

## An Taisce Report – IBAL Anti-Litter League, Survey 2, 2024

**Arklow: Cleaner than European Norms. 10<sup>th</sup> out of 40 towns / cities surveyed.**

A very strong result for Arklow, with seven out of the ten sites surveyed getting the top litter grade and there were no heavily littered sites. A Clothing Bank at Arklow Leisure Centre at which dumping was found in an earlier survey has since been completely removed. Top ranking sites included the approach roads, Bridgewater Shopping Centre, Arklow Town Centre (beautifully presented and maintained) and the residential area of St. John's Villas / John Paul Avenue.

**R772 Approach from N11 - Dublin direction: Grade A.** Lovely marine related features welcome any visitors to Arklow travelling along this route e.g. light house feature / old boat used as a large planter box etc. Freshly laid bicycle path looked well, and the drinking water fountain is a welcome addition. . The whole route was excellent with regards to litter.

**Coolgreaney Approach Road: Grade A.** This route creates an excellent first impression of Arklow. The recently laid road / markings / paving add to the overall freshness of the route. The colourful premises on the left hand side closer to the town was a lovely feature. A Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) poster on the right hand side 'takes away the bare look' of a boarded up premises, while also conveying the SDG message.

**Upper Main Street / Main Street: Grade B+.** This long stretch of road has experienced a high number of closed down / vacant / derelict premises but clearly a very careful eye is kept on them as there was no litter directly associated with them. Efforts to reduce the visual impact of same have been made (to good effect) by painting 'fake facades' etc. The overall impression was generally very good with regards to litter - not much effort is required for top litter grade.

**Bridgewater Shopping Centre: Grade A.** All aspects of this large shopping centre environment presented very well and were in excellent condition - there was a complete absence of litter throughout. Attractive planters boxes at the various entrances were welcoming features.

**Arklow Riverwalk: Grade B.** A lovely riverside environment, some of it recently re-paved and fresh looking, with attractive wooden seating. Children's art work lined one stretch of the walk and there was informative illustrated Biodiversity' signage. Main litter items were food related, along with cigarette packaging and other miscellaneous substance on the ground. One of the life-belt stands was lying on the ground.

**Arklow Town Centre: Grade A.** A beautifully paved and attractive town centre environment with lovely wooden seating, attractive landscaping and opportunity to refill water bottles. There was a complete absence of litter in this area.

**Arklow Train Station: Grade A.** There were no litter issues at the 'unmanned' train station. Station platform was adorned with 'Past Tracks' historical information by Turtle Bunbury. The colourful mosaic 'FAILTE' feature looked very well. The station platforms / car park were very good with regards to litter.

**Deposit Return Scheme, Lidl: Grade A.** This facility was absolutely spotless.

**R772 Approach – Wexford: Grade B+.** Significant road works were still underway / impacting the flow of traffic along this busy route. Any visible litter items were not in the immediate vicinity of the road works but slightly closer to Arklow town. A couple of planted and colourful roundabouts (sponsored) were welcoming features.

**St. John's Villas / John Paul Avenue: Grade A.** A series of interconnecting residential roads with no obvious signs of litter. Playground / PE equipment at the entrances appeared in good order. Communal grass areas were well maintained. Overall, this site was very much deserving of the top litter grade.