Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Pullough - Pollach**	Ref:	**2103**
County:	**Offaly**	Mark:	**352**
Category:	**B**	Date(s):	**14/06/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	53	54
Streetscape & Public Places	80	45	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	44	46
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	37	39
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	27	30
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	55	56
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	42	43
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	36	37
TOTAL MARK	**600**	**339**	**352**

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, photos (we loved the Drone view of the village on the cover), map, and your 2024-2026 Plan. We were quit confused with the orientation of your map; next year please add a North point … it helps the adjudicators. (Usually North faces at the top of the page not the bottom!) The road, according to Google, from Ferbane to Ballycumber is the R436. Your Pullough Tidy Towns Facebook page has almost 900 followers and we see that it is updated regularly which is crucial for all social media feeds. Your village is a community working well together with a committee of 4 and a voluntary body of 16, all part of Pullough Residents' Development Association. Unfortunately the Community Shop was closed when we visited but we read that it also hosts various community events which is excellent. It's great that you work closely with the primary school … they're doing great work in their gardens. You also work closely with a variety of local groups – heritage, sports, health clubs, art, etc. In addition Offaly County Council and other state, semi-state and voluntary bodies have assisted your community through funding and advice. It was good to see that you responded to queries/suggestions raised in the 2025 TidyTowns report. Your participation in the Tidy Towns competition for over 11 years is admirable and in doing so you have noted a development of pride of place and improvement of community spirit. 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:

The elongated layout of the village, based very much around the Grand Canal and River Brosna, is quite unique. The area around your Community Shop has new fencing, and we have no doubt that the new seating is well used by the community and those using the canal cycle path. Perhaps the seating area could be improved by the addition of planting beds to separate it from the vehicular traffic. Truthfully the general forecourt around the shop should be examined in terms of landscaping – hard and soft, including tree planting. Across the Grand Canal bridge the main village of Pullough begins with the St Mary's church, and its Harry Clarke stained glass windows, and adjacent well maintained grotto. Celebrating your geographical location is the tabernacle inserted into a highly polished bog oak sculpture. Close by is the national school where teachers and pupils have been busy in the garden. The Bogman and surrounding planting is an attractive feature on the streetscape and also celebrates your surrounding landscape and social history. The information panel close by gives a brief but concise history of Pullough and its heritage. We were delighted to see that there were quite a number of seats dotted around the village; we note that you repaint these annually. Perhaps we were too early with our visit for you, but we noted that

some were in need of painting. Compliments to the Pull Inn Public House on the presentation of the property, including the attractive planting beds. In addition the planting bed beside the property has a great variety of flowers and shrubs, and the artwork was admired. Are there areas for some addition art work around the village? Take a walk and see where some could be installed to celebrate people or places in and around your village.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There is a very pleasant green area to the south of the canal with a sylvan backdrop and intricate bog oak sculpture as its centrepiece; a very pleasant area to sit and relax. We read that the sculpture was vandalised, which is very unfortunate, but glad to see that you restored it and made the area what we see today along with its new planting around the base. As the bog is such a part of your social and economic history it is vital to keep any references you have to retain this connection. The planting project undertaken at Dernagun will in time be a great asset to this area of the village and we were delighted to read that Irish wildflower seeds were planted. We recommend that you harvest the wildflower seeds growing wild in the ditches around you, as these will prove to be the best varieties for your area. Like many communities along canals and waterways your main green spaces are the canal banks which are a wonderful amenity for the community and visitors alike.
There are some freestanding planting containers in the GAA/Community Hall car park near the recycling bins which we suggest be removed and instead a permanent stone surround planting bed be installed. It's always better to have permanent planting beds rather than freestanding planters. We admired the planting in the narrow gravel margin at the edge of the footpath across from the Pull Inn Public House. When this matures, it will be extremely pleasant, but it will be important to make sure that it does not encroach on the footpath and so it will need to be trimmed back annually. It would be good to see some hanging baskets with colourful flowers on the poles along the edge of the canal. We noted that there are a lot of poles so we suggest perhaps on every second pole would be sufficient. These will add beauty to the area and not be a complete burden for your volunteers. Perennial flowers and trailing plants can be used.

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

With the great number of hedgerows, mature trees, stone structures and walls, and the Grand Canal and beautiful wide Brosna River you have a great variety of habitats for birds, insects and mammals. 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 – foxglove, ox-eyed daises, cornflowers, etc. all in bloom. It's great that the cycle path is well used and brings visitors to your village. Turraun Wetlands, we read, is 'the most diverse of all Lough Boora's sites'; it's wonderful to have this a short journey from you village. We encourage a no mow policy but it needn't be confined to May. We suggest that it be rotated and that some areas are No Mow May while others are No Mow June or July. In this way a variety of wild flowers and grasses will become apparent. There's no need to put up signs … they just add clutter to an area. We too praise your recording efforts. But we suggest that you involve the children and start doing a Fit Count with them – it's a great way to really look at our insect life. The Hares Corner initiative was successful and we noted the fruit trees growing on the Canal bank slope. Let us know in future applications of your success.

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. Compliments on the various Community Shop initiatives you mention in your application. St Mary's national school teachers and the pupils must be complimented for their wonderful garden. Fruit bushes, vegetable beds, flowerbeds, composting areas, leaf mould composting cages in addition to insect hotels and wildflower areas – it was wonderful to visit this garden. Please compliment the teachers and pupils for this wonderful initiative. We love that the products are available to purchase! There was also an excellent garden we noted with a polytunnel and flowers and vegetables growing in planting beds and we wondered was this a community garden? The community pre school garden was unfortunately closed when we visited, but we had a good look through the fence. Compliments to those involved in its creation. We particularly admired the timber tractor tunnel/slide; a reminder to the children of their rural social and industrial heritage. We noted the rainwater harvesting butts at the school but wonder if many of the residents have them installed? This is something you might encourage and let us know of your success. While freshly painted and looking well, the wall along the GAA grounds would benefit from being planted with climbing plants. This would not only remove the need for painting, and therefore be a sustainability initiative, but would also be to the benefit of birds and insects. Good to see the Pullough Loop Walks – we'll have to revisit at some stage

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. We strongly encourage groups to 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 Pullough which we were delighted to see, so compliments to you litter pick-up team. We also noted that the cobble lock pavements were virtually weed free which is difficult to maintain due to the nature of the structure. 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. The bring banks at the GAA grounds had been recently emptied and the area surrounding them was virtually litter free. Some of the bins are in a poor state of repair, perhaps it's time to paint them? Perhaps here is the location of a mural celebrating you location in the bog. 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:

Set in rural Offaly, the residents have contributed positively to making the village extremely pleasant. A few of the houses had been freshly painted including boundary walls and fences and those with gardens were neatly kept welcoming the visitor. Some residents had shrubs and herbaceous borders in their gardens and some had great trees as features. Single and two storey traditional houses are the predominant style of houses along the entrance roads and in the village. We admired the trees along the entrance road to Brosnan View and suggest that additional trees be planted in the communal green space within the estate. The area around estate name stone is gravel and there was considerable weed growth here. We suggest that the adjoining grass be continued around the name stone, similar to St. Manchan's Estate, which would be easier to maintain. Unfortunately chemical weed killer has been used around trees, poles, etc which has left unpleasant burnt grass appearance. We strongly recommend this practice be stopped and that residents are informed of your 'Sustainable Care' policy. Where there are blank boundary walls along the road sides or into estate entrances we suggest that pyracantha, ivy, or other climbing plants be grown which will give nesting sites, food and cover to insects and birds. You asked for recommendations for bilingual estate signage. Truthfully it would be a pity to remove the existing large stone signs. If bilingual is required a simple metal sign could be made (similar to a town street name sign) and this attached to the adjacent wall. They need not be large, just small simple signs, similar to a street sign in Birr or Tullamore. All new estates name sign will be bilingual.

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

The village name signs needs to be clearly legible by motorists which necessitates keeping the hedge rows and grass margin neatly trimmed. This warns the motorists that they are entering a settlement and so need to reduce speed. Road surfaces were fair but in some areas we noted edge break up, potholes and tarmac unravelling. Do a survey and bring this to the attention of the area office. We question that there are no stop signs painted on the roads exiting the housing estates. Is this something that has yet to be completed by the local authority? We admired the painted black and white large mooring bollards along the edge of the canal which give a distinct safety appearance to the roadside. Road markings are a little worn and will need to be repainted shortly. Make a list of where they are worn and give this too to the area office. We admired the new dipped kerbs which facilitates those with buggies and mobility issues. The black and yellow metal crash barrier at the River Brosnan bridge draws attention to the steep drop. Would you consider this treatment might also be suitable for the crash barrier at the Grand Canal? Something for you to consider. The boat planter and surrounding planting bed at the junction of the main road and Dernaugun Road is well positioned and was very attractive. It draws the eye of the motorist giving directions to the River Brosna or Grand Canal. It was alive with buzzing insects when we visited

Concluding Remarks:

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

- Please put a North point on the map and truthfully north should face the top of the page and not the bottom.
- In the Application Form you numbered the projects 2e(N), 3c(M), etc but failed to transfer these to your map. Please use the same numbering system on the map to identify the projects you would like us to visit. If you wish you can colour code the various categories to make it even clearer. This is to help the adjudicators to negotiate their way around your village and see the various projects or locations of projects.
- Your Plan is now in the final year. We recommend that you make a Five-Year Plan rather than a Three-Year Plan as many activities/projects take longer than three years to be completed. 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 Pullough.