

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dalkey - Deilginis** Ref: **170**
County: **Dublin** Mark: **411**
Category: **E** Date(s): **04/07/2026**
26/07/2026

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	57	58
Streetscape & Public Places	80	59	61
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	56	57
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	51	53
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	35	37
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	61	63
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	41	42
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	39	40
TOTAL MARK	600	399	411

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 SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition 2026. Thank you for participating in Ireland's longest-running environmental project and helping to make Ireland a better place. We really appreciate all the great work that you do and the effort you put in, year on year.

You have made a lovely job of your entry. This was detailed while being colourful and easy to read. Thank you for all the work that went into this. We appreciate you referencing the comments of last year's adjudicator. We do advise against padding your entry with irrelevant material. You have a plentiful story to tell without it.

You are very obviously well-organised and are thinking ahead. You also don't lose track of the past and we enjoyed reading little bits of history in both your entry and on the ground. Your Heritage Town 'suggested interesting walks' (super title, by the way) sign is very well done. The adjudicator regretted the lack of time to undertake any of these while on duty but resolved to return. On which, the specific project that you have identified for particular effort this year is the same Dalkey Heritage Trails. Super work. Well done all.

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

Dalkey has some truly splendid built heritage and it is clear that you appreciate and treasure it. The first sign we looked at was that at Archbold's Castle and there is your logo. We liked the simple design of the sign and learned new things from it – always a pleasure when this happens. The Heritage Centre looked fantastic but the two planters at the front of the building were empty of plants but did unfortunately contain some cigarette butts.

You have plenty of projects reported in this category and we are pleased to say we got to see most of these. We will have to come back to visit the Vico Baths. This time we will bring a towel

On your business premises, we will have to devote a hefty paragraph of praise. So many business premises looked so well that it is a near-certainty that this adjudicator will have overlooked some. Please be assured that this is by no means an exhaustive list and contains only a sample of the lovely shopfronts and businesses of Dalkey... In no particular order: Three lovely old premises of Hicks, the former camera shop and Cleggs are counterpointed with a neat contemporary chipper. It is wonderful to see a SuperValu making such a positive contribution to the streetscape but the internal full-window stickers (while high-quality bespoke photographs etc.) detract. On the same issue, could no other solution also be found for the former Carnegie library? The Gutter Bookshop is delightful, Thyme Cut looks sharp, Dalkey News has a nice traditional feel. Finnegan's – full to capacity it seemed, on this

balmy evening was resplendent with flowers. We admired the way logos such as those of Shoe Lane and Roberts do not detract from a traditional shopfront window. Is Select Stores still trading or were we just late getting there? We asked a young man here but he seemed too engrossed in his book. Not to worry. Dalkey Pharmacy is another gorgeous building and very well cared-for and decorated. The new library looked very plain to this adjudicator but on revisiting it, this works very well, as does the colour choice. Queens Pub looked super with its usual strong colours and floral decorations. Vying for top spot was the also-busy Kavanagh's.

Bubba's Fish Market has its own 'parklet,' there is so much lovely planting here. Indeed all the outside eateries of Dalkey looked appealing.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Your entry gives a great account of a busy year. Well done to all. The fruits of this are there to see. One of the first planted areas we found after we parked was by accident after emerging from the lovely Church of the Assumption. The Corten steel bed here was lovely and colourful. We didn't see the gravel beds that were mentioned in your entry. It must be said that the car park was quite full as evening mass had just concluded so perhaps the adjudicator overlooked them.

There can be no doubt over the pollinator-friendly nature of at least some of your tall box planters of your main streets. One of the first things that this adjudicator saw on arriving was young lady videoing Bumblebees on your flowers. We didn't ask her to do a FIT count, rest assured. The Church of the Assumption hosted a gorgeous floral display. You have taken gardening in small (and unusual) places in interesting directions and we admire that. The suspended 'baskets' under the billboard and over a utility box look great. Warhol was evoked. Could that box also host something arty? At the bed in front of Bubba's are many pollinator-friendly plants. Well done. The full to overflowing box planters on your tricorn junctions are very effective.

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

This was a most interesting and colourfully illustrated entry in this category. We are delighted to see that you are taking part in Citizen Science initiatives such as the bird surveys. The Red Squirrel is a species that has been in the scientific news of late, as has its unwanted American counterpart. We look forward to hearing how this progresses. Dark skies are also very important and we would be really pleased to see an outstanding urban Tidy Towns group such as yourselves make this an integral part of your work in this category.

Watch out for invasive species making their way into your planted areas. Winter Heliotrope is one such. This was seen in the church grounds but also along some of the leafy residential streets. We tried to visit Street Begnet's graveyard to see your work here but it was firmly locked up.

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

This is a strong category for you and this year you have told us about many interesting and engaging projects that are designed to save resources. However, this is one category where you have included irrelevant material (e.g. reporting to Uisce Éireann, Windfarm meetings etc.). Trust us, you have so much going on that this is unnecessary. Instead, please use your platforms and connections to highlight the excellent work that you are involved in including your energy masterplan, the air quality monitoring and waste-saving. On same, you could have provided more information on the 'sustainable food and sharing' initiative. It really wasn't clear what this was about, where it operates or any idea of the scale of the project. Thank you though for the great stats that you have provided with regard to other aspects. Finally, it was great to see bike racks so full of bikes (and most were not e-bikes so the art of self-propelled cycling isn't yet lost).

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Yours was a very good entry with regard to this category. It was detailed but very clear. The illustrations really help. Great to see that you are involving youth in this. That's a really impressive impact statistics table. Well done!

Unfortunately, Dalkey was not litter-free on adjudication day. It is acknowledged that this was a busy Saturday evening during the summer with lots of footfall. Also, no elderly or aged litter was found, so well done. The adjudicator was impressed to see an older gentleman veritably 'pounce' on a number of items that had fallen from a fullish-litterbin. Also impressive was how he quickly deduced that two of the items were 'Return' cans. These he kept! At Circle K, some outdoor diners had left all behind them and it was blowing down the street. On a more positive note, litter was a rarity in most places and your litterbins were clean – which makes a difference. The Dublin Coastal Trail sign was grubbier than it should have been. Your neat little Dalkey Tidy Towns signs are a great idea.

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

Another lovely and colourful entry here. Great to hear that your gardening competition is back. We take it that this was a Covid-19 casualty. Enjoy the healthy rivalry! Well done for the great efforts at St. Patrick's Square. Could the residents here take on the rest of the tasks here now? The estate survey is a great idea. Well done for collecting up the leaves and making leaf-mould. Again, spread the word on this please. It a simple but really multi-benefitting initiative. Interestingly, the compost cage you showed looks just like one of the wooden pallet-crates that firewood gets delivered in.

It was great to see the baby boxer mural up close – big baby, much bigger than he looked in your entry! This is a lovely little laneway here. It is something of a shame that so many of the laneways and residential areas are either gated or have private property signs. One feels that it would be nice to explore some of these some more but sin mar a bfhail sé. It was nice to see some wildflowers (that had made their own way here) at the front of Kilbegnet Close. These included Wood Aven and Herb Robert – not at all rare but little woodland species that hang on in urban environments. Unfortunately there were some non-native invasive species here too that did not get here by accident but were planted. These were Montbretia and Cherry Laurel. Neither will be of much value for wild species and both will spread if left unchecked. On a more positive note, we admired the nice wooden boxes at the front of Termon, well done. The houses behind the four Birch trees looked really well. The gate and hoarding at Ulverton Place (near the junction) didn't look great, though.

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

Ar dtús anseo, we have to say how good the new welcome to Dalkey signs look. The first one we saw was at the entrance to the town at Barnhill Road. Given the traffic etc., we had to come back on foot to have a better look. The planted containers here in front of Barnhill Stores also looked super, really colourful and attractive. Nearby and opposite we could see other evidence of your careful work. The work to install that boulder looks hefty! It's the last one so not a Sisyphean task, at least. We appreciate that you are thinking of walkers with this.

Your treatment of public spaces is really super, it must be said. Writer's Corner was looking great and some young people were having their takeaways here in the sunshine. There were some crash-barriers stored next door to your little planted area which was a detraction, albeit no doubt a temporary one. The status of the area in front of the collection of four billboards wasn't clear. It's a good spot for a food truck though.

Almost all of your thoroughfares were neat and orderly. We did note where one of the 'wand' bollards has been removed that the bolts which had held it in place still remain. These are potentially dangerous to a bare or sandal-wearing foot and to bicycle tyres. It was good to see that there is a 'lighter touch' being taken on the roundabouts – for example on the R829 on the way to Glenageary – where it is clear that you have managed this for pollinators. The entry to Dalkey on Hyde Road is really lovely.

Concluding Remarks:

The key memory we have of Dalkey is a bustling little place on a sunny summer evening. It was so clear, from arrival to departure, that Dalkey is cherished by you and is so much the better for your dedicated care.

Second Round Adjudication:

Dalkey what a pleasure to visit and adjudicate for second round judging on a pleasant sunny morning. As always the streets were bustling with activity: people sitting out in the sunshine, relaxing and having something to eat. Other members of the community were walking on their way for a swim in the harbour. On a visit to Dalkey one cannot but notice the heritage buildings, Dalkey Castle and Heritage Centre and others bringing a uniqueness to the streetscape. The town, as you mentioned, has kept its village uniqueness even though it has grown in population, like most towns, with more people coming to live in the area. The town's hard-working committee are divided into different sections looking after planting and various other parts of the competition and are doing a splendid job. This is evident by the awards they have won in the last year and may this continue on in the years to come. Your welcome signs give a very good first impression to those visiting and this welcome continues throughout the town. Various improvements have been made to the public spaces, such as Writer's Corner, which has been revamped. Businesses have been refreshed, some in preparation of their participation in Netflix filming, that was taking place in the town.

The Tram Yard, which was once a unique part of Dalkey's streetscape, is no longer in use, which is a pity but work is ongoing to get it revitalised and up and running again. It has been brightened somewhat with the new murals. Businesses that impressed were The Club and Finnegan's. Castle Park School entrance could do with freshening. Landscaping throughout the town has been upgraded with more use of pollinator friendly planting, added to ground and container planting giving more all-your-own colour and interest to the streetscape. This enhancement was notable at Barnhill Roundabout/Barnhill Road. Sorrento Park has also seen improvements, which revealed old features, which were carefully restored. The soft landscaping of the town is complemented with various items of hard landscaping such as seating and the Famine Pot. Some containers of Olive trees were looking tired and didn't impress.

Biodiversity is strong in Dalkey. The town and surroundings are home to many bird and animal species that are being recorded and monitored. Invasive plants are monitored and eradicated. Less mowing of grass is also carried out and the planting of native trees, hedging and pollinator plants indicates good management and awareness of biodiversity. It is good to show appreciation for nature in the area by the organisation of guided walks and also the installation of new information boards and apps, so that the community can understand and value biodiversity more. The town is certainly doing their best to make the area more sustainable. The creation of different projects under the different headings of water, waste and energy are being undertaken, resulting in Dalkey making strong progress in this category. The town is generally tidy but some areas, such as signage, could be improved. Signs should be all cleaned and all foliage cut back to make them more visible. Lamp posts are an important part of the town structure but some of these are in need of painting or freshening.

The residential areas of the town are all well maintained with superb landscaping and of course the stone walls that were noted, add greatly to all areas. The houses at St Patricks Square were particularly admired, so too was Rockbrook cottage looking bright and colourful. Well done to the residents on the maintenance and presentation of their homes. Good landscaping, hedges and trees also add to the overall ambience of the streetscape. Well done

to all involved in the developing of new projects and on the maintenance of the town generally, which has created a lasting impression on this year's second round adjudicator.