

# Tidy Towns Competition 2009

## *Adjudication Report*

Centre: **Sherkin Island** Ref: **692**  
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **285**  
Category: **A** Date(s): **08/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	38
The Built Environment	50	36
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	30
Litter Control	50	40
Waste Minimisation	20	14
Tidiness	30	22
Residential Areas	40	28
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	35
General Impression	10	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>285</b>

### **Overall Development Approach:**

Well done on another very comprehensive entry into the TidyTowns competition. Your entry gave very much useful information on your group's work over the last year. It is clear that you work well with a number of other organisations both on and without the island. Your recent work with third level colleges is a very positive step. This is very important. Your school is working hard toward its Green Flag and this is another key step toward a sustainable community. Your approach to keeping the natural elements of Sherkin while improving the built and human environments is a good one. You have tackled some of the outstanding problems while still working on your regular events and tasks. Your committee remains in strong numbers and is very obviously an active one.

### **The Built Environment:**

The national school looked well on day of visit with nice planting in the school garden. The playground looked very neat. The gates and wall could be re-painted. The church is in a good colour but the grounds looked a little bleak. Some flowers would help the overall appearance. Here again, the gates and walls need attention. The Islanders' Rest looks very well. There has been a lot of effort at landscaping here. The gardens are very pleasant to spend a little time in now. A little more work could be done on the planting at the sleeper beds along the lane. The Jolly Rodger also looks very good. An Tigin is a lovely little premises. The Community Centre and Library looked well and were in use at time of visit. The Friary is an invaluable asset to the island's built landscape. Although much conservation work has been done and display materials were noted inside the building, the Friary was still closed to visitors on day of visit. Having even a small part of this unique site open would be of great benefit to the island.

### **Landscaping:**

The recent flower bed across from the Tigin looks very well. The work at the hotel and the pub is noted. There are several areas where some judicious planting or the situation of some planted containers would be an addition. E.g. at the pump, at the quay or at the church.

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

Sherkin is an island richly endowed with natural resources. It is commendable that all of your farmers are in REPS (notwithstanding the fact that at time of writing the government has announced the cessation of this scheme). The use of walking routes and guided walks to bring the visitors to the wild aspects of the island is a good idea. It is believed that work is underway on this. Visitor information on walkways, flora and fauna and general island natural history will be essential. Your project to gather this is noted but there is currently none available. The adjudicator looks forward to seeing the results of this.

### **Litter Control:**

As your application addressed, litter seems to have been banished to the past for Sherkin. Almost no litter was seen on day of visit. Your spring-clean work, public information and encouragement is to be praised. Trabawn Strand was visited. This is a beautiful beach and was as empty of litter as it was of people!

### **Waste Minimisation:**

Well done on making composting so popular. Your work with the budding Green School is noted too. Encouraging vegetable gardening is an excellent way of cutting down on waste (and saving energy). Good luck with the paper briquette project. The re-vamped recycling storage area was seen and looks much better than before. A sign that tells passers-by what this area is would be a good idea.

### **Tidiness:**

There was a marked improvement in the quay areas on this visit. However, there is room for improvement at the pier still. A number of the signs around the island need some work. The Sherkin map should be at the pier or a new one made for this purpose. Make sure that any signs in place are clearly and correctly pointing the way. For many visitors this is their first visit and they will have no idea where to go or how to best use their time. This is what should be kept in mind when designing any signage for the island. The bench beside the post-box is missing. The sign on the Portakabin beside the community centre is beyond utility. The pump needs weeding and is not working. Neither is the tap beside it. It is noted that there are far fewer cars on the island, both derelicts and in use, than on previous visits. A minibus service is now in use which seems to contribute positively.

### **Residential Areas:**

A generally high standard of upkeep was seen among the houses and gardens of Sherkin. The cottages of 'The Lane' looked very well. The low-impact of the houses on the environment was appreciated on day of visit which was very bright and sunny.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The roads of Sherkin are really lovely to walk, especially in the summer. Very little needs to be done to either the roadsides or surface for walkers or cyclists. There is ample room for the creation of new walking routes (on or off-road) on the island.

It is a shame that the approach to the island from the marina isn't better. Passing under the shadow of Dun na Long, this could be a lovely way to enter the island but it is not. The signs here are very poor and not exactly welcoming. The path surface isn't great and there is clutter. The tap on the left is flimsily erected. This would be a great place for heritage information or a decent map. It would be simple to make some changes and make this a better introduction to the island. There is room for improvement at the pier.

### **General Impression:**

Sherkin has made yet another good entry into this years competition. It was a great pleasure to be back on the island again. Litter and waste, including fly-tipping have been tackled head-on. It is recommended that the committee concentrate on improving some of the visitor facilities over the coming year. The heritage and wildlife aspects of the island remain to be explored properly. It would be great to return and be able to explore the Friary or undertake a longer walking exploration of this lovely island. Good luck with all your work.