

**Ballina: Joint 8<sup>th</sup> out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Cleaner than European Norms**

**Ballina has scored very well and certainly, there are the remnants from Biden's recent visit. All bar one of the sites surveyed got the top litter grade. With so many sites getting the top litter grade, some deserve special mention for various reasons: Pearse Street was exceptionally freshly presented with excellent streetscape – the impact of the closed down / vacant properties was very much reduced by some excellent art work / projects. The Jackie Clarke Collection was a wonderful site, particularly the small walled garden right in the heart of the town. The large expanse of park at Tom Ruane Park was also very much deserving of the top litter grade. The one blot on the landscape in Ballina was the 'Bring Facility at Humbert Car Park' – it wasn't just casually littered but dumping had taken place.**

**N25 Foxford Approach Road: Grade A.** This route created a very positive first impression of Ballina and this was sustained for all bar one of the remaining sites surveyed. Colourful planting along both sides of the road was a lovely feature and the pedestrian pathway, flanked by grass was in very good order.

**Lord Edward Street Approach: Grade A.** (from Gurteens Roundabout). There was lovely sculpture and planting at Gurteens Roundabout, with some nice tree planting closer to the town. There was a virtual absence of litter throughout the route surveyed.

**Pearse Street: Grade A.** The majority of the individual shop fronts were freshly presented, and measures were taken to take the bare look off the vacant premises. The streetscape was excellent e.g., very attractive brick paving underfoot, seating, signage, bicycle parking, bollards etc. and there were plenty of signs relating to locations / people of historical interest. Pearse Street was an exceptionally clean shopping street.

**Riverbank: Grade A.** (Cathedral Street side of the river). There is a lovely riverside path which was spotless and there were no obvious litter items within the water. All aspects associated with this amenity were in very good order e.g., visitor information notices, seating, life-belts, planted areas etc. It is a lovely amenity which presented very well and was very much deserving of the top litter grade.

**Car Parks at Aldi / Ballina DC Teeling Street: Grade A.** A large expanse of car park, incorporating both the Aldi car park and the Ballina DC Teeling Street Car Park. The Aldi section was particularly freshly presented with excellent car park surface / markings / signage and all aspects directly associated with this lovely Aldi building were in excellent order e.g., bicycle parking, litter bin, signage etc. The Ballina DC Teeling Street car park was also in good order. NB a site behind the ESB station was partially boarded up but litter was evident within this, and care needs to be taken to ensure that this doesn't impact on adjoining sites.

**Bring Centre, Humbert Car Park: Grade D+.** The only blot in the landscape in Ballina. It wasn't just casually littered with the items typically found at such a facility, but dumping had taken place – several bags of household rubbish (the contents of which, including food, were strewn on the ground), along with electrical items and other items had been very deliberately placed by the recycle units. Bags / boxes had also been stuffed between the units.

**Jackie Clare Collection: Grade A.** If ever a Grade A+ existed in the IBAL survey, this site would certainly be deserving of same. The red-brick building has been wonderfully presented and it has been further enhanced by a beautiful outdoor space. Located on a busy shopping street, the moment you step into the gardens, an air of calm pervades. The 'Buddy Bench' was made by the 'Men's Shed', wall was lined with historical murals and the planting throughout this walled garden was life-enhancing.

**Tom Ruane Town Park: Grade A.** Another exceptionally good site in Ballina! It was completely spotless throughout a large expanse of park. The playground equipment was made of 'natural' wood, very much blending in with the landscape. The remainder of the park was well presented and maintained e.g., bins, signage, life-belts by the river etc.

**Ballina Civic Centre: Grade A.** A very eye-catching fish sculpture, made of natural materials stands proud outside this building. The area was adorned with colourful planting. All aspects were in very good order and the area immediately surrounding Ballina Civic Centre was spotless.

**Sligo Approach Road: Grade A.** All appeared in very good order along this route with no visible litter throughout.