



Press release  
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## **Carlow wins inaugural All-Ireland Anti-Litter league**

Government pledges support for expanded IBAL league in 2003

Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) today announced Carlow as the winner of the inaugural All-Ireland Anti-Litter League. With a 'litter free' rating of 89 points, the town won out over Fermoy (85) and Enniskillen (83). In all, 6 towns from 29 achieved litter free status based on independent surveys carried out by An Taisce over the course of 2002. At the awards ceremony in the Conrad Hotel in Dublin, Minister of State Pat 'the Cope' Gallagher announced that the Department of the Environment would partner IBAL in expanding the league in 2003.

Presenting the award to Carlow Town Council, Dr Tom Cavanagh of IBAL said Carlow served as an ideal illustration of the league's effectiveness: 'Carlow is a worthy winner of the league on a number of fronts. Firstly, it proves that clean surroundings are not beyond the reach of a mid- to large-sized town with large traffic inflows.

'Secondly, its success shows how rapid improvement can be made on litter within a town, if the political will is forthcoming.' Carlow was in 24th position at the outset of the competition, but had climbed to first position by the third reading last August.' .

A special award for 'Most Improved Town' went to Roscommon, whose rating surged from 'very heavily littered' to 'moderately littered' within just 3 months.

Welcoming the Government's announcement, he commented: 'The Minister's support is an acknowledgement of the league's success. From the outset, we saw Government backing for the endeavour as crucial to its long-term effectiveness. We look forward to the league becoming an established ongoing monitor of local authority performance in respect of litter.

'This is not the prime benefit of the Government's involvement. The partnership will allow us to bring the league into the major urban centres, where the litter problem is most severe. In many ways this year was a pilot, for a project which will now embrace all our cities. On its own, IBAL would not have been able to undertake this task on a sustained basis.'

"Performance of the towns involved this year rose by almost 30% between this survey and the previous one, with all but 6 towns showing an improvement. The league model has worked in bringing about rapid change. Its legacy will be a visible improvement in quality of life in our cities and towns."

Carlow Town Council was presented with a specially commissioned trophy by artist John Coll. In addition, IBAL will plant a tree in the town in recognition of its success.

For 2003, the League will be extended to include Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford. Details will be announced in the New Year.

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