

Tidy Towns Competition 2011

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bere Island** Ref: **667**
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **293**
Category: **A** Date(s): **28/06/2011**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2010 | Mark Awarded 2011 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Overall Development Approach | 50 | 43 | 44 |
| The Built Environment | 50 | 35 | 35 |
| Landscaping | 50 | 36 | 36 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 50 | 36 | 36 |
| Litter Control | 50 | 38 | 38 |
| Waste Minimisation | 20 | 15 | 14 |
| Tidiness | 30 | 18 | 20 |
| Residential Areas | 40 | 28 | 28 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 50 | 32 | 33 |
| General Impression | 10 | 8 | 9 |
| TOTAL MARK | 400 | 289 | 293 |

Overall Development Approach:

Welcome to the TidyTowns Competition 2011 and congratulations on a most detailed submission. The quality and approach of Bere Island to this entry says much of the progress your island community has made in recent years. The adjudicator has visited this island many times and is once again impressed at your long-term thinking and the evidence seen on the ground. The adjudicator is aware of what a blow losing three full-time workers can be and the 'lag' period of when the effects of this are felt. Your community is not alone in this.

The Built Environment:

The Post Office at Rerrin looks very good and has been painted since last visit. O'Sullivan's bar looks very neat and tidy. It is a shame about the rest of the buildings here, though. The remains of another commercial building are failing fast. Painting the garden walls here would be a great help and take the look of dereliction from this area somewhat. The house painted deep blue looks well. It is a desperate pity about the little dormer-roofed house here. The lovely old terraced houses on the way to the fort are really beautiful. Were these military lodgings? Some are unfortunately altered. The community centre looked well with a very nice bench and planted tubs- well done. The church looked well too. The adjacent sheds with the green door and roof have been very well treated. The HSE building remains much the same as in previous years though. New building was noted in Rerrin - at least one new house and one extension. The old boathouse with slipway at Rerrin Quay is a lovely building but the door needs some work. The heritage Centre looks great. Has it now got an Internet Café? The national school continues to look well and the garden was bright and looks productive. Is the mural being renewed? Some of it definitely looks more modern than the adjudicator remembers. Well done. The adjudicator has always admired this school.

Landscaping:

There is little by way of formal landscaping across the island but nature does this best. However, the efforts made at various places and by householders are applauded. Is the design for Rerrin complete and will we see this next year? Do show the next adjudicator where the native trees have been planted.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

It's great that you have your own 'Heritage Officer' to oversee projects such as the removal of non-native invasive species. Tell us more about this. The results of the wildlife survey are looked forward to with genuine interest. How will this be disseminated? The walking routes continue to improve and are one of Bere's greatest assets. Will the wildlife survey result in a 'wildlife version' of the Bere Island Experience which concentrates more on built and cultural heritage?

Litter Control:

There was only a little litter seen on adjudication day. However this is far from an insurmountable problem for the island and your ongoing anti-litter work is to be commended. Do provide the next adjudicator with details on how this is organised, however. For example, how have you coped with the loss of staff etc.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done on your extensive and far-sighted approach to recycling. However, the adjudicator feels that you have yet to properly address this issue- one which is critical on an island. The work by your Green School is important but it must go further than this.

However, you are advised to read the Tidy Towns Handbook on how to proceed in this section of the competition. Please do continue to work with the national school on this. You could also get advice from the County Council's environmental awareness officer.

Tidiness:

Well done on your work at Rerrin and the West End. It shows. Is the chip van permanently parked in Rerrin now? There are a few areas for improvement. A couple of signs - beside your 2010 Tidy Towns award sign - need cleaning. There are broken and bent fences at Lawrence Cove. There is probably no need for all three (Crafts etc.) signs here. The green painted gates at Ballinakilla look really well. Could this be extended as a project?

Residential Areas:

New building and some renovation works were noted. There are several houses which have been repainted since The adjudicator's last visit. Well done, this is important. Do try to work on the derelict and empty houses if you can.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Road surfaces are generally very good, especially for an island. A major exception to this - and one which requires urgent attention - are three huge potholes to the west of the hotel. Fix these if they haven't been addressed by now. The road surface down from the Martello Tower at Cloughland is also dicey for cyclists. The adjudicator cannot praise enough the development that your walking routes have seen. They are first-class and offer ideal walking experiences for a range of interests. The O' Sullivab Bere / Sli Bheara information board and map is beautiful. The looped walk sign is excellent. The Beara Cycle Route is excellent! However, do re-examine how easy or difficult it is to misread the map or directions. There are old walking route markers that help to confuse the issue. Remember that signs are for people who don't know where they're going and may never have been here before. Your signage is confusing in more than one area. A major signage misdirection is at Ballinakilla and it directs people for the Pontoon Ferry to Tra Galdha. Not a major problem is you're driving but what if you're on foot and trying to walk back to Rerrin for the last ferry? The interpretation at the Lonehort battery is among the best the adjudicator has seen and possibly the best interpretation of a heritage site in Ireland. This was so enjoyable and interesting. The new stile to the Martello Tower is a real addition. Is there likely to be access to the areas on private grounds soon?

General Impression:

It was a real pleasure to be on Bere Island. Progress is palpable here. Keep this up. Well done for showing so well one of the most fascinating corners of Ireland.

