

PRESS RELEASE

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Immediate Release

Attention: News Desks, Industrial and Political Correspondents

BLAENAU GWENT HAD WALES'S DIRTIEST STREETS: TORFAEN HAD CLEANEST STREETS NEW GMB ANALYSIS SHOWS

Councillors should be clear that for street cleaning, as for other public services, "you get what you pay for" GMB Congress in Southport is told

Wales's dirtiest streets were in Blaenau Gwent while the cleanest were in Torfaen according to the latest available official figures from the Local Government Data Unit Wales. The figures are contained in a league table for Wales, set out below, which was compiled by GMB and was published today at the GMB Congress in Southport. (See Note 1 below for details on GMB Congress).

In Blaenau Gwent the percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness was 75%, the lowest in Wales. It means that 25% fell below an acceptable level. (See Note 2 below on definitions and standards). Next in the league were Newport and Wrexham where the percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness was 84%. This was followed by Cardiff where the percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness was 87%.

Torfaen had the cleanest streets in Wales with the percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness was 100%.

For all 22 councils in Wales the percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness was 95.2%. 9 councils in Wales had streets dirtier than this Wales average. In Swansea and the Vale of Glamorgan the percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness was 92%.

The figures for each of the 22 councils in Wales for 2008/09 are shown in the table below. (See Note 3 for sources).

LEAGUE TABLE ON CLEAN STREETS FOR 22 COUNCILS IN WALES

		Percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness
Rank	Wales	95.2

1	Blaenau Gwent	75
2	Newport	84
3	Wrexham	84
4	Cardiff	87
5	Gwynedd	89
6	Flintshire	92
7	Swansea	92
8	The Vale of Glamorgan	92
9	Monmouthshire	94
10	Ceredigion	95
11	Rhondda Cynon Taf	95
12	Isle of Anglesey	95
13	Caerphilly	95
14	Denbighshire	95
15	Neath Port Talbot	95
16	Pembrokeshire	96
17	Conwy	97
18	Powys	97
19	Merthyr Tydfil	97
20	Bridgend	98
21	Carmarthenshire	99
22	Torfaen	100

Allan Garley GMB Wales Secretary, speaking at Southport said, **“There is an alarmingly high and dangerous level of dirty streets and pavements in far too many places in Wales. On average the 4.8% of streets that are officially classified as not clean is bad enough but there are 9 councils in Wales that have a higher proportion than that which is totally unacceptable.**

Local communities deserve clean and healthy environments. GMB know that clean streets are perfectly feasible everywhere, it’s just a matter of ensuring there are enough properly trained and equipped street cleaners employed to do the job.

Councillors should be clear that for street cleaning, as for other public services, you get what you pay for. The next thing that failed politicians may come out with is that people, as well as paying their council tax, should clean the streets themselves.”

End

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Notes to Editors

1 GMB Congress 2010, which comprises up to 1,000 delegates and workplace representatives from all over the UK including Wales, is being held at the Floral Hall Southport Convention Centre from Sunday 6th June to Wednesday 9th June. GMB is Britain’s third largest union with 611,000 members who work in every industry in the UK economy. You can watch GMB Congress 2010 Live on GMB Congress TV at www.gmb.org.uk/congresstv

2 Definitions and standards

What needs to be cleaned from relevant land and highways and pavements include:

1) Detritus comprises dust, mud, soil, grit, gravel, stones, rotted leaf and vegetable residues, and fragments of twigs, glass, plastic and other finely divided materials. Detritus includes leaf and blossom

falls when they have substantially lost their structure and have become mushy or fragmented. A significant and avoidable source of detritus is uncollected grass cuttings that have started to decompose.

2) Litter includes mainly synthetic materials, often associated with smoking, eating and drinking, that are improperly discarded and left by members of the public; or are spilt during waste management operations. Litter may also include putrescible or clinical wastes, or faeces such as dog, bird and other animal faeces.

3) For Wales how relevant land and highways is assessed and how the overall cleanliness index is calculated is set out

http://www.dataunitwales.gov.uk/Documents/PMFDocs11/PMF04000_STS_SET_1011_v1_eng.doc#STS005

For England there is a different measure. What are the levels of detritus and litter that fall below an acceptable level is set out in website <http://cleanliness-indicator.defra.gov.uk/>

3 Source: The league table for Wales was compiled by GMB from the National Assembly for Wales Performance Indicators 2008-2009 and the source is the Local Government Data Unit Wales. The league table for England was compiled by GMB from the National Indicators 2008-2009 for which the source is the Audit Commission and the data is from National Indicator Set 195a & b Improved street and environmental cleanliness. For Scotland the data is from the Scotland Performance Indicators 2008-2009 and the source is Audit Scotland.