Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Johnstown - Baile Eoin**	Ref:	**370**
County:	**Kildare**	Mark:	**373**
Category:	**C**	Date(s):	**20/07/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	51	53
Streetscape & Public Places	80	46	48
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	47	49
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	39	41
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	19	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	64	66
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	45	47
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	46	48
TOTAL MARK	**600**	**357**	**373**

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.

Johnstown Community Association and the Tidy Towns sub-committee are very welcome back to the National Tidy Towns Competition, thank you to Johnstown Tidy Towns for your submission, yet again you have submitted an excellent and comprehensive record of your work in 2025/2026.

For 2026, Tidy Towns have entered into Category C Small Town population between 1001 and 2500.

While Johnstown is in the small town category you have done very well to retain the best characteristics and nature of a village.

Your core group of 7-10 volunteers work regularly twice weekly on your projects, with the core group growing up to 20-30 volunteers for your occasional flagship projects. The Tidy Towns sub-committee also work as part of the very active Community Association and are also an active participant in the Kildare Tidy Towns Network, which is a great source of information and a sharing of ideas for the tidy towns communities.

You have successfully taken part in the national Tidy Towns competition since 1969, one of the longest participants in the country. It is amazing that you are able to include the map that you included in your 1978 entry nearly 50 years later.
You have also highlighted that many organisations, local businesses and numerous committed individuals have contributed to the Johnstown 2026 submission.
Without exception all of the entrants from Kildare, including Johnstown identified the support and assistance of Kildare County Council - the high standard achieved by the county's Tidy Towns family both in the past and in 2026 are a testament to the ongoing commitment and energy of the County Council.

Continued engagement with the Johnstown Community Association and the other voluntary groups especially the residents associations is essential to working effectively in Johnstown. In particular the Johnstown Community Association ensures that the Tidy Towns group is able to communicate effectively with the whole community through the various channels, including newsletters, posters and Facebook.

You have also attached your 2026 Three Year Action Plan which usefully cross-references your detailed Plan with the adjudication category, setting out your long term aims and objectives, and year of planned action and

implementation. This is a very well thought-out and clear document and sets out a definite road-map for the Tidy Towns to follow.
It is very encouraging to note your observation that the Tidy Towns competition provided a key channel for the integration of newer and older communities in Johnstown. Based on your submission and the adjudication inspection the results of this integration have been very successful in terms of community planning and involvement.

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

Like many other towns Johnstown is built around a typical ribbon development, the main street of Johnstown was part of the old main road from Dublin southwest towards Naas, and onward then to Cork, and Limerick. The main street and the rest of Johnstown is accessed from the N7 from 2 roundabouts at each end of the town.
The River Morell runs across the main street, crossed by a single arched rubble stone masonry bridge and is a feature of the streetscape. Given it's rich historical heritage it is not surprising that many of the main features of the town are located on the main street.
The main street includes a Heritage Trial developed by the Community Association and is lined by a combination of cottages, homes, fine houses including Johnstown House, and a historic coach house dating from the 1640's which is now being renovated as Devoy's Hotel
The 6 Gothic style Revival cottages on the left hand side heading south are particularly striking and in excellent condition

The presence of parks, including the pocket park, the Village Graveyard, a tidy car-park for commuters and the proposed Johnstown Community Park at the old garden centre site all add to the streetscape, with the future development of the community park being a major addition to the town. There is currently a take-away coffee shop operating on this side of the road. The unfortunate absence of a local shop on the street is obvious.

The street furniture includes previously mentioned heritage trail signage, some benches, tree guards and the very well presented pump in front of the cottages referenced above. A particularly attractive feature of the main street are the cobbled channels to the sides of the road, a throwback reference to byegone days.

Given it's proximity to one of the busiest motorways in the state, and despite the very obvious heavy presence of the pedestrian bridge it is extraordinary how removed Johnstown feels from the rush of traffic - it has managed to retain a country village feel in spite of being part of the developing commuter belt.

The whole town has been very well maintained and looked after.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Your current entry and last year's adjudicators report confirm that Johnstown has an abundance of green spaces and landscaping spread throughout the village.
As mentioned previously the green spaces are a mix of historical legacy including the medieval graveyard and more recent developments including the pocket park and the car-park with green banks surrounding and also the green banks lining the Morrell stream. The future development of the community park has commenced so the village is moving in the right direction. It is particularly encouraging that Tidy Towns have already commenced the bark mulching and planting on the street side of the limestone boundary wall to the future community park.
In addition to looking after the car park and green space, and in addition to the boundary wall planting referred to above, Tidy Towns have planted the excellent flower beds in front of the cottages.
Planters have been placed at the entrance to the car-park along with the decorated bike, and also on the green entrance to the walk down by the stream, as mentioned previously the preference is for planting on green spaces where available. The flowers to the planters were excellent and well looked after, certainly bringing a lot of colour to the village.
Slightly away from the main street but a highlight for this adjudicator is the excellent pocket park and walkway through to the Knightswood playground.The park has a great combination of mature and newly planted trees and the benches provide an ideal resting spot. The developing whitethorn hedge is looking healthy. You have also taken on board the adjudicator's recommendation from last year that the stakes and ties to trees should be checked regularly - thank you.
You have chosen your flowers critically for their roles as early season pollinators, and also considered the need for reduced watering in your future planting and maintenance programme -well done.

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

The increased importance of Nature and Biodiversity is recognised in the increased scoring for this category for the 2026 Tidy Towns competition.
From last year's adjudication report there was mention of consultants having been engaged to formulate a Biodiversity Action Plan - did that 5-year plan ever progress?
The Council's Draft Biodiversity Action Plan for 2026-2031 is an excellent document that might assist your future work. The document specifically identifies Tidy Towns as partners who might actively investigate opportunities to improve community biodiversity actions, you have already engaged with the Council's Environment Officer and the Council will continue to be a source of information and excellent advice.
You have included in your submission confirmation that Tidy Towns are maintaining the biodiversity corridors that are in the town by only carrying out necessary trimming and cutting back hedgerows, and limited mowing of grass verges. The value of hedgerows to the wider environment is often under appreciated. In addition to improving the

scenery and occasionally acting as boundaries, healthy and diverse hedgerows provide wildlife habitats, control flooding, and act as a carbon store.
Have you eliminated the use of herbicide spray throughout, and especially at the wildflower corridor?
You continue to monitor previously planted bushes and trees received from the Trees on the Land programme.
Johnstown has the advantages of having many areas around the village, including the Morrell Stream and the Graveyard offering significant wildlife habitats.
While the decline of bumblebees has been arrested and is turning around, largely due to the National Pollinator Plan, one third of Ireland's 98 bee species are threatened with extinction - your plans to drill holes in tree stumps for solitaire bees to use is a very welcome initiative.
Your village offers many opportunities for learning and development in this area. There may well be some local knowledge and interest in recording the biodiversity that is already existing in Johnstown. You might also be interested in linking up with a citizen science programme and taking part in water sampling at the Morrell which will provide accurate and current data and information relating to water quality. As you have noted, the presence of your resident heron at the river is a positive indicator for the health of the environment.

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

The increased importance of Sustainability for all communities is recognised in the increased scoring for this category for the 2026 Tidy Towns competition.
Well done on tying in the date for the spring clean as the opportunity to link in with the clothes recycling date and as is seen by the photograph in your submission and the monies raised for the community association the clothes recycling - it has been a great success, hopefully you will repeat this again next year.
The location of your car-park, and also the on-street parking in Johnstown and it's use for commuters is also probably reducing carbon emissions and also saving costs. Johnstown along with neighbouring Kill are ideally placed to have a very well used cycleway and active travel including walking and cycling for all should be promoted.
Your initiative in having the promotional article on the use of waterbutts published in the newsletter is excellent. You might be interested in making contact with the SEAI to see if a similar initiative promoting the use of renewable energy would be possible.
You may also wish to revisit the Tidy Towns handbook which has some areas that might be of interest to the community of Johnstown. Sustainability is a very broad term that cna be embraced by your town in many ways.
One of the principles of a circular economy model involves using existing materials and products for as long as possible. Your continued use of hand-held tools including shovels, spades and forks together with your sweat equity is a sustainable lesson for all.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Johnstown Tidy Towns volunteers have put in place a twice weekly schedule of litter patrols and this programme ensured that Johnstown continues to have a high standard of tidiness and litter control in all of the public areas visited. The litter patrol description is an understatement for the range of tasks taken on including management of the green areas, trimming hedgerows, litter picking, grass cutting, and general repetitive maintenance including checking on trees. In particular the Morrell river is very well maintained, most litter patrols in other towns don't require waders.
You have noted that there has been some reduction in littering since the shop in Johnstown closed and there has also been a significant nationwide reduction in plastic bottles and cans being littered since the introduction of the Re-turn deposit return scheme in 2024. Disposable coffee cups are regularly a problem but the take-away appeared to be well managed. Unfortunately the scourge of nitrous oxide canisters littering was evident in Johnstown on the day of the inspection. Apart from this one bag there was virtually no evidence of litter, dumping or flytipping in the town or estates or the approach roads.
Along with many other Tidy Towns groups, you have taken part in the An Taisce National Spring Clean Up initiative to get the year under way and you also used that opportunity to have a very successful clothes recycling day at the same time - other tidy towns groups might be interested to hear of your experience here.
Well done to all who have helped keep Johnstown looking so well during the whole year.

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

The housing estates surrounding the main street of Johnstown are also in very good condition, keeping up the high standard set in the village.
Even though they are neighbouring estates Johnstown Manor and Johnstown Gardens differ in vintage and design, one is a modern estate comprising typical 2-storey brick fronted houses with an excellent playground and well planted green spaces and the other is a mature estate of bungalows built around a generous green space with very good tree cover, and with the stream running through acting as a boundary to the main road. The well-placed pedestrian bridge at the village end offers easy access and permeability to the Gardens housing from the village.

What both estates have in common, along with the other estates in Johnstown, is that the residents have maintained and kept their homes, gardens and green spaces to a very high level.
The signs for both estates were very obvious and clear.
Similarly the one-off houses in the surrounding areas of Johnstown all have well maintained colourful gardens, many with trees and shrubs.
It is also clear from your submission and the evidence of the inspection that both Tidy Towns and the Johnstown Community Association have done an excellent job in ensuring that the residents of the estates, new and old, are fully engaged in looking after their communities.
Congratulations on your work

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

Last year's adjudicator described the signs to the approaches into Johnstown from the roundabouts as superb which remains an accurate description. The roundabouts and the approach roads into Johnstown are overall very clean, with clear signage and markings with good road surfaces throughout.
All approaches had neatly trimmed grass verges and well maintained hedgerows. Having a path/cycle way running alongside the approach road separated by the gras verge is also welcome.
The car park area in Johnstown was very tidy and litter free on the day of the inspection visit and the grass berm surrounds and planting were obviously well maintained.
While through traffic appears to be light, having traffic calming measures including ramps is very welcome. The bus shelter serving passengers is also welcome.
The general condition of roads and paths was excellent and it was a pleasure to walk around the Johnstown community.

Concluding Remarks:

This adjudicator was impressed with the presentation of your town and the work the Tidy Towns and the Community Association have carried out.

You have very exciting plans in place on a number of fronts ranging from bug hotels and bat boxes to bi-lingual signs to improve this already vibrant town. In particular your community project will be a major undertaking for your group and it will significantly enhance your town.

Best of luck for the future. Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.