

Kilkenny: 1st out of 37 towns / cities surveyed. Cleaner than European Norms.

There is surely a lesson in this result for other towns – while the majority of towns have deteriorated during Covid, Kilkenny has been maintained in pristine condition. All approach routes were top ranking and created a positive first impression of the town – this high standard was sustained for almost all of the remaining sites and there were no seriously littered sites. With so many top-ranking sites, special mention. High Street, Upper and Lower John Street, River Nore River Walk (behind Kilkenny Castle) and the grounds of Kilkenny Castle Park – all were excellent with regard to not just litter, but overall presentation and maintenance.

R712 Dublin Road Approach: Grade A. Cycle / pedestrian paths were in good order and the overall impression created along this road was a very good one, creating a positive first impression of Kilkenny - this very high standard was maintained for almost all of the remaining sites surveyed.

Upper and Lower John Street: Grade A. A long stretch of shopping street which scored very well with regard to litter. Newly laid road surface created a very fresh impression. Clearly a close eye is kept on the derelict / closed down premises as there was no litter directly associated with them. Some shop fronts were attractively presented, really adding to the streetscape e.g., Billy Byrnes, Langton's and an 'olde' style food deli.

Kilkenny Castle Park: Grade A. An expansive area - such a wonderful resource - beautifully managed with a complete absence of litter throughout. All aspects of the area surveyed were in very good condition e.g., playground, seating, signage.

River Nore: Grade A. Area surveyed was from John Bridge, along the pedestrian route to the rear of Kilkenny Castle. The attractively laid out area at the beginning of this walk was very fresh in appearance with sculpture, items of historical interest, seating, bins etc. - all in excellent order. There was a complete absence of litter on this long stretch of riverwalk - a credit to the users.

High Street: Grade A. A lovely streetscape, excellent with regard to litter and all aspects of the area surveyed in very good condition e.g., paving, seating, planting, visitor information notices, street bins etc. The individual shop fronts were very well presented with very few closed down / vacant outlets, compared to other towns / cities throughout the country.

Market Yard Car Park: Grade B+. An extensive street level car park, mostly good with regard to litter, but some items were impossible to ignore e.g., face masks, plastic gloves and some loose food related litter e.g., cans, plastic bottles.

Bring Centre at St. Canice's: Grade A. A small facility, all aspects in very good condition and no litter associated with it. Signage was clear, legible and in good order.

Kilkenny Ring Road: Grade A. (From garage at Dean Street to Castlecomer New Road) The built environment was in excellent order and the grass area was in good condition - there was no visible litter along this expansive stretch of road.

Ormonde Retail Park: Grade B+. Plastic wrapping was the most obvious item with some food related litter (e.g., plastic bottles and coffee cups) in the low-lying shrubbery. Not much effort is required for this to be a top-ranking site.

Carlow – Kilkenny Link Road: Grade A. An excellent route in both directions, in terms of both presentation and litter.