

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mullingar** Ref: **206**
County: **Westmeath** Mark: **252**
Category: **G** Date(s): **22/06/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	34	34
The Built Environment	50	37	38
Landscaping	50	35	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20	21
Litter Control	50	28	28
Tidiness	30	16	17
Waste Minimisation	20	8	9
Residential Areas	40	30	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30	32
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	245	252

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you very much for the filled up entry form and those nice photographs. Unfortunately I did not receive a map of the town and it was difficult trying to identify districts and where your boundaries are. The map is very important for us adjudicators to navigate through towns.

I note you have fifteen committee members and hold meetings every two months and you are getting a lot of support from the list you provided. The local people are well informed of your activities. There is excellent interaction between your committee and the schools.

There are lots of events in the town that provide good social outlets for the townspeople.

All of this means you have a good approach to the competition.

The Built Environment:

This is a pleasant town to visit, where there are a variety of good shops and public buildings, and it was noticeable there are plenty places to eat and enjoy a snack or a drink.

Going around the town I admired bi-lingual signage at the well presented shop front of S Mac Tréinfir. Druids chair with the clock has attractive signage. The hotels – Greville Arms and Annebrook in particular stood out, and I loved the little bridges over the river at the Annebrook.

The sculpture of the pilgrims is a great feature and there is a great view of the street from the seating there that leads up to the second sculpture of Joe Dolan a fitting tribute to a wonderful singer.

The round front of Austin Friar's hotel is unusual and attractive.

The Presbyterian Church is a beauty and it is a pity that it has to be sold off.

Some footpaths contained advertising material and some products were shown on the footpath near the small church and this type of advertising does not cater for the people with impaired vision.

The distinctive church of Ireland looked supreme with the great railing and gate so well presented. The old community hall near the church, probably once a school is starting to look a bit run down and it would be great if it got a new lease of life. Market House and the County Buildings are in great shape. I liked Carton Casey, Zaro and Jasmine shops. St Paul's church nestles peacefully enclosed by good landscaping at the side of the hill. The Cathedral is a landmark structure and looked supreme surrounded by the great railing. Nearby the extensive Garda Barracks and Schools make this a beautiful part of the town. But several other shops and offices were presented to the highest standard. The swimming pool was spotlessly clean.

Landscaping:

The Town Park is a great facility for the townspeople and nice to see people crossing through on the fine pathways to access other parts of the town. The children's playing areas are spread out nicely in this extensive park. The lake in the middle is a great feature of this park and I loved the bridge across it with the safety railings. A pair of swans swam merrily, but a work of caution is advisable to deal with the algae and what is causing it. The Silver Brosna is an interesting sculpture. Excellent seating all around the park makes it a wonderful place to relax in the fresh air. Main St is adorned with good quality floral displays as is Domnick Street, but I felt that some of the streets could be further adorned with the inclusion of some suitable trees as in Church Avenue. Many other areas of the town has good landscaping notably at Lynn roundabout and St Pauls Church. It was a positive move to get Dermot O'Neill to give some professional advice about further enhancement of the landscape.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

I note your plans for the Tranquility Park which are quite interesting. The walks by the side of the canal are splendid recreational amenities and you could provide a few signs to relate details of the fauna and flora that is prevalent along these routes. You could also get some people on to your committee that have an interest in outdoor pursuits to tell us all about the wildlife of this beautiful part of County Westmeath.

Litter Control:

Positive initiatives are undertaken to keep on top of the litter in this town that leaves it for the most part neat and tidy. It is a big area to keep on top of at all times. The national problem of cigarette ends strewn about is noticeable in some parts of the town, and a black spot was noticed near the bus stop across from Extra Vision where the container for butts had lots of them on top of it and on the ground. Another black spot of chewing gum residue was found outside McDonalds in Church Avenue. The first litter bin at the entrance to the Town Park was full and as a consequence litter was strewn about, but where the other well serviced litter bins are in place the surroundings were neat and tidy. Interesting to find the litter wardens are now patrolling the town on bicycles and this will greatly help the prevention of litter. Great to find that a Judge at the court in Mullingar has ring fenced a substantial sum of money from fines for litter for your activities.

Tidiness:

Graffiti is noted on a limited scale and it is ruining the lovely wall at the entrance to the Park. Unfortunately dereliction and closed down businesses leave the surroundings untidy and a group of derelict houses are very noticeable on Clonmore road. It would be wonderful to have some more cables put underground and I read you are pursuing this goal.

Waste Minimisation:

With all the twelve schools involved in Green School initiatives the children, parents and teachers are now taking a responsible attitude to the protection of the local environment. Your encouragement of the local businesses to minimise waste are noted. The "Pride of Place – Eco Friendly Schools" competition is a great way of increasing awareness amongst the people, and Mullingar Educate Together National School are leading the way with the vegetable garden and compost bin. We all have a role to play in the minimisation of the waste and we must preach reduce reuse and recycle at all times. I went out to the Oxigin recycling centre, and it is presented in excellent condition taking in a large variety of materials.

Residential Areas:

I visited a sample of the housing estates and from what I saw a very good standard of presentation was in place and the tidy estates competition helps to keep the standard up. I note they are not relying too much on your committee as they organise their own "clean up" days. The town houses are maintained to a high

standard and the people are proud of their places with good spirit in evidence. There are some really special stand alone houses around the town with great displays of landscaping making some areas most picturesque.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The roads around the town are in good condition with excellent signage that was clear and distinct. The bridge at the turn for Delvin is a great structure and the railing along the side of the road there is sturdy and attractive. Good parking space is provided in many car parks that keeps the traffic flowing in most of the streets, but there was some congestion at Domnick Street.

General Impression:

There are great efforts made to present this fine town in good condition, and it was a pleasure to return here after an absence of ten years to find all the improvements. You have impressive plans for the betterment of Mullingar. Well done.