

# Tidy Towns Competition 2011

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bantry** Ref: **666**  
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **297**  
Category: **D** Date(s): **13/06/2011**

|                                | <b>Maximum<br/>Mark</b> | <b>Mark<br/>Awarded<br/>2010</b> | <b>Mark<br/>Awarded<br/>2011</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Overall Development Approach   | 50                      | 44                               | 45                               |
| The Built Environment          | 50                      | 40                               | 39                               |
| Landscaping                    | 50                      | 39                               | 41                               |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50                      | 28                               | 29                               |
| Litter Control                 | 50                      | 31                               | 32                               |
| Waste Minimisation             | 20                      | 13                               | 14                               |
| Tidiness                       | 30                      | 20                               | 20                               |
| Residential Areas              | 40                      | 31                               | 31                               |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas  | 50                      | 38                               | 38                               |
| General Impression             | 10                      | 8                                | 8                                |
| <b>TOTAL MARK</b>              | <b>400</b>              | <b>292</b>                       | <b>297</b>                       |

### Overall Development Approach:

Bantry is very welcome to this year's completion. Thank you for the splendid submission in which you succinctly set forth your objectives. Thank you also for the two maps both of which proved their worth on the day of adjudication. The town stands at the apex of a historic and scenic bay and you have made use of both your history and your scenery in the presentation of the town. The ever present rock formations are very apparent for example in Scart Road. This feature of the topography inevitable place constrains on the development and challenges for the presentation of the town. The central area displays exceptionally attractive presentations which bring together the history, scenery and facilities that continue to entice very many visitors to the area. The creation of specific project teams and issue focused sub-committees is an excellent way to generate an additional power house of progress. Your involvement with the local schools helps to ensure the trans-generational nature of your commitment and progress. The Bantry Heritage Trail is a delightful initiative which adds immeasurable to ones visit to the area. Your involvement with Cork County Council and the Town Council is beneficial while the support of local businesses both in cash and kind are significant elements towards your success. The most encouraging manifestation of your widespread community support is the response to the Church gate collection each June.

### The Built Environment:

The town is endowed with many imposing buildings, Civic, Religious and Mercantile. Pride of place must go to the superbly presented Bantry House which is a joy to visit and savour the wonderful gardens. St. Finbar's Church was outstanding as was the secondary school beside it. The Hostel overlooking the harbour was a delight and featured pleasant planting in its restricted foreground. The Hospital grounds were well presented and Barrack Street displayed many colourful shop fronts. C. W Briggs and the nearby St. Brendan's Church of Ireland (1818) added their significant contribution to the overall scene. Elsewhere Bantry Tyre Centre a

delightfully well presented, and sizable commercial concern; the suitable painted of the front walls in white with red capping were admired. The screening trees were also a plus factor in its presentation. The Fire Station looked well and Rowa Chemical Plant was neat and orderly. West Lodge Hotel was inviting while the suitably presented Citizens Awareness Bureau caught the eye. Well located, the Ocean Restaurant was lively and featured three flags. The Post Office was housed in a fine building of green and pale cream colours. The Children Shop was colourful as was Bantry Bay (O'Callaghan's Hotel). The Essentials of Bantry and Burke's of Bantry were good examples of agreeable shop fronts.

### **Landscaping:**

The area around the seafront near the Cemetery and the splendid sculpture was imposing albeit the history of the area they tell so well is sobering. In general the town is well equipped with maps but it would be helpful to indicate on them the little symbol indicating 'You are here'. The splendid park opposite the Cemetery was home to a number of regal swans. We were taken by the way the sizable car park at Bantry House was divided by low level "islands" of suitable planting. The imposing planting was continued all along the seafront (N71). Even the car park, which still remains free of charge, featured agreeable planting at its front facing wall. The children's playing area beside the well presented Bantry Blue's sports field was a delight. Pride of place goes to the suburb presentation of the town centre which has brought together the history, scenery and marine tradition. The enormous Anchor was imposing as were the enjoyable and well scripted, history panels.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Your proximity to the sea provides ready access to a perfusion of wildlife and seabirds. The identification of and the significant of suitable plants and flowers which attract butterflies and bees and thus helps establish the food chain on which birdlife necessarily depends is critical to your ongoing success. Your vigilance in preventing the insidious growth of invasive plants species is welcomed and all too necessary. The Birds of Bantry information leaflet is an excellent initiative as the wider knowledge of birdlife and wildlife generally is inevitable coupled with enhanced public appreciation, concern and action. The introduction of bat boxes kindly sponsored is a welcome development. However bats are known to be notoriously choosy when selecting their habitats.

### **Litter Control:**

For a town of its size and visitor numbers, Bantry scores well under this category. There was a sprinkling of litter on the approach roads and some of the minor streets within the centre. All that was noticed was clearly recent and it does appear that your success in the 'National Spring Clean' has had long term beneficial effects. Involvement of the schools in your 'BAG IT' competition is another positive element in the, unfortunately, never ending battle against litter. Well done on securing fourth place in the County Council Inter-town Litter Competition last year. The large car park was free of litter and dumping.

### **Waste Minimisation:**

The 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' mantra central to this category in the overall competition succinctly sets out the change of public attitude and practices desired. Increasingly, expensive power and scarce petrol are accelerating the search for alternative energy. Wind power and solar energy both have their part to play. Equally our own utilisation can make a contribution to the overall reduction required. Purchasing decisions also play a part. A recent survey for example suggested that one third of all food purchased was never consumed but discarded. Clearly there are substantial financial benefits to the individual and by extension environment advantages for the community if a material shift in lifestyle choices can be affected. Your decision to segregate litter helps to focus attention of the extent of thing which can usefully be recycled. Well done on the fine new recycling facility which is being extensively used. The 'Grow your own' course, linked to the allotments at Bantry House is another beneficial element in the overall task. Congratulations to the schools that have to date secured a Green Flag aware, this is an ongoing process and the benefits accrue as the second and third flags are acquired. The Bottle Bank at the car park was being widely used and respected while the Clothing Bank, facilitating the reuse of suitable garments is also positive.

### **Tidiness:**

The general presentation of Bantry is of a high order with many notable successes being achieved. Minor matters do continue to intrude however and call for remedial action. The spoil at the sides of many approach roads is an ongoing difficulty and relatively easy to improve. The Fishery Harbour was very neat although the same comments above apply to the base of walls. The large hotel on the seafront which appears to be closed and the number of closed premises on Marino Street is a more intractable problem. The charming estate office on The Quays would be enhanced substantially by repainting and a general clean up and appears to be

an interesting element of local significance. The co-operation of the business associations in the presentation of their buildings is applauded and as indicated elsewhere has achieved considerable success. The charming ironwork affixed to the side of the house in the roadway leading to Marino Terrace caught the eye. It is significant piece of local architecture and richly deserves an enhanced presentation. The overall impression of the splendid and intensely used central area was a delight.

### **Residential Areas:**

Bantry is well endowed with suitable located and designed housing estates. There are some splendid good infill buildings notable on Glengarriff Road. This road also features a number of splendid individual houses. The traditional houses at Railway Cottages are a gem and being well presented. However the area opposite the houses here deserves some remedial attention. Because of the extent of private housing and estates it is only possible to achieve progress if the Tidy Town's Committee "sublets" the tasks to individual residential associations. Other towns have found it beneficial to organise competitions amount the various estates and areas utilising the well known Irish competitive streak to good advantage.

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

The anticipated damage by the heavy frost and snow of last winter has been, to a considerable extent already put to rights. This was a major undertaking and compliments to all involved. The Slip Road was well swept, neat and orderly while the Church Road featured a much improved road surface. Street signage generally was neat and readable. There were a total of 17 signs visible from Casey's Garage on the Glengarriff Road, some needed to be washed and perhaps some could be dispensed with or rationalised to some degree. The work on Bridewell Lane is a substantial advance and compliments to all those who cooperated in this improvement. We look forward to the progress of the Lane's Project which will do much to highlight and accentuate these attractive elements of Bantry.

### **General Impression:**

Bantry is a sizable centre with a substantial increase in visitor numbers during the summer. This inevitable places a strain on the resources of the community both civic and volunteers, in their continuing efforts to present the centre to it optimum degree. The centre was viewed just after the June Bank Holiday weekend. All those involved should take a bow and receive applauses for the splendid manner in which the town is presented this year. It is obvious from your presentation and much more so on the ground that you are tackling the difficulties with determination and creative intelligence. Well done to all involved in this year's competition and we look forward with interest, to your ongoing progress.