

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castleknock - Caislean Crucha** Ref: **772**
County: **Dublin** Mark: **331**
Category: **E** Date(s): **01/07/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	40	42
Streetscape & Public Places	80	39	41
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	40	43
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	37	39
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	31	33
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	55	57
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	37	40
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34	36
TOTAL MARK	600	313	331

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, interspersed with photographs, and for your map and other documents. Well done on your Five Year Plan – good to see it extended and we liked the colour coding. What does the X mean? Your BAP was also noted. You have a committee of 8 with a dedicated weekly volunteer force of 40/50, which is excellent. With Facebook you have 1.7K followers and we see that it's updated regularly. You also have a Website, Instagram and X accounts. You list a large number of state and semi-state agencies, in addition to business and community groups who support you and recognise your hard work. Your What's App methods are excellent – 9 dedicated What's App groups mean that only those who need the message are targeted. The variety of communication methods - social media, newspaper articles, radio etc - ensures that all ages are aware of your activities. Good to see you working with TY students from the numerous secondary schools in Castleknock. Please change the date regarding your entry into the SuperValu Tidy Towns competition ... you still had last year's date 2025. We are delighted to see that you evolving as a community and the various headings of this competition guide you to innovate and to expand.

Please see Concluding Remarks for advice for your 2027 Application.

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

Castleknock has quite a number of historical structure e.g. St. Brigid's Cofl Church (including the beautiful Harry Clarke window), the imposing Castleknock College, the beautiful sport's pavilion and various large houses etc. which add greatly to the streetscape. In addition, the core of the village is an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) which demonstrates its importance to Fingal Local Authority. Some new structures which add to the architectural merit of your area must also be mentioned – the RC churches of Or Lady Mother of the Church and St Thomas, the Apostle (another Harry Clarke?) and Castleknock Lawn Tennis Club. Many of the businesses along the streetscape had made an effort and had painted their premises and added floral arrangements in support of your work. One of the utility boxes at Laurel Lodge junction has been artistically painted reminding us of the proximity of the canal. Is it your plans to continue with this work? Utility boxes are, truthfully, an unpleasant 'furniture' item in the streetscape, so an artistic enhancement is a suitable treatment (permission to undertaken the must be sought). Select a theme which represents Castleknock or alternatively a nature/floral theme. Well done on the repairs to the railings. It's always good to repair items as soon as they are damaged as otherwise they become an eyesore on the streetscape and after a while it's only the visitor who notices them. The wall at Myos car park was noted with a similar mural to

that we saw at underpass at Castleknock Tennis Club – a series of swifts flying. Simple but very beautiful. The mural on the wall in Educate Together's grounds is hidden behind weeds. What we saw was very beautiful, so we suggest you help to remove the growth so that it is visible again. Good to read that you are tackling unoccupancy as this quickly leads to dereliction. The pump and its surrounding architectural brick and stone form is in a place of dominance along the streetscape. It is extremely beautiful and was admired – the planters add colour but truthfully they are not really needed.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You have a number of green spaces for the community to enjoy - Laurel Lodge, Park Avenue Green, Castleknock Green, Peck Lane Green etc. and of course the wonderful Phoenix Park of over 700ha. In addition there are the private green spaces attached to Castleknock College, Edmund Rice College and St. Brigid's GAA Club. Most of these communal spaces had mature trees and spaces mown for ballplay. It would be good if additional seating was installed in all of these spaces to allow parents to sit and supervise their small children and also those walking to sit for a while and enjoy being in nature. The junction of Park Avenue and Castleknock Road with its mature and recently planted trees will in time be a very beautiful area. We admired that seating has been provided as when traffic has ceased (if this ever happens!), this must be a very pleasant location to sit. While Laurel Lodge has had some trees planted recently it needs a lot more. We suggest that the paths are lined with trees on both sides. This will give shelter to walkers and runners both in winter and summer, which will be badly needed with climate change – wetter winters and hotter summers. We loved the little park beside the RC church with the brightly coloured mural on the wall. It seems a pity that planting now hides this mural. We recommend that the shrubs and weeds are removed so as to allow the mural to be visible as was originally intended. We admired the planters but remember all planting pots especially tiered ones need trailing plants

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

There are great habitats for our insects, birds and wildlife in Castleknock. Wonderful mature trees, hedgerows, many stonewalls and stone structures, grass areas, and of course being beside the Royal Canal and Tolka and the amazing Phoenix Park is an added bonus for you. You are truly located in the centre of an area rich in biodiversity. We were delighted to see that you had prepared a preliminary BAP. To have a full scale BAP for Castleknock this is a study that really must be undertaken by a professional but in the meantime what you have is excellent. We love that you plan to install various measures for habitats both at your polytunnel area and also in various estates. We admired the idea of making contact with developers regarding locations for swift boxes and bee bricks in suitable new developments. You've marked locations where swifts presently occupy nests – we were too early visiting to see them arrive back at dusk. We admire that you work with your seven local schools. We looked at your matrix but while we understood some we didn't know what the 'X' meant – offered, in existence, not offered, yet to be undertaken ...??? Have you thought about having a 'Nature Trail' led by a professional where the community is invited. You have so many areas where this could take place – the Tolka River, the Canal, the Phoenix Park, any one of your many parks. Not difficult to organise and great fun for all who attend ... as well as being educational. Also consult the Heritage Council (2004) booklet Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Villages – a guide for local community groups.

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

When this category was introduced quite a few communities struggled until they realised that it's just about you as a voluntary group 'doing more with less' and encouraging the community to do likewise. We ask that Tidy Towns groups lead by example. We visited your polytunnel and surrounding area – John (a tennis club member) let us in and told us of its hidden location. The area around the polytunnel is quite large but very overgrown. It would be good if Castleknock Tennis Club gave you access to more of this land so that your polytunnel, compost, storage areas could all be increased and truthfully made into a more pleasant work space – all you can do is ask! Planting beds were noted in the green area beside the RC church which were neglected. Perhaps take charge of these and invite local children to plant vegetables and flowers? It's a quiet, fairly remote space and hopefully they would be safe from vandalism. We see that only one school has a water refill station. We were quite shocked to read this and we recommend that you encourage the other six schools to also install one. Are any of your many food/drink establishment part of Refill Ireland? You might encourage them to take part as it's an easy programme for them to sign up to. We admire the work you are promoting with the leaf mould composting cages. We also love the idea of the Castleknock CommunityCycle Page (4.8K members), where people give away 'unwanted stuff' for free.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Good to read that you joined other groups and undertook a morning in April to litter pick along the banks of the Royal Canal. Tidiness and litter control is something we all notice when we enter a village or town for the first time and it is this first impression that stays with us and colours our view of the whole area. You have a litter team who target problem areas on a weekly basis and in addition volunteers, as they go on their walks, collect litter. Castleknock was virtually litter free when we visited so we can happily report that your volunteers are doing a very good job in litter picking. You write correctly that you are surrounded by built-up areas and as such you need to be vigilant regarding graffiti and fly posting which is a general urban problem. The new decal advertisement stickers have now become a problem for you, as they have in all urban areas, so these too are now being removed by your volunteers. It is vital that you continue to focus on keeping the streetscapes presentable. Your area is quite large and so weed control will be difficult for you. Weed growth is something we noticed around your streetscape and while it didn't detract hugely from the area it was a pity that it was noticeable. Please make weed removal a priority for some of your volunteers – perhaps have a weed control group. We admired that you do not use chemical weed controlled methods and undertake this arduous task manually. It will be wonderful when the cobble lock pavements

are replaced as this will reduce your weed control workload.

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

A mix of architectural styles are represented in the residences along the Castleknock Road – single storey terraced cottages sit comfortably with three storey apartments buildings. In addition businesses, schools and a church intertwined with the housing stock and it is this mix of styles and building uses that gives Castleknock its character. Along the main road, residences with gardens have great herbaceous borders, and colourful shrubs set behind garden walls or hedgerows. We noticed a number had specimen trees adorning their gardens which added interest to the streetscape. Your residential areas are on both sides of Castleknock Road and here we find mature estates which have wonderful tree lined roads. We noticed however that a number of trees had been cut and that tree stumps remain, needless to say this is not acceptable. We see that you are in discussions with FCC to have these removed and to have new trees planted. We encourage you to keep these discussions active. Residents in the majority of the estates had well-presented gardens and we see that they take pride in where they live. You have a 'Best Garden' (Tell the Story of Your Garden), and 'Best Estate' competitions. A certificate is presented to the winners. Perhaps make this a social event where you invite the local press and local elected representatives to attend which will give you additional publicity and, who knows, might encourage more volunteers to join you.

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

Situated between the River Tolka, River Liffey and Phoenix Park the roads leading to the village core are tree lined and some have grass margins which separate the walkers from the traffic. Trees on arterial roads are important. In addition to making an area more beautiful trees are also known to have a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing. By planting and caring for trees, you help reduce pollution, improve your surroundings, improve the appearance of your community and increase the value of your property. In addition, they provide shade for humans, food for insects and food roosting sites and nesting sites for birds. Compliment to FCC roads engineers and parks department on the treatment of the roundabout at Park Drive/Castleknock junction. We admired the trees in the centre surrounded by colourful perennial flowers – perhaps make the floral arrangement wider next year and only leave a narrow grass margin. The trees act as a focal point for the motorists and terminates their view making the junction safer. We noted some new rumble strips and dropped paving which aided those crossing at road junctions and pedestrian crossings. Is this to be continued? We loved that in many areas there are small, narrow pedestrian linkages, including the tunnels, which facilitate those, including school children, walking from one area to another. Well done on the new lighting system and also the wall painting and small murals - perfect.

Concluding Remarks:

We were delighted to visit Castleknock but we have quite a few recommendation for your 2027 application.

- We suggest that your excellent Castleknock Plan needs two more columns. One with the name of a committee member who will lead/progress the project and the other with the name of a collaborator who will assist you in its implementation e.g FCC, Heritage Council, LAWPRO, local business, etc.
- Your numbering system is a little complicated. Perhaps just colour code the categories (Red = Streetscape, Green = Landscape, Blue = Nature etc.) and then the projects/activities in each category can begin at 1. N1, N2, N3 etc for New projects/activities and M2, M2 M3 etc for maintained projects/activities. This would make your map less cluttered.
- An application of 67 pages is WAY too big. Please be brief in your application to the competition. You can always have a more wordy document on your website /Facebook page for the community to see.
- We requested a maximum of 500 words per category; PLEASE do as we ask. Select the projects/activities which are MOST important and only include these. No need for long wordy sections of texts – just brief bullet points. You can put the rest of the information on you social media platforms for the community to see.
- Only include New and Maintained projects in your Form. This is requested at the beginning of each Category. All Future Projects are ONLY to be in your Five Year Plan and NOT in the Application Form.
- The adjudicators unfortunately cannot visit a large number of projects – you had 49 for us to visit. Please only select the ones where you've made considerable effort. Unfortunately we don't have the time to visit 49 projects in each centre we visit.
- Please don't add hyperlinks – unfortunately we don't have the time to open all of these.
- Please select the BEST category to put your project – you had Saturday Morning Clean-Up in Landscaping rather than in Tidiness and Litter Control, and there were others.
- There is no need to do a Q and A on the adjudicators' reports. This will also help to reduce your word count in the Application Form .

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, brief, application form and accompanying map to inform us of your projects and make our visit rewarding. We would appreciate if these points could be taken into consideration when preparing your 2027 application. Thank you for entering the 2026 SuperValu Tidy Towns competition.