

An Taisce Report – IBAL Anti-Litter League, Round 1, 2018

Athlone: 12th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Cleaner than European Norms.

A strong performance by Athlone, giving the town its best ranking in years. There was attractive 'olde' style street signage indicating places of interest in the town, and olde style street lamps (e.g. John Broderick Street). Seven out of the ten sites surveyed in Athlone got the top litter grade- some of the top ranking sites included Fairgreen Car Park, John Broderick Street and Kilmartin N6 Centre. Burgess Park was also a top ranking site with regard to litter but it was noted that many of the signs relating to fish / water birds / flora etc. were covered in grime and almost illegible.

Fairgreen Car Park: Grade A. The signage relating to Pay & Display Car Park was in good order and the road surface, signage and markings were in good condition. The colourful planter box was a welcome addition in such a built environment. There was a virtual absence of litter throughout the area surveyed.

Sean Costello Street: Grade A. Major road works have been taking place and care needs to be taken to ensure that there isn't a build-up of litter behind the fencing. Once finished the paving / surface should look very fresh. The remainder of the street was generally fine with regard to litter.

John Broderick Street: Grade A. A fresh and clean shopping street with paving in good order. The 'olde' style street lamps are an attractive feature. Individual shops appeared well presented.

Athlone Castle: Grade B. The area directly outside the Castle was well presented with paving, seating, bin, bollards and planting in good order. Cigarette butts were pronounced on the pathways and there were lower levels of sweet wrappers and glass bottles (broken glass). With a little extra effort this could easily be a top ranking site.

Pedestrian Walkway between St Hilda's Kiosk and Sarsfield Square: Grade B. The large yellow signage, (just before the bridge) 'Caution Give Way to Pedestrians' was very grimey. The overall impression here was of a somewhat littered environment which was generally lacking in maintenance (e.g. heavy weed growth and graffiti). The litter was mostly food related.

Burgess Park: Grade A. This is a lovely green space which was generally well presented except for the visitor information relating to 'Fish of the Shannon' and 'Waterbirds of the Shannon' / Flora / Historic notices – these were practically illegible due to grime / staining. There was also graffiti on other signage. Apart from these issues it was a very good environment with regard to litter.

Kilmartin N6 Centre: Grade A. The car park and surrounding area of the Kilmartin N6 Centre was spotless. The overall impression was of a very well presented and maintained environment.

N62 Approach from Birr: Grade B. Much of this route scored well with regard to litter. However, the road was let down by litter at make-shift lay-bys – fast-food wrappers, plastic bottles, cans, sweet papers etc. were all present same.

M6 / N6 approach from Dublin: Grade A. The overall impression created along this road was an excellent one. All aspects of the area surveyed were in very good condition and there was an absence of litter throughout. Freshly cut grass verges contributed to the whole appearance.

N61 Athlone - Roscommon connecting Road: Grade A. The road between Athlone and Roscommon was very good with regard to litter and overall presentation. There was no discernible difference between the two local authorities.