

Tidy Towns Competition 2014

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bandon** Ref: **108**
County: **Cork(South)** Mark: **286**
Category: **E** Date(s): **04/07/2014**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2014
Community Involvement & Planning	60	42
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	39
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	46
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	26
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	13
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	52
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	35
TOTAL MARK	450	286

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Bandon is most welcome to the 2014 Tidy Towns competition. Many thanks for your application form, map, three-year plan, photos and additional information. It is evident that you have been busy and have taken comments in last year's report seriously. This is excellent and shows that you mean business. Do be sure however to clearly distinguish in your report between actions completed and actions still at the planning stage. It's fine if you want to tell the adjudicator about your plans but perhaps contain them under a separate heading. Your map remains a little difficult to make out and you are urged to look at this again as it is so important. There must be an artist somewhere in Bandon that could render an attractive base map for you which could then be used year after year to highlight the locations of projects. Your photographs were admired and it is particularly welcome to have before and after images to demonstrate the impact of projects to the adjudicator. Your one-page three-year plan is a little slim. The should be more than just a list of jobs to do. Ideally it should contain an overarching vision, be complementary to the local area plan, set out with each of the contest headings. Action items are then listed under the headings. This is more than just aesthetic. Such an approach encourages you to think for the longer term and breakdown large tasks into their component parts. Rest assured however that you have the right tools to see this through. You have a good number on your team and a wide range of links with all the relevant bodies.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

A systematic approach is needed when dealing with derelict buildings. It could be similar to your signage audit where each is photographed and potential solutions assessed with the relevant assisting body. You are making progress and this is good to see, particularly at St Patrick's Quay and opposite the Munster Arms. Well done on your efforts in this regard. Elsewhere do be patient and persistent. You have an illustrious heritage in Bandon and it is great to see it is celebrated through your Walled Town day. The historic graves project is a part of this. The restored railway carriage was barely recognised given its previous incarnation! Next up is the nearby steam roller which could do with a rubdown. The hoarding with old railway themed photos was admired and creates a point of interest. There is wonderful architectural heritage along St Patrick's Quay although not all of it is in great shape. Is there a heritage trail that can be followed? It's a shame there is no interpretation for the visitor of this important area. It also a shame that the stream here is so full of litter and other debris. St Patrick's church is stunning and the steps up to it from Market Quay create a fantastic entrance. Many businesses look really well with smart presentation and clean facades. Those around the Old Market House were particularly admired. Super Max needs urgent attention (simply washing the facade would make all the difference). South Main Street looks well with many interesting and well presented features. Painting the 'Pat Dineen' wall would greatly enhance this key location that is so visible along the thoroughfare. St Peters Church looks very atmospheric looking across at its counterpart. Impressive features are scattered here and there, for example at the Arches, but no information as to their significance is provided. The Garda station needs to clean its boundary walls. The town of Bandon commemorative plaque is a nice

feature but would be better suited to a more central location in the view of this adjudicator. Well done on planning to clean the statue of Sean Mac Laol while the plinth here also needs to be repaired. The Shambles look well but there are a number of tidiness issues in this area. The Heritage Centre (although there is no signage at the entrance to declare this) is a dramatic piece of architecture and the flowers all along its steps really add to this character.

Overall Bandon can be said to possess a first class built heritage but this remains a diamond in the rough. Work with your local authority and elected representatives in bringing out the shine, as you are doing through your herculean efforts. Bandon should be an attractive tourist stopover but you need to work on presenting your heritage to the standard of say, Kinsale or Youghal. You are wished every success in these endeavours.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Well done on the opening of your new river walk. You have also been busy planting and trimming and strimming and it's great to read about this level of maintenance. The planting of the county council offices were once again admired although grimy flagpoles need to be cleaned. The river park is very well maintained and a really exciting combination of plants creates an abundance of colour and excellent screening of the wire fence here. A dead tree by the roadside should be removed. Well done on the superb new skate park which was indeed being well used on adjudication day - as was the nearby ball court. These are great amenities for young people in Bandon. The hard and soft landscaping work well at the Glaslinn Rd. a beautiful row of lime trees is a wonderful feature along St Patrick's Quay. The Market Quay fountain is nice in this historical area. The large gable wall here is crying out for a murals, perhaps related to the heritage of this location. Some very low quality signage brings the area down. Trees and stone planters, along with good quality seating however makes this a nice area overall. Superb planting was on show at the Weir Health Clinic, well done on this excellent display.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:

Your nature trail is a good idea given the wonderful natural assets that you have available to you. Once this is in place it is hoped that it can be used as an outdoor classroom and area of appreciation for your natural heritage. Well done to the men's shed and the Girl's Presentation Convent for their participation. The design of your information panel is attractive and the photographs are wonderful. Please do not release captive bred ducks to the river. They may displace local water birds or even carry diseases that may spread to their wild cousins. Much better to give nature the space here to do its own thing. There is a major infestation of Japanese knotweed on the banks of the river. This alien invasive species is a serious threat to local biodiversity and will be a challenge to deal with. Contact Inland Fisheries Ireland and the Cork county council heritage officer on how best to start the process of eradication.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

Your thinking on planting schemes is most welcome and it is the kind of mentality that needs to be applied to all areas of the contest. Well done to schools on their green flag achievements, do detail them all in full. Your group should analyse the projects they have undertaken to see how they can be applied across the community. Use your communication channels to broadcast the message including tips on how to reduce waste. For helpful tips and case studies from other Tidy Towns entrants please take a look at <http://localprevention.ie/tidy-towns/>

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

The weekly community litter picks are most welcome and they give people from beyond the committee a chance to participate. Do provide an indication of the typical numbers involved. It is also good to participate in the national spring clean. How is awareness raised of this issue among the community and in schools? Your signage audit is excellent and you recognise how this can make such a difference to the overall appearance of the town. This audit should be integrated with your three-year plan. It should also include redundant or unsightly poles, for example the two sentinels across from the garden centre. The litter issue that was mentioned last year seems to have abated somewhat. A lot of drinking debris had entered the river itself however and effort should be made to remove this within the bounds of health and safety. There are a total of six empty poles along the bridge. A nice project would be to renovate the Victorian era post box next to the library. The small car park at the Riverview/Supervalu is full of woody debris from a broken hoarding. A grand total of 10 empty poles were counted on the pedestrian bridge while it would be great to see this repainted. Litter control on adjudication day was to a high standard in the main thoroughfares, a very well done.

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

Is there a formal or informal liaison between Tidy Towns and the various residents associations? Ideally a representative from each association would sit on the Tidy Towns committee. How do you deal with those areas that do not have a residents association? Effort should be made to also bring their areas into the fold. Bandon benefits greatly from town houses and terraced homes in the centre. Well done to all those owners who made the effort to hang out colourful pots of flowers.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

Your work on the Cork approach is acknowledged and was admired. The roundabout here with installation is very well presented and an attractive introduction to the town. Along the bypass the footpath is great to have but vegetation really needs to be cut back. A margin of 1 m is sufficient to create a tidy appearance. The commercial centre with DID Electrical etc is a blur of signage and looks extremely cluttered. Do try to work with business owners here as this type of free for all benefits nobody. Large-scale shrubbery planting of the station road is excellent for

this location. The main junction on approach from Cork, at the Methodist Church, is busy and incredibly there are no pedestrian crossings. There seem to be few street nameplates in the town and perhaps this is a project in which you could engage.