

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mullingar** Ref: **206**
County: **Westmeath** Mark: **282**
Category: **G** Date(s): **30/06/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	40	40
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	42	43
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	40	41
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	24	24
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	11	11
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	49	50
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	35	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	36	37
TOTAL MARK	450	277	282

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Welcome Mullingar Tidy Towns to the 2017 Supervalu Tidy Towns Competition. Your entry is very much appreciated. Thank you for your illustrated entry form and map. The map was inadequate. This adjudicator does not use glasses. The map is so small that the print is unreadable. The numbers were just about legible but nothing else. Your map page says that the original map is included "where the references can be seen clearer". It was not included so the references are meaningless. The numbers should have been included in the text in your entry form but were not. The entry form instructions state clearly "ensure each project is given the same number on your entry form as on the map".

You must supply a legible map with next year's entry form. Your chosen population category is large urban area G. You have a committee of 12 and 10 volunteers. That seems appropriate for your population. No doubt you can get more volunteers if needed. You estimate that you have 30 other bodies that help you. Meetings held as required. Your meetings are also attended by reps of commercial streets. The list of support agencies ranges from Westmeath County Council to Robert Gunne.

Your channels of communication include social media and traditional print media. We look forward to getting a copy of your new 3 year plan in due course. You engage well with your schools and plan to have a Junior Tidy Towns and you will include a rep of it on your committee. You also engage with youth organisations. Well done. You have been participating in the competition for over 30 years. Clearly you are experts by now. You set out the value of the competition to your community very well in your entry form.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

Christ The King Cathedral is imposing. It is visible from all parts of the town. It is well-presented. All Saints Church of Ireland is well-preserved. Its bell is on display in a hallway. School building behind the church flies 1 green flag. All Saints Parochial School 2000. Last day of school before holidays. All very happy. There are lots of schools in Mullingar. Others are St Mary's Co-Ed School. 1 green flag. Building well-presented. Attractive, colourful display of flowers.

A secondary school – "An Edmund Rice School" is beside the cathedral. What was a tree trunk is now a wooden sculpture? The Heavey Institute seems too grand a title for a school. The Garda Station opposite looks well. Gael Scoil an Muillinn 1994 has a fine entrance and railings. Building looks well. Well planted beds along the railings. Loretto College is a magnificent campus with impressive buildings – a mix of old and new. All well-presented. Extensive grounds with majestic trees, shrubs and hedges. A grotto at the entrance is eye-catching. No gates at the entrance or exit. What a lovely statement to make.

St Brigid's School building is well-presented. It has a colourful mural on a wall. Hanging baskets, flowers in beds and containers add more colour. St Brigid's is expanding. Congratulations. Planning application dated last May. Presentation Junior and Senior School have 1 green flag. Buildings look well. Lots of colour on a boundary wall. All

neat and tidy. St Coleman's National School is on an elevated site and looks well. Nicely painted, it has 1 green flag. Tiered flower beds at the school building. Fine stone wall in front of the school. Canton Casey stands out. Its opulent window boxes and flower containers on a railing add a lot of colour to this key position in the town. It also has traditional shop fronts. An elegant black lamp post has 3 baskets of flowers to further enhance the area. The Fair Green complex has planters on the footpath and at the roundabout. The Railway Station is very well-presented. Neat and tidy. Great use of the colour yellow. New entrance and ramp admired. Marian Year statue at the entrance has flowers in beds and containers. Trees, shrubs and flower beds in the station and its environs. Courthouse covered in scaffolding. The canal harbour is very well-maintained thanks to Waterways Ireland. It now has a toilet block, elegant lamp posts, seats, etc. Grass is well-maintained. A slipway has been added. A Waterways Ireland notice urges anglers to return fish "or there will be no fishing to return to". Adult exercise machines are a useful addition. The Tourist Office in Market Square looks very well. So, does the Joe Dolan statue outside it. On Pearse Street John Daly's pub has a traditional shop front and is well-painted. Voluptuous hanging baskets and wooden flower barrels. Mullingar Credit Union is well-presented. Branch offices in surrounding villages seen by this adjudicator. A nice mural on a wall in Meeting House Lane features a child and a red balloon. Old Masonic Hall well-presented. St Loman's Hospital is a venerable complex.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

the canal and rivers.

Landscaping

You mention your 1916 Memorial Park. Is this an addition to the Town Park and Tranquillity Park? This adjudicator visited a 1916 Commemorative feature near Columb Barracks. Very many of these have been visited in the course of this year's and last year's adjudications. Common elements were the Proclamation, 7 trees and the flag. At the one in Mullingar there was graffiti on a wall at the feature which should have been treated.

The Town Park gate pillars are impressive. The park has plenty going on – lake, bridge, nice seats, lamp posts, litter bins and a tree stump crafted into a piece of sculpture – The Norse and the Gael. The children's playground has lots of colourful equipment and the swimming pool looks well. Next door are well-kept tennis courts. There is a good avenue of trees at the Sunday's Well road entrance. The silver Brosna sculpture is eye-catching. Tranquillity Gardens will improve as it matures. Pity there is no access to the stream. The banks are so overgrown that the stream will be overwhelmed in due course.

The very large art piece should be given a name. At the roundabout near Fair Green there is a great display of pink flowers. The roundabout at Dominick St/Oliver Plunkett St is very colourful. The maximum amount of flowers used to great effect.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:

We note your clean-up of the Royal Canal banks and your reference to invasive species. As you know invasive species must not be touched without expert supervision and reports must be sent to the appropriate database. No doubt all of this was complied with. Providing bat boxes was a good initiative. We await the outcome of the bio-diversity project involving your community group. Well done to Mullingar library for hosting an exhibition of insect mansions, bird boxes, etc. We await the outcome of your new project regarding signage along the canal and rivers.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

You have some items in this category but before dealing with them this adjudicator would like to use the opportunity to gently remind Mullingar Tidy Towns that priorities in this category changed fundamentally. This category has evolved in line with current waste prevention and 'best policy' guidelines. These guidelines are based on the revised Tidy Towns Handbook guidelines distributed to Tidy Towns groups in 2013. The EU Waste Management Hierarchy now puts waste prevention ahead of waste treatment in terms of priorities. Once Tidy Towns groups have prevented waste as much as possible, then, they should look at opportunities to reuse, then to recycle as much as possible. It is not clear who organised the bus to Ballinahown. Was this a Tidy Towns initiative? It is not clear what was involved in the reuse month event and the St Vincent de Paul charity shop. It is also not clear what went on with the upcycling workshop. We note you are to submit an application for a Market Gardening course. The Recycling Centre on Delvin Road has 1 metal clothes container which is clean. Large black plastic sack on the ground. 7 bottle bins. None full. All need cleaning. Two white bins show the dirt more than the others. Area behind the bins needs to be cleaned – bottle tops, paper, sweet wrappers, etc. No litter in front of the bottle bins.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The Gum Litter Task Force is commended for its work with Mullingar Community College. The dog fouling initiative is also commended. Using an audio device is novel but effective. The Women's Community Centre competition is also commended. Well done to St Brigid's for winning. We await the outcome of the "back to beauty" event. The Grange United piece of art in place of graffiti was interesting. Daily sweeping by Westmeath County Council noted. Also, monthly sweeping of approach roads and housing estates. Your Best Estate and Shop Front competitions also noted. In next year's entry form please let us know what litter picking your Tidy Towns group carries out – numbers of volunteers, frequency, etc. Please add details of your weed control, too. Well done on your National Spring Clean.

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

Are the residential areas marked on your map, particularly those that are operating the 2-minute clean ups? During the adjudication, the following residential areas were visited. Ashfield, off Ashe Road – name plaque at the entrance. Good brick walls with railings. Residences well-presented. Fine, big hedges. Lots of trees. Green areas

well-maintained. No weeds. Harbour Street is a terrace of 6 two storey red brick houses. All well-presented. This terrace stands out. O'Growney Drive has a bi-lingual name stone at the entrance. Two wide well-maintained green areas with mature trees. Good paths with high kerbs. Road surface good. Back lane spotless. Mature neighbourhood. Residences well-presented. Planters on a traffic island. A prize winner in a "Tidy Neighbourhood" competition. Perhaps you would add a list of resident associations to next year's entry form.

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

As you know approach roads are important in helping to create the first impression of your town. Only one new project was included in this category – Lynn Road. This project was finally located but it was not clear what significance this stretch of road has. In next year's entry form, perhaps you would tell us what your current 3 year plan says about "Welcome to Mullingar" signage, what has been achieved and what remains to be done. The road structure around the town is complex. As you know most Tidy Towns have a plan which is agreed with the local authority who supply the signs. The NRA may also be involved in the signage. Agreements are reached about landscaping roundabouts and its signage.

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you Mullingar Tidy Towns for this opportunity to adjudicate your town. It was an interesting experience. We look forward to receiving your entry in the 2018 Supervalu Tidy Towns competition.