

Tidy Towns Competition 2021

Adjudication Report

Centre: Skibbereen - An Sciobairín	Ref: 693
County: Cork(West)	Mark: 340
Category: D	Date(s): 27/07/2021

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2021
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	49
Streetscape & Public Places	60	47
Green Spaces and Landscaping	60	45
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	40
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	23
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	62
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	40
TOTAL MARK	470	340

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Fáilte Chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2021. Táimid buíoch daoibh as ucht na hiontrála a chur chugainn. Go raibh maith agaibh as ucht bhur dtacaíocht le linn na paindéime. Lean leis an dea-obair.

Welcome to the 2021 SuperValu Tidy Towns competition. Thank you for your entry and for your commitment to your place in these difficult times. Keep up the great work.

Skibbereen has a strong working committee with a number of volunteers working diligently to develop and enhance the town further. Meetings are held when required. There are many means of communication but mostly it is through social media, newspaper and of course word of mouth. A newsletter is issued twice yearly on Facebook and twitter keeping the community updated with all your activities. There are a large number of businesses, sporting groups and agencies that you engage closely with for advice or funding, or simply helping you out with your work load. With less resources on the ground from the County Council the Tidy Towns group has had to take on more work to ensure the town is presented to a good standard. As a result of this reduction in resources such as equipment and workers the Tidy Towns group are doing a lot of the work that should be undertaken by the County Council. Let's hope more resources are put in place to help you to continue with the fantastic work you have undertaken over the years. You have been busy over the last number of months drafting two plans. A community biodiversity plan through a partnership with Cork nature network and supported by Cork County Council is one plan. The first phase of this plan will focus on the O'Donovan Rossa Memorial Park. The second plan 'My town my plan' under guidance was drafted by the community and business organisations. This initiative demonstrates what can be done through groups coming together with leadership in place. Thank you for entering the Covid 19 Community award. This shows a caring community ready to help when needed as was the case during these difficult times. Well done for your work at this time. This is your 60th year in the competition. Since joining the competition you have contributed to the developing of projects that have enhanced the town and have been beneficial to the community and visitors. Well done to the rowers from Skibbereen who done everyone proud on their great achievement at the Tokyo Olympics.

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

There was a number of projects completed for this year's competition. Phase 1 of work at the Square and Main St were completed with new pavement and walkways installed. New trees were sown at Supervalu and Permanent TSB. Pedestrians crossings were installed at Towneshend Street, Bridge Street corner, Bridge Street and Llen Street. The community in conjunction with Cork County Council came together to provide more facilities to help with opening up after Covid in summer 2020. The provision of more seating located at different locations in the town enabled people to move out and meet with people. Age friendly designated parking spaces were also

provided. Music was provided at Levis Quay at lunchtime on Wednesday's and Saturday's to help lift people's spirits. The refurbishment of St Fachtna's De Le Salle High School was completed. The restoration of the railings was also completed. The Parochial house which is adjacent to the school also got a face lift, the colour of the facade in keeping with the period of the house. The Grotto another important feature of the town also got a face lift. Two interactive tourist information boards which never functioned were removed from the square and a mural was erected on a gable end at the arts centre. This mural it is hoped will bring joy and happiness to the community with the slogan name 'there is a light'.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

In this category there are new projects and ongoing maintenance of other projects. It is good to note that planting of wildflowers have revamped an area of overgrowth while enhancing the area and also encouraging bees. From your entry it is noted that this type of pollinator friendly planting is carried through the town in all planting. Getting the community to adopt planters and take care of watering is a great help for the committee and gets the community involved. The O'Donovan Rossa Memorial Park and the Forge Anvil garden are two important amenities in the town. You are commended for organising walks, such as the famine walks to highlight the amenities and also to pass on to the community their past history and its importance to the town. The ongoing treatment of Japanese knotweed is important to ensure its eradication from the areas infected. The County Council gives good help in dealing with this invasive species. Well done to Skibbereen Tidy Towns on their award for Skibbereen walks, in the Pride in our Community awards.

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

Skibbereen is rich in Biodiversity and natural habitats. On 1st February 2020 the community biodiversity plan in conjunction with Cork Network was launched. Four selected sites were visited. The aims of the plan were to understand and identify biodiversity and promote it in the community. Mapping the selected habitats was also important. Workshops on biodiversity were carried out online. O'Donovan Rossa Memorial Park was identified as the focus location. The first biodiversity project was completed at the Memorial Park in 2020. A group of volunteers prepared the central memorial section of the park. This was followed by a planting plan for biodiversity. Many other ongoing areas displaying biodiversity can be enjoyed at different locations around the town. Schull road wild garden is one such area. This is a tranquil setting with superb views of the Llen river where you can enjoy the many pollinator plants growing there. This area was one of the sites selected for the biodiversity plan. Skibbereen do a lot of good work to encourage natural habitats and organise walks, where the community can embrace and celebrate the history of the town and the many areas of rich biodiversity that exists there. Skibbereen Golf Club also tee'd off their biodiversity project with trees and wildflowers planted. When this project matures in the coming years it will certainly be worth a visit not only from the wildlife but also from the community.

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

In this category groups are asked to describe how through their activities the area is becoming more sustainable, reducing impact on the environment. Reducing the number of plastic bottles of water used in the residential care centre and replacing them with jugs instead, is one example. Well done on approaching the management and putting this saving in place. That is a good example of how the community, by thinking and looking at where savings can be made can help bring a big change and reduce environmental impact. The community orchard available to the community to use and also help with the maintenance of is another good example of caring and sharing. Growing your own seeds and plants is another superb way of becoming more sustainable. The new park benches in O'Donovan Rossa Memorial Park were made from recycled material which came from a large number of plastic bottles. The park benches are a perfect example of how otherwise waste materials can be put to good use. Do continue with your present projects on savings as well of thinking all the time of new initiatives.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

There is a good plan in place trying to reduce litter not only on the streets of the town but also along the beaches. Litter anywhere impacts on the environment. On the beaches if not collected it ends up in the sea doing untold damage to marine life. If more people visited the website www.cleancoasts.org it would help to educate them on the importance of not disposing of litter anywhere that can end up in the rivers and seas. You are commended on the project undertaken by the TY students under the guidance of Rory Jackson on marine plastic. This is a great initiative. Taking part in the County Litter league which hopefully will be up and running soon, creates awareness among the community. The initiative from Deelish sponsoring a prize during lockdown as a challenge to encourage the community to keep their own areas and also tourist areas clean, during walks is commended.

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

The town has great pride in its heritage and its community. The houses along the streetscape of the town, the housing estates and the houses along the approach roads show their presentation is very important to this tourist town. The community work well together to present their homes, green areas and gardens to a high standard. As the photos show it is lovely to see all ages working together for the betterment of the community. The residents of the town help with all categories of the competition and this is commended.

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

The town is fortunate to have work along the approach roads to the town sponsored. This includes the roundabout on the Baltimore road adopted by Skibbereen garden centre, who planted it with pollinator friendly plants. On the

Cork approach road, Deelish garden centre adopted this roundabout which was planted with a feature olive tree, rosemary and lavender. New heritage signage 'Welcome to Skibberen' was erected on both N71 approach roads to celebrate your achievement in the national competition, winning your first silver medal, well done. The N71 road was also enhanced further with the planting of cherry blossom trees and beech hedging, funded by Cork County Council. On the other approach roads including the N71 there is a 'sweep and clean' approach where volunteers and workers remove weeds manually. This type of weed control is encouraged avoiding where possible the use of weed killer. A stretch of the Schull approach road was also enhanced, with drainage pipes installed, resurfacing and tree planting. As mentioned earlier heritage is important to the town and the painting of the milestones is a perfect example of the importance of preserving your history. These were of great importance to travellers determining their journeys in bygone days.

Concluding Remarks:

Skibbereen as always is a pleasure to adjudicate even though it is different this year. Thank you for your photos which were a great help to the adjudicator. You have done good work for this year's competition and you are wished well in the future.