Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Newtownmountkennedy - Baile an Chinnéidigh**	Ref:	**515**
County:	**Wicklow**	Mark:	**364**
Category:	**D**	Date(s):	**20/06/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	55	56
Streetscape & Public Places	80	42	44
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	44	46
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	44	47
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	23	25
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	61	62
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	41	42
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	40	42
TOTAL MARK	**600**	**350**	**364**

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 including some lovely pictures of the various events that you held during the year as well as a map with a useful legend. The Easter Egg hunt looked like it was tremendous fun and enjoyed by all, and the St. Patrick’s Day ‘Banish the Rubbish’ float looked superb. In addition to the 12 on your committee, you have a very healthy additional volunteers numbering 25 as well as support with other community and voluntary organisations such as the Newtown Community Forum as well as the Town Team. There is also strong engagement with statutory bodies such as your Municipal District as well as Wicklow County Council. Your communications seem strong with the use of social media such as Instagram, Facebook as well as traditional media such as local newspapers and radio stations. I had a quick look at your social media, and it looks like you work hard, but also find time to play and there appears to be a good social element to help you keep motivated, including the Spooktacular Halloween Woodland Event which sounds amazing as well as your Christmas event complete with beautiful lights to raise winter spirits. Well done on the establishment of a Junior TidyTowns programme in conjunction with the local primary school, as well as your involvement with the Woodstock Educate Together school a wonderful way to raise awareness and educate the environmental leaders of the future. I was also very interested to read about your partnership with Cali: Care and Learn Ireland, and the assistance that they have given you on your weekly litter picks, it sounds like it has been a mutually beneficial partnership, and also that this initiative has now included Saint Catherine’ Special School.

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

There were some lovely and unusual features to be found throughout the town such as the bicycle planters as well as the fantastic old green ‘Telefón’ box complete with mannequin which is probably one of the most unique upcycling projects that I have seen and really catches the eye and the imagination. The little area with the milk churns and various statues was charming
Some of the commercial premises which looked particularly well presented included the flower shop at the end of the town (sorry I didn’t catch the name), and the Vincent’s shop with plenty of planters outside, and North Wicklow Medical, as well as a very smart looking black and white Bar/Lounge with some really nice window boxes. St Joseph’s Church looked very attractive, it is a beautiful building, and the grey stone was nicely complemented with some gorgeous floral displays. The work that you have been carrying out in relation to the painting of benches and new planters was notices. Other public buildings with good presentation included St. Joseph’s and Saint Catherine’s Schools, the Hospital and Primary Care Centres.

There are unfortunately a few vacant and derelict buildings to be seen in the town, an all to common feature of many rural towns alas. Perhaps in conjunction with the owners permission and perhaps some help from the County Council you may be able to improve the appearance of these through painting or posters in the window until they have been redeveloped and brought back into use?.
Great work has been done on the recently completed Monalin Road and Fishers Junction area which not only improves the appearance of the town but is vital in helping to improve traffic flow and road safety.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

There are some beautifully vibrant planters, flowerboxes, flowerbeds and other floral displays to be seen as you walk around the town that really enhance the area. Great to see that you have made sure to include perennials and pollinator friendly planting in your schemes.
Good work on the maintenance of the 1798 Memorial and the area around here which looked freshly clean and tidied.
Well done on the new flower bed at entrance to Killadreenan Close, this was most attractive looking.
Thank you also for the update on the Glenbrook Park area and path to New Linear Park, and praise due to you and your volunteers on the huge amount of work that you have carried out at the linear path in relation to cutting back all the overgrowth, brambles, weeds etc. at this are to get them back under control. We hope that the taking in charge of the Glenbrook Park area will allow you to do some work on this also in time.
Congratulations on your recent well deserved award in the landscaping category for your 'Trio of Welcoming Roundabouts' these looked absolutely splendid and create a wonderful first impression to your town. The sensory garden is absolutely delightful, with lots of interest including a lovely wooden Arbour that you can sit for a while and contemplate away from the hustle and bustle.

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

There is a wealth of nature to be found within the town and its immediate environs, including the Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) along with your woodlands, not to mention the nearby Varty Reservoir and Wicklow Mountains. You are conscious that increased development such as new residential estates can have significant impacts on habitats and wildlife and are making huge efforts to mitigate against the more negative effects of these. To this end you have initiated steps to develop a Community Biodiversity Action Plan with the assistance of some funding from the Community Foundation of Ireland. You have identified some particularly significant areas that need protection such as the Murrough Wetlands SPA/SAC as well as the Carrigower/Drumbawn Bog SAC. Best of luck with this and well done on your initiative of planning events to create awareness of your work and the importance of biodiversity and habitat protection for National Biodiversity and Heritage Weeks. We also wish you well with your application for the NeighbourWood scheme and the work you have done on this in collaboration with Coilte and hope to hear positive news on this in the future. It was lovely to read about your involvement in the ReWild Wicklow project and the spotting of a Pine Marten, very exciting, and great to have the sighting recorded for posterity.

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

You are making good strides in this area with many new initiatives in this category. I saw the new water butt beside the church and note your efforts to be more sustainable through the use of rainwater harvesting, well done. You also propagate many of the plants in your displays yourself, or those grown from seed by volunteers and residents. I also spotted one of your leaf composters with a sign explaining what it is being used for and asking people not to throw anything else into it. You are also ensuring to use perennials and pollinator friendly planting when you can and use natural methods such as decorative stones for weed control.
I didn't notice anything about energy efficiency on your entry from, there is some very useful information in relation to energy efficiency and available grants for both commercial and residential buildings that can be found on the website of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland https://www.seai.ie/
Some other ideas you could look into for this category would be having 'swop shops' for pre loved items such as old sports gear, books, clothes etc. I have seen some really lovely little 'free libraries' where people can leave a book they no longer want and take one they have yet to read. 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:

You have a very proactive approach to keeping your town clean and litter free. Your monthly community clean ups that take place are a wonderful way to advertise all the work that you are doing and hopefully encourage some new volunteers to assist, even if they do not want to commit to joining TidyTowns or helping on a regular basis. This is in addition to your regular weekly litter picks covering the entire town. Your TÚS scheme workers are to be praised for all the work that they do, and congratulations to the worker who won a Sustainability Award from Wicklow County Council. You also participate in the An Taisce Annual Spring Clean, and great to see the support of local businesses such as The Parkview Hotel for the provision of some scones and beverages which I am sure went down a treat after all the hard work. The litter survey you carried out is a good idea and great to see that there has been a reduction in the number of plastic bottles and cans since the inception of the Return Scheme. Overall, a great job being done, but just be aware there were one or two black spots such as some of the bins at the side of the shopping centre which were overflowing with pizza boxes and some empty coffee cups as well as a few bits of litter to be seen down near the river walk.

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

There was a high standard of presentation to be seen throughout the various estates, including some very well-kept colourful gardens.
Season Park had a very attractive entrance sign with some nice planting beside it, and the green area looked extremely well-tended, with some good quality landscaping including plenty of pollinator friendly plants. Also, some nice landscaping at the entrance to the new Altidore Gardens estate, which also had good footpaths and hard landscaping. Fantastic work being done on the upkeep of the wildflower areas to be seen at Season Park, Wicklow Hills, Kiladreenan Close and Mountain View Drive, and thanks to the local Men's Shed for the lovely handmade hardwood signs. Dispersed Orchards have become increasingly popular in the past few years, and well done on the planting of 150 trees in the various housing estates involved, and good to see that the residents of these areas are also taking part in the maintenance and upkeep of the trees from pruning, weeding, fertilizing etc.

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

There is some wonderful work being done in this category, which creates a fantastic first impression to your town and a glimpse into all the work being done in the town itself. The Heritage Welcome signs are lovely, complemented with some lovely pops of colour.
The roundabouts on the approach road off the N11 were stunning with striking landscaping. There are some very fine Silver Birch trees to be seen as you approach Newtownmountkennedy from the R772 approach which create a lovely vista to the entrance here, and some very attractive dry stone walls on the approach and in the town. You make sure to manage mowing to help protect habitats and biodiversity. You have adopted a strategic approach to planting to ensure as much colour and variety as possible throughout the year, including plants such as Allium and Anemones, Crocus and Crocosmia, along with ferns, Snowdrops and Bluebells, and hopefully your plan for these to become self-perpetuating will work and help reduce the maintenance needed.

Concluding Remarks:

I really enjoyed my visit to Newtownmountkennedy, although I have passed through it quite often it is a while since I have had the pleasure of spending some time in your town and seeing all the great work being carried out by the TidyTowns committee, community and volunteers, and wish you all the best with your future projects.