



Press Release - Monday, 29 May 2006

Nationwide Litter survey shows Capital City on the slide

- *Dirty Dublin lets nation down as rest of country cleans up*
- *Tourists to Ireland put off by litter levels*

A new litter survey has found Dublin City is failing to keep pace with a countrywide improvement in litter levels. The Capital has been deemed a 'litter blackspot' in the survey by Irish Business Against Litter, and ranked last of 53 areas inspected. While litter levels nationwide have decreased by 16% in the past three years, Dublin City Centre has suffered a slide in cleanliness. The study showed Cavan to be Ireland's cleanest town. Meanwhile, IBAL has warned that a dirty Capital threatens our tourist numbers as the holiday season kicks off.

"The disappointment here is not that Dublin has finished at the bottom of the rankings. It is that in recent times the City is on a negative trend compared to the rest of the country," commented IBAL Chairman Dr Tom Cavanagh. "10 years ago Dublin was on a par with the national average. It is now 40% behind it."

The survey by An Taisce on behalf of IBAL showed the average litter rating at 74 out of a possible 100, an improvement of 9% compared to this time last year. By contrast Dublin City suffered a 15% fall in standards. It was one of only 4 areas to be deemed 'litter blackspots', alongside Mallow, Leixlip and Finglas. Nearly half of all areas were classed as 'litter free', including Galway and Waterford City. The other major cities of Cork and Limerick were also deemed to be almost Clean to European Norms.

"The Dublin City Manager needs to get to grips with a situation that impacts on the economic well-being of the entire country," Dr Cavanagh contended. As well as being at the epicentre of foreign direct investment, Dublin is a gateway for 2 out of every 3 visitors to this country.

"Cost just isn't an excuse here," he continued. "The Minister has ample means at hand through increased levies on plastic bags, chewing gum taxes etc to finance the maintenance of a clean Capital. We believe there is widespread support for such measures."

The An Taisce surveyors slammed Smithfield in Dublin as 'a complete disgrace', the quays as 'very unsightly' and the Iveagh Market as in a 'dreadful condition'. It cited Moore Street as an ongoing problem: "unless it is tackled there is never going to be any improvement." In contrast, Cavan was praised for "the totality of its approach to the environment, not just regarding litter" with the Town Centre and Main Street in excellent condition.

IBAL singled out Sligo town and Galway City as areas which have demonstrated spectacular improvements, having emerged from 'litter blackspots' in recent years to reach their current 'litter free status'. "Galway, in particular, shows that a clean environment is attainable even in a vibrant, expanding urban centre," concluded Dr Cavanagh.

As we enter the height of the tourist season, IBAL is highlighting the importance of a clean environment to incoming tourists. This follows a study by Fáilte Ireland which showed that, after high prices, litter was the main source of dissatisfaction for tourists to this country. This was especially the case for tourists from Germany, a quarter of whom were disappointed by litter and hygiene levels here.

IBAL 2006 Litter League – Round 1

Ranking	Town/City	Status
1	Cavan	“Litter Free Status”
2	Sligo	“Litter Free Status”
3	Wexford	“Litter Free Status”
4	Fermoy	“Litter Free Status”
5	Carlow	“Litter Free Status”
6	Trim	“Litter Free Status”
7	Tralee	“Litter Free Status”
8	Dungarvan	“Litter Free Status”
9	Waterford City	“Litter Free Status”
10	Youghal	“Litter Free Status”
11	Athy	“Litter Free Status”
12	Galway	“Litter Free Status”
13	Nenagh	“Litter Free Status”
14	Dundalk	“Litter Free Status”
15	Killarney	“Litter Free Status”
16	Greystones	“Litter Free Status”
17	Roscommon	“Litter Free Status”
18	Castlebar	“Litter Free Status”
19	Ballina	“Litter Free Status”
20	Tallaght	“Litter Free Status”
21	Clonmel	“Litter Free Status”
22	Longford	“Litter Free Status”
23	Enniscorthy	“Litter Free Status”
24	Monaghan	“Litter Free Status”
25	Cork City	Moderately Littered
26	Limerick City	Moderately Littered
27	Portlaoise	Moderately Littered
28	Midleton	Moderately Littered
29	Dunlaoghaire-Rathdown	Moderately Littered
30	Athlone	Moderately Littered
31	Arklow	Moderately Littered
32	Letterkenny	Moderately Littered
33	Kilkenny	Moderately Littered
34	Bray	Moderately Littered
35	Ennis	Moderately Littered
36	Cobh	Moderately Littered
37	Drogheda	Moderately Littered
38	Swords	Moderately Littered
39	Thurles	Moderately Littered
40	Newbridge	Moderately Littered
41	Mullingar	Moderately Littered
42	Maynooth	Moderately Littered
43	Tullamore	Moderately Littered
44	Wicklow	Serious Litter Problem
45	Shandon / Blackpool	Serious Litter Problem
46	Navan	Serious Litter Problem
47	Naas	Serious Litter Problem
48	Ballinasloe	Serious Litter Problem
49	Gorey	Serious Litter Problem

50	Finglas	Litter Blackspot
51	Mallow	Litter Blackspot
52	Leixlip	Litter Blackspot
53	Dublin City	Litter Blackspot

As part of the IBAL Anti-Litter League, which is run with financial assistance from the Dept. of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, all towns of population 6,000 and over are monitored independently by An Taisce in accordance with international grading standards.

Editors note:

Set up in 1996, Irish Business Against Litter is an alliance encompassing more than 30 member companies, employing in excess of 70,000 staff. Members share a belief that continued economic prosperity - notably in the areas of tourism, food and direct foreign investment - is contingent on a clean, litter-free environment.

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