Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Newbridge - Droichead Nua**	Ref:	**369**
County:	**Kildare**	Mark:	**400**
Category:	**G**	Date(s):	**06/07/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	65	66
Streetscape & Public Places	80	48	50
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	59	60
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	50	52
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	27	29
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	54	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	43	44
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 was my first visit to Newbridge as the adjudicator for the Tidy Towns Competition for 2026.
You have entered into Category G Large Urban Centre of the competition for towns with a population of between 15,000 and 20,000
The Category G of the Tidy Towns Competition is especially competitive and of a high standard in Kildare.
Your excellent submission for 2026 sets out in great detail the work and involvement that Newbridge Tidy Towns brings to the town. The submission includes a lot of very colourful photographs showing your work during the year, a picture paints a thousand words, your photographs have painted a very favourable picture of Newbridge. You have continued this work for 45 years, which is an incredible record of commitment.
Your committee of 6 elected officers and 12 committee members is necessary for a town the size of Newbridge, and you are fortunate a good cohort of 30 to 40 regular volunteers. These excellent resources allow you to plan and sub-divide the necessary tasks and projects over the seasons and over the year.
You have highlighted that many organisations and numerous committed individuals have contributed to the Newbridge 2026 submission. Reasons of space prevents this adjudication report mentioning each group but the significant support of the primary and secondary schools, the TY students, the many local sporting and cultural groups, the other local volunteer organisations, the Newbridge for All Network, environmental groups, and residents associations and the business community are essential to the success of Newbridge Tidy Towns.

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

Your presentation of your methods of communication covers all possibilities and is also very well set out.
Newbridge Tidy Towns Association are also active members of the Kildare Public Participation Network (PPN) & Kildare Tidy Towns Network, which requires commitment and time but are very effective in ensuring that Newbridge remains up to date with possible opportunities for the town.

As a minor aside, your map references in the text do not always line up with the map link but the general high standard is maintained.
This is an impressive submission by Newbridge in terms of community involvement.

Judging by your succession of gold medal awards previous adjudicators have all been equally impressed.

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

Newbridge is centred on the old Dublin Road, at the Liffey crossing approximately half way between Naas and Kildare, and has been by-passed by the M7 for over 30 years. Newbridge is also served by mainline rail and has a railway station which serves a large commuter community.
The town has a rich industrial legacy carried on today by companies such as Newbridge Silverware (which also attracts tourists to it's visitor centre) and has a number of industrial and distribution estates around the town. There is also a large number of housing estates, with more currently being developed.
The development of the Whitewater Shopping Centre added to the reputation of the town as a retail centre and there are a number of smaller shopping centres as well as main street retail and hospitality operations active in the town.
St. Conleth's GAA Park occupies a prime site in the town, the Newbridge or Nowhere mural on the gable wall of a neighbouring house retains it's freshness.
The town has a number of significant buildings both from by-gone days and more modern developments. The Bank of Ireland at the corner of Charlotte Street is part of the rich Victorian architectural heritage, as is the former Methodist Old Garrison Church which is now the Town Hall, with a unique weather vane. A redundant wooden plaque fixed to the railings could be removed without difficulty.
The streetscape in front of the bright Garda Station was in good condition as was the building. The art-deco Library Building is temporarily closed but again is important to the town. There was a good display of planters on the railings.
The very modern Bord Na Mona headquarters currently under construction will be a major addition to the streetscape.
On the other side of the excellent bridge there is the 1914 red brick national school, and the striking St. Conleth's Catholic Church, with the contemplative garden, and the original convent building and the modern Holy Family Secondary School with the National Schools and the Patrician Secondary School complete with Green Flag sitting across the other side of the Naas Road.
Away from the main street, Newbridge has a lot to offer. George's Street is a lively mix of coffee shops and restaurants complete with outdoor displays leading to the historic Market Square. On Station Road, the Aras Slainte building and the Community College are within walking distance of the town centre. The victorian railway station has been modernised and is in very good condition, The Past Tracks board at the platform provided very interesting reading.
Tidy Towns submission notes that there is some dereliction in the town and has noted that the Council has followed a Compulsory Purchase Order for some properties. The row of derelict houses on Cutlery Road present a stark contrast to the Whitewater Centre.
It was also encouraging to see that along with many other towns Newbridge has made provision for outdoor seating and dining facilities on the streets, in a number of locations, George's Street has already been mentioned, with other locations such as Papryka and Pera offering alternatives, some effort might be made here to use planters so as to reduce the impact of the hard surfaces. 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.
The Whitewater Centre also has some outdoor seating, however the green plastic wall is not to everyone's taste.
The work of Tidy Towns is much in evidence throughout the town at multiple locations, with perennial planting visible throughout the town. Last year's adjudication report suggested that more use should be made of ground planting and possibly reducing the number of containers, if you not already done so that suggestion might be considered.
Thank you for all your brilliant work.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Your current entry accurately identifies the Liffey Linear Park as the jewel in the crown of the town's green space, it has everything that any large town would hope for from a park relatively close to the centre of the town.
Your extraordinary record in achieving a Green Flag for Parks for 9 years in a row is one of many highlights for your town. Well done to the CE workers and to the Council Parks Department
The park has a winning combination of riverside walk, wetlands, trails, uncut wild pollinator-friendly areas and well maintained lawns and paths, with all facilities including seating, playgrounds, coffee shop, bike racks, and car-parking all available so as to encourage use of the facility.
While your submission obviously emphasises the Linear Park and your work in the park, Newbridge does have a number of other green spaces that offer opportunity for development and enhancement.
You might also consider where opportunities arise for further increasing the tree cover in the town in areas other than the Linear Park, for example in Market Square or the green space in front of the Patrician College. The Council Masterplan for Dara Park/LHD Parklands will also be an opportunity to influence the future development of this excellent communal facility.
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.
Newbridge Tidy Towns have firmly embraced the need for biodiversity in their town over many years and you have continued your great work in 2025/2026.

You no longer use pesticides which is very much welcomed. Pesticides cause widespread environmental degradation by polluting waterways through runoff, contaminating soil, and driving biodiversity loss.These toxic chemicals frequently kill vital pollinators, degrade soil fertility and accumulate in the food chain.
With the linear park so readily available to the people of Newbridge, you have great opportunity to work with and enjoy the benefits of nature and biodiversity on your doorstep. Your work this year was centred on planting spring bulbs and your development of the Pocket Forests and the care and maintenance of the native fruit orchards will impact for many years to come. Your Bee Highway is an excellent idea. The very good board setting out the connection between bat species and the Liffey is a good example of how nature is interlinked.
You have also worked on the development of your Urban Meadows at Moorefield Crescent and Moorefield Cross, using reduced mowing and introducing professional seeding with a mix of native wildflower species sourced within County Kildare, which is really keeping it local. Native wildflowers help support thriving pollinator population. The future planting of yellow rattle will also assist the development of the meadows. You have also put up signage explaining what is happening, Hopefully these 2 pilot projects will be the catalyst for a programme of urban meadows throughout Newbridge district, they will become a haven for pollinators, bugs and insects and quickly bird life and thriving ecosystems will become a daily feature of the neighbourhoods.
Given your location and fantastic environment, you might consider engaging with one of the many citizen science programmes that are collecting data so as to inform future policies relating to nature and biodiversity.

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 is a broad category and many community activities come under this heading. Newbridge is taking local environmental actions and is doing more with less.
The management of the linear park as a zero waste park is a great example of how sustainable practices can be put into place, you have outlined a series of actions that absolutely reduce the impact on our environment. This requires planning, foresight and innovation and implementation - excellent work by all concerned.
Your audit and communication of the recycling facilities available in the town for recycling, reusing and generally reducing the need to consume new materials or generate unnecessary waste is another example of sustainable practices becoming the norm, society has to move away from being a throw-a-way society. Newbridge Tidy Towns is fortunate that there appears to be reasonably good facilities in the town for recycling and reusing - well done to those businesses who recognise that the sustainable development goals are for the benefit of all. Special word of mention for those shops who not only raise money for their respective charities but also reduce unnecessary landfill by offering good fashions at affordable prices - thank you.
Active travel and the promotion of walking and cycling are also key to sustainable living. Newbridge has good wide paths and also a some good cycleways. The Safe Routes programme delivers many benefits to students, research has shown that young people who cycle regularly are happier, more confident and more aware of traffic safety than those who get driven to school. The fact that you have a number of schools in close proximity to one another should generate a critical mass of cyclists where cycling is the norm.
The provision for bike parking and bike lockers at Newbridge railway is in good condition, and appears to be adequate.
Newbridge is also well served by local and interconnection bus services with a mix of sheltered and unsheltered stops observed throughout the town.
As you correctly note, the promotion of sustainable living will require changes in behaviour but your role as an advocate for positive change across many areas is very welcome.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Newbridge Tidy Towns Committee and the volunteers and the various Pick A Patch crews working in their own neighbourhoods, together with the Litter Wardens and the employees of Kildare County Council have worked throughout the year so that Newbridge continues to have a high standard of tidiness and litter control in all of the public areas visited.
You have led the local effort for the An Taise nationwide “Spring Clean” including cleaning up the river bank and some of the approach roads.
You have also worked with and supported the local residents associations in their efforts. Your leadership and participation in the Safer Newbridge Project also delivered very positive results for the town in terms of clean-up and presentation, all delivering on the aim of living in a pleasant town.
Congratulations on your work

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

In 2026 Tidy Towns continued their Orchard Parks initiative where packs of 5 fruit trees with stakes and ties and planting and care instructions, were passed on to a number of residents associations and schools. Apart from growing community participation and increasing tree cover, this initiative is excellent on the sustainability front by hopefully growing some of our own fruit and showing that there is a very acceptable alternative to the imports. Given that you have been operating this initiative for 4 years it would be interesting to see how the overall programme has delivered, and how your first plantings have fared.
The residential estates and housing areas visited and seen were of a good standard, with entrances and public spaces maintained in good condition. Most of the homes had very well maintained frontage with colourful gardens, some with flower boxes and hanging baskets.
Many of the estates had been pro-active in planting, well done to the residents of Piercetown. Unfortunately, there was some evidence of weedkillers being used at the entrances to some estates.

Closer to the centre, the well presented line of brick houses with stone features and sash window at McElwain Terrace is another high spot for the town.
Previous adjudication report queried as to whether or not there was a community wide competition between the estates, other towns have used the competitions as a way of establishing relationships with new estates and keeping a good standard throughout.

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

This adjudicator arrived into Newbridge by the R416 from Kilcullen route to the Athgarvan road. It was a very pleasant entry into the town with good clear signage at all junctions. The roundabouts at the R445 exit from the M7 and the business park were all well signed. Your display of planters at all approaches were top class.

All approaches had neatly trimmed grass verges and well maintained hedgerows.

Having a separate path/cycle way running alongside some of the approach roads is also welcome.

The excellent condition of the bridge has already been noted.

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

Concluding Remarks:

Your aim is very well stated in your submission - “Our primary aim is to enhance the appearance of our town in a planned and coordinated way, making the town a more attractive place to live, work and enjoy the many recreational facilities available to the population”.

By the evidence and details of your submission and this adjudicator’s observations on the ground you have continued to definitely achieve your aim in this past year, congratulations and well done to all who have made their contribution.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.