

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Rathcormac** Ref: **1268**  
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **200**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **18/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	28
The Built Environment	50	29
Landscaping	50	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	15
Litter Control	50	26
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	12
Residential Areas	40	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	25
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>200</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

C ad mile failte to Rathcormac to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition. We hope that your arrival in the competition heralds a new era for your committee and Rathcormac . Your submission suggests that you are an ambitious, dedicated group who are proud of where you live and intend to improve your village and community spirit through this competition. We wish you well with your plans. Your website is a great help in introducing one to Rathcormac. You appear to have very good community support and of huge interest is the integration of newcomers into the live of the village. The map you included was of reasonable assistance. A hand drawn map highlighting places of interest to your work and to the adjudicator would be more useful. You realise the importance of financial support for your work. Well done on getting the local businesses to support your enterprise. It is most important that you have enlisted the assistance of agencies and bodies that are significant in improving life in Rathcormac. The use you make of the website has to be important in bringing the community with you. In order to streamline your plans and to give credibility to your plans when you meet with officials you should devise a 3/5 year plan with projects ranging from immediate, definable and achievable projects to longer term more aspirational wishes. Adding costings to your plans will also help steer your work. Include such plans in next year's entry. Continue your engagement with the local schools and investigate the possibility of a school striving to attain Green Flag Status. Schools can be a helpful resource in carrying our wildlife surveys and, maybe in your case, traffic surveys etc. Many years of fulfilling involvement in the TidyTowns Competition. It is clear from the submission that you have some realisation of the task ahead of you requiring more than a sweep-up and 'a few window boxes here and there'!!

### **The Built Environment:**

Rathcormac is a story of two villages, one the older one and now there is the new village. The built landscape of these two distinct locations, though sitting side by side, is as different as chalk and cheese. A community

working together will unify these separate locations, as you are doing now with your work. Landscaping along the new street would bring greater vibrancy to buildings now painted with the one colour. What seems like an old grain store at the end of the street has been beautifully restored, the stone facing particularly attractive. The surrounding wall and railing complete a pleasing picture. The same theme is replicated around the Rathcormac Community Centre. These stone facings and the stone walls built around Rathcormac add character to the village. The building across from the Community Centre will add further interest to this area when constructed. The Garda Station looks well. The Church of Ireland church and cemetery are jewels of your heritage which cry out for the maintenance you are now organising and for the redemption that will hopefully come from a new owner. The Catholic Church is imposing, the railings and pillars combining to create a respectful scene. The playground is a joy. The Opening Stone a tribute to the people who helped provide the facility. The shop fronts at O Coileain's and at the antique are most attractive as is Barry's across the way. Your village is now a work in progress and will develop into a vibrant community with the assistance of groups like yours.

### **Landscaping:**

There is evidence that there has been very attractive landscaping in Rathcormac over the years. Just because it is from an earlier period does not mean it should be overlooked and this landscaping does need your help. The hard landscaping on the Cork approach road does need a hand. As you plan for the future you will see that there are many locations that would be enhanced by colourful, all year round, landscaping. Identify these places and set to work. Already there are efforts to bring colour to main street with half barrels, hanging baskets and window boxes. The problem is that the work is sporadic. This landscaping work needs a co-ordinated plan. The landscaping at the parish pump is one of the highlights. Residents at Roseville deserve a special mention as does the Garda Station.

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

It has to be accepted that Rome was not built in a day and you are correct to limit your ambitions to definable goals for the moment. You do have plans for this section and those are praiseworthy. You might consider forming a wildlife sub committee of people or of a person with an interest in this area, someone who would advise on landscaping from a wildlife perspective, someone who would have an interest in cleaning up the stream as first step and then making a feature of it. You might engage with a teacher in the school who would undertake a wildlife survey for you. There are a lot of marks in this section which should not be put on the long finger.

### **Litter Control:**

Well done on entering an anti litter competition already and on your awareness of the need for regular clean-ups. Well done on the provision of bins. While there are bins in the playground there is also litter strewn about illustrating the necessity for engaging with the school. One would expect that litter could be a big problem for you with the amount of building that is going on and with the passing traffic. While there is evidence of litter you are doing good work. But you cannot relax!! Like every other village you need a litter plan, litter targets and, maybe, a litter survey would help focus your activities.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

The summary of your activities shows that you already have a good, basic waste minimisation plan in operation. School activities influence the home and business. The segregation of waste at cleans ups is good practise. Your Bring Bank is a great help in recycling. Well done. You plan to inform yourselves further. Well done. During your winter meetings some of you might study the booklet 'Race Against Waste'. It would stimulate waste minimisation projects.

### **Tidiness:**

Make sure to keep the verges of the approach roads trimmed and mown on a continuous basis. Regular grass cutting seems to be a problem for you. Keep an eye on weeds. They give a neglected appearance to public areas. This may be an opportune time for Rathcormac to bury cables underground while the construction is going on in the village. A wire free skyline is worth aspiring to. There is an amount of clutter in front of some stores. Improvement may need statesmanlike negotiation. But the greatest challenge facing Rathcormac is traffic. It is clear that motorists pass through with no regard whatever for the speed limit. Traffic calming measures are an urgent requirement. Your committee needs to engage with the relevant agencies.

### **Residential Areas:**

The standard of residential areas is something to be proud of. The estate by the grain store is well laid out

and the stone facing on the buildings compliments the facing on the grain store giving a unifying, authentic sense to the area. When the landscaping develops this will be a beautiful estate. The name signs for Shanowen/Sheanabhann are impressive but the appearance of this lovely estate is spoilt somewhat by the weeds. Millstream could be exploited more to bring more colour to that part of town. The grass in other estates needs to be mown regularly to improve their appearance. The houses along by the GAA bring personality to the village. It is noted that you intend to work with the new resident associations and to promote competitions, a most laudable method of promoting pride of place and developing community spirit.

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

One is struck when arriving on the Cork Road by the great walls on both sides of the road. Special care needs to be taken of the loose stone wall so that it does not unravel. The road sweeps into town from the far side and that approach is promising also. It is natural that road surfaces would suffer with all of the construction work that is in progress. Your submission tells us that you are keeping a watchful eye on the authorities. Check out the wire situation before the new pathways are laid. Ensure that you have an input into road and amenity signage. There must be a lot of activity at the school if there are so many pre fabs but great work is being done to keep the area clean and tidy. Someone must take responsibility for the tennis court, a worthwhile facility that needs maintenance. Another black spot is the area around the entrance to the Church of Ireland. Keep an eye on the back of the Community Centre in case it becomes a cluttered dumping ground. You have many worthwhile plans as outlined in your submission.

### **General Impression:**

Your initiative in entering the TidyTowns Competition 2008 is timely. With such major changes shaping the future of your village it is vital that the people most affected by those changes are involving themselves in the eventual outcome. The degree and rate of change can best be estimated by comparing the size of the permanent school building to the number of pre fabs in the school yard. These are exciting times for the residents of Rathcormac. The involvement of the new residents in the 'sweep up of main street' will help generate greater community spirit on the one hand and beautify the new Rathcormac at the same time. Good luck with your efforts.