Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Maynooth - Maigh Nuad**	Ref:	**377**
County:	**Kildare**	Mark:	**403**
Category:	**G**	Date(s):	**22/06/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	62	63
Streetscape & Public Places	80	52	53
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	58	59
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	46	47
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	31	32
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	62	64
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	41	42
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	42	43
TOTAL MARK	**600**	**394**	**403**

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.

Maynooth Tidy Towns have submitted an entry for the 2026 National Tidy Towns Competition in the Category G Large Urban Centre Population 15,000 to 25,000 Section.
While I have been an occasional visitor to Maynooth over the years, this was my first visit to the town acting as the adjudicator for the Tidy Towns Competition.

Three notes of congratulation to mention at commencement of this adjudication report for 2026 - congratulations on the 850th anniversary of the founding of Maynooth, congratulations on winning a gold medal in the very prestigious 2025 Entente Florale, and congratulations on 50 years participation in the Tidy Towns competition, all fantastic achievements for your town. Comhghairdeas, agus maith sibh go léir.

In addition to your comprehensive 37 page entry submission you have also attached your Entente Florale Europe introduction booklet and the very helpful route map for your inspectors.
Thank you for taking notice and responding to the previous 2025 adjudicator's advice under the various headings. You have previously reduced your 2025 submission and that was well received by the adjudicator, and that direction of travel remains definitely recommended for future submissions. However the addition of a contents/index page has proven helpful for other submissions.
You have a very active committee of 11 members and up to 40 volunteers, making good use of sub-committees to deliver an effective programme. You have highlighted the international nature of the Tidy Towns team with people from 18 countries helping out - it is no surprise that a university town of the stature of Maynooth is providing so attractive for so many people from all corners. Déanann go leor lámha an obair éadrom.
The participation of the Tidy Towns in the Community Council monthly meetings and the St. Patrick's Parade are an essential part of getting your message out to the wider community - your submission included a great photograph of some fearsome Tidy Towns warriors, hope you all had a great day.
You have also mentioned your Maynooth Five Year Plan for 2024-2028 and your annotated Town Map.
Your engagement with the competition since 1976 has resulted in a very apparent sense of community spirit and pride. It is incredible that you still have active members who were involved in the very first submission - Tidy Towns must have kept them healthy.

Your presentation of your methods of communication covers all possibilities and is also very well set out. Your participation and use of the high quality Maynooth Newsletter is certainly an effective medium.

Maynooth Tidy Towns enjoys wide support from many other voluntary groups, sports clubs, the university, and very importantly many of the local businesses - without that level of support your town would not be the living attractive town that it is.
A special word of appreciation for the students, teachers and pupils of Presentation Girls N.S. (great display of posters on the school wall), Gaelscoil Ui Fhiaich, Maynooth Educate Together (how did the acorns grow?), St. Mary's Boys School (green flag on display) and Maynooth Post Primary Transition Year. Fair play also to Maynooth GAA Under 8's and Under 14's who also made a major contribution in the planting and in their work.
Without exception all of the entrants 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

Also with particular reference to County Kildare your Large Urban Centre Category G is an especially competitive group and is of a high standard.

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

You have responded to the previous comments regarding weeding of the cobble paving at Courthouse Square and you have taken some action to tackle the issue. Given the prominence of the Square to the town and given the investment in laying the cobbles and other features here it is a pity that the appearance here is not better - perhaps it might be useful to discuss further with the Council. The inclusion of your Entente Florale Europe plaque here is very fitting. The street furniture, particularly the pair of decorative boot-shaped benches including planters were very effective.
Apart from the striking Courthouse Square mentioned above, Maynooth has very striking buildings and public realms spaces, very different in character in a relatively small space. The thumbnail photographs included in your entry proudly set out your extraordinarily rich heritage.
Main Street was generally in good condition with a number of very attractive shop fronts, including for example the Library and The Maynooth Bookshop opposite. The Doctor 365 clinic with yellow bike outside and the neighbouring Bistro 53 also caught the eye. The presence of mature trees and decorative light standards adds to the character of the street, bookended by Elys Wine Store stone building opposite the magnificent entrance to Carton House. Not too many towns have access to such a facility literally in their town. Thank you for your photographs showing your work to the Main Street lime trees carried out this year, well done.
It was also encouraging to see that along with many other towns Maynooth has made provision for outdoor seating and dining facilities on the streets, most notably on Main Street and Courthouse Square. Most of the businesses that were open on the sunny day of adjudication appeared to be busy. While this option presents challenges to every town and needs to be managed, it will encourage increased pedestrian traffic and result in increased footfall for all businesses in the town. Brady's might consider alternative methods of securing their outdoor furniture - the use of the barriers does not help the overall appearance.
It would be much appreciated if the banks and building society buildings could match the contribution of the other local businesses to to the overall appearance of the town.
The Glenroyal Centre was also a centre of activity and again appeared very well maintained and cared for.
The new biodiversity sculpture and planting at the Maynooth Pond provided a great seating area away from the bustle of the town - hopefully the traffic cones flanking the bench seen on the day of adjudication have been removed.
St. Mary's Catholic Church is a fine building adding to your streetscape, well maintained, on the day of adjudication work on installing a water butt was under way.
The area around Maynooth Castle and South Campus Gate and St. Mary's Church of Ireland at Parson's your Medieval Quarter add significantly to the sense of history for Maynooth.
Traffic is obviously an issue for the town but the overall impression is of a lively vibrant town with many options to enjoy.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You highlight the Harbour Field as the main green space for Maynooth and it certainly a major asset - on the day of adjudication the visiting circus was packing up and leaving town. It is a wonderful asset to have with so many activities including the essential playgrounds being used. We look forward to your proposed development of Community Gardens together with Kildare County Council - you might consider making contact with other Tidy Towns committees who have undertaken similar gardens to gain from their experiences. Some of the fencing at the Harbour Field might require some attention.
Lyreen Park is also a great amenity area that looks well.
You have also mentioned the very striking Avenue at Carton House as a maintained area.
In terms of green spaces and potential areas of landscaping Maynooth and it's environs are well served. Many of the extensive college grounds in Maynooth are hidden gems. The gardens to the student accommodation at the Divine Word School of English are a good example of the greening of your town.
Some bee–friendly and pollinator areas were signposted. The use of these spaces as potential wild meadows might be considered, and keep in mind that trees are the most effective cover against ground heating - bare soil is the worst.
Your bulb planting programme is also very worthwhile - well done to your own worker bees.
Thank you for the work in keeping all the green spaces distributed through your town so well maintained and attractive for all.

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.
Thank you for taking our previous adjudicator's comments relating to encouraging some of the businesses to engage with your planting and greening projects for the town - that is much appreciated.
You have highlighted the issues arising from the development of the town both in planning and in actual construction and the challenges that poses for nature and biodiversity.
Your active management of the hedges in the town since 2021 is a brilliant piece of work - you have recognised the threat and taken the appropriate action - well done on this initiative. Hedgerows are the corridors for nature - communities need to take action to stop unnecessary destruction of our habitats.
Your approach to allowing dandelions, nettles and briars allowing them to prosper is very much welcomed - monoculture is the enemy of biodiversity and those dandelions, nettles and briars contribute so much to the ecosystems that we all enjoy.
Your advocacy work in relation to developments is valued, largely built on the reputation you have establish over your 50 years of continued commitment
Your engagement with the Council's Draft Biodiversity Action Plan for 2026-2031 is a very positive step that will direct your future plans and actions. The document specifically identifies Tidy Towns as partners who might actively investigate opportunities to improve community biodiversity actions - the opportunities are there for Maynooth Tidy Towns and their many supporters.
You have specifically mentioned the work of the residents of Beaufield and Moyglare Abbey estates in their promotion of nature of biodiversity - well done to these estates and to the many other Maynooth estates who are also playing their part in caring for our environment.
Your engagement with the Council's and Maynooth University's water quality on your Joan Slade and Lyreen Rivers is especially interesting - your initial findings seem to reflect a nationwide picture of deteriorating water quality, there is little doubt that water quality will remain a critical issue for us all. It will be interesting to receive an update in your next submission.
One of the highlights of this adjudicator's visit was the Sensory Garden to the rear of the Parish Centre at St. Mary's Catholic Church. Opened in 2019 it has developed very nicely over time, a particularly striking avenue of lavender leading to a bench in a quiet corner, fruit appearing on the trees and a tranquil spot. Please make sure that the lavender is cut back before it get's too woody.

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.
While the adjudicator did not get access to the Retrofit House in Meadowbank, the on-line video was reviewed and it looks like an excellent pilot project that will educate and raise awareness of the need for sustainable housing in order to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels.
You have identified the use of water butts and water storage as a key activity in the drive for sustainability and moved forward in a number of locations to hold and recycle water when required in an environmentally friendly way.
In comparison to other European countries Ireland has a low number of active cyclists but based on this 2026 adjudicator's visit on a nice sunny day in June there was evidence of significant cycling activity in Maynooth which is very well served by cycle lane [and bike parking facilities] throughout the town. It is particularly pleasing that students of the schools and the colleges have recognised the efficiency and economic benefits of cycling - it is certainly healthier than sitting in a traffic jam in a car. Research has shown that regular cyclists are happier so it is no surprise that Maynooth appears to be a happy town.
Maynooth is also very well served by different modes of public transport and is a well planned reasonably compact town.
You have outlined many activities and programmes in Maynooth that are helping our environment by reducing waste - the schools participate in the Green Flags programme, well done to Three Pin Electric repair and recycle, Zero Waste for cutting down on clothes and textile waste, the supermarkets for helping Food Cloud, and also for hosting battery and vape drop off and collection points.
Well done to the Tidy Towns and Maynooth University for their joint work in reuse and composting brown bin waste, the one million square metres of meadow in Maynooth College is an amazing resource to have.
Many of the local businesses are pursuing sustainable practices, for example the Glenroyal Hotel have made significant investment in reducing their footprint and still manage to deliver a viable business.
It is also encouraging to see that a number of residents have planted fruit bearing trees - growing your own food is part of the sustainability drive.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Maynooth is a very interesting mix of urban, suburban and rural landscapes and presents a lot of different challenges for any community group trying to control litter and dumping.
Maynooth Tidy Towns Committee and the volunteers together with the employees of Kildare County Council and other stakeholders have delivered a high standard of tidiness and litter control in all of the public areas of Maynooth visited.
You have responded to the adjudicators previous comments regarding bottle banks and recycling centres - thank you for taking action, all areas inspected were in good condition.
The only exception noted to this high standard was some evidence of anti-social behaviour and litter left behind at Coates Lane. Incidentally the Stop sign here is facing away from the road and needs to be re-aligned. The litter has arisen from one of the local fast food franchises - if they are not already doing so, hey might be encouraged to contribute in some way to keeping the town clean.
You have set out a very impressive schedule of cleaning timetables and works areas allocated - well done to all.

Some highlights from your submission for this adjudicator - it is truly fantastic that Maynooth has it's own beach clean, the brilliantly named MUCK canal clean-up, and a brilliant photograph of the Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich yellow army that picked litter at Harbour Field and Royal Canal areas.
Congratulations on your work

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

Maynooth is a mix of an old town, university and ecclesiastical centre, new development and many adjoining housing developments of varying vintage and some new developments underway, including infill developments and gated communities, all traversed by major roads carrying traffic through the area.
The houses in the town are a mix of modern and vernacular two storey houses with businesses in between which makes for an active town day and night. Houses along the main streets presented well and many had been freshly painted giving a brightness to the streetscape. Some had window boxes, planters or hanging baskets which added colour and also benefited the insects giving them food and shelter.
Particularly pleasing is the classic terrace of houses and gardens starting at the Garda headquarters down to the harbour house on Leinster Street.
Notwithstanding the extensive development works currently under way, the residents and communities in the newer estates maintain and keep their homes, gardens and streets to a very high level.
Lyreen Park and Castlepark were typical of the estates visited and most of the homes had very well maintained private and public spaces. The green space were generally planted with trees and pollinator friendly plants. On the other side of the town the Kingsbury and the Greenfield/Maynooth Park homes were equally well cared for.
The work of the various residents associations throughout the town is essential to the general upkeep of the town. It is appreciated that the engaging with the management companies in some developments can be difficult but can be worth pursuing. Investors in properties do not want their properties to become rundown.
You have provided details of the impressive work carried out to the stone wall at Manor Court during the year, hopefully the solitary bees and the bugs will enjoy their new superior accommodation. One third of of Ireland's 98 bee species are threatened with extinction so every effort made is appreciated.

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

Given it's central location, Maynooth has many approach roads of different types and given it's characteristics there is a certain fluidity to where Maynooth starts and ends, there is no clearly defined boundary. In addition the railway is a major gateway into the town and the canal still serves as an approach for the more leisurely traveller. As mentioned previously the provision of cycleways also serves the town. You have also mentioned the development of the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road scheme.
The surface condition of the roads, the road signs and road markings were generally in good shape on the approach roads, and most pavements and footpaths were also in good condition. Some footpaths and verges might benefit from some weeding in a small number of locations. There was evidence of some new footpaths together with tactile paving and dropped kerbs in place laid recently. It was also good to see that the intersections between new bike paths and roads were generally clearly defined.
As with all towns of this size there is a constant need to have some control of traffic speed, with ramps, pedestrian crossings and lights being part of the suite of measures required. No excessive speeding was observed in the town or estates
The input of the Tidy Towns into the Council's planting and grass cutting programme also contributes significantly to the appearance of the approaches to the town.
The 2km approach sign on the R406 is somewhat obscured by the overhanging trees and bushes.
The railway station was in excellent condition, and it was encouraging to see the take up of the bike parking facilities. The canal cycleways were also in very good condition, good surfaces and no litter throughout.
Mullen Bridge on R406 was excellent as was the Bond Bridge on Parson Street, unfortunately there is some graffiti on the sign at Bond Bridge.
Maynooth Tidy Towns have worked very well to make sure that their town presents a very attractive face to all visitors especially closer in to the town where your planting and your murals to the utilities cabinets has been eye-catching and attractive. Well done to all.

Concluding Remarks:

Maynooth Tidy Towns committee and volunteers and supporters have worked very well with the local community to enhance, develop and maintain your town's environment, including both natural and built heritage.

Congratulations on your work in 2026, your many achievements over the years and an extraordinary 50 years participation in the Tidy Towns Competition.

You have much to be proud of and we look forward to seeing you in 2027.

Thank you all who have contributed so much over the last 50 years, you have left a legacy that must be carried on.