

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

**Waterford City: Clean to European Norms. 16<sup>th</sup> out of 40 towns / cities surveyed.**

Waterford City was surveyed in December and the city centre was full of 'Waterford Winterval European City of Christmas 2024' displays / signage throughout. While Vulcan Street was heavily littered, some heavily littered sites in previous IBAL surveys have improved e.g. the road leading to / from Waterford Dog Pound was very much deserving of the top litter grade this time around; the Miscellaneous site beside Vee Car Park was not quite as heavily littered but still had a litter presence. Many of the Waterford sites are consistently high ranking e.g. Barronstrand / Broad Street, Medieval Quarter, Bus Eireann Bus Station and People's Park – well done to all concerned. There was great use of QR codes in a few different ways – pictures of sites of historical interest along the riverwalk were accompanied by QR codes, as were wooden sculpture features (e.g. Arundel Square).

**Road to / from Waterford City / Co Dog Pound: Grade A.** The heavy levels of litter during the first survey of IBAL 2024 were no longer present. Clearly a clean-up has taken place - it should be easier to maintain given that this happened. This time around it was very much deserving of the top litter grade.

**Arundel Square: Grade A.** There was a virtual absence of litter at this city centre environment, very much a 'winter wonderland'. Seating, signage, street bins etc. were in very good condition. Wooden sculpture had a QR code at its base encouraging members of the public to 'Read More'.

**Ballybricken Park: Grade B+.** This small 'open' park in the city centre was nicely laid out with seating / picnic tables and traditional 'band stand' area with small a colourful mosaic on the grass. Much of the area was very good with regards to litter but it was let down by significant cigarette butt presence around the seating areas and other small pieces of indistinguishable items at the base of the table seating area.

**Misc. Site beside Vee Car Park: Grade B.** While litter levels were not quite as high as previous IBAL surveys, there was still a very definite presence - clearly this site needs very careful monitoring to prevent litter levels deteriorating to previous levels. Items were mostly food related, along with plastic wrapping.

**Sixcross Roads Business Park: Grade A.** A freshly presented and maintained environment with individual premises and public areas in good order. Litter bins were dotted throughout, modified to prevent the disposal of domestic rubbish.

**Newtown / Dunmore Approach Road: Grade A.** All was in good order along this route, with fresh road surface / markings / signage closer to the city centre. There were no obvious litter issues.

**People's Park: Grade A.** The attention to detail at this park is second to none. It is always exceptionally well presented and maintained. Previous works on water feature have finished, currently adorned with red / green lights, given the time of year. All aspects of the park were in very good condition e.g. play equipment, PE equipment, playing grounds, seating, planted areas etc. - clearly a very well respected environment, well done to all concerned.

**Bring Facility, Canada Street / Park Road: Grade A.** This is a small, 'on-street' facility with the recycle bin units flush against the perimeter wall of the People's Park - no opportunity for the 'stuffing' of items to the rear, as so often happens at such facilities. Some of the signage associated with the use of the facility was peeling / wearing away.

**Canada Street - Park Road: Grade B.** A small 'cul-de-sac' parallel to the People's Park. There was a very definite litter presence along this route, lined by parked cars on the left side and a series of business premises on the right hand side. Litter was primarily, but no limited to, the parked cars side of the road.

**R448 Approach from Newrath Roundabout: Grade B+.** There were too many loose food related items, along with a couple of election posters (12 days after the general election) for the top litter grade.

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**Greenway Car Park & Environs: Grade A.** An excellent car park and facilities relating to the Greenway - very good signage, drinking water fountain etc. There was a complete absence of litter throughout the survey area.

**Sherlock Walk: Grade A.** All was in very good order at this residential development - presentation and maintenance were excellent. There was a virtual absence of litter throughout.

**Medieval Quarter: Grade A.** As always, this extensive area from Reginald's Tower and including Cathedral / Wake Museum / Silver Museum / Medieval Quarter / Bishop's Palace was exceptionally well presented and maintained. It was completely spotless throughout. Area was enhanced by sculptures, large chess / drafts board, planting etc.

**Exchange Street Car Park: Grade A.** A small 'street level' car park which was clear of litter, bar some cigarette butts. Signage related to the use of the facility was freshly presented.

**Homesavers - King's Meadow Retail Park: Grade B.** The main car park area was relatively free of litter but the perimeter with an adjoining site had a definite litter presence - items included coffee cups, plastic bottles, plastic bags, fast food wrappers, mineral cans and sweet wrappers. Accumulations of cigarette butts were also present. There didn't appear to be any litter bins / cigarette disposal facility at store entrance.

**Deposit Return Scheme, Aldi, Ardkeen: Grade A.** This 'stand alone' facility in the car park was spotless, with no litter in the immediate vicinity. Heavily used at time of IBAL visit and being managed / emptied a few minutes later.

**Bring Facility, Tesco Extra, Ardkeen: Grade B.** The bin units and signage associated with same were in good order. While the overall impression was certainly improved compared to some previous IBAL surveys, there were still some items, (not associated with recycling facilities), discarded in the area e.g. sheets of glass, large plastic containers etc. Area to the rear harboured loose litter. It would seem that clothing banks have been removed since earlier visit in 2024.

**Riverwalk: Grade A.** (From Tower Hotel to Bridge) This extensive riverside environment was exceptionally good with regards to litter - this is no mean feat - well done to the users and those responsible for the cleaning of same. All aspects were in excellent condition e.g. seating, signage, planting. There was good use of technology by the provision of QR codes at the base of photographs of significant sites worth visiting in Co Waterford.

**Ferrybank Approach: Grade B.** Major works were underway along this stretch - litter wasn't directly associated with these works but on public areas. A variety of food related items were present - coffee cups, sweet papers, mineral cans, plastic bottles and fast-food wrappers.

**Pedestrian Access to Car Park, from George's Street: Grade B.** This site, visible behind gates, presents poorly, albeit not as heavily littered as first IBAL survey in 2024 - primarily industrial related items e.g. plastic wrapping etc.

**Plunkett - Waterford Train Station: Grade A.** 'No Smoking' signage was painted on the ground directly outside the entrance to the station building. Overall impression was of a clean and well maintained environment - car park / bicycle parking / planting.

**O'Connell Street: Grade A.** A long street, with a mix of variety of commercial uses. Colourful 'Waterford Walls' were used to great effect. Clearly a careful eye is kept on the various closed down / boarded up buildings as there was no litter directly associated with them. Overall, O'Connell Street was very much deserving of the top litter grade.

**Vulcan Street: Grade C.** Vulcan Street is a very very short street, between O'Connell Street and the quays - 4 plastic bags of rubbish had been 'neatly' lined up on the pavement. Street signage from the quays end was practically illegible.

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**Bus Eireann, The Quays: Grade A.** This facility is exceptionally well served by litter bins / litter awareness notices and cigarette butt notices. There was a virtual absence of litter throughout. The litter bins were a mix of regular and green recycling for mixed dry recyclables.

**George's Quay / road leading to Marina Hotel: Grade A.** This riverside environment (no visible street name) leading to Marina Hotel, is tucked away, not visibly apparent to passing traffic and thus seemingly relatively quiet. Seating, life-belts marine themed features were in very good condition. It was excellent with regards to litter.

**Barronstrand / Broad Street: Grade A.** This main shopping thoroughfare was ablaze with Christmas lighting / decorations, with a fun-fair in the centre. The whole area was exceptionally clean. Road signage, paving, seating, planted areas were in very good condition.