

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Gowran** Ref: **392**
County: **Kilkenny** Mark: **306**
Category: **B** Date(s):

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	45	45
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	40	41
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	43	43
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	39	39
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	16	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	52	53
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	33	34
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	34	34
TOTAL MARK	450	302	306

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Gowran Tidy Towns committee is welcome to the Supervalu Tidy Towns competition 2017. We enjoyed our first visit to your lovely village. Thank you for your comprehensive entry form that included helpful photos. The map was a little difficult to make out.

Your sizeable committee of 18 members has assistance from others as required. You are fortunate to have a Tus scheme to assist in your efforts. You have good links with Kilkenny County Council and Duchas. You also have the support of your school, Foroige local businesses.

You communicate your messages via local newspapers, newsletter, meetings, email and social media. parish bulletin, leaflet, email and direct contact. It is encouraging to hear that Gowran's long-time participation in Tidy Towns has led to all of your original objectives being achieved. No doubt you are coming up with new ones now. Keep up the good work.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

Preserving the historical character of the village is important to you and rightly so. The restoration of the castle and gate lodge is a wonderful achievement for the village – it appears this was in last year's entry also. The railings look well. Please be specific as to what is new since your previous entry, so we can award you marks accordingly. Other items you mention here are more relevant to other categories. The expansive church grounds and graveyard were both beautifully maintained. The nearby Community Hall looked well. The school is enhanced by attractive green planting. Loughlin's pub is very neat, particularly the rear car park with its attractive planting. Carey's garage has an attractive design; the colour scheme works well. It would great if it could be freshened up soon and some of the repetitive façade signage minimised to give a less cluttered impression. Gowran has some lovely traditional shopfronts such as the pharmacy – the side railings require attention. The post office is neat. The pubs near the Fairgreen are not of the standard you are striving for. The Family Butchers is another lovely building with windows boxes and an attractive (but slightly worn) awning. It's a pity the windows have to be blocked off in such an unwelcoming manner. The ivy-clad 'Glasraí and Goodies looked well as did the adjoining house in same colour scheme.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

Planting and overall landscaping is making a big impact in Gowran – a lot of your voluntary time is taken with maintenance of these areas. One of the highlights was the stepped green areas in front of St. Mary's Church – all well-maintained. Landscape-design is formal as befits the surroundings. We like the fact that the colour palette is pared back here so as not to draw the eye from the backdrop. The stone features blend in well. The large stone bed of mixed flowers was admired as we drove from the church towards the village centre. On the Kilkenny Rd, the bed

in front of the name stone requires a little attention. The white bed of roses on the Carlow Rd looked well. Down the street, we loved the bed of lavender framed by a box hedge outside a private residence. It's amazing what you can fit into a small space. The bees will love it! The grotto is beautifully maintained and enhances this approach. The daffodils in bloom at the restored well look great in your photos - thank you for those.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:

Gowran has a variety of valuable habitats – from marshland to woodland. You are active in maintaining the woodland area – please highlight this area on your map. The local school is to be commended for their many initiatives to learn about and encourage local biodiversity. The Bee project is a worthwhile initiative and appears to have caught the imaginations of the younger residents. Both students and Tidy Towns members have been getting up to speed with the Pollinator Plan – well done. Leaving areas unmown to encourage wildflowers and thereby pollinators is a practical measure that requires no experience. Can you give us feedback on this next time? Planting native hedgerows creates corridors for birds. The garden and wildlife area between the 'V' at Paulstown/Goresbridge Rd is a lovely spot.

What help do you receive from 'Young Ireland' hurling and camogie club that relates to this category? We look forward to hearing about more community-wide initiatives next time.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

You have implemented some practical steps here that have led to cutting down on resource-use. The vegetable garden is a wonderful community resource and it is encouraging to hear that the produce is used for Gowran's Meals on Wheels service. Food waste is reused as are ashes. Gowran N.S. is playing its part in saving water, through installation of water saving devices on toilets. You continue to encourage use of recycling facilities. You continue to raise awareness of all the above initiatives through your various communication channels – try and come up with more waste 'prevention' ideas rather than just recycling. Any measures in the community to reduce, reuse, repair, cut down on energy/travel and cut down on water? We look forward to hearing of further progress next time. Staying in contact with your Environmental Awareness Officer is a good way of hearing about the many workshops and training programmes that are held in relation to this category. You might even host an event or programme in your locality?

Please refer to the SWRM guidelines and pick a few more ideas that would work best for Gowran. Alternatively, visit www.localprevention.ie/tidytowns to see what other initiatives are happening around the country. We look forward to hearing of further progress next year.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Your litter picks are frequent, organised and involve different groups in the community. Apart from a little minor littering, Gowran was exceptionally clean so well done to all involved. There were 2 litter pickers hard at work for the duration of our visit. Your school visits keep the message out there – well done to the students for adopting the nearby road. You continue your awareness through your various communication channels. We positively note that you segregate collected materials for recycling. Well done to all involved.

Gowran presents a fairly tidy appearance. Your ongoing lobbying in relation to undergrounding of cables is acknowledged – please do keep us updated. The pitch & putt fence on the Goresbridge Rd is rather untidy. Lanterns at the Fairgreen will require cleaning soon. The bottle bank area was very neat and tidy.

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

The standard of presentation was high under this category. Residences along the main streets and approach roads were mostly neat and tidy. Significant progress has been made in terms of restoration of derelict homes. Your efforts to liaise with Kilkenny Co Co regarding derelict properties are lauded as is your encouragement of painting – the latter really does have a positive impact on the streetscape.

Gowran has several housing estates – those we observed were neat and litter free, some enhanced with attractive landscaping. We observed a lovely mix of period cottages, town houses and housing estates – all neat and colourful. Some attractive landscaping was observed at housing estate entrances. Downhill from the Castle Lodge, we admired two beautiful homes – the stone house with the red door and the white home with the yellow door. 'Louglin' house looks well with its traditional sash windows. It was encouraging seeing the house along this street renovated and occupied (pale blue windows). Parkmore Terrace is presented to a high standard, with stone beds, annuals, bench and well-maintained green area. The Steeples right in the heart of the village. Well done to all residents involved.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

Approaches are well-maintained. The white fence on the road from the school to the village shows the dirt easily and will need to be freshened up soon. You might consider planting a native hedge along here in time that will require lower maintenance in the longer term. We feel that you could improve directional signage to draw people into the lovely village centre as opposed to just driving around the edges. You might also consider painting gates within village boundaries at some time in the future – one uniform colour would bring a sense of cohesion to the village. Cycle signage was in good order. The bus stop area was neat and tidy.

Concluding Remarks:

