

Waterford Metropolitan Area

Walking and Cycling Index 2023

Published March 2024



Foreword

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



**Cllr. Joe Conway,
Mayor, Waterford
City & County
Council:**

As Mayor of Waterford City and County Council, I am pleased to welcome the first Waterford Metropolitan

Area Walking and Cycling Index. This report, which covers both the County Waterford and County Kilkenny areas of the city, provides useful insights into the behaviours and opinions of residents towards walking and cycling. As a long-term resident, I have viewed at first hand and with satisfaction, the growth in active travel. The enclosed data underscores the strong level of support in Waterford for walking and cycling.

This report indicates that there is broad public support for active travel investment in Waterford, with 68% of residents wanting to see more investment in walking and wheeling, and 63% wanting to see more investment in cycling, to create a more sustainable, liveable city, where people and businesses can thrive.

Waterford City and County Council, supported by the National Transport Authority, have done some great work in the past number of years with many more projects planned. Waterford's famous Greenway now stretches right into the heart of the city via the recent completed Bilberry to City Centre Link.

A new sustainable transport bridge is currently being built across the River Suir in Waterford City Centre to connect the Waterford Greenway to the North Docks area and the Greenway between Waterford City and New Ross.

The benefits and support for active travel in the Metropolitan area are clear from this report, and Waterford City and County Council will continue with efforts to make Waterford a healthy, sustainable, and attractive place for all.

I welcome publication of this report and fully endorse its findings.

**Cllr. Michael Doyle,
Kilkenny County
Council:**



As Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, I welcome the Waterford Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index. The report gives us a great sense of what type of investment and infrastructure people in Ferrybank and South Kilkenny want and will benefit the forthcoming Ferrybank Mobility Management Plan. Projects like the South East Greenway connecting New Ross to the heart of the new North Quays will strengthen links between Kilkenny and Waterford in a sustainable and attractive manner.



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The Walking and Cycling Index

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

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

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years. This is the first report from the Waterford Metropolitan Area produced in partnership with the National Transport Authority of Ireland. The data in this report comes from 2023 and includes local walking, wheeling and cycling data, modelling and an independent survey of 1,105 residents aged 16 or above in the Waterford Metropolitan Area. The survey was conducted from May to July 2023. Independent market research company Behaviour & Attitudes conducted the survey, which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

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

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



Defining wheeling

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

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

Headlines

Waterford Metropolitan Area

Populationⁱ

66,555

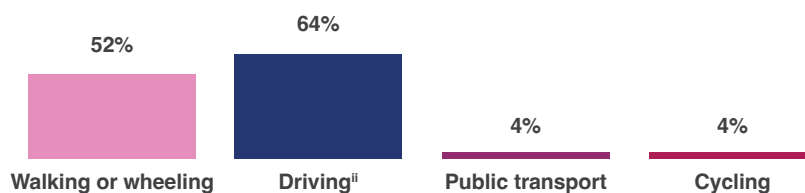
Survey area



Frequency of different modes of travel

Participation in walking and wheeling on a regular basis is good, but participation for cycling is low.

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



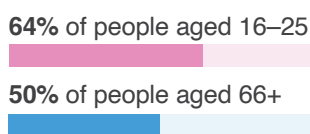
52%
of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week

16%
of residents cycle at least once a week

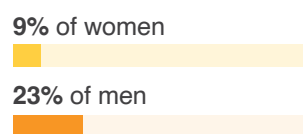
Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

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

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



Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a weekⁱⁱⁱ

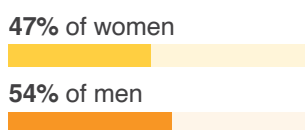


Not all residents feel safe and welcome in their neighbourhood

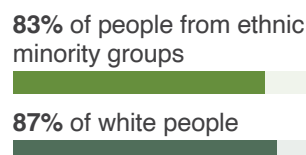
Proportion of residents who think walking or wheeling safety is good



Proportion of residents who think cycling safety is good



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



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

Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Every day, walking, wheeling and cycling in the Waterford Metropolitan Area take up to nearly **16,000** cars off the road.^{iv} Each year in the Waterford Metropolitan Area these three modes combined:

+ Prevent

186

serious long-term health conditions



Create

€80.5 million

in economic benefit for individuals and the Waterford Metropolitan Area



Save

4,300 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions

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

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

Walk or wheel

53% more

3% less

Cycle

31% more

1% less

Take public transport

28% more

8% less

Drive

15% more

21% less

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

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

68% on walking and wheeling

63% on cycling

73% on public transport

38% on driving

Increased funding would help support more liveable neighbourhoods

Among Waterford Metropolitan Area residents:

76% support

10% oppose

more cycle paths along roads, physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

86% support

4% oppose

the creation of more 20-minute neighbourhoods^v

80% support

5% oppose

the creation of more low-traffic neighbourhoods^{vi}

79% agree

9% disagree

that increasing space for people socialising, walking, wheeling and cycling on their local main street would improve their local area

78% support

10% oppose

the ban on vehicles parking on the footpath

62% support

18% oppose

shifting investment from road building schemes to fund walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport

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



Walking in the Waterford Metropolitan Area

Walking and wheeling participation, safety and satisfaction

Walking and wheeling participation

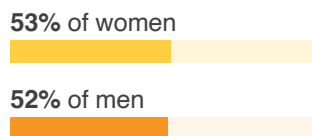
Walking and wheeling are often overlooked in transport. This is despite being an efficient use of space, good for our health and having no environmental impact.

93%
of all residents walk or wheel

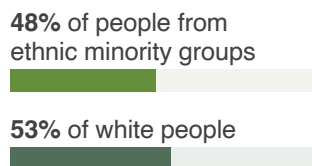
52%
of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week

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

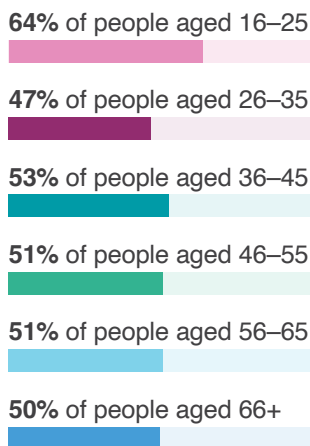
Genderⁱ



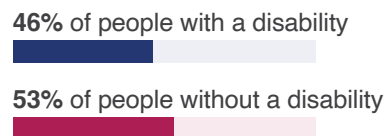
Ethnicity



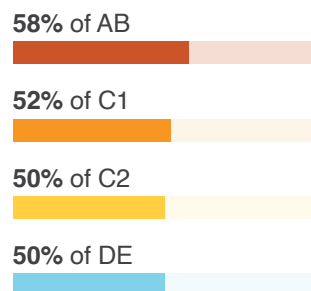
Age



Disability



Socio-economic groupⁱⁱ



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

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

Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

80%

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

67%

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

84%

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

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

Gender

81% of women



79% of men



Ethnicity

84% of people from ethnic minority groups



80% of white people



Age

84% of people aged 16–25



87% of people aged 26–35



83% of people aged 36–45



70% of people aged 46–55



79% of people aged 56–65



79% of people aged 66+



Disability

71% of people with a disability



81% of people without a disability



Socio-economic group

74% of AB



83% of C1



78% of C2



83% of DE



AnnMaria Langford, Retired firefighter



I walk because I can. As I get older, I've a greater appreciation of my physical abilities. Also, it's an opportunity for me to escape and have time to myself.

The benefits are physical, mental, and spiritual. I love walking into town which is a 30 minute walk from my house – no parking worries and a bit of exercise – win win!

Better street lighting and fewer potholes would greatly improve my experience as a pedestrian.



Cycling in the Waterford Metropolitan Area

Cycling participation, safety and satisfaction

Cycling participation

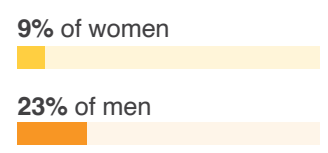
Cycling participation is not equal. Barriers to cycling can be far more pronounced for some people. Safety, including road safety and personal safety, is the single largest barrier to cycling.ⁱ

25%
of all residents cycle

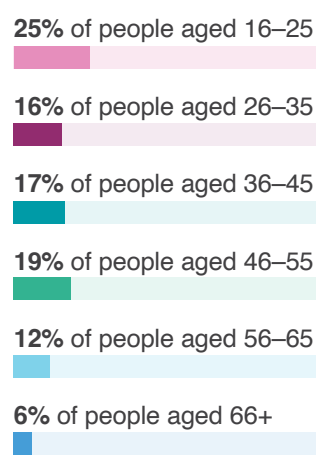
16%
of all residents cycle at least once a week

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

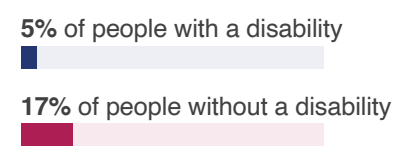
Gender



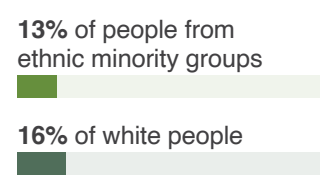
Age



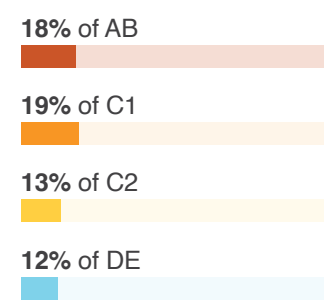
Disability



Ethnicity



Socio-economic group



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

Cycling safety and satisfaction

51%

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

44%

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

55%

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

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

Gender

47% of women



54% of men



Ethnicity

78% of people from ethnic minority groups



48% of white people



Age

57% of people aged 16–25



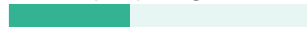
60% of people aged 26–35



57% of people aged 36–45



40% of people aged 46–55



46% of people aged 56–65



43% of people aged 66+



Disability

39% of people with a disability



52% of people without a disability



Socio-economic group

43% of AB



53% of C1



52% of C2



53% of DE



Anne-Marie Swift, Healthcare worker



I travel with a mixture of walking, driving and cycling. I got an electric bike recently, so I've been cycling more. It helps with the hills.

My cycle commute into work is about 3km. My motivation is partly for the environment, but also for my own health.

I don't like being car-dependent; I like having the freedom that cycling gives me.

Where I live, it's possible to walk or cycle into town because it's close, but the roads can be narrow. A lot of drivers park on the footpath, maybe because they don't have a driveway. So that can be an issue for walking, especially people with buggies.

Speed limit reduction and traffic calming would make a huge difference. A cycle lane on the way to work would help too!



Benefits of walking

Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

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

Waterford Metropolitan Area residents walk or wheel 4 times around the world every day

26.5 million

walking and wheeling trips were made in the Waterford Metropolitan Area in the past year, which adds up to

64.6 million kilometres

= 180,000 kilometres a day.

This equates to each resident spending

12 days

walking or wheeling continuously in the past year.

Annual walking and wheeling trips by purposeⁱ

Enjoyment or fitness – adults and children (including running):
13,200,000

50%

Destination – adults only (like work, school, shopping):
12,600,000

48%



School – children only:
650,000
2%

Walking and wheeling benefits residents and the local economy

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

€0.94 is saved

for each kilometre walked or wheeled instead of driven in the Waterford Metropolitan Area.

Over a year this adds up to

€20.7 million

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

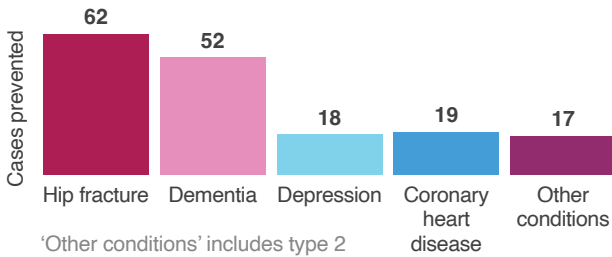
The total annual economic benefit from all trips walked and wheeled in the Waterford Metropolitan Area is

€73 millionⁱⁱ

i. Trips for enjoyment or fitness include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment). School trips are shown separately for children only. ii. This includes trips walked or wheeled for enjoyment or fitness, and trips to destinations by people with and without a car.

Walking and wheeling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Walking in the Waterford Metropolitan Area prevents 168 serious long-term health conditions each year



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

Saving the HSE in the Waterford Metropolitan Area
€2.4 million per year

 equivalent to the cost of
43,000 GP appointments

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

In the Waterford Metropolitan Area the physical activity benefits of walking

prevent 28 early deaths annually

which is valued at

€215 millionⁱⁱⁱ

Please note wheelchair or 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:

9,900 kg of NO_x

and

1,200 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5})

88% of residents agree the

air is clean in their local area



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

3,800 tonnes

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



54,000 people taking flights

from Dublin to London Heathrow

In 2021 transport accounted for **18%** of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2021 transport emissions rose by **114%**.

Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland's Final Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2021.

Walking and wheeling keeps the Waterford Metropolitan Area moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^{iv} This helps to keep the Waterford Metropolitan Area moving for all road users.

15,000 return walking and wheeling trips

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

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

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

73 kilometres

equivalent to the distance from Waterford City to Rosslare.



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



Benefits of cycling

Why everyone gains when more people cycle

Waterford Metropolitan Area residents cycle once around the world every day

1.3 million cycling trips

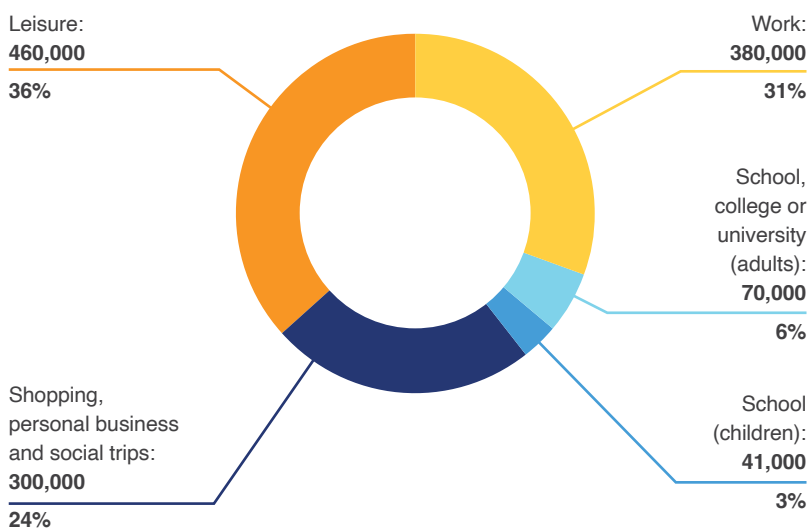
were made in the Waterford Metropolitan Area in the past year

This adds up to

8.3 million kilometres

= 23,000 kilometres a day

Annual cycling trips by purpose in the Waterford Metropolitan Areaⁱ



Cycling benefits residents and the local economy

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

€1.40 is saved

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

Over a year this adds up to

€4.2 million

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

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

€7.5 millionⁱⁱ

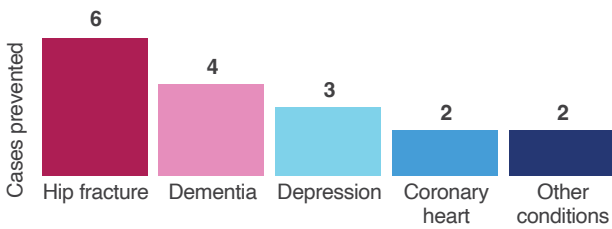
i. Leisure trips include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment).

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

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

Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Cycling in the Waterford Metropolitan Area prevents 18 serious long-term health conditions each year



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

Saving the HSE in the Waterford Metropolitan Area
€270,000 per year



equivalent to the cost of
4,900 GP appointments

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

In the Waterford Metropolitan Area the physical activity benefits of cycling

prevent 1 early death annually

which is valued at

€9.1 millionⁱⁱⁱ

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

1,200 kg of NO_x

and

145 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5})

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



Cycling in the Waterford Metropolitan Area helps mitigate our climate crisis

510 tonnes

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



7,300 people taking flights

from Dublin to London Heathrow

In 2021 transport accounted for **18%** of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2021 transport emissions rose by **114%**.

Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland's Final Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2021.

Cycling keeps the Waterford Metropolitan Area moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^{iv} This helps to keep the Waterford Metropolitan Area moving for all road users.

950 return cycling trips

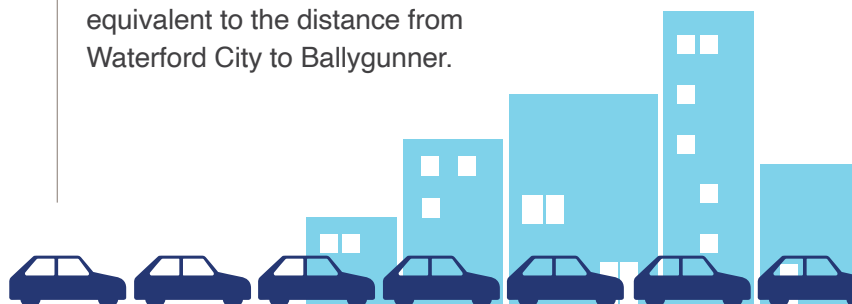
are made daily in the Waterford Metropolitan Area by people that could have used a car.

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

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

5 kilometres

equivalent to the distance from Waterford City to Ballygunner.



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



Walking solutions

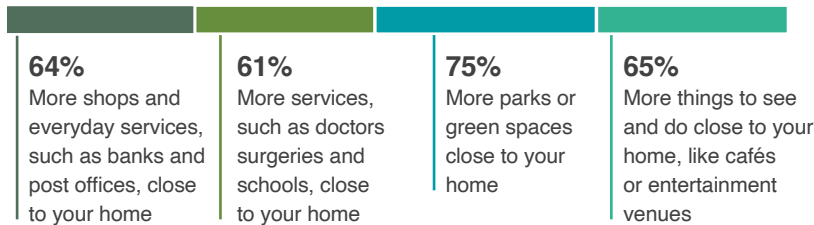
What would help make walking and wheeling easier?

Residents want more services and amenities within walking and wheeling distance

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

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

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



14%

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

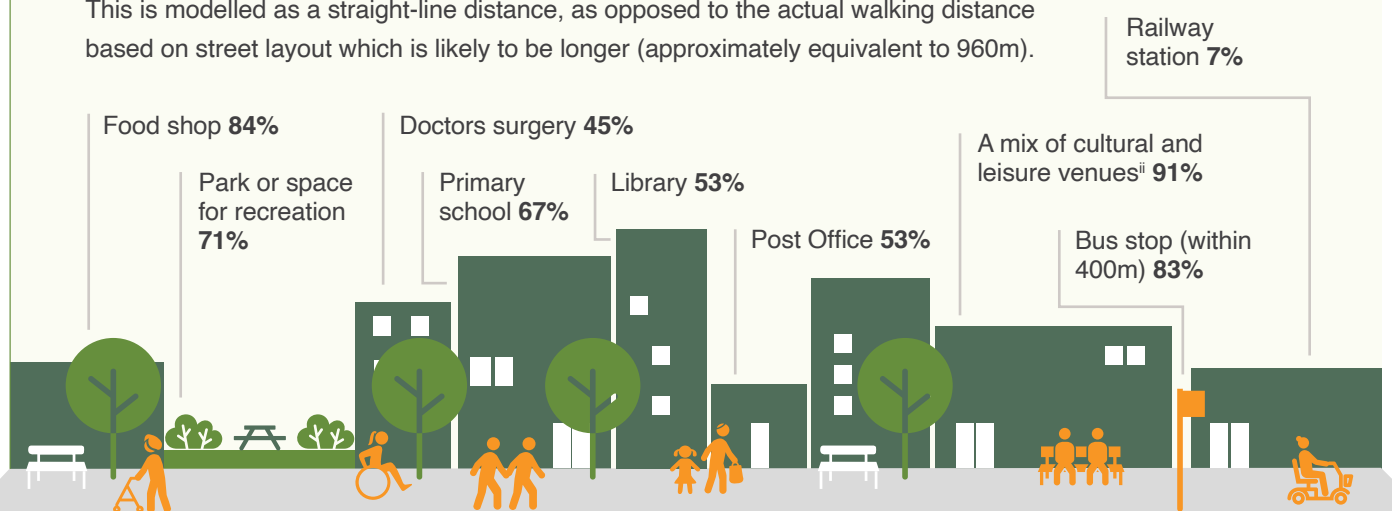
These higher-density neighbourhoods can sustain local businesses and public transport routes more easily. This helps to reduce car dependency.ⁱ

70%

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

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

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



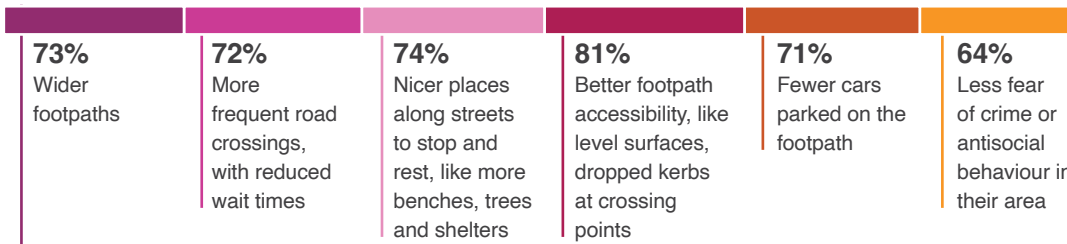
i. Sustrans, 2017. Linking Active Travel and Public Transport to Housing Growth and Planning.

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

Residents want better streets

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

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



In the Waterford Metropolitan Area:

43% of National and Regional roads have a footpath width greater than 3mⁱⁱⁱ

43% of minor roads have a footpath width greater than 2m

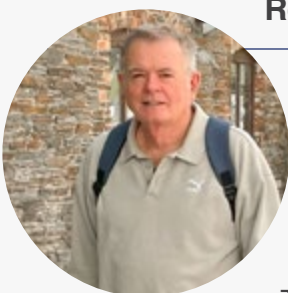
81%

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



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

Robert McCarthy



I walk almost exclusively. The incentive to not be contributing to the environmental problems of relying on cars is really important to me.

The exercise and enjoyment of getting around by walking; visiting people, and not feeling like you are sitting in an isolated little cubicle while travelling.

The traffic is unbelievable, anywhere near downtown. Even if I'm on a bus, I'll get off early, because I can walk faster than the bus will get there.

The one big thing that would make a difference is a reduction in speed limits. It costs very little, it doesn't hinder drivers, it would just bring so much more peace to the roadway.

It would make it possible to ride your bike on the road with the traffic instead of trying to stay out of their way. It would solve so many problems.

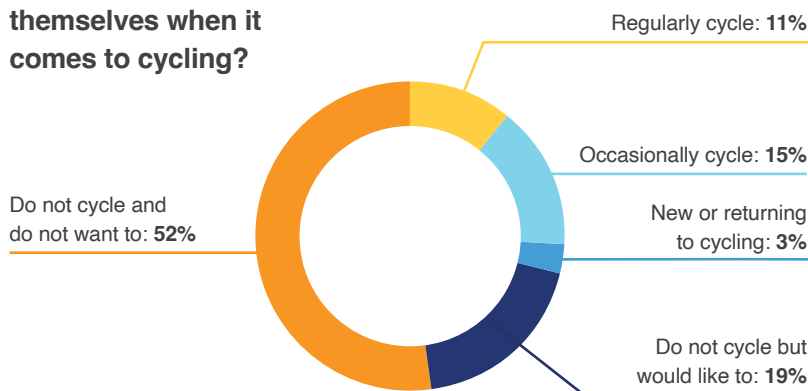


Cycling solutions

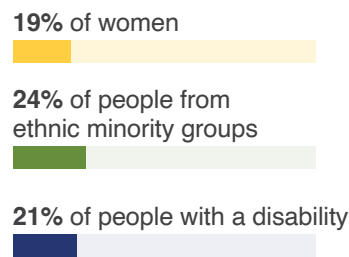
What would make cycling better?

Many Waterford Metropolitan Area residents want to cycle

How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?

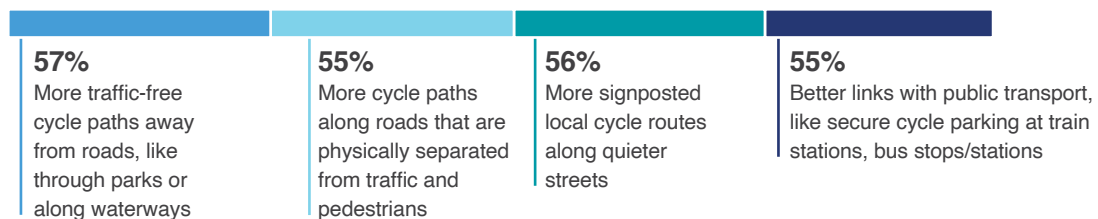


What proportion of residents said they 'do not cycle but would like to'?



Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

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



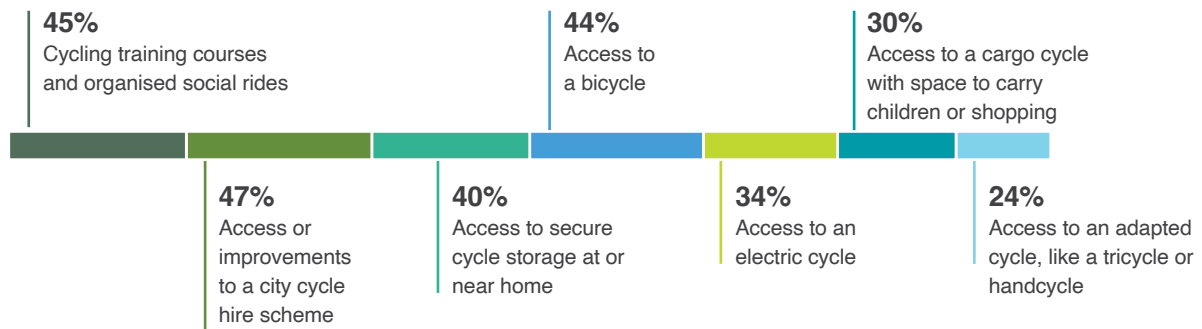
76%

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



Residents want more support to cycle

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



Waterford Metropolitan Area cycle hire schemeⁱ

177

hire cycles

14

cycle hire stations

17,212

annual trips

Reported cycle thefts

There were **209** reported cycle thefts in the Waterford Metropolitan Area in 2022/23.

251 in 2021/22

For every **121** people who own an adult cycle in the Waterford Metropolitan Area, there was **1** reported cycle theft in the past year.

Proportions of residents with access to an adult cycle

48% of residents

36% of socio-economic group DE

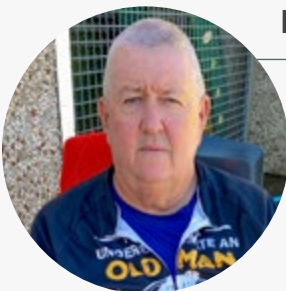
56% of socio-economic group AB

76%

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

19%

of households are within 800m of a cycle shopⁱⁱ



Michael Walsh, Retired



I love cycling. I enjoy the buzz I get on the bike.

I've had the bike now for around 14 months and I've done 12,000km so far – 90% of these on the Greenway.

The Greenway is fantastic, I enjoy having a coffee when I'm out on it and it's a social place.

There needs to be more thought into how we can safely get on and off the greenway. Once the greenway ends, the road doesn't have enough space on it for cyclists.

If this was made safer, I definitely think more people would cycle. I would be able to bring my grandkids with me, because as it is I wouldn't dream of taking them with me.

i. Data covers July 2022–June 2023.
ii. © OpenStreetMap contributors.



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

87%

of residents



89% of women



84% of men



83% of people from ethnic minority groups



87% of white people



80% of people with a disability



87% of people without a disability



84% of socio-economic group DE



89% of socio-economic group AB



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

63% of residents think that their streets are not dominated by moving or parked motor vehicles.

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

62% Walk or wheel more



55% Cycle more



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

74% agree that restricting through-traffic on local residential streets would make their area a better place.

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

57% Walk or wheel more



49% Cycle more



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

79%

agree increasing space for people socialising, walking, wheeling and cycling on their local main street would improve their local area

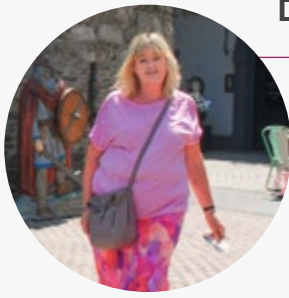
77%

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

80%

support low-traffic neighbourhoods

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



Debbie Kirwan



I live in Carlow but I like to visit Waterford. You can get away from the town here without cars hitting you.

I think we need to make more of our towns more people friendly. We have so much traffic in Ireland and don't allow for walking.

The elderly and children are not really considered in my opinion. Where there are pedestrian crossings, I think there needs to be more with flashing lights to make them safer.

Waterford has some cycle lanes, but it needs more. I drive and I think 50kmph is too fast in town.

I think in housing estates the speed limit certainly needs to be lower. I think the government needs to do more.

Neighbourhoods must be designed with children in mind

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

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

12 years old

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

80% of seven-year-olds in Germany are allowed to go alone to places within walking distance, other than school.ⁱⁱ

76% of residents agree there is space for children to socialise and play



50% of households are within 800m of a children's playground

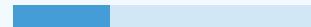


Among Waterford Metropolitan Area residents:

54% agree



32% disagree



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

These are known as 'School Streets'.

0 schools in the Waterford Metropolitan Area have School Streets schemes.ⁱⁱⁱ

But see Safe Routes to School on page 23.



ii. Children's Independent Mobility: an international comparison and recommendations for action, 2015.

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



Developing the Waterford Metropolitan Area

Recent walking, wheeling, cycling and neighbourhood changes

Waterford City and County Council has been delivering projects that support active travel in the Waterford Metropolitan Area for several years, most notably the hugely successful Waterford Greenway which opened in 2017, stretching nearly 50km from Waterford City to the sea-side town of Dungarvan in west County Waterford. A new 2km section bringing the Greenway right into the city centre was completed in 2023. Other work has included the development of segregated cycle lanes and widened footpaths, new pedestrian crossings and urban realm upgrades and the progression of a new sustainable walking and cycling bridge over the River Suir, which is currently under construction.

The work of Waterford’s Active Travel Programme is underpinned by the aims and objectives set out in the Government’s Climate Action Plan 2023. One of the key aims cited is to increase the number of walking and cycling networks so that walking, cycling and public transport will account for 50% of all journeys made by 2030.

An Active Travel team was established in Waterford City and County Council in 2020. Between 2020 and 2022, the Active Travel team have spent approximately €22 million in delivering active travel projects across the City and County. In addition, a Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) at Waterford North Quays has received significant investment including the provision of the aforementioned sustainable transport bridge. The combined investment of active travel projects and the SDZ represents a significant step in creating more opportunities for walking and cycling in Waterford city and the wider metropolitan area.

It is important to note that the Waterford Metropolitan Area comprises of both Waterford City and County Council and Kilkenny County Council administrative areas. The planned Urban Core Network will consider the wider metropolitan area and the relationship between North Quays, Ferrybank and Waterford City.

“
The work of Waterford’s Active Travel Programme is underpinned by the aims and objectives set out in the Government’s Climate Action Plan 2023.



Bilberry to City Centre – Waterford Greenway Link

The Bilberry to City Centre Greenway Link is a new 2km section of footpath / cycleway that links the Waterford Greenway from the existing Bilberry Greenway Car Park to Waterford City Centre.

It will also serve to connect the Waterford Greenway to the future Southeast Greenway (Waterford to New Ross), at the Clock Tower on the South Quay via the proposed sustainable transport bridge.

This Active Travel project has been funded by the National Transport Authority (NTA) and delivered and managed by Waterford City and County Council. The 2km link has taken a little over two years to complete and opened in June 2023.



Mount Pleasant Estate – Permeability Scheme

The purpose of this project is to improve permeability and increase cycling and walking potential by creating a new route through this housing estate to the local shopping district.

The Active Travel project team engaged closely with residents when developing the scheme proposals.

Timely and consistent communications with local residents led to the smooth delivery of this project. This project was delivered in June 2022.

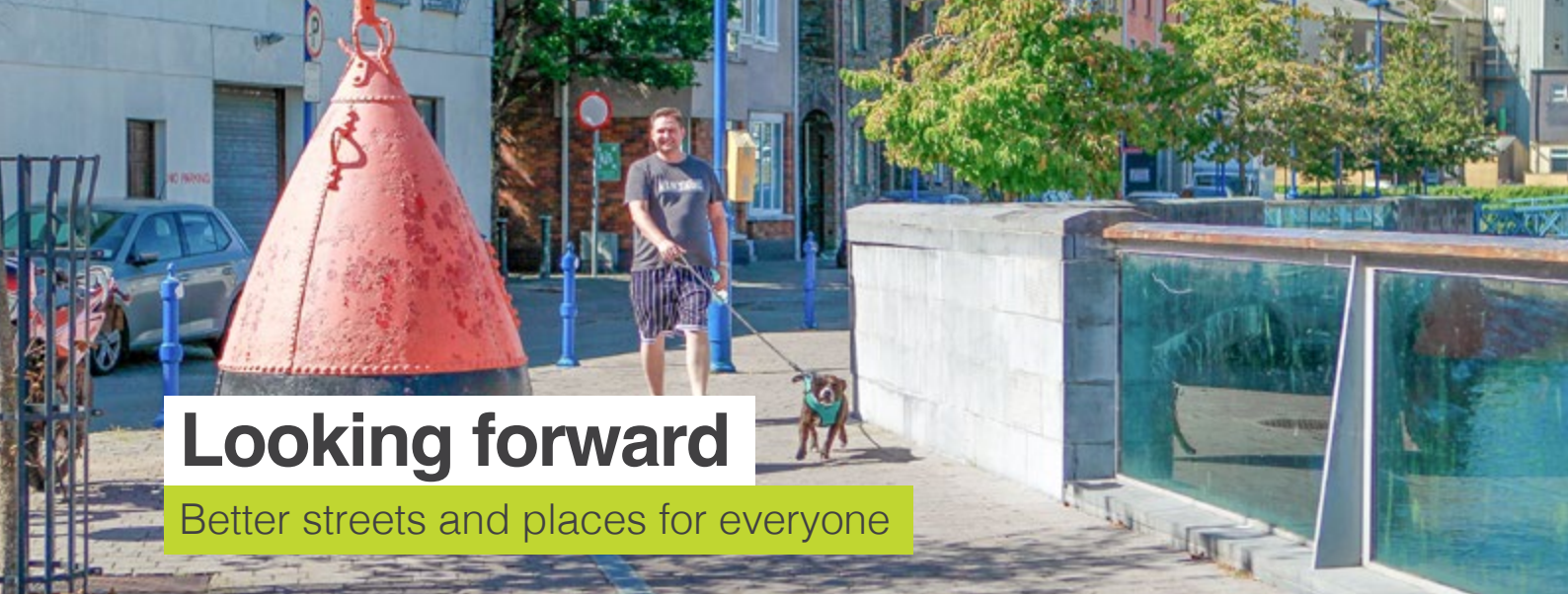


Bank Lane – Pedestrianised Street

The project facilitated the introduction of a pedestrianised street that improves pedestrian facilities, particularly with regard to access for users with disabilities.

Bank Lane was recently closed to traffic and links the Mall with Bolton Street car park.

The project replaced old, uneven and disjointed footpaths, installed a raised shared surface along the length of the street and created a footpath area to provide room for the installation of a Transport for Ireland shared bikes station. This project was delivered in September 2022.



Looking forward

Better streets and places for everyone

Waterford Cycle Connects

The NTA and Waterford City and County Council are developing a comprehensive cycle plan for the metropolitan area. This includes existing cycle networks such as urban cycle routes, greenways, and inter-urban routes. This will be supplemented by proposed cycle routes/links outlined in latest development and transport plans, and other networks required to maximise the connection of the network to communities.

Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (WMATS)

WMATS was published in December 2022. It sets out the framework for an accessible, high-quality integrated transport network that provides for the travel demand and sustainable growth of the Waterford Metropolitan Area as the major growth engine of the South-East Region. One of the objectives of this strategy is to develop a strong cycling culture in the Waterford Metropolitan Area. This includes the proposed measure ‘to deliver a safe, comprehensive, attractive and legible cycle network in accordance with the Cycle Network.’

TFI Bike Rental Scheme

The TFI Bike rental scheme comprises 177 bikes located across 14 bike stations which are strategically located across Waterford city. The TFI Bike Rental Scheme has been in operation for over a year with strong take up in the first year and the scheme will go from strength to strength with the delivery of further cycle infrastructure across the city.



The council will continue to deliver Safe Routes to School projects, permeability schemes, junction improvements and the provision of cycle parking.

Greenways

One of Ireland's premier greenways is the Dungarvan to Waterford City Greenway. This infrastructure provides huge benefits for recreational cycling but also as a commuter route. An urban greenway is planned to connect Waterford to Tramore (14km). While Tramore falls outside of the metropolitan area, there is a strong functional relationship with the urban centres in the Waterford Metropolitan Area.

The South East Greenway is a joint initiative of Wexford County Council, Kilkenny County Council and Waterford City and County Council, supported by the Department of Transport. Once complete, the South East Greenway will be a 24 km off-road cycling and walking trail from New Ross through Kilkenny to the Waterford City quays. The first phase of the South East Greenway, a 6km stretch from New Ross to Glenmore in Kilkenny, opened to the public on 25 July 2023.

Upcoming Schemes

The programme of Active Travel projects in Waterford Metropolitan Area comprises a number of schemes that focus on creating segregated cycle routes on the main radial routes, and integrate with orbital segregated cycle routes, resulting in the delivery of a strong coherent network. Examples of this include the Cork Road / Manor Street scheme and the Inner Ring Road scheme, both in Waterford city.

The North Quays strategic development zone will deliver housing and employment, and a sustainable transport bridge connecting the North Quays to the historic core will be a major part of Waterford's future as a sustainable and attractive city.

The pathfinder project in the Lismore residential area of Waterford City will provide for strong permeability walking and cycling links within Lismore and to the wider surrounding area. The Lismore project will also connect to the Cork Road / Manor Street and the Inner Ring Road cycle routes in Waterford City.

In addition the council will continue to deliver Safe Routes to School projects, permeability schemes, junction improvements and the provision of cycle parking.

John McSweeney, Bank manager



I would rather cycle or take the bus into Waterford for work. I live in Ballygunner about 3km outside the city. When I drive out of my estate in the morning there is so much traffic, especially if I come out at peak time around 8am.

I have a bike for leisure but I would commute if I could. If there was a bus lane I would travel in on the bus but currently I'd just be stuck in traffic.

There is more and more housing around the city but there are not the facilities or infrastructure to accommodate the people.

We need to plan better. The Irish solution is just to build more roads but we have started to see a change in attitudes. I will be glad to retire not to have to deal with the traffic.

Notes on methodology:

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

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

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

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

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

More information and a detailed methodology are available at www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-index

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

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

Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

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

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