

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Carracastle - Ceathrú an Chaisil	Ref:	2185
County:	Mayo	Mark:	289
Category:	B	Date(s):	15/07/2026

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	37	38
Streetscape & Public Places	80	39	41
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	36	38
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	25	26
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	22	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	55	57
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	32	33
TOTAL MARK	600	278	289

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. Thank you for sustaining your interest in the Tidy Towns competition since 2015. It is heartening to hear that your involvement has contributed to increasing community pride and spirit. You also indicate that with more participation you have expanded on new ideas to improve the village environment. You have kept a steady committee of 6 with 12 regular volunteers. You have regular litter picks and also participate in the annual An Taisce Clean up in Spring. You tell us that you can have three generations of one family helping at times, great social inclusion and helps generate nice memories. You indicate that you have support and collaboration from a range of state and local bodies, local business, school and sporting communities. Communication is important and you use a number of print media options and also use the Community Council Facebook page for rallying the litter pickers. It could be used for other aspect of the Tidy Towns too especially tips on biodiversity/sustainability and to upload photographs of your work and give yourself an applaud. Well done on your previous successes keep up the good work.

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

Carracastle reflects the pattern of a typical crossroads village which has a dispersed pattern anchored by the church. Nearby community buildings include your graveyard, presbytery, shop/pub and community centre. Further along the L4504 you have other key community facilities which include the co-located school, pre-school, GAA grounds and hurling wall. It was collection time at Castle Kidz when we visited, and the area was lively with sound. The childcare building is nicely enclosed with low walling and recessed car parking. The adjacent NS looked well, especially with the white coat of paint and blue plinth and capping, are these local team colours? The boundary tree line looked well too. We liked the cautionary words for vehicle drivers to leave enough room for the children's safe movements. It is a benefit to all to have the GAA facilities including the hurling wall nearby. Go Caiseal Gaels with the latest wins, is who knows may be hurling is catching up with Mayo GAA football achievements. You identified the re-painting internally and externally of the community centre as your special project. It certainly was looking smart and refreshed. We liked the symbols on the elevation reflecting uses and the people silhouettes conveying inclusiveness. Davey's pub/shop just adjacent should be rightfully proud of their attractive presentation. Generous floral displays in every window of this two-storey building, nice clean paintwork, simple fascia and controlled signage. A purchase in the shop section revealed an original traditional internal layout, as it was a sunny day it was nice to stop and use their welcome outdoor seating. The church we see is an attractive 19C. building and conveniently located opposite the undulating well maintained graveyard. The boundary stone walling giving it nice enclosure. At the periphery of the village, you tell us of the small local enterprises including the Farm Stays, the

Nine Irons Crafter and also local artisan cheesemakers Dozio. We have chance to savour the cheese on a number of occasions, and it was delicious. Like all small villages you are challenged with dereliction and vacancy. We note your efforts to camouflage some of these buildings including the two-storey structure adjacent to Davey's and the single storey structures on the other side of the community centre. Simply painting these structures does improve the village visual environment greatly well done, the addition of a few window boxes on the two storeys would further animate the village. Well done on displaying the Eircode clearly near the Defib sign at the community centre— it is particularly useful for the emergency services who have centralised control offices and are unfamiliar with village names /townlands.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You commend your Foroige group for planting daffodils and indeed having an occasion to visit the village in Spring this year outside of the role of adjudicator, their impact was noted and welcomed. Photos should be included in your application next year. You have a nice, planted bed adjacent to the community centre and we see these are complemented with a series of white pots with the Scout's artwork, lovely gesture to show community contribution from all age groups. Davey's pub particularly impactful contribution to landscaping has been already noted and it certainly does give great animation and focus in the village. In addition, the decorative turf basket, bicycle, churn, many planters and for the specific season Mayo GAA Team supports, all reflected pride of place. We noted the coordinated plant pots at the church too. If you could locate some more areas for ground bedding with perennials to replace the pot planters on the street it would save you on time, money and watering.

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

Carracastle being predominately located in a rural area has a lovely natural setting blessed with trees hedging, grasses wildflowers and stone wall habitats. You are contributing to enhancing biodiversity you tell us by maintaining a modified cutting regime for road verges and also that you continue to operate a No Mow May. You should celebrate this great natural environment by using it as a guide to your future landscaping. There are plenty of opportunities along your verges to add some bedding with pollinator friendly planting which can be added to by colourful annuals. We appreciate the daffodil planting, just remember that these species do not attract pollinators although they do add greatly to the visual amenity. You could encourage Foroige to plant other additional spring species such as crocuses or grape hyacinths which add colour and provide nectar. You have changed your flower baskets to support perennials and adhere to hedge cutting regulations to avoid disturbance during the nesting season, well done. You tell us that your N.S. has achieved 8 Green Flags to date. Commend them on their hard work. You tell us that you continue to encourage nature awareness by informing the school about planting initiatives, have they acted on these promotions? The school has a nice line of trees along the boundary and there appears to be a few locations where a wildflower garden could be accommodated without interfering with play opportunities. You tell us they host a mini-beast hotel and a willow dome to promote biodiversity also. Good also that you relay information on the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan for Faith Communities to your graveyard committee, hopefully they see the benefits of acting on the guidelines. Although the graveyard was neat and tidy it was not tightly mowed, which is good regime for wildflowers and biodiversity in general. The boundaries here include hedging, trees and stone walls all supporting habitats also.

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

Sustainability is a category where we focus on trying to minimise our use of all resources within the community so that we can reduce our environmental impact. Your school seems especially aware of specific areas that it relates to such as waste recycling, water conservation, reducing energy use, encouraging active transport, food production and 'food miles'. You tell us they have four raised beds, and they grow flowers, herbs and vegetables. In addition, they have a mini orchard. Great to hear that they do not use any chemicals and make compost also. You also tell us about your local beekeeper who produces honey and as previously mentioned your artisan cheesemaker – great to have these on sale in Davey's too. We see you have a glass and clothes recycling hub near the school. Congratulations to the Scouts on their work making bug hotels and planters – we assume this was from recycled materials. Does your GAA facility have a water refill station, what contribution have they made to introduce more sustainable practices? Your community centre seems busy all year round – you tell us of all your calendar events, please let us know if you practice sustainable event management this can include for no single use plastics, reduced food waste, decorations from re-cycled materials etc. Great that you provide a location for crafters at the community centre, your photographs are telling of the success of such markets. You have in recent years carried out roof repairs at the community centre which included improved insulation and it now makes the building more energy efficient. Have you considered applying for a grant for PV solar panels? With regard to transport your school encourages walk to school and you tell of encouragement for carpooling for secondary school runs. It is indeed lamentable that your local Bus Éireann service is in jeopardy, keep up the lobbying and hopefully a good service will be retained and a better waiting area provided similar to services being accommodated in many other Mayo rural villages. Not only would this be of social and community benefit but also support our national goals to reduce carbon emissions by reducing the need for car journeys.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You have continued to participate in the An Taisce Spring Clean. This brings out great village support you tell us including your school children and families. Are the numbers of bags collected annually diminishing following your participation in the TT competition and your cautionary anti-litter signs in the village? It would be great rewarding progress for your committee if so. You tell that also do follow up litter patrols, when necessary, You tell us also that you have an observant resident who monitors your re-cycling hub. Well done for the vigilance as the clothes recycling bins in particular do cause problems everywhere but thankfully yours was spotless on the day of the visit.

Weeding is also carried out by your volunteers. Overall, you and your volunteers are doing a fantastic job, the village was litter free, a little bit of weeds along the main street but they hardly detracting from the streetscape.

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

The pattern of housing is typical of rural villages – low density and a dispersed layout. The house design is mainly single /dormer housing on individual sites bounded by low walling, with some more traditional styled farmhouses. Upkeep is generally high with painting maintained and gardens nicely landscaped. The enclave at St. James Drive is a lovely development with nice paving and mature trees and bed planting. Similar to last year's adjudicator we too lament that the presbytery remains vacant and will obviously deteriorate in time if not occupied. Hopefully, the generous vacant homes grant will be a spur to occupancy soon. We would reiterate the advice to encourage a degree of maintenance to this protected structure which has great architectural merit and a defining contribution and presence on the streetscape. Why not apply for a community heritage grant for simple upkeep if it remains vacant much longer – MCC would be good to advise. We have referred to the other vacant/derelict premises in the core village area; they too will need a little bit of ongoing maintenance over time and as suggested some window boxes would enliven them also. We liked your townland names in stone – a good local history lesson.

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

The approach roads have a nice rural character with low hedging, stonewalling and some trees. You have referenced the spring flowers planted here, and we commend you for this investment in giving a welcoming to all to the village. As suggested previously in the report why not extend this with more pollinator friendly spring bulbs and possibly some summer ground planting too near the signs. We noted that the vegetation near the signs was obscuring the place name, so this requires more rigorous trimming in these areas. With the national road realignments, the village street has little traffic except we assume for school and church schedules. This at least makes it relatively safe for pedestrian movements however we would have expected a full standard footpath to the school and other community facilities here – are there plans to upgrade this road? Might be an idea too to install a seat near the bus stop sign if you manage to retain the service.

Concluding Remarks:

Thanks for the opportunity to visit your village and we are delighted with the efforts you and your volunteers are making to enhance the village. We appreciated your clear submission which included good supporting illustrations and map.