

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilcullen - Cill Chuillinn** Ref: **371**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **400**
Category: **D** Date(s): **06/07/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	60	61
Streetscape & Public Places	80	48	50
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	61	62
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	51	52
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	28	29
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58	60
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	40	42
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	43	44
TOTAL MARK	600	389	400

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.

This was my first visit to Kilcullen acting as the adjudicator for the National Tidy Towns Competition for 2026.

You have entered the Small Town Category D for towns with a population of between 2500 and 5000. In Kildare the Category D is especially competitive and of a high standard.

Congratulations to your 10 committee members and core group of 40 volunteers who work for the Tidy towns. Special word of acknowledgement to the newly arrived volunteers coming into Kilcullen and now making their contribution to their new home town.

Kilcullen has been a member of the National Tidy Towns competition for 30 years, a great record.

Your 2026 submission of 47 pages is very detailed and includes lots of good information and plenty of photographs setting out your work during the year. You have included an indexed map and also links to online maps. Given the volume and scope of your activities during the year this report will only be identifying some highlights but you can be confident that the full range of your work has been considered.

You have also included the detailed Kilcullen Community Action draft annual plan for 2026 including timeframes and budget for the delivery of each piece of work. It is confirmed that your Tidy Towns application for 2026 has been drafted and submitted in accordance with your programme - well done to Noel, Ray, Eoin, Clare, Ann, Martin, and all others who made their contribution.

Your report annual schools report for the development of Green Schools in Scoil Bhríde Primary School and Cross and Passion College Secondary School Kilcullen both of which are very detailed - excellent work, well done to the students, teachers, parents, mentors and Green Schools co-ordinator Pauline. Well done to Scoil Bhríde on flying their Green Flag even during the school holidays.

You have highlighted that many organisations and numerous committed individuals have contributed to Kilcullen's 2026 submission, particularly Kilcullen Lions Club, Kilcullen GAA and other sports and arts clubs, all the local schools, KARE and the Camphill Community. You have incredible support across the community especially from the local businesses and enterprises, the range of input is extraordinary from coffees for volunteers to power supply to lending plant and equipment and to supplying and fixing materials and actual carrying out the work, well done to the

business community who have made their contribution.

You have also mentioned your sources of funding including the annual collections and fund raising events and very generous supports received from local businesses, and your energetic approach to ensuring that Kilcullen gets adequate funding from a number of sources

Without exception all of the entrants, including Kilcullen, from Kildare 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.

You have also mentioned the significant contribution of your CE workers - thank you for your commitment, initiative and efforts.

Again your presentation of your methods of communication covers all possibilities and is also very well set out.

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

Kilcullen is a thriving market town sitting on the river Liffey close to the M9 motorway, the town is expanding and has a number of new housing developments under way.

Your 2026 submission identifies new projects two new projects the first being the pedestrianization at the lower Main Street and Market Square and also identified the new mural on the Newbridge Road which is now scheduled for completion in August 2026.

Previous submissions mentioned working on a distinct design statement for the town - thank you for advising of the progress and update on that design statement for the town, that is excellent work and will yield long term very positive results for the town.

Kilcullen is a striking collection of public buildings and space, with a number of outstanding buildings and shopfronts. The thumbnail photographs included in your entry proudly set out your extraordinarily rich heritage. It was encouraging to see advantage being taken of the new paving at Market Square with provision for outdoor dining - it looked very pleasant in the brilliant sunshine.

Many of the towns in Kildare sitting on the Liffey have old bridges that are often narrow and restricted and do not serve their town as well as the Kilcullen bridge - the remodelling and modernisation of the original bridge is a major asset to the town allowing the development of the town on both sides of the river.

When it was no longer fit for purpose as a school, the re-modelling of the old national school as your library is an excellent example of town regeneration. Similarly the Credit Union Building at the bridge is a very interesting mix of old and very modern with a nod towards Kildare's Round Tower heritage. The modern town hall building overlooks the excellent streetscape works at Lower Main Street which was being used for outdoor dining.

In terms of shopfronts Kilcullen is very well served - the following are mentioned but this is not an exhaustive list of all the excellent shopfronts in the town.

The windows to the Kilcullen Opticians features great artwork, the Little Brew Cafe, and the 5 A Day fruit and vegetable shop add great colour to the street, the An Tearnann is certainly inviting, and the tasteful multi-coloured terrace of 5 houses including Liffey Barbers catches the eye.

The corner Woodbine Books is an excellent shop front that could possibly be improved by reducing some of the signage directing to the business next door at the upper levels.

The Hideout Gastro Pub and McTernans at opposite ends of the town are just 2 of the many hostelrys that have made great efforts to present as welcoming and attractive businesses.

Away from the main street and the excellent artwork on the utilities boxes and cabinets, the rear entrance from the Library garden to O'Neills Shop offers a surprising mix of colour and positive thoughts - well done to whoever brought that unique project to fruition.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Kilcullen has an outstanding collection of varying green spaces and landscaping available to enjoy from leafy riverside trails to parklands to infill gardens.

You have noted in your submission that the green space that you spend most time and energy on is the Valley Riverside Park and Fairy Trail. Indeed on the very hot day of the adjudication inspection there was a brigade of Tidy Towns volunteers at work cutting back on vegetation, planting, tidying up and making sure that the signage and forest decoration are in top class condition.

The new butterfly mural is an outstanding addition to the trail well done to the sponsors Kilcullen Fishing Club and local engineering firm Jonathan Keogh. On the day of inspection work was still underway but the intention to plant pollinator friendly plants around the Butterfly is to be applauded.

The fantastic location of the park alongside the river lends itself to a wide range of activities, and is certainly an invaluable resource for the town.

Thank you to the Bridge Community at Camphill for having their super gardens and nature trail open to the public - it was a super experience.

The beautiful library gardens at New Abbey Road opposite the church with raised planters and coloured benches are a great refuge to have in place, excellent work by the gardeners here. The gardens to the church are also in

good condition and well tended.

You have highlighted the great work carried out by Tidy Towns volunteers on a great number of other projects including the Dun Ailinne Interpretative Park and also the extraordinary planting of bulbs and trees at the Community Centre/GAA Club/Schools campus, congratulations on planting 5,000 trees in 3 years, your reward will be great.

The stone wall to the side of the avenue adds to the general atmosphere of the campus. It is difficult to soften an expanse of hard surface such as the Community Carp Park but the colour and variety offered by the box planters to the pedestrian bridge at the Pinkeen Stream

You have also brought some colour to the town by having numerous planters placed at key positions by way of your annual Kilcullen in Bloom programme, as mentioned previously by the 2025 adjudicator sometimes less is better but there is no denying that your community has fully engaged with flower boxes and planters.

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.

In addition to your extensive tree, native hedge and bulb and flower planting you have undertaken to protect the ecosystems in your town by taking on the significant task of removal of invasive species including Himalayan Balsam from the river banks, this particular plant causes untold damage to river banks and needs to be cut back as much as possible. You have also removed Dogwood from the River Valley Park, well done, this work is unseen but is essential for our native species to take root and thrive.

Your promotion of wildlife meadows at the 4 locations including using your own native wildlife seeds and the use of Yellow Rattle are also essential for our pollinators to thrive. Native wildflowers help support thriving pollinator populations. Once planted, native wildflowers do the necessary work.

Kilcullen has an abundance of outdoor classrooms and exhibition areas that are absolutely made for learning about the abundant nature and diversity that you enjoy. Well done to all who have taken an interest in our world, be it water, trees, birds, fish, insect life, plants and helped others especially the younger generations to understand and enjoy the complexity and wonder of it all and who have worked to hand over that legacy in Kilcullen. Well done to all who took part in the children's workshops with Dúlra Forest School for Biodiversity Week and Heritage Week.

Special word of mention for your over a number of years in reclaiming the Pinkeen stream for nature, excellent work here.

Again you have scored well in this category.

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.

Sustainability can include a multiple of actions taken to reduce our collective impact on our environment and you have identified a number of Kilcullen initiatives which qualify as sustainable actions.

One of the outcomes of taking sustainable actions is that money is saved and unnecessary spending is reduced.

You have emphasised the importance of your polytunnel, your use of composting, the seed swapping programme, and your overwintering of your summer planting so as to reduce buying in new plants.

Together with the Camphill Community you have planted an orchard in the River Valley - hopefully your community will enjoy the future fruits, a small step towards food security and a reduction in air miles in importing fruit that can be grown here.

The recycling aspect of sustainable actions is well understood in Kilcullen, the extensive recycling bank at the Mart is readily accessible to all, there are clothes banks available for use, and the Lions Club initiative in the metal collection appears to be successful.

It was excellent to see the old school lockers being redecorated and reused as planters at the Cross and Passion College and other locations in the town

Have the local sports clubs considered using boxes for recycling jerseys and boots? Unfortunately textiles used in jerseys take years to degrade in landfill - we need to recycle wherever possible.

In terms of energy and reducing carbon footprints, there was good evidence of Kilcullen's role as a Sustainable Energy Community - congratulations to the Lions Club Sheltered Housing who completed retrofit insulation of their four houses with the assistance of SEAI and Kildare County Council. Well done also to The Spout bar who have solar panels installed to their roofs, and all the other businesses, homes and agencies engaging in the move to renewables.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Kilcullen Tidy Towns Committee and the volunteers together with the employees of Kildare County Council and other stakeholders including a number of very active individuals and other stakeholders have ensured that your town and environs continues to have a high standard of tidiness and litter control in all of the public areas visited. You have used a great combination of regular Saturday pick-ups and then other days as the need arises, and you have worked alongside the Kilcullen Lions Club in organising an annual black spot collection - your photos show how effective your days out are.

Well done to the teams from Scoil Bhride and Kilcullen GAA and also to the Sweep Hire sponsorship.

You have undertaken graffiti removal and also taken care of the bins.

The only black spot was a takeaway coffee cup mounted on the green water pump at the entrance to the filling station beside the bus stop. Takeaway littering is a scourge, it can only be hoped that the businesses involved take some responsibility.

The civic pride in your town is apparent. And the mandatory coffee afterwards is a great idea, the social aspect of

tidy towns is critical.

Congratulations on your hard but obviously very effective work programme.

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

You have included a comprehensive listing of 13 areas and estates in Kilcullen, together with a brief description of the estate, photos, detailed schedule of works completed and in some cases suggestions from Tidy Towns as to how best to move forward.

The estates visited by this adjudicator on the day of inspection included Nicholstown and Conroy Park.

Congratulations to the residents of Nicholstown on their receipt of the 2025 KCA Best Biodiversity Impact Award. Top marks also and well done to the residents of St. Brigid's Avenue who help out their more mature neighbours in St. Brigid's Grove.

Many of the estates visited and most of the homes had very well maintained frontage with colourful gardens, some with flower boxes and hanging baskets. There were many green spaces with trees. Some of the estates had excellent entrance signage, with flower surrounds. Most verges and kerbs were clear and clean.

Car-parking on grass is not very helpful, especially when there appears to be adequate on-street parking available in most of the estates.

The simple practices of not using herbicide, cutting grass less frequently and leaving some areas for wild meadow are very much encouraged for all estates and housing areas, as is the use of native trees and plants where possible. It is truly amazing when wild orchids and other beauties appear in the meadows.

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

Initial entry by this adjudication to Kilcullen was by way of the R413 route from Dunlavin, which features a very good entrance sign with very attractive flowers underneath. There was also a line of staked newly planted trees in place alongside the hedge.

At this approach, special mention is made of the two single storey houses on the left hand side going into the town beside the entrance sign, both had excellent gardens, very colourful planting in full flower.

Kilcullen Tidy Towns have carried out excellent work at each of the major approaches from Athy, Dunlavin, Naas, and Newbridge.

At the Newbridge entrance your work on the farm gates and the utilities boxes have lifted the whole approach.

In general, in addition to the wildflower areas, all approaches had neatly trimmed grass verges and well maintained hedgerows.

The general condition of roads and paths was excellent and it was a pleasure to arrive into your town.

Concluding Remarks:

As mentioned previously, this adjudicator has not been able to comment on every one of your actions in the Tidy Towns application, but they have all been taken into account in the adjudication process.

This adjudicator was impressed with the presentation of your town and the work the committee and volunteers have carried out in Kilcullen. It is an excellent example for many other towns to follow.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.