

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **St Mullins** Ref: **1155**
County: **Carlow** Mark: **268**
Category: **A** Date(s): **22/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	44
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	36
Waste Minimisation	20	8
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	9
TOTAL MARK	400	268

Overall Development Approach:

The adjudicator would like to welcome St. Mullins to the 2009 Tidy Towns Competition. This was the first visit to St. Mullins for the adjudicator and in advance the very name of the village created a sense of anticipated mystery. What a truly beautiful place this is. The Tidy Town Committee and the community have been extremely successful in letting nature, and the natural environment dominate the landscape. Relatively low key intervention has been made on the landscape in regard to your many projects. This is the mark of great success in village treatment.

The entry form and documentation was extremely comprehensive. Thank for the Sli Na Slainte brochure, the Heritage Trail and Bicentenary booklet, all of which were read with great interest. The photographs were also extremely helpful. The committee is a large one by national standards and that is most encouraging and the close involvement of the School in your various events is of key importance. Well done on your Pride of Place success last year. The three people involved in the CEP Scheme have done great work which is highly commended. The 3 Year Plan is detailed and clear and a most useful document. The adjudicator enjoyed reading the Heritage Guide No 5 that you provided. The fact that you enjoy good agency support is so obvious on the ground.

The Built Environment:

The plans for the small Marina sound most interesting and we look forward for news on progress of this initiative next year. The new car park and the beautifully designed walkway to the heritage core of the village was really admired. One of the great aspects of this access route is that it has been prepared to blend perfectly with the natural surroundings. Repair work was examined at the base of the Round Tower and it was really interesting to be able to examine the inside of such a structure. The new path to the Heritage Centre

(closed on the day of the visit) again blends very well environmentally. In the most interesting Graveyard, the new building identification signs added much interest to the visit. At the entrance to the Graveyard the information panel needed to be cleaned or re-done. There is such a great sense of history in the Graveyard and the birds and the babbling of the nearby river create a great sense of contemplation here. The old Mill would appear to have a great redevelopment potential and we look forward to progress on the Plan for this large group of buildings. The redevelopment of the old Grain Store has been successful and has not been 'over done'. The toilets were excellently presented in every way. The erosion issue at the Motte is a really serious one and do get early professional advice. It may even be necessary to stop people, like this adjudicator, climbing to the top to admire the panoramic view! The presentation of the Quay area is superb and the surfacing here is so appropriate, at the same time not visually intrusive.

Landscaping:

Much of the landscaping in St. Mullins has been done by nature with just a little, but very appropriate, addition by The Tidy Towns Committee. The landscaping plan was noted with interest and it was good to see that you are following this year by year. Do always remember the importance of year round colour. Good landscaping was noted on the New Ross approach at the village name stone. The Green area is excellently presented but the visual impact was diminished a little by a car and a van parked on the grass. If such parking is necessary on an ongoing basis perhaps a designated car parking space for a few vehicles can be developed here. Around the Motte area the grass had been cut but thankfully not too close. Your approach to grass cutting gives a much more natural result. However, on approach roads grass on verges and banks had been cut but in some cases the cut grass had not been removed. On the road to the key the largely natural landscaping along the Graveyard wall was much appreciated.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The planting of native tree species is applauded as is the development of the habitat pile – a simple but effective and important idea. The wildlife panel at the Quay needs a little work as some of the lettering has become deformed. The Wildlife Tours are a great concept and what an interesting area for them. The wildlife area at the back of the Motte was examined but an information panel at this point would have been interesting for the visitor.

Litter Control:

The Daily litter patrols are an excellent idea and certainly are producing most positive litter control results. On the day of adjudication three litter pickers were seen out at 9.15 am! It is a great idea to ask residents to take control of litter in a 100 meter road frontage area. The Litter Management Plan is warmly welcomed as are the new wooden litter bins for the Quay area. On the day of the visit litter control was exceptionally good.

Waste Minimisation:

The introduction of the recycling bin is welcomed strongly as are the composting bins noted near the Motte. Try and introduce one new initiative in respect of waste minimisation each year.

Tidiness:

St. Mullins was found to be extremely tidy in all areas and just a few issues were noted. At the Borris / Tinnahinch road junction weed growth along the base of the long road boundary wall here needed attention. This wall would be improved if repainted. The car and van parked on the grass at the Green has been discussed above. At the Quay the seats / tables needed to be treated and graffiti was noted on one table. Some rubbish in the river might be removed at the base of the angling platform at the right hand end of the Quay car park.

Residential Areas:

The house in the St. Mullins area was generally attractively presented in a way that was totally appropriate to a deeply rural area. The houses at the bottom of Quay Lane have a great sense of community and this is such an attractive quiet area. An attractive, very well presented farmhouse with the Post Box caught the eye in the Green and the other properties here also impressed.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

On the Borris approach to the 50 KPH signs the verges had not been cut and looked rather rough. The resurfacing of Bauck Hill has made a big difference to this area. The fine low stone wall and the very good verges and planting on the Tinnahinch road was much admired. Some additional verge and bank cutting on the New Ross was necessary. One of the very attractive features of St. Mullins is the small, narrow, tree lined winding lanes that creates a great sense of anticipation around every corner.

General Impression:

You continue to do great work for St. Mullins and it was a real pleasure for your adjudicator to spend some time here on a warm June morning. Good luck with your work for next year.