

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Rathfarnham - Ráth Fearnáin	Ref:	775
County:	Dublin	Mark:	278
Category:	B	Date(s):	21/06/2026

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	33	34
Streetscape & Public Places	80	37	39
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	39	41
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	26	28
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	13	14
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34	35
TOTAL MARK	600	267	278

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.

Thank you, Rathfarnham for entering the 2026 Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition. You are a very active Tidy Towns Team with a population base of a village you have an active committee of eight with a volunteer base of twenty two. It is very encouraging to read your adoption of the volunteer charter, a very important document and ethos for any Tidy Towns Community. It is encouraging to read that you have involvement with younger members of the community and your education in the national heritage is a treasure for them to learn.

Your communication by WhatsApp for the volunteers and your Facebook page is very active with great communication of interesting topics to a wider audience. Based on your Facebook content your website page when established will be very interesting. Your regular meetings and various clean ups both organised and adhoc are also a great communication network within your Tidy Towns team. Even though your geographical area is mainly in the Rathfarnham area it is great to see community support from neighbouring townlands bordering your village, but also in other townlands and villages. Your map which was well laid out and easy to follow, but it covers a wider geographical area than a village status, than you have entered for, such as Dodder river and its satellite area, within the boundaries where there is a bigger population?

Thank you for the information in your application re coffeeshops etc in the village it is encouraging to see your support for businesses in your village. Tidy Towns is not only an environmental competition but in this category Community Involvement is vitality important for the people of the community and the village. The engineering works you mention while inconvenient do not distract the adjudication process as they are very necessary for the greater good, in culinary phrases you need to have a mess to make a great omelette.

Your Vision Plan 2026 to 2031 is excellent with clear set visions for each category, may we wish you every success in its achievement.

While your application form is very long and detailed there is a lot of duplication, such as greenspaces under streets. For future applications may we suggest please adhere to the word count for the category, to make the adjudication process less complicated.

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

On the day of adjudication there was some disruption to the street landscape due to construction works, as mentioned, but this does not distract from the adjudication process. Your concern about the footpaths is noted and

hopefully this will be remedied once construction works are completed. As it is an older and historic village footpaths and road space challenges can occur. There are some historic and architecturally interesting buildings in the village, Rathfarnham Castle, the Catholic Church of Annunciation with its majestic trees on the grounds, grow a lovely leafy frame, with the interesting features and stone work of the church and spire in the background. Your ongoing project and work with the Church of Ireland is noteworthy and interesting. The Court of Petty Sessions is a nice building in the centre of the village but its sentiment is that it looks neglected. The council and the powers to be, should look at ways of bringing this building to some good public use. Noting your traders' response to previous adjudicators comments regarding shutters. There are some interesting shops in and around the village, even though some have shutters to guard their premises for insurance reasons, which can also make them a target for graffiti artists tags. Is there a solution where with the tidy town's community, murals can be painted onto these shutters like frescos, advertising the shop's wares and bringing them into the street atmosphere. The streetscape in the village is relaxing without the clutter of overhead cables. There is nice landscaping and coloured pockets of pollinator plantings around the area. The pedestrian plaza of the village has a nice relaxed feel about it giving it a nice place to saunter around.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There are some well planted lovely landscaped areas and planters in and around the village. Your preference to plant directly into the ground is ideal and there are some nice planted beds with shrubs and perennials at the Rathfarnham village sign and the village court area. Some trees have lighting wrapped around them, if it is necessary to do this check the wiring periodically so that it does not damage the tree bark. The wooden planters throughout the village are planted with evergreen shrubs and a mixture of pollinating perennials and some seasonal bedding plants. The overall selection of plants is good in terms of colour palette, architectural form and seasonal diversity with pollinator plants fulfilling the biodiversity need. Some of the plantings are covering signs such as the Village Court. In all cases shrubs and plants should never obscure signs to the point that the signs are not visible. Rathfarnham Castle Park is a nice asset to have; it would be nice however the water feature is stagnant. It should be flowing in order to bring more life of sight and sound to this feature and vicinity.

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

You are doing a lot in this category tying in pollinator plants with your landscape category. There is an excellent natural wildlife corridor with the proximity of the Dodder and Owendoher rivers bringing a natural wealth of biodiversity to the area in terms of flora, fauna and aquatic life. The old graveyard brings its own form of biodiversity and it is good to read it forms part of your FIT count regime and monthly bumblebee transect walk that are submitted to the National Biodiversity Centre. While Foxes and Badgers are welcome, the elusive Otters' play an important part in the ecology of a healthy river, their traces can be found under bridges. To identify their presence this could be a nice project to undertake with the National Biodiversity Centre. During the adjudication visit it was a pleasant experience to encounter young teenagers, fishing at the river with all the joy of a summer evening. I was told there are loads of brown trout in the river but none caught that evening, an unlikely tale of the ones that got away. The small ones when caught go back in. The sustainability of a river is that its abundant wildlife also brings a challenge, pleasant memories and life river skills to the upcoming generations. Young teenage fishing people are a great resource for monitoring biodiversity and are a natural talent pool for your workshops on biodiversity monitoring, given the time they love to spend by the riverside. Even if they don't catch a fish they may watch and catch a glimpse of some interesting flora or fauna.

The Dodder Action in 'Balsam Bashing' is a worthwhile project to prevent this invasive plant growing along the river. Care must be taken in removing such plants as this but also Giant hogweed which is also present. All new volunteers taking part in these operations should be acquainted with river safety and poisonous plant procedures. Well done on your basic bat surveys with Dodder Action group. One of the big problems with some species such as bats is light pollution, with new street lights and solar lights limiting the range of such species. Encouraging residents to leave small areas for biodiversity is a good project. A birdbath in a garden can be more useful to birds in an urban setting than just bird feeders and boxes alone. It is also a useful tool in identifying the birds who visit either to drink or bathe.

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

This category focuses on doing more with less and while your focus on biodiversity is good, reducing food waste and growing vegetables and fruit, once the produce is consumed are worthwhile projects.

You may consider an education project for food storage for example. Your herb pot project is a good and tasty one to use fresh herbs

A lot of single people possibly live in the area, whereas a lot of retailers only sell food portions for families.

Encouraging local food retailers to cater for single peoples items may reduce food waste and cost for this group. Be careful of the cardboard packaging you use, as some cardboard packaging may also contain, plastic, ink and staple contents which should not be used in soils for food growing. In the current climate rainwater harvesting is a no brainer. This category also looks at matters such as promoting sustainable transport, energy use and consumption. These important items should also be included and acted on in terms of your plan.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Rathfarnham area was generally litter free with little graffiti, street gullies and shores were clean of leaves, dust and debris. There are good litter bins in the village area and are being used by the public. Some litter was present in the pond area of the castle. In your plans your focus is to maintain a clean, welcoming village while addressing the behaviours that cause persistent litter issues. Your work with schools and litter picking programmes are working well in this regard.

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

There are some nice resident dwellings in the vicinity of the village.

Woodview Cottages in the centre of the village charmed houses of the historic era. Rathfarnham Castle estate is a nice development of brick houses with nice tree lined and nature strips. Village Court is a nice apartment style complex within the village. Owendore Crescent is a lovely older style estate in the vicinity of the village, a lovely greenspace which is being nicely used by the residents, surrounded by trees beside the river, a haven for biodiversity.

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

The main Rathfarnham Road by passing the village is a busy thoroughfare, however road surfaces are good for both cycling and driving with a cycle lane towards Terenure. Approaches from Ballyroan and Butterfield are reasonable with Welcome to Rathfarnham village signs noticeable. Some footpath surfaces were disrupted by engineering works and hopefully when completed will be in good order. Walking and cycling through the village is comfortable, surfaces are good and generally clutter free.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for your entry this year, it was pleasant adjudicating Rathfarnham village. For future applications please keep your entries and word count relative to your category. Please look at your population category as your area exceeds the boundaries of the village. We wish you very luck and success in your endeavours in making Rathfarnham a lovely place to live in and visit.