

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Kilkeeran - Cill Chiaráin** Ref: **562**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **361**
Category: **A** Date(s): **13/06/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	46	47
Streetscape & Public Places	80	45	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	49	50
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	42	44
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	25	27
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	69	70
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	38	39
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	36	37
TOTAL MARK	600	350	361

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. It was a great pleasure to visit your area for the first time and to view your stunning location on the western shores of Lough Carra. Thank you for your 36 years of long dedication to the Tidy Town competition and for expressing so well the community and environmental benefits that has accrued to your area as a result of participation. It is absolutely amazing to read that for a small population of 60 you can sustain a committee of 6 and can rely on the support of 23 other volunteers and their extended household members. Great to see these in your photographs. You also tell us that you have a lot of support from a range of local community groups, state bodies, local representatives and local business. You are also proud that you and your agricultural community have been involved in the Carra EU LIFE program and the ACRES scheme which is focusing on restoring the conservation status of Lough Carra and through agricultural practices redressing our biodiversity decline. Your photographs give a glimpse of some of the fantastic flora and fauna that can be found in Killeerin and the unique geological characteristic of the lake. It is not surprising that you have chosen your endeavours to enhance biodiversity as the project you are proud of this year. Great to read that the children of the area are well integrated in involvement in your projects

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

Kilkeeran as you tell us has a long history of settlement and looking at the map record of archaeology in the area on the RMR we can see the legacy of ancient structures including your mention of the stone age causeway and crannog, the latter which was clearly visible. The village reflects a good example of a farming settlement pattern known as a Clachan. The housing is mainly one/ dormer type buildings. Many beautifully restored and extended and good to see a new one under construction adding to your village population. The informal grouping exhibiting little sense of plan. It is serviced by narrow roads, beautiful stone wall boundaries flanked by trees and hedging all which adds to the significance of the charm of the area. There is also a strong legacy of well-maintained stone outbuilding. Well done to your community. You have worked well to clear and restore the impacts of Storm Eowyn this is reflective of your pride in and excellent care of the village. Your harbour found after weaving through your narrow access roads is well enclosed by a particularly attractive collection of housing, having a private access means you aren't disrupted by much vehicular traffic. It was with interest we visited the well-kept Ballyovley graveyard and church with its spectacular setting and nice boundary walls and gates. You have documented the plots on your panel well, great for local history and genealogy. It would have been good to read about the history of the church and site also. The Heritage Officer in Mayo Co. Co. might help secure this information and appropriate signage. The associated parking area has been sensitively developed by Mayo Co Co with nice stone walling and designed to be discreetly set back from the road. Your other community focus in the area is your little park which proudly tells us on

your well-maintained plaque of the evolution of your resident's association and your historic wins including those in the Tidy Towns competition— further good luck in the future.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

It is commendable that you have managed to retain your little pocket park in your village. It nestles well into the less managed surrounding area adding to habitat diversity. Do you use it for any community events? It is very attractive and might be a good area to highlight you and your agricultural community's involvement in helping to restore conservation status on the lake through the LIFE and ACRES project also. Maybe a new picnic bench might allow for dwell time. The transition strip alongside the lakeshore, riparian zone gives a good buffer to the landward side and an additional area to experience nature for both your residents and visitors. The graveyard also has amenity value it was well maintained and allows for easy access within the space and the historic church. Perhaps as suggested by last year's adjudicator the planters at the entrance could be replaced, maybe by ground planting which might be easier maintain, although the fuchsia and heather were blooming nicely. In general, the landscaping in the village was of a high standard within the curtilage of houses, scattered colourful beds along the access roads all within a well-respected natural environment.

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

Congratulations in achieving UNESCO Geopark status for the swathe of interesting geology in the greater area. No doubt the unique provenance of your marl lake contributed to this classification. We also read on local news this year the mayfly has been spotted on Lough Carra for the first time in 20 years. This is a credit to both the local farmers and local communities around Lough Carra like yourselves who are endeavouring to redress the depreciation in lake water quality and endeavouring to improve conservation status through the LIFE and ACRES project. You tell us that you get advice from the Biodiversity Data Centre on management of nature and landscaping practices. This was apparent on our visit where we can see that your focus is on native planting and pollinators and practices that encourage native plant species and local wildlife. This accords well with the LIFE project on Lough Carra and gives continuity to wildlife corridors. It is understandable that you respect your natural environment which is a high-quality natural setting with well-developed hedgerows, grasslands, backdropped by mature trees and a unique lake all populated by lots of native flora, fauna and aquatic life. Your photographs were very telling. You selected your biodiversity approach as your special project. The range of flora in the area and in your planting, schemes included ox eyed daisies, foxglove, buttercups and of course the devil's-bit scabious, which is the sole food source for the Marsh Fritillary butterfly larvae. You certainly live in a very privileged natural environment and from your actions appreciate and support the ecosystem.

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

You appear to have well embedded the principles of sustainability within your community. Good to hear that you are reducing your carbon footprint by transitioning to PV solar energy use and by opting for public transport and car sharing rides. Every small action is a victory. You indicated that some residents grow vegetables and take honey from their beehive but are also generous enough to share excess produce with neighbours. That is both kind and contributors well to reducing food miles. Although not visible on the visit you have indicated that residents' conscious of water conservation uses water butts for watering, well done. Foraging for berries and apples too is a local sustainable practice which is great as a communal and learning event. Hopefully, your local entrepreneur Elaine from Hawthorn Skincare can secure at least some of her ingredients in the area for her products too. Your enthusiasm encouraged your residents to get involved with Grow it Forward and your photographs demonstrate the benefits of this participatory process with such a lovely range of vegetables. Great to read that this initiative includes for sharing of the growing experience through seed exchange within your community Happy dining!

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

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

We referenced earlier that you represent a classic clachan pattern of village settlement. The scale, layout and design of new dwellings tempered to assimilate with this style. The irregular layout has resulted in a magical experience, but much is attributed to the standard of care your residents maintain in their housing and associated sites. Without exception all looked so well. The striking aspect was how well the older stock has been adapted to modern living and the conservation approach adopted to retaining many of the vernacular stone sheds/out housing. Landscaping has been approached well, abundant in scale resulting in beautiful hedging, shrub growth and riotous colour from well-chosen floral planting. This was most spectacular in the collection of houses near the harbour. The traditional distinctive stone walling gives a strong identity to the village along with street furniture such as farm gates

and domestic gates along with the conserved boreen type streets with central and verge grass margins.

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

Ambling along the southern approach with a degree of anxiety if the need to reverse was required it was a nice welcome to reach your corner entry point to the village. Notwithstanding this the boreen style of the roadway from both approaches gives great character to the village, added to by the grassed maintained centre line. We noted repairs to the surface hopefully these will sustain the surface for a good while. The heritage information sign you tell us is to be replaced soon, it will be interesting what added information it will have next time. Your planting bed with the welcome sign had nice roses and ox eyed daisies. However, the latter was screening your sign. It might be an idea to move the sign to the front of the bed and prune some of the shrubbery. We note you have repaired the dry-stone wall at this location, possibly damaged by the storm. Your village green gives good definition and interest along the road to the village. The network of roads is nicely supported by roadside planting especially the raised bed at the junction. The stone boundary walls and conserved historic outbuildings contribute greatly to the ambience of the streetscape. The approach from the north side is defined by the graveyard and the historic church ruin and also by the expansive attractive view of Lough Carra. All these attributes contribute to atmosphere of the area and the unique attractive character of the village.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to visit your village and to hear about all the efforts being made to improve the ecology and increase the biodiversity of the area. Just a note regarding the map. Perhaps to avoid number confusion you could either keep the historical map separate from the itemised actions or alternatively give a different colour coded legend for both. Regardless however we managed to see everything and learn lots about your beautiful village.