Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Kinnitty - Ceann Eitigh**	Ref:	**294**
County:	**Offaly**	Mark:	**336**
Category:	**B**	Date(s):	**19/06/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	48	49
Streetscape & Public Places	80	46	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	47	48
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	29	30
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	23	24
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	59	61
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	38	40
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	36	37
TOTAL MARK	**600**	**326**	**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, map with legend and Three-Yer Plan. We opened your Facebook page and see that you have 797 followers. The more you post, the more the community will see your activities and follow you. This is very important for social media feeds so that the local community keep interested in you. Hopefully in time, some will become part of your volunteers. You are a committee of 12, and you have 22 volunteers who assist you with various activities and projects. We are delighted to see that in addition to your TidyTowns meetings you also engage with the whole community asking for their suggestions. This ensures that the whole community are actively involved with you. We see that you are engaged with state and semi-state organisations in addition to local businesses, and voluntary groups, all of whom you list. Many of the projects/ activities need the help of collaborators and so it is important to keep up this engagement. You have participated in the SuperValu Tidy Towns competition for over 20 years and we see that participation has 'strengthened community spirit, increased volunteerism, and fostered lasting pride'. This is the true spirit of the Tidy Towns.

Please see Concluding Remarks for advice on filling out the Application Form

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

Kinnitty is probably known best for the stunning Kinnitty Castle and surrounding landscape but the village itself located in the heart of the Slieve Bloom mountains also has lot to offer. Your neat, tidy village centre with its wide streets gives a very good first impression to the visitor but it lacks trees along the streetscape on the eastern entrance (see below in Landscaping). You have a large number of historical structures, probably the most unusual being the mausoleum to the Bernard family in the shape of a pyramid. We walked up the hill along the gravel path and loved the wildflower meadow on both sides. It would be good if you would cut a narrow strip of grass along both sides of this path so that it is obvious that you are maintaining this very important area. We also recommend that the gravel path surrounds the structure – at the moment the surrounding grass is encroaching on it. We noted that some stones of the mausoleum are lose/missing. This is something that needs urgent attention so that long term damage isn't done – contact the conservation architect/ officer in Offaly Co Co. Like many rural villages and towns you have your share of unoccupied and derelict buildings. We were delighted to read that some of these have been recently purchased and will soon be reused. We strongly recommend that if any of the commercial properties are converted to residential use, you request Offaly Co Co to insert a Condition into the Planning Permission stating that the shopfront, frieze and name are retained. These are part of your architectural and social history and should not be

removed. We noted that some of the properties along the streets had been recently painted and these presented very well. Please thank the many businesses who had made an extra effort with planters, baskets and window boxes which were full of colourful pollinator-friendly flowers.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Your Village Green is beautiful – this is what makes Kinnitty an extra special place. This area, with its fast flowing stream with stone banks and neatly trimmed grass is very beautiful. We admired that the green is surrounded with cast iron bollards and chain fencing which gives it additional grandeur. The mature trees and colourful rose bed adding to visual appearance of the area. We read that daffodils, tulips etc. have been planted on your approach roads which give spring colour and which is a delight to see following the long winter. We suggest that you also plant crocuses, alliums and snowdrops which provide nectar and pollen for bees and other pollinators in the spring. We mentioned above that part of the main street would benefit from additional tree planting. We suggest that where there is perpendicular parking at present this is made into parallel parking and the additional space becomes a grass margin with a row of trees. This would add greatly to this section of your streetscape. The grounds of St. Flannan's Church are beautifully maintained but now we need to see more in the area of biodiversity rather then neatness. The Heritage Council have produced a booklet entitled 'Havens for Nature' where they encourage faith communities to sign up to support biodiversity in Faith Grounds. We suggest you see what you can do in the grounds of St. Flannan's for next year. Check the Heritage Council website for information.

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

Areas of value for nature and biodiversity include trees, hedgerows, woodlands, rivers, stone structures etc. and in Kinnitty you have your share. You also have the benefit that to the south are the Slieve Bloom mountains, which has great tracts of blanket bog, and also the Blue Dot Camcor River runs through the grounds of Kinnitty Castle. We read that you have ongoing pollinator-friendly planting and that you are also involved in educational events. Tell us specifically about the educational events next year. We always encourage Tidy Towns groups to become involved in assisting the community to find out more about nature and biodiversity around them. Have you thought about bringing the school children on a nature trail? Just to walk around the school grounds and listen to the bird song and have them to identify them would be a very simple project for you. They could make a drawing of the bird they liked best, and these could be exhibited in your Community Centre. Foraging walks are another project for adults and children where a specialist could lead a walk and show what fruits, etc. are freely available around you – nettles, dandelions, wild garlic, mushrooms, elderflowers and elderberries, blackberries, sloes etc. etc. At every season food is freely available if we were shown how to forage. We noted some block walls along the streetscape and in housing estates which would benefit from planting to create biodiversity corridors. Where block walls exist in your village they are ideal locations for plants such as ivy, pyracantha, honeysuckle, wisteria etc. which will not only benefit nature, but will also look good in the streetscape and eliminate the necessity of keeping the walls painted.

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

This category confused many Tidy Towns groups, when it was first introduced, but now all know, that it is just about being aware of our use of the planet's resources. This category is about looking at how the community as a whole can reduce waste and save on water, energy and transport. We ask Tidy Towns groups to lead by example. There are many actions and projects that you can undertake. For example, you could make your own compost for use in your landscaping schemes as this avoids all of the associated packaging and other waste that comes with shop bought fertilisers. Growing your own pollinator friendly plants, harvesting your own seeds or sourcing donations of plants from keen local gardeners is recommended as this also avoids the waste associated with shop bought varieties. Consider harvesting rainwater in order to avoid using treated water when maintaining your planters. This is a simple process which involves placing a water butt on a downpipe to capture rainwater – St. Flannan's church or the Community Centre with the large expanse of roof are ideal for this. We are delighted to read that you work closely with the Green Schools programme. Where you involved in the planting at the poly tunnel? We strongly recommend that TidyTowns groups are involved in planting raised beds with school children. It would be wonderful if every child before leaving National School had the experience of planting seeds and seeing vegetables grow. Then tasting these and realising that they are much tastier than shop bought vegetables would be a wonderful part of their education. Perhaps in future years they might become involved in an allotment and here they could pass on the knowledge they gained from you in national school. You mentioned a colouring competition – what was the topic? We'd love to have seen some photos. We see that you are part of Birr Cycle Hub – Loop 3 and that you have now installed bike racks along your streetscape to facilitate those who undertaking this cycle.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We read that you take part in the All Ireland An Taisce Spring Clean Event. We encourage all Tidy Towns groups to sign up for this, as when a large number of volunteers are seen in their high-vis vests, picking litter, removing weeds, and doing general maintenance along the approach roads, and in the village or town itself it reminds the community that they too should be vigilant in their disposal of waste. We see that you have the help of RSS workers who, with your volunteers, carry out weekly litter pick-ups. When we visited, there was very little litter and so we commend all the volunteers and RSS workers. Some weed growth was noted which was a pity, as this distracted a little from the streetscape. We recommend that you ask your volunteers to bring a spade, hoe and stiff brush with them and to remove weed growth in addition to picking up litter. You mentioned that dog fouling is addressed through signage. As you know, signage is clutter and detracts from a streetscape. Instead of signage, we recommend that you stencil a sign on the footpath, such as 'Clean up After Your Dog' where dog fouling is a problem. We have been told that this works better than signs fixed to poles or fences. You might also add to this 'Any Bag, Any Bin'. The Village Green is important and should be one of your priorities in terms of tidiness and litter

control. We were disappointed to see that the bollards were quite dirty. The area itself was litter free, tidy and the grass was neatly cut. But it is very important that, due to it being a focal point of your village, everything associated with this area is perfect. Remove the 'No dogs allowed' sign from the pier of the graveyard as this tracks from this very beautiful architectural feature of piers and gates. A lot of the signs at the graveyard entrance should be removed as they are quite unpleasant and unnecessary. This is something to request from the LA local area office.

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

In addition to the single and two-story vernacular houses in the centre of your village there are also some very pleasant houses on your approach roads. Some of these had been freshly painted and presented very well. Pollinator-friendly herbaceous borders were noted in quite a number of the gardens on the approach roads. We also visited your housing estates – St. Finian's Park, Lismooney Court etc. Some estates have no name and this should be addressed. We were also delighted with the standard of the presentation of individual houses in the residential estates. It is obvious that home owners are very proud of where they live and keep their front facades, road frontage, gardens and boundary walls well-presented and neatly maintained in support of your work. A small number of garden boundary walls in some of the estates need attention where walls have become weather stained. We loved the sign of Ballincur Park which is located on the small grass roundabout with some wonderful mature silver birch (Petula pendula) trees. Instead of having a planter with flowers as a feature in front of the sign, we recommend that a planting bed with a mixture of flowers and shrubs is made to the sides and rear of this sign. This will emphasise the sign and can have pollinator-friendly flowers all year long. On the communal open spaces in the housing estates we suggest that instead of cutting the grass around trees that you leave a neat 90cm radius of uncut grass around each tree. This removes the possibility of damage being done to the bark of the trees and will also be an area of wildflowers and grasses for your pollinators. If neatly done, this cutting method will add to the appearance of the communal open spaces. We were happy to read that new benches had been added. These are so important in communal open space so that young parents can sit while their children play, young people can meet socially, and your elderly population can rest as they take exercise. Don't forget to encourage the residents to grow pollinator friendly flowers. 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 and post a list on your Facebook page for all to see.

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

The 50K speed limit signs are clearly visible on the approach roads giving motorists warning that they are entering a settlement and so need to reduce speed. We are delighted to see that the footpath extends as far as Kinnitty GAA encouraging young people to access the facilities on foot. It also means that they have a safe passage on the footpath on this busy Regional Road. We admired the tourist information signage, giving us directions to All Trails via Kinnitty, Kinnitty GAA, etc. Good to see that on the R421 entrance road the landowner has planted trees inside the timber post and rail fence. It would be lovely if, in addition, a native hedgerow could be planted which would create a biodiversity corridor for our insects, birds, bats etc. You have several walking trials on your doorstep varying in distance from 4km to 11km which bring walkers from all over Ireland to your village. We noticed a very wide radius on one of the roads into a housing estate and we wonder why was it so wide? This large width makes it difficult/ dangerous for the pedestrian to cross this road.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2026 competition … we have a few suggestion for 2027

- In your application form, use bullet points to give us the information of the actions and projects rather than an essay. This makes it easier for the adjudicators to quickly identify what you have achieved during the year.
- Please number your projects New – (N1, N2, N3 etc) or maintained (M1, M2, M3 etc.) so that the adjudicator can quickly identify them. The numbers of the project you wish us to visit, can then be transferred to your map. Don't worry if you don't have a long list as you are a small village so we don't expect you to have lots and lots of projects.
- It would be lovely to see some before and after photos of your work inserted into the various categories in the application form. We suggest that you ask a youth to be your PRO who will look after this for you if you don't know how to do it. PRO for Kinnitty Tidy Towns will look very good on their CV.
- Only include completed projects (i.e. New) or maintained projects in your application. All other projects which are in the planning stage are known as Future Projects and should only appear in your Three-Year Plan and NOT in the application form.

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. It was a pleasure to visit and adjudicate Kinnitty. Keep up the good work and we look forward to our return visit.