



Cork Metropolitan Area

Walking and Cycling Index 2025



Our vision for walking, wheeling and cycling



Cllr. Fergal Dennehy
Lord Mayor of Cork

As Lord Mayor of Cork, I am delighted to welcome the second Cork Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index.

Its valuable data and insights will feed into future projects and investment in walking and cycling infrastructure projects for our City.

Cork City Council is proud to work with our partner, the National Transport Authority (NTA), to deliver improvements in walking and cycling infrastructure. Recently, we have been delighted to open the Grange-Tramore Valley pedestrian and cycle route, the Marina Promenade, and the Mahon Cycle Scheme, with plenty more in the pipeline.

It's enormously encouraging to see increases this year in the percentages of residents who walk, wheel or cycle. It's testament to the theory that if you build it, they will come.

The public health impact of choosing to walk or cycle instead of driving is particularly striking, and of course, the environmental benefits of active travel are undeniable, all evident in the data here.



Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley
Mayor of the County of Cork

We stand firm in our commitment to make active travel a more viable, safer and accessible option for all who live in, work in, and visit our city.

As Mayor of the County of Cork, I welcome the Walking and Cycling Index 2025 which shows growth in active travel.

Cork County Council, in conjunction with the NTA, has spent over €100m on active travel schemes since 2021. These include over 8km of a shared pathway connecting Dunkettle to Carrigtwohill. In Carrigaline, the Bridgemount Link opened in 2025 with an average of 942 daily users.

I am very proud of the work done on our Safe Routes to School Programme. We have 36 schools across the county being progressed with 8 of these within the Cork Metropolitan Area. To date, 17 schemes have been completed.

We are looking forward to using the Index to further progress active travel schemes.

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The Walking and Cycling Index

The Walking and Cycling Index is the biggest assessment of walking, wheeling and cycling in the UK and Ireland. It is delivered by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans) in collaboration with 22 regional and local partners. Each area reports on the progress made towards making walking, wheeling and cycling a more attractive, everyday way to travel.

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years. This is the second report from the Cork Metropolitan Area, produced in partnership with the National Transport Authority of Ireland. The data in this report comes from 2025 and includes local walking, wheeling and cycling data, modelling and an independent, demographically representative survey of 1,110 residents aged 16 or above. The survey was conducted from April to August 2025. Independent market research company Ipsos B&A 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 2023 data where available.

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

More details on all reports and an interactive data tool to explore the data in more depth can be found at www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/walking-cycling-index



Defining wheeling

Some people who use 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.

Headlines

Cork Metropolitan Area

Population^[i]
327,649

263,211 adults
64,438 children

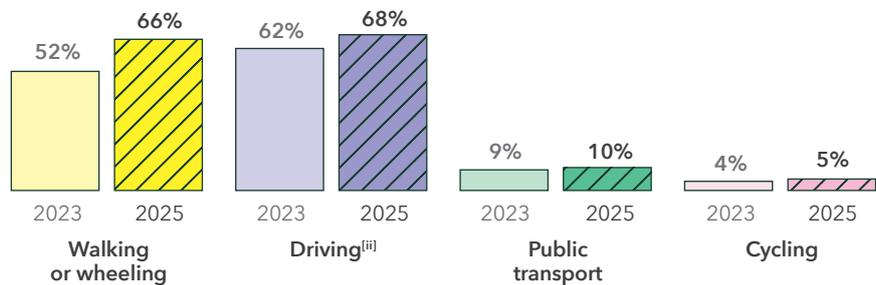


Frequency of different modes of travel

Walking and wheeling as well as driving are the most common modes of travel amongst Cork Metropolitan Area residents. Since 2023 walking and wheeling appears to be increasing.

i. CSO Census 2022. This is the most recent available for the Cork Metropolitan Area.

Residents who travel by the following modes five or more days a week in the area



ii. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle.

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.

66%

of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week

Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week^[iii]

69% of women

62% of men

14%

of residents cycle at least once a week

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

8% of women

21% of men

Not all residents feel safe in their neighbourhood

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

62% of people with a disability

83% of people without a disability

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to cycle in their local area

59% of people aged 16-25

46% of people aged 66+

Proportion of residents who feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood^[iv]

87% of socio-economic group DE

90% of socio-economic group AB

iii. See footnote on page 6.

iv. Socio-economic groups AB are managerial while groups DE are manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment. See page 6 for full definitions.

Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Based on modelling of survey data, every year, walking, wheeling and cycling.

prevents

775

serious long-term health conditions

creates

€415.9 million

in economic benefit for individuals and the area

saves

13,000 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions

Walking, wheeling and cycling reduces congestion by taking up to 82,000 cars off the roads every day.

Residents want to walk, wheel and cycle more

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

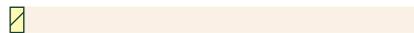
17% of residents want to drive less. 68% of residents agree that they often use a car because no other transport options are available.

Walk or wheel

52% more

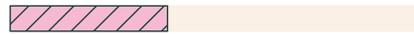


3% less

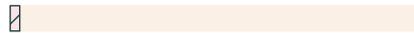


Cycle

38% more

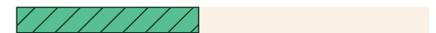


2% less



Take public transport

44% more



7% less

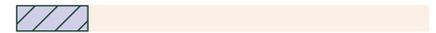


Drive

28% more



17% less



Cycling is seen as less safe than other forms of transport

Percentage of residents who think it's safe in their local area to:

81% walk or wheel



45% cycle



85% use public transport



93% drive



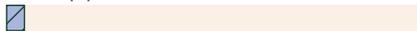
Residents support more connected neighbourhoods

64% of residents support shifting investment from road-building schemes to fund walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. 18% oppose such a shift.

92% support



4% oppose

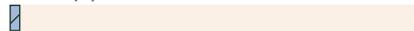


stopping vehicles parking on the footpath

92% support



2% oppose

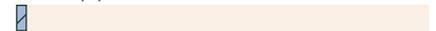


improving and increasing off-road walking, wheeling and cycling paths

91% support



2% oppose

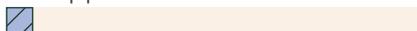


improving walking, wheeling and cycling access to bus stops and coach or rail stations

88% support



6% oppose



reducing speed limits, improving crossing points and introducing protected cycle paths in school neighbourhoods

59% support



24% oppose



closing residential streets outside schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times

91% support



3% oppose



having shops, schools, green space and public transport within a short walk or wheel of their home^v

v. Local places with services and amenities nearby your home are often known as 20-minute neighbourhoods.

Walking and wheeling

Participation, safety and satisfaction



Walking and wheeling participation

Overall in Cork Metropolitan Area the number of residents walking and wheeling at least five days a week has increased since 2023.

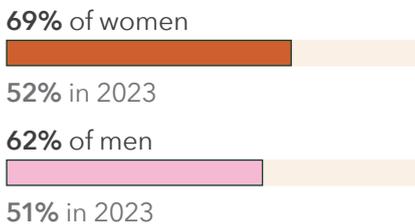
Encouragingly, the majority of residents feel it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area and think it is a good place to walk or wheel.

94%
of all residents walk or wheel
89% in 2023

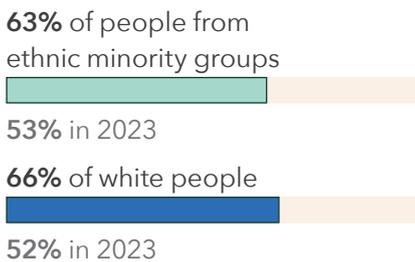
66%
of all residents walk or wheel at least five days a week
52% in 2023

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

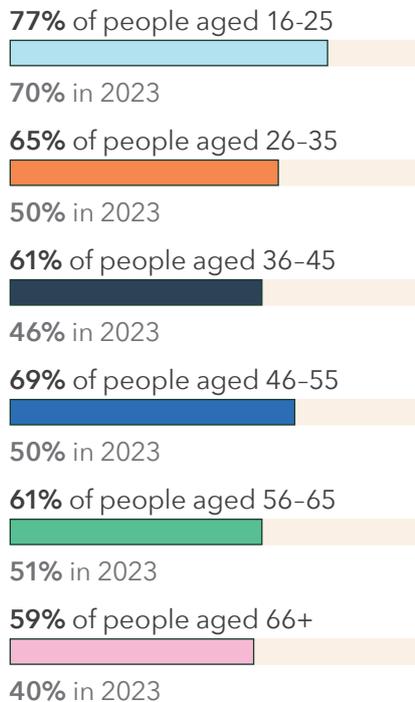
Gender⁽ⁱ⁾



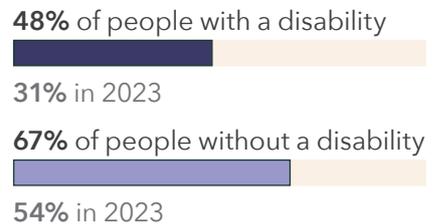
Ethnicity



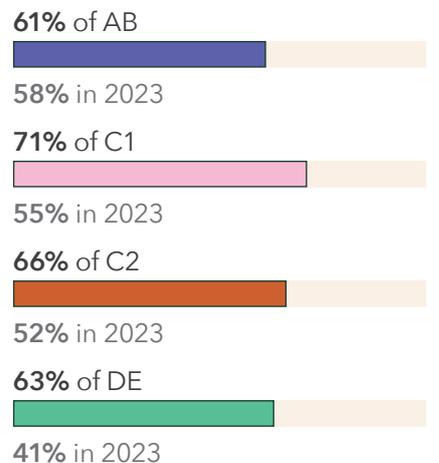
Age



Disability



Socio-economic group⁽ⁱⁱ⁾



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

81%

of all residents think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

72% in 2023

53%

of all residents think it's safe for children to walk or wheel in their local area

60% in 2023

78%

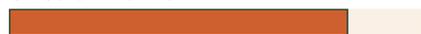
of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to walk or wheel

76% in 2023

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

Gender

82% of women



72% in 2023

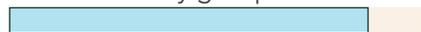
81% of men



72% in 2023

Ethnicity

87% of people from ethnic minority groups



79% in 2023

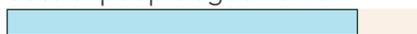
81% of white people



71% in 2023

Age

85% of people aged 16-25



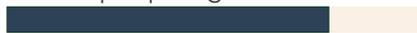
80% in 2023

83% of people aged 26-35



69% in 2023

78% of people aged 36-45



70% in 2023

79% of people aged 46-55



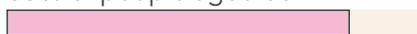
71% in 2023

81% of people aged 56-65



69% in 2023

83% of people aged 66+



72% in 2023

Disability

62% of people with a disability



71% in 2023

83% of people without a disability



72% in 2023

Socio-economic group

81% of AB



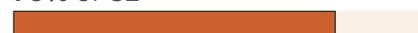
76% in 2023

85% of C1



73% in 2023

78% of C2



72% in 2023

79% of DE



66% in 2023



Sarah Harrington

I am a wheelchair user and overall, the streets are ok but sometimes there can be a lack of drop kerbs which makes life very difficult as it requires me to double back and go on the road which is unsafe. People parking or putting their bins out on the footpath is another big issue.

The work carried out on McCurtain Street in 2023 makes it a pleasure to navigate and similar work could be replicated in other areas to make them more accessible. Also, the lack of disabled parking currently in Cork City is a significant issue for disabled drivers.

Cycling

Participation, safety and satisfaction

Cycling participation

Currently, 14% of residents cycle at least once a week.

Safety, including road safety and personal safety, is the single largest barrier to cycling.^[i]

The Cork Metropolitan Area has been working to provide safe, dedicated space for cycling.

27%
of all residents cycle
25% in 2023

14%
of all residents cycle at least
once a week
18% in 2023

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

Gender

8% of women



12% in 2023

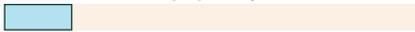
21% of men



25% in 2023

Ethnicity

16% of people from ethnic minority groups



19% in 2023

14% of white people



18% in 2023

Age

21% of people aged 16-25



33% in 2023

14% of people aged 26-35



19% in 2023

19% of people aged 36-45



18% in 2023

10% of people aged 46-55



12% in 2023

13% of people aged 56-65



18% in 2023

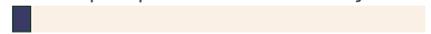
9% of people aged 66+



5% in 2023

Disability

4% of people with a disability



2% in 2023

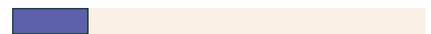
15% of people without a disability



20% in 2023

Socio-economic group

18% of AB



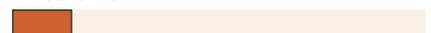
24% in 2023

15% of C1



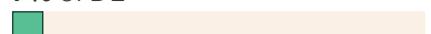
20% in 2023

14% of C2



18% in 2023

7% of DE



10% in 2023

i. See Bike Life reports 2019 (various cities).

Cycling safety and satisfaction

45%

of all residents think it's safe to cycle in their local area

49% in 2023

39%

of all residents think it's safe for children to cycle in their local area

43% in 2023

42%

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

53% in 2023

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to cycle in their local area

Gender

45% of women



49% in 2023

45% of men



50% in 2023

Ethnicity

52% of people from ethnic minority groups



61% in 2023

44% of white people



48% in 2023

Age

59% of people aged 16-25



60% in 2023

42% of people aged 26-35



42% in 2023

45% of people aged 36-45



51% in 2023

39% of people aged 46-55



45% in 2023

37% of people aged 56-65



49% in 2023

46% of people aged 66+



46% in 2023

Disability

31% of people with a disability



44% in 2023

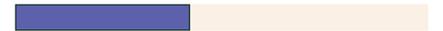
46% of people without a disability



49% in 2023

Socio-economic group

42% of AB



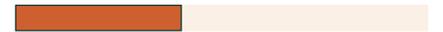
54% in 2023

52% of C1



50% in 2023

40% of C2



52% in 2023

44% of DE



40% in 2023



Fionnuala Solomon

I have a dance class in the city, which takes about 20 minutes to drive to, plus 10 minutes to find parking – and that's when traffic is kind. Cycling takes 30 minutes ALWAYS: no parking stress, no traffic stress, no "will I be late?" stress.

It's relaxing, enjoyable, and adds some more exercise into your routine – a win-win all round. I also like to cycle to meet friends for a drink or two. Fewer hills in Cork would make cycling easier, and more bike lanes make everything smoother and safer. If more people cycled, we'd have less traffic anyway.

Benefits of walking and wheeling

Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

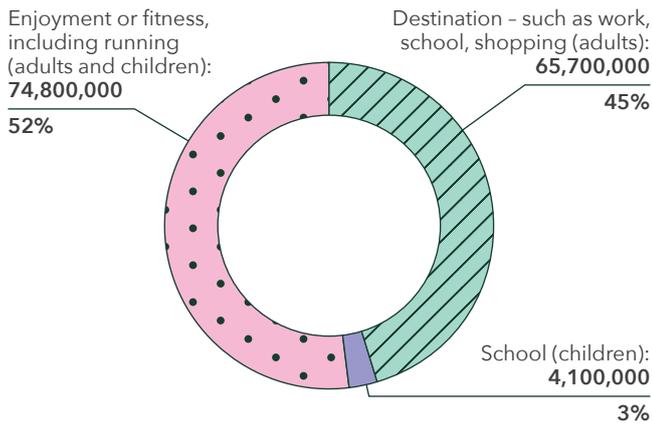


Together, Cork Metropolitan Area residents walk or wheel 19 times around the world every day

Walking and wheeling improves health and air quality, saves the HSE money, and reduces congestion.

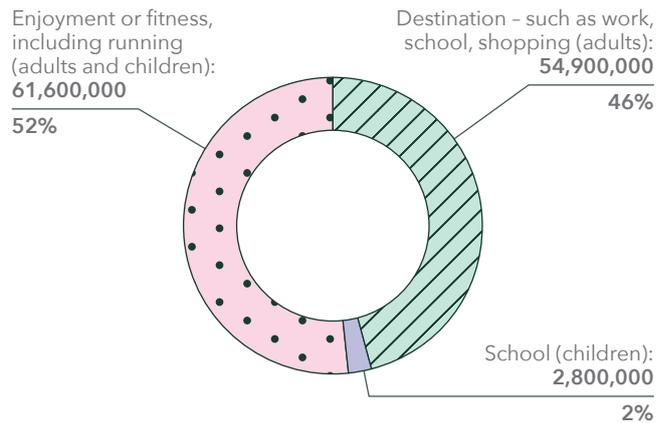
Annual walking and wheeling trips by purpose

144.6 million trips in 2025 which add up to **279.4 million kilometres**



Average walking or wheeling trip distance: 1.9 kilometres

119.3 million trips in 2023 which add up to **280.7 million kilometres**



Average walking or wheeling trip distance: 2.4 kilometres

Walking and wheeling benefits residents and society

We model the costs and benefits of walking and wheeling journeys, including those that replace trips which could have been driven, using our Societal Gain model. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

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

€368.4 million

Many of these trips were made by people with access to a car. For these (excluding trips for enjoyment or fitness) our model compares the costs and benefits of walking and wheeling to those of driving.

For these journeys **€1.13** is saved for each kilometre walked or wheeled instead of driven. Over a year this adds up to **€63.4 million** in economic benefit for residents and society from **55.9 million kilometres** walked or wheeled by those that could have used a car.



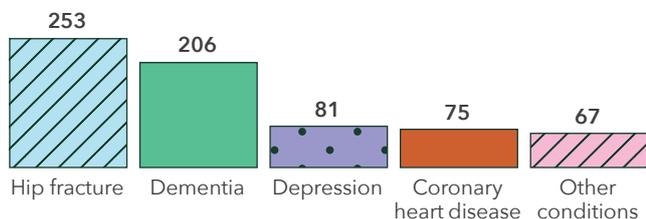
2023 model estimates in this report differ slightly to those published in 2023, due to being recalculated using input data from more robust sources. See methodology report for details.

Walking and wheeling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Walking in the area prevents 682 serious long-term health conditions each year.

666 in 2023

Cases prevented



This saves the HSE

€8.6 million per year

€8.5 million in 2023

Equivalent to the cost of

140,000

GP appointments

150,000 in 2023

Above figures are based on applying area data to Sport England MOVES tool, which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity. 'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

The physical activity benefits from walking

prevent 133 early deaths annually

133 in 2023

which is valued at

€1 billion

€1.03 billion in 2023

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. Wheelchair and mobility scooter trips are modelled as walking trips for the purposes of the MOVES and HEAT models.

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

31,000 kg of NO_x

(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

42,000 kg in 2023

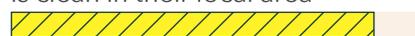
and

2,100 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀, which includes PM_{2.5}) annually.

3,100 kg in 2023

88% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



90% in 2023

Walking and wheeling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By walking or wheeling instead of driving, residents save

9,300 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) annually.

16,000 tonnes in 2023

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

93,000 people

taking flights

from Cork to London Heathrow.

In 2023 transport accounted for **21.5%** of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2023, transport emissions went up by **129.4%**.^[i]

i. Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland's Final Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2023.

Walking and wheeling keeps the area moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^[ii] This helps to keep the area moving for all road users.

77,000 return trips

are walked and wheeled daily by residents who could have used a car.

65,000 in 2023

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

368 kilometres

equivalent to the distance from Cork City to Castleblayney.

311 kilometres in 2023

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

Benefits of cycling

Why everyone gains when more people cycle

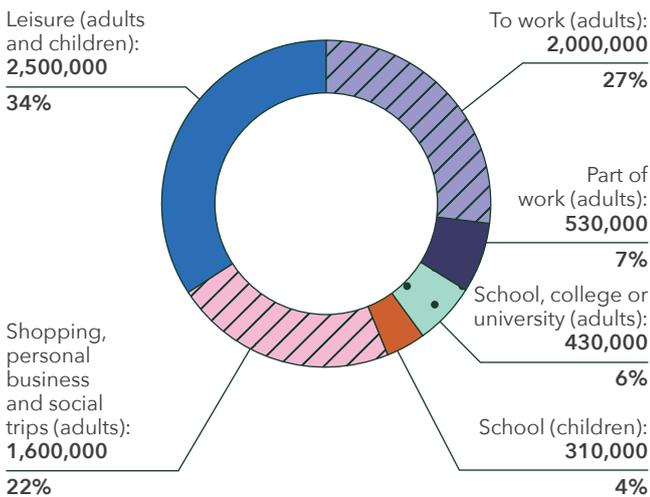


Together, Cork Metropolitan Area residents cycle 3 times around the world every day

Cycling can be convenient for many local trips, especially in cities and towns. It gives people transport choice and access to education, jobs and community.

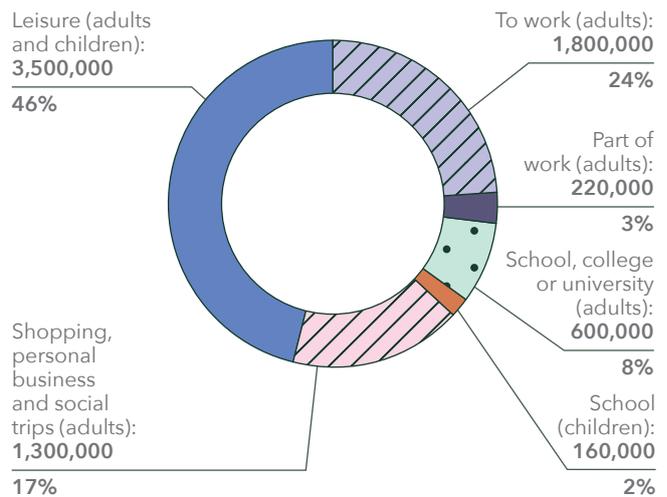
Annual cycling trips by purpose

7.3 million trips in 2025 which add up to **45 million kilometres**



Average cycling trip distance: 6.2 kilometres

7.5 million trips in 2023 which add up to **44.9 million kilometres**



Average cycling trip distance: 6.0 kilometres

Cycling benefits residents and society

We model the costs and benefits of cycling journeys, including those that replace trips which could have been driven, using our Societal Gain model. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

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

€47.5 million

Many of these trips were made by people with access to a car. For these (excluding trips for leisure) our model compares the costs and benefits of cycling to those of driving.

For these journeys **€1.61** is saved for each kilometre cycled instead of driven. Over a year this adds up to **€32.5 million** in economic benefit for residents and society from **20.2 million kilometres** cycled by those that could have used a car.



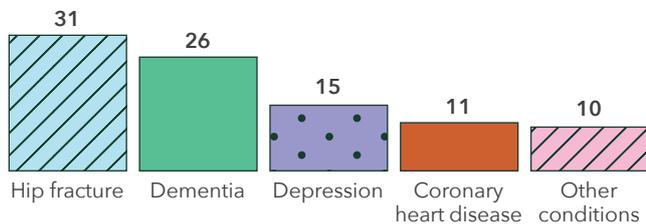
2023 model estimates in this report differ slightly to those published in 2023, due to being recalculated for the inclusion of cycling trips as part of work and using input data from more robust sources. See methodology report for details.

Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Cycling in the area prevents 93 serious long-term health conditions each year.

69 in 2023

Cases prevented



Above figures are based on applying area data to Sport England MOVES tool, which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity. 'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

The physical activity benefits from cycling

prevent 7 early deaths annually

6 in 2023

which is valued at

€49.8 million

€48.8 million in 2023

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.

This saves the HSE

€1.2 million per year

€990,000 in 2023

Equivalent to the cost of

21,000

GP appointments

18,000 in 2023

People cycling instead of driving improves air quality, saving:

7,700 kg of NO_x

(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

5,400 kg in 2023

and

593 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀, which includes PM_{2.5}) annually.

398 kg in 2023

88% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



90% in 2023

Cycling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By cycling instead of driving, residents save

3,400 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) annually.

2,300 tonnes in 2023

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

34,000 people

taking flights

from Cork to London Heathrow.

In 2023 transport accounted for **21.5%** of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2023, transport emissions went up by **129.4%**.^[i]

i. Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland's Final Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2023.

Cycling keeps the area moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^[ii] This helps to keep the area moving for all road users.

5,400 return trips

are cycled daily by residents who could have used a car.

4,800 in 2023

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

26 kilometres

equivalent to the distance from Cork City to Cobh.

23 kilometres in 2023

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

Walking and wheeling solutions

What would help make walking and wheeling easier?



New homes and existing communities should have services and amenities within walking and wheeling distance

Putting walking and wheeling at the heart of new and existing communities gives people greater transport choice, while reducing car dependency.

60%

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

70% in 2023

90%

support prioritising new housing developments that support walking, wheeling, cycling or the use of public transport

New developments and existing communities can support walking and wheeling by ensuring many of the things people need are found near to where people live.

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

80%

more shops and everyday services, such as banks and post offices, close to their home

69% in 2023

79%

more government services, such as doctors surgeries and schools, close to their home

69% in 2023

87%

more parks or green spaces close to their home

77% in 2023

81%

more things to see and do close to their home, like cafés or entertainment venues

75% in 2023

Residents want walking and wheeling to better align with buses

While walking and wheeling should be the most attractive option for short journeys, it should also be integrated with public transport for longer trips.

Bus use is the most common form of multi-modal journey across Ireland, and most bus trips depend upon walking and wheeling. Residents told us they need practical improvements to better integrate these modes of transport.



What percentage of residents would find these changes useful to help them take journeys that include walking or wheeling and the bus more often?

82%

more information to help them plan and take a journey (such as apps, maps, signage or public transport staff)

82%

more direct walking and wheeling routes from housing estates to bus stops

82%

accessible walking and wheeling routes to and from bus stops

84%

improved safety while walking or wheeling to and from the bus stop

84%

improved walking and wheeling crossing facilities near bus stops

86%

improved bus stops (such as accessible, well lit and maintained, cover from rain, display of service information)

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?

82%

wider footpaths
70% in 2023

84%

more frequent road crossings, with reduced wait times
73% in 2023

86%

nicer places along streets to stop and rest, like more benches, trees and shelters
78% in 2023

89%

better footpath accessibility, like level surfaces and dropped kerbs at crossing points
78% in 2023

83%

fewer cars parked on the footpath
69% in 2023

74%

less fear of crime or antisocial behaviour in their area
69% in 2023

In the area, for each road making up a junction with traffic lights

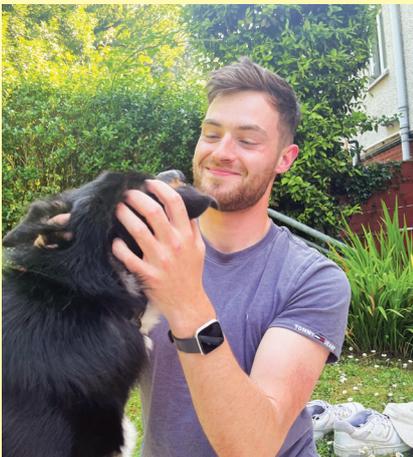
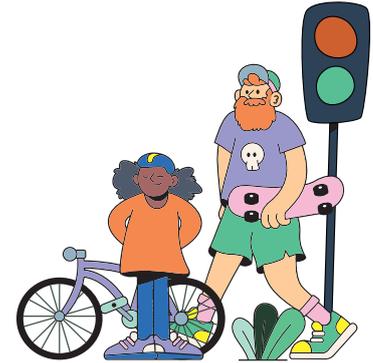
85% have a pedestrian crossing



15% don't have a pedestrian crossing



For example, a T-junction has three roads making up the junction, and a crossroads has four.



Alex MacEvilly

I moved to Cork at the end of 2023 and have enjoyed navigating my new home on foot. My weekly routine involves a walk from my office on Douglas Road into the city centre. My job brings me to new businesses each week, and there's always something interesting to see along the way. Walking makes my commute more engaging, healthier, and stress-free compared to driving.

One of my favourite places to visit is the English Market – a destination that shows how

walkable routes can reduce congestion and parking stress while supporting local business. Although I love the freedom of walking, busy roads like the Southern Road, with its high walls and traffic emissions, can feel unpleasant.

More tree cover and wider footpaths would make these routes safer and more enjoyable. I'm lucky to have the Greenway to Tramore Valley Park and Ballybrack Woods nearby – perfect for peaceful, green walking routes.

Cycling solutions

What would make cycling better?

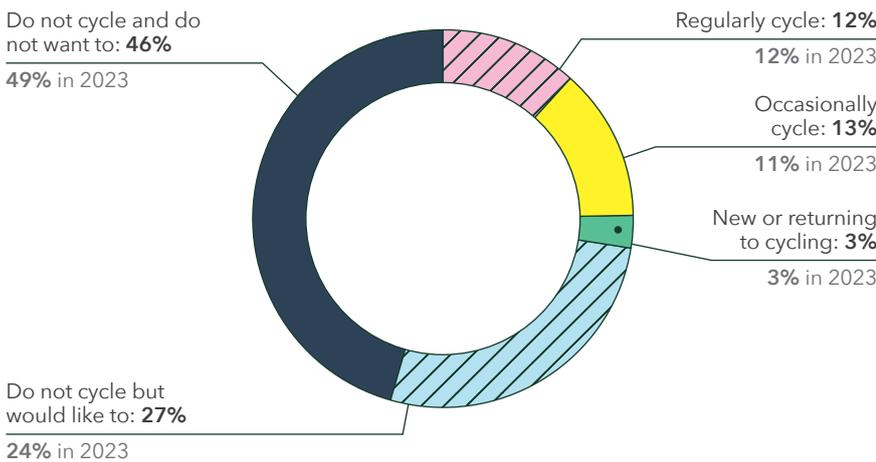


Many residents want to cycle

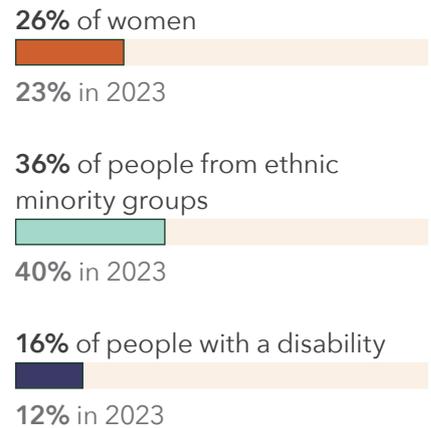
There is considerable appetite to start cycling from residents who don't already.

To meet this demand we must address safety, ensuring people have dedicated space for cycling, as well as supporting access to a cycle, training, cycle parking, and better integration of cycling with public transport.

How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?

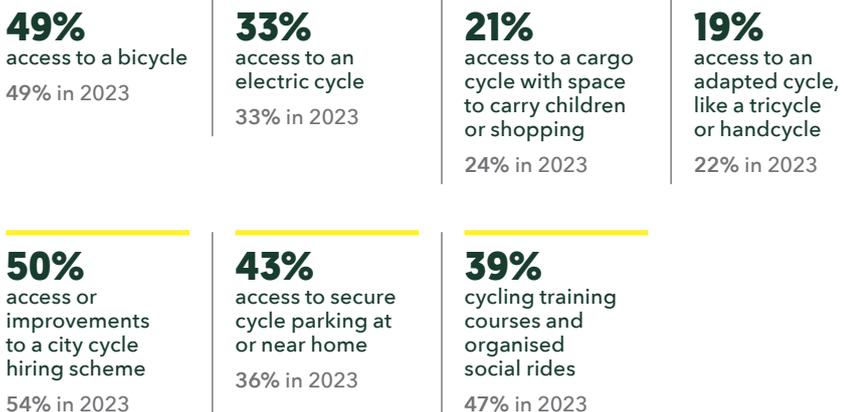


What proportion of residents said they 'do not cycle but would like to'

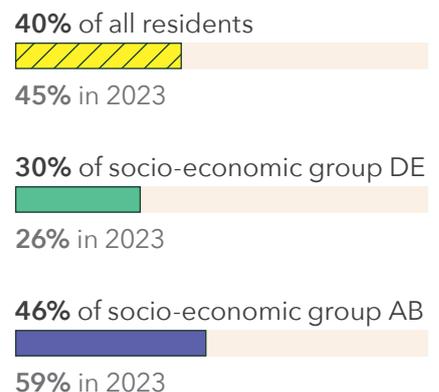


Residents want more support to cycle

What percentage of residents think that these kinds of support would help them start cycling or to cycle more?



Proportions of residents with access to an adult cycle



Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

People want networks of dedicated and safe cycle paths, cycle parking and better integration with public transport.

In the area there are:

What percentage of residents would be helped to start cycling or to cycle more by better facilities?

Among residents:

6% of households

are within 125 metres of either traffic-free cycle paths away from the road, cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, or signposted routes along quieter streets

The area has **10 km** of cycle paths level with the footpath, distinguished by a different surface

40 km
of traffic-free cycle paths away from the road

18 km
of cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

0.3 km
of signposted routes along quieter streets

174
cycle parking spaces across 10 railway and bus stations

62%
more traffic-free cycle paths away from roads, like through parks or along waterways
64% in 2023

60%
more cycle paths along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians
62% in 2023

61%
more signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets
63% in 2023

58%
better links with public transport, like secure cycle parking at train stations, bus stops/stations
61% in 2023

92%
support improving and increasing local off-road walking, wheeling and cycling paths

73%
support building more cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic
69% in 2023

91%
support improving walking, wheeling and cycling access to bus stops and coach or rail stations



Cork Flower Studio

We first invested in a manual cargo bike, back in early 2020, as city centre deliveries were proving to be very time consuming. The cargo bike proved to be much faster, with bike lanes, access to pedestrian zones and being able to park right outside our destination.

We upgraded to an e-cargo bike in 2023 to allow us to travel that little bit further and it has also become my main mode of transport in and out of work.

It's also consistently the case that two runs on the bike is still faster than one run in the van. We cannot stress enough how convenient the bike is.

Neighbourhood solutions

Thriving places, centring children

Neighbourhoods should prioritise the needs and wellbeing of the people who live there and visit. They should be planned to support community, foster social connection, and be places where everyone feels welcome.

Designing neighbourhoods with children in mind means they work better for everyone.

Improving the journey to school

Schools are at the centre of many neighbourhoods and should be part of any plan to make neighbourhoods better.

This means working with schools to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling, but also improving the neighbourhood around schools to reduce traffic and improve footpaths, crossing points and cycle provision.

59% support



24% oppose



closing residential streets outside schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times

These are known as 'School Streets'.

0 schools

in the area have School Streets schemes

0 schools in 2023

88% support



6% oppose



reducing speed limits, improving crossing points and introducing protected cycle paths in school neighbourhoods

These are known as 'Safe Routes to School'.^[i]

18 schools

are in the Safer Routes to School programme

i. The Safer Routes to School schemes aim to provide distinctive colourful schools zones at the front of schools to prioritise children walking, wheeling and cycling, discourage vehicle drop-offs, and improve crossings and key links for children choosing active travel.

Giving children the independence to roam, play and develop

Neighbourhoods should be places for children to thrive. Well-designed neighbourhoods can give children freedom to move around, play and socialise, helping children's independence, social skills, and autonomy.

Average age when parents and carers would let children travel independently in their neighbourhood

12 years old
to walk or wheel

13 years old
to cycle

14 years old
to use public transport

82%

agree there is space for children to socialise and play

82% in 2023

Fewer children play out on their streets than ever before. Just **27%** of children said they regularly play outside their homes, compared to **71%** of those born between 1946 and 1964.

Save the Children, Summer of Play campaign survey, 2022.



Residents support child-safe neighbourhoods

Adults support child-safe neighbourhoods, including traffic-reduction targets and measures to reduce through traffic and traffic speed, but this must be done fairly.

59%

of residents think that their streets are not dominated by moving or parked motor vehicles

68% in 2023

84%

support setting traffic-reduction targets and taking action to achieve these

83% in 2023

83%

support low-traffic neighbourhoods

82% in 2023

18%

of the total length of unclassified roads in the area have nothing to prevent through traffic. This can result in rat running.^[i]

19% in 2023

Residents would find fewer motor vehicles on their streets useful to:

75% walk or wheel more



56% cycle more



83%

support reducing speed limits on local roads in built-up areas to 30 km/h speed limits

10%

of the area's streets should typically have traffic travelling at speeds below 30 km/h (excluding motorways)

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

77% walk or wheel more



56% cycle more



Everyone should feel welcome in their neighbourhood

Improvements to neighbourhoods must also recognise the needs of adults, for example women, people with a disability and people from ethnic minority groups.

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

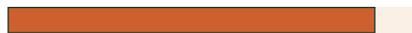
89%

of all residents



91% in 2023

89% of women



91% in 2023

89% of men



91% in 2023

89% of people from ethnic minority groups



95% in 2023

89% of white people



91% in 2023

76% of people with a disability



90% in 2023

89% of people without a disability



91% in 2023

87% of socio-economic group DE



85% in 2023

90% of socio-economic group AB



94% in 2023

83%

agree they regularly chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello

83% in 2023

87%

feel able to participate in making their neighbourhood a better place to live

89% in 2023

i. Based on analysis by CycleStreets www.lowtrafficneighbourhoods.org. Low-use minor roads are those classed as 'less significant minor roads' on OpenStreetMap.

Developing the area

Improving walking, wheeling and cycling



Active Travel is an excellent way to get around, allowing people to stay fit, reduce pollution, and save money all at the same time. It benefits both individuals and the environment.

The Cork Metropolitan Area includes all of Cork City Council (CCC) and parts of Cork County Council (CCO) areas. The National Transport Authority (NTA) works closely with these local authorities to deliver a wide range of Active Travel projects. This includes creating segregated cycle lanes, widening footpaths, constructing new walking and cycling bridges, and installing additional pedestrian crossings. The NTA's Active Travel Programme is guided by the goals outlined in the Government's Climate Action Plan 2023. One of the plan's key objectives is to expand walking and cycling networks so that walking, cycling, and public transport account for 50% of all journeys by 2030.

Projects are funded by the Department of Transport through the NTA's Active Travel Programme and are managed and delivered by the local authorities. Cork City Council established an Active Travel team in 2011 to oversee NTA-funded projects, and up to the end of 2024, €158 million has been invested in Active Travel schemes. Cork County Council joined the programme in 2012 and has invested €86 million to date. Since 2020, investment levels have increased significantly, delivering numerous projects that enhance connectivity and provide more opportunities for walking and cycling across the metropolitan area.

One of the plan's key objectives is to expand walking and cycling networks so that walking, cycling, and public transport account for 50% of all journeys by 2030.



Cork TFI Bikes Scheme

Cork's TFI Bikes scheme has seen sustained growth each year since 2021, with over 175,000 trips made in 2024. In 2025, 100 new e-bikes were added to the fleet, and new temporary stations were added to the network.



The Marina Promenade Improvement Scheme

The Marina Promenade Improvement Scheme was completed in 2024. This 2km stretch of shared space for pedestrian and cycle links to the Passage Greenway scheme which was completed in 2023, as well as the Blackrock public realm enhancement scheme delivered previously. At the other end of the scheme, it connects to light cycle segregation on Centre Park Road and Monahan Road towards the city centre.



Cork to Waterford Pathfinder Project

Cork County Council and Cork City Council have continued to develop the Cork to Waterford Pathfinder Project. Since the Dunkettle to Carrigwohill project began in 2020, over 8km of an Active Travel Corridor linking schools, small businesses and train stations has been delivered. It is expected that the final sections of this scheme will commence this year.



Safe Routes to School Schemes

In Cobh, a cluster of three SRTS schemes have been delivered, making the town a safer place for children to get to school. Similarly, in Crosshaven, the project's wider footpaths, planting and placemaking elements have been hugely popular with pupils, parents and teachers. The scheme delivered for Scoil Mhuire na nGrást in Belgooly has won several accolades including the Irish Landscape Institute 2024 President's Award.

Looking forward

Better places and streets for everyone



The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS), published in 2020, provides a comprehensive framework for developing an accessible, high-quality, and integrated transport network across the Cork Metropolitan Area. Its aim is to support the travel needs and sustainable growth of the region, recognising Cork as the major economic and population growth engine of the South-West.

A key objective of the strategy is to foster a strong cycling culture within the metropolitan area, including the delivery of a safe, comprehensive, attractive, and easy-to-navigate cycle network.

Cork City Council is actively expanding its Active Travel Network, linking existing infrastructure with new schemes. Planning permission has been granted for the city's section of the Pathfinder project, which will connect Kent Station to the Dunkettle area. Construction of this project began in 2025. At the Kent Station end, the scheme will tie into the River Lee cycle track, providing a continuous route through the city centre towards University College Cork. The Dunkettle Road (Phase 2) scheme will connect Glanmire to the Pathfinder network, while the Glanmire Greenway will also be completed, further enhancing connectivity.

In the city centre, two new pedestrian and cycling bridges will be constructed, linking South Main Street to the redeveloped Beamish and Crawford site. This will significantly improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. Cycle parking is also set to be upgraded, with new Sheffield stands and secure parking introduced at the City Hall Car Park.

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

75% on walking and wheeling



67% on cycling



88% on buses



76% on trains



71% on other forms of public transport



61% on driving



A key objective of the strategy is to foster a strong cycling culture within the metropolitan area

On the city's Northside, the Ballyvolane Sustainable Transport Corridor will provide enhanced facilities for walking and cycling and will connect to areas with significant new housing. The Knockpogue Scheme will improve accessibility for local residents and the many students attending schools nearby. Several other pedestrian and cycling schemes are either under construction or in the design phase.

Cork City Council will also establish a Bike Library in partnership with schools and sports clubs, allowing families to borrow e-cargo bikes for up to three months. Evidence from Dublin, where a similar scheme has been running since 2022, shows that such initiatives can be highly effective in encouraging sustainable travel behaviours.

Beyond the city, significant investments are planned across the metropolitan area. Carrigtwohill will be linked to Midleton Train Station, connecting with the TII-funded Midleton to Youghal Greenway. Midleton's

internal network will be integrated with the Ballinacurra to Midleton project. In Carrigaline, the Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan (TPREP) will continue, with the Bridgemount link already completed. The Little Island Multi-Modal Infrastructure project will provide safe cycling and walking infrastructure alongside bus priority measures, connecting to the Dunkettle to Carrigtwohill Pathfinder project.

In the south, the Lee to Sea project will link existing greenway sections to Passage West, including transforming a disused railway tunnel into pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The scheme will continue from the ferry to Monkstown and Ringaskiddy, creating a continuous corridor.

Taken together, these projects will create a comprehensive network of north-south and east-west Active Travel routes, knitting together the metropolitan area and enabling safe, convenient, and sustainable travel for all.



Ollie Sheehan

I work at Mary Gearys Childcare, based in the IDA Business Park in Carrigtwohill, and we cater for 450 children. We are very fortunate to have the cycleway at our front door.

Our setting is big into outdoors so, from a young age, children are out on the cycleway. This cycleway is used by us in several ways such as our four-seater buggies, preschool walkers going to the lake, our

school-aged children walking to school each morning and our 'cycle bus', where up to twenty-five children cycle to and from school each day. The cycleway connects us safely with the local schools, the lake and shortly, Glounthaune and beyond.

We have a large percentage of children in Carrigtwohill who walk, scooter or cycle to school because of this cycleway.

Notes on methodology

The attitudinal survey was conducted from April to August 2025 (May to July 2023) by independent research company Ipsos B&A.

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

All other data are sourced from our regional and local partners, national data sets or modelled and calculated by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. All locally-sourced data are correct as of 28 May 2025.

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

Trip estimates now include cycling trips as part of work for both 2025 and 2023. Previously published 2023 model estimates have been recalculated to include these and allow for direct comparison and using some different input data from more robust sources. This has also impacted walking trip estimates from 2023.

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 on data sources and calculations, including strengths and limitations of the survey and model methodology, are available at www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/walking-cycling-index

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust is the charity making it possible for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle.

Because people powered movement changes everything. Our health. Our wellbeing. Our world.

www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk

Funding and support

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Walk Wheel Cycle Trust is a registered charity in Ireland (20206824), in England and Cymru (326550), and Scotland (SC039263).

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