

# Tidy Towns Competition 2004

## Adjudication Report

Centre: **Gowran**

Ref: **118**

County: **Kilkenny**

Mark: **247**

Category: **B**

Date: **26/07/2004**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	44	44
The Built Environment	40	35	34
Landscaping	40	37	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	17	16
Litter Control	40	34	34
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	23	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	32
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>243</b>

### Overall Developmental Approach:

Gowran Development Association is one that shows an obvious interest and care in the development of its village's future. Many thanks for your extremely comprehensive submission which was most helpful on adjudication day. The adjudicator noted the plans that are afoot for expansion of the village. Do ensure that any future developments are in keeping with the character of the village in order that it continues to maintain its unique charm and character.

### The Built Environment:

The buildings of the town generally looked extremely well on adjudication day. Power's looked very fresh and Loughlin's was admired for its magnificent traditional plasterwork front. Do discourage the use of curved plastic canopies and encourage their replacement with ones of a more traditional fabric awning type. Annesley House B&B in the village centre looked very cheerful with its façade of roses growing up around the door. The Post Office was extremely fresh as was Byrne's with its charming simple front, and also the Gowran Inn. The Church and its associated Parochial House with their magnificent grounds and well maintained graveyard looked extremely well. The raised grass garden, to the Parochial House, in particular, with its fountain and mature trees looked extremely well. The school and hall were also well maintained. The garage beside St. Mary's Church in the village centre was mentioned in last year's report. Perhaps what could be considered in this location is the planting of some semi-mature trees of a suitable indigenous type planted along the street line in order to maintain this line and also to somewhat screen the buildings behind? Gowran Park was

well maintained and its magnificent limestone pillars at the entrance were greatly admired.

### **Landscaping:**

The magnificent Fair Green, composed of a grassy space with overhanging mature trees and attractive limestone bollards was greatly admired. The High Garden, opposite, and associated landscaping, with the fountain playing on a hot summer's day, created an extremely good impression. This is a marvelous asset located in the centre of the village at St. Mary's Church and is most suitable to the character of the village as it reflects the village green and forms part of the fabric of Gowran with its use of stone walling and strong association with St. Mary's Church etc. An incidental landscaped space of roses growing against a wall on the Thomastown Road was admired, as was the planted area opposite the church and graveyard.

### **Wildlife and Natural Amenities:**

Gowran is indeed fortunate in this regard with its four landscaped areas of the quarry, the laneway by the church, the river valley and the marshland area. Perhaps get local school children involved in drawing up a map and booklet outlining the wildlife habitats in their locality? There are many ideas contained within the Tidy Towns Handbook for further developing this important aspect of the competition.

### **Litter Control:**

The standard of litter control on the day could have been better, particularly for a village of Gowran's size. Bottles and a plastic bag were evident on the Kilkenny Road as one approached the village and a lot more was evident at the bend in this road. There was some evidence of litter being picked up on the day. The old plastic litter bins should be replaced - perhaps you should get in touch with Kilkenny County Council in this regard?

### **Tidiness:**

The village gave a generally neat and ordered appearance on adjudication day. Minor items were - that weeding was necessary to the kerbsides to the hall and boxes had been abandoned at the recycling bins in this locality. Perhaps a more frequent pick up is required?

### **Residential Areas:**

Houses in the village and along approach roads generally looked well cared for on adjudication day. Attractive houses were noted on the Kilkenny Road and the charming semi-detached houses with cottage gardens opposite the Post Office looked extremely well. An attractive entrance to a modern housing estate on the Dublin Road was admired - indeed there were many attractive gardens on this road. The adjudicator was pleased to note that a large house at the top of the main street had retained its traditional timber up and down sash windows, and therefore had lost none of its unique character of proportion.

### **Roads, Streets and Back Areas:**

The standard in this category of the competition was somewhat inconsistent. On the Kilkenny Road, although the verges had been cut back in places it appeared to be slightly rougher in appearance further in and indeed was quite overgrown and weedy in places. The speed limit sign on this road and the dangerous bend sign were quite grubby. This road affords the visitor a magnificent view to St. Mary's Church in the village beyond. The Dublin Road was in a similar condition. The Thomastown Road was to a higher standard and the grass verges here had been well maintained with good open spaces, attractive stone wall and well maintained grotto. This entrance to the village affords the visitor a magnificent view to the fine archaeological heritage of the town beyond.

## **General Impression:**

Gowran is a most attractive village with much to offer both visitor and resident alike. It continues to perform well in the competition.

## **Second Round Adjudication:**

The town looked well on a Monday second adjudication day. We found two areas of litter (1) in the green fronting St. Mary's Church, and (2) in the car parking area outside the catholic church. Your submission with aerial photographs illustrate the problem with rusty corrugated roofs: these now need attention. We also suggest you refurbish the text inscriptions on the stone bollards at St. Mary's Church. These information pieces are of great value to visitors anxious to learn about the Butler influence on the area etc. The concrete post and rail fencing on the approach road is in need of repairs: a job for the local authority we feel. Some farm gates would benefit from painting. You are now raising your marks to a degree that expects greater attention to detail. We found some very good individual effort at Green View Estate. You need to ensure a high maintenance of developments before embarking on new projects.