

Cork City Centre: 24th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Moderately Littered.

A solid performance for Cork City Centre, with just three heavily littered sites this time around and no litter blackspots – well done to all concerned. These were at Anderson's Quay, Granville Place and Kent Train Station. What would push Cork City up the league would be if some of the thirteen moderately littered sites shifted up a grade – this should be achievable, especially considering the recent works / enhancement schemes e.g. South Mall and Princes Street; Improvements were noted at Kennedy Quay – still moderately littered but not nearly as heavily so; similarly with Railway Street – William Street was Grade A, a massive improvement. Pembroke Street was attractively paved with large planter boxes – it was very encouraging to see staff of premises sweeping outside. The licensed premises along Washington Street had wonderful and substantial planting, used to great effect.

As a general note in Cork City – perhaps there's room for a cigarette butt awareness campaign – based on the number of sites where cigarette butts were present and litter grade brought down by same.

Copley's Street: Grade A. Despite being blighted by graffiti, this street wasn't necessarily littered – just some small amounts of cigarette butts.

South Mall: Grade B+. A well-presented, tree-lined thoroughfare with a clearly defined bicycle path. The overall impression was a positive one with seating, bicycle parking and signage in good order. Cracks in the pavement have resulted in cigarette butts becoming lodged. Other minor items included sweet papers and glass bottles. Not much effort is required for South Mall to get the top litter grade.

Pembroke Street: Grade A. This was a superb site. Much of the area has been attractively paved and adorned by large planter boxes and outdoor seating. It was very encouraging to see local businesses out sweeping – it is great to see their efforts being rewarded.

Phoenix Street: Grade A. Apart from some cigarette butts, this narrow laneway (home to Crane Lane Theatre and some pubs premises) was clear of litter.

Cotters Street: Grade B. The paving along one stretch was exceptionally freshly presented and clean. Not all was freshly presented, graffiti was a feature on a painted wall and there were heavy levels of cigarette butts. What is not visually evident is the smell of cannabis.

Infirmary Road – approach: Grade B+. This road was mixed in terms of presentation of the buildings – some were in much better shape than others. The overall impression was generally a good one, with not much effort required for the top litter grade. Cigarette butts featured significantly, with accumulations in various locations.

Old Station Road: Grade A. A freshly presented route with a variety of building types, including a derelict site – clearly a careful eye is kept on it as there was no litter directly associated with it. Overall, this road presented well and was good with regards to litter, just some plastic ties on poles.

Albert Road: Grade A. The derelict side of the road is boarded up / covered in graffiti, rather imposing in appearance – however, it wasn't necessarily littered. Planning permission at this site dates from some time ago. The opposite side of the road was a series of terraced residential housing – all was in good order here.

Kennedy Quay: Grade B. After being a heavily littered site for many years, there was a notable improvement this time around. This was seemingly achieved due to demolition works necessitating meshing fencing being erected around a significant area. Planning permission notice relates to January 2024, perhaps change is afoot. The Odium's area behind the railings wasn't considered part of the survey site, albeit being heavily littered within.

Anderson's Quay: Grade C. The seating, tree planting, paving, street bin etc. looked very well along Anderson's Quay and was very good with regards to litter. The new bus area was in very good order. What brought down the litter grade was the corner site, behind the railings, which has suffered abuse and neglect. Alcohol cans / bottles were pronounced, along with lower levels of all manner of food related litter and some miscellaneous items e.g. umbrella. Such areas are only likely to attract further litter.

Railway Street: Grade B+. There were significant improvements compared to previous IBAL Surveys – the fresh construction has certainly helped. Not much further effort is required for the top litter grade – as with so many other Cork City sites, cigarette butts were very much in evidence, along with some plastic bags and sweet papers.

Penrose Quay: Grade B. To the casual observer driving along, all appeared in good order – attractive paving and good street features. However, there was a definite food related litter presence at the base of wooden seating and in the planted areas.

Hanover Place: Grade B. Apart from heavy levels of chewing gum, lower levels of coffee cups, plastic ties on poles and cigarette butts were noted along Hanover Place. Graffiti was also a feature.

Washington Street: Grade A. It is very evident that great care is taken with some of the individual premises along this street e.g. 'olde' style pub Dwyers with the draping greenery and Reardens. With attractive awning. Clearly a careful eye is kept on the numerous derelict buildings as they were not littered. The Washington Inn had some cigarette butts outside its front door but overall, Washington Street was deserving of the top litter grade.

Princes Street: Grade B+. (from Oliver Plunkett to St. Patrick's Street). This was another Cork City site which just missed the top litter grade – if even half of these were able to become Grade A, the overall ranking would be much improved. Cigarette butts were most notable outside Ann Summers. Sweet papers and chewing gum were also visible.

St. Patrick's Street: Grade B. The presentation of St. Patrick's Street was very fresh with excellent paving, seating, tree planting, bicycle parking etc. There appeared to be an increase in the number of derelict premises. The most widespread litter items were cigarette butts, followed by lower levels of other food related litter.

Bridge Street: Grade A. This is an excellent example of an urban renewal project. The whole street looked great with lovely 'olde' style streetlamps, attractive paving, seating, tree planting etc. It was spotless throughout.

Caroline Street: Grade B. Much has been done to create a lovely streetscape – large tree planter boxes, with colourful bedding beneath, attractive paving etc. The area presented well but was let down by fast-food litter.

William Street: Grade A. What a transformation! While the site was still suffering from crumbling plasterwork, lots of wiring and graffiti and a general back-alley appearance, it was very good with regards to litter.

Rory Gallagher Place: Grade B+. An attractive city centre environment public space, with sculpture, seating in good order. There were too many cigarette butts for the top litter grade, lodged in the cracks in the paving and between the iron grills in the ground.

Kyle's Street: Grade A. This was a superb site, very freshly presented and maintained. Pedestrianised area was attractively laid out. The whole area was very much deserving of the top litter grade.

North Abbey Street: Grade B. Overall, this was better than previous IBAL surveys. This appears to be a mixed-use laneway, partly residential and party other. Much of the area was good with regards to litter but there was one isolated area, more commercial / industrial in nature, presented poorly and was well on its way to bringing down the overall litter grade. Taking the street in its entirety, this was moderately littered.

Granville Place: Grade C+. The 'Smoke Free Zone' that is the Mercy Hospital appears to have actually generated cigarette butts – possibly the nature of such a zone is that no butt units are provided. This was the main issue, along with lower levels of all manner of food related items, and some dog fouling.

Kent Train Station: Grade C+. There was a definite litter presence at the car entrance to the station – a wide variety of food related litter was present, along with significant amounts of bus / train tickets and cigarette butts. Heaviest concentrations were along the kerbs.

Lower Glanmire Road: Grade B. From train station to Railway Street. This route was moderately littered, along both sides, but litter was more obvious on the side of the train station.