

An Taisce Report – IBAL Anti-Litter League, Round 2, 2019

Ballina: 16th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Clean to European Norms.

Despite a number of littered sites, Ballina has performed very well on its return to the League in 2019. Very good top ranking sites in Ballina included St Nicholas' and St. Dymphna's Schools (a very clean and well presented environment with colourful paint feature); Mercy Park / Playground (very well presented and maintained) and Jackie Clarke Collection – Museum (a beautiful red brick building and grounds in excellent order). By far the most heavily littered site surveyed in Ballina was the Recycle Facility at Dunnes Stores where it wasn't just casually littered but dumping had occurred.

Church Road Approach: Grade A. A very clean and tidy impression was created along this route with some attractive tree planting and well cared for individual properties.

Killala Road Approach: Grade B. The road surface, signage and markings were in good order along this busy stretch of road. The side of the road, with houses, was noticeably cleaner than the opposite tree / shrub lined stretch. Main litter items included plastic bags, fast-food wrappers, sweet papers and cans.

St Nicholas' and St. Dymphna's Schools: Grade A. The area immediately outside the school gate was very good with regard to litter. School signage was clear, clean and legible with some colourful hand-prints. All appeared in good order within the grounds, with plenty of mature planting throughout.

Mercy Park / Playground Grade A. A lovely 'green' space which was very good with regard to litter. Signage at entrance 'Welcome to Mercy Park Playground' was in good condition, as were the bins and seating. The grounds surrounding it were well maintained. . The tree-lined pathway was a lovely feature.

Ballina Cinema Complex: Grade B. A freshly presented build environment which was generally quite good with regard to litter but was let down by sweet papers trapped in the fallen leaves and shredded items at the base of the industrial bins – the latter was quite pronounced, creating a poor impression.

Recycle Facility at Dunnes Stores Car Park: Grade C. On first impressions, the individual bin units at this facility were in good order and initially the facility seemed quite a fresh one. However, to the rear of the clothing bins was a different story – several bags and sacks of clothing had been left on the ground. The back of the green clothing bank was very grubby. .It was also let down by bags stuffed between the units, glass on the ground and cardboard boxes.

Humbert Street: Grade A. Paving, bin, seating, bollards, lamp-posts and low-lying planting were in very good condition along Humbert Street. This contributed to the clean and tidy impression created along the street.

Pearse Street: Grade B. This was a mixed street in terms of presentation – the lower end, close to the roundabout at Dunnes Stores had several boarded up / derelict houses which were a considerable blot on the landscape. Further along the streetscape is much enhanced by attractive paving, 'olde' style street lamps, trees and seating. Chewing gum was the most obvious litter item with lower levels of dog fouling and cigarette butts.

Jackie Clarke Collection – Museum: Grade A. This museum is housed in a beautiful period red brick building with attractive garden and colourful window boxes / hanging baskets. All aspects of the area surveyed were in excellent order and there was a complete absence of litter throughout.

N59 Sligo – Ballina Connecting Road: Grade A. This road was virtually litter free for the entire length of the route.