

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Schull** Ref: **833**  
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **237**  
Category: **B** Date(s): **20/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	39
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	20
Litter Control	50	32
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	17
Residential Areas	40	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	26
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>237</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Congratulations to the Schull TidyTowns Committee for participating in the TidyTowns Competition 2009. Thank you for your submission, for your comprehensive village improvements plan and for your map. It appears that your submission has improved substantially since last year. For next year you might improve on the map. A hand drawn sketch of the town which highlights the places you regard as being most important for the TidyTowns Competition is a great help to the adjudicator and leads the adjudicator in a focused manner through the village. Glad to see that the men are not leaving all of the work to the ladies and are involved on committee. It appears that you have the goodwill of the community judging from the list of volunteers who assist your work. You are blessed with the funding you have succeeded in getting. This indicates that business and the Cork County Council find you a creditable group to engage with. Your engagement with the schools seems to be meaningful and mutually beneficial. Your comments on your experience in the competition are interesting. Patience is not a virtue that associates well with enthusiasm. Your group seem to have both, a dynamic mix.

### **The Built Environment:**

The eclectic mix of colours on the mainstreet is a joy to behold. Business owners realise that part of the charm of a visit to Schull is the presentation of the shop fronts. There is some dereliction. You are tackling this problem and good luck to you. The owners of these premises have responsibilities to the public who supported them for many years.

There are many fine individual buildings throughout the town. The environs of the Church are to be complimented. Those grounds occupy a privileged elevated position in the town but are immaculate in their maintenance and presentation. The school of 1835 looks better than it did back then. The yellow presbytery completes the picture, or should one include the parish office also. There are other fine buildings, for example the AIB, the Credit Union or the library. The gables of The Harbour View Hotel and of the Dental

Clinic are striking in their strong colours. Care must be taken to ensure that these buildings present themselves well and need constant supervision. Your main heritage building seems to be The Holy Trinity Church. Mind it. Grove House is another that links with the Schull heritage. Schools are a joy to visit. The Garda Station presents a modern sassy design. The marine Education Centre another to stand out. The round tower Planetarium a joy. St Gabriel's and its landscaping deserves special mention but please paint the oratory door. Fair play to the firemen, nice station. There are many attractive shop fronts. Hope nobody, especially in Tigín or in the Bunratty Inn, will be affronted if the adjudicator gives special mention to TJ Newman.

### **Landscaping:**

Well done on the bed of roses, all blooming in the summer sun. Your encouragement to businesses to have hanging baskets and window boxes on the first storey has been most successful. The street makes one dizzy with the colour.

Many buildings are enhanced by their landscaping, the Garda Station being a noteworthy example. Wonderful to see that the fine playground is busy. Much of the landscaping has been neglected in this carpark. Work done recently in this park will not assist the hydrangea to flower this year. Priority needs to be given to landscaping carried out over the years. Maintenance of much of this landscaping or renewal needs your attention. An example would be the landscaping around Ardmanagh Road.

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

There are wonderful natural amenities in Schull. Access to these is key. Your concern for wheelchair access is most laudable. In reading your 'improvements plan' one feels that the wildlife topic has been overlooked. In view of the wide range of natural resources in your locality one feels that your group needs to be more pro-active in the promotion of biodiversity and in the research of the ecology of Schull.

### **Litter Control:**

For such a busy town Schull does not have a litter problem. Very little litter was noticed. No graffiti was spotted. Well done. Your work is paying dividends.

Scoil Mhuire gets another mention for its effort to keep Schull clean. Its 'Coinnigh Glan' sign is a call to arms, agus as Gaeilge too.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

When admiring the sculpture at Scoil Mhuire the compost bins and the organic gardening enterprises were spotted. The Green Flag Status of Scoil Mhuire was announced by the green flag. All these are waste minimisation schemes. Extending Green Flag Status to the secondary school would be an achievement. Good to see that there is a 'strict regime' of recycling in the National School. Be careful not to confuse this section with the litter section. Remember that the emphasis in this section is not on litter control but on minimising waste in your community.

### **Tidiness:**

Traffic seems to flow freely through the town, facilitated by the town centre car parks. The lack of litter and graffiti help create a tidy appearance. Too many signs are dirty or rusty. The fences create a shabby appearance. Where the landscaping is not regular, as at the houses beside the Grove, there is an impression of neglect. One will not mention the impact of dereliction.

### **Residential Areas:**

There are beautiful individual dwellings throughout the town, all enhancing their surroundings with their design and landscaping. Glorious examples are the ivy clad houses on the twist on the road from Ballydehob. Many of these houses have commanding views of the bay and must contribute to a pretty picture from the sea. Housing estates have been mushrooming in Schull for many years. One imagines that many fishing cottages have given way to new ones down by the coast. Many of the Celtic Tiger estates are holiday homes, it would appear. The landscaping management of some of these estates leaves an amount to be desired. The older estates, such as McLean Terrace and the crescent of houses at Seaview Terrace maintain their pride of place well, in the face of the stiff competition from the Moorings et al. One hopes that Copper Point reaches its potential on that important site. The frequent use of Gaeilge for house names is impressive as in 'Trasna na dTonnta' or 'Cruidín'. There are some older terraces between Cobblers and the Church of Ireland that would come to life with a coordinated hanging basket plan, like you have achieved on main street.

**Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

As a wise general rule the verges of many of the approach roads are allowed grow wild, in keeping with their surroundings. On approaching from Ballydehob one is presented with a picture postcard view of the harbour. Later one feels that the briars should be controlled. Timber fencing and concrete fencing are frequently in use in Schull. In almost all cases the fencing needs attention. This adjudicator would love to see a planned substitution policy for this fencing as the fencing rarely improves its surroundings compared to the impact that the stone wall boundaries and the hedging boundaries of other areas. The district on the way from the main street to the pier is the high point of this visit. The walk down the steep hill fills one with excitement of being in a ferment of activity. There are the stone walls, the pretty businesses, the summer colour of the fuchsia, the cobblers, the view of the harbour, the helter skelter of the fishing port, the old and new buildings getting to know one another, the nooks, the crannies and the corners. And then, of course, the stream gushing downhill, racing to the finishing line. In the midst of it all your display board on the fish is tucked away. A lovely experience.

**General Impression:**

It will be no consolation to your committee if the adjudicator says that Schull is a beautiful town and does not increase the marks. There are many marks that can be readily picked up by Schull thus improving your position in this competition by taking note of the comments in this report. There are other challenges that are not quite so accessible but will never be solved without pressure of a community group like yours.