

Tidy Towns Competition 2022

Adjudication Report

Centre: Mullingar - An Muilleann gCearr	Ref: 206
County: Westmeath	Mark: 326
Category: G	Date(s): 20/07/2022

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021	Mark Awarded 2022
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	43	45
Streetscape & Public Places	80	47	49
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	45	46
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	30	31
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	17	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	56	57
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	38	39
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	40	41
TOTAL MARK	550	316	326

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2022. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór An Muilleann gCearr. Thank you for your application and the continuing participation of Mullingar, for almost 40 years now, in the Tidy Towns competition. This is an important year for Mullingar with Flradh Ceoil na hÉireann returning to the town and providing an opportunity for all to be involved in preparations. The entry form and accompanying map were very helpful in assisting with judication, N and M projects were easy to locate. Your committee and volunteers are doing good work in drawing support of a wide range of agencies and business to support your activities. Your engagement with schools is commended, and the Fishing for All competition was a practical way to introduce young people to the value of river water quality to the maintenance of fish populations. Congratulations on your Bronze Tidy Towns award and your Pride of Place award for 2022.

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

The organization of the Christmas Shopfront Competition and the Summer Bedding Competition are good ways to widen involvement and enhance the streetscape of Mullingar. With such a variety of shop fronts in the town such competition draws attention to the diversity of retail outlets. The planting of biodiversity enhancing plants around the town is welcomed. The tree planting in the park will be a wonderful addition to this area in coming the years. Trees can also enhance the streetscape of the town and it may be worth considering the planting of more trees in the town. The smaller streets and lanes in the town center show the value of car free environments for small shops and on street dining.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The biodiversity planting throughout the town is commended. The use of native plant material and working with your horticulturalist establishes a network of green spaces throughout Mullingar. The ongoing work of volunteers in maintaining these sites is noted, The displays flowers on shopfronts really enhances the town and as noted above competitions to involve business in the ongoing development of such displays is encouraged. Mullingar is fortunate to be at a point where the Royal Canal Greenway and old Rail Trail converge. The Town Park has a good mix of play spaces and as noted biodiversity planting. The Pocket Forest project is a good initiative and a nice way to bring trees into the town.

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

The planting and maintenance work along the Brosna and at Carey's bridge highlight the sometimes-difficult task of

change from more formal landscaping to 'working with nature'. Continue to work with your biodiversity plan as this is a useful document on which to base future activities. It is good to note participation in the Waterways biodiversity course by Isolde. The Royal Canal Way and the Rail Trail are 'biodiversity hotspots' for the town. The habitat mapping project for the canal could be extended to other parts of the town. A survey by schools and homeowners of birdlife in and around the town would be a useful way to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity. Surveys are also useful ways of looking at how things are getting better from year to year.

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

The new bike sharing scheme is welcome. It was good to see the cycle hubs around the town. Are you monitoring use of these bikes? The network of cycle lanes could now be extended into the town. The encouragement of cycling for all will have benefits for health, the quality of the streets and in reducing the carbon footprint of the town. The ongoing work of recycling, the networks of charity shops, electric car charging points and planned talks on climate action for the community are welcomed. It is good to see that Mullingar is a Decarbonised zone for Westmeath. As a decarbonizing zone you should be considering how to gather information on how this project is working. In coming years you will be able to report on carbon emission reductions and energy savings.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The 'before and after' photographs of graffiti at the Springfield tunnel show how this kind of work can enhance an area making it feel safer for the general public. Litter pick activities with volunteers and schools gets everyone involved and the results show in the overall tidiness of the town, canal and rail trail areas. The focus of cleaning on particular black spots is noted and the follow up planting at Carey bridge will deter future littering in the area. The upcoming Fleadh will benefit greatly from the cleaning and maintenance activities of the Tidy Towns team and volunteers.

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

Working with resident associations at Abbeylands and Ardleigh will bring future rewards as awareness of biodiversity and the use of a community garden show the benefits of such actions. If possible keep a record of when birds start using bird boxes, which species use them and that they are maintained in coming years. The approaches to residential areas and the estates throughout the town were seen to be well kept, many have welcoming planting schemes and place signs that give the visitor a welcome to the community. In some places street names are beginning to fade, a plan with the council to upgrade these would enhance streets around the town.

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

The roundabouts on approach roads all provide welcoming displays to the visitor. Signage detracts at some of these roundabouts and a culling would help reduce the feeling of clutter. Sponsors of displays could be noted on Facebook or perhaps with just one sign. The network of cycle lanes needs to be refurbished and could be extended into the town. This is a project that will feed into many aspects of sustainability in the town

Concluding Remarks:

The ongoing work of the committee and the support of the community through volunteering and sponsorship is a measure good to see. It was a pleasure to visit Mullingar in this Fleadh year and to see the community pulling together present a warm welcome to visitors.