

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Mitchelstown** Ref: **657**  
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **233**  
Category: **D** Date(s): **26/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	40
The Built Environment	50	32
Landscaping	50	24
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	17
Litter Control	50	33
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	30
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>233</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Congratulations to Mitchelstown for participating in the TidyTowns Competition 2008 through the aptly named organisation AROMA. Thank you for the town map and for highlighting places that must be visited, the various photos and other literature. A special thanks for your 3-5 Year Plan. For the purposes of this competition it would help if the plan submitted followed the various section layout. It is obvious from reading your submission that you are a hard working group with high hopes for your town. Having an input into the strategic plan for Mitchelstown puts you in a position to steer a path for your TidyTowns ambitions. With plans such as yours you need finance and you seem to have strategies for your funding also. In a town as big as Mitchelstown it would not be possible to make progress without engaging with the decision making agencies so those regular meetings with the bodies that help shape Mitchelstown are vital to your progress. Of immediate importance to you at present is the engineer with the NRA. It is obvious that you have the goodwill of many in your community. What type of assistance do you get from that list of voluntary bodies? One hopes that you see the rewards that your present efforts merit in the near future. Engagement with the schools is most important if you are to progress the tidiness of Mitchelstown. Well done to the CBS for attaining Green Flag Status and hopefully others will follow that example.

### **The Built Environment:**

Mitchelstown is a town within a town. One could say that there are two towns here with much of the old town around the Kingston area, beautifully preserved and maintained and landscaped. Then there is the new commercial town dominated by the busy main street, Cork Street with its varied shop fronts and colours giving the town its character to many motorists passing through and who do not visit either left or right. O'Ceallachains shop front stood out as most attractive for this adjudicator but some of the other fronts need to examine what kind of image they contribute to creating for the street. Keep the pressure on the occupiers of

all the amenity buildings to keep their colour freshened. The New Square is well appointed and full of activity. The long list of tasks undertaken and completed by you marks great achievement. For instance you can be justly proud of the playground project. A photo of the arch and stone walls at the park at Ballinwillin looks well but they do not tell the whole story and there is need for maintenance of the whole boundary wall here. The Workhouse Wall is one of the true heritage sites of the town and thankfully its maintenance is high on your agenda. A lot has been done with this wall but maintenance all along the road verge must be tackled. The grain store, by Aldi, is another building that will have to be preserved and worked upon by this generation of TidyTowns people or a group in the near future and one is glad to see from your submission that this building is in your plans. The Church of Ireland is a delight. A tiny part of town heritage is the pump at the entrance to St Fanahan's lane. It deserves a coat of paint.

### **Landscaping:**

Again it is clear that you are active in this section. Overall there has been much worthy landscaping completed in Mitchelstown down the years. One of the challenges for you is to have this work maintained or revitalised. The approach to town on the R665 leading into George's St is the standard by which all areas must be judged. George's Street is a landscaping dream. The trees, tubs, fountain at Kings Square are delightful. Other places need to aspire to these standards. One sympathises with your frustrations in dealing with the NRA and your frustrations in bringing your new roundabouts to an acceptable standard. There is much that can be done which is within your own remit.

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

Your 3 to 5 Year Plan lists projects some of which are definable and attainable, others more aspirational and dependent on the good will of others. You might engage the assistance of the schools in completing a wildlife survey of Mitchelstown and its surrounds. You might engage someone with an immediate interest in this section who would assist you. In planning further landscaping projects be aware of the needs of local wildlife.

### **Litter Control:**

There is much to be enthusiastic about in your efforts to eliminate litter. Your interaction with the schools is vital in the matter of litter. Your inter street and area competition will also bring improvement. The establishment of residents' committees will help bring a more co-ordinated approach to planning and dealing with problems. Your involvement in the Inter Town Litter Challenge will assist you in developing anti litter strategies and in planning anti litter targets. There was no evidence of dumping in the survey of the town. But there was quite a lot of litter in various places, much of which was teenage litter. You may have to identify the main offenders and in what places. Litter that cheapened the appearance of the Square and Cork Street in the evening had disappeared by morning, good work. The fight against litter is a continuous one and you are taking a multi pronged approach. Eventually you hope for results. The school area was very good.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Well done on any influence you had in motivating the CBS to gain Green Flag Status. The essay competition within the schools on recycling is an important element in moulding attitudes in this section. The ideas the pupils encounter and the skills they develop will be brought home to the generations at home and will help in developing composting, reusing, recycling and reducing mentalities. The Bring Bank area is well maintained and is being used. Some members of your group might study the recommendations in the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. It would stimulate waste minimisation projects.

### **Tidiness:**

This is the section where most work needs to be done. There is room for improvement here through planning and organisation. Grass margins need to be tended to or an appearance of neglect develops quickly. There are many instances about the town where a co-ordinated plan of action would improve the image very quickly. Whenever possible insist that cables be buried. The opportunity arises from time to time. Keep the pressure on the NRA regarding the roundabouts. Signage needs maintenance also. Some organisations could give a rub of domestos to their signs. There is a major tendency towards big advertising hoarding in Mitchelstown, very little of which benefits the town. This hoarding often detracts from the surroundings.

### **Residential Areas:**

Residents all over town present their dwellings and their estates with pride. Many estates were visited and it was an uplifting experience. The caveat here is to ensure that the open spaces are maintained for the estate dwellers. The residents are providing the colour and their individual landscaping. Some authority must keep the open spaces. Ard Mhuilinn, Ballinmuillin Close, Carraigroe, Ailsbury Court are just a few. Others visited

did not have identifying namestones and this is regrettable. The residents associations are a worthy step and timely.

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

There are so many roads in Mitchelstown! It is a joy to arrive and have the town proclaimed as on the Cork road with a proud picture of the town overlooking Machaire Méith na Mumhan. These town signs also define the town limits. Good verge and hedge trimming help define the town also and give a picturesque image of the town. You might have a look at some of the approach roads using the R665 as your prototype. The path to the roundabout is a wonderful amenity on this road and the cycle lanes deserve much credit. There is need for a co-ordinated plan along many of the approach roads as in the case of the Ballyporeen Road.

The street network of the town leads fluently into the town centre enabling domestic and passing traffic to move along. Church Hill reveals unexpected delights as one climbs along the path. The pillars appropriately lead to the ecclesiastical and scholastic centre of Mitchelstown, a beautiful vista now further enhanced by the playground.

### **General Impression:**

A most enjoyable visit made all the more enjoyable by studying your plans before arrival. You are an enthusiastic group of people. Mitchelstown is a town in transition. It needs people like you with a vision of what you want from Mitchelstown in the immediate future. AROMA, a hint of the future.