

# Tidy Towns Competition 2008

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Skerries** Ref: **178**  
County: **Dublin(Fingal)** Mark: **291**  
Category: **E** Date(s): **22/06/2008**  
**25/07/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	47
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	35
Waste Minimisation	20	13
Tidiness	30	19
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	35
General Impression	10	9
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>291</b>

### Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the 2008 TidyTowns Competition and thank you for your submission. Please pass on my appreciation to the Prosper Fingal Service Users for their wonderful card commemorating the TidyTowns 50th anniversary. The Work plan and Town Plan were both very informative and the map provided was well marked out. The Adjudicator was particularly impressed with the breadth of programmes you undertake. This can only assist in encouraging all members of the community (both business and residential) to take pride and ownership of their area. Well done on this. We are pleased to hear of the work you have carried out following on from last year's report. It is very positive that you have businesses such as Holmpatrick Shopping Centre that are so supportive and willing to take on board recommendations. Your committee of 8 is not large for the size of the area. However, by bringing in event volunteers, partnering with clubs and asking residents/businesses to take on responsibility for their area through your awards programmes you are successfully meeting many of your objectives that larger groups couldn't. TidyTowns is designed to be a platform to bring different groups together to create a better community for all so you have certainly been successful in this.

### The Built Environment:

Your inclusion of the Irish version of the name on all street signs is to be commended. The refurbished toilet block on south strand was clean and tidy. The use of old stone and red brick is in keeping with the built surrounds. The thatching of the derelict cottage was a great project. This has not only improved the aesthetics of the area, but also preserved an authentic historical feature. We were pleased to hear of your inclusion in the Fingal County Councils Cleaner Community Competition. Your involvement in competitions such as these will assist in keeping momentum and volunteer interest in projects throughout the year. Congratulations on your continued success in the Iarnród Éireann Best Suburban Station Competition. The station was tidy and very well presented on the day of adjudication. However, one of the outside planting box near the bike rack

needing replacing and the bike rails would look brighter and tidier if repainted. The 1913 school was clean and tidy. The school was painted in classic colours and surrounded in lovely greenery. The O'Learys Guesthouse was admired as a traditional style B&B.

### **Landscaping:**

We were very interested to hear about the Guerrilla Gardener's working with Crann Phadraig to plant new trees. This is very good initiative for all involved. The work that Skerries Community Association is undertaking by hosting green schools seminars will be very beneficial to all the schools (and ultimately the wider community) in assisting them to reach their environmental targets. On the day of adjudication, the main park area was clean and tidy and featured attractive landscaping. The bright floral display on the corner of Thomas Hand St and New St was admired. The plantings on Dublin Road before Patrick's close were also colourful and well maintained as were those at the roundabout at the Lusk road turnoff. The bird sculpture (The Oyster catcher) installed at the junction is very unique and relevant addition to the area. The Finglas cave was well maintained and flowers in the area retained a striking blue theme. This area was very clean and there was no litter.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

The Dune Conservation Work is an important endeavour, particularly in an area that would see high pedestrian traffic. The regular beach cleans will also be important in protecting the natural coastal environment and it is good that you are working with Coastcare on such projects. On the entry to The Mill, the reed area with its swimming cygnets, swans and ducks was admired. We were pleased also that you are utilising organic weed killer instead of chemicals.

### **Litter Control:**

Your involvement in the National Spring Clean is commended. The Adoption Scheme is great way to have small areas looked after by individuals. This will reduce your own workload, and also encourage ownership and pride throughout the community. We were pleased to hear about the work undertaken by the CSPE School on chewing gum and we look forward to hearing more on how this progresses over time. The addition of new litter bins and extra dog fouling bags is noted. There will always be a higher success rate in reducing litter if suitable disposing options are given. There was some litter along the beach by Hoar Rock and in some back areas near the beach. The main area of Skerries held some light litter but overall there was not a lot of litter. There was a lot of litter in the Community Centre car park. Bins were overflowing near the first car park at the beach.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

We were pleased to here that all houses in Skerries have brown bins. Well done the council on this. As a follow-up, your committee or one of your schools could undertake a survey to examine how much of the community actually utilises these bins and how many don't. It would also be useful to examine why bins may not be being used. Well done on your Green Home Talks. We were extremely pleased to hear that all primary schools in Skerries hold a Green Flag. Well done schools! Most impressive was the fact that Milverton Green is run solely by children. The walking bus scheme is a very good project. Well done also to Holmpatrick School and its work in the composting network. We look forward to hearing more about the pilot of the Green Neighbourhood in Mourne Estate. Hopefully this is successful and can be moved to include other estates.

### **Tidiness:**

The work you have undertaken to repair footpaths and upgrade signs will assist both tourists and residents walking through the town. The Community College was a bit overgrown and there was litter in the car park. The actual building was neat and tidy. The notice board does need updating. The pitches at the sports club were clean and well presented. Your work on replacing signage that had been removed and installing new signage were needed is noted.

### **Residential Areas:**

In general residential areas were tidy and well kept. Some areas were a little bit overgrown on grass verges, but not to a large extent. The entrance to Skerries Rock Estate was well maintained and tidy. The Hoar Rock featured lovely cottages overlooking the beach. The lovely cottages on Main Street hold a wonderful old charm. We are pleased to hear of your competition for Best Kept House and Best Kept Estate. Events such as these will help keep residents focused on keeping their areas well kept and reduce the work load of the Tidy Towns committee. Most importantly it assists in creating a stronger community. This is particular important in an area such as Skerries where many people would commute and may not have a lot of time to socialise with neighbours.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The work undertaken to upgrade the tactile paving at crossing points is well noted. It is important to ensure that risk to residents and visitors is minimised as much as possible in public areas. The new pedestrian bridge installed at South Strand is a welcome addition and will encourage more pedestrians to use the area. The walk along the South Strand and the addition of new seats will also encourage foot traffic. The Stone wall along by sea and old watchtower were in wonderful condition and this area has been well maintained. Roads in general were in good condition.

**General Impression:**

You are to be commended all the work you are doing to make Skerries sustainable community; and your capacity to involve so many people, particularly the children, in your activities is really excellent. We really enjoyed our visit to your lovely town this year and hope to come back soon. Many thanks.

**Second Round Adjudication:**

While I would generally concur with the first round comments, a few issues were evident at second round. The grass verges on the Dublin road were in need of trimming on the day and, unfortunately, some litter was apparent in this location. There were a number of new bird sculptures evident in the village since the adjudicator's last visit to Skerries – at the junction of Church Street and Strand Street and at the seafront. The newly thatched roof on Church Street looked quite marvellous- unfortunately a thatched cottage opposite was in somewhat poorer condition! Hopefully, this will be restored to its former glory in the not too distant future. Don't forget gable walls when considering overall presentation, as they are quite evident as buildings step up and down along streets. The open spaces and car park area of Red Island were in very good condition on the day, free of litter and being well used. New fencing was evident to the site beside the Amusements Arcade and entertainment centre on the seafront, where a new stone boundary wall was also noted. A few papers were evident on Strand Street and one or two papers in the Community Centre car park, but this situation seemed to have improved somewhat since first adjudication. However, quite a few weeds were evident in this location. Skerries is a community which shows an evident care in the appearance of its village. Well done to all concerned!