

Galway City: 19th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Clean to European Norms

Again, one of the few cities to achieve clean status, this was a strong performance by Galway City with just over half of the sites surveyed getting the top litter grade – these included Renmore Recycle Facility, NUIG, Briarhill Car Park, Lough Atalia Playground / Lough Atalia Road Park, Iarnród Éireann Train and Bus Éireann Bus Station and Shop Street, to name but a few. What sets these and other top-ranking sites apart is not just the lack of litter but the overall presentation and maintenance of same. Some sites just missed the top litter grade, and this could easily be achieved with a little extra effort e.g., Merlin Park Hospital, Lough Atalia Avenue, and the residential area of Gaelcarraig Park. Eyre Square has been nicely presented and maintained but a very casual attitude to litter prevailed on the day of the survey – there were heavy levels of a wide variety of litter throughout. Galway University Hospital needs to address the cigarette butt issue – there were literally hundreds, if not more, at the entrance / along the grass, as well as significant face-mask presence and food related items. It was the most heavily littered site surveyed in Galway City.

Teach Briota: Grade A. A very freshly presented residential environment which was excellent with regard to litter.

Briarhill Shopping Centre: Grade B. This site just missed the top litter grade and with a little extra effort, this could easily be maintained. Cigarette butts and sweet wrappers took away from an otherwise well-presented environment e.g., bicycle parking, bollards, litter bins, etc. Litter was most obvious around the trolley bay.

Briarhill Centre Car Park: Grade A. There was some lovely tree planting / wood chippings within the car park. Paving, bicycle parking and bollards were in good order. Chewing gum was obvious on some parts of the car park surface but overall, there was a virtual absence of litter throughout the area surveyed.

Merlin Park Hospital: Grade B+. Not much effort is required for this to be a top-ranking site. The grounds were well maintained, with signage, litter bins and seating at covered area in good condition. Alcohol cans and sweet wrappers were present.

R338 Approach: Grade B+. (from lights with Old Dublin Road in to Skerrit Roundabout). A pleasant approach to the city with just too many food related items for the top litter grade. Road surface / markings / signage were in good order.

Lough Atalia Avenue: Grade B+. The majority of this residential area was very good with regard to litter, with individual properties well presented and maintained. One house had litter in the front and garden, as well as the pavement in front of the house.

Army Barracks Chapel: Grade A. A sensitively presented and maintained facility with all elements in good order and some restoration works taking place. There was a complete absence of litter throughout the area surveyed.

Renmore Sports Grounds: Grade B. Much of this large expanse of grounds was clear of litter but there was a definite food related presence to the end of the area under the trees, where the benches were site. There didn't appear to be any visible litter bins / litter awareness notices but there was humorous dog fouling signage '*Clean It Up, Your Dirty Pup*' Graffiti on the ESB facility had been painted over.

Renmore Recycle Facility: Grade A. A clean and freshly presented facility with recycle units and signage associated with the usage of same in good order. It was very much deserving of the top litter grade.

Church of St. Oliver Plunkett: Grade A. There was a complete absence of litter at this site. The grounds were very well maintained, with plenty of planting throughout.

Lough Atalia Playground / Lough Atalia Road Park: Grade A. There was plenty of clear and legible signage at the entrance to this facility, including colourful signage indicating that is a 'Smoke Free Zone, Children at Play'. Playground equipment was in good order. The whole area surveyed was spotless throughout.

Lough Atalia Park: Grade B+. A large expanse of parkland which was generally well presented and maintained, with one wall covered in graffiti and some on the ground. Some of the litter was at the base of a wooden bench. Clear Dog Fouling notice ('Leave Only Paw Prints') and No Dumping signage is well positioned at the gate. Great to see 'Bike Share Scheme' in place.

Westside Amenity Park: Grade C. There was a plenty and a variety of dog fouling signage throughout this amenity: 'Love your Dog, Respect Your City' / 'Clean It Up, You Dirty Pup' / 'Our Children Play Here, No Fouling'. 'Dogs Must be Kept Under Control at All Times' signage was grubby / somewhat defaced. Much of this park space was in very good condition and free of litter. However, there was a heavy presence of all manner of food and alcohol related items, along with other miscellaneous items (e.g., shopping trolley with a scooter in it) along the perimeter edge. This brought down the overall litter grade. PE / play equipment were in good order.

Gaelcarraig Park: Grade B+. There were some casually discarded food related items e.g., plastic bottles, fast-food wrappers and mineral cans along the path / roadway, along with items 'trapped' at the base of the briars at one open area. Not much effort is required for this residential area to be a top-ranking site.

Galway University Hospital: Grade D. For a 'Smoke Free Campus' there were shockingly high numbers of cigarette butts, particularly around the main entrance. Huge numbers of butts lined the grass all around the edge of the paving and the pebble stones. Many of the butts were in areas with 'No Smoking' signage. Disposable face masks were all very pronounced, along with food related items on the grass and at the base of tree e.g., coffee cups, plastic bags, fast-food wrappers and sweet papers. It was great to see the opportunity to separate / recycle with green bin attached to regular litter bin.

NUIG: Grade A. A beautiful environment which was not just excellent with regard to litter but lovingly tended and maintained. All aspects within the campus were in very good order e.g., picnic tables, bicycle parking, paving, planted areas etc. It was great to see the opportunity to recycle with recycle bins incorporated into regular litter bins. Clearly this is a very well-respected environment.

Shop Street: Grade A. The overall impression created along this busy pedestrianised shopping street was a good one with regard to litter, minimal items throughout. Litter bins were solid and in good condition, some of which had large cigarette butt units attached to the side.

Eyre Square: Grade C. Eyre Square is a lovely open green space which was well presented and maintained. A casual attitude to litter prevailed on the day of this survey with significant levels of food related items e.g., coffee cups, fast-food wrappers and sweet papers and lower levels of a wide variety of other items, including alcohol cans and cigarette butts. Large numbers of birds were waiting to feast on what had been left behind. Litter bins / cigarette butt units were provided.

Iarnrod Eireann Train and Bus Eireann Bus Station: Grade A. The platform of the train station and the joint waiting room were spotless. There were some minor items outside the station but not enough to bring down the overall litter grade. Overall, this was a well presented and tended environment.

Docks & Marina: Grade A. This area was very much deserving of the top litter grade. Area was enhanced by 'Port of Galway' large planter boxes. There was a virtual absence of litter throughout a large expanse of area surveyed.

Marina / Dockside Apartments: Grade A. Attractive paving and planting very much add to the overall impression created at this residential waterside development. There was a complete absence of litter.

Martin Connolly Causeway: Grade A. Signage at the beginning of the causeway was clear and legible and pedestrian / cycle pathways were in good order. Seating / litter bin / dog fouling facility were

in good condition, albeit with some graffiti. One life-belt was on the ground, beneath one in its rightful place. It was impossible to ignore the noticeable smell coming from the Mutton Island Treatment Plant.

R336 Spiddal Approach Road: Grade A. All aspects along this route were in very good order, with lovely 'olde' style lamp-posts, signage, litter bins etc. The overall impression was of a clean, tidy and well-tended route.

R337 Bearna Road: Grade B+. Food related items (e.g., sweet papers, glass bottles and coffee cups) at the bus shelter and along the walls in spots, took away from what was otherwise a good site. With a little extra effort, this could easily be a top ranking one.