

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Temple Bar** Ref: **179**
County: **Dublin(City)** Mark: **259**
Category: **D** Date(s): **26/06/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	44
The Built Environment	50	33
Landscaping	50	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	24
Litter Control	50	33
Waste Minimisation	20	10
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	26
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	259

Overall Development Approach:

Temple Bar is very welcome to the 2009 TidyTown Competition and many thanks for the comprehensive information and supporting document supplied. Your map outlining items of interest was most useful on adjudication day, although perhaps the colour dots on the map could be linked to the items number on your key for clarity. The establishment of the TASCQ group seems to be really working for you. The idea of an annually appointed board is an effective way to ensure all members have a chance to be a part of the decision making process. The structures, both formal and informal, you have in place to aid consultation both within your group and with other organisations such as DCC and the Gardai are a great success. How does the communication with residents and residents groups work? There doesn't seem to be a representative of residents group on this year's board? The organisation of your plans in each category into a three year structure was good to see and we hope that this will help you to focus your actions to achieve real results.

The Built Environment:

The built environment and the cultural environment of your area are so interlinked and this is what makes it a unique part of the city. As a result of the boom times virtually all of the derelict sites from previous years are now developed. We look forward to some of the newer developments proposed such as the development at the Eagar Beaver and the new Green Hotel. The GIS study will be a great tool to help you plan for the future and good luck in the development of design guidelines for the area. This would be especially useful in the control of shop fronts as some frontages, especially around Temple Bar Square are becoming overrun with sometimes poorly designed and thought out signage. The development of the Temple Bar guide and free map seems to have been a great success and virtually every second visitor to the area was seen referring to one on adjudication day. The street area maps were also well designed although the one at Anglesea Street was empty.

Landscaping:

The built environment and the cultural environment of your area are so interlinked and this is what makes it a unique part of the city. As a result of the boom times virtually all of the derelict sites from previous years are now developed. We look forward to some of the newer developments proposed such as the development at the Eagar Beaver and the new Green Hotel. The GIS study will be a great tool to help you plan for the future and good luck in the development of design guidelines for the area. This would be especially useful in the control of shop fronts as some frontages, especially around Temple Bar Square are becoming overrun with sometimes poorly designed and thought out signage. The development of the Temple Bar guide and free map seems to have been a great success and virtually every second visitor to the area was seen referring to one on adjudication day. The street area maps were also well designed although the one at Anglesea Street was empty.

Landscaping Comment

For an urban area in the centre of the city your civic spaces come under huge pressure and they were well used on adjudication day. The relief trees bring to streets as in the lovely space created at Essex Street West at the Constellation wall, show how even the smallest space, once treated properly, can add so much to the streetscape. The space at Crampton Court was looking neglected and in need of attention. A number of the units here were boarded up and we hope there are plans to protect this space, one of the few green spaces in your area.

Meeting house square was perfectly presented and we note your plans to identify locations for seating as it is a pity there was nowhere to sit in this quiet space. The public art here, and in other locations, do much to enliven the space and good luck with the proposed Public Art Map. The planted beds at the Central Bank Plaza at Fownes Street were parched and much of the planting was dead.

We would encourage you to be more innovative in the types of seasonal planting used, to be design inventive in this area. As suggested in your Biodiversity Study, wild flowers may be an option but consider more modern interpretations of planters. Rather than the Lobelia and Geraniums, which are similar to planting schemes used elsewhere in Dublin, and do not particularly stand out as being different, perhaps try new combinations of plants. This may be something you could discuss with the Parks Department of Dublin City Council who develop the street displays or advise commercial owners on new combinations of plants to try in their hanging baskets.

One area of landscaping that is beginning to become more prominent as gardens establish, is the number of roof gardens and terraces. Increasingly as you look up in Temple Bar you see how much elevated green space you have. This is an area that you should encourage with perhaps starter packs developed for residents to green up their balconies available through Cultivate. The learning garden in Clutivate was much admired. This could be linked to your 2011 aim of creating urban allotments using boxes or containers that could be used on roof terraces/balconies. Perhaps you could start a best roof garden/balcony competition for both residents and commercial premises? In last years report mention was made of a Green Residential award? Have you made any progress with this idea?

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

Congratulations on the production of your Biodiversity Study. There are many ideas listed in this document which should help increase the biodiversity within Temple Bar. We would encourage you to use this document to help set out very clear short and long term targets for you to aim for. We especially liked the idea of establishing a green wall. You should look at the work of Patrick Blanc. His vertical gardens in Paris at the Quai Branley Museum, if applied to Temple Bar, would certainly transform the ESB building at Fleet Street and could become an attraction in its own right as well as being a valuable habitat and biodiversity device. Your Biodiversity Day is a great way to focus attention on the hidden wildlife in Temple Bar.

Litter Control:

For an urban area of its size your efforts at litter control are certainly paying off with very little litter evident on adjudication day. However one big issue we had was the commercial waste left out on footpaths. Although all of this was tagged and bundled it was a shame to see it so evident on the street. In particular bags of tagged litter were placed at the traffic signal box, in all its colour, at the junction with Eustace Street and the Millennium Bridge. This was on a late afternoon, one of the busiest times for your area with a lot of visitors passing this spot. This was a real let down as this is such an important gateway to Temple Bar from the North City. It was also particularly unfortunate as it was right beside the welcome to Temple Bar Tidy Towns sign. This is an issue that needs to be addressed with surrounding businesses. Tagged bin bags were also noted on the path at Anglesea Street.

Cigarette butts are a difficult item to address and your litter survey shows this was some of the most prevalent waste found during your audit. However we congratulate you on all the efforts you are making to address this

issue especially the development of the cigarette vacuum machine. The Play Nice Campaign notices were much in evidence on bins. A cigarette butt bin should be installed at the Courts building at Dolphin House.

The recycling centre at the entrance to the Fleet Street car park was tidy with no blown litter.

Waste Minimisation:

Thank you for the comprehensive completion of this category in your submission. The Temple Bar Green and Clean strategies are very interesting. How are the recommendations from the independent auditor work during the summer being received by the entrants? It would be useful to follow this audit up with a study as to how many people took on some of the recommendations and how successful they have been. As mentioned earlier in the report, the issue of tagged commercial waste and its storage need to be addressed. Did your An Taisce report audit where most of the waste was being generated from? If you can target the waste generators then you can target waste reduction. Perhaps you could encourage the use of biodegradable food ware in food outlets if they are one of the major contributors? The Meeting House Square Food Market would be a great place to highlight the possibilities for urban food production and the realities of composting in urban apartments?

Tidiness:

Temple Bar present itself as a tidy area and most premises and streets looked well on adjudication day. As over the years so many of the empty sites have been developed dereliction is no longer a real issue. An area where new strategies may need to be devised is the issue of empty shop units, an indication of the present economic difficulties. It was good to see a sculptural display in the empty shop unit at the corner of Cows Lane and Essex Street, such a prominent site.

An item that needs addressing is the issue of bike parking. A study should be taken as to the real demand for bike parking and where it needs to be located. Some of the bike stands at the periphery of Temple Bar, as opposite Rhythm Records at Aston Quay, were empty. While other areas, such as the rail at Eden restaurant and to the steps at Cows Lane, were full of bikes illegally chained. This cluttered the views and should be tackled. Safe central bike parking areas are a must to encourage cyclists.

There are an increasing number of smaller 'sandwich board' stand alone signs outside shops. These should be discouraged as in addition to cluttering the street they are an obstacle to pedestrians, especially in Temple Bar square.

Fly posters were noted at some locations and perhaps consideration should be given to having a dedicated central location when fly posters and gig notices could be displayed. Perhaps they could be incorporated into your proposed free standing information maps? This is central to the cultural and arts agenda and allows both visitors and residents see what events are happening. The Temple Bar cultural events banners at the entrance to Foster Place were the only events display observed apart from the banners to the poles on Fleet Street, although some of these were out of date and displayed events in May.

Your efforts at graffiti control were in evidence with graffiti only really a problem in door ways. Other locations were generally graffiti free with the exception of the set pieces such as your street art projects.

Residential Areas:

The presence of residents in Temple Bar are what make it a living quarter as opposed to a tourist attraction. The life on upper floors is evident through the terraces and balconies that help to enliven the views of many of the streets. There were glimpse views to the interior courtyards at Smock Alley Court and Handel Gardens. As many of the apartment complexes are private, the exteriors facades were all that were viewed. Most were well maintained with colourful planters on many of the balconies at Essex Street and Fishamble Street in particular however the planters to the exterior of the Green Building are in need of attention and new climbers need to be planted. The old residential block at Crampton Court was looking very run down with many of the flats boarded up. Are there plans for this complex? It is a shame to see it so unloved as it is one of the original residential communities in the area. We wish you continued good luck in your efforts at developing and strengthening relationships with all the residents groups and management companies.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Public Domain Audit is a great way to keep on top of key maintenance issues in your area especially as budgets for this type of work may be under stress and repairs/upgrades may need to be phased. The road works were ongoing in Temple Lane South on adjudication day and these improvements works are great to see. The use of wall mounted lighting was admired as it removed the need for lighting poles in some of the narrower streets. Some of the other items of street furniture such as light poles and bollards were showing

signs of wear with paint peeling etc. Bikes being chained to poles seems to have a particularly destructive impact on the painted poles.

General Impression:

The use of the competition as a structure under which you can achieve real results for your area is a terrific approach to take. And while Temple Bar will no doubt go from strength to strength in the competition it is the real impact of your programmes on life on the ground which really matters. Well done to all involved in this years submission and to all the groups whose help you harnessed to achieve you goals. Continued good luck in 2010.