

Connecting Ireland – creating a more effective and integrated public transport system

Connecting Ireland is a major public transport initiative developed by the National Transport Authority (NTA) with the aim of increasing public transport connectivity, particularly for people living outside of major cities and towns.

Connecting Ireland continues to make public transport in rural communities more accessible for people in towns and villages across the country in a number of ways by:

- Adding new high-frequency services;
- Enhancing existing services; and
- Providing improved connectivity to the wider transport network

The Connecting Ireland Plan aims to improve mobility in rural areas, and it is doing this by providing better connections between villages and towns linking these areas with an enhanced regional network connecting cities and regional centres nationwide.

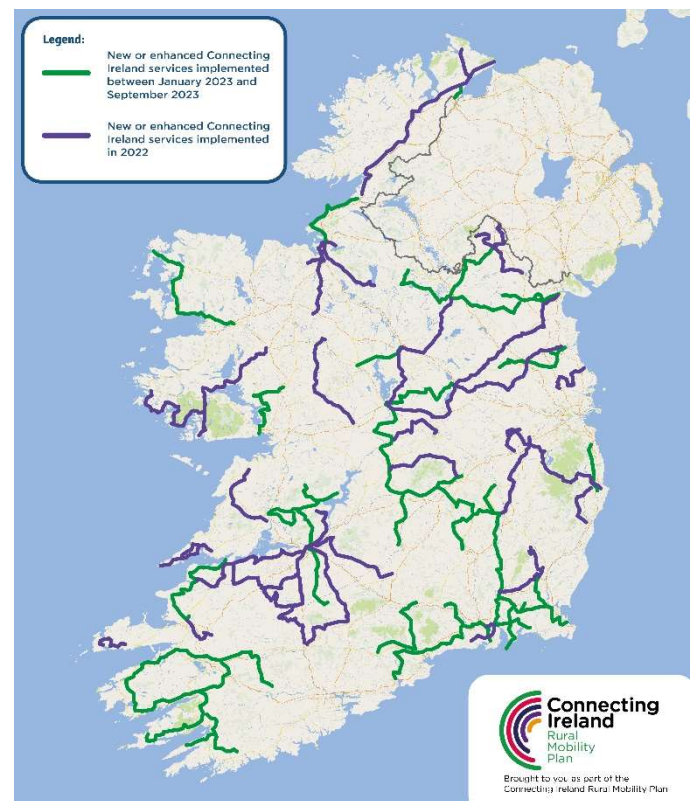


Figure 1 – Services Implemented in 2022 & 2023

So far in 2023, thirty four (see Figure 1) new and enhanced Connecting Ireland services have been launched throughout Ireland.

Passenger demand is increasing on a weekly basis, with thousands of people using Connecting Ireland services to get to work, college, medical and leisure appointments – giving them the opportunity to travel with ease and use a sustainable mode of transport which is frequent and reliable.

The Connecting Ireland Plan will continue to deliver new and enhanced services in the coming months and years, which will create a more effective and integrated public transport system.



➤ New Services in Action – Route 280 Waterville to Killarney

As part of the Connecting Ireland Plan, the NTA and TFI Local Link Kerry identified a need for improving public transport connectivity and mobility for residents of communities along the Ring of Kerry, including the settlements of Killorglin, Glenbeigh, Kells, Cahersiveen and Beaufort. These areas were identified as lacking regular public transport connections to county towns Waterville and Killarney. It was noted that the implementation of new bus services in these areas would greatly improve access to essential services and resources for residents living in these areas.

Since the 17th of July, new Route 280 now provides greater connectivity and flexibility for the communities of Cahersiveen, Kells, Glenbeigh, Killorglin and Beaufort. The new route operates seven daily return trips Monday to Sunday which includes three return trips between Waterville and Killarney. The new service provides peak time and evening services and also offers enhanced connectivity to regional bus services in Killorglin and rail services in Killarney to facilitate onward travel. This new service was part of a planned phased roll-out of new and enhanced bus services in County Kerry which when used together allows passengers to connect to Waterville to travel around the Iveragh Peninsula all year round. Route 280 connects with new TFI Local Link Kerry Route 281 in Waterville to facilitate travel around the Iveragh Peninsula. In the first week, Route 280 carried over 560 passengers and continues to carry an average of 760 passengers per week since.

Speaking on success of Route 280 **TFI Local Link Kerry General Manager, Alan O'Connell** said *"Route 280 was designed to offer connectivity for passengers to travel between the towns and villages of Waterville, Cahersiveen, Kells, Glenbeigh, Killorglin, Beaufort, Fossa & Killarney as well as providing connections with Route 279 in Killorglin for Tralee & Route 281 in Waterville for Kenmare."*

Alan continued by saying *"We are delighted with the success of this route to date with the passenger numbers growing each week which shows the eagerness of people to embrace public transport and make it part of their daily lives."*

"This bus service has opened up the Iveragh Peninsula for local residents and tourist's alike enabling greater connectivity for employment, recreation, education and health purposes as well as providing connections onto other regional bus and rail services. As this bus service travels along areas of natural beauty & breathtaking scenery along the Ring of Kerry it's a very enjoyable service to sit back, relax and just gaze out the window."

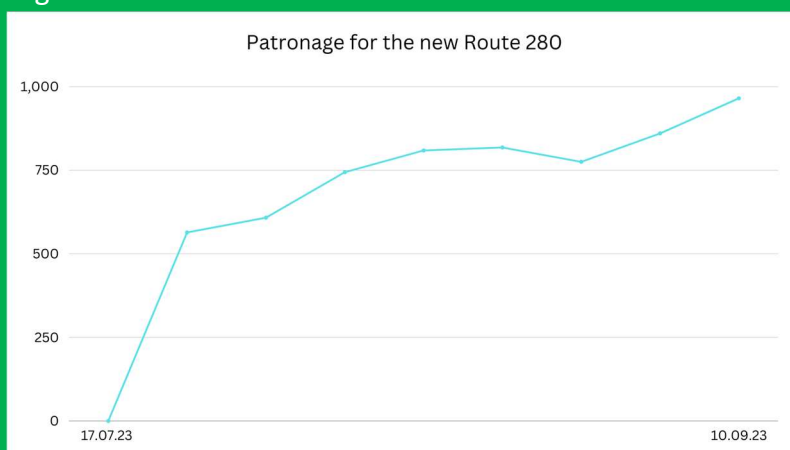
What passengers have said

Fantastic service! We used the 281 this morning to get from Caherdaniel to Waterville.. and we walked the Kerry Way back in time for lunch! This service is such a great addition. Thank you.

Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan

TFI local link

Brought to you as part of the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan





New Services in Action – Route 270 Skibbereen to Killarney

As part of the Connecting Ireland Plan, the NTA identified the need for improved services on Route 270, operated by Bus Éireann. The service in its previous form operated between Killarney and Kenmare three times per day Monday to Friday with an additional trip to Sneem on Friday only. The service also operated twice on Saturday and once on Sunday. The provision of the enhanced 270 service provides better connectivity across large parts of West Cork and Kerry. The enhanced route now connects Skibbereen and Killarney five times per day, seven days a week and from Kenmare the service operates twelve times per day, seven days a week. Subsequently, the enhanced service provides improved connectivity to the areas and villages of Bantry, Ballylickey, Glengarriff, Ballydehob, Kilgarvan and Glenflesk. Route 270 also provides peak-time and evening services for commuters as well as offering enhanced access to MTU Tralee and regional bus and rail services.

Since the service's implementation at the end of June 2023, Route 270 has seen an increase of over 217% in customer journeys, with this growth trend continuing in the autumn months. Customer usage has grown across all segments and age groups particularly among tourists travelling between West Cork and Kerry and amongst young adults (18-24 year olds) as the route provides access to 3rd level education facilities.

What passengers have said



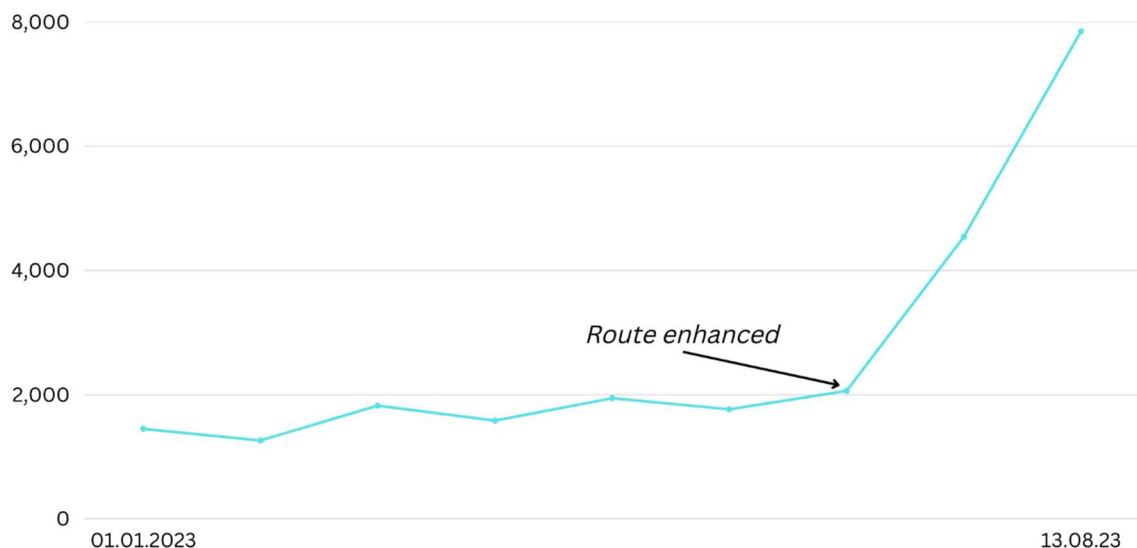
The enhanced Route 270 is great news for all passengers along the route. As a proud resident of West Cork, it is now so easy to visit our neighbours in Kerry using public transport for the first time. It was great to travel on a bus full of both locals and tourists and hear all the positivity about the bus and how scenic the journey is. I can only see usage of this service growing and growing and becoming part of our day-to-day life in West Cork & Kerry.



Brought to you as part of the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan



Patronage for the enhanced Route 270



Services implemented so far in 2023

Route Number	Route Name/ Description	Operator	Implementation Date
897	Kilkenny – Castlecomer – Carlow – Athy	TFI Local Link Carlow Kilkenny Wicklow	01/01/2023
188	Athboy – Drogheda via Navan & Duleek	TFI Local Link Louth Meath Fingal	16/01/2023
384	Wexford – Enniscorthy	TFI Local Link Wexford	13/02/2023
438	Galway – Tuam	TFI Local Link Galway	22/05/2023
356	Dungarvan – Clonmel	TFI Local Link Waterford	12/06/2023
232	Allihies – Kilcrohane	TFI Local Link Cork	12/06/2023
270	Skibbereen – Bantry – Kenmare – Killarney	Bus Éireann	25/06/2023
281	Waterville – Sneem – Kenmare	TFI Local Link Kerry	10/07/2023
978	Belmullet – Castlebar	TFI Local Link Mayo	10/07/2023
387	Wexford Town – Rosslare Harbour via Rosslare Strand	TFI Local Link Wexford	12/07/2023
280	Waterville – Cahersiveen – Killorglin – Killarney	TFI Local Link Kerry	17/07/2023
171	Shercock – Carrickmacross – Inniskeen – Dundalk	TFI Local Link Cavan Monaghan	24/07/2023
274	Tarbert – Ballybunion – Ballyheigue – Ardfert – Tralee	TFI Local Link Kerry	24/07/2023
426	Longford – Knockanboy – Killashee – Ballyleague – Roscommon	TFI Local Link Longford Westmeath Roscommon	31/07/2023
834	Roscrea – Mountrath – Portlaoise	TFI Local Link Laois Offaly	01/08/2023
363	Tallow – Lismore – Cappoquin – Dungarvan	TFI Local Link Waterford	07/08/2023
388	Wexford – Wellingtonbridge – Duncormick – Bridgetown	TFI Local Link Wexford	07/08/2023
667	Waterford – Dungarvan	TFI Local Link Waterford	07/08/2023
399	Hook Head – Fethard – Ballyhack – New Ross	TFI Local Link Wexford	14/08/2023
392	Wellingtonbridge – Ballycullane – Newbawn – New Ross	TFI Local Link Wexford	21/08/2023
822	Mountrath – Abbeylaxey – Carlow	TFI Local Link Laois Offaly	21/08/2023
170	Cavan – Bailieborough – Carrickmacross – Dundalk	Bus Éireann	27/08/2023
318	Ennis – Quin – Limerick	TFI Local Link Limerick Clare	28/08/2023
342	Ennis – Clooney – Tulla – Feakle	TFI Local Link Limerick Clare	28/08/2023
344	Ennis – Feakle – Scarriff – Mountshannon – Whitegate	TFI Local Link Limerick Clare	28/08/2023
819	Mullingar – Castletown – Geoghegan – Athlone	TFI Local Link Longford Westmeath Roscommon	28/08/2023

Route Number	Route Name/ Description	Operator	Implementation Date
887	Carlow – Bagenalstown – Graiguenamanagh – New Ross	TFI Local Link Carlow Kilkenny Wicklow	28/08/2023
850	Roscrea – Templemore – Birr – Banagher – Cloghan – Athlone	TFI Local Link Laois Offaly	04/09/2023
329	Limerick – Ballyneety – Bruff – Kilmallock – Kilfinane	Bus Éireann	10/09/2023
357	Youghal – Villierstown – Whitechurch – Dungarvan	TFI Local Link Waterford	11/09/2023
354	Carrick-on-Suir – Portlaw – Waterford	Bus Éireann	24/09/2023
176	Monaghan – Clones – Cavan	TFI Local Link Cavan Monaghan	01/10/2023
521	Newcastle West – Charleville	TFI Local Link Limerick Clare	01/10/2023
929	Corlough – Ballinamore – Cavan	TFI Local Link Cavan	01/10/2023

Services for implementation in 2023

Route Number	Route Name/ Description	Operator	Implementation Date
982	Ballyshannon – Maugherow – Sligo	TFI Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim	Q4
454	Ballina - Crossmolina - Lahardane - Pontoon - Turlough - Castlebar	TFI Local Link Mayo	Q4
563	Sligo - Dromahair	TFI Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim	Q4
566	Dowra – Dromkeeran – Sligo	TFI Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim	Q4
981	Coolaney – Sligo – Dromahair	TFI Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim	Q4
977	Castlerea – Ballaghaderreen – Sligo	TFI Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim	Q4
885	Sallins - Naas - Blessington - Ballymore Eustace - Baltinglass	TFI Local Link Carlow Kilkenny Wicklow	Q4
276	Castlemaine - Annascaul - Daingean Uí Chúis	TFI Local Link Kerry	Q4
268	Daingean Uí Chúis – Ballydavid - Daingean Uí Chúis	TFI Local Link Kerry	Q4
277	Daingean Uí Chúis - Ceann Trá - Baile an Fheirtéaraigh - Dhún Chaoin	TFI Local Link Kerry	Q4
C2	Cavan - Kilnaleck	TFI Local Link Cavan Monaghan	Q4
126	Dublin - Kildare - Rathangan	Go-Ahead Ireland	Q4
C3	Redhills - Farnham Estate	TFI Local Link Cavan Monaghan	Q4
272	Tralee - Listowel - Ballybunion	Bus Éireann	Q4
279	Tralee - Castlemaine - Milltown - Killorglin - Killarney	Bus Éireann	Q4
360	Tramore - Waterford	Bus Éireann	Q4
360A	Tramore - Waterford	Bus Éireann	Q4
419	Clifden - Galway	Bus Éireann	Q4

Route Number	Route Name/ Description	Operator	Implementation Date
423	Clifden - Letterfrack - Leenaun - Westport	Bus Éireann	Q4
424	Leitir Mealláin - An Ceathrú Rua - Casla - An Spidéal - Bearna - Galway	Bus Éireann	Q4
425A	Galway - Monivea - Caltra - Mountbellew	Bus Éireann	Q4
923	Galway - Clifden	Commercial Bus Operator	Q4
322	Portumna - Terryglass - Ballinderry - Dromineer - Ballycommon - Nenagh	TFI Local Link Tipperary	Q4
547	Portumna - Ballycrossaun - Eyrecourt - Ballinure - Ballinasloe	TFI Local Link Galway	Q4
100	Drogheda - Dundalk	Bus Éireann	Q4
458	Ballina - Enniscrone - Ballisodare - Sligo	Bus Éireann	Q4
S2	Strandhill - Sligo - Rosses Point	Bus Éireann	Q4
572	Ballinamore – Riverstown – Sligo	TFI Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim	Q4
292	Donegal - Ballyshannon	TFI Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim	Q4
287	Cahersiveen - Portmagee - Chapelstown - Knightstown	TFI Local Link Kerry	Q4
361	Youghal - Ardmore - Dungarvan	TFI Local Link Waterford	Q4
423	Clifden - Letterfrack - Leenaun - Westport	Bus Éireann	Q4

The estimated implementation dates are indicative and may change for a number of reasons:

- The duration of the planning and design process, involving liaison with local authorities, TFI Local Link Offices, representatives, lobby groups, passengers and transport service providers to provide enhanced levels of service in response to growth and changes in demand for transport;
- Availability of service providers and drivers.

Given the rapidly changing environment, it is important that the Connecting Ireland team is able to be agile and flexible in its management of the programme, so that where progress is impacted, other plans can be advanced instead. This Bulletin reflects NTA's intention as of today, but is likely to change to respond to changing circumstances.