# Tidy Towns Competition 2026

## *Adjudication Report*

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| Centre: | **Ashford - Áth na bhFuinseoige** | Ref: | **902** |
| County: | **Wicklow** | Mark: | **369** |
| Category: | **C** | Date(s): | **20/06/2026** |

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2025 | Mark Awarded 2026 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Community – Your Planning and Involvement | 80 | 52 | 53 |
| Streetscape & Public Places | 80 | 52 | 54 |
| Green Spaces and Landscaping | 80 | 52 | 55 |
| Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality | 80 | 36 | 37 |
| Sustainability – Doing more with less | 80 | 28 | 29 |
| Tidiness and Litter Control | 90 | 61 | 63 |
| Residential Streets & Housing Areas | 55 | 39 | 40 |
| Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes | 55 | 37 | 38 |
| **TOTAL MARK** | **600** | **357** | **369** |

### 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 very much for your entry into this year’s competition and for providing your 3 Year Development Plan as well as a map. You appear to have strong links across all sectors of your community, community groups, as well as local businesses and statutory agencies. You hold regular meetings, increasing these coming up to key times of the year and have good communications using various social media, WhatsApp groups etc. ( I had a look at your Facebook page which is has lots of really good information and colourful content including videos and motivation to keep everyone focused on your work). You also engage very strongly with your local schools, especially with the promotion of sustainability and biodiversity, and this is evidenced by the impressive number of Green Flags amassed to date with 6 Green Flags for Nuns Cross School and 7 for Scoil na Coroine Mhuire.

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

It is fantastic news that the go ahead has been achieved for the re-opening of Ashford Community Park, unfortunately it was not open when I visited your town, and there still appeared to be a lot of overgrowth near the entrance gate, but hopefully this will change soon. You have also mentioned some other areas such as the ‘ghost estate’ and old Garda Station, and we wish you the best of luck with the redevelopment of these also.
I admired the granite bench erected by Ashford Tidy Towns with nice
The newly revamped ‘Triangle’ area looked well, and it is great to see the sustainable reuse of materials such as the sleepers and stone wall. Street furniture looked clean and well cared for overall with some lovely iron lamp standards.
The Church of the Most Holy Rosary is a beautiful building and looked extremely clean and well cared for, as did the adjacent grotto area.
Some good quality signage giving the history of Ashford and the various points of interests to be seen around the town.
There were some beautifully presented commercial premises to be seen in Ashford. These include Wardrobe, Pixie & Linus, Ashford House, and the Chester Beatty Inn, and of course the Avoca Store which was beautifully presented with lovely landscaping at the entrance.

### Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Ashford benefits from its picturesque location with a large amount of greenery, trees and hedging that helps frame

the town beautifully, not to mention the Vartry River and your proximity to Mount Usher Gardens.
Landscaping throughout the town is excellent, with just the right mix of planting and use of hanging baskets, flower displays etc. well done on the donation of 150 Mountain Ash and Silver Birch trees to local households as part of National Tree Week in conjunction with sponsorship by Centra and Aidrian Dunne Pharmacy.
The Ashford GAA Boundary Wall upgrade looked great, nice to see the traditional stone walls and the craftmanship that goes with them being kept alive.
The lovely stone sculptures and plaques with 'Haiku' poetry seen as I walked around your town were charming, as was the black and gold painted old water pump. The imminent reopening of the Community Park will be a welcome addition and we hope that this will happen soon (it may have already happened since this adjudicator visited).

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

The River Varty is very much at the heart of Ashford, and you are doing some fine work on keeping it clean which helps with water quality and therefore helps the local flora and fauna such as otters, herons, dippers, and deer thrive. A riverside walk along it would provide a wonderful scenic place to stroll and we look forward to hearing about progress on this in the future.
You are also committed to helping our pollinators through your wildflower areas as well as pollinator beds at the centre of the village. The beautiful roundabout sponsored by Eden was buzzing with activity with bees enjoying the lovely lavender planting, and great to read that you are taking a 'meitheal' approach with assistance from local experts. Great work on the installation of various bat, bird and bug boxes! Have you ever done any survey work on these? Perhaps with the assistance of local schools and the help of any expertise from the County Council.

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

There is good engagement with your local schools and you are encouraging the younger generation to think about sustainability and the circular economy, and one of the ways you are doing this is through providing Battery Boxes to facilitate recycling and raise awareness. We also note the Green Flag status of the two primary schools.
The 'Hub' local charity shop is eye catching and a great example of the circular economy in action, a fantastic way to ensure the recycling and repurposing of items that other people no longer need and help reduce landfill as well as saving money and energy resources such as water and electricity used in the manufacturing of new goods. We also note the plans for the Park and Ride facility which should help encourage more use of public transport and all the environmental benefits that this brings.
Is there much use of renewable energy in Ashford? The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland have a wealth of information in relation to energy efficiency as well as the types of grants that are available to both businesses and residential homeowners, and can be found at www.seai.ie.
It is also heartening to hear that there such engagement with asylum seekers in the town and that this helps with integration with the community as well as assisting you in your work and bringing fresh perspectives and ideas. In relation to sustainable transport, I noticed the Electrical Vehicle charging points and there are good facilities for the many cyclists that spend time in the lovely Wicklow hill

### Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Ashford was looking very spick and span when I visited with practically no litter to be seen, great work. This is I am sure due to all the hard work that you and the community are carrying out such as the weekly litter picks by your Litter Pick Team, which increases to twice weekly during the main competition period. And a shout out to your TUS workers who assist you in your work and also keep an eye out for graffiti, fly-posting as well as tackling weeds.
The 'Pure Mile' initiative is a great idea and seems to be gaining traction throughout the country with great results, as well as encouraging a sense of ownership and pride by residents taking care of their own 'patch'. You do so much for your town that it is great to see that it is reciprocal and that local businesses offer so much support through sponsorship, upkeep, care and presentation of their premises as well as the various displays of planters, hanging baskets, window boxes etc. which all add to the visual appeal of the town.
The Recycling Bank area looked clean and tidy on the day that I visited, and I saw little evidence of dog fouling, so hopefully the efforts you have made through the installation of dog litter bins is working.

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

There is a wide mix of residential types in the town, and all of the estates that I visited looked very well maintained and appeared landscaped very well and were litter free, and clean. And we note from your entry that in addition to all the marvellous work you do on the town centre and main thoroughfare that you are also going to extend your activities to focus even more on the communities and encouraging more involvement. There has been an increase in new houses of recent years and hopefully you will be able to attract new volunteers amongst the new residents of the town.
I saw that you raised the idea on your Facebook page of the introduction of some light-hearted competition by having awards for different categories in residential areas such as Best Estate (different size categories) best biodiversity or pollinator feature, best kept green area as well as top shopfronts, it would be great if this idea took off, and will be interested to reading about this next year if it is put in place. Again, great work by volunteers and TUS workers to maintain communal grass areas and take care of litter in the residential areas.

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

The approach roads were well tended with lush greenery to be seen as you enter the town, with nice islands separating the road with nice wooden planters. Signage was also of good quality, and it was great to see your undertakings along the R772 in relation to the development of pollinator friendly verges, Bug Hotel, and work to

ensure a good habitat for wildlife along with your Pure Mile work here as well as on the Ballymacahara Road. The roundabout sponsored by Eden landscaping is absolutely gorgeous and creates a lovely focal point here. The engagement with the developer at Mount Usher Glade resulted in the removal of an obstruction which could not only be unsightly but also harmful to safety, so well done on this. The idea of a Slí na Slainte route linking Ashford Park to Hunter's Hotel sounds like an exciting project and we very much look forward to hearing more about this in the future.

### Concluding Remarks:

Ashford was a lovely space to spend some time and walk around, and it is great to see all the great work that you are doing on the ground and look forward to visiting again soon, and hopefully I will be able to enjoy the Community Park when reopened.