

Tidy Towns Competition 2023

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mullagh - Mullach** Ref: **82**
County: **Clare** Mark: **279**
Category: **A** Date(s): **25/06/2023**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2022	Mark Awarded 2023
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	37	38
Streetscape & Public Places	80	42	43
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	39	40
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	20	20
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	16	16
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	58	60
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	30	31
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	31	31
TOTAL MARK	550	273	279

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Na mBailte Slachtmhara Super Valu don bhliain 2023. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn, agus guimíd gach rath ar bhúr gcuid oibre amach anseo. Adh Mór....

Welcome to the 2023 SuperValu TidyTowns competition and thank you for your application form and a map indicating structure of interest and projects. While the map was very basic it did help us to negotiate our way around your area and see some of your work, so thank you for including one this year. But it needs to be improved and the location of all the projects identified using numbers. You are a committee of ten and you have five volunteers who help you from time to time. It would be good to recruit some extra hands but we know that this is sometimes difficult. You list those who help you - state and semi-state organisations, community groups, individuals, businesses etc who support you financially and/or who advise you. We looked on the internet for a website and Facebook page but found neither – next year give us the exact name so that we can have a peep to see what's going on in Mullagh. This is your thirteenth year entering the TidyTowns competition and we are delighted to read that you have found it beneficial to your community. TidyTowns helps communities develop pride in their locality and we are happy to see this is true of your village too.

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

Mullagh is a dispersed community with vernacular single and two storey buildings along the entrance roads and the core of the village has the RC St. Mary's church set in its own grounds and neatly presented houses and business properties lining both sides of the main street. The parochial house and parish office on the entrance road from the east were well presented and we admired the specimen trees in the garden. We were delighted to see that you now have LED lighting in parts of the village. Are these to be installed throughout the rest of the village? Overhead service cables diminish the visual amenity of any streetscape especially where they feature several cables radiating from a single pole; the local engineer should be approached regarding a possible date for ducting starting with the unsightliest poles first. The house being renovated will make a positive contribution to the streetscape due to its prominent location on the entrance road. We admired that some of the shops which have been converted to residences still retain the shop front and name. We encourage this as it is part of the social and architectural history of the village. Maybe those who have removed the names could be asked to reinstate them. The little cottage with the galvanised roof was well presented – painted windows and the owner looking over the half door and very pleasant planting along the front wall.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

While you have no communal public green space associated with the village as you are a rural community you have green spaces all around. In addition, in the centre of the village is the sporting field, with illuminated walking track

all around, which is a wonderful amenity for the community. Here too are the adult exercise machines positioned for the walkers to use. The planting bed had a variety of pollinator friendly shrubs and flowers. We suggest mowing a grass strip to just beyond the lighting poles and leaving the rest unmown as this is a great example of how to effectively present a semi-wild habitat in this type of setting with its narrow strip of tidily mown grass along the outer edge to show that the wilderness behind is deliberate. We admired the landscaping entrance to the village at the road junction – neatly trimmed grass, stone surrounded planting beds full of shrubs and colourful flowers and a picnic area. A few strategically positioned trees along the road edge would make the post and rope fence redundant while adding to the area. Keep the grass well-trimmed in front of the Fáilte go Mullagh stone. We admired the raised planting bed on the entrance road – a few trailing plants would add to this. Please commend the houses and business owners along the main street for their positive contribution to the streetscape – painted facades and colourful floral displays. The grotto area, the church grounds and the planters near the church added to the beauty of the streetscape

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

The aim of this category is to encourage people to recognise, engage and celebrate the biodiversity and richness of the wildlife habitats in their surroundings. With the great number of stone walls, hedgerows, and trees you have a great variety of habitats for insects and mammals. The hedge rows were very colourful with wildflowers in bloom and were buzzing with insect life. Knowledge of your area and promoting this knowledge to the local population and passing visitors are the key components of this category. This could be done by installing information panels in some central location in the village – perhaps a poster on your community notice board/ shop. Could you develop a Ring Walk? This is an excellent project and it not only gets people out walking but also helps to develop an interest in the locality. The wildflower patch behind the church was very beautiful and was full of butterflies and bees when we visited.

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

This is a category where many communities 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. Tidy towns committees are encouraged to try and prevent the generation of waste when carrying out their day-to-day activities. It is recommended that you get the basics right and focus on simple but effective measures. For example, you could make your own compost for use in your landscaping schemes as this avoids all of the associated packaging and other waste that comes with shop bought fertilisers. Growing your own pollinator friendly plants, harvesting your own seeds or sourcing donations of plants from keen local gardeners is recommended as this also avoids the waste associated with shop bought varieties. We noted the solar lights in the planters which must be quite beautiful at nighttime as they light up the colourful flowers. We also noted an EV home charge points and also solar panels on one house – are there more in the community who have these? We noted one solar panel on the Community Hall. Are there plans to install more? One seems very little for a building this size. There is an old graveyard (Kilbridget) on the hill – perhaps you could identify a circular walk which would take in this historical area.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

We're wondering if you register for the National An Taisce Clean-Up which takes place in April? This is a great way to get the community involved as it focuses the attention of all on the need to be vigilant about litter, fly-tipping and weed growth. When we visited the village was virtually litter free so, please commend your litter pick-up team for their work. Weed growth too was minimal in most areas although we did notice a little along kerbs. We recommend trimming the grass margins at footpaths, at roadside kerbs, at the base of sign posts, estate names, etc. etc. rather than using weed killer. Tracts of dead grass edges are unattractive. Please advise the residents of Finnuermore Park not to do this. We noted the Clean -Up after your Pet /Doggie Bags sign at the sporting field. The pump needs to be painted and weed growth removed from the platform. Is this connected to the mains water supply? This has been done elsewhere.

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

There are many wonderful well-kept houses in the centre of the village. They are generally on-the-street terraced or detached with small gardens to the front. It was good to see that the majority were occupied as vacancy leads to dereliction in a very short space of time. Finnuermore Park is a fine estate of houses and the communal space at the entrance was well presented. Trim back the planting which is encroaching on the name sign. In noting the use of old tyres for planting, we wish to advise that in our view, they should be recycled in the normal way and not used in landscape schemes. They detract from the natural landscape. In recent years some Tidy Towns groups have used old painted tyres for plant containers and other purposes and through these comments we are discouraging them from doing so. Compliments to the house with the great display of sunflowers – always a joy to see them. Encourage the residents to plant pollinator friendly flowers. Make out a list and post it in the local shop for all to see.

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

The approach roads to Mullagh have neatly trimmed grass margins making the entrances quite pleasant. Single houses sited on individual sites or farmhouses with neatly tended yards greeted us as we entered. Road surfaces in the village are good and we liked the yellow dashed line indicating the road edge and so the allowance for parking. Footpath surfaces were cracked in a few locations and need to be repaired. Road markings are a little worn in places e.g. the stop sign at the road junction, and will need to be repainted shortly. The carparking layout at the church seemed a little haphazard but if the community knows how it works then that's all that's needed! The blue paint for the disabled parking will also need to be painted soon. The village name sign and Community Alert Area

sign were dirty, which was a pity, as these give the visitor a first impression of your village. Equally the Ceatru an Logain sign should be washed, as that too was difficult to read. The ramp into the sports field area needs to be remarked as the white warning lines are worn. We recommend painting the letters of the village name stone signs in white as this colour stands out better on limestone than black.

Concluding Remarks:

We enjoyed our visit to your village – a first for us. Keep up the good work which we have no doubt is appreciated by the community.

Thank you for entering the SuperValu Tidy Towns 2023 competition.