Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Carnew - Carn an Bhua**	Ref:	**1107**
County:	**Wicklow**	Mark:	**311**
Category:	**C**	Date(s):	**03/07/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	41	42
Streetscape & Public Places	80	44	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	41	43
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	26	28
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	18	20
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	56	58
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	38	39
TOTAL MARK	**600**	**297**	**311**

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 for your entry into this year's competition and we are delighted that you are back after a few breaks and this has been a positive experience and of benefit to your town and community. Although you have a relatively small number of committee members and volunteers for the size of your town it is great to see that you can call on extra support from organisations such as Tomacork Community Employment, as well as your local Fire Brigade, Carnew Heritage Society as well as the GAA and local schools, and also that you are beginning to attract new volunteers. It is a testament to the work that you are doing that you have got such positive feedback and assistance from both residents and businesses alike who obviously appreciate the huge efforts that you are making and the various events that you are involved with such as Christmas Lights, St. Patrick's Day Parade etc. Your communications appear to be very strong through the use of such mediums as WhatsApp, meetings, newsletters, your Facebook page as well as festival programmes. It is great also to see that the younger members of the community are getting involved with strong engagement with your three local schools.

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

There are some fine buildings to be seen in Carnew such as the lovely All Saints Church of Ireland building
Some of the business premises that caught the eye included J Dowse & Son with its striking red and black décor, M Hall's, and Kenny's Bar, and the Centra had some really nice planters to enable a small outdoor seated area.

Good street furniture and I thought the upcycled yellow bicycle planter added a lovely pop of colour to the streetscape. The 'Art of Wool' project display was absolutely charming and made a lovely point of interest combined with the complementary planters. I spotted a lovely yellow water pump on the main street, and perhaps something could be done at this spot to make a nice feature from it, as you have done elsewhere.
There was some great work done on repainting the yellow benches which provides a lovely little spot to relax and reset.
I noticed on your Facebook page that there was a Town Health Check for Carnew as an initiative between Wicklow County Council and the recently established Carnew Town Team, we would be very interested to read about the results from this, and if you intend to produce some sort of public realm plan?
You have some really good plans to improve the aesthetics of the Main Street and core of the town (subject to grants/funding) including painting some of the vacant and derelict buildings, maintenance of the upcycled bike planters as well as upkeep of street furniture, and I hope that you are able to carry these out. If you have not done so already, an audit of street furniture, posters, poles etc. would be useful to see if there is any 'visual clutter' along the main street that is no longer necessary and would also enhance it's appearance.

The Main Street and town centre has an interesting mix of different architecture and well-maintained buildings including the Church of Ireland building, the 18th Century Hand Water Pump, and of course the Castle and all the history and heritage that goes with it. The Credit Union building also looked well maintained with nice landscaping, and we note your efforts in relation to the area known as the Back Alley as well as work on lighting for St. Brigid's Hall.
Well done on the Christmas lights organised by Pride in Carnew TidyTowns Committee, a lovely way to brighten up the dull winter days.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There is some really nice hard and soft landscaping on the main street opposite M.Halls, and Osborne's Centra has some lovely planters that act as screening and creating a partition from the road for their seating area.
There was a very charming corner with some very pretty circular knitted/crochet features as part of the Art of Wool Project by Carnew Community Care Knitting & Crafting Group, a really lovely idea, and the bicycle planters in the town were very attractive and added a nice splash of colour, and some lovely baskets are also to be seen at various railings in the town. Great work being done on the Aughrim Road shrubbery bed with the assistance of your local GAA club, and it is heartening to read that this included some of the younger members your community. Wel done also on the work that you are doing at the Mulroney Spring on Mill Lane on the native aquatic planting and the work on the wildflower area.

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

It is great to read in your plan that you intend to develop more wildflower areas to help with habitats, pollinator and biodiversity, and some really good work being done in the area beside the Mulroney, and what you have done in conjunction with the County Council to make it more accessible. If you have not done so already there is great advice to be found at the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan website at https://pollinators.ie/
The wildflower area by Carnew Girl Guides was charming and a great way to raise awareness in relation to biodiversity and the importance of pollinator friendly plants. Your Pollinator Friendly Zone notices were spotted, a great way to raise awareness of the work that you are doing and the importance of providing sustenance for our pollinators and I also spied some of your bug hotels.
The signs for your Food Foraging Trail were very attractive and created a lovely invitation for those who came across them to forage for their own fruit to take home and enjoy, a really lovely practical initiative that also helps create awareness about sustainability and air miles. You are doing a lot to make sure that people are aware of this, through signage, as well as what sounded like a fascinating even at Carnew Library to explain the story of it's inception and journey to where you are now.

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

Congratulations on your achievement awards in the Main Street and Community Gardening categories in the Wicklow County Council Tidy Towns, Estates and Sustainable Development Awards Scheme.
I noticed a water butt which surely helps with being more sustainable in watering the various floral displays and hanging baskets in your community.
It is great to read that the installation of the 2 water butts for rainwater harvesting have had such a positive impact and note your intention to install even more once that you have found some suitable locations for them. You endeavour to be as sustainable as you can in all of your work, including the use of window boxes from recycled plastic, the use of energy efficient LED Christmas lights as well as various recycling initiatives. You also attend workshops such as the talk on seed harvesting and creating awareness through your newsletters etc.
There is some very useful information in relation to sustainable issues, can be found on the website of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland https://www.seai.ie/
Some ideas you could look into in this category would be having 'swop shops' for pre loved items such as old sports gear, books, clothes etc. and perhaps a little free library somewhere where people can exchange books. Also you could engage with local cafes and restaurants about encouraging the use of 'keep cups' or refilling water bottles to avoid the use of single plastic ones which often end up in landfill.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

On the day that I visited Carnew the town overall was litter free apart from one or two small pieces. Great work being done by your Community Employment person who carries out litter picking three days a week which enables you to do other work such as weeding and cleaning, in addition to the litter picking rota that you have at weekends. It is a pity that it has not been possible to get rid of the bollards at Brunswick Row as well as the promised new footpaths, but hopefully these issues will get resolved soon.
Good work on ensuring that litter is segregated in order to recycle as much as possible and that the new solar powered 'Big Belly Bins' are having a positive impact on the town. Well done on your work in raising awareness about the importance of controlling litter, both with residents and businesses alike and also the issue of dog fouling, and good to read that Wicklow County Council has put in place dog waste collection bins and hope that this helps with this issue.

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

In general, there is a high standard of presentation and maintenance of residential areas. Some of the areas visited included Coves Brook which had an attractive green area and a nice stone name sign, Valley Heights Housing estate with great work being done here on improving the common areas of the estate, and also by the residents of Brunswick Row/School Height for their ongoing work in maintaining the lovely green area and flower beds, and I am

sure that this area must look enchanting in the winter when all lit up. We note your efforts to do what you can to improve the appearance of vacant and derelict buildings through painting, including residential ones, and you are conscious that this can be a sensitive matter sometimes, good work. There is obviously a very strong commitment by those who live in Carnew to maintain and take care of their houses as well as the areas surrounding them, may with beautiful gardens. Have you considered having any competitions for best estate etc. which could be a fun way to encourage people even more, and perhaps have the closing date prior to TidyTowns adjudication to help with the best possible presentation before the competition.

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

The stone Welcome to Carnew sign is very smart and clear and I loved the display of vintage agricultural equipment. There are some lovely dry-stone walls to be seen in the town and on the approach roads, and the verges looked very neat and well maintained. I loved the flower bed created by the Carnew Girl Guides, though a refresh of the paint on the timber would make it look even more attractive. We note that you are trying to improve the footpaths and hope that you can achieve this. Great work has been done at The Community Care Village which was presented to a very high standard with good quality soft and hard landscaping including some attractive tree planting. You are also to be commended for reducing the amount of mowing to help with biodiversity as well as the establishment of the wildflower area and wilding up to the old castle wall. Good work also on establishing ‘Pure Mile’ areas, and well done to you and all of your volunteers for their hard work to ensure the various approach roads are kept as clean as possible and create a great first impression as you enter the town.

Concluding Remarks:

Carnew was not a place that I was familiar with prior to my visit, but it was a pleasure to visit your town and experience it’s heritage and see all the work that you are doing to present it at it’s best, and wish Pride in Carnew/TidyTowns well in all your future endeavours.