

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Dochas Centre - Iarionad le Dóchas** Ref: **2302**
County: **Dublin** Mark: **293**
Category: **B** Date(s): **21/07/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	46	40
Streetscape & Public Places	80	28	38
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	38	42
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	34	35
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	35	36
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	48	45
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	28	27
TOTAL MARK	600	287	293

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 and all the Tidy Towns community do and the effort you put in.

Thank you for your entry into this year's competition. It is great to see you back for the second year after a long absence from the competition. You are very welcome back to the competition and it is great to have you! We understand that quite a number of staff are putting in voluntary effort throughout the year on your Tidy Towns journey. Prisoners are however, the key workforce for Dóchas Tidy Towns! We read that you are involved with Phibsborough Tidy Towns and that is such a useful partnership. You get to learn from an experienced Tidy Towns group and in return they get flowers and baskets and as much compost as any Tidy Towns group could ever want! More on that later.

Your group is unusual in a number of ways. We realise that you cannot apply for funding in the same way that other centres can. However, you have not let that hold you back and you have undertaken a number of very worthwhile and interesting initiatives in just the last year. Your partnership with organisations such as youth clubs, schools, church and of course other Tidy Towns groups is loaded here and is much encouraged. The specific project that you have identified for particular effort this year is the Butterfly House. The adjudicator was lucky enough to see this and to appreciate how much this meant to all the women involved in it. This was a very clever and imaginative project. Well done to all.

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

Thank you for the information that you supplied here. As you know yourselves, this is not a typical centre and there is not the same collection of buildings et cetera to be assessed. Thank you for the details on murals that have been created for your walls. While visiting you, the adjudicator could see that the standard of upkeep is indeed high at the Dóchas Centre. We acknowledge that this is down to both prisoners and staff. We appreciated the opportunity to see your Joy of Coffee mobile café. This has to be the most unusual café that this adjudicator has ever visited. Its use as a training facility is ingenious. We appreciate the way that planting containers and beds are used to help soften the built environment here. We would encourage the creation, wherever possible, of both new murals and planted areas.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

This is a major category for you all. We greatly admire the way that the green spaces within the centre are treasured, managed and shared. While we visited, we were given a very detailed account of the journey that the Dóchas Centre has undertaken with regard to horticulture within the facility. We admire greatly how staff have stepped up to provide the materials, space and time to make this happen. However, most praise is reserved for the women who have voluntarily taken on the management and care of your green and planted spaces. The adjudicator was reminded of a green school undertaking its first flag – everything is new, everything is somewhat daunting, but everything is out there to be gained! It was a fantastic achievement creating and entering a garden for Bloom this year. We extend our thanks to your staff for giving up their time to make this happen. We further extend our congratulations to the women who worked on this and have put their hearts into this unique entry. We truly hope that your experience at Bloom will encourage you all to enter again and seeing as you've made such a mark, you really should! We would encourage you all to consider asking a horticultural expert to donate a little of their time to Dóchas in order to give hints, tips and ideas on planting in spaces such as this. The adjudicator learned that a florist has agreed to come and do classes for the women and this is a wonderful opportunity.

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

You put it very well in your entry that within your facility your conservation areas are the managed green spaces within your perimeter. You go on to say that your Bloom garden and your butterfly rearing space are your nature reserves. You also tell us here that you keep some spaces deliberately dark as a primary conservation zone for shade tolerant plants and nocturnal insects. Very good. Of all the centres that this adjudicator has seen over the years, this is the first with an active ladybird – rearing project. This is an example of biological control which is rarely practised by volunteers! We believe that the fascinating world of insects could be explored even further by you and your team. We recommend that you have a look at the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. This is literally the bible for the conservation of pollinating insects in Ireland. While you might be limited to your perimeter in terms of space, this is still a vast area when it comes to pollinating insects. Seed-savers elsewhere might certainly be persuaded to donate wildflower seeds for propagation by you. We would also advise you to get some help from a wildlife or conservation group on how you all might play your part in addressing our biodiversity crisis. This might be easier done than you think!

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

This is often considered to be one of the trickiest of the Tidy Towns categories. However, if you have a look at the guidance that is available for this category you will see that many actions and initiatives qualify for points here. The adjudicator believes that you will have no trouble in this category as we got to see many examples of reuse, repair and re-imagining during our visit! At the café old cable reels have found a new life as tables, for example. All of this is in the ha'penny place when seen beside your entry for Bloom. This incredibly imaginative piece of work saw you take a piece of history and create your own notable event – a gold medal! - from it. You then added some more contemporary items that raised a smile from this adjudicator and probably a few eyebrows when it was unveiled at Bloom!

Truly impressive though is the way that you have harnessed the treatment of organic waste and turned this into an invaluable product. This is used not only within the centre, but you also share this with a local Tidy Towns group! The compost is of course used by you in your flowerbeds and to grow from seed. You have donated flowers to the church, shamrock to a local youth group and even sold some to raise money for rainwater harvesters. This in itself is a great lesson in circularity of materials. Well done. The way that the Dóchas Centre is embracing sustainability is a story which should be more widely known...

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The adjudicator got the opportunity to see how well cared-for your communal spaces are, well done to all the women and staff involved. In terms of litter, there was little or none to be seen throughout the entirety of the visit. When there, the adjudicator was informed that anti-litter actions are a part of the normal activities. Perhaps some notices in the common areas that the Dóchas Centre is part of Tidy Towns would be a good idea.

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

As part of the adjudication of the Dóchas Centre, we visited some of the residential wings of the centre. We were delighted to be able to talk to some of the residents and learn about their contribution to the life of the centre and also to the lives of others outside the facility. The adjudicator got the chance to see the creations of some very talented people and how these have been put to use in the improvement of the living spaces here. It is a credit to all involved how such talents have been used for everyone's benefit. Again, we would encourage the development of wall-art as a means of improving both interior and exterior spaces.

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

It is acknowledged that some of the categories of the Tidy Towns competition do not readily conform to every situation. This has been allowed for in the formulation of points for the Dóchas Centre. Necessarily, how one visits this facility is markedly different from most other Tidy Towns entrants. There are of course thoroughfares within the centre. These were extremely neat and tidy and free from litter and unwanted plants. Looking back on these, we wondered if there were some way that flora might be added to wall spaces.

Concluding Remarks:

This was a truly fascinating visit to your centre. The adjudicator is very grateful to all the residents and staff who gave so generously of their time to meet and discuss what you've achieved together. You have developed some really interesting and frankly ingenious ways of making the Dóchas Centre a better place in which to live and work. You have shown how ways toward sustainability are open to everybody. You have really given us a lesson in what we can achieve when we work together. Thank you all