Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre:	**Baile Mhic Ire\Baile Bh**	Ref:	**491**
County:	**Cork South**	Mark:	**209**
Category:	**B**	Date:	**22/06/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	36
The Built Environment	40	27	27
Landscaping	40	33	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	24	24
Tidiness	20	15	11
Residential Areas	30	24	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	25
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	**300**	**209**	**203**

Overall Developmental Approach:

Both villages are attractively presented with the connecting corridor of beautiful lime and ash trees along the roadsides. The map, booklet and plans for work in 2004 are welcome and were helpful at adjudication. Availing of the attractive walkways in the vicinity and the heritage of St. Gobnait forms an interesting, unique and attractive aspect of the villages. A more fundamental plan that would cover all aspects of development of the villages over the next three to five years is needed now. This would help to pinpoint the focus of attention and would guide the year-by-year work in a far seeing way. Such a plan could also act as a yardstick to measure achievements and would be a motivation for the development of both villages.

The Built Environment:

There is a vast range of building styles within the two villages – from the thatched gift shop at one end, through the various business type premises, to the Udrais na Gaeltacha buildings, school and church. The colourful aspect of the buildings through the village forms a very attractive profile. Looking along the villages roadside boundaries – such a vast range of roadside walls, fences, stone walls, styles and balustrades – one wonders if a more coordinated approach was made would a better overall picture emerge – worth consideration. The church is looking particularly well presented with the fine painting work that has been done. The school buildings also look well. The stone walls and the features of the Well and Mass Rock are unique to the village.

Landscaping:

There are many fine landscape features in both villages. The millennium monument and surrounds is attractive with the heather planting and the roses and Hypericum planting along the top of the adjacent wall top. This gives a very attractive entrance to the village. The roadside borders to the front of the houses near the café are attractive. The grotto is well landscaped. Many hanging basket and container plantings add a nice sparkle to the village. Tree planting is satisfactory with many good examples of plantings – especially at the church where the entrance is flanked with the Hornbeam trees. Scope for further tree planting exists at the grounds to the front of the Ionad Culturtha building-, which is nicely treated at the entrance with plantings as is inside the gates of the Pairc Abain. Tree planting is a key factor in determining the future fabric of the landscape of the villages. There are many mature trees and each is so vital – such as the large conifer tree by the entrance to the school with the bench at its trunk – this tree is a landmark and illustrates how one long lived tree can play such a vital role. Trees by the church grounds and to each side of the villages create a very green style village. The many roadside gardens play a very important role in giving roadside colour to the villages and good credit is due to those who care for their gardens so well.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The walkways are very attractive features of the villages and provide a good opportunity to avail of the appreciation of the natural environment. More progress is needed to provide information in several ways so that people can interpret their natural surrounds and appreciate the value of the natural environment on their doorstep. Schools should be encouraged to play a role in this, as the knowledge gained by young people will stay with them through their lives. Local knowledge should be tapped and accumulated. Consult the Tidy towns handbook to help develop this aspect further.

Litter Control:

There is a very clean aspect to the villages. Constant attention to detail is needed to prevent litter and all the local projects such as community clean ups and educational campaigns, particularly in the schools are beneficial. Attention to recycling schemes and the building of awareness on how to avoid the accumulation of materials that are difficult to recycle is helpful.

Tidiness:

The villages are well tended to. The overhead wires and cables take a little from the appearance and hopefully these will be removed to underground in time. The roadside boundaries in the villages as mentioned above specifically on entry from the millennium monument side, give a cluttered appearance, as do the service poles. The broken fence near the grotto is in need of attention.

Residential Areas:

The roadside residences are well tended to and look very well. There is a very wide range of housing types. The stone-faced terraced cottages opposite the thatched gift shop look very well. The small housing estate leading to Pairc Abain is compact. The railings and walls of a number of these houses would benefit from attention, as would the presentation of many of the gardens. The housing estate opposite the church is nicely tended with good tree planting on the small green. The new housing estate is developing well and looks promising.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfacing is generally good- there is some opportunity for improvement on the road surfaces as in many instances water pools remain after showers and the roads are a little uneven in places. The approach road verges have been left to facilitate the natural plants of the area and it is nice to

see ferns, foxgloves, pennyworth, and hawthorn flourishing by the roadsides. The signage for the walks and various places of interest is a good feature.

General Impression:

The combination of the two villages gives a unique style. The tree-lined corridor between the villages is a nice link and the array of colourful buildings makes a good impact on entry to the village. Traffic is heavy along the village centre and some more help for people to cross the road would be appreciated.