

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **BERE ISLAND**
 County : **CORK**
 Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 06-07-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	38	35
The Built Environment	40	35	33
Landscaping	40	0	--
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	0	--
Litter Control	40	32	32
Tidiness	20	0	--
Residential Areas	30	0	--
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	36	35
General Impression	10	38	36
TOTAL MARK	300	179	171

Bere Island, Co. Cork

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Your '3-5 Year Tidy Towns Work Programme' is more a statement of intent than what is understood by the term elsewhere. A typical plan would normally include a series of projects assigned to each future year - this has an immense advantage as it means that committees do not take on everything at once, and work is systematically phased over the chosen period. The proposals in your sheet dated April, 1997 are all of the highest order, and the fruits of whatever you decide to take on first - which is not stated in the Programme - will be eagerly looked forward to next year. When filling in the questionnaire, please differentiate clearly between work achieved and work planned. This committee's voluntary effort is superb; you seem to be taking on work which would normally fall to other organisations elsewhere.

LITTER CONTROL AND TIDINESS

The bottle bank at the west pier was overflowing on adjudication day; there were heaps of uncollected refuse in bags nearby. Visitors are requested to 'Keep the island tidy' but a poor example faces them on arrival. It seems that while residents are attempting to collect litter at the correct places, they are being let down by the authorities which should remove it. Several abandoned vehicles were seen in prominent positions. There are some untidy open yards where unused equipment of various kinds is left lying; unfortunately two of these, near the pub at the centre of the island, seem more conspicuous than the many such spaces which are well kept. Builders' refuse and scrap metal was unnecessarily obvious in some places.

HOMES, HARBOUR AREAS AND OTHER FACILITIES

There are a number of beautifully tended houses, including farms. Two in particular looked splendid on adjudication day - Sullivan's Harbour View, and the two-storeyed stone house (former school) at Rerrin. The derelict corrugated-iron shed at the centre of Rerrin Harbour is so prominently placed that it detracts unfairly from the whole village. The nearby military and naval remains of many periods are fascinating: a pity more can not be made of them. The barracks buildings in use during summer are well maintained - an imaginative step on the army's part would be to have them painted in less dull colours next time. A number of attractive coastguard/naval houses are being improved. The Church at Ballynakilla, of somewhat Mediterranean aspect, is dignified and charming, with well-kept surroundings and an interesting graveyard; this is one of the most attractive areas on the island. The school is well looked after. It is a fact which has to be accepted that buildings which are not so well looked after catch the eye. It seems strange that the landscaped seating area at the electrical sub-station should have new concrete kerbs, when local

stone is so much more attractive and is immediately available. It was good to see the signposted walks being followed by visitors.

PRESENTATION OF ROADS, WALLS AND HEDGEROWS

Roads are adequate. It was good to see where a corner had been widened that stone wall building in the native tradition had taken place. Fencing was seen to be poor at the west harbour; surely road and harbour are public property and should be accorded proper treatment by the competent authority; hedges of any variety which grow well on the island would enhance this important arrival-point. The adjudicator was shocked to see a beautiful fuschia hedge in full bloom being clipped on adjudication day; two hours later it had been reduced to something one might see in a city suburb: this is precisely the kind of action and attitude which one hopes not to find in an island, or indeed any rural community.

OVERALL GENERAL IMPRESSION

In spite of a number of problems, many of which are gradually being overcome, the overall impression is good. One remembers with pleasure the views from Coomastooka which can only be described as heavenly, the rich plantings of conifers, the roses rambling over houses at Ballynakilla and the profusion of wayside flowers and native shrubs like meadowsweet, montbretia, foxglove, marguerite, hawthorn, fuschia, mallow and semi-native shrubs like hydrangea and escalonia. Congratulations to all those who are doing so much good work towards overcoming environmental problems. Self-help always succeeds best in the long run, though problems may seem intractable at times.