

AnTaisce Report – IBAL Anti-Litter League, Round 1, 2019

Swords: 18th out of 40 Towns / Cities surveyed. Clean to European Norms

An excellent showing by past winner Swords on its return to the league after an absence of several years. The approach roads got the top litter grade, creating a positive first impression of the town. The residential areas of Carlton Court and Longlands were both top ranking, indicating well cared for environments. Some of the moderately littered sites could easily be top ranking with a little extra care and attention e.g. Swords Town Park and Plaza Village – the latter was particularly well presented and maintained.

Main Street: Grade B. The overall impression along Main Street was somewhat littered. Much of the street was in good order e.g. paving, seating, planting, bins etc. But, there was a very obvious fast food and cigarette butt presence on the steps beside a fast food outlet. Chewing gum was pronounced throughout. There were plenty of cigarette butt units, some directly outside shops / bars but also silver 'free standing' units.

Swords Castle and Environs: Grade A. There was a virtual absence of litter at this site. The general impression was a good one but care needs to be taken to ensure that litter from any work taking place doesn't build up.

Carlton Court: Grade A. There is one word to describe this residential area – immaculate. The pathways, large grassy areas and general presentation and maintenance were excellent. Clearly it is a very well respected by the residents.

Longlands: Grade A. A clean and tidy residential area with a complete absence of litter throughout. Recently attended grass verges indicate a well maintained environment.

Approach from Malahide to Main Street: Grade A. In the main, this was a clean and tidy environment. Road surface, signage and markings were in good order and this route created a positive first impression of Swords. Malahide Road Roundabout presented well.

R125 Ashbourne/ Ratoath Approach Road: Grade A. This route was more rural in nature than Malahide approach and was maintained accordingly. There were no visible litter issues

Swords Town Park: Grade B. Swords Town Park was well presented and maintained but let down by a casual attitude to litter – e.g. plastic bottles and coffee cups right beside the bins at seating areas. Fast-food wrappers and sweet papers were also present. With a little extra effort on behalf of the users this could easily be a top ranking site. The plastic Perspex of the visitor information notice for 'Swords Town Park' had a couple of incidents of graffiti. Dog 'Poop and Scoop' bin had paint peeling.

Castle Shopping Centre: Grade A. The presentation of this site was fine, where little effort has taken place to take the 'bare look' off the car park area. A broken bollard lay on the ground. There was a virtual absence of litter.

'River Mall': Grade B. Signage indicating 'River Mall' was in very good condition and there was some attractive paving and railings. However, there was a definite litter presence and the level was such that it was verging on becoming a Grade C site. Cans and cigarette butts were the most obvious litter with lower levels of sweet papers and plastic bottles. There was a large sign in the water.

Plaza Village – Shopping: Grade B+. This shopping environment was freshly presented and enhanced with some large planter boxes. Some casually discarded litter took away from an otherwise very good site - paving, signage, tiles, bins and planting were all in very good condition. Not much effort is required for this site to get the top litter grade.