

Tidy Towns Competition 2025

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Skibbereen - An Sciobairín** Ref: **693**
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **390**
Category: **D** Date(s): **23/06/2025**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2024	Mark Awarded 2025
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	80	55	57
Streetscape & Public Places	80	52	55
Green Spaces and Landscaping	80	50	52
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	55	45	46
Sustainability – Doing more with less	55	25	27
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	69	71
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	55	37	38
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	55	43	44
TOTAL MARK	550	376	390

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

Fáilte chuig Comórtas Bhailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2025. Go raibh maith agaibh as bhur iarratas a chur isteach. Maith sibh don obair atá déanta agaibh in bhur cheantar go dtí seo - guímid gach rath oraibh i bhur dtionscadail amach anseo. Ádh mór.

Thank you for participating In Ireland's longest-running environmental project and helping to make Ireland a better place. We really appreciate all the great work that you do and the effort you put in, year on year.

We should start with a word of praise for the team (for surely this was a team effort) that worked on your entry form this year. This was really well thought-out, richly illustrated and easy to follow. We note that you have dedicated this entry to the late Denis Dwyer and it is a fitting tribute to the person you describe as a life-long friend of Skibbereen Tidy Towns. Please accept our condolences on your loss of this stalwart volunteer and friend. Here in this first category, you leave us in no doubt as to the supports that you enjoy from and within your community. It's great to read that you are involving youth and sports clubs. The specific project that you have identified for particular effort this year is The Friends of the Rock. This is an interesting multi-annual project that is a significant undertaking for your group. Very good. Thank you so much for providing the historical context of the birth of Skibbereen Tidy Towns and we are delighted that it has been such a positive experience for the town.

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

First of all, thank you for clearly addressing the comments of last year's adjudicator. We understand that dereliction is a difficult issue. It must be said that the presentation of your work here is so impressive. Thank you for the many photographs that make this adjudicator's work so much easier. You describe various public realm projects, the Playground Project and some of the many buildings and other items of heritage significance. We also praise here the excellent representation that you have provided of the many businesses – old, new and rejuvenated- that make the streetscape of Skibbereen what it is. The library looks great after its facelift. The Uilim Arts Centre is still as striking as the first time we saw it. Olympic Square looked great. Lovely planters here were very well maintained with lots of summer species. Larger trees and shrubs really aren't suitable for container planting though. Your shopfronts are such a great asset for you and the Skibbereen streetscape benefits from the great care and colour that are displayed here. Among the premises we admired were Daly's old drapery, Antiquity Books, Smooth salon, Hamilton's and Cleary's Pharmacies, Violette, Field & Co and the Church Restaurant. It was lovely to be able read poetry in the street, by the way. It workshop also great to see that the Credit Union, AIB and Bank of Ireland all have window-boxes. The ramp at the latter was also viewed. The Square looked great on the day and it was such a pleasant place to sit.

Skibbereen is a very pleasant town to walk around with many features of interest including street art, poetry and nice old buildings. The Town Hall appears to be somewhat underused in the opinion of this adjudicator. This would seem to have potential for an arts venue, perhaps a theatre? We congratulate the Supervalu management for the presentation of their premises and retaining the beautiful old shopfront features here. Nearby a telephone repair shop has also made great efforts with windowfront presentation. Fastnet Business Park looked well. Good efforts with planted containers on the railings here are applauded here.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

Another lovely entry in this category! Thank you so much for making Skibbereen's other seasons come to life on the page. A diverse range of planting measures are displayed by you here. Undoubtedly, the Friends of the Rock is your 'big one' for this year. This is a really ambitious project but it was absolutely obvious to this adjudicator the value of a site such as this. Congratulations on your Muintir Cork award for your work in this area. The Rock was visited as a priority and we were so impressed by the scale of this project and what an important amenity it means for Skibbereen. There is such a great walking trail here with a good gradient for the cardio fans! We admired the round tables, the amphitheatre and paths. Please be aware that there is quite a bit of Japanese Knotweed here. This may be seen from the second of the little round tables on the left hand side. We counted three stands of it so it has a foothold. We advise that you get this surveyed and a simple Invasive Species Management Plan done up. While in O'Donovan Rossa Park we saw an All-Ireland Pollinator Plan sign but weren't sure what this signified. Cut grass shouldn't really be piled up like this. We'd prefer to see it used for composting or even as mulch.

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

This is another really well-illustrated entry from you. It's so important that towns like Skibbereen have their own Pollinator Plan. When it is locally-based like this, it is far more likely to come together and be effective. We applaud your partnership with Deelish Garden Centre. Can we enquire as to the provenance of the wildflower seeds though? Thank you for showing us the various pollinator-friendly areas of Skibbereen. Gorgeous photographs of these were lovely to review. Several super projects are also described by you here. These include your work on the River Ilen, various biodiversity initiatives by and for schools and biodiversity records for your area. There were some real surprises in amongst these!

Our first stop was at the main town car park and we really liked the pollinator information here and plants for pollinators. Some really talented artists have worked on this! One of the first things we noticed on alighting was the noise of Swifts doing their thing – a real summer sound! We saw great potential at The Rock. There is a real opportunity for a mini-nature reserve up here. A wildflower meadow would form a very valuable part of this. We know that you have a Pollinator Plan so we look forward to seeing what you can do up here.

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

Here you tell us first about the visit to Skibbereen by Durrus Tidy Towns. We applaud this kind of knowledge-sharing and it usually makes for a fun time for all parties involved! A new project for you is the Skibbereen Cycle Bus. This was launched in May. Will it run all the way through the year (and the poorer weather)? A great initiative, well done. Skibbereen Community School hosted a Cycle-sense Workshop – a super TY initiative! It was great to hear about the food waste treatment project and the Relove Paint product. We wish this circular economy-friendly business all the best. Various school-based projects are also described by you here from plastic bottle recycling to Junk Kouture and The Golden Boot! Several other projects are described by you here in this category including seed-saving, rainwater harvesting and the new water fountain. Great stuff. We wish you all the best with becoming a Greenway Trailhead town and all that comes with it. Finally, congratulations to St. Patrick's Boys' National School on their award from An Taisce.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Thank you for all the detail you have provided in this category. This included a no to election posters campaign, anti-litter actions by Skibbereen Community School (well done everyone) and your ongoing anti-litter efforts. These included Spring Cleans, the KWD County Clean-up and Sunday beach cleans. Fantastic. Very few tidiness issues were encountered during the entire visit. You take good care of your street furniture like railings, benches and post boxes – well done. Skibbereen wasn't litter-free on adjudication day – Olympic Square unfortunately had quite a few litter items on the day – but overall the standard was excellent. The bring centre and recycling facility was spotless and very neat at time of visit. Thank you for all your hard work.

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

Here you tell us that you are maintaining your Area Ambassador programme as well as its junior counterpart. We love the inter-estate anti-litter challenge - a super bit of internal competition! It's great to read that derelict houses are to be put to good use. We were impressed with the standard of presentation of townhouses in Skibbereen. Well done for those householders here and in various estates that have green to the effort of container and bed planting for the summer months.

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

In this last category, you unveil some of the hidden history to Skibbereen's alleyways. These are almost always a most fascinating feature of older towns. Thank you for the before and after photographs. You also provided us with excellent photographs of road and roundabout upgrades, good to see. These and other roundabouts are now

benefiting from perennial plants for pollinators, excellent. Thank you for describing your weed control actions on your approach roads and the walking trails and tours that visitors to Skibbereen can avail of.

On the way into Skibbereen we noted that your name signs and speed limit signs were all clean. We like the little bit of planting at the base of the Tidy Towns sign – just watch out for vegetation obscuring the sign! However, we did note that several signs for various Skibbereen attractions (e.g. Skibbereen Food Festival) were covered with algae and didn't look great. Do please let us know which bedding species you use on your long planting rows. Both of the 'big' roundabouts looked absolutely superb. Some nicely planned planting here gave depth and light as well as colour. Around the bridge, decorative planting is also well thought-out. Well done.

Concluding Remarks:

This was this adjudicator's first visit to Skibbereen for a long while and it was great to be back and especially to see such improvements. It's clear that you are taking your participation in Tidy Towns and more importantly perhaps, the quality of life of your residents very seriously. We applaud your great efforts for pollinators and the massive project that is The Rock. Best of luck and thanks again.