

Tidy Towns Competition 2010

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Skibbereen** Ref: **693**
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **275**
Category: **C** Date(s): **16/06/2010**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009	Mark Awarded 2010
Overall Development Approach	50	38	39
The Built Environment	50	36	36
Landscaping	50	34	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	32	33
Litter Control	50	34	34
Waste Minimisation	20	10	11
Tidiness	30	17	17
Residential Areas	40	28	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33	33
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	400	270	275

Overall Development Approach:

Skibbereen TidyTowns Committee is welcome to the 2010 competition. You would appear to have a good working relationship with Town Council, West Cork Development Partnership and Cork County Council as well as the local community in general. You work well with local schools and it was good to hear that you visit them regularly. We hope that your efforts to resurrect the best business premises will come to fruition - this should lead to some good work on shop-frontages and the appearance of the streetscapes. Work on neglected buildings will pay dividends as there are more and more evident in recent times. We wish you well with your work at the Rock area, and to the riverside, which currently does appear to be under-utilised in the town centre area.

The Built Environment:

The buildings of the town were a little inconsistent in appearance on the day. Some shopfronts looked quite fresh, while others looked a little neglected. Baby Hannah's was admired with its mural to the gable wall. The Cathedral looked well with its floral display and it was good to see from your photographs how well it looked in the wintertime. The Railings were a little stained, however. Abbeystowery Church of Ireland in its prominent location in the centre of the town is a fine stone building. The adjacent Church Restaurant was admired. The West Cork Arts Centre looked fine as did Mercy Heights Convent. What work is due to take place to the blasted rock site to the streetfront at this location? It's quite prominent on the Cork approach to the town. The modern car showrooms on the Baltimore road looked sharp. The Gospel Hall looked fresh. The AIB bank looked good in stone and brick. Annie May's looked very fresh. Teagasc and grounds looked well. The Library looked a little patchy and could be repainted before next year's competition. Don't remove the render from vernacular street buildings, these were intended to be plastered and removal of render to reveal the stonework below is not only incorrect from a conservation point of view but can lead to problems with water penetration. The Post Office looked very charming in brick with limestone details. The Town Hall Building at

the Square should be painted before next year's competition, as it is quite prominent in this location.

Landscaping:

The landscaped areas at the two main roundabouts were admired, as was Rossa Park which were all well maintained. Abbeystrowery graveyard looked well, as ever. Floral displays of hanging baskets and tubs were admired near the Southern Star, and many colourful displays were evident throughout the town. An incidental landscaped space was greatly admired to a corner beyond Ilen Villas and the Heritage Centre, where landscaping also looked very well. Planting at the front of the Courthouse looked marvellous. We were pleased to hear of the tree planting in March and it will indeed create year-round effect, which is all to the good.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The wildflower garden by the riverside on the Ballydehob side of the town was admired. Have you considered other projects for this aspect of the competition?

Litter Control:

The standard in this category of the competition was quite good on the day. We were pleased to hear of your success in the Cork County Anti- Litter Challenge. There were a number of problem areas in the town. There was some evidence of litter to the main car park area, on the roadsides near the Heritage Centre, on the Ballydehob Road, and the Cork Road. Good luck with your litter campaign. Some of the litter bins should be washed more regularly, as they looked quite grubby on the day.

Waste Minimisation:

We were pleased to hear of your work with the Gaelscoil in relation to their Green Flag application and we were delighted to hear that the girl's school had achieved theirs. Contact the Council's Environmental section regarding other possibilities for this category of the competition. We were pleased to hear that you segregate your litter from pick ups and that you promote this practice in the wider community. We hope that you are successful in relation to your negotiations with the County Council regarding your recycling area

Tidiness:

The town generally had a reasonably neat appearance on Adjudication Dday. However, there were one or two problem areas. Weeds were noted at kerbs on the Baltimore approach, particularly near the roundabout, and on the Ballydehob Road. Although Hourihan's Laundry was very fresh, perhaps the canopy which remains from its days as a petrol station could be removed? Do ensure that untidy yard areas are screened from public view. There were some on approach roads and at the main car park area. Some buildings near the bridge need some attention as they look quite neglected, although the hotel in this location looked well. Discourage fly-posting, as they can give roadsides a rather cluttered appearance. Some neglected buildings with broken windows were spotted from the smaller entrance to Field's car park area. Some outbuildings in this location also looked rather neglected. Some pallets appeared to have been abandoned behind West Cork Cabs.

Residential Areas:

The standard in this category was generally good. Terraced houses along streets looked good for the most part, with individual houses and gardens along approach roads looking well. The houses with vertical hung slate and stone detailing on Townsend Street were greatly admired. Inse Alainn was admired with its fine stone walling in front of trees behind and some other attractive houses were noted on the road behind the Heritage Centre, as were some in stone and render on the Baltimore Road. The relatively new trees to the development on the riverside on the Ballydehob Road are coming along nicely. Landscaping at the retirement village on the Baltimore Road was admired. We were pleased to hear that you are encouraging the foundation of residents associations and plan competitions for this aspect of the competition. Well done on your work with the COPE foundation.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The standard in this category was also a little inconsistent on the day. The Cork Road was quite well maintained, although some overgrowth was evident to the far side of footpaths, while the Baltimore Road was overgrown and the nameplate sign and Keep Skibbereen Clean Sign were virtually obscured by overgrowth. The Ballydehob Road could also have been improved upon. Try to ensure approach roads look natural - they don't need to look manicured, but they shouldn't look neglected either. Signage was quite grubby in places, such as at the roundabout on the Baltimore Road and in a number of areas in the town centre. We were pleased to hear that you maintain bollards and keep them freshly painted. The bridge on the Ballydehob side of the town was looking a little flaky. The planting to the bypass is coming along well. This road gives a completely new view of the town than was previously seen. Therefore it is important to consider how the

buildings of the town appear when viewed from this perspective. The main car park area was fine, and some new shops and spaces have developed as a result of its creation-again these need consideration in this category of the competition. The river side in this area could be improved upon – at the moment it is not promoted to its best advantage. The roundabout with the bronze abstract sculptures on the Baltimore Road looks marvellous and is quite unusual. We look forward to seeing your ideas for the future sculpture/feature on the approach to the town.

General Impression:

Skibbereen is a busy working town whose residents show a keen interest in its future. It has a charm of its own and continues to improve its position in the competition, from year to year. Well done to all concerned!