

# Tidy Towns Competition 2003

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mountshannon**

Ref: **98**

County: **Clare**

Mark: **264**

Category: **A**

Date: **09/08/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	48	48
The Built Environment	40	36	35
Landscaping	40	37	37
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	25	24
Litter Control	40	36	36
Tidiness	20	18	18
Residential Areas	30	26	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	29	29
General Impression	10	9	9
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>261</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Mountshannon continues to impress. The documentation on work undertaken during the year and also your plans for the future show a community with a wonderful sense of heritage and imagination. We look forward to the completion of these new projects just as we have enjoyed and wondered at the work already accomplished. However, for the purposes of this competition, the ongoing maintenance of the accomplished projects must be addressed and this theme will run through the remainder of this report in a spirit of constructive criticism.

### The Built Environment:

Most business premises were well presented with some signage refurbishment needed in certain cases. It was very good to see the derelict building in the main street being developed. Also it was good to see the old Garage now being used as Callura Pottery – could the petrol pumps here be painted? We noted your remarks on needing patience in respect of the right time for the Market House and await developments. The Churches, Community Centre, School and Mountshannon Hotel were all well maintained and attractive.

### Landscaping:

The commitment of Mountshannon to ensuring that visitors appreciate the village and lakeshore is

commendable. The award winning features and planting at the lakeshore and also the extensive area at Aistear Iniscealtra are exceptional. However, in places these areas were very weedy and quite overgrown. It was not clear to the Adjudicator if it were the intention to leave matters so in a natural state but this approach does not work in such a structured park setting. Also there was a threat of the plants being overcome by the weeds and so ruining your hard, and no doubt expensive, work in planting these in the first place. Some scheme of ongoing continuous maintenance must be put in place for the future. The new triple arched shelter and other artefacts at the Aistear were noted. Other areas of landscaping throughout the village such as on the Whitegate approach were admired, as indeed were the hanging baskets and tubs throughout. Care should be taken not to "gild the lily" with too many small containers.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The Woodpark Forest Nature Trail is a fine achievement and your research into natural herbs in the locality should provide a new insight in regard to their heritage for the community. Birds noted in the Aistear Iniscealtra park were thrushes, blackbirds, wagtails and swallows. The latter were flying low - denoting that rain was on the way - which proved to be the case. Bird boxes were also noted in the local school grounds.

### **Litter Control:**

There was just a very small amount of stray litter to be seen throughout the village on the day of adjudication.

### **Tidiness:**

The village mostly presented a tidy appearance with kerbs weed free throughout. The car park at the entrance to the Woodpark Forest Nature Trail was weedy and again, ongoing maintenance is required here. Past the Community Centre, there was a heap of gravel in the farmer's yard, hopefully indicating that this area is going to receive attention. On the Whitegate road the stone walls were a little overgrown with ivy and brambles.

### **Residential Areas:**

Private houses and housing estates in an around the village were contributing to the Tidy Towns effort.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Road works were in progress in Mountshannon and no doubt upon completion these will have addressed the need for road surfaces to be upgraded throughout the village. Street furniture was mostly well maintained but the distinctive water hydrants needed to be painted.

### **General Impression:**

Mountshannon has the capacity to again vie for the national tidy towns award by putting in place structures to see that the detailed work required on an ongoing basis is undertaken. Unfortunately, it is a true saying that "the devil is in the detail".

### **Second Round Adjudication:**

Flyposting is an unfortunate practise which should be discouraged as it gives streets and approach roads a very cluttered appearance. The road surfaces were in poor condition, but work appeared to be taking place to improve them. Do ensure that any building materials are removed once this work is complete. New stone walling at the school was admired, as were the mature trees along the main

street. The park is maturing well. It is a marvellous asset to the village and provides a link from the main street to the waterside. Litter control could have been better on the day, as there was rather a lot evident-in particular by the much used waterside area, and along the main street. The old pumps by the pottery (as mentioned in First Adjudicator's report) should be painted up before next year's competition, as should village pump opposite the park. There is a great deal of new housing stock since this adjudicator last had the pleasure of visiting Mountshannon. Curved canopies should be replaced with traditional fabric awnings. Mountshannon was a pleasure to visit on a sunny weekend. The problem of litter control should be addressed before next year. Do ensure that new houses do not detract from the village's unique and special character.