

Ennis: 5th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Cleaner than European Norms

Remarkable consistency from Ennis, with another top 5 position in the IBAL rankings and again free of heavily littered sites. Eight out of the ten sites surveyed were top ranking, among them O'Connell Street (an exceptionally clean main shopping street), Lidl (Gort Road), Clare County Museum and Tim Smythe Park – the latter is an extensive survey area and despite plenty of activity on a very sunny afternoon, it was very much deserving of the top litter grade.

Tim Smythe Park: Grade A. A fantastic park environment with plenty of activity within on a very warm and sunny afternoon. The wide range of facilities were all in very good order e.g., playing pitches, the two playgrounds, revamped basketball area, renovated building within the park, picnic tables and PE equipment. There was graffiti on some of the park signage. It was great to see the opportunity to 'separate / recycle' waste in the green bins.

Abbey Street Car Park: Grade A. This is more than a car park, it appears to be a 'destination' of sorts with people sitting on seating / taking shade under the trees. As well as the carparking facility, there was attractive planting, a water fountain and wonderful illustrated wildlife signage by the river. Some of the cafe outdoor seating, fronted directly on to the car park – there was no litter directly associated with same. Abbey Street Car Park was very much deserving of the top litter grade, fitting for the location of the IBAL winning sculpture.

Approach from Clareabbey Roundabout: Grade A. This route creates a very positive and welcoming first impression to Ennis – this was sustained for all, bar two of the remaining sites surveyed. Clearly a careful eye is kept on the numerous boarded up premises on the right-hand side, close to a small roundabout, as there was no litter along the road associated with same. There was a virtual absence of litter along this road.

Lidl, Gort Road: Grade A. All aspects of this survey site area were in excellent order, and it was excellent with regards to litter. Car park surface / markings were very fresh and the litter bin at the entrances to the shop was in good condition. Overall, this was very much deserving of the top litter grade.

R352 / Lahinch Approach Road: Grade A. (from Claureen Roundabout) Claureen Roundabout was wonderfully wild and adorned with colourful butterfly artworks. There was a virtual absence of litter along this road, and it culminates with abundant flowering close to the roundabout with the obelisk.

R474 / Circular Road Approach: Grade B. (from Beechpark Roundabout). There was a variety of food related litter items and plastic wrapping along this road – no one area was particularly pronounced, just a definite presence throughout.

Ballymaley Business Park: Grade B. All was stunning and gleaming at this business park, bar Block 1 – it's a pity as it's the first block as one enters. It would seem to be unoccupied and unattended with various litter items in the immediate vicinity. The remainder of the business park was spotless throughout and meticulously maintained.

Clare County Museum: Grade A. The one visible litter bin in the immediate environs was covered over but this didn't negatively affect the litter situation. The area to the front of the entrance was spotless and seating / visitor information signage were in very good order.

River Walk: Grade A. (from Wood Quay Pump station to Mill Bridge) There was almost a complete absence of litter on this long stretch of riverwalk – any minor food related items were all in the vicinity of the Mill Bridge. This area has been enhanced by some colourful flowers / planted areas. Signage, seating, litter bins, life-belts etc. were in very good condition. Graffiti was a feature on several different surfaces.

O'Connell Street: Grade A. Ennis, like most towns / cities throughout the country has its fair share of vacant / closed down premises – clearly a careful eye is kept on them as they didn't impact in any negative way on the litter situation. O'Connell Street was an exceptionally clean main shopping thoroughfare.