

**4They Came – They Saw – They Cycled**  
***186 teams come together to see their bike trips increase week on week***  
***in the Smarter Travel Workplaces Cycle Challenge***

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2015:**

The Workplace Cycle Challenge encourages employees to form teams and compete with colleagues and with other workplaces to see who can gain the most cycling points during this three week event. Each team was required to have a novice cyclist on board to encourage new cyclists and those who had been off the bike for six months or more. Points were awarded for leisure and social trips with extra points awarded for work related trips.

186 teams representing 52 organisations across Ireland took part this year. Prize-winners came from workplaces in both the Republic and Northern Ireland, with the overall Cycle Challenge winners being 'The Wonderers' team from the University of Limerick. The winning team members clocked up an average of 136 journeys each over the course of the three week Challenge. The team 'De Pata Negra' from Lufthansa InTouch won the Smarter Travel Workplaces top prize, and team 'Paed-al Faster' from Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children won the Travelwise Northern Ireland top prize.

Participating workplaces included Cook Medical, Cork County Council, Deloitte, DCU, FINEOS, Meath County Council, Roughtan & O'Donovan, St. Vincent's University Hospital and Tourism Northern Ireland.

'Novice cyclist' Peter May from DIT commented: *"I stopped cycling 20 years ago when after sitting my driving test at the earliest possible opportunity, purchased my first car. The bike that I then owned was shoved in the shed where it stayed until the week before this year's Challenge began. When I reacquainted myself with cycling it really was as if I had never stopped. I certainly felt it in the legs at first but soon got used to it. Also speed ramps to a bit of getting used to on a bike as there weren't many, if any of those, the last time I cycled. After giving up the car a few years ago and since then always using the bus and walking everywhere, I can't get over the fact that I had forgotten how small the city is when you are on a bike. I was mad to have left it in the shed for so long."*

Anne Graham, Chief Executive of the National Transport Authority said: *"This is the 6th year that the National Transport Authority has run the Cycle Challenge as part of the Smarter Travel Workplaces programme. It's great to see such enthusiastic participation and in particular to hear about participants returning to the bike as a commuting mode as a result of taking part. Congratulations to all who participated and to the workplace coordinators within each workplace. We hope you continue to be active as you travel."*

Michael Lindsay, Travelwise Northern Ireland commented: *"Once again Travelwise Northern Ireland and its partner organisations in Northern Ireland have been delighted to participate with Smarter Travel Workplaces in the Cycle Challenge. Travelwise Northern Ireland recognises the link between supporting employees to increase activity levels, using smarter modes of transport, and their health and wellbeing. We would like to congratulate our leading teams and indeed all participants from right across the island and to thank the staff in the National Transport Authority on behalf of our partner organisations for the opportunity to participate and the support they have provided. We look forward to further collaborations in the future."*

ENDS

## ***National Transport Authority 2015 Cycle Challenge Press Release***

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### **Editor's Notes:**

The National Transport Authority's **Smarter Travel Workplaces Programme** is a Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport-funded programme for large employers (over 250 employees) seeking to develop a Workplace Travel Plan. Workplace Travel Plans have been shown internationally to reduce single occupancy car use on the commute by between 10% and 24%. Workplace Travel Plans also impact on costs associated with parking, business travel, fleet, CO2 emissions, absenteeism, and access issues. Further information on the programme and Partners can be found at [www.smartertravelworkplaces.ie](http://www.smartertravelworkplaces.ie).

**Travelwise Northern Ireland** is an initiative within Northern Ireland's Department for Regional Development tasked with the promotion of sustainable modes of travel. It works with three main target groups, namely schools, commuters and employers to encourage walking, cycling, use of public transport and car-sharing. It works closely with employers across Northern Ireland to help them develop Workplace Travel Plans that will encourage sustainable travel modes. For more information on the work of Travelwise Northern Ireland visit [www.nidirect.gov.uk/travelwiseni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/travelwiseni).

Further information on the **Cycle Challenge 2015** can be found here – [www.cyclechallenge.ie](http://www.cyclechallenge.ie)