# Dublin Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index 2021

Published May 2022

NTA

Sustrans

## Foreword

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

The National Transport Authority (NTA) is delighted to publish the second iteration of the Dublin Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index (formerly Bike Life). While Bike Life primarily focused on cycling, the Walking and Cycling Index includes walking, wheeling and cycling with a greater emphasis on the pedestrian experience and environment.

The 2021 Walking and Cycling Index allows us to take stock of how the pandemic impacted the way in which we travel. While working from home reduced the commute for many, social and leisure walking and cycling trips increased. As people were forced to spend more time within 5km of their home, many experienced their local neighbourhoods anew, on foot or by bike. The Covid-19 pandemic forced us to reimagine our roads and streets, and the NTA and our partner local authorities responded to the challenge. Since 2019 we’ve added 43km of new cycle routes along roads and physically separated from traffic, or traffic-free and away from roads. We’ve also seen an increase in women and senior citizens cycling, and in the general perceptions of cycling safety.

It is remarkable that 95% of all Dublin Metropolitan Area residents walk and 25% of us cycle at least once a week. It highlights the importance and reach of the investments made by the NTA into active travel infrastructure.

It is useful and illuminating to have the health, economic and environmental benefits calculated throughout the report for both walking and cycling. 69,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions are saved annually through people choosing to walk instead of drive in the Dublin Metropolitan Area - equivalent to 980,000 people taking flights from Dublin to London.

The case studies within the report are thought-provoking and illustrate how active travel can contribute to an individual’s quality of life. The report also recognises that our neighbourhoods should be a place for children to thrive and it is fantastic that we are now measuring children’s independence and improving their journeys to school, which is a key focus for the NTA. In the last two years we have initiated and funded the introduction of 40 School Zones in Dublin and established a national Safe Routes to School Programme.

More people than ever want to cycle and walk as part of their daily journey. The information in this report allows us to provide the type of facilities and services that will allow them to do precisely that.

**Anne Graham, CEO, NTA**

## Contents

[Report summary 7](#_Toc103083839)

[Walking in the Dublin Metropolitan Area 11](#_Toc103083840)

[Cycling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area 14](#_Toc103083841)

[Benefits of walking 17](#_Toc103083842)

[Benefits of cycling 20](#_Toc103083843)

[Walking solutions 24](#_Toc103083844)

[Cycling solutions 27](#_Toc103083845)

[Neighbourhood solutions 30](#_Toc103083846)

[Developing the Dublin Metropolitan Area 33](#_Toc103083847)

[Looking forward 35](#_Toc103083848)

## The Walking and Cycling Index

The Walking and Cycling Index (formerly Bike Life) is the biggest assessment of walking and cycling in urban areas in the UK and Ireland. This is the first year walking has been included.

It is delivered by Sustrans in collaboration with 18 cities and urban areas. Each city[[1]](#footnote-1) reports on the progress made towards making both walking and cycling more attractive, everyday ways to travel.

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years. This is the second report from the Dublin Metropolitan Area produced in partnership with the National Transport Authority of Ireland. The data in this report predominantly comes from 2021 and includes local walking 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 over six weeks in June and July 2021 following Covid-19 travel restrictions across Ireland being lifted. Independent market research company Behaviour & Attitudes conducted the survey which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk or cycle. Across this report we have included comparisons to 2019 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 Walking and Cycling Index reports can be found at [**www.sustrans.org.uk/walkingcyclingindex**](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/walkingcyclingindex)

Figure: Map of the UK showing the cities participating in the Walking and Cycling Index: Aberdeen, Belfast, Bristol, Cardiff, Dublin Metropolitan Area, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greater Cambridge, Greater Manchester, Inverness, Liverpool City Region, Perth, Southampton City Region, Stirling, Tower Hamlets, Tyneside and West Midlands.

### Defining wheeling

We recognise some people, for example wheelchair or mobility scooter users, identify with the term wheeling instead of walking. Therefore we use the terms walking and wheeling together and consider walking and wheeling to include the use of mobility aids and pushchairs.

All walking survey responses within this report include responses from people who wheel. However, please note for graph labels we use walking as a shorthand for walking and wheeling.

## Report summary

Dublin Metropolitan Area

### Population[[2]](#footnote-2)

1,408,010

### Survey area

[Figure:] Map showing the area covered by the survey with Donabate, Swords, Kilcock, Blanchardstown, Dublin, Tallaght, Dun Laoghaire and Greystones highlighted. The area is approximately 969 square kilometres.

### The impact of the pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on how, when and the amount we travel, especially in relation to public transport and driving.

Impact of Covid-19 on the transport sector, Ireland Department of Transport, June 2021.

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

##### Walking

2019: 61%

2021: 64%

##### Driving[[3]](#footnote-3)

2019: 55%

2021: 38%

##### Public transport

2019: 19%

2021: 9%

##### Cycling

2019: 11%

2021: 9%

Participation in walking and wheeling on a regular basis has increased since 2019.

64%of residents walk at least five days a week (61% in 2019)

25%of residents cycle at least once a week (24% in 2019)

### Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

Many residents are less likely to walk or cycle regularly, for example elderly people and disabled people. However participation rates for cycling amongst women, the elderly and disabled are increasing.

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

73% of people aged 16–25

54% of people aged 66+

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

8% of people with a disability

27% of people without a disability

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

#### Proportion of residents who think walking safety is good

90% of socio-economic group AB

79% of socio-economic group DE

Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Association of Irish Market Research Organisations. 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.

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

59% of women

71% of men[[4]](#footnote-4)

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

83% of people from ethnic minority groups

92% of white people

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

Every year, walking and cycling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area:

* Prevents 3,207serious long-term health conditions
* Creates €1.1 billionin economic benefit for individuals and the region
* Saves 93,000 tonnesof greenhouse gas emissions

### Walking, wheeling and cycling help to tackle the climate emergency

Every day, walking and cycling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area takes up to 330,000 **cars off the road[[5]](#footnote-5)**

However, 194.4 millionjourneys up to five km are driven in the Dublin Metropolitan Area each year

If 80% of these journeys were walked or cycled it could save approximately 64,000 tonnesof greenhouse gas emissions[[6]](#footnote-6)

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

#### Percentage of residents who would like to see more government spending on:

61% on walking (61% in 2019)

63% on cycling (75% in 2019)

65% on public transport (71% in 2019)

37% on driving (34% in 2019)

### This would help support more liveable neighbourhoods

#### Among Dublin Metropolitan Area residents:

71% support, while 14% oppose, more cycle tracks along roads, physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

74% agree, while 12% disagree, increasing space for people socialising, walking and cycling on their local main street would improve their local area

84% support, while 3% oppose, the creation of more 20-minute neighbourhoods [[7]](#footnote-7)

82% agree, while 9% disagree, more measures to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour on the street or in public spaces would improve their local area

77% support, while 7% oppose, the creation of more low‑traffic neighbourhoods

60% agree, while 21% disagree, closing streets outside local schools to cars during school drop-off and pick-up times would improve their local area

## 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 2019.

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.

95% of all residents walk (96% in 2019)

64% of residents walk at least five days a week (61% in 2019)

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

##### Gender[[8]](#footnote-8)

66% of women (64% in 2019)

61% of men (58% in 2019)

##### Ethnicity

57% of people from ethnic minority groups (59% in 2019)

65% of white people (62% in 2019)

##### Age

73% of people aged 16–25 (70% in 2019)

61% of people aged 26–35 (57% in 2019)

68% of people aged 36–45 (59% in 2019)

61% of people aged 46–55 (59% in 2019)

65% of people aged 56–65 (67% in 2019)

54% of people aged 66+ (60% in 2019)

##### Disability

53% of people with a disability (65% in 2019)

65% of people without a disability (61% in 2019)

##### Socio-economic group[[9]](#footnote-9)

71% of AB (61% in 2019)

62% of C1 (63% in 2019)

56% of C2 (59% in 2019)

61% of DE (61% in 2019)

### Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

Important differences exist in how safe people feel when walking or wheeling. Safety includes both road and personal safety.

86%of residents think the level of safety for walking is good

74%of residents think the level of safety for children walking is good

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

##### Gender

87% of women

85% of men

##### Ethnicity

82% of people from ethnic minority groups

86% of white people

##### Age

91% of people aged 16–25

83% of people aged 26–35

88% of people aged 36–45

81% of people aged 46–55

85% of people aged 56–65

88% of people aged 66+

##### Disability

82% of people with a disability

86% of people without a disability

##### Socio-economic group

90% of AB

87% of C1

82% of C2

79% of DE

89%of residents think their local area overall is a good place to walk

### Quote from Joanne Mulhall, Commuter

My five-year-old daughter goes to Harold’s Cross National School. We used to go by car but now we walk there. I realise it takes the exact same time as going by car, between 10 and 15 minutes.

Earlier this year the school put in pencil-shaped bollards to stop cars parking in the school zone. It’s a residential area and parents just parked in the yellow zig-zag areas and across people’s gates. The bollards have helped reduce parking outside the school, although it may have just pushed the problem along the road.

Most parents would already walk to the school. The bollards gave me the nudge to walk as it became more of a hassle to find a parking space. My daughter prefers to go this way as she likes to take her scooter.

I’ve seen the benefits of walking. My step counter has gone way up even though it’s just a short walk and it’s made me walk to other places like the park instead of driving.

## 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 at similar levels since 2019. Despite a much larger potential, only 25% of people cycle regularly.[[10]](#footnote-10)

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. Encouragingly, perceptions of cycling safety have improved since 2019.[[11]](#footnote-11)

35% of all residents cycle (34% in 2019)

25% of all residents cycle at least once a week (24% in 2019)

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

##### Gender

18% of women (14% in 2019)

33% of men (35% in 2019)

##### Ethnicity

29% of people from ethnic minority groups (25% in 2019)

25% of white people (24% in 2019)

##### Age

35% of people aged 16–25 (40% in 2019)

31% of people aged 26–35 (29% in 2019)

31% of people aged 36–45 (26% in 2019)

24% of people aged 46–55 (23% in 2019)

15% of people aged 56–65 (13% in 2019)

10% of people aged 66+ (6% in 2019)

##### Disability

8% of people with a disability (5% in 2019)

27% of people without a disability (26% in 2019)

##### Socio-economic group

29% of AB (27% in 2019)

29% of C1 (31% in 2019)

17% of C2 (23% in 2019)

22% of DE (14% in 2019)

### Cycling safety and satisfaction

65% of all residents think the level of safety for cycling in their local area is good (47% in 2019)

56% of all residents think the level of safety for children cycling is good (37% in 2019)

67% of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to cycle (57% in 2019)

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

##### Gender

59% of women (39% in 2019)

71% of men (56% in 2019)

##### Ethnicity

70% of people from ethnic minority groups (58% in 2019)

64% of white people (46% in 2019)

##### Age

66% of people aged 16–25 (56% in 2019)

70% of people aged 26–35 (49% in 2019)

66% of people aged 36–45 (47% in 2019)

60% of people aged 46–55 (45% in 2019)

66% of people aged 56–65 (41% in 2019)

58% of people aged 66+ (42% in 2019)

##### Disability

67% of people with a disability (43% in 2019)

64% of people without a disability (47% in 2019)

##### Socio-economic group

65% of AB (43% in 2019)

70% of C1 (50% in 2019)

60% of C2 (53% in 2019)

59% of DE (45% in 2019)

### Quote from John Legge, Emergency Medicine Doctor

Since I was a child, I always cycled. For me it is just convenient and easy as a means of getting around. Working in emergency medicine, there is a lot of shift work and I often have early starts or late finishes, so public transport may not be up and running when my shifts end.

It’s nice to have the bike, it’s always reliable and I know how long my journey is going to take. It means my exercise for the day is done at the same time, so I get the benefits of that as well as fresh air.

## Benefits of walking

Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

The large numbers of walking and wheeling trips in the Dublin Metropolitan Area produce important health, economic and environmental benefits for everyone.

### Dublin Metropolitan Area residents walk or wheel 83 times around the world every day

526.4 millionwalking and wheeling trips were made in the Dublin Metropolitan Area in the past year, which adds up to

1.2 billion kilometres= 3.3 million kilometresa day.

This equates to each resident spending 11 dayswalking or wheeling continuously in the past year.

#### Annual walking and wheeling trips by purpose[[12]](#footnote-12)

Destination – adults only (eg work, school, shopping): 284,300,000 (54%)

School – children only: 29,600,000 (6%)

Enjoyment or fitness – adults and children (including running): 212,500,000 (40%)

### Walking and wheeling benefits residents and the local economy in the region

In the Dublin Metropolitan Area, the net annual economic benefit for individuals and society from all walking and wheeling trips is €796 million

Of this total, €169.8 millionis from people with a car choosing to walk or wheel for transport in the past year.

41c net benefit from each km walked or wheeled instead of driven

These figures are based upon monetising the costs and benefits of driving and walking. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, medical costs, work absenteeism, congestion, infrastructure, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases and taxation.

### Walking and wheeling unlock health benefits for everyone

#### Walking in the Dublin Metropolitan Area prevents 2,731 serious long-term health conditions each year[[13]](#footnote-13)

##### Cases prevented

Hip fracture: 1,017

Dementia: 787

Depression: 356

Coronary heart disease: 294

Other conditions: 277

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

Saving the HSE in the Dublin Metropolitan Area €24.7 million per year

equivalent to the cost of 450,000 GP appointments

These figures are 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 walking prevent 547 early deaths annuallywhich is valued at €2.69 billion

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

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

630,000 kg of NOxand 25,000 kg of particulates(PM10 and PM2.5)

79% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area

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

69,000 tonnesof 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 taking flightsfrom Dublin to London Heathrow.

Transport now accounts for 20% of the Republic of Ireland’s greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2019, transport emissions went up by 137%, while overall emissions went up by just 10%.

Department of Transport, Transport Trends 2020, An Overview of Ireland’s Transport Sector.

### Walking and wheeling keep the Dublin Metropolitan Area moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.[[14]](#footnote-14) This helps to keep the Dublin Metropolitan Area moving for all road users.

290,000 return walking tripsare made daily in the Dublin Metropolitan Area by people that could have used a car.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back 1,400 kilometresequivalent to the distance from Dublin to Skibbereen and back, twice over.

## Benefits of cycling

Why everyone gains when more people cycle

### Dublin Metropolitan Area residents cycle 32 times around the world every day

There has been a reduction in all non-leisure trips since 2019 as more people stayed at home. However, cycling levels increased for leisure trips.

#### Annual cycling trips by purpose in the Dublin Metropolitan Area[[15]](#footnote-15)

##### 2021: 90.2 million trips

Work: 25,700,000 (28%)

School, college or university (adults): 4,200,000 (5%)

School (children): 3,400,000 (4%)

Shopping, personal business and social trips: 16,800,000 (19%)

Leisure: 40,100,000 (44%)

This adds up to 467.9 million kilometres= 1.3 million kilometres a day

##### 2019: 86.6 million trips

Work: 24,100,000 (28%)

School, college or university (adults): 5,600,000 (7%)

School (children): 3,400,000 (4%)

Shopping, personal business and social trips: 20,600,000 (24%)

Leisure: 33,000,000 (38%)

This adds up to 479.3 million **kilometres** = 1.3 million **kilometres** a day

### Cycling benefits residents and the local economy in the region

In the Dublin Metropolitan Area, the net annual economic benefit for individuals and society from all cycling trips is €311.4 million**[[16]](#footnote-16)** (€329.3 millionin 2019)

Of this total, €162.1 millionis from people with a car choosing to cycle for transport in the past year. (€175.4 millionin 2019)

€1.14net benefit from each km cycled instead of driven (€1.09in 2019)

These figures are based upon monetising the costs and benefits of driving and cycling. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, medical costs, work absenteeism, congestion, infrastructure, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases and taxation.

### Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

#### Cycling in the Dublin Metropolitan Area prevents 476 serious long-term health conditions each year[[17]](#footnote-17) (491 in 2019)

##### Cases prevented

Hip fracture: 154

Dementia: 109

Depression: 103

Coronary heart disease: 53

Other conditions: 57

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

Saving the HSE in the Dublin Metropolitan Area €4.5 million per year (€4.6 millionin 2019)

equivalent to the cost of 82,000 GP appointments (84,000in 2019)

These figures are 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 42 early deaths annually (48 in 2019)

which is valued at €205 million (€238 millionin 2019)

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.

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

160,000 kg of NOx (180,000 kgin 2019)

And 7,500 kg of particulates(PM10 and PM2.5) (8,500 kgin 2019)

79% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area

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

24,000 tonnes (27,000 tonnes in 2019) 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 taking flights from Dublin to London Heathrow. (380,000 people in 2019)

Transport now accounts for 20% of the Republic of Ireland’s greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2019, transport emissions went up by 137%, while overall emissions went up by just 10%.

Department of Transport, Transport Trends 2020, An Overview of Ireland’s Transport Sector.

### Cycling keeps the Dublin Metropolitan Area moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.[[18]](#footnote-18) This helps to keep the Dublin Metropolitan Area moving for all road users.

48,000 return cycling tripsare made daily in the Dublin Metropolitan Area by people that could have used a car. (56,000in 2019)

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back 229 kilometres equivalent to the distance from Dublin to Derry/Londonderry. (166 kilometresin 2019)

## Walking solutions

What would help make walking and wheeling better?

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

Ideally walking should be the most attractive transport option for the vast majority of short journeys. A city can support this by ensuring many of the things people need are found near to where people live. The walking environment should be safe, comfortable, welcoming and attractive.

Neighbourhoods where many facilities can be reached on foot are known as 20-minute neighbourhoods. You can walk from your home to many of the things you need on a regular basis and back again within 20 minutes. This equates to around 800m each way.

31%of Dublin Metropolitan Area households are in neighbourhoods of at least 40 dwellings per hectare. These are or can become 20-minute neighbourhoods.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Lower density neighbourhoods have too few people to make much local business or public transport viable.[[20]](#footnote-20)

84%agree they can easily get to many places they need to visit without having to drive

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

70%More shops and everyday services, such as banks and post offices, close to your home

68%More government services, such as doctors surgeries and schools, close to your home

75%More parks or green spaces close to your home

77%More things to see and do close to your home, eg cafés or entertainment venues

#### Proportion of households within an 800m walk or wheel of the following amenities and services

Food shop 77%

Park or space for recreation 85%

Primary school 69%

Doctors surgery 39%

Post Office 40%

Railway station or tram stop 12%

A mix of cultural and leisure venues[[21]](#footnote-21) 83%

Bus stop (within 400m) 81%

### Residents want better streets

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

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

74% Wider pavements

76% More frequent road crossings, with reduced wait times

79% Nicer places along streets to stop and rest, eg more benches, trees and shelters

77% Better accessibility, eg level surfaces, dropped kerbs at crossing points

72% Fewer cars parked on the pavement

72% Less fear of crime or antisocial behaviour in your area

##### In the Dublin Metropolitan Area:

55% of National and Regional roads have a pavement width greater than 3m[[22]](#footnote-22)

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

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

82%of residents agree more measures to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour on the street or in public spaces would improve their local area

### Quote from Tom Feeney, Chairman of Blackrock Business Network

Under Covid measures, Blackrock Village Main Street was developed into a one-way system for vehicles with a contra-flow cycle lane and widened footpaths. This created opportunities for safer physical distancing and active travel among pedestrians and cyclists in Blackrock Village in south Dublin.

It’s turned out great, it’s beautiful. This is what Blackrock needed. All you had to do was come here over the weekend. I was here on Saturday and Sunday on several occasions just to monitor what was happening. And I think the big word I would say is vibrancy.

The place was buzzing. There were people sitting on chairs, eating, chatting. No sooner did a group of people leave a bench or a chair than another group came in. Previously it was just lacking in life. The place was just soulless. Suddenly there’s a new vibrancy, a new atmosphere has been created.

## 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?

Regularly cycle: 17% (17% in 2019)

Occasionally cycle: 15% (12% in 2019)

New or returning to cycling: 3% (3% in 2019)

Do not cycle but would like to: 22% (21% in 2019)

Do not cycle and do not want to: 43% (47% in 2019)

#### What proportion of residents said they ‘do not cycle but would like to’?

25% of women (23% in 2019)

27% of people from ethnic minority groups (32% in 2019)

23% of people with a disability (23% in 2019)

### Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

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

65% More traffic-free cycle routes away from roads, eg through parks or along waterways (70% in 2019)

63% More cycle tracks along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians (69% in 2019)

64% More signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets (68% in 2019)

57% Better links with public transport (eg secure cycle parking at train /DART/LUAS stations) (61% in 2019)

Dublin has 2,392 free cycle parking spaces across all 118 railway stations and tram stops[[23]](#footnote-23) (2,647 in 2019)

##### The Dublin Metropolitan Area has[[24]](#footnote-24):

95 **km** of traffic-free cycle routes away from the road[[25]](#footnote-25) (86 **km** in 2019)

118 **km** of cycle tracks physically separated from traffic and pedestrians[[26]](#footnote-26) (84 **km** in 2019)

2 **km** of signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets (1 **km** in 2019)

7%of households are within 125m of these routes

226 **km** of cycle tracks level with the footpath, distinguished by a different surface (224 **km** in 2019)

71%of residents support building more cycle tracks physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic (84% in 2019)

### Residents want more support to cycle

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

49% Cycling training courses and organised social rides (51% in 2019)

59% Access or improvements to a city cycle sharing scheme

46% Access to secure cycle storage at or near home

53% Access to a bicycle

36% Access to an electric cycle (47% in 2019)

28% Access to a cargo cycle (with space to carry children or shopping) (39% in 2019)

28% Access to an adapted cycle, eg a tricycle or handcycle (36% in 2019)

#### Dublin Metropolitan Area cycle share schemes[[27]](#footnote-27)

2,460shared cycles (2,100 in 2019)

117cycle share stations (116 in 2019)

1,635**,**700annual trips (3,947**,**677 in 2019)

#### Reported cycle thefts

There were 3,789 reported cycle thefts in the Dublin Metropolitan Area in 2020/21. (3,997 in 2019/20)

For every 154people who own an adult cycle in the Dublin Metropolitan Area, there was 1reported cycle theft in the past year.

There is a public cycle parking space for every 31 people who cycle in the Dublin Metropolitian Area. (38 in 2019)

#### Cycle access

52%of residents have access to an adult pedal cycle (53% in 2019)

21%of households are within 800m of a cycle shop[[28]](#footnote-28)

### Quote from Clodagh, e-bike User

I was born with hip dysplasia which if undiagnosed can lead to lifetime disability and impaired mobility. For me, cycling is a way to overcome that barrier because walking can be difficult.

My bicycle is my lifeline. I have always cycled to work but three years ago I moved to the suburbs and got an e-bike This was revolutionary for me because I could continue the commute to work, a round trip of about 20 km. One of the biggest challenges is finding bike parking in the city centre within a reasonable walking distance to places. In my workplace I am lucky there is underground parking available.

You wouldn’t leave your laptop or mobile out in the weather all day because it affects the battery. The same goes for e-bikes. As they get more popular, I hope that parking facilities get better and increase, so more people of all abilities will bike to work and to town.

## 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

91% of residents

90% of women

92% of men

83% of people from ethnic minority groups

92% of white people

90% of people with a disability

91% of people without a disability

88% of socio-economic group DE

92% of socio-economic group AB

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

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

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

71% Walk more

62% Cycle more (59% in 2019)

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.[[29]](#footnote-29)

73% agree that restricting through-traffic on local residential streets would make their area a better place. (70% in 2019)

23% of all streets in the Dublin Metropolitan Area should typically have traffic travelling at speeds below 30km/h.[[30]](#footnote-30) (23% in 2019)

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

69% Walk more

62% Cycle more (56% in 2019)

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

74%agree increasing space for people socialising, walking and cycling on their local main street would improve their local area (82% in 2019)

85%agree they regularly chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello

77%support low-traffic neighbourhoods

### Quote from Brian Farrelly, D7 Cycle Bus

Brian Farrelly is a parent and part of the D7 Cycle Bus that escorts children to safely cycle to school five days a week.

“We need traffic calming and better junctions for bikes. You must sit in the middle of the road and cars are not inherently slow or friendly at these junctions. Ultimately we need segregated cycle lanes so that the children can cycle safely to school.

To have safe neighborhoods we need bikes and outdoor activities to be normalised, such as using a bike or walking to the park as opposed to driving. We need more bike parking, it’s funny how few bike parks there are in Dublin. More places to lock your bike would make places more accessible and friendly. And I think a 30km speed limit in the city would be really good, as well as bus drivers doing cycling courses so they can understand how dangerous it is when they swerve or don’t pay attention.

Cycling is something we all enjoy as a family. As it is our primary method of transport for school and socialising. It is our number one source of exercise and our chance to do things together”.

### Neighbourhoods must be designed with children in mind

Neighbourhoods should be places for children to thrive: to grow up in, live their lives in and grow old in. 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.

11 **years old** average age when people living with children would let them walk or cycle independently in their neighbourhood.

Over 80% of seven-year-olds in Germany are allowed to go alone to places within walking distance, other than school (parents’ responses).[[31]](#footnote-31)

82% of residents agree there is space for children to socialise and play

52% of households are within 800m of a children’s playground

#### Among Dublin Metropolitan Area residents:

60% agree, while 21% disagree, closing streets outside local schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times would improve their local area

58% agreed, 24% disagreed, in 2019

These kind of closures are known as ‘School Streets’.

2permanent School Streets schemes exist in the Dublin Metropolitan Area.[[32]](#footnote-32) But see School Zones on [page 33](#_Developing_the_Dublin).

## Developing the Dublin Metropolitan Area

Recent walking, wheeling, cycling and neighbourhood changes

The Covid-19 outbreak in 2020 resulted in significant changes to our trip making, via travel restrictions, working from home and social distancing requirements. The pandemic brought increased focus on provision for cycling and walking as healthy, sustainable forms of travel, as public transport carrying capacity was reduced to as little as 25% in line with social distancing requirements.

Local authorities responded to the challenge and €63.5million was invested in walking and cycling projects in 2020 in the Greater Dublin area, representing more than a threefold increase in funding from 2019. An additional 43km of protected cycle facilities were provided in the metropolitan area. Footpath buildouts increased space and comfort for pedestrians in many urban centres and Dublin City Council reduced all of their signal times to reduce pedestrian wait time and crowding.

As local neighbourhoods became more of a focus for Dubliners, the National Transport Authority (NTA) funded local authorities to support local businesses and improve the urban realm through road space reallocation for outdoor seating and planting. This resulted in a ‘makeover’ for many neighbourhood centres including Dundrum, Blackrock, Malahide and many Dublin city centre streets where space for people replaced space for cars.

Dublin City Council also installed over 40 School Zones to slow traffic and restrict vehicular drop-off in the immediate vicinity of a school, using eye-catching surface treatments and pencil-shaped bollards. The success of these School Zones projects prompted a new national Safer Routes to School programme, which was launched in March 2021 to accelerate the delivery of walking, scooting and cycling infrastructure on access routes to schools, to provide ‘front of school’ treatments, and to increase bike parking at schools.

To resource the delivery of active travel projects, the NTA worked with the Department of Transport to secure 145 additional staff positions in the Greater Dublin Area local authorities. To assist in the training of active travel practitioners, the NTA ran a 12 week active travel series in collaboration with Engineers Ireland. This series is available online: [www.engineersireland.ie/Professionals/Communities-Groups/Active-Travel-Series](http://www.engineersireland.ie/Professionals/Communities-Groups/Active-Travel-Series)

### Interim Liffey Active Travel Route

This 2.5km scheme included temporary widening of footways and the installation of protected cycleways using kerbing, bollards and planters along the river quays and reconfiguring of traffic signals along the corridor.

### Hartstown Ring Road Active Travel Scheme

This 4km route involved the upgrade of the existing cycle lanes on Hartstown Road to include an innovative extruded kerb to protect cyclists from vehicular traffic. Additional pedestrian crossing and junction improvements were added in a subsequent phase. The cycle and pedestrian facilities link the surrounding residential area to schools and workplaces.

### Wellington Lane Active Travel Scheme

This 2km scheme involved upgrading existing cycle tracks with bollard protection to segregate and protect cyclists from vehicular traffic. Segregated cycle facilities and new pedestrian crossings were also provided at two main roundabouts.

### Coastal Mobility Route

The 4.5km Coastal Mobility Route is a two-way segregated cycle lane with buff surfacing, extending over 3.6km in two uninterrupted sections from Newtown Avenue in Blackrock to Coal Quay Bridge, and from Queen’s Road to the Forty Foot in Sandycove, and a further 0.9km section through quiet streets. This project was made possible through the reallocation of road space and through the introduction of a one-way system for vehicles along the route, providing safety and quality improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. Approximately 20,000 cyclists are utilising the route each week.

## Looking forward

Better streets and places for everyone

The Programme for Government – Our Shared Future sets out an ambitious and wide-ranging set of commitments in relation to active travel, supported by an increased multi-annual budgetary allocation amounting to some €1.8 billion national investment in active travel over the lifetime of the Government.

To deliver this level of investment the National Transport Authority (NTA) worked with the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) local authorities on a planned infrastructure plan to 2025 which has 3 main components:

1. Cycle facilities delivered on main radial routes under the BusConnects programme
2. Prioritised GDA Cycle Network on non-BusConnects routes
3. Rapid deployment of interim cycle facilities programme.

This infrastructure programme will be supported by:

* Increased resources funded by the Department of Transport to progress the delivery of active travel projects. Recruitment processes are well underway in individual local authorities and staff numbers in active travel teams across the Greater Dublin Area have more than doubled in the past 12 months.
* An updated National Cycle Manual and subsequent training of relevant stakeholders in relation to cycle design. This will be available in 2022.
* Additional training, workshops and site visits.
* The Green Schools Travel, Smarter Travel Workplace, Campus Behavioural Change, and Safe Routes to Schools programmes.

Specific projects that are planned to be completed or substantially complete by the next iteration of the Walking and Cycling Index in 2024 include:

* The Dodder Greenway in South Dublin
* The extension of the Liffey Cycle Route to the Docklands
* Royal Canal Greenway from the Liffey to Castleknock and from Maynooth to Confey
* Broadmeadow Way from Malahide to Donabate
* Sandyford Area Cycle network
* South Tallaght Cycle Network
* St Cronins Road in Swords
* Churchfields Road in Mulhuddart
* Rathingle River Vallley Swords Cycle Scheme
* Clonskeagh road UCD to Ashtons
* 3 Large Scale Active Travel School Routes Dun Laoghaire
* Celbridge bridge
* Kilcock Road and Celbridge Road in Maynooth.

In addition the NTA are pursuing Rapid Deployment schemes with local authorities, which are schemes that utilise road space reallocation and/or innovative construction techniques to deliver schemes faster than traditional construction approaches

### Quote from Reka Kurtos, Small Business Owner

Reka Kurtos invested in an e-cargo bike for her successful floristry business, Annie Bloom, in South Dublin in February 2021.

“My main motivation in getting the e-cargo bike was to reduce my carbon footprint and be more eco-friendly. It has also turned out to be very convenient, we can get through traffic quicker and it is a healthier form of transport.

The e-cargo bike goes much further than you’d think. We can use it to deliver to the whole southside between the seafront and M50, it is a very wide radius. I see it as a long-term investment. I needed to employ a second member of staff so we have one delivery driver and one for the e-cargo bike. The delivery van goes to further destinations but the e-cargo bike is much more flexible as we can take orders right up until 4 or 5pm to deliver locally.

Our customers love it and some even ask to have their flowers delivered by the e-cargo bike. We have a custom-made box of vase holders within the bike which we can alter depending on the delivery. It can hold between six and twelve vases.

Some of our customers are also other business owners and they ask us about the e-cargo bike and are interested in it for their own businesses, so I definitely see it as the future for deliveries.”

## Notes on methodology:

The attitudinal survey was conducted over six weeks in June and July 2021 by independent market research company Behaviour & Attitudes.

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

2019 survey data was collected from June to July 2019, also by Behaviour & Attitude, following the same methodology.

Trip estimates use a model developed by Sustrans. When comparing to other travel surveys, some variation may exist in the proportion of journeys cycled 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/walkingcyclingindex](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/walkingcyclingindex)

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. Join us on our journey. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

Sustrans is a registered charity in the UK No. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)

© Sustrans May 2022

© Photos: Julien Behal (page 2 headshot). Kieran Ryan / National Transport Authority (page 6). Joanne Mulhall (page 7). Blackrock Business Network (pages 15, 18). Brian Farrelly (page 19). Reka Kurtos (page 23). All other photos: Kieran Ryan

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

Printed with 100% renewable energy using an alcohol-free process and vegetable-based inks

Walking and Cycling Index Dublin Metropolitan Area is funded by the National Transport Authority. The project is co-ordinated by Sustrans, with assistance from The Freshfield Foundation.

NTA

Sustrans

1. City is used as a shorthand for Walking and Cycling Index cities, city regions and boroughs. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2016 Census data. This is the most recent available data for the Dublin Metropolitan Are [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle. In 2019, questions did not include traveling by motorcycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Based on walking and cycling by residents that live in a household with a car. Does not include leisure cycling or leisure walking trips. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Based upon each journey being 2.5 km in length. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See definition on [page 24](#_Residents_want_more). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Association of Irish Market Reserach Organisations. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Based on people who cycle at least once a week. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See Bike Life, 2019 Dublin Metropolitan Area report. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Trips for enjoyment or fitness include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment). School trips are shown separately for children only. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Litman, 2021. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Benefit has gone down despite more trips, because of a smaller proportion of transport trips overall, and a smaller proportion of those transport trips being made people with a car in their household. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Changes to the benefits depend not only on the number of trips and distance travelled, but also on who is travelling [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Litman, 2021. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. UK Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021, National Model Design Code. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Sustrans, 2017. Linking Active Travel and Public Transport to Housing Growth and Planning. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. A minimum of three distinct types of cultural and leisure venues, eg cafés, pubs, bingo halls, cinemas, museums. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. National and Regional roads are main roads. Pavement widths are calculated using OS Mastermap Topographic data © Copyright Ordnance Survey Ireland - 2021/OSi\_NMA\_180. Pavement width does not account for obstructions, such as bus stops or litter bins. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Some stations offer secure cycle storage that requires a fee. These have not been included here, but were included in 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. To ensure comparability, figures given are correct as of 26 May 2021 for all city reports. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Part of the change in route length figures is due to the tightening up of mapping against the Walking and Cycling Index criteria. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. This does not include ‘pop-up’ cycle tracks installed during the pandemic. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. © DublinBikes, BleeperBikes and Moby cycle hire data. 2021 data for July 2020–June 2021 and 2019 data for July 2018–June 2019. Number of cycle share stations are for Dublin Bikes only. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. © OpenStreetMap contributors. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Based on analysis by CycleStreets [www.lowtrafficneighbourhoods.org](http://www.lowtrafficneighbourhoods.org). Low-use minor roads are those classed as ‘less significant minor roads’ on OpenStreetMap. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Excludes motorways. Source: NAVSTREETS Speed Category data, from NAVTEQ data set. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Children’s Independent Mobility: an international comparison and recommendations for action, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Figure given is correct as of 26 May 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)