

An Taisce Report – IBAL Anti-Litter League, Round 2, 2018

Cork City Centre: Overall 2018 result: 20th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Clean to European Norms.

It is a great achievement that a major city such as Cork has enjoyed Clean status for the past 6 years. This time out it had one of its best showings. With so many sites getting the top litter grade, there are a few which deserve a special mention: Cork Bus Station was a very welcoming and clean environment for anybody arriving by bus; Bishop Lucey Park was a much improved site compared to a few years ago; Opera Lane continues to be a pristine site; Fitzgerald Park was also excellent – clearly well respected and maintained. As a general comment about Cork City – a notable feature was the paving in many of the city centre sites – adding enormously to the overall presentation of streets e.g. Winthrop Street; Parnell Place; Opera Lane; Drawbridge Street, to name but a few.

Lower Glanmire Road: Grade B+. Much of this route presented well and was generally quite good with regard to litter. Any litter which was visible was at specific locations e.g. at the new Supermacs and Maxol and at the derelict house, No. 1 Woodside. Litter was primarily food related, along with some plastic ties on poles.

Dunkettle Interchange: Grade A. A very positive first impression of Cork is created at this busy junction. It was very well maintained and clean throughout.

Water Street: Grade A. There was a virtual absence of litter along this small street. Graffiti was obvious and paving was somewhat patched.

Custom House Street: Grade A. The overall presentation of this environment was a very good one with a blend of both old and new buildings. All aspects of the area surveyed were in very good order and there was an absence of litter throughout.

Victoria Road: Grade A. (from Albert Quay to Centre Park Road) This road passes through a mix of commercial, residential and a large old industrial area. While graffiti is an issue on Victoria Road, the area was clear of litter.

Cork Bus Station: Grade A. Cork Bus Station created a very positive first impression of the city for anybody arriving by bus. The exterior of the station presented very well with some of the wide expansive walkways laid with attractive paving. Apart from some cigarette butts there was a complete absence of litter – perhaps notices re no smoking in immediate vicinity might help.

Parnell Place: Grade A. A recently rejuvenated area, Parnell Place was looking very well. The horse trough was used as a plant box with colourful planting. The pavement was lovely and fresh in appearance and the area was further enhanced by ornamental tree planting. There were a couple of large scale building projects and two derelict buildings but these didn't impact in any negative way on the litter situation.

St. Patrick Street: Grade B+. The streetscape presented very well with a great sense of space throughout. The paving wasn't so much littered as grubby. St. Patrick Street just missed getting the top litter grade – plastic ties on poles, sweet papers, cigarette butts and chewing gum were obvious.

Oliver Plunkett Street: Grade B. Some parts of the paving were much fresher in appearance than others. Chewing gum and cigarette butts were particularly prevalent, with lower levels of dog fouling and food related litter. The litter was most obvious at the Grand Parade end of the street.

Princes Street: Grade A. Princes Street scored well with regard to litter – cigarette butts there were the only items. Some of the individual premises along this street were brightly painted and presented well (e.g. Nash 19 had a display of pumpkins as well as colourful planting; a site beside the corner had a wall mural).

South Mall: Grade A. It was noted that South Mall was much improved in terms of overall presentation on previous IBAL litter surveys – this time around the impression was of a clean site with excellent paving and well maintained buildings.

Morrison's Quay: Grade B. Much of Morrison's Quay was choked by on street parking. Many parts of the area were good with regard to litter but there were a few occasions behind the parked cars (water side) where litter was obvious – mostly coffee cups and sweet papers. Cigarette butts and chewing gum were very noticeable adjacent to Cork College of Commerce and next to the pedestrian bridge.

Trinity Bridge: Grade A. This small pedestrian bridge presented very well and apart from some cigarette butts it was litter free. There was some graffiti on the signage 'Trinity Bridge, Opened by Councillor GY Goldberg'

Bishop Lucey Park: Grade A. Bishop Lucey Park was an oasis of calm in the centre of the city. It has seen a big turn around from a number of years ago when it was quite littered – this time around it was immaculate. The seating, bins, paving and general environment were all in very good order.

North Main Street: Grade A. North Main Street has its fair share of discount and derelict buildings but there was no litter associated with the latter. Much of the paving presented well and St. Peter's Visitor Centre and the square at the site of Skiddy's Castle were particularly attractive.

Opera Lane: Grade A. A pristine site throughout. Paving was excellent, with plaque 'Opera Lane, 2009 O'Callaghan Properties' underfoot. Opera Lane was exceptionally clean in appearance, with glass buildings adding to the fresh impression created.

Drawbridge Street: Grade B. The paving presented well along this narrow street which is a blend of both old and new – strangely enough the litter along Drawbridge Street was more obvious in the newer part of the street.

Winthrop Street: Grade A. There was a virtual absence of litter along Winthrop Street, any small items were outside McDonald's. The remainder of the street was immaculate and the paving was excellent.

French's Quay: Grade A. There were no litter issues along this mixed use street. Paving, cycle path and bollards were in good order and outing seating at the café created a welcoming feel. Graffiti was pronounced at the premises of Garage Repairs.

Derelict Site at Finbarr's Car Park: Grade C. (Sharman Crawford Street) There were heavy accumulations of a wide variety of litter behind the blue railings. The rusty fencing presented poorly. The overall impression was of a site awaiting development and allowed to deteriorate in the interim.

Mardyke Street: Grade A. The brightly painted (pink / red) corner site add a splash of colourful along Mardyke Street. There was a complete absence of litter throughout.

Fitzgerald Park: Grade A. Attractively landscaped park environment with seating bins, paving, planted areas, trees and grass in very good condition. It was spotless – a credit to the users and those responsible for the maintenance.

Magazine Road: Grade B. There was a definite litter presence along Magazine Road. It was much cleaner to the Dennehy's Cross end - most pronounced near Highfield Avenue, closer to UCC. There were significant and hazardous amounts of broken glass bottles.

N40 South Link Road: Grade B. (from Wilton to Togher exit / entry points). There were scattered amounts of litter on the left hand side of the road - mostly sweet papers and coffee cups with lower levels of fast-food wrappers, cans and cigarette butts.