

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Bere Island** Ref: **667**
County: **Cork(West)** Mark: **289**
Category: **B** Date(s): **09/07/2009**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	45
The Built Environment	50	35
Landscaping	50	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	37
Litter Control	50	37
Waste Minimisation	20	15
Tidiness	30	18
Residential Areas	40	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	289

Overall Development Approach:

Congratulations on a very comprehensive but relevant entry into this year's TidyTowns competition. Thank you for the copy of the Heritage Plan which was in writing on my last visit to the island. In the last year you have also commissioned a TidyTowns Action Plan. This was read with interest. This provides a sound basis for your work in the coming years as well as providing advice for areas where more attention is required. Your contact with a range of statutory bodies is noted. Thank you for the new Bere Island Experience booklet, which is a major achievement.

The Built Environment:

The national school looks great. The mural still looks good although some parts of the wall near the base might be better with a touch of paint. The decoration of the derelict cottage beside the school is very good. The new Heritage Centre is a lovely building and it is great to see it complete. This is a fantastic resource for the island and it is hoped that it will be very successfully used. There is very nice planting and gardening at O'Sullivan's ('the Hotel'). It is hoped that this building will be fully restored. St. Michael's Church and the adjacent community centre look fine and were both in use on day of visit. The Health Centre could be made to look more cheery. Murphy's Post Office and shop has a very nice shop-front and forms a focus for the street. Laurence Cove Lodge looks well. The Look Out looks very well and as the first building seen after disembarking at this pier, it sets a good tone.

Landscaping:

There is little by way of landscaping on the island. As your TidyTowns Plan suggests, artificial landscaping should be minimised and the natural landscape be allowed to flourish. However, there are areas where effort has been put to good use. The area around the TidyTowns sign at Rerrin is well kept and the tub of flowers at the other sign (at the pier) definitely makes a difference. The grotto looks great, as does the front area of the

Look Out. The garden of the national school is excellent, demonstrating re-use as well as regrowth.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

There was not time on day of visit to see all of the habitat areas on Bere. The walker is treated to a wonderful display of wildflowers all along the small roads. The field scabious contrasted beautifully with the biting stone crop and bell heathers. There is an abundance of insect life and this in turn will allow for a healthy bird population. Your entry describes a wildlife survey that has been completed. It is hoped that the results of this will be able to inform new signage which is very much needed to address the dearth of information on wild species and habitats. It is unfortunate that the REPS programme has been discontinued. It is hoped that this will not have a deleterious effect on the natural environment of the island. The participation of the farmers in the Walks Scheme is excellent and they and your group are to be congratulated on this. We look forward to the new Bere Wildlife Trail.

Litter Control:

With only the most minor exceptions, no litter was seen on day of visit. Your group and the population of Bere should be proud of this achievement. This does not come about of its own accord and all who have worked toward this goal can claim some credit for this.

Waste Minimisation:

Well done on providing information to all households. The widespread use of composting is a good sign. The waste collection and compaction facility at West End was in good condition on day of visit. The plans for a glass-crusher are excellent and the reuse of the cullet and also the shredded paper is a great on-island solution. The savings in greenhouse gases by your waste management initiatives are also praiseworthy.

Tidiness:

Some debris and junked materials were seen at the West End pier, though this is much improved since the adjudicator's last visit. The fingerpost sign closest to the ferry needs work. It isn't absolutely clear that all signs are pointing in the right direction. A longer post might be a good idea. Similarly, the place names for the villages could be looked at. There may be a local sign-writer who could touch up the names on these signs. While this is being done, should they be bilingual? The pier area at Rerrin was very neat on day of visit. The benches and information board here were in very good condition also. However, some of the signs here need some work and there is a plinth here with no information. Some heritage information here would be a good idea. The walking route sign at Rerrin needs some touching-up. There are noticeably fewer junked cars than on previous visits.

Residential Areas:

The old national school (now a private house) is an impressive building and the garden is very well kept. There are lovely colours to be seen in the village of Ballynakill, between the houses and the masses of roses.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

As previously stated, the roads of Bere are a joy to walk and are in sufficiently good condition to allow easy cycling. The planning of new walking routes and their publication in the guide booklet is an excellent achievement. The adjudicator completed the Mid-Island Loop but wished that there was time to do more! The creation of a wildlife-oriented route is another great idea.

The approach to Rerrin could be improved, perhaps with some tree-planting. The yellow-painted concrete railings look good. The painting of the farm gates as suggested in your plan is a good idea for roadside gates.

General Impression:

Bere island has been seen to improve over the last few years. The quality of the submissions to the TidyTowns competition is indicative of the work that has been achieved in this time. There are a few areas where improvements can be made. It may be seen that some of the more difficult areas of the competition and the aims of TidyTowns have been effectively tackled by your group and the islanders. Attention should be paid to providing more information on the built and natural heritage of the island, although the new heritage centre will go a long way toward this. It is hoped that Bere will continue to improve through the valuable work of your group and that of all the community.