

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Ballyboden - Baile Buadain	Ref:	1353
County:	Dublin	Mark:	307
Category:	F	Date(s):	23/06/2026

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	41	43
Streetscape & Public Places	80	38	40
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	35	38
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	30	33
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	20	22
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	55	57
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	36	38
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34	36
TOTAL MARK	600	289	307

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

Fáilte chuig 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 - guímid gach rath oraibh i bhúr dtionscadail amach anseo.

Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2026 competition and thank you for your application form, photos, and map. When we tried to open the link to the map of BBTT on Google Earth it asked that we send a request to open it. Needless to say as the adjudication is anonymous this is not possible. Your Facebook page has 1.6K followers and Instagram 1.3 followers (we loved the logo), and we see that they are regularly updated, which is vital for all social media feeds. For an area of your size your committee of five is small. But truthfully, this is no harm as it is important to have volunteers who assist when work needs to be completed. Your volunteer force of 100+ is admirable. Dividing the volunteers into active subcommittees has seen participation growing significantly in recent years. We commend you for this. You list the businesses and community groups who support you. Communication with your subcommittees and with interest groups is via WhatsApp text alerts. There are five national schools and eight secondary schools within or close to your area where the local children attend. Your Youth Involvement Project is central to your committee and we see from the postings on social media, this involvement is extremely active. Interesting to read about The Mingle – well done and its inception. This is your sixth year participating in the Tidy Towns competition and your purpose to act as 'advocate and cheerleader' for the community and to stimulate 'collegiality within the community' is admirable. Your concerns regarding the new adjoining TidyTowns participants were noted.

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

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

As you correctly state Ballyboden does not have a traditional village core, and is a dispersed community of residential, commercial, business, and educational areas interspersed with parks, roads and public spaces. It's good to read that some of the businesses have reduced advertising signage which clutters the streetscape and detracts from it. It would be good if others copied this. Promoting #shoplocal and #buylocal is admirable. Your area is quite historical important with National Monuments, Protected Structures, and ACA's in addition to historic mill sites and old bridges. It's important to protect these structures which are also part of your social history. It will be good when you have completed your Virtual Heritage Map of your historical structures, including the industrial heritage inventory. When this is done, you will need to promote it locally, so that visitors to your area will see that it is possible to download the map and visit the sites and buildings. Like many areas, village and towns in Ireland, you suffer from vacancy and dereliction, and we see that volunteers report these to the local authority. It's important to

see vacancy and dereliction being acted upon and seeing either the buildings been refurbished or new development taking place is rewarding for the community. There are quite a number of utility boxes along your streetscape. Elsewhere, Tidy Towns groups have painted these with pictures which relate to their areas. We saw two boxes which were painted, but we suggest that you could do more. Perhaps look at the possibility of painting them with historical scenes, personalities or buildings relating to your area – perhaps even some of the mills which are demolished. Needless to say permission from the utility provider is necessary before any work is undertaken.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You have quite a number of green spaces with large mature trees in Ballyboden which give the overall area a luscious feel. We visited quite a few and were pleasantly surprised by the standard of maintenance carried out. Clearly these green spaces are important for the communities that surround them. You mentioned the introduction of Circular Mobility Paths within your parks and green spaces. We were wondering when were these projects undertaken as you didn't give us dates? We visited St. Enda's Park and strolled along the tree lined paths which led to the large open green area. The formality of the paths in the walled garden at the Pearce Museum adding to the beauty of the park. It's wonderful to read that there are fruit and nut trees, pollinator friendly landscaping, sensory and quiet areas, etc. available for those who frequent Glendoher Park. Could additional seating be provided which could be used for those supervising their children as they play? We noted the landscaping work at the roundabouts by SDCC some of which have pollinator, friendly planting. It would be good to see this continued on all of the roundabouts in your area. Some of the trees in the parks and along the roads have sucker growth which need to be removed as these divert valuable energy away from the main tree. We also noted quite a number of trees need to have stakes and ties removed. Some of these had the ties eating into the bark and causing damage to the trees. These need urgent attention. We suggest that in addition to allowing the meadow parkland areas to grow that you adopt a similar approach around your trees. Provide a 600mm to 900mm radius around Parkland trees where wildflowers and wild grasses can grow. This will eliminate the damage caused by strimmers around the tree trunks. The landscaping at the entrance to Grange Golf Club was admired. We note your Street Tree Canopy survey and the positive response from SDCC in relation to additional street tree planting.

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

With the number of parks, green spaces, mature trees and hedgerows in addition to streams and rivers you have wonderful habitats for nature and biodiversity. We see that you have studied your area well and that you are aware of the importance of biodiversity corridors. It's also interesting that you have taken the time to study your hedgerows and seeing them on old maps and using Hooper's Rule you realise that they date back to the early medieval period. Your three glacial river systems with their riparian borders are also important for your biodiversity corridors. Interesting to see that these rivers were used for milling and in most instances the historic millrace is all that remains. The importance of our pollinators is now widely accepted, and we are delighted to see that you have three golf clubs who have adopted the principals of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. We assume that they no longer use chemical weed control? This is something you might check and report next year. Are there any beekeepers in your area? Enquire and let us know. The Ballyboden former open reservoir is now a wetland habitat. Great, that with the addition of planting, you have seen birds and mammals visit this area. Have you undertaken a swift survey in Ballyboden? This is something you could undertake as a community activity. Swift Conservation Ireland will advise. Perhaps you already have swift nesting boxes installed in the various schools? We didn't see any in the schools we visited. Let us know of activities such as these which you undertake with both the community and the local school children. We noted the additional projects and activities listed in your application form – no need to comment. It was lovely to hear the bird song as we walked through St Enda's Park – Eurasian black cap, house sparrow, chaffinch etc.

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

We see that you have taken ownership of the SDGs and you tell us that you have adopted them in your 'projects, planning participation, environmental initiatives, accessibility improvements, and community development activities.' We were delighted to read this, as very often this category of Sustainability, is one which Tidy Towns groups are confused. Your work in the category Sustainable Communities has resulted in judgments which have long-term implications for the improvement of future developments and the people who will reside there. Your Sustainable Transport, Accessibility and Active Transport surveys have seen improvements undertaken by SDCC. It would have been good if the 'kissing gates' were left, and alongside a swing gate installed, as the 'kissing gates' are part of your social, architectural and artistic history. Perhaps there wasn't room. The concept of 'laps' within your green spaces is noted which has been brought about by the creation of the circular paths which now exist in most of your communal green areas. We loved that the community are aware of the number of laps required to complete 1 km. Thank you for the drone photographs, which clearly shows the circular paths. You have a number of projects mentioned under Responsible Consumption and Production which were noted. Do you know what happens to the unwanted paint, rollers and brushes? We read about your community allotment, but you failed to let us know where it is located. We looked on the SDCC website and couldn't find any in your location so we assume it is a private concern – we would have liked to have visited. Have you a Tidy Towns store, polytunnel and work area? Mark its location on your map next year. We admire that you have planted unwanted bulbs in the different schools and green spaces – hopefully you will reap rewards in the spring. Have you thought about making a list of those in your area who repair items? This is invaluable to community and particularly to new residents..... 'Ballyboden where can I fix it?' The list can be a link on your Facebook and Instagram pages. Have you a Men's Shed? If not, why not start one? And now we have Women's Sheds so maybe one of these too. Good for productivity but also important for social connection for your community. Compliments to the staff and pupils of Whitechurch NS – the gates were open so we popped in. We were delighted to see the planting beds, murals, water butts, bug hotels, tiny pond,

compost areas etc. We were met by a grey squirrel when we visited!

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

As your area is a mix of residential commercial and educational centres, you have quite a large land area to coordinate in terms of Tidiness and Litter Control. We assume that your Tidy Town volunteers take part in the nationwide An-Taisce Spring Clean-Up event? Seeing your 100 volunteers in their hi viz clothing would focus the mind of the general public on the high amount of litter/fly tipping/ dumping that occurs nationally and we would hope that it would encourage individuals to dispose of their waste correctly. Is there a set day or days where your volunteers actively work in litter picking and decluttering your area? While it is good to see residents informally litter picking during the daily walks, school runs or while tending planted areas the formality of the little pick days are important. Finishing the hour's work with the social interaction is important. Perhaps one of your business establishments would sponsor a cuppa after the little pick. Your little pick volunteers are doing a good job, as we are delighted to report, that when we visited, that there was only a small amount of litter in your area. Unfortunately some weed growth was noted at wall / path / and road junctions which gave a slight unkempt feel to some areas. Ask your volunteers to bring a hoe or spade and a stiff brush with them and also to remove weed growth.

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

The residential accommodation in Ballyboden consists primarily of individual or semi-detached houses set in their own sites located either along the main roads or in housing estates. Quite a number of the housing estates were built in the lands associated with large houses. We visited quite a few of these estates and were impressed with the attention that the house owners paid not only to their individual gardens, but also to the areas immediately outside them. Many of the houses had been freshly painted, including their boundary walls or fences which made a positive contribution to the area. Gardens in general were well maintained and had herbaceous pollinator, friendly borders beside neatly cut grass while some had allowed the grass to grow a little and so had clover, daisies and buttercups growing in the grass attracting our pollinators. We suggest that in addition to 'No Mow May' you might ask some estates to have 'No Mow June' or 'No Mow July'. In this way different wildflowers will get a chance to grow for our pollinators and other insects. There were quite a few blank walls along entrance roads and adjacent to communal open spaces which would benefit from climbing plants, such as variegated ivy, pyracantha, wisteria etc. This will not only reduce the need for maintenance of the wall, but will also be good for our pollinators. It's good to see that Residents' Associations exist, who maintain their estates. It's always encouraging when owners or occupiers take ownership not only of their own property but also of the area around their properties. Additional street tree planting has been secured for quite a number of your estates following your Street Tree Survey mentioned above under Green Spaces and Landscaping. We noted some chemical weed control had been used around posts and at roadside grass margins. This is no longer acceptable and we ask you to tell your volunteers and Residents' Associations to stop this practice. We visited The Glen, and noted the work undertaken by the residents. Please commend them on our behalf. Have you a Best Kept Estates competition? This is a great way to encourage residents to become involved in their area. You could divide it into small, medium, and large estates. Prize giving – a certificate – to be given to the winners and runners up at a social event, in the autumn, where the local media and elected representatives are invited. If you wish this could be expanded to have a Best Kept Garden and Best Pollinator Garden competition.

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

We entered Ballyboden from the west along the Scholarstown Road and were impressed by the SDCC roundabout planting. Along a number of roads we saw well-trimmed hedgerows and mature trees which add to the area. As you are part of Dublin city, traffic along the main roads is busy and so we were delighted to see quite a number of pedestrian activated crossings. We were also happy to see the cycle ways along some of your roads but truthfully we didn't witness any being used ... is it too dangerous? Along the main roads, surfaces and road markings were presentable although some of the yellow boxes need to be repainted. However, some of the roads surfaces along minor roads had edge break up and ravelling where the road surfaces had been repaired previously. Perhaps a survey of the minor roads is required and where you see items which need urgent attention this is brought to the area office. Remember the LAs often rely upon communities to advise them on works which need to be done, as their manpower is limited. We also noticed quite a number of disabled parking bays, which also need to be repainted. Have you any 'Age Friendly' parking bays? We looked but didn't notice any.

Concluding Remarks:

We thoroughly enjoyed visiting your area ... but we have a couple of suggestions for 2027.

- Firstly please take the instructions given and limit the word count to 500 per category as requested. You can identify your projects and activities with bullet points, give a brief description and therefore omit the long-winded information. An application form of 57 pages, most of which is typed, is no longer necessary or acceptable.
- While your application form indicated the various works undertaken in a general format, it did not differentiate between new projects and maintained projects. Under each category, you are required to number your projects as New - N1, N2, N3 etc or Maintained - M1, M2, M3 etc. and then these numbers are transferred to your map. If you wish you can colour code the various categories to make your application clearer.
- You did not submit a plan. We strongly recommend that, following your AGM to which you and invite the community, you make out a five-year plan showing activities or projects which you wish to undertake under the various categories. When making your plan show who on the committee will lead the activity/project. Also show collaborators names (you'll need help from state and semi-state organisations with many of the projects). Put a tick each year after the topic when a project or activity has been undertaken/completed. We suggest this is best as it will show progress annually.

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 2026 competition. It was a pleasure to visit and adjudicate Ballyboden.