

Richhill in Bloom 2022

The logo for the Richhill Building Preservation Trust (RBPT) is a yellow square with the letters 'RBPT' in white, enclosed within a thin white rectangular border.

Richhill Building Preservation Trust's
Environmental Improvements Group

Richhill dates back to at least the early years of the 17th century when it was known as Legacorry. Over the next 100 years this was altered to Richardson's hill – named after the family who built and lived in the manor house and which was subsequently shortened to Richhill as we are known today. Over the years it has been a thriving Market place, known for its jam and furniture making but village development continued at a very slow pace. The village population trebled in the years between 1971 and 1991 census as numerous new housing developments sprang up around the historical central core of the village. It was viewed as a safe and desirable place to live and won a number of awards in the best kept village competition.

In 1993 the historical core of the village was designated a Conservation village. We realised change was necessary but it was vital that any change would require to be carefully managed. A small group of committed people got together to form the Richhill Regeneration Group which in 2002 became the Richhill Buildings Preservation Trust – a charity and a company limited by guarantee.

Between 2005 and 2010 the local trust applied to Heritage Lottery for a Townscape Heritage Initiative. Work started in 2011 with a fund of £1.3M of which £747k from Heritage Lottery with other substantial contributions for the council, planning service and NIHE. Work on the 11 targeted buildings was completed in 2017. The trust also developed a number of other complementary initiatives – these have included;

- 1 Richhill Apple Harvest Fayre – now a major annual event in the NI food calendar and which last year attracted 3800 visitors to the village
2. The pacing of all electric cabling underground
- 3 A village paint scheme
4. production of a book on the history of Richhill by noted historian Brett Hannam

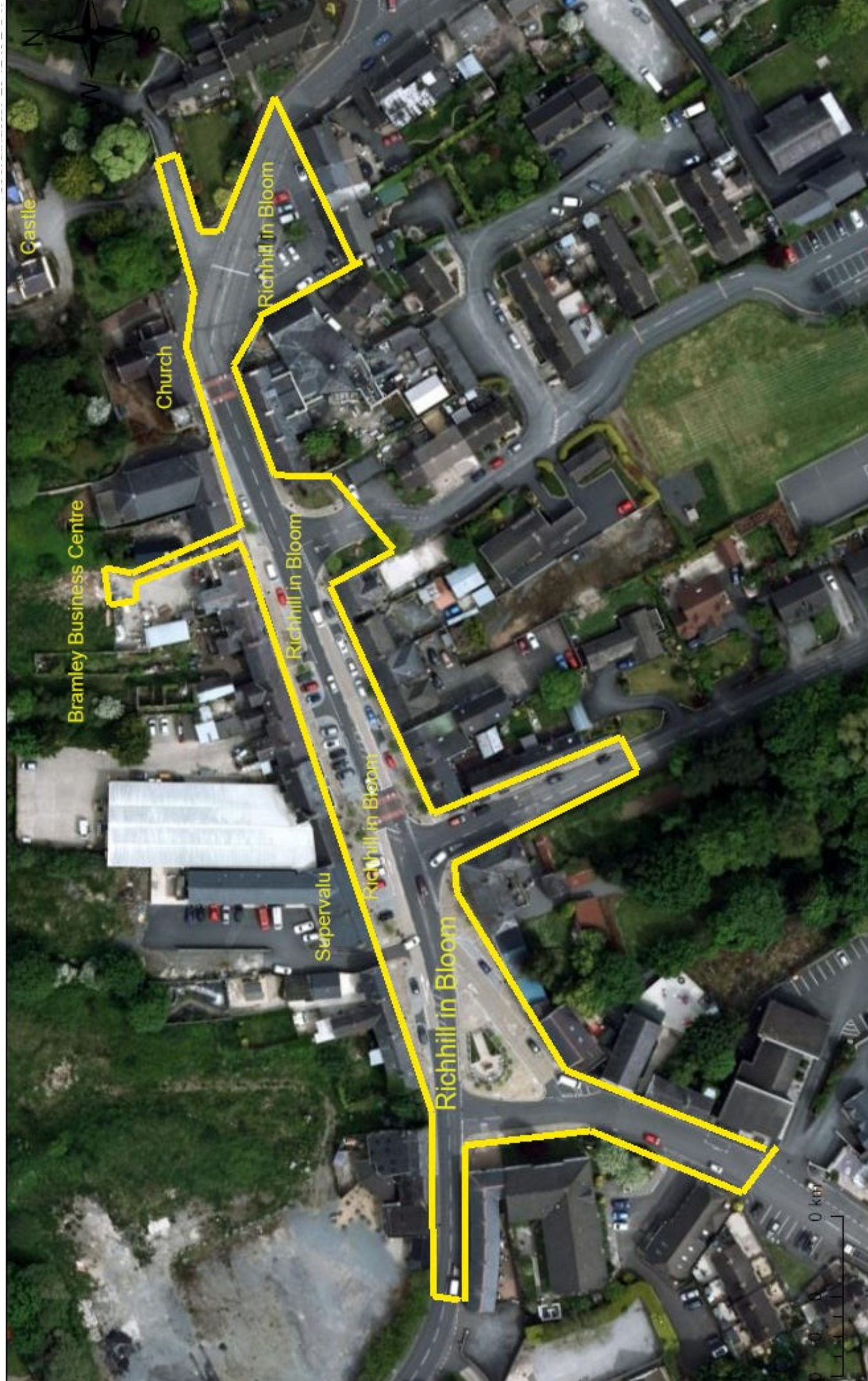
Meanwhile ABC Council has made a valuable contribution with a £1.2 public realm scheme with replacement of pavements and street lighting

All of the above has improved the sense of community - as witnessed by the 1200 people who took part in the jubilee celebrations in the village on 2nd June 2022

We have developed an active environment improvements and litter picking teams

These groups are detailed more fully elsewhere in the portfolio

Richhill in Bloom Map



Floral Displays

Since 2019 the Environmental Improvements Group have been working on enhancing the planting scheme on the The Square and Main Street.

This began with a few householders and businesses in The Square who wanted to have a cohesive display with a range of troughs, pots and hanging baskets on their frontage to the street. Over the last few years the display has increased to over 70 baskets and is gradually working its way down the main street. We always aim for bright and complimentary colours with the majority of plants selected for their pollinator friendly credentials.

There are two different displays each year one for Spring/Summer and another for Autumn/Winter. We arrange community planting days for these which are located at the front of the castle. This is a perfect site as there are plenty of mature trees to shelter under if the weather is not on our side! Not only do our Environmental Improvements Group take part but other community groups including the primary school and local churches get involved. We always enjoy a break in the middle when we have a cuppa and get tray bakes from the local café.

On the week prior to this, the baskets are brought to the castle and any plants that are perennials are potted individually for use the following year. i.e. heathers and ivies for the winter displays. Volunteers keep these watered when necessary.

The scheme has often been subsidised by the Live Here Love Here small grants scheme along with each householder making a small donation per basket.

The agreement is that each householder will water and maintain their own baskets throughout the season. Any baskets in public areas will be maintained by volunteers on a regular basis. This has created plenty of conversations on the street about the ever increasing displays while the baskets are being cared for.

Photos of our planting days



Photos of our planting days





Basket Displays in The Square and Main Street



Litter Picking

We organise quarterly litter picks, which are attended by up to 40 local residents of all ages. High vis vests, litter pickers and bags are provided. The event is always held on a Saturday morning at 10am and we aim to cover every street and road within 1mile radius of the village. At around noon or shortly after when the litter pick is completed we meet back for refreshments and a chat.



Litter Picking



Other Planting

In 2020 & 2021 we created three new planting areas

The first of these was in Autumn 2020 when we created a garden on a share amenity space on the Main Street. This space is very visible we included a Lime tree to match the existing trees which line the Main Street and a Magnolia tree. The garden is edged with a traditional yew hedge and a variety of colourful and scented shrubs . Climbers have been used to create a display at the top of the garden and to cascade over the railings.

The two other spaces we have landscaped are at the RBPT's Bramley Business Centre. We planted up the small space at the front of the building and we also created a seating area to the rear with apple trees and a variety of plants including herbs.

Before



After



Built Heritage Improvements

The wall along the edge of the square below The Castle is a very prominent feature as you journey up the street and had been covered in harsh cement based render for years. The render was removed to reveal beautiful stone work but this needed cleaned down and repointed in lime. We decided to run a free stone masonry course for members of the community who were interested. This was carried out over three Saturdays in August and skills taught by a local stone mason. There were 12 volunteers who were trained and involved. The local community have complimented the transformation.



Lime Pointing Volunteers



Before—After



Richhill Apple Harvest Fayre

Each year the Fayre is a celebration of the local apple harvest and the PGI status of the Bramley apple , A unique all day food festival which has run since 2014 centred around the importance of the Armagh apple industry. This family fun day out has chefs' demonstrations showcasing recipes using Bramley apples. There are also a range of top quality artisan food stalls selling their local produce including Armagh apples Armagh cider, cheese, chutneys, oils and seafood etc. As well as children's activities many local musicians and dancers provide live entertainment. In Oct 2021 there were 3800 attendees





CONSERVATION & HERITAGE
RICHHILL APPLE HARVEST FAYRE
IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE
ENVIRONMENT GROUP

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