

Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre: **The Neale - An Éill** Ref: **796**
County: **Mayo** Mark: **351**
Category: **B** Date(s): **24/06/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	50	51
Streetscape & Public Places	80	44	46
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	52	54
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	19	20
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	20	21
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	71	73
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	39	40
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	44	46
TOTAL MARK	600	339	351

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 Town competition for over 20 years. For a small committee of 4 you can motivate up to 10 volunteers and their families to engage in your activities. Your photographs were welcome and tell a story of good community engagement and great pride in your village. You use your links with the national school to enhance the village and also as a learning exercise in nature. You communicate through the regular channels and use the Neale Heritage Facebook site also. With a following of over 400 you should highlight your work and reach out for more engagement as we see posts aren't frequent – you should upload the photos you sent us to spread your word. Great that you have the support of your local businesses. You tell us of you organised planter flower meitheail and social afterwards. You have referenced your Local Enhancement Plan 2025, which we have read about and sound great. This is to be the basis of your projects going forward. You selected the recent ivy removal from the historic Kilmaine estate boundary wall as your special project. Wonderful that you use projects for engagement with all the community and good luck on your ambitious plans for the village.

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

The Neale is a long linear village clustered around key community facilities which include your impressive RC Church, Mellotte's bar, the adjacent restaurant and your handball alley and park space. The Church and grounds are well maintained and nicely enhanced with mature trees and planters. This and the handball alley are an obvious space to encourage a less manicured approach to grass cutting perhaps a portion set aside for native wildflower could be encouraged. Melotte's is nicely painted and adds animation to the village, great that you have Clover & Stone restaurant now and that it accommodates outdoor seating. Keeping an interesting elevation on Gibbons adds character as does the lovely, thatched dwelling on the northern side of the village. Beyond this you have your O' Malley Park which you manage well. The old post office which is derelict now holds interest owing to the pictorial painting of the elevation and the signage. We notice enforcement is being taken by MCC as a derelict site notice is on the front, hopefully there will be some action will be taken soon. You tell us you intend repaint it again which would be good as it is at a key exposed junction. The Memorial Hall is further north and is kept well with nice titling on the gable. This location also contributes to village heritage with the curious pyramid folly and well-maintained historic graveyard and church ruin. You have great built heritage which you have exposed a glimpse of by removing ivy from the old boundary wall of the historic Kilmaine estate. You tell us this has revealed both historic legacy and stonemasonry craft. It does indeed but this should be carried out under careful instruction, did this cause a section of walling here to collapse as we saw on our visit? Why not contact MCC Heritage officer for guidance on appropriate methodology for removal of ivy from stone buildings.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You work hard at enhancing the village and exploiting your pocket parks. We rested in O'Malley Park with a picnic thanks for the table and bin facilities. You have brightened up this space with window type boxes and red bucket planting. The little forest is a nice touch too. However, the standing stones commemoration begged explanation – this is a limestone area but not enough knowledge to solve the mystery, good to have an information panel. This location would be ideal for some heritage panels also to illuminate the story of the nearby pyramid folly, tell more about the Temple folly too and of course the Gods of the Neale story too. We see from your heritage trail walk/talk you already have a great interest in local history. Please remove the vegetation under the memorial tree here for both aesthetic and healthy tree growth reasons. Your hand ball alley park with the well appreciated pump would lend itself to better usage for the community – more seating and a playground perhaps, we see you have intentions for a plaza area which is good too. Plenty of lovely flower in bedding, bowl planters and pot planters. These are generously located throughout the village, well done on your landscaping and for making it a community event. Also great to hear that these are full of flowers for most of the year. Loved the brightly painted box planting outside the school the children's handiwork you tell us. Congratulations to all of them.

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

You have a rich natural environment being located essentially in a rural area and your village trees, hedging, stone walling contributes to the habitats that support flora and fauna. Although your tightly mowed grass verges, curtilages and open space areas reflect good care there is always room to support wildlife and enrich your local biodiversity. You can do this by setting aside some areas that can be managed for wildlife within your open space areas. As advised previously by adjudicators there is a huge resource of advice available from the national biodiversity data centre. Mayo Co.Co has a Biodiversity Officer too who can give you specific advice for your area and community. You have shown great energy in flowerbed and pot planting you could enhance your biodiversity by simply adding more pollinators species – a great learning for your young community too. It would tie in nicely with the Green School Program which we are sure they are involved in. You tell us that you are reducing your use of chemical herbicide – you know there are organic alternatives too. Wonderful that you use sheep wool to suppress weeds and to fertilize your trees. We saw your nice discreet composting. You tell us that you use the decomposed organic material as fertiliser for your village planting and as an education tool to teach your children the biodiversity value of composting. There may be other opportunities to teach this message to your community and influence their gardening habits? Great to hear that your members were involved in tree planting at the nearby river and the learnings they got from this exercise – hands on projects are always the best way to influence thinking on the environment. Great if you would give us an update on the bird boxes next year.

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

This is a category where many communities struggle but it's just about how we can carefully use the resources of the world in our daily lives and as a community so that we reduce our environmental impact. It relates to area such water, transport, waste, energy, and climate action. There are lots of tips in the TT handbook. You already are busy applying the circular economy approach as you tell us when you re-used fallen trees to make village seating and recycled empty agricultural buckets for use as planters. You also make and upcycle your school planters. Watering of plants is from harvested rainwater and of course you have proudly stated that you have developed a composting area. Great use of 'waste'. We also noted that the village has a recycling hub. Maybe try to spread your message to other – a water refill station at the school and GAA pitch maybe. Maybe a book/household swap event along with your planting event next year? Sustainability is also an area where you can use your role as a community group to influence change in your community – tips on your Facebook page, encouraging your local business to change too – use of keep cups, recycling of coffee grounds for example.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We love to read that communities take part in the annual An Taisce Spring Clean-Up and we commend you for organising this locally in addition to another follow up event in June. This annual event focuses the attention of a community on the need to be vigilant on litter, fly-tipping and weed growth. You tell us that your older community follow up the big clean ups with more regular litter patrols. You also scuff edges and this year you had the benefit of one of your communities using equipment to render surfaces more suitable for use by pedestrians and buggies. Well done to him. We appreciate your photographs showing all your labour. In general, all your efforts have resulted in a virtually litter free environment. Some attention to weeds is needed around the stone edging at O Malley Park and also around the timber seat in the village. The seat in the church needs a lick of varnish and some low bollards could do with a little TLC. The recycled area looked clean, signage here needs upgrading here as does the small TT signs which have faded in the rain. If there is no imminent change with your old P.O. re-painting would be a good solution Overall however the presentation of the village is one of diligent care to all public areas. Well done to all involved.

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

It is wonderful to read that you are going to have a new residential development in the village, and we see the boundary wall commencement works. A great sustainable location within walking distance of the school and village. You tell us that you have taken an interest in this development regarding the naming and incorporation of village signage. It might be good to discuss the landscape design of open space also to incorporate a biodiversity favoured approach. There are many very attractive houses with interesting gardens located along the main street, particularly the two near the hand ball alley. The lovely, restored thatch has already merited a mention. You benefit greatly from

the RSS scheme also where staff bolster your good standard of care in green areas.

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

The Neale has long approaches into the village with little to temper vehicular traffic speeds. We do read that you have plans for traffic calming in your Enhancement Plan and for improved safe pedestrian crossings in the village which will increase pedestrian safety – all in the future hopefully. That said the Ballinrobe approach is attractive with well manged verges and the interest generated from the pyramid folly and historic graveyard where you have lovely planters. You tell us you maintain the village name signs, these looked well in addition to your bespoke signs including the Failte sign with use of Irish language. Any plans for the blank sign frame opposite the community hall? Great to have footpaths extending on this road to your Memorial Hall and also a footpath on the Kilmaine Road which gives access to the NS school and the future housing development. The southern approach from the Cong junction is also pleasant, well done on the beautiful new ground planting here. Lovley to see the preserved stone outbuilding enhancing this approach too. You give equal care here to verges on this approach. We would suggest a tree line closer to the village on the wider verges.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for the opportunity to visit your village and learn about all your work that contributed to keeping a good standard. We wish you well with securing funding for your Enhancement Plan and with your participation in the recently designated UNESCO Geo Park in your area. Perhaps include your schedule of work from your Enhancement Plan in your next Tidy Town Plan along with specific actions it will give you clear path to follow.