

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Aughagower - Achadh Ghobhair	Ref:	503
County:	Mayo	Mark:	318
Category:	A	Date(s):	17/06/2026

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	50	52
Streetscape & Public Places	80	45	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	45	47
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	25	27
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	17	19
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	56	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34	35
TOTAL MARK	600	304	318

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. Ádh mór. It was a pleasure to visit Aughagower in the capacity as an adjudicator. The last visit was quite a number of years ago while trekking the challenging Tochar Phadraig walk. The village bears evidence of your hard work over the 30 years plus that you have been involved in the Tidy Towns. We are pleased that the competition has been a catalyst for the community to collaborate together to enhance your historic village and instil pride of place. It is amazing that you can garner the support from such a small population to sustain a committee of 12 and support from 50 volunteers including the local school, community and Foroige group. You are well organised with regular meetings and have developed sufficient knowledge and experience to tap into both advisory and funding resources. You also indicate that you work well with support from Mayo Co. Co, Pobal and SMDO. Your communication channels are varied, and we noted that your social media shows a large following and is refreshed frequently and has good visual appeal. Sorry to be missing your well-advertised local produce "Makers Market." It was great to see that you had the opportunity to host the Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney whose paternal grandparents hail from just outside your village. Lovely photographs on your social media. That was great recognition for the village and showcased it well. We can tell from your application and photographs that there was no need for a hurried sprucing up of the village in advance of his arrival as you had a lot of work done already. This was evident from your focused application, illustrative photographs. It was also great to read your long-term ambitions in your 5-year plan. You chose your Community Park as your special project where you have revitalised bedding and refreshed and supplemented your rose bushes. Well done.

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

Aughagower village is steeped in history spanning a number of generations from the middle ages which has left a wonderful built heritage legacy in the village. It must feel privileged to live there in the shadow of the Reek and to host all the links to St. Patrick and Tochar Phadraig too. The village is anchored by the ruins of your medieval church, round tower and associated graveyard adjacent to your holy wells. We reviewed your informative village map and information panel for more details. The panel sits nicely beside your old telephone kiosk and painted bicycle with its own story. All presented well and have added vibrancy courtesy of your summer planters. You have made your own contemporary mark opposite by developing your riverside Community Park, adjacent to another cemetery and in view of a third hillside cemetery on the hill – obviously Aughagower is a desired area to spend eternity ! St Patrick's church sits in the middle of the village and is nicely landscaped, hosts well maintain shrines. We did not have an opportunity to visit the church itself as it was unfortunately closed. The adjacent shop Scott's, which has recently been painted you tell us is a welcome sight which offers a lot of local services. Any chance that

the roof on the stone shed to the rear of Scott's could be restored ? The outbuildings facing onto the car park are a delightful collection of structures, most nicely maintained. Your hand ball alley has been given a nice public address with the addition of the three panelled mural. This was a great idea and a nice contribution by your young community. Other key contributors to your streetscape include your community centre, with the collection of cars outside this might also allow for a remote working hub? It is a wonderful boast that you just have only one remaining derelict house in the village and with the current momentum for restoration of old houses this might like the other two be primed for restoration by next year You have to be commended on your street lighting fixtures they are of a nice design, well maintained and very clean, well done. You planting and general maintenance of the public areas add greatly to the character of the streetscape and is a delight for anyone trekking through on the Tochar Phadraig.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

It was a pleasure to wander through your Community Park, and it was full of bird song on the day of our visit . All your park furniture here is well maintained and you tell us you have refreshed your rose beds. It might be good to add some more native pollinator species in the park to complement existing landscaping. We see your recently planted oak tree and read on your Facebook page that it was planted by the Canadian prime minister on his visit. In time you might have an opportunity to replace some of the non-native trees in the park with native species. You have secured a grant to upgrade your paths well done. Your Fairgreen was buzzing with life, the Famine Memorial is a nicely planted tribute to your forebears. The extensive raised beds along the wall from the community centre towards the village was bursting with well-tended shrubs flowers The village trees added to by your basket planting, planters and beautiful flower beds were distributed well throughout the village, you should be proud of your work in this regard. You have a lovely playground, and it is located advantageously opposite the preschool. Here we thought there might be another opportunity to add a wildflower garden perhaps on the boundary of the overall area. This might come in your next phase of development of this area which is planned to be a recreational park. Your grotto reflects diligent care and lovely to see that it hosts spring flowers as we see in your photographs.

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

The village which has a rural setting is blessed with a rich biodiversity supported by trees, hedging, wildflowers, grasses, stone walls and the Aille River. These are added to by your conscientious pollinator friendly planting. Good that you are keeping a watchful eye for the visitors to your nest boxes and bug hotel. Note the new guidelines on feeding as issued by Bird Watch Ireland. Thank Charlie for using his great photographic skills to record nature in the village. As advised under H&S I did not visit your nature walk, it is unfortunate that it is out of bounds pending repair from flood damage in the area. Hopefully, it will be resolved soon, and your community can enjoy the benefits it provides again. Do you collaborate on any specific nature program with nearby local schools? We note your new status in association with the UNESCO Geo Park; we see also that you are part of the Dark Sky Park. We see from your application that a village lighting audit was completed also with suggestions on reducing light pollution. Have you pursued any changes to lighting design in view of this yet? Reducing light pollution can be advantageous to natural ecosystems particularly nocturnal animals and migratory bird. Wonderful to see your spectacular photos of the Aurora Borealis framing the village. We noticed a goat farm close to the village, it would be interesting to hear more about this next year.

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

Firstly, as we checked, congratulations on being selected for a grant of almost E12,000 under the Climate Action Fund. You have great projects here that and you will be able to advance with this funding. We note that you have ambitions for a polytunnel, orchard planting, rainwater harvesting tanks and solar panels for the community centre. All great sustainable projects and hopefully some will be realised by next year. You are already benefiting from solar power in your hand ball alley you tell us. Hopefully when you get your energy audits done for the community centre and the church you will be on the way to plan for better conservation of energy in these buildings. You are to be commended for initiating the re-turn scheme in your village which has recycling benefits and financial ones for your community. We also noted that you have a large community bottle and clothes recycling hub. It is great as you tell us that you are composting your leaves. Do you intend to extend this to grass clippings/hedge trimming? You indicate that your annual tea party includes for home made goods, offsetting food miles and that you practice avoiding food waste from the residue by redistributing leftovers for other community events. Have you any initiatives for active travel? A cycle stand in the car park might be a beginning. Also, it might be good to raise sustainability awareness through your Facebook page with maybe post sustainable suggestions each week.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You show great diligence in keeping Aughagower neat and tidy. It was litter free and weed free when we visited. This is credited to your annual spring clean and your weekly litter pick rota. These activities are supported by your local Foroige and schoolchildren as your photographs tell showing lots of smiling faces in action. These are great learning activities to embed respect for the public environment in young people. The re-cycle bank with your gentle encouraging sign to avoid littering, was free of any external dumping and in good order. Public signs were clean and lighting standards well maintained. You might touch up the lettering on the stone sign at St Patricks Vat. The grotto, the pump and the telephone box area were all very tidy. It is clear that all public buildings and their curtilages are being well maintained and no trace of litter was to be found – notwithstanding that this was shortly after the Canadian PM's visit which attracted lots of visitors to the village. Overall, the village area gave a strong impression of being cared for, even when out of the public eye. Applaud to all involved.

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

As you have conveyed your vacant/derelict properties have reduced to just one in the last year. It will be a welcome addition to have the other two occupied soon. In general, there is exceptionally good upkeep of the houses in the village which are typically of a rural settlement in type single and dormer in style and well maintained and landscaped. The only housing development Pilgrims Way is a nicely designed scheme and assimilates well into the village. The estate is blessed by a very generous open space area lovely, mature, good tree line and you tell us MCC staff maintains it. Well done to them. It was notable that that the old outbuildings, sheds and most gates were freshly painted, adding to the heritage distinctiveness of the village.

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

The meandering narrow approaches to the village are lined with stone walling, grass margins, trees and hedging which contribute to the unique historic character of the village. We noted your granite signs which you tell us have had their lettering repainting recently, lovely to see them nestled in floral planting. We do agree with your point that a better wayfinding signage scheme might benefit the village historic trail. Try again applying for such a grant, tell them we support your in this. Although we did still find your two sign boards – for the village and Tochar Padraig helpful. Some fingerpost commercial signage we saw should be removed to reduce clutter, it is a visual distraction. We see that on the advice of last year's adjudicator you have removed ivy from the stone walling. Well done this must have been a laborious task. It is important to leave ivy growing elsewhere in the interests of birds and insects including butterfly life cycle needs. You indicate that you are on a haul route of a working quarry and have HGV's travelling through the village often. For safety reasons better traffic calming is needed you tell us and we feel more speed reduction signage which would also benefit the atmosphere in the village. This is a reasonable request to make to Mayo Co. Co, keep up the lobbying. You indicate that a section of road has been resurfaced. We noted this and the new gravel installed around some of the monuments and features in the village. Similar to last year's adjudicator comments we do see enormous potential for the car park area. In reality it can only be full on occasions. It might be good to investigate the re-design of this space with Mayo Co. Co. in view of your historic significance and the value it could add to streetscape. Also, is it was possible to get the fascia at Keane's pub repainted with name titling. We appreciate it is closed but it would at least be a link with historical services and improve visual amenity. Also, a front boundary wall /fence with hedging would provide better enclosure at the community centre car park, this would enhance the streetscape greatly. Loved your planters, painted pump, bicycle area that gave focus to your street intersections.

Concluding Remarks:

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