

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Freemount** Ref: **650**  
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **204**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **09/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	29
The Built Environment	50	25
Landscaping	50	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	9
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	23
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>204</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Congratulations to Freemount Development Association for participating in the TidyTowns Competition 2008. Welcome back into the TidyTowns Competition and we hope that your involvement will be mutually beneficial. Thank you for your informative Entry Form and for the map and 'talk through' of the village which was most helpful. You are fortunate to have a big committee which must mean that you have much support in the community. One notices that you do not have immediate plans for projects in some sections of the entry form. It could help the functioning of your committee if various people were deployed to look after specific sections of the competition. It is noted that you engage with many local agencies so make sure that these relationships work to your advantage and to the betterment of Freemount. When entering next year include a 3-5 Year Plan.

### **The Built Environment:**

The Built Environment of Freemount must have changed dramatically since you last entered the competition. One can understand why a committee might not wish to enter when there is so much construction going on in your village. Certainly the new developments have enhanced your streetscape. The school complex looks beautiful. As your community changes with the times it is inevitable that some buildings will become unoccupied and may become derelict. You may be the group to ensure that non resident owners live up to their responsibilities. A major project for you is the maintenance of the Community Centre and its surroundings. The Church looks most impressive. The grotto occupies a pivotal position in the village and is well maintained. The bridge on the Kanturk side is an important element in the heritage of Freemount and it needs maintenance. This is certainly a definable project for the future. The forge looks great and should be nurtured. Great work has been done over the years in honouring those to whom we are now indebted. Both memorials are well maintained and most attractive. The stonework at the 1916 memorial compliments that on the old school building. That junction is a gem The fountain on the side of the street possibly no longer

serves any useful purpose other than as a memory of times past. That too could be made a feature of. Certainly it deserves a coat of paint. Freemount, a village which reflects our changing times...a challenge for a vigilant committee.

### **Landscaping:**

This is a section that could prove worthwhile for you. After all of the construction work of the past few years landscaping is sporadic in the village and now needs a co-ordinated approach rather than a splash here and there. The new buildings on the mainstreet could be further enlivened by the use of more tubs and floral displays. Do not overlook landscaping that was carried out in the past. It must be maintained now. Attractive work has been done on the approach road from Charleville. Tend to the areas in the Church car park. The picnic amenity is another feature of the village and suggests that there may be other imaginative projects you might now undertake to improve the village.

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

Freemount must be a haven for wildlife. The fox rambling around a meadow seemed very much at ease in its surroundings. The steep bank at Allow Hill is not suitable for mowing but could be developed as a wildlife sanctuary by planned, judicious planting. The encouragement given by feeding the birds in winter is to be commended. Continue to engage with the school regarding surveying the birds and other creatures of Freemount. When the survey work has been completed then you might display this information on display boards. If there is a member of your group who has an interest in wildlife encourage that person to work on wildlife only by identifying projects and setting attainable goals.

### **Litter Control:**

It is great that your efforts in the category are paying dividends for you and that there is an improvement this year. There is still a lot to do. Litter was evident throughout the village despite the obvious provision of litter bins. In your plans you intend providing more bins, very worthwhile. You plan weekly clean-ups by Fás, also worthwhile. You might become involved in Litter Campaign competitions also. Could you make the elimination of litter rather than the clean-up of litter your priority? This is a section in which the 3-5 year plan would help you to focus on a strategic plan of action. Your Tidy Towns Committee cannot eliminate litter without the assistance of others. Well done on your present efforts but there is still a lot to do.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Well done on the Bring Bank. As you are aware the Bring Bank can also create problems as people dump bags of waste by the bins for you to clean up. But the Bring Bank is a start. Well done on the composting demonstrations. Composting is an integral element in waste minimisation. It could benefit your committee to study the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. It would stimulate new waste elimination projects for you. The emphasis in this section is not on litter control but on minimising waste in your community.

### **Tidiness:**

One can understand the frustrations of the residents of Freemount while the construction work was being carried out in the village because the village must have had the appearance of a building site. Now that is over and the new stone walls and footpaths contribute to a much improved visual aspect of the main street. You state that weeds have been eliminated by spray. Yet there is a need to tackle the weed problem in many areas. Even in the picnic area they raise their heads. Along by the bridge there is further evidence of weeds and they detract from the bridge and give a poor first impression of the village. Pebbles on the path and by the side of the road need brushing. It must annoy you that the Duhallow Trail signs have been interfered with. Burying the cables along the street has given your skyline a much better appearance. Parking facilities along the street seem good and contribute to safe driving through the village. Again prioritise what must be done in this section.

### **Residential Areas:**

Allow Hill estate looks extremely well and will improve as the landscaping beds in. The entrance is particularly impressive. Cois Abhann also looks so well and congratulations on the Irish name. The entrance to Noonan Park also looks well but the road surface needs renewal. The estate behind the grotto is settled and comfortable looking. Individual houses exude the pride of their occupiers and bring colour and care to the village appearance.

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

The approach roads to your village announce to us that we are entering a settlement. Ensure that the hedge rows and road verges not just announce but proclaim Freemount. Proclaim your village with appropriate village signs. Attention to the hedgerows and to the grass verges also helps to define the village and creates a sense of care and pride. In order to improve the overall appearance of the village you may have to engage with various agencies to tackle the problem of dereliction. There are a few examples of these sites throughout. There is a lot of traffic through Freemount but your parking facilities are well planned and help ease the problem. The stone wall by the Church needs attention all the way down to the grotto.

**General Impression:**

Firstly, the adjudicator wishes to congratulate your committee for re-entering the competition. Now you are in a brave new world with a renewed village centre. Over the years other committees have enhanced the village with stunning memorials. A lot of the work you need to do is of a more mundane variety...maintain and renew. Set your sights high for this lovely stretch of village life.