

Tidy Towns Competition 2012

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Swords** Ref: **160**
County: **Dublin(Fingal)** Mark: **264**
Category: **H** Date(s): **09/07/2012**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2011	Mark Awarded 2012
Overall Development Approach	50	36	36
The Built Environment	50	36	36
Landscaping	50	31	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28	29
Litter Control	50	32	32
Tidiness	30	18	18
Waste Minimisation	20	11	11
Residential Areas	40	27	29
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	33	33
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	400	259	264

Overall Development Approach:

Swords TidyTowns committee are welcome to the TidyTowns competition for 2012. Thank you for your entry map, copy of your plan and supporting documentation. Your committee and a number of volunteers meet regularly and during clean ups. Congratulations on your achievement in the anti litter league 2011. You engage well with the Council and local supermarkets in obtaining assistance with your projects. Your communication through email, newsletters and your open committee meetings to the public are a great means of getting the community involved. The schools are not mentioned as one of your sources of support. Perhaps you should try and address this as collaborating with the schools is beneficial in many areas.

The Built Environment:

In recent years Swords has seen an increase in developments which has changed the face of the town. The many buildings that were part of the earlier era have blended well with the new developments. The town has expanded in all directions. Swords Castle and St Colmcilles park are part of the heritage of Swords. The many more buildings from the early era such as the lord mayor pub with its thatched roof and the old school house which is now a thriving restaurant. Swords town centre and plaza complex with tree lined entrance all serve the large population of Swords that has grown extensively. The Carnegie Library is an essential part to this large town as are the many Churches and Schools. It is good to see that some vacant houses and old houses have been renovated.

Landscaping:

The town has many superb areas of landscaping. From the fine line of trees on Main Street to the superb planters that add great colour to this area. Swords town centre is another great spectacle of landscaping with its array of trees and planters full of glorious summer colour. The adjudicator admires the lovely yew trees at

Church of Ireland and the splendid floral displays at the lovely stone house in the grounds. The castle park also had lovely landscaping with mature trees and the pound pub nearby was adorned with beautiful window boxes. For further planting projects, the planting of trees, hedging and shrubs for seasonal colour, which will provide more food and shelter for wildlife is recommended. There are also many fine areas of landscaping in the housing estates such as Broad Meadow Estuary and Apple Wood to name just a few.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The town of Swords has such a vast area for wildlife. Along the Broad Meadow River, the Ward River and the estuary, not to mention all the landscaping of trees and hedging that make up the landscape of the town. Planned projects indicate that you are to carry out a study of the wildlife in these areas, which may be carried out by your Fingal bio diversity officer. This would be positive progress in this area and would be a great source of information to document and display. There are great amenities around the town for walkers, from the parks to the nature trails at Broad Meadow Estuary. It is good to see that you are also meeting with the heritage committee to extend and improve the nature trail.

Litter Control:

Your work with Fingal County Council and all the other litter awareness groups promoting and education people in the community on litter awareness is heartening. Your achievement in the anti litter league 2011 is applauded and you are wished success in this years anti litter league competition. In a town of this vastness and with a large population, litter can be hard to combat but on the day of adjudication there was not much litter to be seen. A small amount of litter was noted around the park. Well done on your commitment in this category.

Tidiness:

The town was generally tidy on the day of adjudication. Weed growth along the kerbs and pavements in places which is problematic at this time of the year distracts from the tidiness. The old graffiti appears in places but it looks as if you have got it under control somewhat. Traffic in the town was flowing freely. The restoration and renovation carried out to vacant and old dwellings has very much tidied up these areas and improved the overall tidiness in the town. Keep up the good work in this category.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done to the schools that have achieved so many green flags in the green schools programme. The committee should engage with the schools' green schools programme to address waste minimisation. This category is about reducing the amount of waste produced in the community. When clean ups are done segregate the waste collected. Look at composting both in households and the community. Community composting needs permission from the local authority. Work along with businesses to encourage waste reduction programmes and recycling initiatives. Join the green home programme. But remember the key factor in this category is to reduce the amount of waste produced in the community.

Residential Areas:

The town's residential areas have grown from traditional town houses to modern design and the many estates that extend the towns boundaries. Apple Wood estate is itself is a small town. The presentation of the dwellings here were excellent. Also the communal green areas were all well presented. Back into town the small house painted green beside the 44 Hotel caught the adjudicator's eye. Pinegrove was another one that was also admired. The town's streetscape has so many dwellings of different design, old and modern that blend well together and compliment each other effectively.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach roads to the town are well presented and these first impressions are so important. The bridges are also well maintained. The trees and hedging on some roads is neat and tidy. Consistency in town welcoming signs on all approach roads would be an advantage. It is also important to remember that the cutting of hedges is not permitted during the nesting season between 01st March and the 31st August as per section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976.

General Impression:

The town of Swords is a pleasure to visit and adjudicate. The town has an urban rural touch with the many trees and landscaping that softens the concrete look and makes it less visible to the eye. The committee are doing good work in all categories in the competition. Continue the good work and every success in this year's competition and in the future.

