Tidy Towns Competition 2026

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Shillelagh - Síol Éalaigh**	Ref:	**937**
County:	**Wicklow**	Mark:	**305**
Category:	**B**	Date(s):	**03/07/2026**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2025	Mark Awarded 2026
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	44	46
Streetscape & Public Places	80	37	40
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	41	44
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	80	26	28
Sustainability – Doing more with less	80	14	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	55
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	37	38
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	37	38
TOTAL MARK	**600**	**289**	**305**

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 a map, your updated 3 to 5 Year Plan as well as including some photographs in your application of some of your work in action. There seems to be plenty of willing and able volunteers to help you with your work, with an additional army of up to 35 volunteers in addition to the 12 on your committee.There are strong links with other organisations and bodies including statutory organisations such as the County Council, and the Local Authority Water Programme (LAWPRO) as well as local businesses and community groups. Good communications also, including regular meetings, with notices spread around the community as well as social media on Instagram and Facebook and congratulations on your new website. It is heartening to read that there is very strong engagement with the younger residents of the village and that the children in both schools have their own Junior Tidy Towners groups, including Hi Vis vests for safety and take part in litter picks, planting and general clean ups.

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

Your village has a rich history with many fine heritage buildings to be seen throughout the town, and you are doing a lot of hard work to ensure this is kept alive for future generations. The main Information sign was beautifully illustrated with lovely drawings of some of the historic buildings to be found in the village and environs such as the Town Hall (Courthouse), Ardeen House, the old R.I.C. Barracks as well as Shillelagh Church, as well as an explanation of the origins of where the name of your village comes from (Descendents of Éalach). There were also some very informative signs as part of your Heritage Trail to be seen. The Old Courthouse was gorgeous with lovely green paintwork, and some nice landscaping here, and the Garda Station was also very well presented. Good work on the repainting of some of the benches in the village, the blue painted ones looked very smart, and there are some nice features to be seen such as the old wheelbarrow at Behan’s corner. There is a lovely traditional water pump painted black and yellow, which would look even more attractive with a fresh coat of paint, if possible, perhaps a future project?
You are also to be commended for your efforts in improving the visual appearance of vacant or derelict buildings in the village and are aware of the power of a fresh coat of paint and some tidying up pending the sale or redevelopment of these buildings.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You are fortunate to have the park for use which provides a wonderful green space at the heart of the village, a lovely space to enjoy the various walks and take a bit of time out. The playground area was lovely and it is great to

see the recent trend to change from the garish multicoloured plastic slides etc. of old to wooden more sustainable and aesthetic equipment. There were some white railings at the bridge near to this area that would benefit from a fresh coat of paint, perhaps you could consider changing the colour also to create a feature of it?
The Shillelagh Stick is an interesting feature, and this had a nice sign explaining the story behind it as well as some pollinator friendly lavender, though it is a pity the adjacent walled garden fountain is out of action, and cordoned off with bight orange hoarding.
There is some very attractive landscaping to be seen in the village (and thank you for providing some photographs at the back of your application) and we note that you are moving away from displays such as hanging baskets and window boxes etc which require a lot of water and labour towards more sustainable planting schemes, and endeavour to include perennial and pollinator friendly planting, the Behan's corner area in particular was admired.

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

Well done on your new Community Orchard project, with a varied selection of bushes and fruit trees planted in the Fairgreen which have been purchased through funding made available by Wicklow County Council. These include Apples, Plums, Pears and figs, as well as black currents and gooseberries. Not only will these hopefully yield some beautiful produce to be turned into jams, chutneys etc, but also a wonderful way to help habitats and increase biodiversity. You are making sure to user pollinator friendly perennial planting as well as reseeding and taking cuttings as well as trading seeds with the Seed Ark library, and your reduced mowing regime has also been noted, all practical ways to increase your plant stock in a sustainable cost-efficient manner. The herb garden near the Shillelagh stick is a lovely idea where people can pick some fresh herbs for their own gardens, with signage showing what the different herbs are. You are also to be commended on the establishment of the biodiversity area at Shillelagh Manor, with local residents working with TidyTowns to introduce pollinators such as heather, lupins and borage.
It is great to see that there is strong engagement with the Environmental Awareness Officer in the County Council, and attend events on biodiversity awareness, and we wish you the best of luck with your application to the OPW as part of the Community Climate Action Programme.

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

A lot of good work being done in this category using a lot of practical but impactful initiatives. These include embracing the concept of the circular economy and repurposing and upcycling wherever you can. Examples include your reuse of coffee sacks for weed barriers, reusing timbers and wooden pallets as planters or compost beds, and your clothes bank fundraiser. The upcycled yellow wheelbarrow planter was charming, as was the beautifully painted little book library for people to leave or take a book.
You are also ensuring to be as sustainable in your planting and floral displays, using rainwater harvested from water butts, saving seeds from previous years as well as hosting seed swap events. have you looked at energy efficiency in the village, perhaps this is something you can investigate in the future. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland have a wealth of information in relation to energy efficiency as well as the various grants available, which can be found at their website at www.seai.ie.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Well done on your work on litter control, your village was positively pristine on the day that I visited with practically no litter to be seen. Though this does not happen by chance, but because of the concerted efforts that you are making to keep your village clean. In addition to your litter picks you are also raising awareness and education to try and prevent it in the first place through your campaigning. This also includes your local schools, and I saw one of the 'Picker Pals' school notice, good work, and praise also to your Community Employment Scheme worker for everything that do to assist with your work. I was sorry to read that fly tipping and illegal dumping is such an issue here as it is unfortunately in many parts of the country, and hopefully you will be able to get some traction in helping to deal with this problem, would it be possible to look into CCTV monitoring or signage showing the fines at the worst black spots?
It is great to read that you now participated in the An Taisce Annual Spring Clean and that along with the hard work there was also some socialising as well as tea and chats.

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

There are some lovely residential areas to be seen in the village, including the beautiful terrace of stone cut cottages to be seen in the village, well as some nice farmhouses as well as more modern dwellings
Residential areas visited included Millbank which had some really good quality landscaping along with lovely stone entrance sign, along with Chapel Lane, Oakridge Manor, and all looked well maintained. I also visited the new Ard Darach which has been completed with some very good landscaping here, and hopefully there will be a few new volunteers amongst the new residents. Have you ever considered have a friendly 'best estate' or best pollinator garden etc. to introduce some light-hearted rivalry to encourage residents to keep their properties looking as well as possible.

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

The classic black and white heritage sign as you enter Shillelagh was very clean and well kept, and it was nice to see the extra detail explaining that it is a Heritage Village and home of Fitzwilliam's Coolattin Estate. All of the various approaches to the village looked very well maintained and cared for
There are some beautiful dry-stone walls to be seen throughout the village, and overall the quality of street furniture is very good with some lovely planters, flower beds etc.

The approach roads were all very clean and litter free despite the ongoing issue of fly tipping, so great work on that, and verges looked neat and tidy.

Concluding Remarks:

It has been quite a while since I last visited Shillelagh, and it was a pleasure to visit your charming village and to see all the work that you are doing to keep it looking so well and to ensure that habitats and biodiversity are protected. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours.