop of colour and a welcoming charm and you can easily change the seasonal flowers in spring, summer, autumn and winter.

New wheelchair accessible flower beds let's people garden together in community spaces and are a wonderful way

to beautify the area. Congratulations to the students of St. Conleth's College for their craftsmanship. We don't see the planting at its best as it's too early in the season but we see lavenders and blue salvias beginning to colour which will look wonderful. The information boards are coated in the same blue and will only look good if we keep up with maintenance.

Five new landmarks have been added to the Heritage Trail and we owe our appreciation to the Ballsbridge Historical Society to ensure the accuracy of all signage and the use of the Irish language is commendable. It gives both visitors and locals a low-cost way to explore local history and the map is a great addition.

Along Shelbourne Road, The College of Further Education has a nice row of flower boxes on the railings and tall spires of flowering acanthus add height and drama to a corner bed at its entrance. Planters act as a natural boundary at nearby eateries and helps break up the harsh lines, making the streetscape feel more organic. The Post Office building features red brick masonry and integrated lettering stands out and catches our attention. The pavement has been patched up probably for utilities and disrupts the clean look of the streetscape. The road surface of the nearby junction is also in a poor condition. Kerbed traffic islands with hazard markings would be safer with a fresh coat of paint. Outdoor cafes opportunities add a lively and welcoming ambiance.

Seeing occasional large mature street trees brings a sense of life to concrete surroundings and a natural shape. Their leafy canopies provide cool shade and offer homes for wildlife filling urban areas with birdsong.

Viewing the River from the bridge gives a wide look at both the riverbank and nearby city buildings like the No.10 The Pembroke. The traffic interrupts the calm experience. Graffiti below is a community blight and wastes your valuable time.

As we venture up Anglesea Road it's the design of the Pembroke Library that's demands our attention and we have a chance to read about it on the nearby planter. The black railings at the corner would look amazing if they got some attention (Merrion Road).

The well-kept buildings and grounds of the RDS brings a strong sense of order and history. It would be better if the railings did not carry any adverts or events.

A clear theme connects the physical town to popular local traditions and sports and add great appeal. The rugby and showjumping theme are used in subtle ways so it does not clash with everyday shops. Blue and white mini show jumping poles in window boxes are unique and show great personality. We spot white wooden horses as we cross the road and they add a cheerful touch.

The clear glass and modern build of Glencar House keep the street feeling friendly. A loose and natural prairie style planting out front catches the eye immediately.

Groups of well-presented businesses clearly show the adjudicator they take pride in their surroundings. Many like Horse Show House, Spar, Owen O'Reillys, The Pharmacy, Sherry Fitzgerald, the Lobster Pot and Roly's reflect community pride.

On our travels we may have missed seating opportunities. It would be nice to see benches that double as modern art pieces rather than standard park benches – we feel you would be good at this!

The free library is a lovely suggestion so do include in next year's entry please.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

We loved the quiet of the Greenway and managing vegetation growth during the summer requires frequent maintenance because warm weather and sunlight can cause the grass and bushes to grow rapidly and narrow the pathways. Ensure friendly reminders of Trail Safety & Etiquette between cyclists, joggers and walkers on how to share the pathway between them.

Having a river greenway on your doorstep allows people to enjoy a mix of fresh air, relaxation and opportunities for learning which connects them to nature. Annual clean ups are noted favourably.

River Ecology talks on fish and insects living in the river, guided bird watching with binoculars to spot waterbirds and bat walks make good initiatives, some of which you have organised already.

An idea you may be interested in is a Folklore Storytelling event told at scenic river spots about local myths and legends perhaps – if there are any?

We acknowledge pruning of trees on Clyde Road by the students, under the guidance of DCC. We are incredibly grateful for their contributions but also to office workers on their 'day for doing initiative'.

The Horse Shoe Pitches Area plays a major role in the Christmas celebrations featuring a carol service by the junior choir of St. Conleth's in 2025. With over 200 attending, hot chocolate, mulled wine and mince pies was a lovely gesture. Sounds like a lot of fun!

Flowers brighten many areas and vary planting – mix tall ornamental flowering perennials where it is safe to do so. Seeds like zinnias, nasturtiums and cosmos make great displays and are bee friendly.

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

Recycled pallets is a highly sustainable material for street art because they are easy to shape and we look forward to your timber creations to mark the 100th year of the Aga Khan competition in the RDS. Using discarded pallets gives a second life to wood and it lowers the need to cut down new trees.

We are sorry to hear the village experienced substantial flooding earlier in the year but your response to help design planters with water tanks to collect excess rainwater is positive. As you mention this will also save you in the summer when you can then tap into your water reserves. Have you consider installing bioswales where suitable – shallow planted channels alongside the paths to absorb rainwater while adding greenery. Reach out to the biodiversity officer or the Landscape Division of the DCC for more advice.

Organising the dawn Chorus and bat walks make for interesting events and let us know what bird species are recorded locally as well as bat species.

Herbert Park is a great local amenity and a perfect outdoor classroom. Any wildlife survey completed in this venue – keep us updated. Fill us in on the any Green Initiatives at the school.

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

Your main focus in this category is 3 recycling projects. Having been approached by DCC you brought street furniture back to life. You obtained 3 large boxes from Ringsend that you will add a replica of the RDS clocktower and rugby posts which we may have missed on our visit. Include your photographs in next years entry. We hope you get a chance to complete your new polytunnel in time for the 2027 growing season and you can then choose what plants, vegetables, shrubs or trees you would like to grow.

Any training courses attended or organised will gain you points in this category.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

On adjudication day we can only report good management of litter and your pictures show how productive you all are when you go out for litter picks and clean ups. We find a tidy and neat appearance and a lot of hours has been invested and the work completed is a credit to all involved.

A street bin looked messy as we headed over the bridge towards Insomnia as it was covered in vape stickers. How do you deal with this or does the Local Authority apply anti-graffiti coating or just use scraper tools? They remain a persistent public nuisance and an unsightly form of littering coating public bins and puts extra burden on DCC and volunteers. Post pictures on local social media to start a conversation and promote awareness. Super turnout overall - great job.

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

Residents are working hard to achieve a good standard from what we can see on our visit. Encourage more pollinator friendly spaces, wildlife window boxes or small garden ponds. A good initiative to involve residents in is a spring bulb planting project- just an idea (snowdrops, crocuses, grape hyacinths or bluebells).

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

Within a few minutes of arriving, neighbourhood buildings, pathways, bus stops, are a good standard and greenery. We must thank especially the team at the Clayton Hotel which is looking fabulous. It's a great example of community pride when you see hotel staff actively sweeping and tidying alongside volunteers. The work really improves the overall look of the street and sets a great example- they are such stars in your community.

We are delighted to hear you have an extra pair of hands and your new TUS worker is very keen and has lots of positive energy. This will make tasks more fun and productive.

We thank all the community and DCC for their continued support.

Concluding Remarks:

The village has a long history and a deep connection with rugby and show jumping and these events bring the community together and provide a way for the younger generation to connect with their roots and learn about their cultural heritage. This social connection will make the whole area feel safer and more supportive. Remarkable effort has been put into improving the streetscape and we particularly admired unique wooden creations which made our visit memorable. We wish you all the best for 2027. Well done once again.