

Arklow: 4th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Cleaner than European Norms.

An excellent result for Arklow. The three approach roads got the top litter grade, and this high standard was maintained for many of the other sites surveyed. There is clearly a strong Tidy Towns presence throughout the town, based on various signage and projects. One notable feature throughout Arklow was the way in which many of the closed / boarded up properties had been brightly painted, even camouflaged to remove the sense of abandonment. Arklow Sports Centre – Coral Leisure and Environs wasn't just very good with regard to litter but there was a strong emphasis on the environment with solar panels on the roof and 'water conservation garden' to the rear.

R772 Approach, Dublin direction: Grade A. This route created a very positive first impression of Arklow and this high standard was maintained for the majority of the remaining sites surveyed. Attractive planting and marine features added to the 'Welcome to Arklow' atmosphere.

R772 Approach, Gorey direction: Grade A. Another fresh and welcoming route to Arklow, with many of the roundabouts beautifully landscaped / adorned with artwork. A boarded-up property on the left-hand side had been painted, taking away the 'bare' look.

Arklow Recycle Centre: Grade A. This was an excellent site, not just in terms of litter but in the overall presentation and maintenance. The bottle / can units were exceptionally freshly presented, with absolutely no items stuffed between, beneath, behind the units. The flower pots around the perimeter were made from recycle plastic – a great initiative at a recycle centre.

Main Street: Grade A. The Main Street has more than its fair share of 'closed down / abandoned' properties but clearly a careful eye is kept on them as there was no litter directly associated with them. Great efforts have been made to minimise the visual impact of these sites. There were plenty of abundant flower boxes / hanging baskets throughout the street. It was very good with regard to litter.

Riverwalk: Grade B+. (from bridge to the area with boats). The water was clear of litter items but there were minor items, mostly fast food, alcohol and cigarette butt related along the path and grass area.

Coolgreany Approach Road: Grade A. There were no visible litter issues along this somewhat more rural route. Road surface / markings / signage were in good order.

Lower Main Street: Grade B. There was a definite litter presence along this street, much of it long - lie, indicating a lack of thorough cleaning for quite some time. Cigarette butts were pronounced with lower levels of face masks, food related items and alcohol cans / glasses. There didn't appear to be a visible street name.

Public Car Park: Grade A. (in front Ambulance depot). Car park surface / signage / markings etc were in good order, replete with 'Age Friendly' parking. There was a virtual absence of litter throughout.

Croghan Industrial Estate: Grade B+. Much of this commercial park was generally fine with regard to litter but it was impossible to ignore the plastic wrapping around the perimeter of the car park to the rear and some scattered food related litter items, masks and gloves.

Arklow Sport Centre – Coral Leisure and Environs: Grade A. An excellent site in terms of overall presentation and maintenance. One of the lovely features was the 'Xeriscape Water Conservation Garden' to the rear of the grounds. There is clearly a very strong environmental theme, with solar panels very much a feature on the roof building.