

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Newport - Baile Uí Fhiacháin	Ref:	567
County:	Mayo	Mark:	356
Category:	B	Date(s):	24/06/2026

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	51	52
Streetscape & Public Places	80	50	52
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	44	46
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	40	42
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	24	26
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	61	63
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	31	32
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	42	43
TOTAL MARK	600	343	356

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 your focused application, supported by a clearly annotated map, informative photographs and web links. We congratulate you also on your ambitious 3-year plan starting 26/27. It might be good to have the projects included in a matrix type list aligned with expected year of implementation for easy of planning. Following the advice from last year's adjudicator you have elaborated on the stakeholders that you collaborate with. This is an impressive list which demonstrates good cross community vision and local confidence in supporting your work. Well done. You encourage active participation from your local school and Foroige group. You use a number of ways to communicate and organise your plans through meetings, scheduled tasks and social media. It is good to hear how you use celebratory events such as St Patricks Day parade to promote awareness of your work, perhaps you could also issue an annual newsletter to highlight all your voluntary work and get the deserved credit! It is commendable that you function with such a small core committee but also welcome that you are actively seeking more members and volunteer participation, including reaching out to your existing Ukrainian community. The special project you identified for 2026 is the refurbishment work you carried out at Princess Grace Park, supported financially by your local Credit Union. A great project that will benefit your community, your visitors and with the telescopic viewing platform complement your unique status as the gateway town to the prestigious Mayo International Dark Sky Park.

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

Newport has a lovely setting anchored by the Black Oak River with vistas out over Clew Bay. The bridge and old railway viaduct tell of an interesting history as does your St Patrick's Church dominating the skyline. The woodlands adjoining Newport House is a subject of pride for yourselves as it accommodates your Princes Grace Park. You tell us of your new project on the main street at Cusack Corner where construction works are ongoing. This is a regeneration project which has eliminated unsightly derelict properties and will accommodate a tourism and enterprise hub, a public realm space and new footpath, great news. It will further enhance this street where there are a number of lovely buildings including Kelly's, Hotel Newport, Patricia's, Centra and Brannen's to mention but a few. Paintwork and colour have been used to great effect and discipline in signage on all streets and this has helped retain the vernacular character. Down the hill towards Borrischoole there are stretches of derelict buildings, perhaps some temporary boundary treatment of the open site here such as installing trees in large planters and painting of derelict building elevations would improve the visual amenity here. You have done good work on other empty buildings with your insertion of history boards. Your significant stone buildings on Georges Street contributes greatly to the street character, hopefully you will be able to get a new use in the unit currently housing the tourist office

when it moves to the new building under construction. We see your historic plaque to Martin Carey and as you tell us you have other similar historic informative plaques planned – limit these to the most important as too many will create clutter. Hard to miss your lovely church and be dazzled by the Harry Clarke windows and the informative story boards telling of the artist life and also highlighting the current conservation works on the steeple. The convent building to the rear is also a beautiful local building. On the south side of the bridge is another lower scaled terrace of housing. You bring attention to the renovation of the old post office changed to residential use – a good example for other empty properties. The vibrantly painted Grainne Uaile pub gives a nice contrast to the stone-faced buildings. Joyce's Garage with its nice simple painted signage would benefit from a refresh. Loved the paintwork and fascia lettering on the old fire station, Commend the owner of Tracks and Treasures for cute train planters. Good conservation of old railway buildings nearby too. You tell us of your delightful playground which was full of life. We loved the great mural storyboard, and it is so nicely located in public view near the bridge and viaduct park. The Borrishoole area of the town accommodates a number of your key community facilities including the school, GAA grounds and the large new community centre. You hoped to encourage the GAA to paint their structures which would improve the address to the road, keep asking. We also think there is great potential to develop an urban forest on the grounds of the new community centre. The site is quite extensive but looks very rough now and would benefit from a proper landscape plan. There are lots of organisations that donate saplings to Tidy Town community groups for free, this might be an idea for this site, and it would be a great community activity as well as having environmental and visual benefit. We admired many of your other street features – Grace statues, murals, historic heritage information in vacant shop windows all tributes to your good work and pride of place.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There was a good variety of high-quality green spaces for us to visit in Newport. You draw our attention in particular to Princess Grace Park where you carried out great work last year. This included replacing seating, improving the walkways and installing a plinth for stargazers. Like most wooded parks you also had to deal with the repercussions of Storm Eowyn, well done. We enjoyed the lovely views and information on trees and the sweet fairy doors. It might be good to have a map showing the trails, access points and walk difficulty rating as well as some directional sign for visitors. In time too it would be good to replace the concrete blocks at the Quay Road entrance with more aesthetically designed bollards but well done for painting them as an interim measure. On Meddlcott Street you have a lovely linear park with interesting panels to read on your history, heritage and loop walks. We admired your quirky elements such as your painted bikes and head in the hole photo opp. Your perennial pollinator friendly beds and trees here look wonderful as does the others throughout the town. You tell us you operate a low mow regime, nature thanks you for that. Your nice tall box planters on the main street were bursting with colour adjacent to well used seating. The Biodiversity Garden was full of buzzing butterflies and insects. We also saw the adjacent new Moon Garden – great idea to support your Dark Skies designation with both this and your new low lighting at the church and proposals for the similarly suitable viaduct lighting. Good to hear that you are adopting a low mow regime in your parks. Your other new adventure is your Sensory Garden which took a while to find but was a delight on arrival. We sampled some of your fruits and listened to some sounds and rested in your gazebo. Might be good to put up a directional sign. Your GAP was full of activity and good to see tree protection here. The welcome bank of roses on the Castlebar Road is a visual delight. We hope that you can in time reactivate your allotments and polytunnel but from viewing all your landscaping you are doing a good job in the meanwhile propagating plants in your homes. The Horticultural Hub will be a welcome project when you get it up and running post current construction works.

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

You are really blessed to have such a remarkably diverse and rich natural environment in Newport. The river, proximity to Clew Bay, the woodlands and general proximity to a rural environment contributes to a wide range of habitats. What is super is that you have embraced this and are making a great contribution to encourage biodiversity. Most importantly you are raising awareness of the people living in the vicinity and also of visitors to that area. Already you have embraced the protection of swifts which are rapidly in decline. You tell us you are incorporating swift boxes into your new construction on Main Street, that the schools support boxes, that your church hosts nesting and that your community have attended a recent swift conference. You intend broadening the information signage on birds in general – great plans. You also relay that you are a participant in Mayo Dark Skies Park and have reduced artificial lighting. Your community also attended bat walks and talks and became more knowledgeable as to the best location on the bridge for your bat boxes. It is most important for the community to be encouraged to feel ownership of the natural assets in the village and these activities help this to happen. In addition, you tell us that you engage on a citizen science project that requires installing and recording data from Light Quality Meters for your Light Management Plan and to retain Dark Sky gold tier status. Great value too in having a free shuttle bus to view the Dark Sky Park and also for providing a facility for your local stargazers in Princess Grace Park. Wonderful to read that your 6th class pupils learn of the importance of litter control at beaches through participating in Clean Coast at Mulraney. Leaving dead log and leaf litter is great for insects and small mammals, well done for these initiatives. Your Biodiversity Garden with the addition of the new Moon Garden as mentioned previously contributes to both pollination, nature and because of its location near the playground a learning tool also. Keep us updated on the progress of all the existing projects in your next entry and hopefully the swifts will come to visit the boxes and bricks soon.

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

You have listed a range of initiatives that fall into this category. We are impressed by your use of organic approaches to fertiliser in gardening and weed control. Is there much uptake of the coffee grinds – perhaps you use them yourselves also? Active and sustainable travel is well provided for with your Greenway, shuttle bus to Dark

Sky locations, WonW ConW and your EV chargers in the car park. Have any of the community buildings- GAA, Community Centre, NS School been encouraged to avail of grants for solar PV panels or other energy saving actions? Do they have water re-fill stations or collect for the re-turn scheme? We note the calculation of the carbon emission reduction as a result of your church changing its lighting scheme. That is telling and a great example to others to consider similar energy saving actions. You tell us lighting at the GAP and a change to municipal lighting is contributing to energy saving also. Is there a requirement for new/renovated buildings to have adaptive lighting too under your SEC plan? Do you promote sustainable ideas / actions through your social media to your community – a great way of educating the public to new ways of thinking and acting. One a week has worked for other TT committees

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Fantastic work keeping Newport practically litter free and this is with all the challenges you have regarding general waste disposal also. We wandered around all the town and even the hidden areas were free from litter. Only spot needing attention was a bit of weed control on the statue at Mellicott Street. Congratulations to all the volunteers who came out for your Spring and Coast clean ups. Fantastic that you can rally some volunteers each week also and that your school and Foroige participate and learn the value of anti-litter measures too. We are delighted that you took the advice of last year's adjudicator regarding dog fouling – you didn't actually tell us if it is working – certainly on the day of the visit it seemed to be as no dog fouling was observed. Why not take over a shopfront for the Tidy Towns and showcase your work in photographs like you have on your Facebook page– definitely give the message that you are very generous volunteers and also highlight all your endeavours. We can empathise with the challenges of dereliction and commend you on inserting heritage information. Painting of the peripheral derelict buildings and associated walling would work wonders too. Trim back vegetation in the Biodiversity Park and elsewhere where signage is obscured. The community centre site and the poor entrance point do need some attention as both look unkempt.

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

The older streets in Newport support a number of well-maintained properties, many embellishing the streetscape with lovely floral planters and window boxes. One house on Black Oak Rise (LHS) had a particularly lovely collection of delightful planters and planting. We admired the very smart apartment development off Castlebar Street near the car park which itself is made very attractive by the associated trees and neat grassed areas. The new housing development on Quay Road at Craobh Ban retained a nice legacy of boundary vegetation and includes for a nice stone and railing boundary. It is great that you reach out to support the residential areas. Have they established residents' associations that you could work with and encourage more varied planting to support biodiversity? The detached housing on the periphery of the town in general showed good care and maintenance and nice landscaping.

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

Great to read about all the good work in this category too. Approaching from the Westport Road affords a lovely sweeping view over the town framed by nice stone walling, trees and a great public realm area along the riverside at Mellicott Street. This street affords neat parking, cycle racks, picnic seating, outdoor dining and lots of information on the town. The playground further into the town animates this approach. The Greenway users have the viaduct which gives great views in both directions also provides an opportunity to sit with Princess Grace a while – lots of interest and good visual amenity. The Castlebar Road approach is animated with the children's artwork and the linear rose bedding. The Mulranny approach is somewhat disrupted currently with the major roadworks and will require some after care. You indicate that you have plans for some wildflower bedding. We noted also that the Quay Road (north section) surface is very poor notwithstanding recent construction. Great to have new town signs that identify your prominence in the Dark Skies Project. Comments made regarding the community centre apply to the approach on R317. The main street has interesting lanes off it some have been given life by freshly painted walling, nicely designed gates and name plates.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for a very clear and detailed application form. We loved that you included excellent photographs to highlight your work. We appreciate that you have taken adjudicators points on board. We see you have a very structured long-term plan which is a great future guide and focus for the community. We would like also to convey a great gratitude to all who volunteer too.