

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **GOWRAN**  
County : **KILKENNY**  
Category : **B**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 20-06-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	39	38
The Built Environment	40	28	26
Landscaping	40	31	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	14
Litter Control	40	35	35
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	17	16
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	31
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>213</b>

## **Gowran, County Kilkenny**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

What you have achieved to date has been most impressive and indeed it is good to read that you continue to have the support of your Local Authority, FAS and the Community in general. Gowran is a lovely old world-type village with some beautiful cut-stone houses and distinctive terraced cottages and while there has been some modern developments it is lovely to see that it still retains its old world atmosphere. You received last year an in-depth report from the adjudicator. The following comments should be taken in context with that report.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Many of the comments made in last year's report are still applicable but on adjudication day the Church, the Schools, St Mary's Church and most commercial premises were presented in a splendid manner. The way in which you have dealt with one of your derelict sites is to be commended. Cognisance was taken of what you have said in your report regarding broken walls, etc which will be repaired in due course. The area of The Dome has got very shabby and urgently needs attention. In the case of other derelict sites it is difficult to know what to do, in a small community, to solve this problem. Perhaps an approach can be made to the owners with suggestions regarding alternative uses or alternatively the Local Authority, who have powers in such matters, could take them over for in-fill purposes. Overall the built environment in Gowran is admirable.

### **LANDSCAPING**

Your landscaping programme has been excellent and was much admired on adjudication day. The whole area of the Church road, the parks, etc on the approaches to the village, the open spaces in the centre of the village and your programme of tree, shrub and flower planting sets a headline which many other towns and villages could follow. A mention also must be made of the excellent work done at Parkmore Terrace on the open spaces there. When looking at other places to landscape please bear in mind that tree and shrub planting should be done judiciously as to do otherwise causes clutter. In this respect refer to the adjudicator's comments under this heading last year. Give some thought also to flowering shrubs which will give you some colour on an all-year-round basis. An ideal area for landscaping would appear to be the concrete wall opposite the cemetery which is somewhat out of keeping with the excellent stone wall on the opposite side of the road. Landscaping here would have the effect of softening its appearance.

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

This is a comparatively new category in the competition, the objective being to place emphasis on the conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats and the environment.

Woodlands, rivers, ponds, hedgerows, grass margins, open spaces, graveyards and walls are important habitats. The Committee should try to identify the habitats in their area and determine the appropriate actions to conserve and enhance them. The guidelines in the Tidy Towns book offer other suggestions as to the type of initiatives you might undertake. If there is a local wildlife expert or a member of your Community with experience in this area please do seek their advice. Your plans in this respect have been noted and it probably will be a 1998 project.

## **LITTER CONTROL**

Regrettably there were some small incidences of litter on adjudication day. It is also regrettable that litter and rubbish was dumped in some of the enclosed landscaped areas at the back of the park in the green area where the telephone box is. Although the grass needed some cutting there the area was otherwise very well presented.

## **TIDINESS**

The village was presented in a neat and tidy manner on adjudication day. There was still some evidence of building in progress but this will solve itself in due course.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Bearing in mind the adjudicator's comments of last year the housing estates still looked very well. This reflects tremendous credit on the residents. Individual houses were excellent, some with lovely gardens. It is absolutely critical in a small village like Gowran that you have the full support of its resident population if you are to progress in the competition. The fact that some residents had hanging baskets and window boxes was also noted but this should not be overdone.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

Generally speaking all approach roads were excellent particularly those from the Ballyhale and Dungarvan sides. In other cases, grass verges needed cutting. Bear in mind that adjudication normally takes place from between the speed limit signs or the town/village nameplates, whichever you opt for. Current thinking also suggests that verges should not be cut right back to walls or hedges but a margin should be left close to the fence for the propagation of wild flowers. The white fencing on the Church road looked very impressive. Road surfaces are quite good.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Gowran is indeed a most attractive village with every evidence that people who live there are very proud of their locality and its general ambience. With careful planning and with the co-operation of your Local Authority and the Community, Gowran has the capacity to do extremely well in the Tidy Towns Competition.

## **SECOND ADJUDICATION (8/8/97)**

Gowran looked quite magnificent for second adjudication and some of the problems noted earlier on in the summer have been rectified, i.e. the dumping on the green open space behind the telephone kiosk and the small lapses in litter control. This adjudicator supports the observation of the previous adjudicator concerning the landscaping of the concrete block wall located opposite the graveyard. Your public seating with its beautiful art work was much admired together with stone work which featured on walls and flowerbeds etc. We look forward to observing your progress over the coming years. Don't forget to remove building materials when construction work has ceased.