

# Tidy Towns Competition 2017

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mitchelstown** Ref: **657**  
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **288**  
Category: **D** Date(s): **11/06/2017**

	<b>Maximum Mark</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2016</b>	<b>Mark Awarded 2017</b>
Community Involvement & Planning	60	42	42
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	41	43
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	37	38
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	25	26
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	18	18
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	55	56
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	29	30
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	35	35
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>288</b>

### **Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:**

Welcome to this years competition. Your submission does what you state in bringing “to the fore the tremendous work being done by so many local voluntary groups”. Your small AROMA committee of eight say that you see your role as supporting and encouraging the work of local groups. In a town the size of Mitchelstown this is a very effective way of ensuring enhanced participation. The list that you work with is very commendable, with the various skills from each group being put to good use across the Tidy Towns categories. Special mention must be given to the Heritage Society this year, as they have completed an impressive number of worthy projects. Congratulations to all involved.

Using the google map with your submission was great idea. You marked the main areas of interest very clearly. To enhance this resource even further, cross referencing projects with the map would greatly assist the adjudicator in ensuring that all projects are seen and marked effectively.

### **Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:**

The upgrading of Forrest Hall from a derelict eye-sore building to the well-presented functional building that is there today was extremely impressive. To ensure that you always get the marks to reflect these great jobs, show the transformation of the “before” situation. (I did google some pictures of this). We concur with you that this shows what can be achieved with the dedication of a well organised and motivated voluntary group. Retaining your status as a Heritage Town was indicated as important to your group and this type of project shows you putting your passion into action, which has a knock on benefit for the whole community. We look forward to seeing the results of the two adjoining premises in the future.

As you referred to in your submission Mitchelstown is regarded as one of the best-planned Georgian towns in Ireland. The tree lined Kings Square mirrored with its Georgian houses is a sight to behold. This is complemented by the newly refurbished 18th Century water pump.

Your before and after photo of the newly painted green post box highlighted the great work that was done. Before and after shots are the best way to ensure that you always communicate the full extent of work going into some of your projects.

You did a great spruce-up some public statues with the help of your “hero” Eddie Walsh and the results were plain to see.

As a future project you might consider a simple updating on the faded Celtic script for An Garda Síochana on the side of the Garda building. The St. Fanahan sculpture clean-up does improve this space.

On your Main Street there are many fine examples of shopfronts including O’Callaghan’s cafe/deli bakery shop front, which would shine out as a great example of a shop front in any street in Ireland. Some other impressive buildings on the street include The Dolls House shop & the McCarthy Insurance Group with the ornate lamp holders giving a nice touch. Clongibbon Hotel on New Market Square provides welcome colour and the wrought iron canopy

is well maintained.

The derelict notice sign at no 49 Upper Cork Street was noted. Even your work of putting the painted windows really helped improve the look here.

### **Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:**

You have a wonderful array of open public spaces that are well-kept. The 1916 Centenary wildflower meadow is one such space. St. Fanahan's Well is certainly worth the walk. The information plaque is very informative and it is well sign posted.

The wide variety of colour planting was noted throughout Mitchelstown. We applaud your efforts to try and ensure that you use annuals as far as possible.

A visitor can't fail to be impressed by the Market Square. Some of the street furniture could do with a little more cleaning and the roof of the bus stop also. The breaking up of the hard car parking surfaces with the trees and planting worked very well.

The additions of photos on the Historical Mitchelstown sign to augment the names of the building really help to orientate the visitor.

The conversion of the old Market street House into a SuperValu seems very appropriate! It is wonderful when old buildings can support current business.

The church, school, allotments and playground form a lovely community space that is well maintained. The children's playground is a fine addition to the town and is kept in very good order.

One of the wonderful features of your main street is the fine wide footpaths which are free from clutter and weeds. Your work towards the reduction of signage adds to the feeling of space. Mitchelstown is a very walkable town.

### **Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:**

Congratulations to both of your primary schools on achieving their Green Flags for bio-diversity. Special mention must go to CBS Primary on their first prize in the Muintir na Tíre Small Schools Garden Competition. Their colourful garden is a sight to behold.

Education and raising awareness of biodiversity is so important. In an area that is such an integral part of the Golden Vale, you probably know better than most of the importance of pollinators. Maybe some more projects in this area might find people willing to get involved especially in light of your attendance on a Farmland Bio-diversity walk.

You mention that due to facilitating the transport of the Wind Turbines some of the roundabouts have been temporarily lowered. Maybe with the help of Cork County Council you might consider replanting these as a bee pollinator corridor, with bee/pollinator plants being planted on each. Some helpful information is to be found on <http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/pollinator-plan>

It is always encouraging when action is taken on foot of survey results. We wish you well in finding suitable locations for your nesting boxes to support the swift population.

### **Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:**

The Scouts project of collecting sleeping bags (to give to people who are homeless) after the music festival at Deer Park is a great example of how saving resources instead of disposing of them helps the community overall.

Your 3 year action plan shows you work closely with the Mitchelstown Business Association and for 2017 you performed an audit of current strategies that businesses employ regarding waste minimization. We hope that these findings are highlighted in your next submission. Feel free to use projects that were undertaken to add to the submission.

The allotments as mentioned above are in a great location. Some of them looked unused but the ones that were in use looked very productive. Hopefully with your water harvesting system it will make it easier for people to look after these. While you are waiting for these to be taken up they are currently providing a food source for our wild pollinators.

You mentioned that this area is one that you wish to concentrate on in the future especially with your business Association. You might get some handy tips at <http://www.epa.ie/begreen/>. Being environmentally friendly doesn't have to always be a cost for businesses.....it can be a help in driving revenue, reducing costs or a mix of both.

### **Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:**

A minimal amount of litter was noted in the town which was even more particularly noteworthy since it was a weekend adjudication. There were plenty of bins spotted in good order.

The spire of the church poking out from the tree lined as you approach Mitchelstown is very impressive backdrop. We would encourage you if it is at all possible to work with your Local Authority to consider trying to get some of the unsightly cables on the main street underground. It is an amazing view down the main street to the Galtee mountains.

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

There are many well-maintained housing estates with nice green areas, stone signs and maturing trees in Mitchelstown including Ashfield Manor and The Meadow. However there is an absence of colour in a lot of these areas. Bulb planting at key locations might help here or a few colourful planters with annuals.

It was nice to see the sign as Gaeilge in Woodlawn.

The legacy of the fine Georgian houses at Kings Square is to be admired. However it is unfortunate that some have boarded up windows. Even just painted windows, similar to other buildings on the main street would help create an almost perfect postcard picture setting.

There was a lot of colour planted noted on the verges of the residential Georges Street which also had lovely wide paths. An example of a lovely kept garden was the house with James Street sign on the side of it.

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

The approach roads are very well kept. The verges nearest the road are mowed, this contrasts nicely with the wild meadows section set further back from the road. This is obviously providing a home for wildlife, including two rabbits spotted at different locations.

The well-maintained trees, including the newly planted trees from the Cork Road approach to Mitchelstown give a lovely avenue effect. Your legacy from the tree lined avenue of Kings Square must mean the value of this vista might be appreciated more than most other places. We note that there is an aim to continue this nearer the town. This would certainly enhance the area.

Minimal litter was spotted, which was especially impressive given the lengths involved.

The roundabout at the Aldi distribution centre is very pleasing to the eye with the mirroring of the same landscaping with the grasses and trees on the entrance to town.

The side streets in town were mainly litter free and free of weeds which is a harder task in an area the size of Mitchelstown.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

We were very impressed by our visit to Mitchelstown. Its status as a heritage town is evident. You certainly look to your past to support your present and future. With your continued work within your community that future looks very bright.