

## **Litter Twitter campaign targets blackspots**

By Seán McCárthaigh, Monday, August 23, 2010

CITIZENS can alert local authorities to litter blackspots under an initiative by the Irish Business Against Litter organisation after its latest survey showed a fall-off in the number of litter-free towns.

IBAL has also launched a "Litter Twitter" campaign which will allow people to submit photos of litter blackspots via their mobile phones.

The aim of the initiative is to alert local authorities to areas which are heavily littered and which do not appear to be cleaned on any regular basis. Photos can be e-mailed to [litterspotter.2010@twitpic.com](mailto:litterspotter.2010@twitpic.com)

Just over half of 53 towns surveyed by IBAL are considered litter-free – down from two-thirds in a similar study carried out last year. A total of 26 of the country's largest population centres were found to suffer from moderate to extreme litter problems.

The poor results has led IBAL to call on businesses to clean up outside their premises twice a day in order to improve the cleanliness of streets in cities and towns.

Tallaght and Portlaoise were identified as the dirtiest locations, with both considered litter blackspots. The south-west suburb of Dublin, which had the worst score of any town, was described as "showing signs of overall neglect." In addition, Naas and Midleton were found to be seriously littered, while Newbridge, Castlebar, New Ross, Monaghan, Athlone and Limerick city also suffer from considerable problems with litter.

The remaining 16 towns and cities, which include Cork, Dublin and Galway, were deemed to be "moderately littered".

In contrast, Wexford was judged Ireland's cleanest town in the survey carried out on behalf of IBAL by An Taisce which praised the town's "consistently high standards of maintenance of the environment".

Among 26 other towns found to be clean based on European norms were Longford, Blanchardstown, Drogheda, Carlow, Trim, Killarney, Clonmel, Ballincollig and Lucan.

Waterford is the only one of the country's main cities considered to be relatively free of litter problems, while Wexford, Sligo, Killarney and Letterkenny were the cleanest towns in their respective provinces.

IBAL chairman Tom Cavanagh expressed disappointment at the decrease in the number of litter-free towns but stressed that the overall results were positive.

"The average score of all towns surveyed is now closer than ever to the European average," said Dr Cavanagh.

He claimed the loss of litter-free status for many towns was due to the neglect by local authorities of approach roads to town centres.

Dr Cavanagh expressed concern that such routes were often near key entry points to airports and seaports. "Unlike roads in urban areas, these are not subject to a cleaning schedule," he added.

The organisation reminded business owners that they are legally responsible under the Litter Act for keeping the visible areas outside their premises free of litter at all times, regardless of its source.

It also urged the Government to introduce legislation which would only allow degradable gum to be sold in the Republic on the basis that litter from conventional gum is still a growing problem, especially as it can be stuck to footpaths for up to 25 years.

This appeared in the printed version of the Irish Examiner Monday, August 23, 2010

Read more:

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/kfcwidojsney/rss2/#ixzz1JHEcv5gM>

<http://www.ibal.ie/v1/default.php?content=index.php>

Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) was set up in 1996 as an alliance of companies who believe that litter has a significant impact on our economic well-being. The main sources of our prosperity – tourism, Foreign Direct Investment and our food industries - all depend on an image of Ireland as a clean and green island. We are now a high-cost destination for visitors, who deserve first-class standards of cleanliness.

IBAL believes that it is the job of Local Government to solve our litter problem. It is through enforcement of litter laws - not public information campaigns - that we will rid our country of this scourge.



*Students Cian Carroll from Wicklow and Christine Lewis, Dublin, launching the IBAL (Irish Business Against Litter) "Litter Twitter" campaign in Dublin today. Citizens are encouraged to alert local authorities to litter blackspots in their area by emailing images from their phone to [litterspotter.2010@twitpic.com](mailto:litterspotter.2010@twitpic.com)*

*Images can be uploaded onto [twitter.com/litterspotter](https://twitter.com/litterspotter) page by emailing from your mobile phone or email account to [litterspotter.2010@twitpic.com](mailto:litterspotter.2010@twitpic.com) . When emailing an image simply use the Subject field to include a caption – date, location and brief description. This will give IBAL and all viewers more detail on the image and help the local authority in identifying the site. Please do not write in main body of email as it will not be picked up. If you wish to contact IBAL directly please email [info@ibal.ie](mailto:info@ibal.ie)*

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