

"Caring for our environment"

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

Results

Date of Adjudication : 26-06-98

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	39
The Built Environment	40	29	28
Landscaping	40	33	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	14	14
Litter Control	40	35	35
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	18	17
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	32
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	225	220

Gowran, County Kilkenny

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

In 1996 and 1997 you received in-depth reports on Gowran and it is indeed encouraging to see that some of the comments made in these reports have been acted upon. Gowran is progressing very well in the competition and the following should be taken therefore as a comment on this progress. It is again gratifying to see that you have the full support of your community and many state organisations in your Tidy Towns effort and thank you indeed for sending so much information with your entry form and the map which was most useful on adjudication day.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Your comments regarding the work which is ongoing at St. Marys church were noted and the adjudicator inspected the site during the visit. The building is now beautifully presented and landscaped and that project alone would make your whole Tidy Towns effort worthwhile. Congratulations to all concerned. It is a wonderful example of a local community co-operating with a state body. Your comments regarding the rebuilding of walls were noted and in particular the one regarding the wall on the Carlow approach. In the event of it not being repaired in the near future perhaps it could be tidied up to some extent. Wall building opposite the church was visited and noted. As last year the church and schools were again extremely well presented. Further evidence of the great community involvement in your efforts. Commercial premises looked well and, of course, your beautiful cut stone cottages and houses were again beautifully presented, many with lovely gardens which were in full bloom on adjudication day. Your comments regarding derelict sites were also noted and it is good to learn that action has been taken in the matter.

LANDSCAPING

As the High Garden had not taken the shape it has now it was probably not specifically mentioned last year but in the overall context of landscaping. What a beautiful facility. The adjudicator has submitted it for the landscaping award for this year. On adjudication day it was in lovely condition and is obviously being exceptionally well maintained. To say congratulations to all concerned would be the minimum one could say for such a project which could be used as a fine example to many other Tidy Towns committees embarking on similar schemes. In the adjudicators opinion its beauty in its simplicity. The story stones are most interesting. The work being carried out at the junction of the Goresbridge and Carlow Road was also noted as was the interesting sculpture. This year the car park was very well presented with no evidence of litter except some untidiness at the back of the park. However this is probably due to local building. Street furniture looked very well as did the number of flower beds,

hanging baskets and window boxes. Do however bear in mind the comments made last year regarding landscaping and possibly in the area of the church.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Your comments regarding Marshland were noted and the site was observed. We look forward to hearing further on this next year. In the meantime and if planning for this project do consult with a local wildlife expert or a member of your committee with experience in this area. It would be important to make a good and correct beginning.

LITTER CONTROL

The centre of Gowran was completely litter free on adjudication day and congratulations are due to all concerned on this matter. There was some evidence of litter on the church road. Perhaps an additional litter bin in the vicinity of school might solve the problem.

TIDINESS

Again this year Gowran was presented in a neat and tidy manner and looked sparkling in the June sunshine. Ongoing building projects were noted and allowed for.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The efforts being made by private residents is obviously a very strong point in your Tidy Towns programme. Individual houses were excellent, many with beautiful gardens which were a blaze of colour. Each housing estate was visited and again houses were very well presented. The Parkrow Terrace/Greenview open spaces however needed attention on the day. They were some what overgrown, possibly due to the inclement weather. These areas needs constant cutting in order to give them a crisp look.

ROADS, STREET AND BACK AREAS

Approach roads were reasonably well presented. Some were somewhat overgrown, possibly again due to the inclement weather. The appearance of the approach roads is important as they tend to set the tone for the rest of the village. Road surfaces are quite good and paths were excellent. It was noted that some pathways have been redeveloped for the purpose of wheelchair access.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Gowran is indeed still one of the most attractive villages in the South East region and capable of doing extremely well in this competition. The requirement now is your attention to detail and in this respect your 5 year plan is excellent. Try to do as much as

you can in any given year within your physical and financial resources and as far as possible set a time limit for each project. Continue to liaise closely with your state bodies and with your Regional Tourism Authority based in Kilkenny who have a video on the Tidy Towns competition which might make interesting viewing for you and also run an annual Tidy Towns seminar with guest speakers which you should attend if you are not already doing so. Congratulations to all concerned on the excellent work you are doing.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (15/08/98)

You have every right to be justly proud of your new developments at High Garden and Lower Park which beautifully compliment St. Mary's Church. Indeed, all the main amenity areas and numerous incidental open spaces are well landscaped but there are numerous minor areas which need attention. There are too many contrasts in terms of the standard of maintenance - consistency is the key to success. In general the Kilkenny approach needs most work. Weedy roadsides do not create a good first impression. The standard of individual properties is generally very good. Some well trimmed hedges were admired, especially in the context of stone walls. It is pleasing to see the on-going work to stone walls as such are an important element of the towns heritage. You are to be commended on your efforts with regard to wheelchair accessibility. The open spaces of Parkmore Terrace and Green View looked much better on our second visit although some litter had accumulated. Elsewhere a very high standard of litter control had been maintained, presumably thanks to the Knights of St. Mary's.