Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Belmont - An Lios Dearg**	Ref:	**522**
County:	**Offaly**	Mark:	**318**
Category:	**C**	Date(s):	**14/06/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	43	44
Streetscape & Public Places	80	42	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	41	42
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	26	27
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	22	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	48	49
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	37	39
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	50	51
TOTAL MARK	**600**	**309**	**318**

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, map, and other accompanying documents. If some of these could be inserted into the Application Form next year it would be most helpful. Select the most relevant photo(s) and use it/them. e.g. we did not need 6 photos of meadows with poppies – one would have been sufficient. You also gave us 15 photos of the restoration of the pump – a before and after photo is all that we need. Your map was BLUE … blue is a very difficult colour on which to see lines and writing, particularly when they too are blue. Just use white paper and black ink next year. Your committee of 15 has 55 volunteers which is wonderful to see and in addition you work with your local High Street N.S. We attempted to open the webpage address given to us in the application form but it failed to open - 'Your search … did not match any documents'. Next year please check and give the accurate social media address.
It's great that you work closely with the National School … teachers need the help of the community for extracurricular activities and education. You also work closely with Offaly County Council and other state and semi-state organisations, businesses and voluntary bodies. Your participation in the Tidy Towns competition for over 40 years is admirable and in doing so you have noted an awareness amongst the community of the beauty of the village and a development of pride of place and community spirit. Truthfully this is the essence of the TidyTowns competition.

See Concluding Remarks for advice on filling out the application form and producing a map.

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

You are a dispersed rural village and this, plus the topography and the River Brosna and Grand Canal, makes Belmont a very interesting settlement. There are a number of interesting historical structures in the village Belmont House probably being the most interesting with the adjacent mill structures. Belmont Bridge, 33rd Lock Bridge and the Railway buildings adding to the industrial archaeology and importance of the area. Sts. Patrick and Saran RC church was beautiful presented and adds greatly to this area of the village. Close by the equally well presented Community Hall with the George V post box and water pump adds to this area. You certainly have made very good use of the paint donated – please commend your volunteers for their work. The work to the water pump is wonderful – compliment to all involved. Cut back the growth which is encroaching on the Lios Dearg stone and also repaint the lettering which was almost impossible to read. The growth around the Endeavor Award sign also needs to be trimmed back. All signage should be easily read or removed if this is too much work for your group – otherwise it is just clutter in your streetscape. We saw the sign for Saint Saran's well but the stile was very overgrown and so we

didn't venture to see it. We suggest a path is cut through the field in order for visitors to access it in addition to removing the vegetation at the stile.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

While you have no park you have a wonderful tree canopy along many of your roads with give great cover in addition to providing roosting site for birds. But there are areas around the village centre and around the church/community hall which would benefit from tree planting. The main structural elements in the landscape and one of the main structural elements in a streetscape are trees. Trees are known to have a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing. By planting and caring for trees, you help reduce pollution, improve your surroundings, improve the appearance of your community and increase the value of your property. In addition, they provide shade for humans, food for insects and food roosting sites and nesting sites for birds. We admired that you are working with Offaly Co Co biodiversity officer and establishing wildflower meadows around the village. We agree with you when you say they have to be managed properly. Allow them to grow and then cut the grasses in September and remove them so that the ground is starved of nutrients. Then little by little after a few years the wildflowers will take over and you will have wonderful wildflower meadows. Where there are concrete block walls or rendered walls around the village we recommend that you plant climbers such as ivy, pyracantha or wisteria, which will in time become a green corridor in the area in addition to reducing the need to paint the wall. This action is not recommended for natural stone walls which in themselves are wonderful habitats.

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

Due to your dispersed settlement you have a great number of hedgerows, mature trees, stone walls, etc. which give you a great variety of habitats for birds, insects and mammals. Add to this the Grand Canal and the Brosna River and along with the riparian banks we see that Belmont is rich in habitats. But have you carried out any study of your natural habitats? Before you undertake any action you need to know what's there. A biodiversity study should be carried out by a professional who will then advise you on actions to conserve and develop your natural habitats. The hedgerows were very colourful and like elsewhere in Co Offaly they had a variety of wildflowers in bloom and were buzzing with insect life – cornflowers, foxglove, ox-eyed daises, etc. all in bloom. We're delighted to see that you are assisting the school with their Biodiversity. What exactly are you doing with them? You collaborated with Burren Beo under the Hares Corner Project and planted native Irish fruit trees. We also read that in conjunction with Offaly County Council you planted 50 Irish native trees. What varieties did you plant? Where did you plant them? There are many ideas for projects relating to this category in the TidyTowns handbooks and we advise you to examine them and undertake a few.

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

This category where many communities struggle is about being aware of how we use the resources of the planet so that we cut down on our waste. We particularly encourage Tidy Towns committees to lead by example. Planting the fruit trees is wonderful but now we need you to do more. Perhaps a community garden could be established where fruit bushes, vegetable beds, composting areas, leaf mould composting cages, etc. can take place. In addition, those involved can exchange ideas and advice in addition to exchanging plants and the product of their gardens. It's good that you arranged the information event for the whole community on renewable energy. S.E.A.I. are encouraging home owners and voluntary groups to install solar panels and battery storage systems. Good to see that the national school are successful in their fundraising with the plastic bottle and can return scheme organised by Repak. Have any of the resident installed rainwater butts? This is something you could encourage them to do. Once again, we direct you to the Tidy Towns handbooks where you'll find a variety of projects under this category. We had a look around the National School and we're delighted to see the planting beds with the scallions, carrots, beetroot etc growing. The rain water storage tanks, and the solitary bee hotels were noted. Good to see the recycling notice in the church on behalf of the Columban Fathers.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We're delighted to read that you take part in the An Taisce Annual National Spring Clean and that you get assistance from Offaly Co Co who provide you with litter pickers, gloves, bags, etc. We admire Tidy Towns groups who take part in Clean-Up events as it focuses the mind of the general public of the high amount of litter/fly tipping/ dumping that occurs nationally. Perhaps ask residents to register for the #2minutestreetclean also organised by An Taisce. There was very little litter visible in Belmont which we were delighted to see. Your volunteers are doing a wonderful job. There was unfortunately, a lot of weed/grass growth along the road side kerbs which give a slightly neglected feel to the streetscape. Where a kerb exists please trim the grass along the edge and also along the roadside so that the kerb is visible. A spade and stiff brush would do wonders. Cut back the vegetation growth around the newly renovated pump at Clonony Castle which has encroached so as to almost hide it. Also remove the weed growth from the base which detracts from this area. In addition remove the bucket of flowers from the pump. You are displaying the pump so let it be clearly seen and don't detract from it by hanging a bucket of flowers on it. There were some old posters attached to some poles along the roadside which need to be removed as they detract from the streetscape.

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

Single and two storey vernacular houses are the predominant style of house along the entrance roads and in the village. Set in rural Offaly, the residents have contributed positively to making the village extremely pleasant. Well done on painting so many of the properties, including those which are unoccupied. This made your area extremely pleasant and welcoming. Many of the houses have wonderful gardens which were full of pollinator friendly colourful

perennials in herbaceous borders. A great number of your houses have mature trees in their properties which added to the immediate area and also to the streetscape. There are some fine two storey houses along the entrance roads some with four bays which is unusual for a rural farm house. There are a number of beautiful farm houses and farm yards interspersed along the roads which add to the interest of the village. The houses in the village had made an effort too with hanging baskets displaying colourful flowers adding to the village centre. The small Beechgrove estate has a beautiful entrance with well planted stone surround beds on both sides of the entrance road and some trees which in time will mature and add great value to the area. The name stone is a little dirty. Soapy water and a brush is all that's needed. We noted some properties had not been painted and we assume that permission had not been granted to paint these… a pity.

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

Your roads are very peaceful with only local traffic passing – perhaps we were there at a good time!
The approach roads to the village are extremely pleasant with wide views across the surrounding rural landscape. We approached the village from the east and clearly saw the village name sign in its stone surround planting bed. In addition to the village name sign planting bed, there are a number of similar planting beds along this road. It would be good to see some colourful pollinator friendly flowers in these. We also admired the well maintained stone wall along this entrance road. There are beautiful rose bushes along the roadside in your grass margins which were in full flower and were alive with butterflies and bees. The village centre is a very wide open space and it would be good to see this redesigned – a narrow carriageway, wide footpaths, trees and planting beds and formal parking areas. This would add greatly to the area. Carparking spaces should be arranged more formally which would benefit the motorist and pedestrian. Tell us about walkways in your area. Have you plotted any of these? Another possible project for you to undertake. You have the Royal Canal and Brosna River close by and we assume there's a circular walk around your village on the quiet roads – these could all be mapped by you for the community and for the visitor.

Concluding Remarks:

We thoroughly enjoyed visiting your village … but we have a couple of suggestions for 2027.

- You must get a new map as the one we had was impossible to read. They can be downloaded – just ask a youth to help. (Don't use Google Maps – others are better). Please put a North point on the map – this helps the adjudicator.
- In the Application Form number the projects New - N1, N2, N3 etc, or Maintained - M1, M2, M3 etc , and then transfer this number to the map so that the adjudicators can locate them.
- We suggest you prepare a Five Year Plan. The plan can show who on the committee will lead the activity/project, collaborators names (you'll need help from state and semi-state organisations with many of the projects), and it will also show progress each year with a tick saying it was undertaken/completed.

We wish to state that this is not a criticism of your work but to explain to you that as adjudicators we rely on a clear application form and accompanying map to inform us of your projects and make our visit rewarding. Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2026 competition. It was a pleasure to visit and adjudicate Belmont.