Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Ballyboy - Baile Buí**	Ref:	**615**
County:	**Offaly**	Mark:	**336**
Category:	**A**	Date(s):	**09/06/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	49	51
Streetscape & Public Places	80	48	49
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	45	47
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	34	35
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	27	28
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	35	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	33	35
TOTAL MARK	**600**	**324**	**336**

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.
Welcome to the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2026 competition and thank you for your application form, and map with legend of places and with project indicated. Next year add a legend of you projects in addition to the 'Relevant Locations' legend. There's room on the A4 map page. Your Ballyboy Community Development/ Tidy Towns Facebook page has 1.1K followers which is a lot for a community of your size. You need to update this regularly, which is crucial for all social media feeds. Your village is a community working well together with a committee of 33 and a voluntary body of 30. A committee of 33 seems enormous and we must assume that this is broken into different groups in order to function well. You say that actions and initiatives relevant to TidyTowns are agreed at your meetings but we recommend instead that you produce a Five Year Plan with projects and activities under each category and that these are then progressed on an annual basis. Good to read that you engage with your Elected Representatives, Offaly Co Co, and state and semi state organisations in addition to local businesses and community groups. Your participation in the SuperValu Tidy Towns competition for 7 years is excellent and we are delighted to read that participation has increased the sense of pride amongst the community.

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

Your village is a dispersed community located around the central area where the recently painted National School and newly thatched Public House sit comfortably amongst houses and farm land, all adding to the beauty of the streetscape and its surrounds. It is wonderful that you are building a Community Centre and already a car parking area has been provided including a disabled person's carparking space. The picnic bench close to the village names sign on the Tullamore Road is in a beautiful location, but a car parking space is needed close by. We also admired the picnic benches in the new car park – these we feel will be used more. The small sign mounted on the board at the entrance to the car park was noted. Your area is quite historical - the convent in 580AD, Motte and Bailey 1190, Ballyboy Castle 1656 and the Flax Mill. It would be wonderful to produce a hand on map showing these locations, if they are known to you, and this could be located on the wall of your new Community Centre when it is completed. We noted a few stiles around the village, and we are delighted to see that they had not been closed as we have seen in other areas. The picnic area beside the Silver River is quite special. We noted the children's play area and suggest that these be moved to the grounds of the new Community Centre and that in this area some natural play areas and equipment are made/constructed. You have some unoccupied/derelict buildings which hopefully will see a new lease of life in the future. We admired the discrete sign on the wall informing us of the Ballyboy Recreation Area. Very often beautiful gates and piers are marred by ugly unnecessary signs. The 1874 Wesley Chapel was noted. Have you thought about making a Heritage Trail … you have quite a number of historical

features, including the Old Munster Road, the pump, famine area etc.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

While you have no official green space in your village there is the a beautiful Pocket Park beside the river which you maintain. We admired your pollinator friendly planting in your two tiered timber planters along the entrance roads. We assume these were made locally so we compliment the craftsman. The colourful floral selection in addition to the trailing plants made these planters striking features along the roads. We suggest that one or two additional planters of this design could be placed in strategic locations in the centre of the village. We were happy to see that you did not feel the need to paint the planters, which we often see, and which detracts from them. We also admired that you installed a backdrop along the timber post and rail fence to emphasize these planters and their content. There was a considerable amount of weed growth in the planting beds in the new carpark. These will choke the beautiful flowers you've planted. Please do not use chemical weed control at the edge of the grass as this creates a look of burnt grass, which is unsightly. Around the base of trees, we suggest you leave a 600 mm radius uncut, which will produce, in time, wildflowers at wild grasses. This uncut area also has a benefit that the bark of the tree would not be damaged by cutting with a strimmer. The Motte is quite special … it would be wonderful if it became part of a park attached to your Community Centre. The planting along the recently pebble dashed wall was beautiful and had numerous insects buzzing around when we visited.

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

With great mature trees and hedgerows, stone structures and walls, and the beautiful Silver River you have a great variety of habitats for insects and mammals both in Ballyboy and along your approach roads. We admired the bug hotel on the fence between the new car park and the site for the Community Centre. We're assuming this is a temporary location as the fence will probably be removed when the Centre is open and in use? The viewing platform/ fishing platform gives a great view over the river. We walked along the riverbank inside the wall until we came to the picnic area. This area is wonderful for nature and biodiversity with the variety of trees, grasses, riparian zone and the river itself. The panel telling the visitor of the Flora and Fauna of the Silver River was noted. Nice clear information. We're delighted to read that the local school uses the river and riverbank as an outdoor classroom area. We wish the school, the best in their application for the 'Nature's Heroes Awards'. Great that the school has set up bird and bat boxes – let us know if they have any residents next year. When we visited, all along the hedgerows there were wildflowers growing. We strongly recommend that you collect seeds as you have such a large variety of wildflowers. These could then be planted as a wildflower meadow in the grounds of the new Community Centre.

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

Unfortunately many communities struggle with this category, but it's just about being aware of our use of the planet resources and how we can in our daily lives, with our actions, cut down on waste. We encourage TidyTowns organisations to lead by example. We visited the national school and saw the raised planting beds, full of lettuce, parsley, strawberries etc. We also noted the bird boxes, insect hotels, a wormery, rain butt and compost bin. We wish the children the best as they aim for their 7th Green Flag Award. We see you are part of the Kilcormac Silver River Loop Walk. It would be good if the visitor who might undertake this walk, could see the difficulty and also the distances involved. Perhaps a small sign indicating the distances in each direction could be erected in your Pocket Park beside the river. In addition to this walk we see that there are three other loop walks in your area. Again signage is needed for these. You mention that there are five working farms in your area. Perhaps you could get organic compost from them for your planters? This could be added to the compost you are currently making as a Tidy Towns group.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Do you take part in the An Taisce Annual Spring Clean? We encourage groups to take part in nationwide Clean-Up events as it focuses the mind of the general public on the high amount of litter/fly tipping/ dumping that occurs nationally. Just register for this Clean-Up and you will receive a free clean-up kit containing rubbish bags, high-viz vests and litter pickers. We were delighted to see that the road signs had been recently cleaned and were legible. When we visited there was virtually no litter visible so your 'Picker Pals' are doing their work. Unfortunately weed growth was noted in a few areas which is a pity. Ask the 'Picker Pals' to bring a hoe and stiff brush with them and remove the weed growth too. The seating areas along the riverbank and in the picnic areas are in need of cleaning. In addition, the area around them should be swept as they are quite untidy with twigs, leaves, etc. The debris can be added to your compost. We noted Ivy growing on the stone walls which we recommend should be a removed. Ivy roots penetrate between the stones, and causes damage which finally leads to the wall collapsing. While ivy is wonderful for nature, so too are stone walls as they are habitats for insects and small birds. Remove the signs from the piers of Ballyboy church and put them on the adjacent wall so that the beauty of these piers and gates can be seen and appreciated.

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

Your village is a mixture of single and two storey houses located in the central area and along the approach roads. Those in the village were well presented, some having been recently painted. Some residents had colourful flowers and shrubs. Along the approach roads there were wonderful farmhouse surrounded by neatly kept yards and fields. Some of these had mature gardens with wonderful trees and shrubs and colourful herbaceous borders. It will be excellent when the renovations currently being undertaken on the various residential properties are completed which will not only bring new residents to the village but also add to the beauty of the streetscape. It is brilliant to read that the original doorway to the Wesley Chapel was discovered and will now act as the entrance once again,

this time to a residence. Don’t forget to encourage the residents to grow pollinator friendly flowers from now on. Have a look at the website https://pollinators.
ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Garden-Pollinator-Guidelines-2022-WEB.pdf for ideas for the garden.

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

The entrances to the village on all of the roads are quite beautiful with great mature trees along the roadside edges. The village name, Ballyboy, on the beautiful stone sign on the entrance road from Tullamore needs to be painted. Firstly wash the stone – soap and water and a brush is sufficient – and then carefully pick out the lettering of the village name. We recommend white paint as this colour will stand out on the limestone, particularly when it is wet. The map of the townlands is also in need of being painted…. truthfully it is now illegible. Here too pick out the names and the townland boundaries in white paint The new car park tarmacadam surface looks good. We loved that you have a kerb between the tarmacadam and grass areas. This will keep both the grass and the tarmacadam neat and reduce the need of maintenance. The road markings around the village are a little worn and need to be repainted. Bring this to the attention of the area office of Offaly County Council. We admired the black-and-yellow painting on the bridge alerting the motorists to the narrow passageway.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2026 competition. It was a pleasure to visit and adjudicate Ballyboy.