



Dublin Metropolitan Area

# Walking and Cycling Index 2023



# Foreword

## Our vision for walking, wheeling and cycling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area



The National Transport Authority is delighted to publish the third iteration of the Dublin Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index. I am also very pleased that we have expanded our partnership

with Sustrans to include

reports for the Cork, Limerick/Shannon, Galway and Waterford Metropolitan Areas.

Since the last report, the NTA, together with our partner local authorities, has continued the accelerated provision of active travel infrastructure and delivered record investment in pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, in line with our Climate Action Plan commitments and the financial support of the Programme for Government.

It is therefore encouraging to see residents are expressing a stronger preference than ever, for continued investment, in both active travel and public transport in the region.

We see that 530,000 return active travel trips are made daily in the Metropolitan Area by people that could have used a car. These trips play a vital role in helping to create a more sustainable, more liveable city and wider region.

Given that remote working has changed the frequency of the commute for many, it is noteworthy that 71% of all residents

walk or wheel at least 5 days a week, and 25% of us cycle at least once a week. This report and the data behind it will help the NTA and our partner agencies understand where we must focus our efforts.

It is important to understand the infrastructural elements that people say will encourage them to walk or wheel more, like better footpath accessibility, more crossings and places along streets to stop and rest. Traffic free and protected cycle facilities, continue to be the type of infrastructure that people say will attract them to cycling, and those facilities are the focus of our recently updated National Cycle Design Manual.

We have seen from national census results that travelling to both primary and secondary school by bicycle is rising for the first time in 36 years, and this report is indicating an increase in children's independent mobility. These trends are encouraging given the NTA's commitment to active school travel via the Green Schools Travel and Safe Routes to School Programmes.

The data speaks for itself, residents want to walk, wheel and cycle more and drive less. This information allows us to develop the type of facilities to meet that demand, and support an attractive, prosperous and healthy Dublin Metropolitan Area.

**Anne Graham, CEO National Transport Authority**

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## The Walking and Cycling Index

The Walking and Cycling Index (formerly Bike Life) is the biggest assessment of walking, wheeling and cycling in urban areas in the UK and Ireland.

It is delivered by Sustrans in collaboration with 23 cities and urban areas. Each city<sup>i</sup> reports on the progress made towards making walking, wheeling and cycling more attractive, everyday ways to travel.

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years. This is the third report from Dublin Metropolitan Area produced in partnership with the National Transport Authority of Ireland. The data in this report comes from 2023 and includes local walking, wheeling and cycling data, modelling and an independent survey of 1,103 residents aged 16 or above in the Dublin Metropolitan Area. The survey was conducted from April to July 2023. Independent market research company Behaviour & Attitudes conducted the survey, which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

Across this report we have included comparisons to 2021 data where available.

Our thanks to the people of the Dublin Metropolitan Area who took part in the survey and shared their stories with us.

More details on all reports can be found at [www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-index](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-index). For more data, including 2019 figures where available, see the Index Data Tool.



### Defining wheeling

We recognise that some people who use wheeled mobility aids, for example a wheelchair or a mobility scooter, may not identify with the term walking and may prefer to use the term wheeling. We use the terms walking and wheeling together to ensure we are as inclusive as possible.

i. City is used as a shorthand for Walking and Cycling Index cities, city regions, metropolitan areas and boroughs.

# Headlines

## Dublin Metropolitan Area

### Population<sup>i</sup>

1,525,225

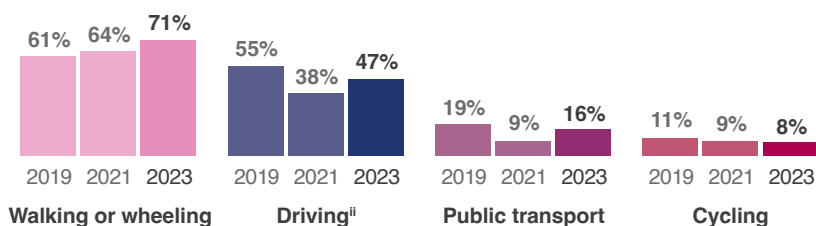
### Survey area



## The impact of the pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic had a big impact on travel. In 2021, whilst most restrictions had been lifted, many people were taking fewer journeys and working from home.

### Residents who travel by the following modes five or more days a week in the Dublin Metropolitan Area



Participation in walking and wheeling on a regular basis has increased since 2021, while cycling has remained the same.

**71%** of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week  
64% in 2021

**25%** of residents cycle at least once a week  
25% in 2021

## Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

Residents' travel choices and their perceptions of walking, wheeling and cycling sometimes vary widely between different groups.

**Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week**

64% of people with a disability

71% of people without a disability

**Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week<sup>iii</sup>**

16% of women

35% of men

## Not all residents feel safe and welcome in their neighbourhood

**Proportion of residents who think walking or wheeling safety is good**

69% of socio-economic group DE

87% of socio-economic group AB

**Proportion of residents who think cycling safety is good**

54% of women

61% of men

**Proportion of residents who feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood**

88% of people from ethnic minority groups

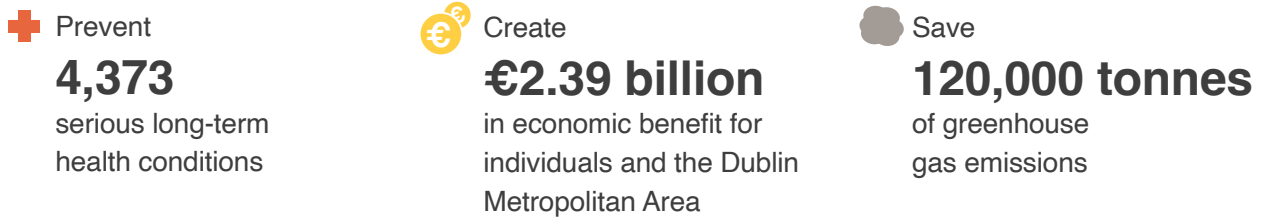
90% of white people

Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

i. CSO Census 2022. This is the most recent available for the Dublin Metropolitan Area. ii. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle. In 2019, questions did not include traveling by motorcycle. iii. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and therefore is not presented here.

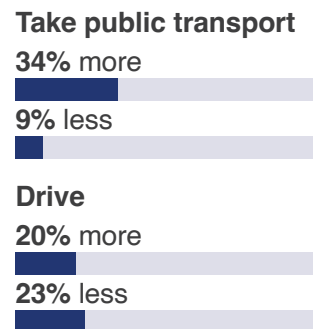
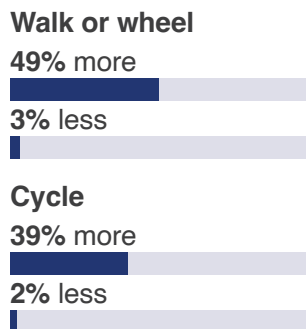
## Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Every day, walking, wheeling and cycling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area take up to **530,000** cars off the road.<sup>iv</sup> Each year in the Dublin Metropolitan Area these three modes combined:



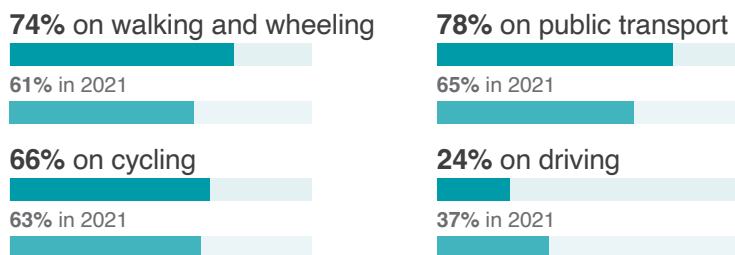
## Residents want to walk, wheel and cycle more and drive less

Percentage of residents who would like to use different types of transport more or less in the future:



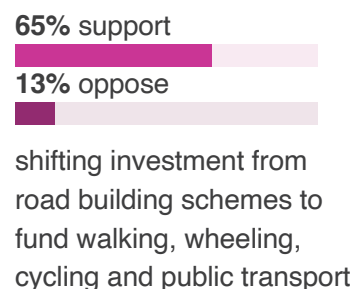
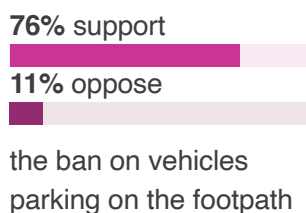
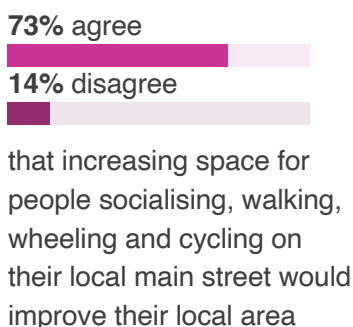
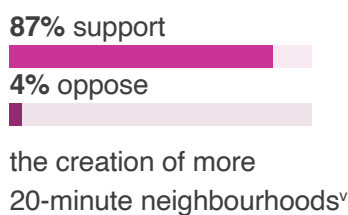
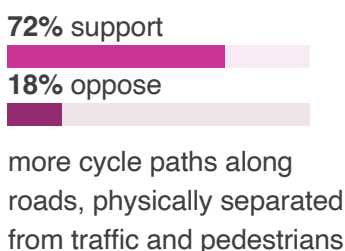
## Residents want more funding for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport

Percentage of residents who would like to see more government spending in their local area:



## Increased funding would help support more liveable neighbourhoods

Among Dublin Metropolitan Area residents:



iv. Based on walking, wheeling and cycling by residents that live in a household with a car. Does not include leisure cycling or leisure walking or wheeling trips.  
v. See definition on page 14. vi. For definition see Methodology document.



# Walking in the Dublin Metropolitan Area

Walking and wheeling participation, safety and satisfaction

## Walking and wheeling participation

Overall in the Dublin Metropolitan Area the number of people walking and wheeling regularly (at least five days a week) has increased since 2021, especially for those aged 66+ and people with disabilities.

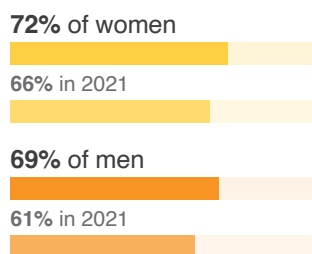
Walking and wheeling are often overlooked in transport. This is despite being an efficient use of space, good for our health and having no environmental impact.

**94%** of all residents walk or wheel **95%** in 2021

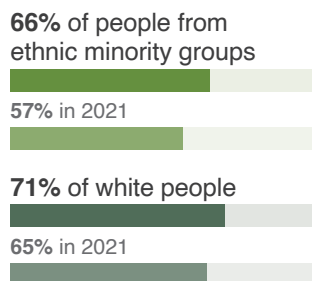
**71%** of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week **64%** in 2021

### Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week

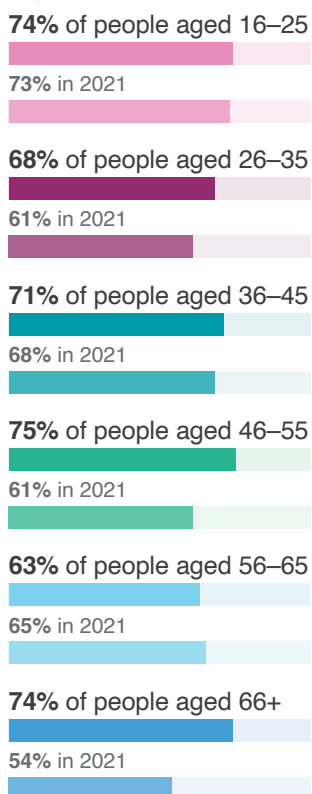
#### Gender<sup>i</sup>



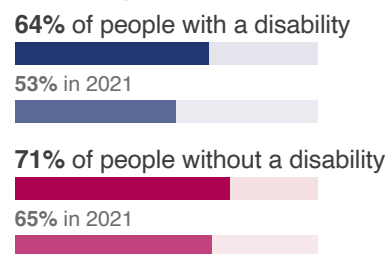
#### Ethnicity



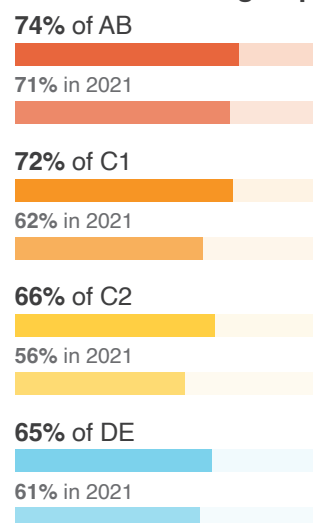
#### Age



#### Disability



#### Socio-economic group<sup>ii</sup>



i. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and therefore is not presented here.

ii. Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Group C1 is supervisory/clerical and students. Group C2 is skilled manual. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

## Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

**82%**

of residents think the level of safety for walking or wheeling is good

86% in 2021

**69%**

of residents think the level of safety for children walking or wheeling is good

74% in 2021

**87%**

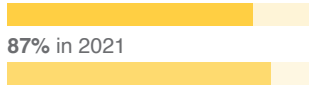
of residents think their local area overall is a good place to walk or wheel

89% in 2021

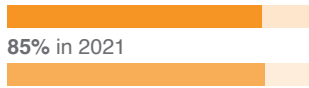
### Proportion of residents who think walking or wheeling safety in their local area is good

#### Gender

**81%** of women

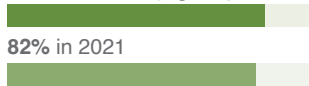


**84%** of men

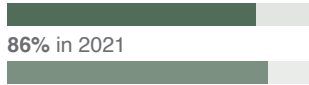


#### Ethnicity

**85%** of people from ethnic minority groups



**82%** of white people

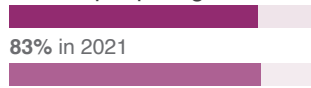


#### Age

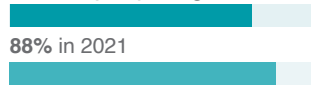
**84%** of people aged 16–25



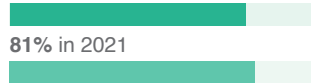
**82%** of people aged 26–35



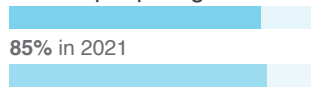
**80%** of people aged 36–45



**78%** of people aged 46–55



**83%** of people aged 56–65

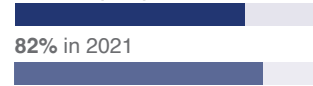


**88%** of people aged 66+

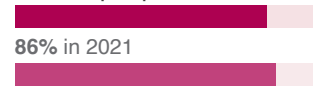


#### Disability

**76%** of people with a disability

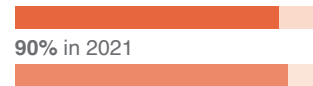


**83%** of people without a disability

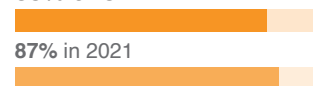


#### Socio-economic group

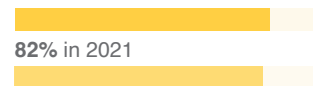
**87%** of AB



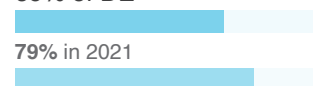
**83%** of C1



**84%** of C2



**69%** of DE



**Deryck Fay, Technology consultant**



I walk and use public transport a lot. My husband does drive, but we chose to live near the city because it's nice to have places that are walkable.

Since Covid, there has been a good extension of bicycle lanes, the barriers are still temporary. When the traffic signals were designed, they were designed to maximise car traffic flow, not pedestrian flow. As a pedestrian, I feel at the bottom of the hierarchy, rather than at the top.

For me, the biggest thing that could change things would be zebra crossings – because they give pedestrians priority. People know what they mean.

We have deliberately been to Blackrock and Dun Laoghaire because there is space to walk, spend time, bring the dog, and so on – the changes they've made there have made it somewhere that we want to spend time in.



# Cycling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area

Cycling participation, safety and satisfaction

## Cycling participation

Overall in the Dublin Metropolitan Area the number of people cycling has stayed the same since 2021. **25%** of people cycle at least once a week.

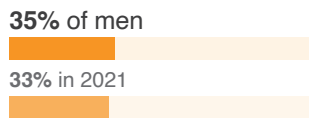
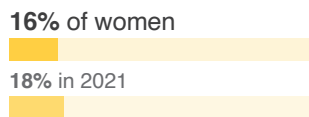
Cycling participation, however, is not equal. Barriers to cycling can be far more pronounced for some people. Safety, including road safety and personal safety, is the single largest barrier to cycling.<sup>i</sup>

**36%** of all residents cycle **35%** in 2021

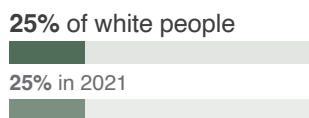
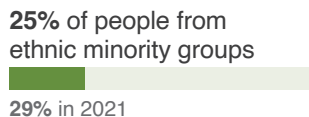
**25%** of all residents cycle at least once a week **25%** in 2021

### Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

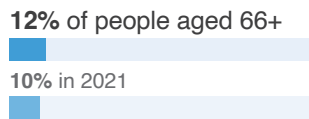
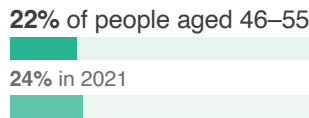
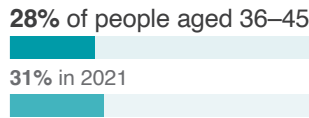
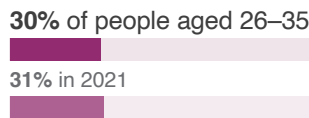
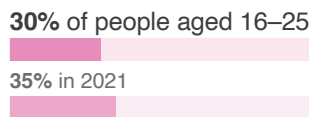
#### Gender



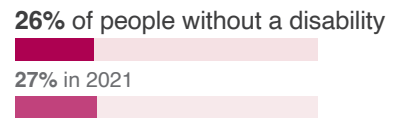
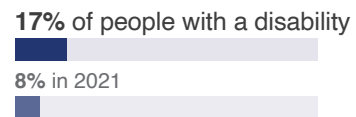
#### Ethnicity



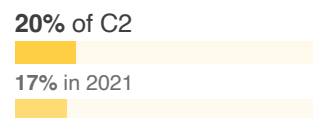
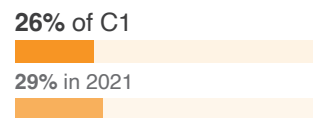
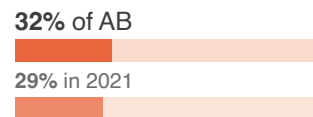
#### Age



#### Disability



#### Socio-economic group





## Cycling safety and satisfaction

**57%**

of all residents think the level of safety for cycling in their local area is good

65% in 2021

**50%**

of all residents think the level of safety for children cycling is good

56% in 2021

**64%**

of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to cycle

67% in 2021

### Proportion of residents who think cycling safety in their local area is good

#### Gender

**54%** of women



59% in 2021



**61%** of men



71% in 2021



#### Ethnicity

**65%** of people from ethnic minority groups



70% in 2021



**56%** of white people



64% in 2021



#### Age

**64%** of people aged 16–25



66% in 2021



**60%** of people aged 26–35



70% in 2021



**52%** of people aged 36–45



66% in 2021



**55%** of people aged 46–55



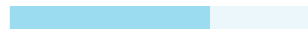
60% in 2021



**60%** of people aged 56–65



66% in 2021



**52%** of people aged 66+



58% in 2021



#### Disability

**47%** of people with a disability



67% in 2021



**58%** of people without a disability



64% in 2021



#### Socio-economic group

**59%** of AB



65% in 2021



**58%** of C1



70% in 2021



**55%** of C2



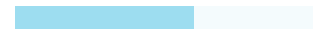
60% in 2021



**53%** of DE



59% in 2021



**Anita Topa, Personal trainer**



I don't have a driving licence; I get around by bike. I'm a personal trainer and cycling is good for your health.

I find cycling in Dublin fine if there is a cycle lane but not so good when you're on the road with cars, taxis and buses.

You have to be really focused, it is not really safe.

I was in Holland recently and it was safer to cycle but there has been a little improvement to cycling in Dublin.



# Benefits of walking

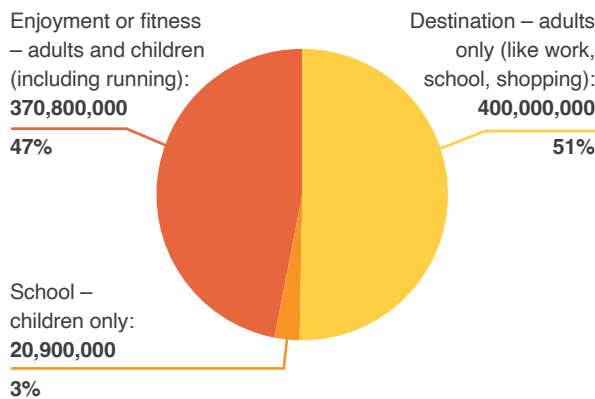
Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

## Dublin Metropolitan Area residents walk or wheel 117 times around the world every day

There has been an increase in walking and wheeling trips to a destination since 2021, and an increase in enjoyment or fitness trips.

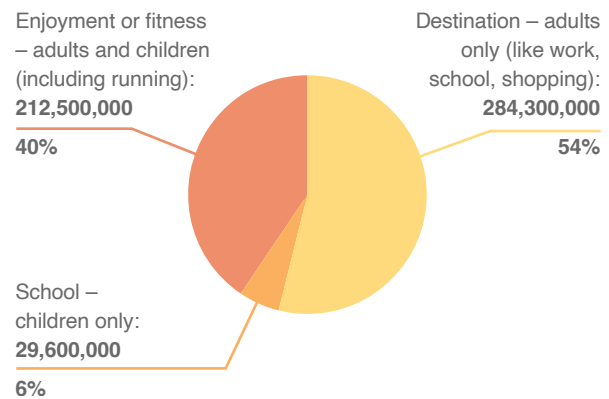
### Annual walking and wheeling trips by purpose<sup>i</sup>

2023:  
**791.7 million trips**



This adds up to  
**1.71 billion kilometres**  
= 4.7 million kilometres a day

2021:  
**526.4 million trips**



This adds up to  
**1.22 billion kilometres**  
= 3.3 million kilometres a day

## Walking and wheeling benefits residents and the local economy

The Walking and Cycling Index uses a model to understand the costs and benefits of driving and walking. For example travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

€0.41  
in 2021

**€1.01 is saved<sup>ii</sup>**  
for each kilometre walked or wheeled instead of driven in the Dublin Metropolitan Area.

Over a year this adds up to  
**€518.3 million**  
from adults with a car in their household walking or wheeling to work, school and other destinations.

€169.8  
million  
in 2021

The total annual economic benefit from all trips walked and wheeled in the Dublin Metropolitan Area is

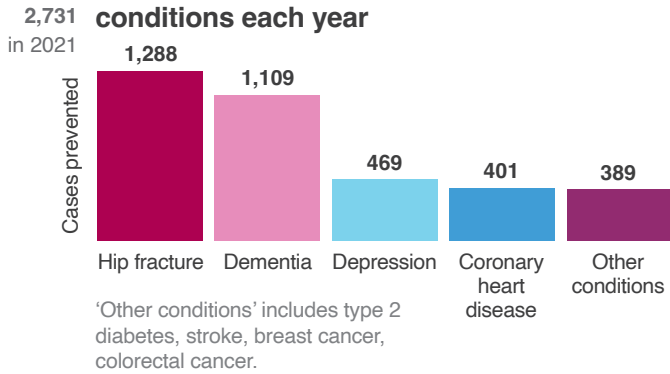
**€1.98 billion<sup>iii</sup>**

€796  
million  
in 2021

i. Trips for enjoyment or fitness include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment). School trips are shown separately for children only. ii. Benefits have increased significantly, mainly because of increased costs of driving and greater traffic congestion. iii. This includes trips walked or wheeled for enjoyment or fitness, and trips to destinations by people with and without a car.

## Walking and wheeling unlocks health benefits for everyone

### Walking in the Dublin Metropolitan Area prevents 3,655 serious long-term health conditions each year



In the Dublin Metropolitan Area the physical activity benefits of walking

### prevent 725 early deaths annually

547 in 2021

which is valued at

**€5.63 billion<sup>iv</sup>**

€2.69 billion in 2021

Please note wheelchair or mobility scooter trips are modelled as walking trips for the purposes of the MOVES and HEAT models.

Saving the HSE in the Dublin Metropolitan Area

### €53.4 million per year

€24.7 million in 2021



equivalent to the cost of

**970,000 GP appointments**

450,000 in 2021

Based on applying Dublin Metropolitan Area data to the Sport England MOVES tool which calculates the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity.

People walking and wheeling more instead of driving improves air quality, saving annually:

**250,000 kg of NO<sub>x</sub>**

630,000 kg in 2021

and

**30,000 kg of particulates**

(PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>)

25,000 kg in 2021

82% of residents agree the

air is clean in their local area

79% in 2021



## Walking and wheeling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area helps mitigate our climate crisis

69,000 tonnes in 2021

### 87,000 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by walking or wheeling instead of driving, equivalent to the carbon footprint of



980,000 people in 2021

### 1.2 million people taking flights

from Dublin to London Heathrow

Transport accounts for **28%** of the greenhouse gas emissions in County Dublin, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2021 transport emissions in Ireland rose by **114%**

Dublin Region Energy Masterplan, Codema, 2021. Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland's Final Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2021.

## Walking and wheeling keeps the Dublin Metropolitan Area moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.<sup>v</sup> This helps to keep the Dublin Metropolitan Area moving for all road users.

290,000 in 2021

### 470,000 return walking and wheeling trips

are made daily in the Dublin Metropolitan Area by people that could have used a car.

v. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

### 2,200 kilometres

equivalent to the distance from Dublin City to Cork City and back four times over.

1,400 km in 2021



iv. Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of walking by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of walking.



# Benefits of cycling

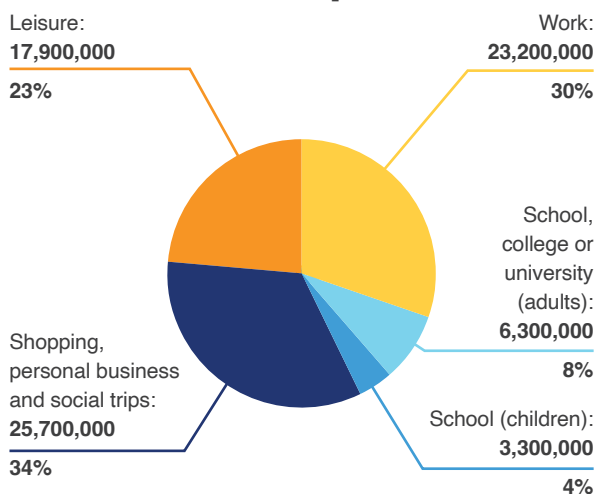
Why everyone gains when more people cycle

## Dublin Metropolitan Area residents cycle 28 times around the world every day

There has been a reduction in leisure trips since 2021. However, shopping, personal business and social trips have increased.

### Annual cycling trips by purpose in the Dublin Metropolitan Area<sup>i</sup>

2023:  
**76.4 million trips**

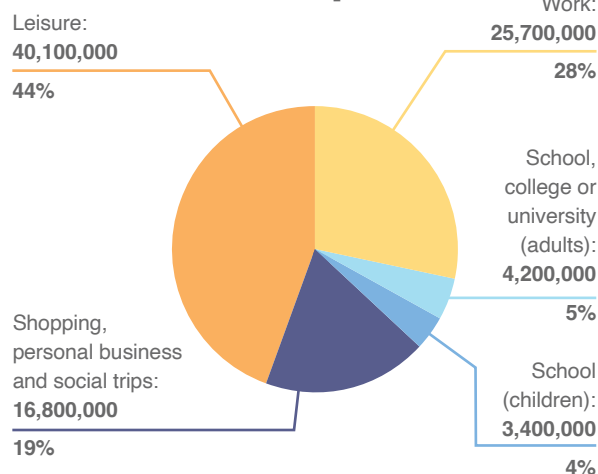


This adds up to

**416.4 million kilometres**

= 1.1 million kilometres a day

2021:  
**90.2 million trips**



This adds up to

**467.9 million kilometres**

= 1.3 million kilometres a day

## Cycling benefits residents and the local economy

The Walking and Cycling Index uses a model to understand the costs and benefits of driving and cycling. For example travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

€1.14  
in 2021

**€1.48 is saved**

for each kilometre cycled instead of driven in the Dublin Metropolitan Area.

Over a year this adds up to

**€294.3 million**

from adults with a car in their household cycling to work, school and other destinations.

€162.1  
million  
in 2021

The total annual economic benefit from all trips cycled in the Dublin Metropolitan Area is

**€404.6 million<sup>ii</sup>**

€311.4  
million  
in 2021

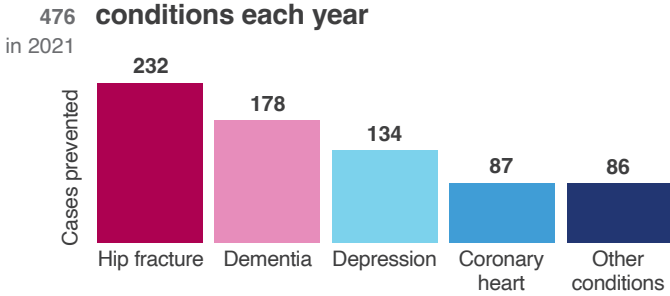
i. Leisure trips include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment).

Education trips are shown separately for adults and children. All other trips are just adults.

ii. This includes trips cycled for enjoyment or fitness, and trips to destinations by people with and without a car.

## Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

### Cycling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area prevents 718 serious long-term health conditions each year



'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer, colorectal cancer.

### Saving the HSE in the Dublin Metropolitan Area €11.1 million per year

€4.5 million in 2021  
82,000 in 2021

equivalent to the cost of **200,000 GP appointments**

Based on applying Dublin Metropolitan Area data to the Sport England MOVES tool which calculates the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity.

In the Dublin Metropolitan Area the physical activity benefits of cycling

### prevent 59 early deaths annually

42 in 2021

which is valued at

**€459 million<sup>iii</sup>**

€205 million in 2021

People cycling more instead of driving improves air quality, saving annually:

**79,000 kg of NO<sub>x</sub>**

160,000 kg in 2021

and

**9,600 kg of particulates (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>)**

7,500 kg in 2021

**82%** of residents agree the air is clean in their local area

79% in 2021



## Cycling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area helps mitigate our climate crisis

24,000 tonnes in 2021

**34,000 tonnes** of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by cycling instead of driving, equivalent to the carbon footprint of



340,000 people in 2021

**490,000 people taking flights** from Dublin to London Heathrow

Transport accounts for **28%** of the greenhouse gas emissions in County Dublin, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2021 transport emissions in Ireland rose by **114%**

Dublin Region Energy Masterplan, Codema, 2021. Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland's Final Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2021.

## Cycling keeps the Dublin Metropolitan Area moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.<sup>iv</sup> This helps to keep the Dublin Metropolitan Area moving for all road users.

48,000 in 2021

**62,000 return cycling trips** are made daily in the Dublin Metropolitan Area by people that could have used a car.

iv. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

**299 kilometres**

equivalent to the distance from Dublin to Killarney.

229 km in 2021



iii. Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of cycling by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of cycling.



# Walking solutions

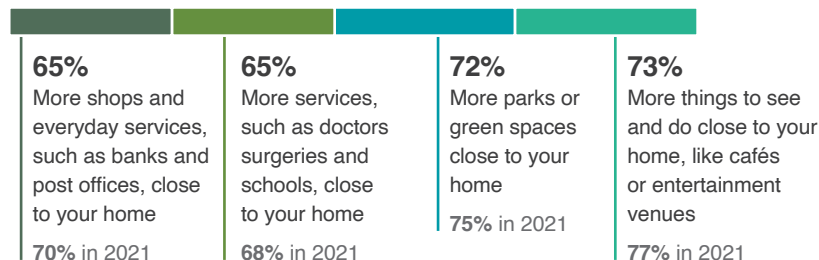
What would help make walking and wheeling easier?

## Residents want more services and amenities within walking and wheeling distance

Ideally, walking or wheeling should be the most attractive option for short journeys. An area can support this by ensuring many of the things people need are found near to where people live. The environment should be safe, comfortable and welcoming.

20-minute neighbourhoods are places where you can walk from your home to many of the things you need on a regular basis (like shops, parks, schools) and back again within 20 minutes.

### What percentage of residents would find more local amenities and services useful to help them walk or wheel more?



**32%**

of Dublin Metropolitan Area households are in neighbourhoods of more than 40 homes per hectare.

31% in 2021

These higher-density neighbourhoods can sustain local businesses and public transport routes more easily. This helps to reduce car dependency.<sup>i</sup>

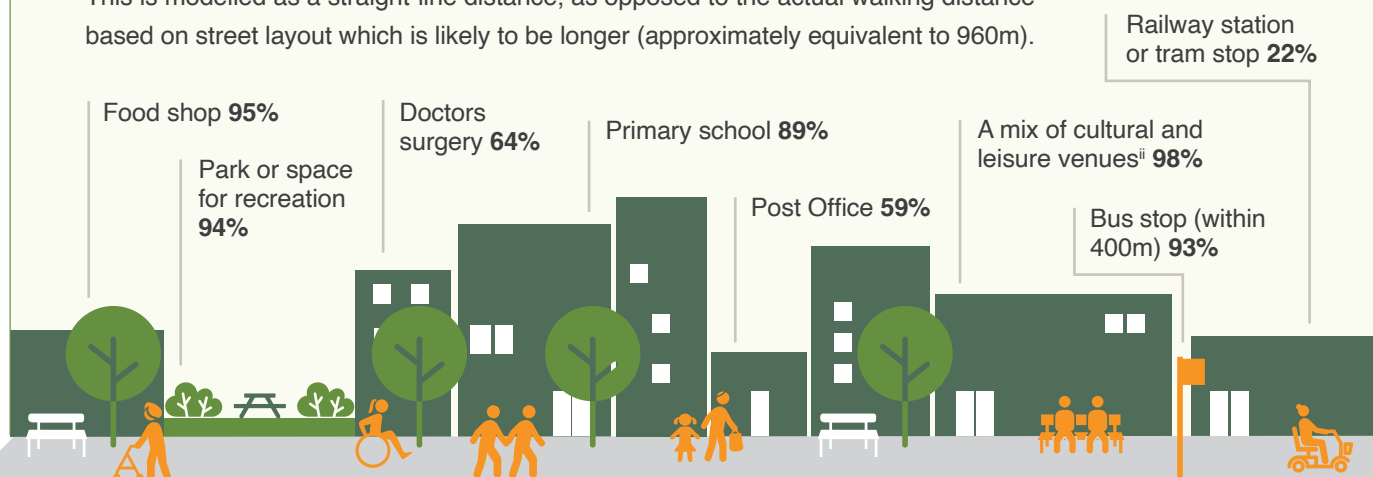
**80%**

agree they can easily get to many places they need to visit without having to drive

84% in 2021

### Proportion of households within an 800m radius of the following amenities

This is modelled as a straight-line distance, as opposed to the actual walking distance based on street layout which is likely to be longer (approximately equivalent to 960m).



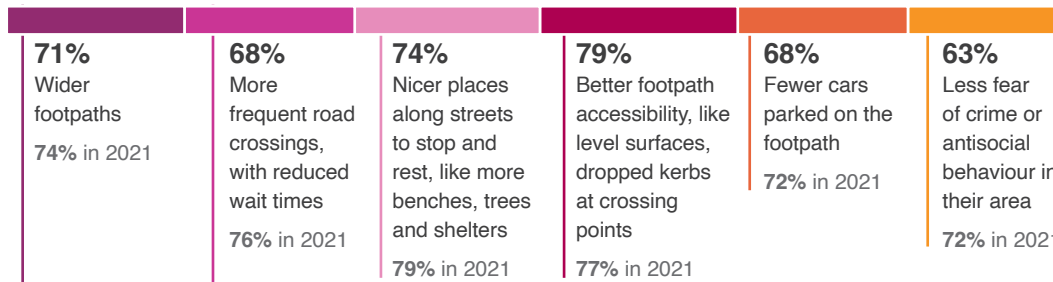
i. Sustrans, 2017. Linking Active Travel and Public Transport to Housing Growth and Planning.

ii. A minimum of three distinct types of cultural and leisure venues, like cafés, pubs, bingo halls, cinemas, museums.

## Residents want better streets

There are many ways to make our streets and neighbourhoods safe, welcoming and comfortable for everyone to walk or wheel in.

### What percentage of residents think that these changes would help them walk or wheel more?



#### In the Dublin Metropolitan Area:

55% of National and Regional roads have a footpath width greater than 3m<sup>iii</sup>

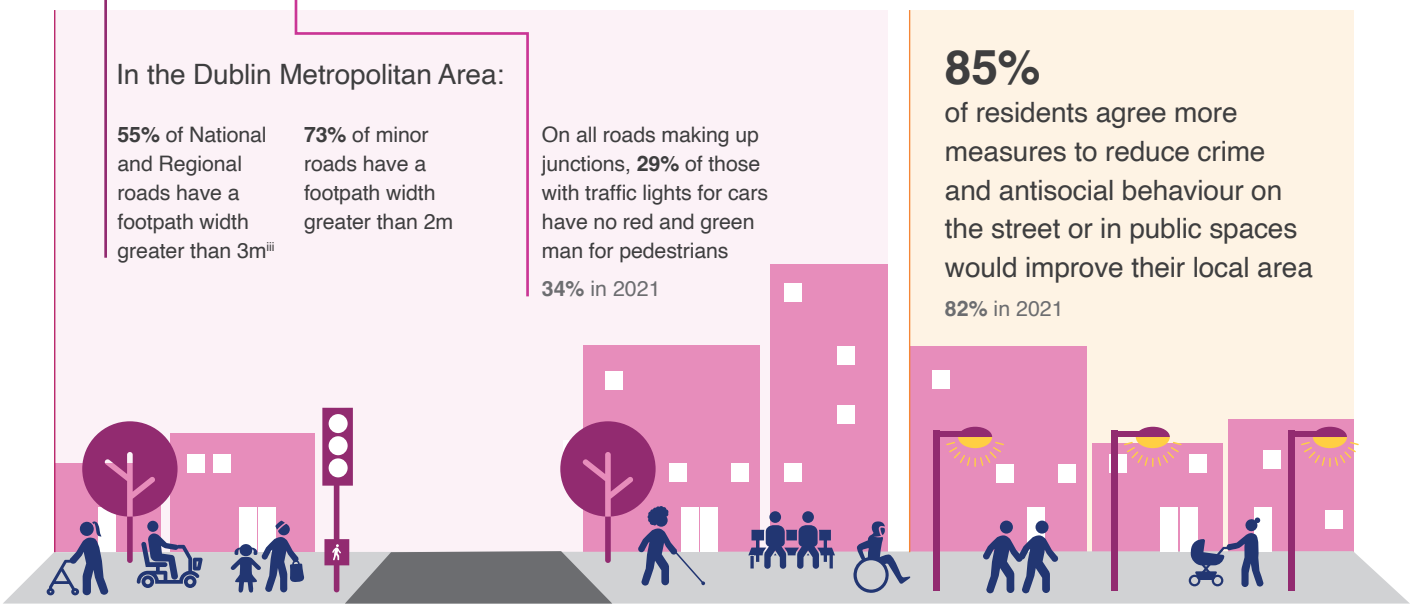
73% of minor roads have a footpath width greater than 2m

On all roads making up junctions, 29% of those with traffic lights for cars have no red and green man for pedestrians  
34% in 2021

**85%**

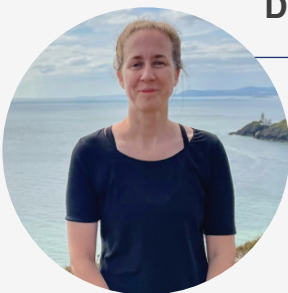
of residents agree more measures to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour on the street or in public spaces would improve their local area

82% in 2021



iii. National and Regional roads are main roads. Footpath widths were calculated using Tailte Éireann's (formerly OSi) Prime II data licenced under the National Mapping Agreement: CYAL50370872 © Tailte Éireann – Surveying. Footpath width does not account for obstructions, such as bus stops or litter bins.

### Dr Kristin Hadfield, Assistant Professor



I predominantly walk between my home in Sandymount and my work at Trinity. I take about 50 minutes, it gives me a bit of exercise.

What makes it less enjoyable and more dangerous is that people park – and sometimes even drive – on the footpath. I wish the law on parking on the footpath was enforced more.

I would like to cycle. It would only take me 20 minutes to get to work, so I'd be able to be more productive as I'd get there quicker. However, there would need to be segregated cycle paths for me to cycle to work. At the minute I wouldn't cycle in Dublin because I wouldn't feel safe.

Also, drivers seem to be very aggressive towards cyclists and I can do without that stress.

If the infrastructure was there, I would cycle for my commute, but I wouldn't stop walking entirely.



# Cycling solutions

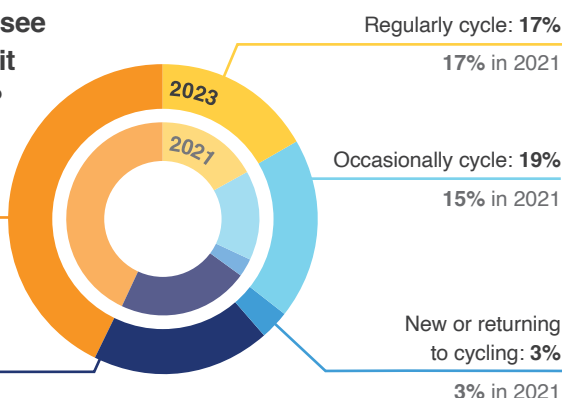
What would make cycling better?

## Many Dublin Metropolitan Area residents want to cycle

**How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?**

Do not cycle and do not want to: **43%**  
43% in 2021

Do not cycle but would like to: **19%**  
22% in 2021



**What proportion of residents said they 'do not cycle but would like to'?**

**22% of women**  
25% in 2021

**28% of people from ethnic minority groups**  
27% in 2021

**18% of people with a disability**  
23% in 2021

## Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

**What percentage of residents would be helped to cycle more by better facilities?**

**67%**  
More traffic-free cycle paths away from roads, like through parks or along waterways  
65% in 2021

**65%**  
More cycle paths along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians  
63% in 2021

**66%**  
More signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets  
64% in 2021

**64%**  
Better links with public transport, like secure cycle parking at train stations, bus stops/stations  
57% in 2021

There are **2,668** cycle parking spaces across all **119** railway stations and tram stops in the Dublin Metropolitan Area<sup>i</sup>  
2,392 in 2021

The Dublin Metropolitan Area has:<sup>ii</sup>

**113 km**  
of traffic-free cycle paths away from the road  
95 km in 2021

**140 km**  
of cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians  
118 km in 2021

**13 km**  
of signposted routes along quieter streets  
2 km in 2021

**14%**  
of households within 125m of these routes  
7% in 2021

**203 km**  
of cycle paths level with the footpath, distinguished by a different surface  
226 km in 2021

**72%**  
of residents support building more cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic  
71% in 2021

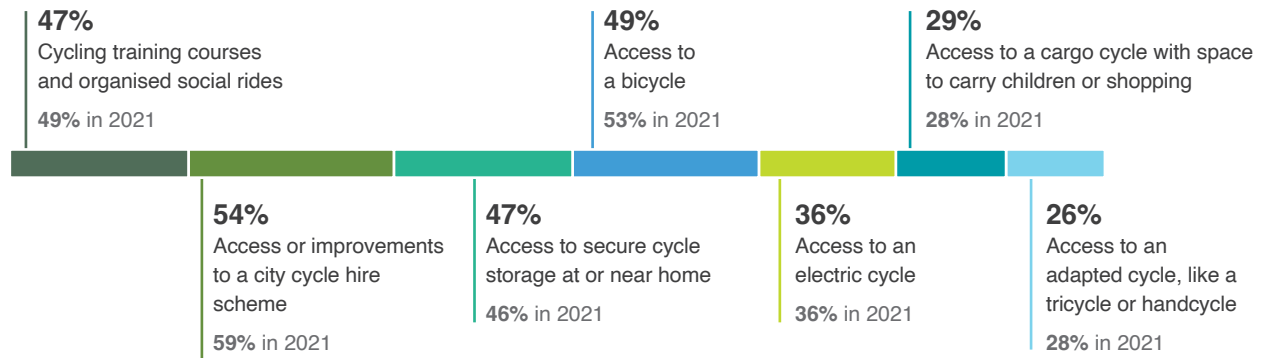
This figure has been revised downward following a comprehensive remapping exercise.

i. There are some stations that offer secure cycle storage that require a fee to access. These have not been included here. Parking at stations that share facilities have only been included in the total once to avoid duplication. ii. To ensure comparability, these figures are correct as of 31 May 2023 for all city reports.



## Residents want more support to cycle

### What percentage of residents think that these kinds of support would help them cycle more?



#### Across the Dublin Metropolitan Area's six cycle hire schemes<sup>iii</sup>

3 schemes in 2021

**2,836**

hire cycles

2,460 in 2021

**129**

cycle hire stations<sup>iv</sup>

117 in 2021

**2,487,033**

annual trips

1,635,700 in 2021

#### Reported cycle thefts

There were **11,926** reported cycle thefts in the Dublin Metropolitan Area in 2022/23.

14,100 in 2021/22

For every **59** people who own an adult cycle in the Dublin Metropolitan Area, there was **1** reported cycle theft in the past year.

#### Proportions of residents with access to an adult cycle

**58%** of residents 52% in 2021

**47%** of socio-economic group DE 40% in 2021

**65%** of socio-economic group AB 59% in 2021

**80%** of residents support financial discounts for people on low incomes or not in employment to help them buy a cycle

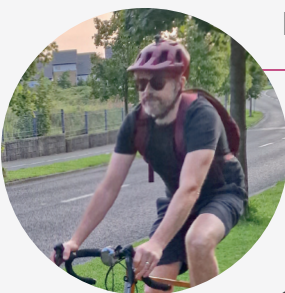
**34%** of households are within 800m of a cycle shop<sup>v</sup>

v. © OpenStreetMap contributors.

There is a public cycle parking space for every **22** people who cycle in the Dublin Metropolitan Area. 31 in 2021



#### Ruairi Devoy, Cabinet Maker



Cycling is my primary source of transportation. I commute with my kids to their school on bike, which now has a cycle lane, a shared path and greenway to the school.

I make sure to cycle with care for all road users and show a good example to my kids, every light, stop sign and yield adhered to.

Commuting by bike brings me the greatest freedom, joy and peace compared to driving. I can do my school run, meet a friend at the school and cycle through the new greenway all the way from Knocklyon to Terenure chatting, 70% of this is safely away from vehicles.

I love the protection the segregation gives me, more kerbs or greenways through parks would be brilliant.

iii. 2023 data covers July 2022–June 2023. 2021 data covers July 2020–June 2021.

iv. There are some dockless schemes that use designated public bike parking stands/racks as drop off pick up locations. These have not been included in these totals.

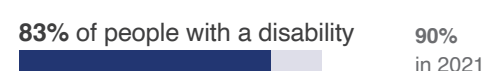
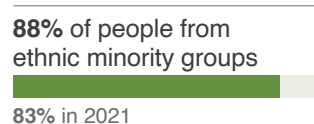
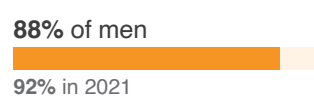
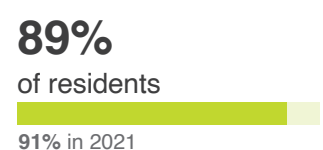


# Neighbourhood solutions

What would help make neighbourhoods better?

## All residents should feel welcome in their neighbourhood

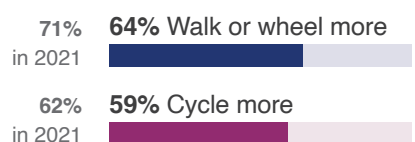
**Proportion of residents that feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood**



## The dominance of motor vehicles can discourage walking, wheeling and cycling

**58% in 2021**  
**54%** of residents think that their streets are not dominated by moving or parked motor vehicles.

**But residents would find fewer motor vehicles on their streets useful to:**

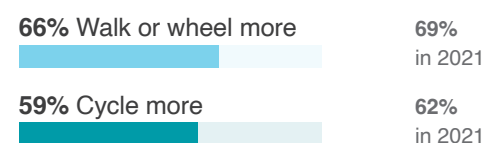


Low-use minor roads are not designed to carry through-traffic, but in the Dublin Metropolitan Area **12%** of their total length has nothing to prevent it. This can result in rat-running.<sup>i</sup>  
12% in 2021

**67%** agree that restricting through-traffic on local residential streets would make their area a better place.  
73% in 2021

**41%** of all streets in the Dublin Metropolitan Area should typically have traffic travelling at speeds below 30km/h<sup>ii</sup>  
23% in 2021

**Residents would find more streets with 30km/h speed limits useful to:**



## Residents want local streets to be better spaces for people to spend time in

**74% in 2021**  
**73%** agree increasing space for people socialising, walking, wheeling and cycling on their local main street would improve their local area

**82%** agree they regularly chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello  
85% in 2021

**82%** support low-traffic neighbourhoods  
77% in 2021

i. Based on analysis by CycleStreets [www.lowtrafficeighbourhoods.org](http://www.lowtrafficeighbourhoods.org). Low-use minor roads are those classed as 'less significant minor roads' on OpenStreetMap.  
ii. Excludes motorways. Source: NAVSTREETS Speed Category data, from NAVTEQ data set.



I run a local economic development group that is active around the Tallaght area. Our newly refurbished centre, ‘The Edge’, had no footfall, practically no one knew it was here.

Since the work on the Dodder Greenway, the footfall to our centre has been incredibly increased.

Prior to refurbishment, this centre had encountered several burglaries and was subject to anti-social behaviour. However, with the new Greenway infrastructure in place, we haven’t had an ounce of trouble since. It really has opened the area up as a neighbourhood asset now, and the community take pride in it which is wonderful.

I regularly come up here now with my own dog and walk the Greenway. I had never seen The Weir before, and I couldn’t believe something so beautiful was literally behind us and I was only discovering it now.

## Neighbourhoods must be designed with children in mind

Neighbourhoods should be places for children to thrive. Increasing independence, providing space to play and socialise, and improving the journey to school are all important.

If we design neighbourhoods with children in mind they will then work better for everyone else too.

### 10 years old

average age when people living with children would let them walk, wheel or cycle independently in their neighbourhood.

11 years old in 2021

80% of seven-year-olds in Germany are allowed to go alone to places within walking distance, other than school.<sup>iii</sup>

79% of residents agree there is space for children to socialise and play



78% of households are within 800m of a children’s playground



Among Dublin Metropolitan Area residents:

58% agree



60% agreed in 2021

24% disagree



21% disagreed in 2021

closing streets outside local schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times would improve their local area.

These are known as ‘School Streets’.

1 school in the Dublin Metropolitan Area has a School Streets scheme.<sup>iv</sup> Also, see Safe Routes to School on page 20.

2 schemes in 2021



iii. Children’s Independent Mobility: an international comparison and recommendations for action, 2015.

iv. Figure given is correct as of 31 May 2023.



# Developing the Dublin Metropolitan Area

Recent walking, wheeling, cycling and neighbourhood changes

In the years 2021 to 2023, the Dublin Metropolitan Area continued the accelerated delivery of active travel infrastructure of the early pandemic years. This was supported by the Programme for Government 2020–2025 which allocated 20% of the transport capital budget to walking, wheeling, and cycling.

The Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, 2022-2042, was published in 2022, with a focus on creating a safe attractive street environment for those walking, wheeling, and cycling. The strategy included an updated metropolitan cycle network plan.

The National Transport Authority (NTA) continued to fund and advise all the Dublin Metropolitan Local Authorities, in delivering high quality networks to support people to walk, wheel or cycle for everyday trips. In 2022, Dublin City Council published their 'Active Travel Network' plan for 310km of network to be in place across the city by 2030. Similarly, South Dublin County Council's 'Cycle South Dublin' plan aims to deliver a network of 263km by 2030. Dún Laoghaire and Fingal are also actively working on delivering their active travel networks, with 140km and 100km of schemes respectively in development. Fingal have also produced an 'Active Travel Strategy', detailing a wide array of initiatives designed to support walking and cycling for short trips. Kildare, Wicklow and Meath also continued to develop active travel networks in their metropolitan areas.

In March 2021, the NTA established the Safe Routes to School programme aiming to create safe School Zones at school gates where drop off is discouraged, and to increase the number of students who walk, or cycle, to school by providing community requested walking and cycling facilities. 253 schools in Greater Dublin Area applied to the programme, and by mid-2023, 93 schools are engaged in the active programme.



In March 2021, the NTA established the Safe Routes School programme aiming to create safe School Zones at school gates where drop off is discouraged, and to increase the number of students who walk, or cycle, to school.



## **Dodder Greenway in South Dublin**

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Since 2021, South Dublin County Council have completed approx. 7km of the Dodder Greenway including 3 bridges and a major junction upgrade where the greenway crosses a busy radial route. The fully completed Dodder Greenway will stretch over 3 Dublin Local Authority areas, forming an attractive traffic free environment for people walking, wheeling, and cycling, linking residential areas to employment and education facilities and on to the city centre along this beautiful river corridor - one of Dublin's great natural amenities.



## **Griffith Avenue Dublin City**

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Since 2021, Dublin City Council has delivered many kms of protected cycle lanes. An example of one of these schemes, is the 3.5km of rapid build cycle track along Griffith Avenue in Dublin's North Central Area. This scheme developed from a bollard protected scheme to a more permanent facility with a concrete kerb segregation and coloured surfacing. A key goal of the scheme was to link the various residential catchments with the primary and secondary schools along the route and make it easier for those walking and cycling to use busy junctions at several locations.



## **Sea to Mountains Active School Travel Route, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown**

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Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council created a 6.8km Active Travel Route running east-west through the southern suburbs from Blackrock to Dundrum, with the aim of increasing walking, wheeling, and cycling to schools in the area. The scheme included 3.6km of signed Quietways, 1.3km of traffic calming measures, 4 modal filters and 1.3km of new segregated cycle tracks. It also included continuous footpaths and cycle tracks at side road junctions to prioritise walking and cycling. An innovative "protected" junction layout and wayfinding road markings and signage were used to help those walking, wheeling or cycling use the route for their everyday trips.



## **Fingal**

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Church Fields in Fingal County Council is a new development area where active travel facilities were planned to be in place in advance of residential development. This will help the young community to develop sustainably and integrate into the existing area. An example of the innovative infrastructure is the Dutch style cycle-friendly roundabout, a first for Fingal, and for Ireland.



## Looking forward

Better streets and places for everyone

The Climate Action Plan 2023 targets continue to provide the focus for Active Travel in the Dublin Metropolitan Area. The plan requires a 50% reduction in transport emissions, 50% increase in daily active travel trips and 1,000km of additional active travel infrastructure to be delivered by 2025. This is supported by €1.8 billion investment allocation in the Programme for Government.

In delivering this investment and achieving the infrastructure targets, the NTA are working with the Greater Dublin Area Local Authorities on an infrastructure plan to 2025 which has 3 main components:

- Delivering improved pedestrian and cycle facilities on the 12 key main radial routes under the Bus Connects Core Bus Corridor programme which is planned to include over 230km of mostly segregated cycle infrastructure, 360 junction upgrades and over 620 side road crossings upgrades;
- Continued delivery of the “Metropolitan Core Network” with a focus on rapid build cost effective cycle facilities; and
- Continue working with 253 schools in the Greater Dublin Area who applied to the Safer Routes to School programme.

This delivery programme is sustained by active travel teams in each of the local authorities. Those teams are supported by the new Cycle Design Manual and subsequent training. The NTA will also continue to provide training and support on key topics such as public engagement and school travel, and have offer study trips to exemplar locations in Ireland and abroad to all local authorities, with a requirement to include local political representatives.



The Climate Action Plan 2023 targets provide the focus for Active Travel in the Dublin Metropolitan Area.

Specific projects that are planned to be progressed by the next iteration of the Dublin Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index in 2026 include:

- Implementation of a major Dublin City Centre Traffic Management plan to continue to reallocate road space and prioritise active travel and sustainable transport;
- The completion of the Clontarf to City Centre Cycle and Bus Priority Project, which started construction in March 2022. This full street upgrade, with a project budget of €62.5 million will provide upgraded pedestrian facilities, segregated cycling facilities and bus priority infrastructure along a 2.7km city centre route;
- Continuing construction of the strategic radial Dodder Greenway from Tallaght to the Liffey;
- Continuing construction of the strategic radial Royal Canal Greenway from the Liffey to Maynooth;
- The construction of the Clonskeagh to City Centre Interim Active Travel Route;
- Continued construction of active travel networks in the main suburban towns e.g., Tallaght, Swords and Dun Laoghaire;
- The construction of the Broadmeadow Way Greenway over the Malahide Estuary;
- Complete design of Dunboyne cycle network and onward links via Clonee to Blanchardstown
- The construction of upgrades to the cycle network in Greystones in Wicklow, focusing on 5 roundabout junction upgrades; and
- The detailed design of Bus Connects Core Corridors will be progressing, pending planning approval, with some elements beginning construction.



**Stephanie Dickenson, Publicist**



I live in a perfect little ‘15-minute community’ called Stoneybatter. When we bought the house, it was quite expensive, but we justified the expense because of the money saved by keeping transport costs minimal.

Walking is a wonderful thing for social cohesion. I like the slow pace. I like stopping to look at the flowers, read the notices – I have a greater interaction with my environment.

**We need better quality and wider pavements. Street design needs to be focused on vulnerable road users.**

One of my big bugbears is about hostile junctions between different districts – it can put people off walking.

When I first moved to Dublin, there was a street that was a bit down on its luck, and to be honest, I used to avoid it. Recently, it’s been closed to traffic, and it’s been really positive to see, and there are plans to make it even more appealing, with benches, planting etc. I feel that things are changing.

## Notes on methodology:

The attitudinal survey was conducted from April to July 2023 by independent market research company Behaviour & Attitudes.

The survey is representative of all Dublin Metropolitan Area residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

2021 survey data was collected from June to July 2021, also by Behaviour & Attitudes, following the same methodology.

All other data is sourced from our city partners, national data sets or modelled and calculated by Sustrans.

Trip estimates use a model developed by Sustrans. When comparing to other travel surveys, some variation may exist in the proportion of journeys travelled by journey purpose.

Rounding has been used throughout the report. In many cases we have rounded to the nearest whole number. Rounding is avoided where this may cause confusion, for example with modelled estimates shown in the summary and benefits sections.

More information and a detailed methodology are available at [www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-index](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-index)

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Sustrans makes it easier for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle.

We work for and with communities, helping them come to life by walking, wheeling and cycling to create healthier places and happier lives for everyone.

Join us on our journey. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

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Thanks to Open Route Service for their support with their isochrone plugin in QGIS.

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Walking and Cycling Index Dublin Metropolitan Area has been funded by the National Transport Authority. The project is co-ordinated by Sustrans and has been supported by Dublin City Council, South Dublin County Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Fingal County Council, Wicklow County Council, Kildare County Council and Meath County Council.

