

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	Swinford - Béal Átha na Muice	Ref:	361
County:	Mayo	Mark:	346
Category:	C	Date(s):	15/07/2026

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	50	51
Streetscape & Public Places	80	48	50
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	46	48
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	40	42
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	28	30
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	55	56
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	34	35
TOTAL MARK	600	334	346

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 is great to hear that your participation in the competition has extended over 30 years what an achievement. You tell us also that it has benefited the town socially environmentally and economically and gives you an incentive to plan for the future. You have a core committee of 6 but rally your school community and others to help on projects. You appreciate the support and advice you get from various departments in Mayo Co.Co. and also other key state agencies and local businesses too. You link in with your school community especially with the Green Schools program. You are especially proud this year of the progress of your community orchard you planted last year with native Irish apple trees and your plans to install "Bee Lodges" at various locations around the town. We were grateful for your clear application and legible hand drawn map and the photographs corresponding with your work over the last year. Well done.

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

Swinford like many small Mayo towns has a semi planned pattern which is rooted in a main street with a number of connecting streets and lanes. We arrived in your car park beside Pound St. our first major building encountered was your fine courthouse building. It is great when such key institutional buildings can find new uses such as this one for community purposes. It will demand a degree of maintenance though and we did notice weeds in the gutter and an obvious break in piping that may result in water ingress. You have lots of nice shopfronts along the main streets. Mellett's make a great impression complemented by their fascia level flower baskets. We like the cleverly named Lettuce Eat which was very busy. Many more including the bank buildings on Main Street, Carroll Consulting, Horkans, Forkan's, Moore's pub on the corner looked well. Great to see you your notice on the notice board in Moore's nice supermarket. Like many small Irish towns, you do have a share of vacant premises – some like Groarkes retain great architectural features. We commend you where you have attempted to make some of these and empty sites more presentable. Have you a schedule to paint or dress the frontages – good to have such a plan. The recent restorations on Pound Lane look great and hopefully are an inspiring example for others. The old Lyric cinema is an iconic building great to see it painted up so well. You have other great key community buildings such as the RC church and a beautiful cultural centre and library which occupies the former train station. We liked the train mural, and your secondary school presents well. New projects you tell us include the conversion of the courthouse – let us know if you have a structured plan for adaptation of this building. You tell also of improvements to make the streets more accessible – this we assume includes the pedestrian crossings and ditched and blister surfaced path surfaces – all good. You also tell of new dog foul bins, hope these are working. We noticed Pel bins too some towns have wrapped these externally with nice pictures of local landscapes – an idea maybe? Liked to

see your Tidy Town poster in Eurospar with a picture of volunteers.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The Swinford Amenity Park is a great asset for the town and provides a great range of recreational facilities, it was busy on the beautiful day we visited, wise for you to have installed hedging on the boundary this is maturing nicely and provides a good green screen. We didn't get a chance to try out your Golf Club Loop walk but good to expand on your green amenity opportunities – great as a passive recreation space and thanks for photos. We visited Brabazon Woods and your adjacent playground. The area around the playground does need a refresh, evidence of litter, weeds, empty planters and sign frames needing painting. The Butterfly Garden was a pleasure to visit and a lovely fitting memory for bereaved parents and well done to the mothers. The planting certainly included suitable pollinator friendly species, the bedding was weed free, seating in good shape and mural panel very attractive. We ventured into the woods saw the damage you are tackling following the storms last year and the repairs commencing to sections of the path. Great to have this amenity so accessible to the town. We were a bit disappointed with the well area as it really needs a refresh, it had near empty timber planters and weeds were abundant. In contrast it was nice to see the number of planters in the town, lovely baskets on the lamp standards, nice stone planters near the 1950's emigration statue. Some dead trees on the main street need to be replaced. Liked the new bed which was blooming near the old railway bridge. The youth memorial garden was a treat to visit. It really exploits the legacy of the railway site, and the sculpture is so fitting, it was a very mediative space to sit for a while in this space which is surrounded by great landscaping and beautifully adapted railway structures.

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

Swinford is a rural town, and your greater setting is in a rich natural heritage area which is blessed with trees hedging, grasses wildflowers and stone wall habitats. Nature on your doorstep. You tell us you are enriching biodiversity by using pollinator friendly species in you planters and indeed we did notice these at your new ground planting at the bridge, the Memorial Garden and the Butterfly Garden. You tell us also that you help maintain the stream which we ambled by and you indicate it is an important tributary of the Moy and Salmon spawning ground. This is good for both community amenity and the river networks. You have planted hedging on the boundary of the Amenity Park which provides a great habitat for insects, birds and small animals. We have an emerging orchard of native tree species, again introducing more diversity into your local habitats. You are certainly lucky to have A Tus worker who kindly grows your flowers and shrubs from cuttings and seeds gathered from the locality. Your swift project as the surveys indicate records nesting in the old Fever Hospital and the Deanery, we note the details are from 2024 – have surveys been carried out in 2025? A very important aspect of management for biodiversity is to raise the awareness of the people living in the vicinity and also of visitors to that area. Do you encourage community involvement in biodiversity projects /information talks /walks. This is a great way to increase awareness of the benefits of enriching biodiversity and protecting native flora and fauna as your community can adapt a greater ownership and interest with this knowledge. Great that you support 'No Mow May' and that you practice restrictive mowing on your approach road verges. Wonderful too that you have carried out new tree planting near the Procession of the Souls.

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

As you know sustainability relates to how we try to minimise our use of all resources within the community so that we reduce our environmental impact. It relates to a number of areas such as waste recycling, water conservation, reducing energy use, encouraging active transport, food and 'food miles' and even equipment, and reusable items. Some Tidy Towns committees find this category challenging but in reality, you can take many steps to reduce the level of resources used and to become more efficient at using resources, while at the same time reducing waste generation. You are already engaging in some such as recycling glass, clothes, paper as we noticed in the car park area. You indicate that you reuse compost from the summer planters in bedding and that you grow your flowers and shrubs from cuttings and seeds gathered from the locality. Great way to promote the circular economy. You have made planters from re-cycled materials. You also intend to restore the old weighbridge which is in a poor state with building materials donated for the project – you might give us a timeline in the next application. You also furnished us with some details of very nicely restored buildings on Pound Street. Do you harvest rainwater, have a compost for grass cuttings? What are you doing with the fallen trees from the woods – these could be sculpted into nice, interesting shapes or wood chipped for use elsewhere. Do you promote active travel – cycle racks, bike repair stations. Your school and sports club might encourage walking and cycling – tell us next time

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

You told us that you partake in the National Spring Clean-up and your photos show us the hardy team. You indicate also that your new community of African people have enjoyed taking part in your clean up too and that is good overall to be socially inclusive. Great that you give credit to the Tus workers, it must be challenging. It isn't clear if you have regular litter patrols, but you tell us you encourage businesses to take "care of their patch" which can work well too. However, Swinford wasn't litter free on the day of visit. There were a number of blackspots including at the playground, near the railway bridge, walk beside the stream. The bottle banks at the Pond Car Park were unkempt and materials left on the ground. Weed control too appears to be a bit of an issue in places, at the car park near the Courthouse where planter was empty and as already referenced at the playground. Other areas such as the main street and the Cultural Centre/Memorial Garden were well maintained.

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

Great to hear that the residents on many of the housing estates have their own committees and avail of amenity

grants also. We visited a number of areas and were impressed, Park Road housing support lovely landscaped front gardens. Rathdubh has a great open space area with nice, mature trees and well-presented housing. Housing on Davitt Place and the Dublin Road showed good maintenance too. On the periphery there were many fine houses on individual sites with good landscaping and boundary treatment. The MUGA is well equipped and a great asset for young adults. The playground equipment was in good condition.

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

The approach roads reflected the excellent care your RSS and Tus workers carry out to keep these road verges in good shape. We were delighted to see also that they adhere to a good biodiversity approach in keeping the mowing to a trim margin and that No Mow May is an embedded practice which is also adopted you say within your residential estates. Good stuff. We have already commended the restoration work on Pound Lane, it really raises the tone of this area and renders the lane an inviting place to wander. Some street furniture – seating and lamp standards need a bit of a refresh and poor road surfacing in the town should be brought to the attention of the local authority. Keep up the work on the lanes and focus especially on the Brookville Street area where there are many derelict properties you could paint up with the notable exception of the historic Lyric Cinema which is already improved so much with the maintained paintwork.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for affording us an opportunity to visit Swinford. Lots of interesting environmental improvements. Wishing you well with your next series of plans and project up to 2030