

# Tidy Towns Competition 2005

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Baile Mhic Ire\Baile Bh**

Ref: **480**

County: **Cork South**

Mark: **213**

Category: **B**

Date: **17/07/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	36	36
The Built Environment	40	28	27
Landscaping	40	34	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	25	24
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26	25
General Impression	10	7	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>209</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your submission and details of work on hand. Your backup literature was interesting and the handbook on walks is very welcome. We also admired the display map in the village opposite De Róiste. We hope the book is conveniently available. You might consider a short fold-up leaflet as a free hand-out as it would increase the amount of people taking various routes. The twin villages of Baile Mhic Íre and Baile Mhúirne is really lengthy, (some three miles in total), and you have a good deal of area to cover. However, you are coping well with the 'nasc' and it is obvious both centres have their strengths: the village street of Baile Mhic Íre is traditional and the area around the Súlan bridge is special.

### The Built Environment:

You have some very fine public buildings and the church is really superb and looked splendid with an overhead blue and white sky accommodating a very good photograph on adjudication day. Commercial buildings looked well, while some are non-traditional in style they were well presented. The Mills complex is interesting: perhaps an information plaque on the history of the mill would prove interesting to visitors and locals alike. We learn that the former Coláiste has been acquired by an tÚdaras and we hope a new beginning is unfolding. Well done to O'Scanaill for retaining the attractive sash windows. We also admired the facade of An Leabarlann. The bunscoil is in need of painting.

## **Landscaping:**

This is your strong point and the roadside landscaping is excellent. You are competing with constant traffic and you need some planting to soften the effects. The array of wild flowers are raising your marks in this category and many residents have some very colourful displays which we commend. The Millennium Sculpture on the Macroom approach is most appealing and very colourful. You should remove the old black and white fáilte sign as it has gone shabby and is now replaced by the new blue and white one. The derelict house opposite is disappointing on this prominent approach.

## **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

More than most centres you have potential for raising your marks in this category. The river is a haven for wildlife and with little effort you could make wildlife an important part of the tourism product in the area. Many centres in Cork county have wonderful display boards with attractive illustrations. The local flora and fauna would be of great interest to visitors and locals alike. You should also consider a river walk as the river runs parallel to the village and would be very convenient for visitors.

## **Litter Control:**

Well done on the litter control. Both villages were free of litter and the Bring Bank is not being abused. Bearing in mind the passing traffic and the amount of visitors you get, this is a commendable achievement.

## **Tidiness:**

You have problems in this category and the good deal of dereliction, unoccupied houses, badly kept open spaces and unfinished developments combine to keep your marks down in this section. We accept the problems associated with new houses and we would encourage developers to finish well and leave the site landscaped. In general we feel signage is poor and many commercial advertising holdings are of no benefit to the environment: the Guinness sign at Tig Uí Chonail is should be removed. Signage at De Róiste corner is also sloppy. We commend you on your blue and white local signs, keyed up to your publication.

## **Residential Areas:**

Housing estates without exception are of a high standard. The new estate at Cúil na Carraig has potential for enhancing this approach and also presents opportunity for new recruits to your endeavours. However, we did encounter some poorly presented boundary walls at Ardán Gobnait Naofa. Bruach an tSuláin is well presented. Houses within both villages are good and some have excellent gardens, exploiting the climate of this part of Co. Cork.

## **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

Constant traffic takes from the quality of life and the efforts to calm the traffic are recognised. However, you could be worse off, as is the case in Macroom. Road structure is good and the two principal approaches are well maintained. The most imposing approach is from Teampall Ghobnatan, offering splendid views of An Súlan and surrounding countryside. Some houses on this approach have magnificent gardens. Teampall Ghobnatan is well kept, but we were surprised to find notices in English only here. We suggest you paint farm gates a bright colour on the approach roads.

## **General Impression:**

The villages were busy on adjudication day and the weather was very obliging on a July Fri/Sat. You

are experiencing immense developments and as a Gaeltacht area the implications are far reaching. Our hope is that both villages will retain their rural ethos, strengthen the cultural links and meet the challenges of increased population. Go néiri libh.

### **Second Round Adjudication:**