

'The Golden Mile' is an initiative of the Tipperary LEADER Group, assisted by partners from the public, private and community sectors. The initiative is organised as a competition, which is rurally based, essentially it is a way of preserving and enhancing the local environment.

The initiative aims to protect and enhance the natural environment of small rural roads. Individuals and groups submit a plan for the maintenance/upgrading of a mile length of country roadscape with regard to its flora, fauna, road furniture, immediate environment, verge, ditch and wall features and the preservation of the natural and traditional manmade environment.

The initiative addresses the issue of waste, which is endemic on rural roads and aims to increase awareness of the environment and its value. It aims to promote the maintenance of traditional hedgerows, which would have an assortment of indigenous flora and fauna such as hawthorn, beech, oak, wild rose, and wild flowers. It also encourages communities to maintain and enhance stonewalls using traditional methods.

The Golden Rules are:

The chosen mile does not have to be a straight stretch of road, it can go through cross roads or right or left at the crossroads. The exact measurement is 1,760 yards. All country roads outside of the 30-mile speed limit are eligible, and national primary and secondary roads are excluded. The main points of the initiative are:

- Road related aspects of the mile – drainage, signage, safety etc.
- Hedgerow preservation, maintenance and management
- Structural features – stone walls, piers, stiles, traditional gates, building facades
- Litter/rubbish control and management

The initiative is still based in Tipperary at present but the Minister for the Environment, Mr. Noel Dempsey has stated 'Tidy Towns and the Golden Mile complement one another, balancing the urban and rural needs of Ireland and together they could have a wonderful effect on the entire Irish landscape'.

For further information on the costs, implementation and concepts of the initiative contact:

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