

Tidy Towns Competition 2025

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mulranny - An Mhala Raithní**

Ref: **501**

County: **Mayo**

Mark: **395**

Category: **B**

Date(s): **09/06/2025**

24/07/2025

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	55	57
Streetscape & Public Places	80	49	51
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	53	54
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	53	55
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	29	30
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	68	70
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	32	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	43	45
TOTAL MARK	550	382	395

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Bailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2025. Go raibh maith agaibh as d'iontráil a sheoladh chugainn. Maith sibh as an obair atá déanta i bhur cheantar go dtí seo - guímid gach rath oraibh i bhúr thionscadail amach anseo. Ádh mór.

Welcome to the 2025 SuperValu TidyTowns competition and thank you for your application form, which included photos, your Five-Year Plan, and your map and map legend which assisted us greatly as we meandered around the village. This was a return visit for us to your community and we were delighted to see the progress made in the intervening few years - well done to all concerned. You have been involved in the TidyTowns competition since 1992 and we hope the comments in the reports have been useful to your community in the intervening years. For a population of just over 300 it is great to see the number involved in Tidy Towns both on the committee and as volunteers including those who visit on holiday. Compliments on your Mulranny Five Year Plan and it's excellent to see that you are updating it annually and so progressing in your Mission 'Mulranny, with its beautiful coastal setting on the shores of Clew Bay, will have preserved and enhanced its natural environment.' It's encouraging to read that the committee have defined individual roles and in that way your activities are monitored and progressed efficiently. The crossover that you have between different community groups will also help advance your Plan. Keep up the communication with these groups so that the village works as a unit.

We see that you have an Instagram Account and a Facebook Page with over 750 followers We were delighted to see that both are very active with good up-to-date pictures and information. Don't forget to add in some photos of your butterflies now that you've completed a study. Compliments also to the Mulranny Old Photos Facebook page which has some interesting old photos of the village.

Just to note – it's not necessary to list the Adjudicator's comment from previous years and to say how these were addressed. We, the adjudicators, will see the changes when we visit and walk around.

See Concluding Remarks for advice on filling out the application form and producing a map.

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

Your long streetscape from east to west with views over Clew Bay is very special. Your built environment has a great variety of architectural styles which give character to your village. Single and two storey vernacular structures interspersed with open plazas overlooking the sea greet the visitor. The Railway Station, Arts Centre, RC church of the Immaculate Conception, and the Mulranny Park Hotel are among the buildings of note. The thatched cottage and metal roofed cottage with their freshly whitewashed walls and painted red and green timber doors respectively, also adds merit to the streetscape. Remove the ivy from the gable of the cottage with the metal roof, as ivy will damage the roof timbers. We admired the open plaza areas with the painted white rails. Have you considered painting them a dark grey to make them less obtrusive and give a clearer view of the coastline? Some of the seats

in these areas are in need to attention /varnishing/ painting. The Victorian Causeway is a wonderful asset. We walked down the steps opposite the hotel and were delighted to come across this wonderful structure. Congratulations to Mayo Co Co and the local community on its repair. This is a great asset to the village and we were delighted to see the work carried out. The before and after photos clearly show the extent of the work which was required. We noted quite a few people using it to access the beach. Please commend the local businesses for the immaculate presentation of their properties which added to the streetscape – Moynish House, Avondale House, etc. The discrete finger posts e.g. Footpath to Shore are perfect in the streetscape. Compliments to Mayo Co Co and we were delighted to see that the signs are also in Irish.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

You have a number of green spaces in and around the village which were well maintained and inviting. We admired the stone surround planting beds which are dotted along the entrance roads, and particularly the one at the entrance to the St Brendan's Village and Clew Bay Cottages housing estates. The variety of height, spread and movement in many of the larger beds was admired and with the selection chosen, on the day we visited they were alive with butterflies and bees. Next year add some ornamental grasses (great for height and movement) and also trailing plants/flowers for added interest and greater impact. We admired that natural hedgerows are seen all around the village with honeysuckle and fuchsia in flower. While we understand the wish to have a great display of colour along the streetscape we strongly advise against a profusion of planters. Planters should be added for impact in areas where permanent beds aren't suitable. But don't overdo it. And remember the best plant containers are those which are concealed by the plants – so add trailing plants to your planters which will give more impact and interest. We loved the Fern Walk as it meanders through the woodland. It's great to give an alternative to the steps to access the Victorian Causeway. Is it your intention to add gravel to the path to make it safer for use after it has rained? We think you should also consider adding a few steps – made with railway sleepers - in the areas where it's a little steep. We read that seating will be provided as the project progresses which will be welcomed by those who wish to sit and relax in these surroundings. The Centenary Garden following its major tidy in April by the Men's Shed was very presentable.

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

With the great number of stone walls, hedgerows, mature trees and coastal area to the south you have a great variety of habitats for insects and mammals. The hedge rows were very colourful with a variety of wildflowers in bloom and were buzzing with insect life – foxglove, ox-eyed daises, cornflowers, etc. all in bloom. The Butterfly Garden is a work in progress and will in time be a splendid area for our pollinators; the work was progressing well when we visited. We see from the photos you included in your application form the hard work which has brought it to the stage it was at, when we visited. We note that you have carried out excellent research into the planting – host plant, nectar plants, and seasonal plants. The location beside the national school will attract children and will serve as an educational tool. Nice to see that you have already carried out a survey on the species of butterflies. Perhaps get the school children involved in a project relating to butterflies when the garden is complete. The Save the Bees educational sign concerning flowers to plants is in a good location at the entrance to the St. Brendan's Village / Clew Bay Cottages housing estates. Trim back the bush that's encroaching on the bug hotel so that it's on view for local children. The Old Irish Goat farm was visited – what amazing horns! Compliment to the owners on these wonderful animals. The Mulranny Machair and Saltmarshes are quite splendid and well deserved as an SAC. We are delighted that you have included information about this area in this year's application form. Perhaps arrange some 'walk and talk' visits, where you have experts leading the community /school children. These could take place at various times of the year to incorporate grass/floral growth or migrating birds.

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

This is a category which many Tidy Towns groups struggle but truthfully it is just about being aware of how we use the resources of the planet so that we cut down on our waste. Educating both young and old in Sustainability – doing more with less is crucial so that we advance our knowledge in how we use the resources of the planet in order to cut down on our waste. We loved the Mulranny Solar Meitheal/ Mulranny Green Plan and see that both young and old are participating in various activities. The Mulranny Towards 2030 sounds very exciting and that so many state, semi state, third level institutes are participating will hopefully ensure its success. The Dry Stone Wall Festival is wonderful and great that Mulranny, among other towns around Ireland, have embraced this form of construction and celebrate it with a festival. What was the result of the world citizen science data collection project which you carried out on the beach? Was the jetsam litter different to other beaches? Tell us more about this project next year – we're assuming you'll take part next year again. The herb pocket gardens are a wonderful idea and we encourage you to expand these. Do you know what the coffee shops/pubs are doing with their waste coffee grounds? Are they being used in private garden's compost bins or is St. Brendan's using them? Wonderful that the Gift of Hands won the EPA Circular Economy Award – what year was this? Great to see the Water Station at the Tourist Office and we're delighted that you are monitoring the usage of this. Let us know what the local community are doing in their lives to further the objectives of Sustainability. It took us a while to find your polytunnels but we finally found them! Good to see them being so well used and providing vegetables and fruit for St Brendan's. Good also to see the school's green flag blowing in the wind.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Like many communities in Mayo, you took part in the 2025 Spring Clean-Up – we commend you on this as it focuses the attention of a community on the need to be vigilant on litter, fly-tipping and weed growth. When we visited your village was extremely clean and tidy which is a commendation of how the villagers view your work. Compliments to your volunteers. We noted that quite a few unoccupied buildings had been cleaned and/or painted

in addition to boundary walls and fences. This gave a cared for atmosphere and with this the community and visitors are more likely to respect the village. In some few areas weed growth was noticed at kerbs, base of walls and in open gravel areas which gave an unkempt feel but to be honest there weren't many. We love that the 12th Mayo Mulranny Scout's Group, Burrishoole GAA, Mulranny N.S. pupils and Junior Tidy Towns contribute to litter control, village tidiness and also to Clean Coast. Please commend them and their teachers/leaders for this work. The photos were wonderful! Having 'service wiring' underground certainly adds to the neatness of any village and town and we were delighted to see that yours was amongst those completed in recent years. The wall and gate at the Arts Centre is in need of repair ... has it been like this for long? There is also some maintenance required on some of the steps leading to the Victorian Causeway. Cut back the vegetation encroaching on the steps and also paint the handrails and lighting poles. The vegetation at the picnic bench near the school also needs attention. Some benches around the town are in need of painting/varnishing, particularly in the plaza areas overlooking the sea. We noted ivy on some stone walls. While ivy is a wonderful for insect life and is acceptable/good on rendered (plastered) walls it is not acceptable on stone structures as the roots penetrate between the joints in the stones, making the walls unstable and leading to their collapse. Natural stone constructions are in themselves great habitats for insect life and also very beautiful in the streetscape.

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

Set in rural Mayo the residents of the village have contributed positively to making the village extremely pleasant with freshly painted boundary walls and fences and neat kept gardens welcoming the visitor. Shrubs and herbaceous borders were noted in many gardens and some residents had specimen trees as features. Single and two storey traditional houses are the predominant style of houses along the entrance roads and some of these had been freshly painted.

The small housing estate of St Brendan's Village/Clew Bay Cottages had well-kept houses and gardens and here colourful flowers were noted. The entrance to this housing area is particularly pleasant with the stone surround bed and neatly kept green space with picnic bench. The St. Brendan's Village name sign is quite pleasant but a kerb is needed to contain the gravel at the base. At present it has been kicked out onto the adjoining footpath which gives the area an unkempt feel. Where there were no gardens, residents had added window boxes, hanging baskets and planters which were full of colour and added greatly not only to the beauty of the streetscape but also to the biodiversity. The private Mulranny Holiday Village was neat and tidy with walls freshly painted, and grass and shrub beds neatly tended. We also visited The Courtyard and here too some residents had colourful floral displays. You have provided numerous colourful window boxes and planters at the Railway Station which make a positive impression of those using the Greenway.

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

Approaching from the east we admired that the grass had been trimmed along the roadside informing the motorist that they are entering an urban area and so need to reduce speed. The freshly stained black bollards along the road also show that the area is being maintained. Behind these the beautiful array of wildflowers was buzzing with insect life. Trim the bushes which encroach on the first Mulranny sign, as the bottom two panels cannot be read. It's good to see the signs showing your achievements in the Tidy Towns and Entente Florale Europe competitions – bronze, silver and gold medal winners – well done to all who contributed to these wonderful achievements. The community and visitors no doubt are complimentary of your accolades. We loved the low long row of rosa rugosa set in the gravel beds. A perfect plant for this area but as it's invasive take care to keep it trimmed. Along the entrance from the west, we were met with an equally well-maintained entrance with neat grass margins and mature trees. The picnic area along this road needs a little attention but we were delighted to see that a car park was adjacent which makes it user friendly in this location. Road marking along the approach roads were clear with the hard shoulder clearly defined. The cycleway along the road to the east was noted ... is this well used? The road surface in the village was good/reasonable. We see that you/ Mayo Co Co have undertaken a Universal Design Walkability audit of the village and have installed dipped paving and tactile surfaces at junctions. The pedestrian link between the N59 and high road is excellent giving residents access to the village amenities without the need for vehicular transport.

Concluding Remarks:

We thoroughly enjoyed visiting your village and compliment you on your application form ... but we have a few suggestions for 2026. It took us a long time to discover where Project Nos 2 and 8 were and how to access them. The map needs more information - pedestrian links, housing estate names, and show the Victorian Causeway and the Greenway. This will make it easier for the adjudicators to negotiate their way around your village. Future projects are NOT to be included in the Application Form – these should be in your Five-Year Plan only. When they have been completed then put them in the Application Form as New Projects. While you used colour in the title of the various categories you didn't use it for the projects which appear under the various categories. Next year colour code the Project Number as well as the Category Headings and transfer these colours to the map. It will make the map clearer/easier to follow by the adjudicators. We wish to state that this is not a criticism of your work but to explain to you that as adjudicators we rely on a clear application form and accompanying map to inform us of your projects and make our visit rewarding. Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2025 competition. It was a pleasure to adjudicate Mulranny

Second Round Adjudication:

It was our pleasure to be back in Mulranny after a period of several years. We were pleased to see strong evidence of great enthusiasm within the community in taking care of your lovely village. Well done on reducing the size of the

application down to 30 pages. Having read through it, we can see several more ways of bringing it down to perhaps 25 pages. This can be done by reducing the amount of information on the background to projects and the benefits that accrue to the community. As adjudicators, we are aware of these benefits, so there is no need to tell us in the application. While we appreciate that you have used bullet points and pictures to help make the application easier for the adjudicator, we feel that you are providing unnecessary information. Please restrict your comments to what was done and where it is located.

We visited Murrivaugh Cemetery which was clean and tidy. Noting the contrast between the traditional stone walls around the car park opposite the cemetery and the concrete walls fronting the cemetery, we wondered if it was ever considered to lower the concrete wall around the cemetery and stone face it to match the lovely stone walls at the car park.

At the western approach of the N 59 junction, there are some of the largest signs we have ever seen and of course they are necessary for this very important junction. There are also local signs of different sizes which are adding some clutter. Heritage signs are very interesting and are very well done, but the old triangular post and small sign about the Ballroom of Romance needs refurbishment or replacement. It is loose, rusty and the sign is bent. Picnic seats here look very well and having a place to park a car means that they are accessible for visitors.

We visited the Butterfly garden but it hasn't really established – we saw far more butterflies in the centenary garden – where Red Admiral butterflies were in abundance around a Buddleia bush. We noted the Entente Florale Europe plaque from your participation in 2019 fixed to the wall – well done on being part of that well-known European environmental award scheme – the oldest in Europe.

Mulranny Park hotel is a lovely big building on the hill beside the main road. The grounds are attractive in front at the side of the hotel. There is a dead Monkey puzzle (*Araucaria araucana*) tree to the side which should be removed - the views from the hotel of Clew Bay are very attractive. The retaining wall in front of the hotel is faced with stone and looks very well. Flowering cherry (*Prunus*) trees planted in the grass margin in front of the wall must look splendid in springtime – one specimen is being pushed towards the road by a gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) plant which should be pruned back to allow the tree to grow straight.

We walked down the steps to the beach, they look very interesting and quite a climb coming back! It appears that some trees which probably fell during a storm have blocked this pedestrian route – some were cut and removed and other have yet to be removed. We noted the very interesting Fern Walk. At the entrance to the steps are two hawthorn (*Crataegus*) trees and beneath them are two square raised plant containers – we suggest they be moved elsewhere - where they can get more light and rain. An electric cable attached to one of the trees looks untidy. The road here is eroding down the slope, something I'm sure you have brought to the attention of the council.

The station house is a wonderful project – it is great that the building was restored and now serves a valuable service for the public, with public toilets and the shop. Cyclists who used the Great Western Greenway were sitting enjoying a break.

We visited St Brendan's care facility and admired the colourful roses at the entrance.

Towards the eastern end of the village there are two promenades which are very well constructed. The paving, railings, and seats are a high standard of finish, although the seats which are well used will need some protection before winter. Do you depend on painting or are the seats covered during wintertime? Finger post signs will need protection or replacement in a few years.

The paving appeared to be power washed and were clean. Several flower boxes and other containers contain great displays of colourful flowers, including Petunias Pelargoniums and many other seasonal plants providing great colour.

Looking over the wall, we were amazed to see underneath, a floral carpet of Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) – an invasive plant which is well established in and around Mulranny. The seed travels with water streams. The key to control is to cut it before it flowers which is something people are reluctant to do, because the flowers are attractive and resemble their cousin, the busy lizzie – a common houseplant. But this is not the only invasive plant in Mulranny; there are many *Rhododendron ponticum* (native to north west Asia), all around the village and beyond. You also have plenty of *Crocodylia* (*Montbretia*), displaying its shades of red and orange colours – it originally came from South Africa. To be fair, the hedgerows are covered with wonderful displays of Fuchsias – which originally came from Central and South America and have made the west of Ireland their home. For some reason, Fuchsia is not regarded as invasive, even though it had established in Ireland many decades before the others were recognised as invasive – perhaps most people consider Fuchsia as being indigenous – it has certainly naturalised.

Well done on your vigilance in keeping Mulranny looking clean and tidy.