

Galway City Centre: 27th out of 40 towns / cities surveyed. Moderately littered.

With less than half the sites surveyed getting the top litter grade and the presence of two very poorly ranking sites, Galway City has failed to repeat last year's success. Like other towns and cities around the country, Galway is not immune to 'outdoor' drinking as evidenced by the high levels of alcohol related litter at some sites e.g. Eyre Square and Famine Walk. High levels of litter were also noted at Millennium Park – again, possibly due to the fact there are less alternative options for entertainment due to Covid-19. Some examples of top ranking sites included St. Mary's Catholic Church, 'The Bis' St. Joseph's College, Galway Train Station and CIE Bus Station, the latter two providing a positive first impression of the city for any travellers arriving by bus / train.

IDA off R339 Ballybrit: Grade B+. A very well maintained facility with all units very well tended and fresh looking. An accumulation of litter in one small corner and some plastic wrapping at the base of a grey fencing resulted in the downgrade of an otherwise Grade A site.

Ballybrit Heights: Grade B+. The overall impression at this residential area was generally a good one with well-tended properties and recently cut grass area. Some untended shrubbery area and weeds along kerbsides and casually dropped litter in evidence in these areas – examples of litter included plastic bottles, fast-food wrappers and sweet papers. With a little extra care and attention this could easily be a top ranking site.

Cuir na Rasai: Grade A. This apartment development was very well presented and maintained, with neatly cut grass. It was excellent with regard to litter.

East United Football Grounds: Grade B. Overall, a very well maintained site with clubhouse, pitches and open areas all well maintained. However, scattered litter resulted in a Grade B on an otherwise pleasant facility - there was a mix of both food and alcohol related litter and graffiti on the front wall.

GMIT: Grade B+. This large college campus has considerable grass areas - all in a good state of care. Some elements of the 'hard' landscaping were in need of repair e.g. a wooden bench, some low railings and a sign for 'Invited Guest Car Park'. The litter was all associated with this area to the fore of the site, along the road / frontage. The hedging in this area was cleaner than in previous survey visits. Interesting to note the signage on the litter bin: 'From January 2020, GMIT will be a 'Clean Air Campus. No Smoking. No Vaping'.

Lios Caisil – Ballybrit: Grade A.. A very nicely maintained development of semi-detached homes set in their own gardens with a large open air green area with mature trees - all in very good order. Clearly a careful eye is kept on the boarded up house at one end as there was no litter directly associated with it.

Merlin Park Hospital: Grade A. A very large scattered facility over an extensive campus - all elements in good order with virtually no litter in site - generally clean and well maintained with a pleasant welcoming aspect. The painted wall mural with 'Cead Mile Failte Merlin Park' and adjacent hanging baskets were colourful features.

Galwegians Rugby Club: Grade B. The pitch and immediately adjacent areas of this facility and around the club house were in good order and are being well maintained. However, a corner site presented poorly with not just dead planting but black plastic wrapping and various food related items. Also, the area along the road frontage and the whole length of the western perimeter was in a very rough condition with litter all along its length and also rough weeds and debris.

Galway Train Station: Grade A. Once again, this facility was in tip top order - despite being very busy during survey visit. A very pleasant site with a complete absence of litter throughout the area surveyed.

CIE Bus Station: Grade A. A clean and tidy city centre bus depot with all areas in very good order e.g. outdoor seating, bicycle parking, bin, pavement etc. Only a few small weeds in evidence. Virtually no litter in sight.

An Taisce Report – IBAL Anti-Litter League, Round 1, 2020

Canal Walk at Brugh na Ciribe: Grade B. Scattered small amounts of litter along the path rather spoiled this otherwise very pleasant walk in the city centre but it was good to note that there no litter to be seen in the water - an improvement on previous survey visits.

Williamsgate - William Street: Grade B+. A very well presented city centre environment with some relaxing seating, in the form of a sculpture. Overall, it was well tended but let down by food related litter and some face masks. The 'artistic' graffiti on one boarded up premises was beginning to look a bit 'tired'.

Shop Street: Grade B+. As with Williamsgate / William Street this busy city centre street was very well maintained with not too much litter. Brick paving, street bins, cigarette butt units, etc. were in good Overall, the impression was a pleasant one.

Millennium Park: Grade D. The playground area of the park was clean and equipment was in good order and the grass was well maintained. The remainder of the park was very heavily littered, with a very casual attitude to litter prevailing. The litter on the grass bank the litter looked recent while a collection in the enclosed area for skateboarding looked as if accumulated over a longer period.

'The Bish' St. Joseph's College: Grade A. Although presumably no students are currently attending the college, there was evidence of some activity with the gates unlocked and vehicles on the premises. The front railings could do with fresh paint, otherwise a well cared for premises, with no litter in sight.

Nun's Island: Grade A. A very narrow residential street close to the city with through traffic. Most properties in excellent order with the exception of one boarded up property (with graffiti) and one garage, both with small amount of graffiti and some weeds. Otherwise, a clean and tidy and pleasant street.

Car Park at Mill Street (including Recycle Bank): Grade C. The majority of this car park environment was fine with regard to casual litter and the clothing bank didn't have the usual accumulations so often associated with same. However, the site was brought down by discarded items along the wall including two heaps of steel waste and a discarded black sack with small items surrounding it.

St. Mary's Catholic Church: Grade A. This was one of the best ranking sites surveyed in Galway City. It was an immaculate site, not a trace of litter in sight. All elements of this facility were in excellent state of care and very attractive colourful planted areas.

Famine Walk: Grade D. This waterside environment has been attractively presented but very poorly treated by the users. There was plenty of signage relating to littering / no camping / no alcohol etc. but these were being flagrantly ignored. The very dense presence of 'old' litter would indicate lack of thorough cleaning for some time – it was almost impossible to walk on the grass owing to the amount of broken glass. Heavy levels of refuse in the water contributed to the overall air of neglect.

The Prom: Grade B. This very pleasant walk along the coast is a very busy location. Generally, it was in good order but quite a number of casually dropped pieces of litter spoil the effect of an otherwise very attractive facility. Cigarette butts were particularly pronounced underneath the wooden seating areas, with some of the cigarette butt units full / overflowing and covered in graffiti. The 'Poop and Scoop' (as Gaeilge) signage underfoot was old and worn away.

Salthill Park: Grade B. Salthill Park got a Grade B ranking, but only just. It is another outdoor amenity in Galway City which was let down by the amount of casually and recently dropped litter. The park was obviously being well maintained however the well tended grass areas, shrubberies and flower beds were all spoiled by the litter visible all around.

Eyre Square: Grade C. A very busy location which was noticeably littered by casually dropped (recently) litter, as evidenced by the hovering seagulls. Much of the litter related to fast food and drinking. The various elements of the site i.e. grass, planted areas, paving, seating, landscaping, sculpture features etc. were all in excellent order.

An Taisce Report – IBAL Anti-Litter League, Round 1, 2020

Spanish Arch: Grade B. An atmospheric environment with a craft market in operation at time of survey. Scattered litter detracted from an overall well tended location. The overflowing litter bin had a bag of rubbish on the ground beside it..

R339 Ballybrit Road: Grade B+. (from Brier Hill traffic lights in to junction of Monivea Road and Castle Park at East United Football club grounds) Overall, this was a fairly clean approach to the city with properties and public areas all in good order. One empty house and adjacent vacant plot were a bit on the run down side but otherwise very little in the way of litter and a pleasant outlook over the length of the road surveyed.

N1 Tuam Approach Road: Grade A. (from speed limit signs in to traffic lights) A very clean and tidy approach to the city with no litter to speak of in sight. A welcoming first impression of Galway City.

N84 Castlebar – Headford Link Road: Grade B. This was a somewhat mixed route with some areas much better presented than others. There was evidence of maintenance by way of the short grass verges.