

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Skibbereen**

Ref: **544**

County: **Cork West**

Mark: **242**

Category: **C**

Date: **04/08/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	46	46
The Built Environment	40	32	32
Landscaping	40	33	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	22
Litter Control	40	31	30
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	31
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	242	239

Overall Developmental Approach:

Skibbereen Tidy Towns Committee seemed to be extremely small for a town of this size. The adjudicator was pleased to note you have a high level of support from the local community. Your scoping studies examining certain areas of the town in greater detail made very interesting reading and are an excellent initiative!

The Built Environment:

The Town Hall was well presented but the adjacent Tourist Office was in need of a fresh coat of paint and this should be done before next year's competition. The churches were well presented, in particular the attractive grounds to the Church of Ireland were greatly admired. Buildings on the main streets of the town were somewhat inconsistent, in that a number were extremely fresh and looked very well such as the West Cork Hotel with its attractive floral displays, the Eldon Hotel, Trendy Kids and Ty Ar Mor. The mural at Baby Hannah's looked extremely well and the AIB was very fresh with magnificent window boxes. However, there were a number of empty buildings some of which were for sale and some buildings such as O'Leary's and The Stove had not considered their upper levels which looked quite shabby in comparison to the ground floors. Do discourage plastic projecting signage and encourage its replacement with ones of a more traditional timber variety. Do consider gable walls also, that to Centra appeared rather grubby. There is a good use of the Irish language throughout the town and this is to be actively encouraged.

Landscaping:

Landscaped areas throughout looked well. The hanging baskets to the bridge were admired. There is scope for further development of rear areas such as car parks. Field's car park was fine, although some work appeared to have been done to the riverside area it looked rather rough and the new car park at Townsend Street appeared very neglected! The open space on the Ballydehob Road was admired its relatively new trees coming along well. The sculpture and metal figure in this location were admired. New trees and stone walling to the ring road looked extremely well and landscaping in this location should mature nicely. The roundabout at the entry point to the Castletownsend road is always admired for its unusual patinated sculptural features.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Your plans for a nature trail are most interesting. Skibbereen is indeed fortunate with the wealth of wildlife it has due to its location on the river. Future wildlife plaques are looked forward to with great anticipation.

Litter Control:

The standard of litter control on the day was good given the size of the town. A little was evident on the Ballydehob Road - near the Esso station on Townsend Street and one or two papers in the vicinity of bridge near the West Cork Hotel. Some of the litter bins appear quite rusty and should be repainted or replaced.

Tidiness:

Dereliction was evident by the river by O'Leary's shop - hopefully these outbuildings can be put to some use or the site developed, as thi has been a problem area for a number of years now. The riverside area is still in need of some attention - there appeared to be a lot of weed and algae growth. Do discourage fly positing as it gives roadsides a rather cluttered appearance. Empty buildings such as the Esso Station looked unfortunate. Your plans for re-establishing the recycling areas are to be commended.

Residential Areas:

New houses on the Ballydehob Road were under construction on the day - those on the opposite side of the riverbank appeared to be maturing well. Individual houses throughout the town and along approach roads were generally maintained to a high standard. Some of the houses on Townsend Street, however, were not to the same high standard as others. Those with vertical hung slate were greatly admired. Your work in regard to social housing throughout the town is to be commended.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The magnificent limestone kerbs to footpaths were admired but some of the footpaths themselves were in extremely bad condition. In relation to the main approaches to the town, although the grass had been cut back on one side of the Ballydehob Road, the dead grass had yet to be removed. The landscaped area in this location has been commented upon previously. The Cork Road was in better condition as indeed was the Ring Road which was greatly admired.

General Impression:

Skibbereen is an attractive town which is extremely busy. It is always a pleasure to visit. Well done to all concerned and good luck with your future plans.

Second Round Adjudication:

It was an unusual site that greeted this adjudicator on entering North Street to find a minor traffic disruption caused by two majestic elephants trundling along the street advertising circus day in Skibbereen. The town was busy and vibrant with many visitors traversing the various streets. The many fine historic buildings with distinctive architecture and the many large period houses were much admired. Attractive new buildings included the Heritage Centre and the Fire Station and we welcome in particular those adhering to the traditional character of the town in the development of shopfronts. Litter control was good, apart from an overflowing litter barrel in the untidy yard opposite the West Cork Hotel entrance. Some riverside sculpture on river bank on the western approach to the town needs improved presentation. We noticed an extremely busy recycling depot near the roundabout and that evening we observed all the containers being emptied. We commend the layout and presentation of the recycling operation beside the Fire Station which had no signs of abuse. The Famine walk is interesting and informative and of course appropriate for the history of Skibbereen. Some of the signs maintenance may need to be revisited. Thank you for an excellent submission. Like other towns you have a new litter problem emanating from the new anti smoking laws that is contributing to large numbers of cigarette butts being discarded outside some premises: this problem will be solved in time. Well done on a very good performance.