



**DRAFT Release – strictly embargoed until 0.00am Monday, 29 August 2005**

## **Summer IBAL survey shows litter levels continue to fall** *“30% cleaner as a nation than ten years ago”*

We’re a much cleaner nation than we were ten years ago, according to new data from Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL). The summer results of IBAL’s Anti-Litter League of towns and cities across Ireland shows litter levels continuing to fall. These are now 30% below levels of 1995.

According to IBAL, it was only with the advent of the League in 2002 that the clean-up began. “Litter levels were static for the period 1995-2002,” commented Dr Tom Cavanagh, Chairman of IBAL. “Our decision 3 years ago to rank towns based on their performance brought pressure on Local Authorities to devote real effort to the issue.” Litter levels have fallen by 25% since 2002. The League is co-funded by the Department of the Environment.

Of the 57 areas surveyed over the summer, the results reveal a record 13 achieving litter-free status, among them the city of Waterford. Cavan remains undisputed as the cleanest town in Ireland – the 6th time it has claimed this distinction. Only 8 towns were branded ‘heavily littered’ or ‘litter blackspots’. Of these Mayfield and Cobh in Cork, Finglas in Dublin and Sligo occupied the bottom positions. Dublin City Centre, Ennis, Ballinasloe and Clonmel also fared poorly.

The An Taisce surveyors bemoaned a “general lack of maintenance and air of neglect” in Mayfield in Cork. 6 out of 8 Cork areas surveyed were in the bottom half of the League, as were all three Tipperary towns. The cities of Galway and Limerick cities improved to 14<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> spot respectively.

Dr Tom Cavanagh commented: “We are ridding ourselves of a reputation that was endangering our ability to attract tourists and overseas investment. Dirty towns are becoming the exception, whereas previously they were very much the norm.”

This is reflected in the average cleanliness rating of 73 points, up from just 56 in 1997. The target for the towns is 80, which equates to ‘clean to European norms’. In IBAL’s view this is a reasonable expectation for the Irish people. “Nor is not a utopian ideal: it is within the grasp of every town in Ireland.”

“We are confident those few towns still classed as heavily littered or blackspots will follow the lead of the many towns who have cleaned up their act in the past year or two. The focus has to be more and more on these bad apples.”

“Remember, people in a town like Cavan or Carlow are no different from those in Sligo or Clonmel. What may differ is the determination of the local authority in these towns. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, it’s not awareness campaigns that lead to cleaner streets. It is the effort of Authorities in stopping litter from going down, and then having procedures to remove it. This means enforcement on the one hand,

particularly of businesses who offend. On the other it means 7-day cleaning systems and appropriate equipment. Once the street is clean for a period, it tends to stay clean. This has been the experience of towns which consistently achieve litter-free status.”

While both towns and cities have improved over the past three years, Dublin City Centre remains a litter blackspot and this summer registered a sharp deterioration on the previous survey. ‘Clearly this cannot be compared with your average town around Ireland, yet as a focal point for so many visitors, a clean city centre should be a real priority,” commented Dr Cavanagh.

*For further information contact Dawn or Conor in Cullen Communications.  
Tel 01 6689099 / 087 215 6942 / 086 821 7211 or [dburke@cullencommunications.ie](mailto:dburke@cullencommunications.ie)*

**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.

As part of the IBAL Anti-Litter League, all towns of population 6,000 and over are monitored independently by An Taisce in accordance with international grading standards.

*\*Summer Results Table below:*

## IBAL Anti litter League 2005 - Round 2

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Town / City</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Cavan	'Litter Free Status'
2	Carlow	'Litter Free Status'
3	Fermoy	'Litter Free Status'
4	Trim	'Litter Free Status'
5	Dundalk	'Litter Free Status'
6	Longford	'Litter Free Status'
7	Dun Laoghaire	'Litter Free Status'
8	Portlaoise	'Litter Free Status'
9	Killarney	'Litter Free Status'
10	Athy	'Litter Free Status'
11	Waterford	'Litter Free Status'
12	Tralee	'Litter Free Status'
13	Arklow	'Litter Free Status'
14	Galway City	Moderately Littered
15	Terenure	Moderately Littered
16	Ballsbridge	Moderately Littered
17	Midleton	Moderately Littered
18	Skerries	Moderately Littered
19	Castlebar	Moderately Littered
20	Monaghan	Moderately Littered
21	Wexford	Moderately Littered
22	Athlone	Moderately Littered
23	Mullingar	Moderately Littered
24	Drogheda	Moderately Littered
25	Letterkenny	Moderately Littered
26	Kilkenny	Moderately Littered
27	Limerick City	Moderately Littered
28	Newbridge	Moderately Littered
29	Tullamore	Moderately Littered
30	Swords	Moderately Littered
31	Mallow	Moderately Littered
32	Blackrock/Mahon	Moderately Littered
33	Dungarvan	Moderately Littered
34	Ballina	Moderately Littered
35	Roscommon	Moderately Littered
36	Maynooth	Moderately Littered
37	Cork City	Moderately Littered
38	Nenagh	Moderately Littered
39	Enniscorthy	Moderately Littered
40	Tallaght	Moderately Littered
41	Youghal	Moderately Littered
42	Wicklow	Moderately Littered
43	Gorey	Moderately Littered
44	Thurles	Moderately Littered
45	Lucan	Moderately Littered
46	Navan	Moderately Littered
47	Drumcondra	Moderately Littered
48	Bray	Moderately Littered
49	Naas	Moderately Littered
50	Clonmel	Serious Litter Problem
51	Ballinasloe	Serious Litter Problem
52	Dublin City Centre	Litter Blackspot
53	Ennis	Litter Blackspot
54	Cobh	Litter Blackspot
55	Sligo	Litter Blackspot
56	Finglas	Litter Blackspot
57	Mayfield (Cork City)	Litter Blackspot