



Walking & Cycling Strategy

For

County Monaghan



2021-2026



Monaghan County Council

Draft for Public Consultation

April 2021

This is a DRAFT document. It is much longer than the final document will be, as we have included information on the many policies and strategies which have informed our thinking, as well as data on the attitudes and behaviours of people towards walking and cycling. If you just want to see what we propose to do, skip to Section 5!

Input from the public is invited on the proposed Strategy during the month of April 2021. To help you shape your thoughts, we have prepared a short questionnaire, which you will find at the back of the document.

You can return the survey by hand to any Council office, or by post to:

Walking & Cycling Strategy Survey
Community Dept
Monaghan County Council
MTEK II Building
Armagh Road
Monaghan H18 YH59

The Strategy and survey are also available online here:

www.gomonaghan.ie

You can also email your comments to info@gomonaghan.ie

Please use 'Walking & Cycling Strategy' in the subject line

Forewords

As a society, we are too dependent on the private car for our mobility.

- 7 out of 10 journeys are made by car
- Half of journeys under 2km in distance are made by car
- The number of cars being registered is growing faster than the populationⁱ¹

The transport sector is the second biggest contributor to Ireland's CO2 emissions (after the agricultural sector). If we are serious about reducing our carbon emissions in a bid to tackle climate change, then we must all take a look at how we make our daily trips and ask ourselves whether it is *always* necessary to take the car.

Sometimes people elect to take the car because the infrastructure isn't there for them to safely cycle, or perhaps because the town centre is so congested with heavy goods traffic that it is an unpleasant and intimidating place to be if you are a pedestrian or cyclist.

Monaghan County Council as the body responsible for the infrastructure we use to get around needs to reflect: what can we do to improve the environment and make it easier for people to get about on foot or by bike, and how can we support people to choose Active Travel modes such as walking and cycling?

This is an emerging policy area which we are just beginning to explore in Co. Monaghan following adoption of the Climate Change Charter in 2019, and this is our first Walking & Cycling Strategy for the county. As we move forward, I expect that the scope of the actions will expand as the new Walking & Cycling Unit proposed in the Strategy gets bedded in.

I believe that the work laid out in the Strategy is necessary and that the county will benefit greatly from a robust Active Travel programme. I therefore recommend this Strategy to the people of Monaghan.

Eamonn O Sullivan



¹ Source: CSO National Travel Survey 2019

It is my pleasure to welcome the development of the county's first Walking and Cycling Strategy. As recreational activities, there is no better way to enjoy the rolling drumlin landscape that inspired Patrick Kavanagh than on foot or by bike, and Monaghan County Council have been very active in recent times in developing recreational trails to facilitate people to get outdoors and explore our wonderful county.

There can be no doubt that during the Covid pandemic, walking and cycling became refuges for many people struggling with the stress of lockdown and the isolation it brought. Indeed, Rossmore Park became the busiest Coillte property outside of the greater Dublin area during 2020, a testament to the popularity of the recent improvements carried out to the trails by the Council under an agreement with Coillte to share management of the recreational park.

We are proud that Council amenities, and community amenities supported by the Council, play a part in enhancing the lives of people every day. We are also proud of the work of Council programmes such as Monaghan Sports Partnership and Healthy Monaghan, which bring many activities and opportunities to the people of Monaghan, helping to enrich their lives in so many ways.

Over the past few years, the Council has been able to avail of government funding under schemes such as the Outdoor Recreation & Infrastructure Scheme, CLÁR and the Urban & Village Scheme to develop recreational walking trails, especially in scenic areas such as Sliabh Beagh and Lough Muckno. We intend to continue to do so, as we believe that such amenities are necessary supports to the county's tourism product and therefore are a necessary component of the county's economic infrastructure. We have also been able to attract cross border INTERREG funding to extend the Ulster Canal Greenway from Monaghan to Middletown as a sustainable commuting project, and are working on extending the project toward Smithborough and eventually to Clones.

We are all becoming much more aware of the need to treat our planet with more care, and to think about how we use its resources. For the sake of the future citizens of our fair county, we must tackle the issue of carbon emissions and seek to provide an alternative to the private motor car, at least for some of the shorter journeys that people make every day.

The current government has decided to dedicate 20% of its Transport budget to walking and cycling infrastructure, which will for the first time facilitate small Councils like ourselves to really deliver big on dedicated cycling infrastructure within towns and villages and near schools. Getting around town on foot or by bike can often be quicker and more convenient than by car – the hardest thing is to convince the motorist to get out of their car in the first place! We recognise that people will need supports to help them make the change, and these have been built into the Strategy.

While there will be challenges to be overcome, such as the narrow width of some streets in our ancient town centres, we are convinced that the gain will be worth any initial pain which may come with change.

We hope that you will come with us on this journey, which has so many benefits for the county, in terms of improved wealth, wellbeing and sustainability.

Cllr Colm Carthy
Cathaoirleach



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1. Introduction

Walking and cycling are two of the most popular physical activities across Ireland, and contribute much to the health and wellbeing of the nation. As low impact physical activities, they can be taken up by almost anyone, cost little, and can be engaged in solo or as part of a group; indeed many participants report that it is the social aspect of the activity that they derive most benefit from. Both activities draw people to the outdoors, often having the side effect of reconnecting them with nature – the so-called ‘green prescription’ which is attributed with lifting people’s moods.

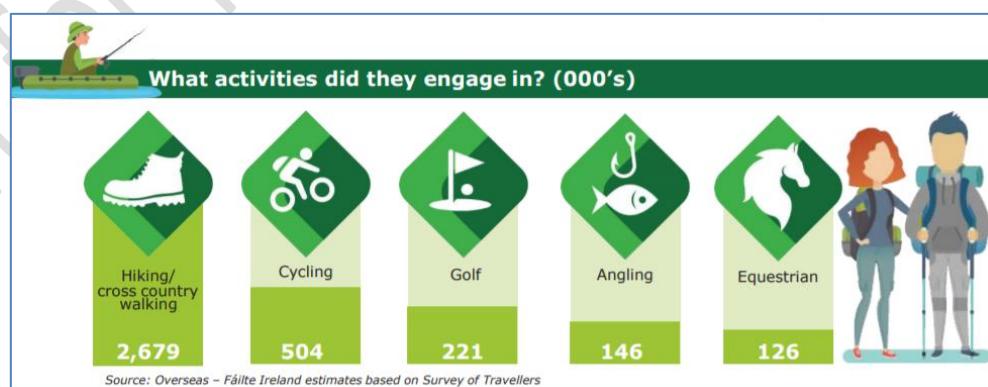
Walking and cycling are also the most freely available modes (forms) of sustainable transport, and as such have a part to play in helping Ireland to reduce its carbon footprint and address climate change. The largest single cause of journeys in Ireland is commuting to either work or school; in Co. Monaghan, almost 40,000 people commute daily and just under 10% of these walk or cycle, even though 15,000 of them have a journey of less than 15 minutes to make. Persuading some of these to make a modal shift from private motor cars to Active Travel modes would make a big difference to the county’s carbon footprint.

“Active Travel is travelling with a purpose using your own energy”

Generally this means walking (including all users of footpaths) or cycling as part of a purposeful journey. Increasingly, non-motorised scooters are also being used

for urban transport, especially by school children, and this would also be considered as active travel. So, walking as part of a commute to work, cycling to the shop or scooting to school are all considered active travel, whereas walking or cycling for purely leisure purposes is not.

Walking and cycling play an increasingly important role in economic terms, with Tourism Ireland reporting that they are the two most popular activities that overseas tourists engage in whilst in Ireland.



Activities most commonly engaged in by overseas visitors whilst in Ireland (Source: Fáilte Ireland)

They also play a key role in facilitating activity in the domestic tourism market, with over one quarter of domestic holiday makers engaging in walking during their break, making it the most popular activity (8% engage in cycling).

Monaghan County Council began actively considering the needs of walkers and cyclists in the early 00's, and began to seek out opportunities to develop infrastructure to support walking and cycling. Early successes included the long distance Monaghan Way, developed by a community group and managed and insured by Monaghan County Council, which was completed in 2002, and a number of looped walking trails around Sliabh Beagh, developed with Interreg III funding. The county's first greenway opened in 2014 in Monaghan town, along the banks of the disused Ulster Canal, giving momentum to the Council's work.

A Cycling Officer role has been designated to the Community Development Officer, who has been working to bring the various Council sections together to plan further initiatives and infrastructural improvements to benefit walking and cycling across the county. A website, www.gomonaghan.ie has been developed to promote walking and cycling in Monaghan, and walking and cycling plans have been produced for the towns of Monaghan, Castleblayney and Carrickmacross. The Cycling Officer also initiated Bike Week in the county, which is now run annually by Monaghan Sports Partnership. Together with Waterways Ireland and our neighbouring local authorities, we have explored the potential to develop the disused Ulster Canal into a long distance greenway. Phase II of the development of the Ulster Canal Greenway, which will see a 22km section from Middletown in Co Armagh to Smithboro in Co Monaghan completed, is underway, and Phase III from Smithboro to Clones is in the early stages of pre-development.

On-road projects include The Hilly Way, completed in 2020, which links Kingscourt to Carrickmacross via scenic minor roads - the plan being to encourage users of the in-process Navan to Kingscourt greenway to continue their journey onwards to benefit Carrickmacross and perhaps visit Patrick Kavanagh Country beyond. A feasibility study into re-opening the Carrickmacross – Inniskeen – Dundalk railway line as a greenway was completed in 2019. The latest cycling project to be completed is the cycle lane along the N2 linking Monaghan town to Emyvale.

A number of looped community projects have been completed around the county in recent times, including the walking trail around Emy Lake, and numerous walking tracks around GAA facilities. Demand remains strong from community groups for facilities at a local level, particularly in rural areas, where safe places to exercise are limited. As Monaghan County Council plays a role in facilitating local communities to meet their developmental needs, it is important that we consider requests for such amenities and assist where and however we can.

Over the last ten years, the national agenda has evolved significantly with regard to reducing pollution caused by motor vehicles by promoting the use of sustainable transport modes (Smarter Travel), as part of the global discussion around the Sustainable Development Goals, and the need to develop a response to climate change. The Dept of Transport Tourism & Sport has charged local authorities with an important role in leading out the drive for behavioural change in promoting walking and cycling, and this is reflected in the recent Programme for Government, which promise significant resources will be available for Active Travel, Climate Resilience and Greenway related measures.

Research from other countries, particularly the Netherlands, provides strong evidence that when safe, comfortable routes are provided, the rate of walking and cycling increases dramatically. The process of ensuring routes are safe is a combination of road design, cyclist training and changing the behaviour of other road users. This results in a safer, more pleasant journey for everyone.

Monaghan County Council wishes to become a leader in promoting and supporting walking and cycling, and this Strategy is a key element in guiding our work over the next 5 years.

1.1 Why is this Strategy Needed?

Having a Strategy helps us to identify the needs of the county, see the total size of the task ahead of us, split the task into bite-sized chunks which can be managed on the budget available, and help us to prioritise the order in which those chunks need to be tackled.

Getting everything that needs to be done down in one place, and seeing how each part (or action) contributes to the achievement of the whole (the vision) can really help:

- to see which projects are the key drivers of walking and cycling activity, and therefore need to be prioritised
- to understand which projects may seem expensive but provide great value for money because the success of so much of the rest of the Strategy relies on their delivery
- to identify where and when resources will be needed, so that we can plan well ahead to meet key targets and avoid project delays
- to maximise synergies from our activities, so that we get maximum impact from each pound of effort and each euro spent

Monaghan County Council is responsible for many areas of activity which contribute to the levels of walking and cycling in the county. These include:

- Road design, construction and maintenance
- Planning, both Development Management and Forward Planning, and including the preparation of Land Use & Transportation Strategies, Local Area Plans and Regeneration
- Housing, including the construction of new housing developments and their connectivity to the surrounding environment
- Economic development, including the development of employment zones
- Road safety
- The development and maintenance of public spaces and amenities, including greenways and parks
- The provision of public lighting, which can have an impact on the number of people using foot and cycle paths after dark and in winter months
- The promotion of climate adaptation and sustainable development, including active travel
- The promotion of healthy lifestyles and participation in sport
- Delivery of national policy on accessible services, public sector duty, age friendly county, and migrant integration
- Development of strong communities and supporting the community & voluntary sector
- Tourism development

The process of working together to develop this Strategy has enabled the various Departments of the Council to examine their areas of activity and consider how each impacts on the development of

the walking and cycling culture and infrastructure of the county. In so doing, the Departments have been able to identify areas where they contribute to the promotion of walking and cycling within their existing programmes of work, and have also been able to identify ways in which programmes can be adapted in order to make an even greater contribution.

The purpose of this Strategy is to provide the framework into which all present and future projects may be slotted, showing how they connect to a coherent network, and contribute to the overall vision. In this way, the Council will be sure that it is getting the best from its resources at all times, putting the right infrastructure in the right place and contributing to an overall framework, which is all working towards a common aim, i.e. the development of Co. Monaghan as a better place to live, work and visit. Section 2.2 of this document outlines the ways in which the Strategy fits into Council policy.

1.2 Why Now?

This is a period of great change in terms of national policy, and walking and cycling have been put forward, for various reasons, as important components in the development of various policies and strategies to help Ireland develop into the kind of modern, forward-thinking, sustainable nation that we wish to become. We will outline how these external factors impact on our Strategy in Section 2.1.

2019 was a year of renewal for Monaghan County Council. It saw a local election and with it, the setting up of new Strategic Policy Committees to assist the Council in bringing forward key policy work. With the local election came the adoption of a new Corporate Plan, which clearly identifies the priorities of the Council for the 2020-2024 period.

The Council also adopted a new County Development Plan in 2019. This is a key document which governs development throughout the county. It contains a number of objectives and policies about walking and cycling, greenways and urban development which are important to the development of sustainable transport infrastructure in the county, as well as to the development of tourism and leisure infrastructure.

Finally, the Council became a signatory to the Climate Change Charter in January 2020, and produced its own Climate Adaptation Plan in October 2019. That document identifies a number of actions which are directly related to walking or cycling, and therefore need to be progressed.

The Council has become involved in a number of initiatives in recent years which will need the support of a strong walking and cycling strategy in order to realise their full potential. These include the Age Friendly County initiative, the Healthy Monaghan initiative and Monaghan Sports Partnership's Sports Participation Strategy.

In addition to the adoption of a number of important policies and strategies, the Council has been engaged in a number of key projects recently which, once implemented, will have a strong impact on walking and cycling. These include:

- A Land Use & Transportation Strategy (LUTS) for Monaghan town
- Plans for redeveloping the town centres, including Dublin Street Regeneration Plan 2017 (Dublin St. South) which was awarded €13.11 million in March 2021 and preparation of Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan and Roosky Lands Master plan (2021), as well as Public Realm & Economic Plans for the four remaining towns
- The extension of the Ulster Canal Greenway
- Work on developing a similar greenway in the south of the county: a feasibility & scoping study on a possible greenway utilising the route of the former GNR railway line from Carrickmacross to Inniskeen and onwards to Dundalk was commissioned jointly by Monaghan and Louth County Councils and produced by Fehily Timony & Clandillon Civil Engineering in 2019
- Upgrading of the walking tracks through Rossmore Forest Park, which the Council now manages. In addition, a 2.5km family friendly cycling trail has been awarded €289,000 funding under the 2020 Outdoor & recreational Infrastructure Scheme and is due to be completed before end 2021.

The Council is also aware of an increasing level of interest in developing walking amenities in local communities, as evidenced by the development of a number of walking tracks around GAA pitches. As the county does not have unlimited resources, the Council feels that it is important to look at the need for amenities and to plan how best to approach future development. This will assist communities to avoid costly mistakes, ensuring that the right projects are developed in the right places.



Peace Link sports campus in Clones includes a walking track around the perimeter. This project was developed by the local community, and a funding application to PEACE was facilitated by Monaghan County Council, which agreed to act as Lead Partner so that the project could be submitted under the 'Shared Spaces' measure of the Peace Programme.

1.3 How was the Strategy Developed?

Following the publication by the newly elected government of its new Programme for Government in October 2020, it became apparent that a new emphasis was to be given within the Dept of Transportation to Active Travel, and in particular to walking and cycling, with 20% of that Department's annual budget to be ringfenced for walking and cycling infrastructure. Whilst three of the towns had walking and cycling plans in place, it was immediately clear that a countywide strategy was needed if the Council was going to be in a position to respond appropriately to the opportunity which would soon be presented by the funding which would be coming online in the Dept.

An internal workshop was held with key staff from every section in the Council, including Planning, Tourism, Community, Road Safety, Roads and the three Municipal Districts. Individual consultations were held with officers working on Council programmes which might have relevance to walking and cycling, either on the infrastructure side or through the promotion of activities. These included:

- Local Community Development Committee
- Monaghan Sports Partnership
- Healthy Monaghan Initiative
- Age Friendly Monaghan Initiative
- Making Monaghan Accessible Initiative
- Ulster Canal Greenway Initiative

Consultations were also held with external stakeholders, including An Taisce Green Schools Co-Ordinator Sorchá Brophy, and MSc student in Sustainable Mobility & Transport, Vincent McCarthy, whose dissertation revealing that gender differences affect mode choice uses data from the Monaghan town greenway.

The Covid 19 pandemic made engagement with schools and community groups challenging. We acknowledge that further work will be required in this area, and have built it into the Actions of the Strategy.

A draft of the Strategy was presented to the Transportation Strategic Policy Committee on 2nd March 2021 for discussion. It was agreed to circulate the draft to key staff for final comment before release into the public domain for public consultation. Following public consultation, the draft Strategy will return to the SPC to consider the outcome of the consultation process before finalisation and recommendation to Council for adoption.

1.4 Scope of the Strategy

The document is a high-level strategic look at how Monaghan County Council proposes to:

- develop walking and cycling infrastructure, and
- promote walking and cycling as activities which support the economic, cultural and social wellbeing of the people of Co Monaghan,

in order to progress towards the realisation of our Vision for walking & cycling in Monaghan 2026, as laid out at the beginning of Section 3.

The Strategy will contribute to the realisation of 6 of the 12 objectives contained in the Council's Corporate Plan. These are shown in detail in section 2.2.1.

The Strategy breaks down the work to be done into Key Actions and assigns each action to a Department. These assignments have been discussed with the named Departments and responsibility for their delivery has been accepted. The Actions will be inserted into the appropriate departmental workplans and progress will be reported upon through the Performance Management Development System (PMDS).

It must be noted, however, that the achievement of some Actions will be dependent on outside resources becoming available, and therefore the timeframe over which progress can be made will not be entirely within the control of the Council to deliver.

2. Policy Review

2.1 External Policy

In considering our approach to developing walking and cycling in Co. Monaghan, we have reviewed the principal policies that have an impact on our thinking.

These include EU policy, which translates into national policies, strategies and initiatives. We have summarised those which have the most influence on our Strategy in the following sections.

2.1.1 UN Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

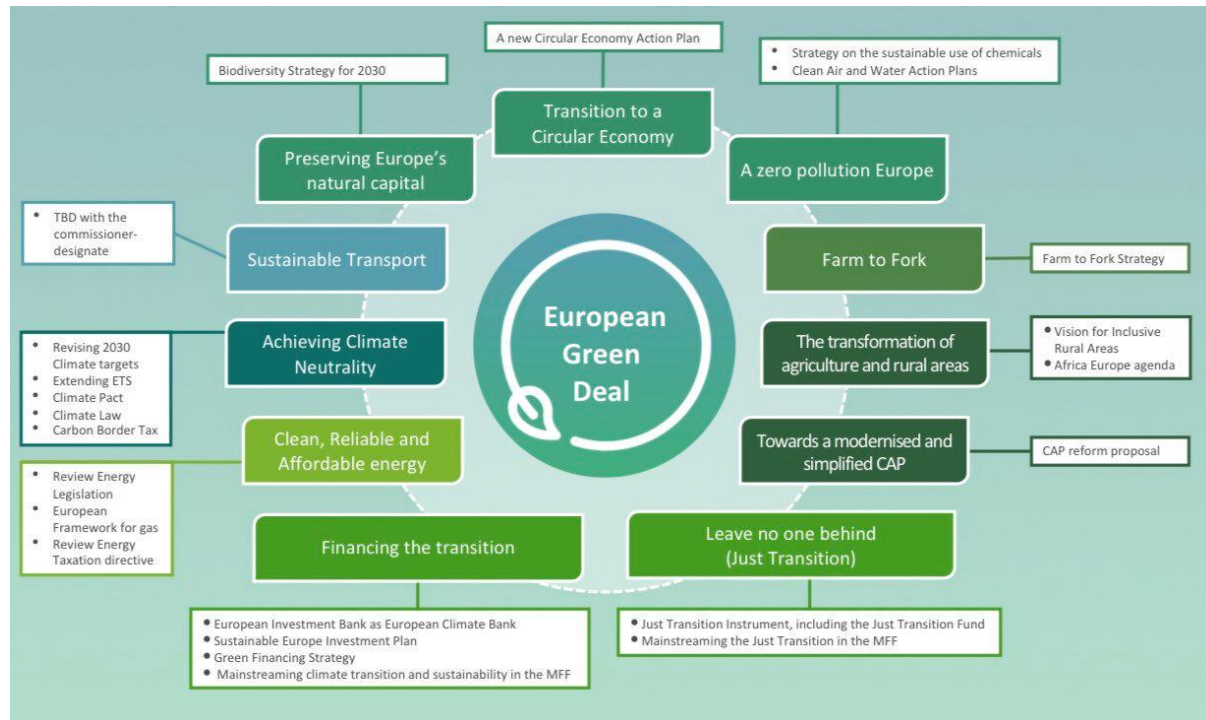
Goals 11 and 13 are particularly of relevance to our work in developing a Walking & Cycling Strategy for the county, taking in as they do the need to plan better designed towns and adopt more sustainable modes of transportation. Less obvious areas also come into play, such as Goal 5. Ireland has only in the last ten years begun to capture gender-disaggregated data related to travel, and is discovering, as are many countries, that the reasons women make journeys, and the ways in which they do so, are very different from men. We explore the gender data and its impact in Section 3.3



UN Sustainable Development Goals

2.1.2 EU Policy

Transport currently accounts for a quarter of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions and this figure continues to rise as demand grows. The **European Green Deal** seeks a 90% reduction in these emissions by 2050. Moving to more sustainable transport means putting users first and providing them with more affordable, accessible, healthier and cleaner alternatives.



The European Green Deal

In the Green Deal, walking and cycling are seen as part of the solution to noise and air pollution in urban areas, and are promoted as the primary modes of transportation for short journeys.

In the Commission's 2016 Strategy for Low Emission Mobility, cities were encouraged to prepare Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP). Walking and cycling are only part of an integrated mobility solution across the urban area, but they are perhaps the most important part; the link without which the other parts cannot connect.

Sustainable Transport/ Mobility is the focus of European policy, and Monaghan County Council has been participating in the annual **EU Mobility Week** since 2019. The aim of EU Mobility Week is to raise public awareness of the need for action in this area of activity, and to provide an opportunity to try out some actions which may provide sustainable mobility alternatives whilst improving the urban environment.



On 9 December 2020, the European Commission launched its **Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy** together with an Action Plan of 82 initiatives that will guide its work on mobility over the next four years.

The strategy shows how the EU transport system can become green, digital and more resilient to future crises. As outlined in the European Green Deal, the result will be a 90% cut in emissions by 2050, delivered by a smart, competitive, safe, accessible and affordable transport system.

Some of the milestones and actions identified in the strategy include: helping 100 European cities reach climate neutrality by 2030; engaging with cities to ensure that all large and medium-sized cities that are urban nodes on the TEN-T network put in place their own sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMP) by 2030; and improving and expanding bicycle infrastructure.

The above – and more – will be further developed within a revised EU Urban Mobility Strategy, planned for summer 2021. It will be based on the results of the evaluation of the 2013 Urban Mobility Package, which is due to be published in early 2021.

2.1.3 Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 is the government's long-term overarching strategy to make Ireland a better country for all of its people. It combines **The National Development Plan** and **the National Planning Framework** into one over-arching strategy, with the National Planning Framework (NPF) setting the vision and strategy for the development of our country to 2040 and the National Development Plan (NDP) providing enabling investment to implement the strategy.

Project Ireland 2040 seeks to achieve ten strategic outcomes, building around the overarching themes of wellbeing, equality and opportunity. They are:

1.	Compact Growth
2.	Enhanced Regional Accessibility
3.	Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
4.	Sustainable Mobility
5.	A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
6.	High-Quality International Connectivity
7.	Enhanced Amenity and Heritage
8.	Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society
9.	Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources
10.	Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services

There will be a special focus on the provision of safe alternative active travel options increasingly being chosen by people such as segregated cycling and walking facilities and networks, especially in our cities and towns, which will also alleviate congestion and help to meet climate action objectives.

The development of walking and cycling infrastructure within our towns has a contribution to make to No.1, whilst the development of regional greenways and connectivity with bus routes contribute to No.2 and No.3. Walking and cycling are specifically mentioned in No.4 (see above), and with a focus on commuters, have a contribution to make to No.5 also. They also have a part to play in No.8, so it is not surprising that 20% of the Transport budget has now been ringfenced for Active Travel measures.

Compact growth is a key driver of active mobility (i.e. walking and cycling), and has become very much associated with the concept of the 'hyper-proximity' approach to planning, which is proving very successful in cities such as Melbourne, Paris and Barcelona. This approach focuses on creating liveable, walkable communities in which people can access most of their daily needs within 15 minutes of from home using active travel modes (walking or cycling) – hence the '15-minute city' concept.

The government also committed to developing a 'Town Centres First' approach to regeneration, and to enabling Local Authorities to lead and collaborate on a 'Town Centres First' type approach to regenerating our towns and villages. Regeneration projects will promote town centres as attractive locations for investment through their contribution to placemaking and regeneration, creating opportunities for businesses to locate, by increasing the viability of support services, through critical mass and economies of scale.

The Southern Regional Assembly has adapted the '15 Minute City Principle' for an Irish rural town context, and through a pilot programme involving Ennis, Carlow and Tralee, has developed the '**Ten Minute Town**' concept. While not binding in Co. Monaghan, it is linked to best practice across Europe and has much to offer in helping to move the active travel agenda forward in a structured way within the overall planning framework of the county.

Monaghan County Council views the 'Ten Minute Town' concept as best practice, and has been using it as a framework for town regeneration projects such as the Dublin St backlands/ Rooskey lands development project in Monaghan town, which secured funding of €13.11 million in March 2021 from government.

2.1.4 Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES)

Co. Monaghan belongs to the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, one of three Assemblies in Ireland. Each Assembly has interpreted Project Ireland 2040's planning framework for their region, producing a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, whose purpose is to take into account the local conditions and factor them into an appropriate response in developing the Strategy. In turn, each Local Authority is obliged to take its respective region's RSES into account when developing local planning strategies.

Monaghan town is identified as a key town for growth within the RSES. "The development of the Ulster Canal Greenway, which provides a direct sustainable transport mode of regional benefit to healthy living and economic benefit through the development of the tourism offer" is identified as a key future priority for the town. Promoting compact growth in the town, and achieving a 20% population growth through undertaking regeneration projects in four areas of the town are also highlighted, as is "Support sustainable travel including the provision of cycling, walking and smart travel initiatives set out in the Monaghan Land Use and Transportation Study". The RSES identifies potential for further industrial growth to the east and west of the town, which lie to either end of the existing greenway.

Relevant policy objectives from the RSES which have informed our Strategy include:

Tourism	To support working with relevant landholders and recreational/tourism agencies to increase access to the countryside and our coastal areas, and to ensure maintenance and access to the existing network of trails, paths, ways etc
	Promote the development of integrated walking, cycling and bridle routes throughout the region as an activity for both international visitors and local tourists in a manner that is compatible with nature conservation and other environmental policies.
Environment – Natural Region	The Regional Assembly shall collaborate with Local Authorities, Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, DTAS, and other relevant stakeholders in developing an integrated network of Greenways across the region's catchments.
	The Assembly supports the further development of Greenways as part of the Outdoor Recreational Plan for Public Lands and Waters in Ireland 2017-2021', as part of an overall improvement of facilities to enhance health and wellbeing across society
Rural Transport	Support Cross-border sustainable transport, including Ulster Canal Greenway
Walking & cycling	The walking and cycling offer within the region shall be improved to encourage more people to walk and cycle, through: (a) Preparation and implementation of Local Transport Plans for... Key Towns (Monaghan), which shall encourage a travel mode shift from private vehicular use towards sustainable travel modes of walking, cycling and use of public transport.

	(b) Safe walking and cycle infrastructure shall be provided in urban and rural areas, the design shall be informed by published design manuals, included the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) and the NTA Cycle Manual. (c) Development of a network of Greenways.
	Policies, objectives and measures which emerge from Local Transport Plans shall be incorporated into Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Strategic Development Zone Planning Schemes. Urban Area Plans and other relevant planning framework documents.
	The management of space in town and village centres should deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes to create accessible, attractive, vibrant and safe, places to work, live, shop and engage in community life.
	Planning at the local level should promote walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighbourhood or district centres, public transport services and other services at the local level such as schools.
	New development areas should be permeable for walking and cycling and the retrospective implementation of walking and cycling facilities should be undertaken where practicable in existing neighbourhoods, to give a competitive advantage to these modes. Prioritisation should be given to schools and areas of high employment density
Healthy Places	Promote the provision of high-quality, accessible and suitably proportioned areas of public open spaces and promote linkage with social, cultural and heritage sites and buildings. In this process prioritise access for walking and cycling.
All-Island Cohesion	To establish a Cross-Jurisdictional Working Group which collaborates on projects such as Blueways, Greenways, Walking/Hiking Trails/Peatways to foster improved local and regional links.

Guidance is provided by the Assembly on how to prepare a Local Transport Plan. While only Monaghan town is required to prepare an LTP under the RSES (being the only Key Town in the county), it is our intention to consider preparing LTP's for all five towns.

2.1.5 Programme for Government 2020

Following the most recent General Election, the coalition government of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Green Party published their Programme for Government on 29th October 2020.

Programme for Government

Our Shared Future

In its Programme, the Government committed to a fundamental change in the nature of transport in Ireland. It declared that 'necessary improvements in climate impact, quality of life, air quality and physical and mental health demand that every effort is made by the Government to make active travel and public transport better and more accessible'. The government has mandated each local authority to immediately carry out an assessment of their road network, to see where space can be reallocated for pedestrians and cyclists.

The Government has committed to an allocation of 10% of the total transport capital budget for cycling projects and an allocation of 10% of the total capital budget for pedestrian infrastructure. The Government's commitment to cycling and pedestrian projects will be set at 20% of the 2020 capital budget (€360 million) per year for the lifetime of the Government. The rationale given for the investment is to 'enable a step change in the number of people taking daily journeys by foot and bicycle, which will help **improve quality of life and air quality**'.

Other measures committed to by the government to help enable the continued increase in the numbers of people walking and cycling each day include:

- Mandate that every local authority, with assistance from the National Transport Authority (NTA), **adopts a high-quality cycling policy**, carries out an assessment of their roads network and develops cycle network plans, which will be implemented with the help of a suitably qualified Cycling Officer with clear powers and roles.
- Expand and enhance the expertise on active travel needed to **dramatically improve infrastructure and participation** both in the NTA and local authorities, including by establishing Regional Cycle Design Offices, co-located in the seven Regional Design Offices for roads, to support local authorities.
- Dramatically **increase the number of children walking and cycling** to primary and secondary school by mandating the Department of Transport to work with schools across Ireland, local authorities, the Green Schools programme and local initiatives, including Cycle Bus and School Streets. · Widen the eligibility of the Bike to Work scheme. · provide an increased proportionate allowance for e-bikes and cargo bikes. · Ramp up the Cycle Right programme to ensure that all children are offered cycling training in primary school. · Conduct a review of road traffic policy and legislation to prioritise the safety of walking and cycling.
- The government committed to leading the development of an **integrated national greenways strategy**. This has the potential to transform modal shift and improve air quality and public health.

The Programme for Government also includes commitments around improving road safety for pedestrians and cyclists, providing cycle storage at bus and train stations, and incentivising modal shift.

Under the government's commitment to tourism development, it commits to work with local authorities and appropriate agencies to continue developing **an integrated national network of**

greenways to be used by commuters, students, leisure cyclists and tourists. It singles out cross border greenways for support, and also commits to support the creation of **80 new walking trails** under its Walks Scheme.

Walking and cycling are also mentioned as part of the solution under **Climate Action**, where the government commits to ‘ensuring an unprecedented modal shift in all areas by a reorientation of investment to walking, cycling and public transport’

2.1.6 National Physical Activity Plan

The aim of the National Physical Activity Plan which was launched in January 2016 is to increase physical activity levels across the whole population. It aims to create a society which facilitates people whether at home at work or at play to lead an active way of life. Local Authorities are tasked with delivering a number of actions within the Plan, five of which involve walking and cycling, as follows:

Action 32

Develop and promote walking and cycling strategies in each local Authority area

Action 33

Ensure that the planning, development and design of towns, cities and schools promotes cycling and walking with the aim of delivering a network of cycle routes and footpaths.

Action 34

Ensure that the planning, development and design of towns and cities promotes the development of local and regional parks and recreational spaces that encourage physical activity

Action 36

Prioritise the planning and development of walking and cycling and general recreational / physical activity infrastructure

Action 42

Include actions that promote increased levels of physical activity in all Local Economic and Community Plans

2.1.7 Smarter Travel & National Cycle Policy Framework (NCPF)



The SmarterTravel policy was first adopted by the Department of Transport in 2009 and continues to form the basis for policy and programmes within the Dept on Active Travel in Ireland. Smarter Travel brought sustainable travel to the forefront of Transport policy for the first time, placing walking and cycling at the centre of transport policy and infrastructure delivery. Whilst progress has been made

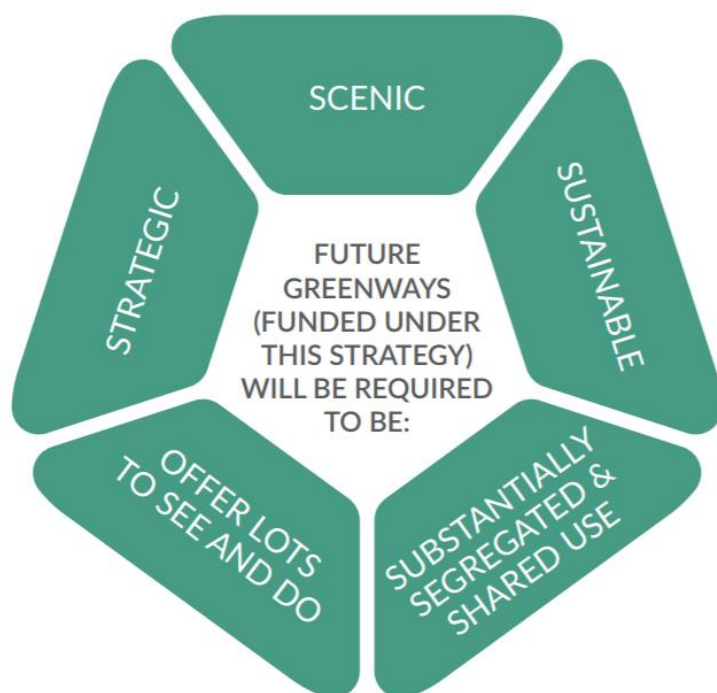
in the cities in the initial years of the policy, insufficient funding has limited the reach of its programmes until the new government ringfenced 20% of the Dept of Transport's budget for walking and cycling under the new Programme for Government launched in October 2020.

As part of the policy, the National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020 (NCPF) was developed (see next section); this set a national target of 10% of all trips being made by bike in 2020 and a vision to create a strong cycling culture in Ireland. The programme envisaged a focus, in particular, on road and cycleway improvements within the urban areas, including revisions to speed limits, junction improvements and the reallocation of road space to safely accommodate cyclists. Educational and marketing programmes aimed at promoting the health and economic benefits of walking and cycling were to help encourage the mindset shift required to achieve this aim.

We understand that it is the intention of the Department to renew these programmes, and in particular to continue with the Smarter Travel Workplaces Initiative.

2.1.8 Greenway Development

In July 2018, ***The Strategy for the Future Development of National & Regional Greenways*** was launched. It sets out to develop a network of routes of scale and quality around the country which are capable of attracting visitors and also serving as a recreational amenity. National routes are required to be at least 100km in length, and regional routes to be at least 20km, and preferably over 40km in length. The document doesn't give priority to any definite routes, however, but does state that the government's focus will be on developing national and regional route as a priority.



From National Greenways Strategy, published by DTTAS in July 2018

DTAS's Greenways Strategy makes reference to the **Greenways Strategy for Northern Ireland**, which was published in November 2016 by the Dept of Infrastructure in Northern Ireland. This document does name the priority routes which it intends to support local authorities to develop over the next funding cycle, and provides a map showing how they connect across the region. The Ulster Canal Greenway is included as a priority route in this Strategy, connecting the routes coming out of Belfast with those coming from the north west.



Figure 1. Map of Primary and Secondary Greenway Routes

Prompted by the inclusion of the Ulster Canal Greenway in the NI Greenways Strategy, Monaghan County Council, along with Cavan County Council, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Mid Ulster Council and Fermanagh & Omagh District Council came together with Waterways Ireland to explore the potential for developing a long distance greenway using the Ulster Canal as the central 'spine'. A route running some 190km was identified and an **Ulster Canal Greenway Strategic Plan** produced in 2018. Funding of €4.95 million for a section of the route running from Middletown, Co. Armagh through Monaghan town and on to Smithborough was secured from INTERREG IVA.

Following a thorough route selection process, the preferred route for the Greenway was published on the project website, (www.ulstercanalgreenway.com), in July 2020 and public information events to present the preferred route to the local communities were held in Tyholland and Middletown in August 2020. Construction of the Monaghan to Middletown section is expected to commence in mid-2022 subject to planning and land acquisition being completed and additional funding being secured.



Ulster Canal Greenway Phase I in Monaghan town, which opened in 2014

The development of greenways is supported in both the Programme for Government and in the North Western Assembly's RSES.

2.1.9 Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets (DMURS)

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) was jointly published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTS) in 2013. This document provides guidance in relation to the designing of urban roads and streets where speed limits of 60kph and below exist. It aims to make urban areas safer by promoting a shift from the dominance of motor vehicles to pedestrians by way of design and to enable pedestrians and cyclists to have a higher or equal status to cars. It is envisaged that this approach will reduce carbon emissions, improve connectivity between places and encourage multi-modal movement. All proposals for development in urban areas including villages will be subject to the provisions contained within this document.

DMURS advocates the following User Priority/Hierarchy when designing an urban route:

- 1) Pedestrians, 2) Cyclists, 3) Public Transport, 4) Private Motor Vehicles

It also recommends a shift away from conventional design solutions towards those which prioritise sustainable modes of transport, safeguard vulnerable users and promote a sense of place and promotes an integrated approach to street design.

2.1.10 A Vision for Cycling in Rural Ireland (November 2020)

Cyclist.ie, the umbrella body of cycle campaigning and advocacy groups in Ireland, published a vision for cycling in rural Ireland in late 2020.

OUR VISION

IMAGINE AN IRELAND
WHERE CYCLING IS
ONCE AGAIN A NORMAL
WAY TO GO TO
SCHOOL, TO WORK, TO
THE SHOPS, TO VISIT
FRIENDS, TO EXPLORE....



Our vision is that all rural communities in Ireland - encompassing towns, villages and rural areas - will be bicycle friendly.

Cycling will be a normal way to get about, especially for short trips.

Next to walking, cycling will be the most popular means of getting to school, both primary and secondary, and children will be able to reconnect with their neighbourhoods and local environments on their daily trips.

Shopping by bike will be as normal as it is in many of the Northern European cycling friendly countries, and our villages will be bustling with bicycles.

The bicycle will be the transport mode of choice for all ages, as well as a way to explore our beautiful countryside on recreational trips and for visitors.

We will have a healthier and happier population with consequent positive benefits on the health service.

We will all gain economically as cycling reduces our fuel costs and helps in easing congestion in local towns.

Imagine the greener, cleaner, healthier, happier world we could create.

The vision features 8 priorities, which focus on accelerating a transition to a cycle-friendly society. They are:

We call on our local and national government to:

1. Create an environment in our cities, towns, villages and rural roads where CYCLISTS ARE EXPECTED AND RESPECTED	2. Create and map a network of useful, CONNECTED CYCLE ROUTES throughout Local Authority Areas
3. Implement BEST PRACTICE DESIGN to ensure routes are safe and comfortable for cyclists of all ages and abilities	4. Prioritise SAFE CYCLE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS and car free zones at school gates
5. LOWER SPEED LIMITS to make our roads and streets safer and more accessible for everyone, and to reduce casualties	6. Ensure clear and timely ACCESS TO FUNDING, by improving capacity at all levels of local and national government
7. COLLABORATE WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS - including cycling and community groups - at all stages of planning and design	8. Provide CYCLE TRAINING for all ages, especially children

2.2 Internal Environment

The Walking & Cycling Strategy operates across multiple functional areas of the Council, and requires many teams to work together in order to achieve maximum impact. Each of these functional areas operate under legislation and policy which governs what they may and may not do. This is all set against the Council's Corporate Plan, which sets out the priorities for the organisation over the lifetime of the current Council. The following have been considered in considering our approach to developing walking and cycling in Co. Monaghan.

2.2.1 Corporate Plan

The Walking & Cycling Strategy contributes to the achievement of actions under Objectives 1,4,5,6,7 and 12 of the Corporate Plan.

1	TO ENSURE A CLEAN, SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT	Support biodiversity and ensure the sustainable management of water, waste, and all other environmental resources
2	TO SUPPORT LOCAL DEMOCRACY	Support the Elected Members, Corporate Policy Group, Strategic Policy Committee, Joint Policing Committee, Public Participation Network and all other committees in their leadership and representative role in response to the needs of the Community
3	TO DELIVER QUALITY & INCLUSIVE CUSTOMER SERVICES	Improve Accessible Services, Improve communications and engagement with the public to drive efficiency and effectiveness for our customers.
4	TO SUPPORT OUR LOCAL ECONOMY	Support the Business Community to stimulate growth, encourage start-ups and maximise job creation. Improve prosperity through cross border partnerships i.e. ICBAN and EBR. Deliver on the economic objectives in the Local Economic and Community Plan.
5	TO ENHANCE CULTURE AND CREATIVITY	Strengthen the capacity of the culture and creative sectors within County Monaghan.
6	TO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITIES	Develop, Support and Enhance the quality of life of sustainable, inclusive communities in County Monaghan as envisaged in the Local Economic and Community Plan.
7	TO IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE SERVICES	Progress key infrastructure projects.
8	TO DELIVER HOUSING AND HOUSING SUPPORTS	Increase the supply of social housing, improve existing housing stock and develop quality amenities to enhance Monaghan as a place to live.
9	TO IMPLEMENT ROBUST BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	Develop and implement sound financial, management and governance systems to enable organisational and operational efficiency
10	TO DEVELOP OUR PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION.	Ensure Monaghan County Council, is an employer of choice, builds our workforce for the future, supports and values managers as people developers.
11	TO ENSURE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGH ADVANCING INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY.	Accelerate the digital delivery of improved and accessible services by promoting a culture of innovation.
12	TO TRANSITION TO A LOW CARBON & CLIMATE RESILIENT SOCIETY	Working in partnership with other key stakeholders to deliver on the adaptation and mitigation actions identified in the Climate Action Plan, Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Climate Action Charter.

2.2.2 County Development Plan

The **County Development Plan 2019-2025** includes the following policies and objectives around walking and cycling:

Cycling and Walking Policy	
CWP 1	To promote and facilitate the development of walkways, cycleways and recreational routes in appropriate locations throughout the County to deliver the objectives of the County Walking and Cycling Strategy and any subsequent strategy document.
CWP 2	To promote and encourage the development of walks and cycleways in accordance with the Smarter Travel Policy and to protect established routes from development that would adversely impact upon them.
CWP 3	To develop, in co-operation and consultation with adjoining local authorities and cross border bodies sections of the Ulster Canal Greenway Network to connect the main urban centres throughout central Ulster.
CWP 4	To encourage the provision of bicycle infrastructure such as shelters and parking facilities in appropriate locations and make provisions for such infrastructure in new developments.
CFP 14	To work with in conjunction with adjoining local authorities including Meath, Louth and Cavan to develop the border kingdoms route across Dundalk, Inniskeen, Carrickmacross, Kingscourt, Nobber, Navan and Drogheda.
CFP 15	To support schools in providing safe routes between schools and surrounding residential areas to facilitate safe routes to schools, park and stride and other active travel initiatives.

The following Transport & Infrastructure objectives and policies will support in the delivery of cycling and walking infrastructure:

Transport Policies	
TP 2	To support the creation of an integrated and sustainable transport system to promote a choice of transport modes including public transport, cycling and walking facilities.
TP 4	To plan for future traffic and transportation needs in County Monaghan and to ensure that new development does not prejudice the expansion of road and cycling corridors in the County. Proposed road routes, road realignment schemes and future cycle route corridors shall be kept free from development that would compromise their future delivery.

Transport & Infrastructure Objective	
TISO 1	To achieve a sustainable, efficient and integrated transport system and ease of movement throughout County Monaghan by enhancing the existing transport infrastructure in terms of the road, cycling and pedestrian facilities and by promoting more compact urban forms close to existing facilities to encourage more sustainable movement patterns.

There is a strong interrelationship between land use and transportation. This is reflected in the **Settlement Strategy** endorsed in the County Development Plan 2019-2025, which aligns with national policy to direct a significant portion of future development to existing towns and settlements in order to reduce car dependency and to facilitate the economic provision of public transport. The adoption and implementation of the Core Strategies for Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay and the smaller settlements will strengthen this relationship by creating more compact urban forms which make the use of public transport, cycling and walking more viable.

2.2.3 Monaghan Land Use & Transportation Study (LUTS)

A land use and transportation study has been prepared for Monaghan Town. The Monaghan Land Use and Transportation Study (MLUTS) sets out the transport and land use options for the town to cover the period 2020-2030. This study was a response to resolving the competing demands for more housing and employment generating land uses with the provision of better transportation, environment and community facilities in the MLUTS Area.

A key objective of this plan is to relieve traffic congestion and divert through traffic, particularly commercial traffic and heavy goods vehicles, from residential areas and the town centre by providing alternative routes around the town. This should make the town centre a more pleasant and safer place to walk and cycle.

The Strategy includes maps detailing planned cycle infrastructure for the town. More details on the LUTS, including a map outlining the proposed cycling infrastructure, and the pedestrian and cycling recommendations for Monaghan town, are provided in **Appendix A**.

2.2.4 Town Walking & Cycling Plans

With funding provided by DTTAS under its Active Travel Towns initiative, walking & cycling plans were prepared in 2012 for Monaghan town and Castleblayney by transport consultant Kieran Boyle. A plan for Carrickmacross was prepared by Council staff in 2017.

The plans consulted with local schools and businesses as well as retailers and residents, and resulted in identification of routes which would be prioritised for walking and cycling through each town.

In **Monaghan**, it was recognised that the greenway provided a convenient 'spine' which brings people from the edges of the town into the centre, and that on-road cycling infrastructure should be focused on linking to and from it, with the speed limit in the very centre of town being reduced to 30kph to allow the creation of a 'shared space' where the safety of cyclists is enhanced due to the slow movement of vehicular traffic. The recommendations from this Plan are incorporated into the MLUTS.

Castleblayney's Plan focuses on linking the residential developments to the town centre and enhancing the leisure walking routes.

Carrickmacross's Plan proposes a mix of walking and cycling infrastructure to support both leisure and commuter journeys, backed with support to schools and businesses to prepare active travel plans.

Progress has been very limited in achieving the objectives set out in the Plans, due to a lack of resources in the years since publication. However, with the substantial commitments to funding for walking and cycling infrastructure in the current Programme for Government, it is hoped that there will be an increase in available resources during the next five years.

It is intended to review the existing town walking & cycling plans and prepare plans for Clones and Ballybay as part of the preparation of a countywide Mobility Masterplan, which is one of the priority actions of this Strategy.

2.2.4 Local Economic & Community Plan

The **Local Community Development Committee's** Local Economic & Community Plan 2015-2020 recognises the importance of the Ulster Canal Greenway as a key driver of tourism growth to the county, and lists the extension of the Greenway as one of its priority economic actions under Tourism.

The impact of a lack of transport on the social and economic opportunities of people living in rural communities, and the need to develop community transport models is highlighted in the Community section of the Plan.

A new LECP is expected to be written in 2021/2, and it will take this Strategy into account as part of its consultation process. We expect to see actions from this Strategy included in the new LECP.

2.2.5 Climate Adaptation

The Government of Ireland has committed itself to a strategy which aims to reduce Ireland's carbon emissions and promote climate adaptation. The Government published a National Climate Action Plan (NCAP) in 2019. Monaghan County Council adopted our own **Climate Action Plan** in October 2019, which identifies a number of practical activities right across our key service areas which we believe will contribute to climate adaptation and mitigation in the years ahead. One very important component in our climate adaptation work will be sustainable travel, and naturally the promotion of walking and cycling, as sustainable travel modes, will be an important element of this. This walking and cycling strategy will guide us in our work.

Each Local Authority is required to nominate a **Decarbonisation Zone**, as part of the measures being taken against Climate Change. While details have yet to emerge of the initiative, it is expected that an area of Monaghan town will be nominated, and that a feature of the nominated zone will be that it will be car-free; hence walking and cycling will be expected to play a key role in the mobility planning for the zone.

Related to this area of work is the Council's **Green Infrastructure Policy** within the **County Development Plan**, which recognises the value of parks and natural spaces and the appropriate access to such areas which can be provided by walking and cycling.

2.2.6 Road Safety

Co. Monaghan's Road Safety Plan 2017-2020 identifies pedestrians and cyclists as vulnerable road users. On a national level, collisions involving pedestrians account for 1 in 5 fatalities annually. Collisions involving cyclists account for 1 in 25 road deaths annually.

The County Monaghan Action Plan has been structured in accordance with the four E's of Road Safety namely Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Evaluation that form the Government's Road Safety Strategy 2013 -2020

Walking- and cycling- specific actions included in the Plan include:

- assisting schools to carry out 'walkability audits'
- promotions aimed at encouraging the wearing of PPE by vulnerable road users
- distribution of hi viz equipment

A new National Road Safety Plan is due in 2021, after which Monaghan Co Co will be preparing a new County Plan. The increasing number of walkers and cyclists on the county's roads will be an issue to be considered in the preparation of the Plan.

2.2.7 Age Friendly Agenda

The benefits of walking and cycling to health, quality of life, educational attainment, and social inclusion have also been acknowledged. In particular, Monaghan County Council is committed to the promotion of social inclusion, and has signed up to the World Health Organisation's **Age Friendly County** initiative.

Cycling has risen to become the third most popular sport enjoyed by older people

Cycling has risen in popularity from 4% to 7% in the last four years.

Research examining the participation and attitudes of older people in Ireland towards physical activity and sport Report prepared for: Go for Life and Sport Ireland September 2015

One in four children born in this decade can expect to live one hundred years or more, and the number of people remaining active well into their eighties is set to increase dramatically.

There were 8,577 people over the age of 65 living in Co. Monaghan in 2016 (last Census), according to the CSO.

Almost everyone does some walking but, now, over half report walking at a 'fast' or 'fairly brisk' pace. Over half walk alone, while another quarter walk with just one other person.

92% of people indicated that they walked for a minimum of five minutes in the last four weeks. 73% have taken a thirty-minute continuous walk in the last four weeks

55% of people walk on their own and a further 25% walk with one other person

Research examining the participation and attitudes of older people in Ireland towards physical activity and sport Report prepared for: Go for Life and Sport Ireland September 2015

Monaghan Age Friendly County programme focuses on ensuring Monaghan is a great place in which to grow older. Monaghan Age Friendly Strategy 2020-2024 includes a commitment to making the built environment more age friendly. Age Friendly design in the built environment and outdoor spaces can promote physical activity, reduce the risk of falls, and reduce social isolation for our older population. To support the work of the Monaghan Age Friendly Strategy, the Walking & Cycling Strategy will:

- Consider the World Health Organisation (WHO) Age-friendly Environments Programme guidelines for the design and development of inclusive and accessible outdoor environments that promote active ageing.
- Ensure walking and cycling infrastructure includes Age Friendly seating at regular intervals along active travel routes.
- Where possible, ensure accessible toilet facilities and adult changing places are provided in larger outdoor recreation areas.

2.2.8 Healthy Lifestyles



From MRBI report on physical activity in Ireland 2019

Monaghan Sports Partnership was established in 2006, with the aim of getting ‘more people, more active, more often’, and since then has been at the heart of promoting walking and cycling in the county. It has assisted in the establishment of new cycling, walking and running groups around the county, and it provides training to clubs both in how to run a successful club, and in skills improvement.

Monaghan Sports Partnership’s **Strategic Plan (2019-2023)** outlines its objectives regarding the engagement of people in the County in Sport and Physical activity. This includes the increased participation in walking and cycling as cost-effective means of getting active for health improvements and can be assisted in the development of more places in which people can walk and cycle, not only for health benefits but also as a means of active travel.

The Plan is responsive to the actions of the **National Physical Activity Plan** regarding activations for physical activity engagement and the objectives of the **National Sports Policy (2018-2027)** in particular those related to the high-level goal of; *Increased Participation: A significantly higher proportion of Irish children and adults from all sectors of society are regularly involved in all forms of active and social participation in sport.*

Monaghan Sports Partnership runs regular walking events and initiatives to encourage people to become more active by walking. It also supports initiatives within the Community that encourage

regular walking and greater use of enclosed, safe walking facilities. Monaghan Sports Partnership has provided Walking Leader training which supports leaders within their own Communities to organise and lead walks. Some of these leaders have also supported the Sports Partnership with public events.

MSP supports the provision of cycle skills training to primary school children and organises **National Bike Week** in Co, Monaghan each year. The Focus of Bike Week is to get people who would not normally cycle to give it a go. Many clubs and organisations get involved in running events for all ages and abilities including duathlons, family cycles, electric bike tours, and bike doctor workshops.

Monaghan County Council is a participant in the **Healthy Ireland** programme, and is leading in the delivery of an annual 'Healthy Monaghan' initiative, which sees a number of agencies collaborate in rolling out a range of programmes aimed at promoting the adoption of healthy lifestyles. These range from looking after your mental health to improving your physical well-being. A Healthy Monaghan Plan was published in early 2020. The promotion of the Smarter Travel agenda is one of the key actions identified in the Strategy, under Objective 1 (See below).

Objective: Enhance the natural and built healthy environment				
Actions	Output	LEAD	Partners	Linked to
1.3 Support the development of SMARTER travel initiatives amongst workplaces and education campuses to promote walking and cycling in the County		MCC	Schools, Employers.	Monaghan Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021 Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 DRAFT Walking & Cycling Strategy For County Monaghan 2017 Ulster Canal Greenway Strategy

From Healthy Monaghan Plan

As cycling is a low-impact activity, it is suited to a wide range of age groups. It is also relatively cheap to get set up with a bike, especially with initiatives like the government's Cycle to Work scheme available to cover some of the purchase price of the bike. Cycling is therefore a valuable core activity for the Healthy Monaghan programme.

Monaghan County Council also participates in **EU Mobility Week**, which promotes sustainable transport throughout Europe.

2.2.9 Town Regeneration

Monaghan County Council is leading a number of town regeneration projects across the five towns. A key policy being followed in the design of these regeneration schemes is that of 'compact growth', as laid out in 'Project Ireland 2040', and its allied concept of highly permeable town centres and priority to sustainable transport modes.

Town Teams have been set up to lead the challenge of regenerating each town, with representatives from local business and retail as well as community representatives working in partnership with the Council to devise strategies for regenerating the town centres.

The schemes in general seek to create more residential occupancy within the town centres, so as to add more vibrancy to the town centres, especially at night. They also promote the concept of outdoor living, with more open spaces designed to encourage citizens to spend time relaxing and enjoying life. The design of these spaces range from covered plazas to urban parks, and their purpose is to encourage people to walk and cycle around the town via these high quality, interconnected spaces, rather than use the motor car.

In addition to playing a role in promoting quality of life outcomes, regeneration projects promote town centres as attractive locations for investment through their contribution to placemaking, creating opportunities for businesses to locate, by increasing the viability of support services, through critical mass and economies of scale. So modern, attractive and sustainable town centres can play a key role in securing the future prosperity of a region.

2.2.10 Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

Monaghan County Council is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and accessibility for all. In line with our statutory obligations under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014, we will continue to develop practices that promote the right for everyone to participate in all aspects of life in County Monaghan. In our efforts to protect human rights, promote equality and eliminate discrimination in the implementation of the *Walking & Cycling Strategy* Monaghan County Council will:

- Ensure all information, supports and advice in relation to walking and cycling and Active Travel in County Monaghan will be provided in an inclusive and accessible format that meets the needs of our diverse population.
- Continue to develop initiatives that remove barriers to participation for some members of our communities by actively promoting equality and social inclusion.

2.2.11 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities came into force from 19 April 2018. The purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities. Monaghan County Council is committed to the principles of the UNCRPD and through the delivery of our services. Regarding the implementation of the *Walking & Cycling Strategy*, Monaghan County Council will ensure:

- The consideration of accessibility in the procurement and construction of capital works that support walking and cycling infrastructure in the county.

- To support the active participation of people with a disability in opportunities provided through the Walking & Cycling Strategy.
- Ensure all public consultation exercises related to the Walking & Cycling Strategy provide a variety of appropriate consultation methods to ensure that the all members are the community can have their views heard.
- The provision of accessible information including signposting/wayfinding and information boards are accessible to all people with a disability.

3 Situational Analysis

3.1 County Overview

According to Census 2011, there were 60,483 people living in Co Monaghan in 2011. This had grown to 61,386 in the Census of 2016, an increase of 1.5%.

The county is located in the North East, and is surrounded on three sides by Northern Ireland. There is no rail service to the county, and the main traffic is taken by the N2, which cuts through the county from north to south. There are 2,454 kilometres of public road in Co. Monaghan of which 108 km is national road. The network of local roads is one of the densest in Europe. There are a variety of public and private bus services serving the main towns, connecting to the main cities daily. A rural transport service connects the rural areas to the main towns.

County Monaghan is a very rural county, with almost 70% of the population living in rural areas. Of the 1.5% increased population recorded in the 2016 Census of Population, 225 people chose to live in our urban centres, while 675 settled in the rural areas. It is clear therefore that the county's traditional rural settlement pattern is set to continue into the future.

This poses unique challenges to the promotion of walking and cycling in the county, as for many people, travel by private motor car is the only practical option available to them at present in the rural areas. The private motor car is also the only practical mode of transport for to other regional destinations for many people, particularly if your destination is not Dublin or Belfast, to where there are regular public transport services from the main towns in Co. Monaghan.

The rolling drumlins and small fields edged with hawthorn hedges together with its many lakes make Co Monaghan's countryside a spectacular place to go walking or cycling. The drumlin topography can act as a deterrent to those who are less physically fit, however, although this is being somewhat mitigated with the arrival of E-bikes, which take much of the effort out of pedalling.

There are five towns in the county, the largest being Monaghan. The towns, while dating back in many cases to early Christian times, owe their current streetscapes in the main to the Ulster Plantation period, and feature open squares linked by narrow streets designed to accommodate horse-drawn traffic. Buildings in the main are set on the streets' edge, leaving little scope to widen paths or provide cycle infrastructure. This poses a major challenge for enhancing the appeal of town centres for pedestrians and cyclists. The situation is exacerbated by the town centres serving as intersections on regional routes, meaning that vehicular traffic is forced to navigate through the towns where bypasses do not exist, leaving the streets busy and carrying a high proportion of HGV's,

which can create an intimidating and unsafe environment for vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

Of the five towns, only Carrickmacross has a sufficiently robust bypass network in place at this point to enable traffic to navigate around the town without having to enter the town centre. The other four towns must still accommodate through traffic from one or more regional and/or national route. This complicates the towns' ability to control traffic in their town centres, as they must balance the need to make the centres liveable, sustainable places where slower modes of transport are protected and encouraged against the need to facilitate the flow of sometimes large volumes of fast-moving traffic.

3.2 Overview of the Existing Walking & Cycling Infrastructure

3.2.1 Trails & Routes

A number of recreational trails have been developed in the county. The first to be developed were the trails within the Coillte-owned forestries, most notably Rossmore Forest Park on the edge of Monaghan town, which was the most visited Coillte-owned property outside the greater Dublin area in 2020. There are walking trails also in Dartrey Forest which stretches from Rockcorry to Cootehill, Muckno in Castleblayney and Billy Fox Memorial Park in Bawn. All offer free access to the public. Monaghan County Council has recently taken over the management of Rossmore Forest Park from Coillte and is in the process of developing and upgrading the trails and other amenities therein.

There is a strong tradition of community development in the area of trails development. In 2001, a community-led initiative developed the county's first way-marked long-distance walk, from Inniskeen to Clontibret. Once complete, the maintenance and insurance of the route was taken on by Monaghan County Council. Over time, with change of land ownership along the route, some sections of the Way have had to be re-routed onto the public road, which has detracted from its attractiveness, and it is currently closed to the public pending review.

Other initiatives include:

- In response to the need for safe places to walk, particularly on winter evenings, a number of GAA clubs have developed walking tracks around their pitches in the last few years. These include Truagh, Latton, Corduff, Clontibret, Scotstown at their training grounds at Kilmore, Donaghmoyne, Cremartin, Castleblayney Faughs, Blackhill, Killeevan and Aghabog.
- There is also a walking track around the Peace Campus in Clones, and at Ardaghey Community Centre
- Donagh Development Committee developed a walk around Emy Lough in North Monaghan, with funding from LEADER
- Knockatallon Development, together with Clones Erne East Partnership, developed a series of cross border walks across Sliabh Beagh and Bragan mountain. A recent Masterplan for the region, facilitated by Monaghan County Council, identifies walking and cycling as a key driver in the development of the tourism product, and the Council has consequently been assisting the community to access funding to upgrade existing trails and address gaps in the infrastructure. A Tourism Development Strategy has been devised for the area, in which walking and cycling again play an important role. It has been identified that there is a need

to provide a safe link between the neighbouring towns and Sliabh Beagh, to facilitate visitor to reach the mountain by foot and bike if they are travelling by public transport.

- Clones Development Society developed a local loop off the long-distance Kingfisher Cycle Trail. The loop, called 'Optional Ride 6' on the longer trail, takes in Clones, Newbliss and Scotshouse on a 35km loop to the 480km main trail.
- Blackwater Regional Partnership, a now defunct cross border collaboration between Monaghan, Armagh City & District Council and Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council developed an on-road cycle trail which starts at Caledon, travels through Glaslough and Monaghan and connects across Threemilehouse and Scotshouse to join the Kingfisher trail at Clones. This Ulster Canal Cycle Trail is identified as Route 91 in the Sustrans list of cycling routes in Great Britain & Northern Ireland. <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/find-a-route-on-the-national-cycle-network/route-91/>

Walking & Cycling Trails			
Trail Name	Trail type	Length	Location
Kingfisher Trail	480km On Road Cycling route through Fermanagh & Leitrim, part Monaghan	35 km loop in Co. Monaghan	Clones, Newbliss, Scotshouse
Monaghan Slí	Sli Na Slainte Walking Route	2.5 km	Monaghan Town
Clones Slí	Sli Na Slainte Walking Route	3.3 km	Clones Town
Carrickmacross Slí	Sli Na Slainte Walking Route	3 km	Carrickmacross Town
Carrickmacross Looped trails	5 looped on-road trails around south Monaghan	Trail 1: 4km Trail 2: 9.6km Trail 3: 7.5km Trail 4: 8km Trail 5: 24/32km	All beginning in Carrickmacross
Monaghan Way - temporarily closed & under review	Mixed surface, off and on-road way-marked walking/ hiking route	56.5 km	Clontibret to Inniskeen via Castleblayney
Rossmore Park Trails	Gravelled walking trails within a forest park	Castle trail: 3km Lake trail: 8km Wheelchair friendly trail: 2km Family Cycle trail: 2.5km Loop of forest: 8km	On the edge of Monaghan Town
Dartrey Forest Trails	Rough gravelled trails within a commercial forestry	Approx. 10km	Between Rockcorry and Cootehill
Ulster Canal Greenway	Off-road walking and cycling route	4.2 km to extend to 26 km in 2022	Monaghan Town
Ulster Canal Cycle Trail	On-road cross border cycle trail from Maghera on Lough Neagh to Clones	79.9km about 50% of which is in Co Monaghan	Follows the path of the canal as closely as possible by road

	via Glaslough and Monaghan		
Sliabh Beagh cross border Cycle Trails McKenna trail: 60km Shane Bearnagh Trail: 60km Finn trail: 29km Teighes Hill trail: 34km Carraig na Brattogh trail: 31km	On-road cross border cycling routes, Monaghan, Tyrone, Fermanagh	Two of the routes have significant sections in Co Monaghan: McKenna trail: nearly all of the 60km Shane Bearnagh Trail: approx. 60% of the 60km	North Co Monaghan
Sliabh Beagh Way 65km cross border walking trail from Aughnacloy to Lisnaskea	Linear walking trail on minor roads, track and moorland across Bragan mountain	Approx. 1/3 of the route is in Monaghan	North Co Monaghan
Knockatallon looped Walks	Four looped walks on mixed surfaces across Bragan mountain	The Tra Walk 10km The Rock Walk 6.5km The Bragan Walk 7km The Esh Walk 9km or shorter 3.5km loop	North Co Monaghan, using Sliabh Beagh Hotel in Knockatallon as the trailhead
Emy Lough looped walk	Mostly off-road trail along lake shore. Last km is on minor road	4km	Between Emyvale and Glaslough
Senator Billy Fox Memorial Park	Short looped trails within a wooded park	2km	Bawn
Ballybay Walks	Three looped walks in and around Ballybay	Town Park: 500m Lough Major: 4.2km Corbrack Lane: 4.5km	Ballybay, all routes starting in the town park
Ballybay Wetlands Trails	Two looped walks through the farmland and along the lake shore of the Wetlands Centre		Ballybay, just outside the town on the Clones road
Muckno Park	A network of walking trails around Black Island, White Island, and the former golf course are available	5.8km of trails	Castleblayney
The Hilly Way	On-road signed cycling route taking scenic back roads from Cabra Castle	8.7km route	South Co Monaghan

	in Kingscourt to Carrickmacross		
Derrygorry/ Favour Royal Forest	Cross border forest which includes the Millennium Forest where a tree was planted for every person alive in Co. Monaghan in the year 2000	1.5km walk to St Patrick's Chair & Well in Favour Royal Forest on NI side of border	North Monaghan

Maps of all the above are available on the website, www.gomonaghan.ie

All of the trails listed above have been developed with recreational use in mind, with the exception of the Ulster Canal Greenway, which was developed with the dual purpose of recreation and facilitating commuter journeys in mind, as all but one of the town's schools, as well as most of the town's largest employers and residential areas lie along its route.

3.2.2 Greenways Development

The county's first greenway opened in Monaghan town in 2014. Utilising the banks of the disused Ulster Canal Greenway, 4.2km of route bisected the town, running from east to west and quickly became popular with commuters and recreational users alike. In its first year of operation, the Monaghan town greenway saw over 100,000 users, the majority of which were pedestrians. Spurred on by the success of the project, Monaghan County Council reached out to Waterways Ireland to explore the potential for collaborating on the development of further sections of the canal, and to neighbouring Councils and Iarnród Éireann to explore opportunities presented by other disused transportation infrastructure such as the GNR railway line.

An Ulster Canal Regional Steering Group is actively working to develop a 190km national route across central Ulster, in which Co. Monaghan and the Ulster Canal will be a central component. A Strategic Plan is in place to guide the delivery of the greenway. As it is a very long route, it will need to be broken into several phases to be delivered. Monaghan to Middletown is underway, thanks to cross border funding from the INTERREG IVA programme. Route selection and some early design work have been carried out on the section between Monaghan and Smithboro, and it is hoped to secure funding to advance this section to construction in the not-too-distant future. Some early preliminary work has been completed on the section between Smithboro and Clones, with the intention of completing the preliminaries so as to have the project 'shovel ready' should funding become available in the next few years.

As Waterways Ireland is working to develop a re-watered section of canal from Clones towards the scouting amenity at Castlesaunderson, and Cavan County Council have begun work on developing a greenway from Cavan town to Castlesaunderson, potentially we could see the creation of a national greenway within the next five to ten years.

In the south of the county, Monaghan County Council has been in discussion with Meath, Cavan and Louth County Councils to identify a regional route which offers the kind of activity and 'lots to see and do' that the government wishes to see in a recreational greenway. A route starting in Drogheda and passing the site of the Battle of the Boyne, then out towards Navan before swinging northwards through Nobber to Kingscourt will then loop back through Carrickmacross through Patrick Kavanagh

Country in Inniskeen to Dundalk. A scoping/ feasibility study on the Carrick to Dundalk section has been completed.

In mid Monaghan, the feasibility of a route from Castleblayney to Ballybay and on to Clones using the GNR railway line is being investigated.

3.2.3 Organisations & Groups

The popularity of walking as a recreational activity is on the increase in the county. The Knockatallon Ramblers Club has been going for over a decade and fields a full programme of activity throughout the year, and a similar club has recently established in Carrickmacross. Cycling too is popular across the county, with the number of clubs on the increase. Clubs include:

- Emyvale Cycling Club
- Killylough Cycling Club
- Muckno Cycling Club
- Clones Cycling Club
- Carrickmacross Cycling Club
- Four Counties Cycling Club

There are a number of walking clubs in the county, catering for every age and level of fitness. The clubs include:

- Knockatallon Ramblers
- Toome TCG Walking Group
- Farney Ramblers
- Clones Walkers
- Rockcorry Walking Group
- Sole Sisters women's walking group, Monaghan town
- Over 55's walking club Monaghan town (linked to U3A group)

3.2.4 Events & Festivals

Walking and cycling events and festivals which take place annually in the county include:

- U3A's walking festival in Monaghan town in February
- Boots 'n' Bogs festival on Sliabh Beagh in March
- National Bike Week in June - a week-long series of events co-ordinated by Monaghan Sports Partnership and funded by the Dept of Transport Tourism & Sport
- Monaghan Phoenix Marathon Festival takes place in September, providing two marathons, a half marathon and a 5k race for running enthusiasts over a two-day period.

Park Runs take place in both Muckno Park in Castleblayney and Rossmore Park in Monaghan every Saturday morning.



Castleblayney Park Run was the first to be set up in the county

Monaghan County Council is committed to steadily upgrading the public spaces in the towns and villages around the county. Recent works include the walk connecting the town park in Ballybay to Lough Mór Avenue, the Convent Avenue Walk in Carrickmacross, and the new community park in Scotshouse, all of which provide quality off-road local walking amenities.

3.2.5 Walking and Cycling for Health & Wellbeing

As low-impact physical activities, walking and cycling are two of the most often recommended activities for improving fitness, as they are suitable for most ages and abilities. They also get people out into the fresh air and often into natural surroundings, which is proven to have a beneficial effect on mood. It is not surprising then, that walking and cycling are mainstays of the HSE's Healthy Ireland strategy, and they have been encouraging their promotion for a number of years.

There are three Slí na Sláinte routes in the county. These are in-town local routes designed to encourage people to take short walks for the good of their health, and are an Irish Heart Foundation initiative.

With the roads becoming busier, and more people becoming active for the sake of their health, community groups are becoming concerned with the safety of pedestrians on rural roads. A number of GAA clubs and community facilities have built walking tracks around their premises to accommodate walking in dark winter evenings.

Monaghan Sports Partnership has run various walking events, including Walk in Nature events aimed at promoting mindfulness and meditation whilst walking.

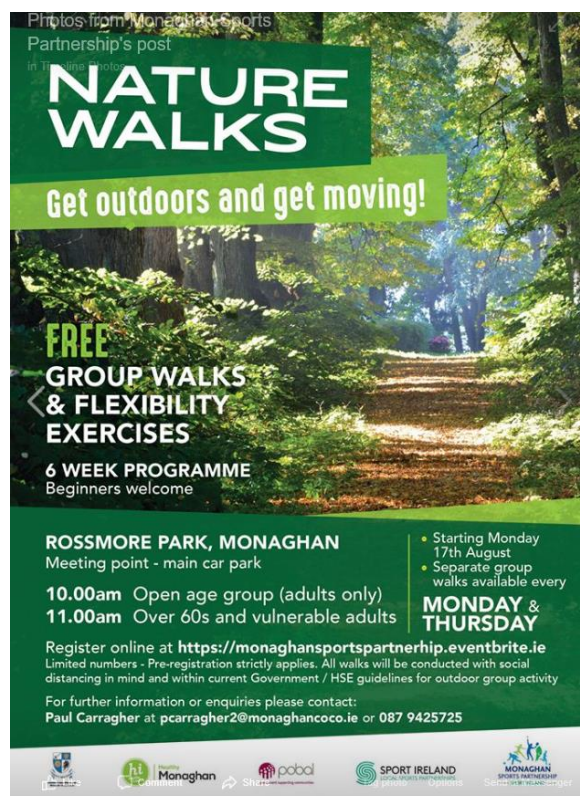
Walking is also a popular component in the lifestyle challenge programmes run annually in Castleblayney, Glaslough and Ballinode, which all finish with 5km walks/runs

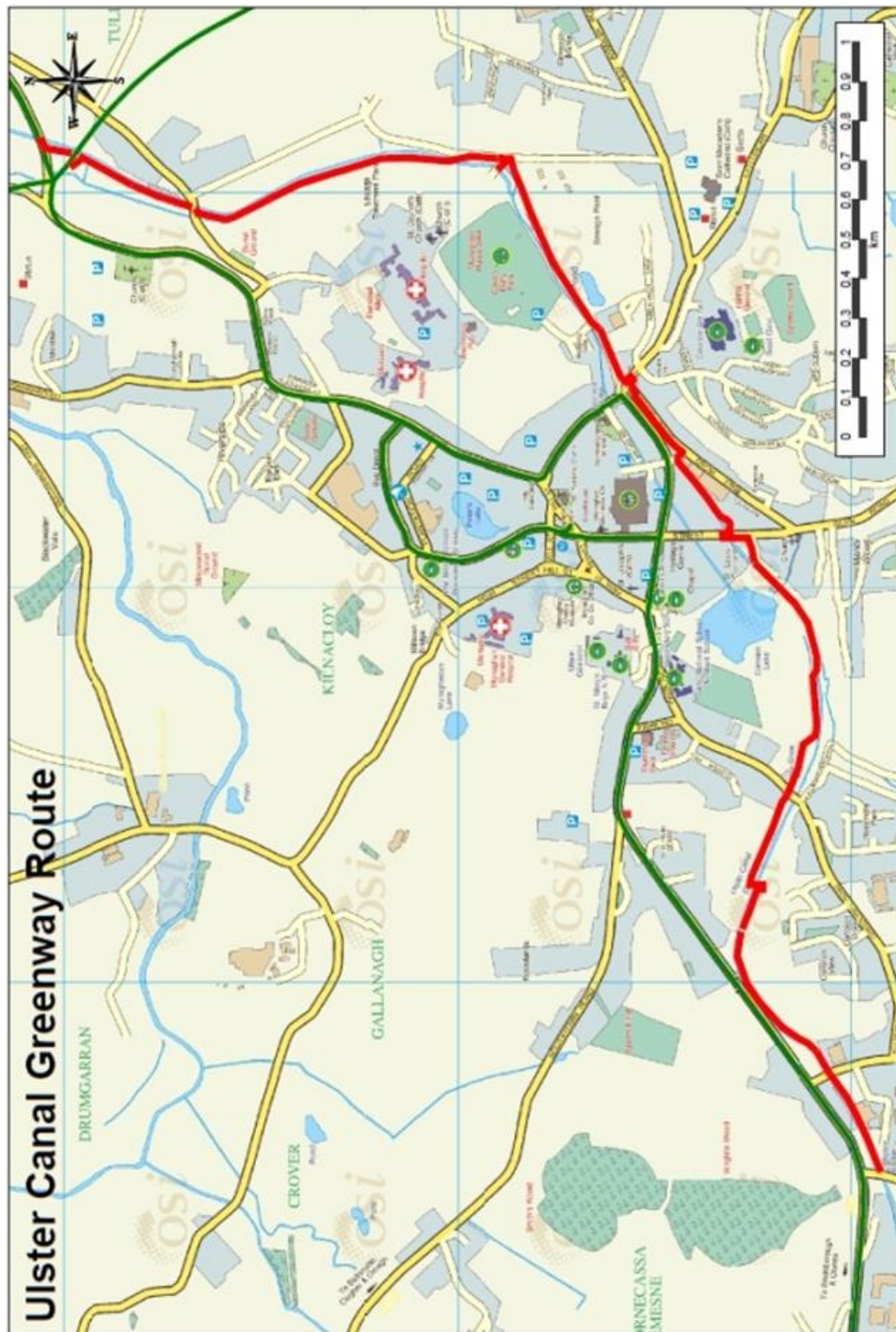
An annual dawn walk held on the Ulster Canal Greenway to support the work of Pieta House, 'Darkness into Light', attracts more than 500 participants each year. The message of the event is anti-suicide and that it is ok not to be ok – to reach out and talk to someone.

A number of communities organise events around the 'Operation Transformation' model, and this drives a significant amount of activity, particularly around walking and running. This activity tends to use outdoor looped trails to provide some visual variety to the routine.

3.2.6 Walking & Cycling for Commuting

A 4.2km section of greenway has already been completed in Monaghan town, and forms a critical part of the town's plans for developing its walking and cycling infrastructure going forward. Most of the town's schools and main employment centres lie near the greenway, as do the main residential areas, and the greenway provides a safe and quick route for traversing the town for those travelling between home and school/ work. Counter data from the greenway shows increased usage at peak commute times, indicating that it is being used for commuting journeys.





Greenway through Monaghan town shown in red – this is Phase I of the Regional Route shown in section 2.1.8

Monaghan County Council, in partnership with Waterways Ireland and Armagh City & Craigavon Borough Council, is currently engaged in the process of developing a cross border commuting route for walkers & cyclists along the banks of the former Ulster Canal between Monaghan town and

Middletown in Co Armagh. The route will connect Monaghan Mushrooms, one of the area's largest employers, to the two settlements. It is also planned to provide a 'spur' development along Monaghan town's N2 bypass to provide connectivity to the Knockaconny industrial lands, which include Comblift, another major employer.

The Greenway passes close to, or is adjacent to all five secondary schools and Monaghan Institute of Further Education and Training. It is also close to all but one of the town's primary schools (Model School). It is therefore eminently suited to the facilitation of a strong active travel programme for the town.

Preliminary design is in process for the section of greenway between Monaghan and Smithboro, which is home to Grove Farm, a large poultry processing plant which is one of the county's largest employers.

A study in 2016 by SYSTRA into the impact the development of a greenway from Smithboro to Middletown would have on commuting and a potential modal shift to walking and cycling found the following:

- By 2023, there will be an estimated 1,364 daily private commuter trips along the greenway corridor
- By providing car parking facilities at strategic locations along the route to encourage commuters travelling longer distances to complete the final stretch by foot or bike and engaging in an aggressive community engagement programme and promotional campaign, it is possible to increase the modal shift to perhaps 12-14%
- This translates into approx. 164 people using the greenway to commute by foot or bike every day.

The Council has developed Walking & Cycling Plans for Monaghan, Castleblayney and Carrickmacross which focus on building infrastructure to facilitate commuting. However, much remains to be done within all five towns to achieve uninterrupted connectivity throughout the towns and to deepen the permeability of walking and cycling infrastructure in town centres in particular, where the narrowness of many streets is a barrier to overcome. Therefore, we propose to develop Cycle Mobility Plans for each town to aid in the identification of commuter routes and ensure that the routes we develop link the most used corridors.

It has been shown in surveys such as the National Travel Survey that the biggest barrier to people switching to cycling is the lack of safe cycling infrastructure. The study also showed some obstacles that could be overcome with good community engagement programmes, such as active travel plans for schools and supporting employers to participate in the smarter travel workplaces initiative. This is an area that the Council can act upon, and we have built this into our Strategy.

3.2.7 Walking & Cycling for Economic Development

The Action Plan for Rural Development Realising our Rural Potential highlights the potential of activity tourism to contribute to economic growth in rural areas. It states that

“Outdoor adventure tourism is a key growth sector worldwide and has been identified as a priority for Irish tourism in future years. The development and promotion of this sector provides opportunities for growth, in rural areas in particular, by facilitating businesses to leverage the tourism assets in their area in a sustainable way to support recreational activities such as canoeing, cycling, angling and hill walking”.

The development of high quality, off-road trails which provide a high-quality landscape experience and which offer plenty of interesting activities along the route, have been identified as the way forward in exploiting this ‘culturally curious’ outdoor-oriented market.

Co. Monaghan’s Tourism Development Strategy includes the development and promotion of the walking and cycling product as part of the outdoor activity tourism offering that the county will be promoting widely in the coming years.

Ulster Canal Greenway – Long Distance Strategic Route

Monaghan County Council has developed a partnership with Waterways Ireland, Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, Cavan County Council, Fermanagh & Omagh Council and Mid Ulster Council to develop a long-distance Greenway using the entire length of the Ulster Canal and several disused railway lines to connect the main population centres throughout central Ulster, including Cavan, Enniskillen, Lisnaskea, Newtownbutler, Clones, Monaghan, Armagh and Portadown. When complete, the route will provide over 190km of off-road trails, will connect the main population centres in central Ulster, and will link routes coming out from Belfast to those extending eastwards from Sligo, thus providing visitors entering the country at Larne/ Belfast with the option of travelling west through the region via a network of cycle routes over a number of days rather than take a car or bus to reach the Atlantic coast in a couple of hours. This could potentially be a game changer for the fortunes of tourism for the central Ulster region.

For the latest information on this project, visit www.ulstercanalgreenway.com

The Monaghan Way

The Monaghan Way is a way-marked route running from Inniskeen to Clontibret, passing through Castleblayney. Originally intended to reach Glaslough, its development was impeded by the Foot & Mouth crisis of 2001. The route was developed by a community group with LEADER funding, and was then handed over to Monaghan County Council to maintain and insure. Over the years, various sections of the route have changed hands, resulting in landowners withdrawing way leave permission, and the route now features significant stretches of busy regional road. The route is currently closed, and is under review.

Sliabh Beagh Trails

Monaghan County Council has also invested in the tourism potential of the Sliabh Beagh region, and under the guidance of a Tourism Masterplan for the area, has been availing of Outdoor Recreation & Infrastructure funding to upgrade the existing trails on the mountain and complete any gaps in the product offering, such as signage.



Sliabh Beagh Adventures is a new business which has recently set up to offer walking and cycling activities across Bragan

Walking & Cycling Enterprises and Supports

There are an increasing number of tourism-related businesses connected to walking and cycling in the county, including:

- Drumlin Trails bike hire, which provides electric bikes and guided heritage tours through north Monaghan
- Sliabh Beagh Adventures, which provides guided walking and bike tours across Bragan mountain
- Tanagh Outdoor Education & Training Centre, which offers orienteering, hiking and mountain biking as in Dartrey Forest as some of their activities

Monaghan Sports Partnership has provided training to a number of Walk Leaders, who are available to organise and lead walking events and festivals. Walk leaders have also been trained in the past through the LEADER programme.



Drumlin Trails electric bikes on a trip around the community-developed Emy Lough walking trail

3.2.8 Assessment of Suitability of Current Walking & Cycling Infrastructure

Taking all of the above into account, it is clear that a good start has been made, but that a lot remains to be done. Recent funding has aided in the upgrading of existing amenities, and in the provision of embryonic cycling infrastructure within the towns and some villages – enough to show that where provided, they have stimulated activity and a demand for more.

It is clear that the community sector has embraced the climate change and healthy living agendas, and are actively pursuing the development of walking amenities, in particular. Whilst the schools are on board with the Transport agenda, the businesses are less organised and will need more support. The appointment of a dedicated Active Travel Officer and the roll-out of an active travel programme aimed at increasing engagement across the business, school and community sectors would provide a massive boost to the numbers of people walking and cycling, and particularly to the number of people persuaded to shift modes of transportation for commuting purposes.

The most challenging aspect of the work ahead will undoubtedly be the provision of cycle lanes in town centres. This is due to the narrowness of many streets, as the towns date back to an era predating the motor car, and are under pressure to accommodate vehicular traffic as it is. The drive from national level for compact urban growth, coupled with a growing appreciation by the public of quality urban spaces will assist us to re-prioritise the public realm away from the facilitation of the fast movement of vehicular traffic through our towns towards the creation of pleasant, liveable spaces where people enjoy spending time and can get around easily and safely without having to constantly watch out for fast-moving traffic. This will require both a significant re-design of our town centres and a shift in thinking by our citizens, and will require consultation and communication to

get right. To aid in this process, we propose to set up a Walking & Cycling Forum, where new ideas can be discussed at an early stage, issues aired, plans thrashed out etc in a spirit of partnership between all stakeholders in the development of the county.

A number of local plans have been produced in the last few years, including Walking & Cycling Plans, a LUTS and a Back lands Development Plan in Monaghan town. In addition, new guidance and best practice at EU and national level is available, such as the '10 Minute Town' concept and the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy. It is advisable to carry out a review of all plans and prepare an overall County Network Plan, which should incorporate a Mobility Plan for each of the five towns.

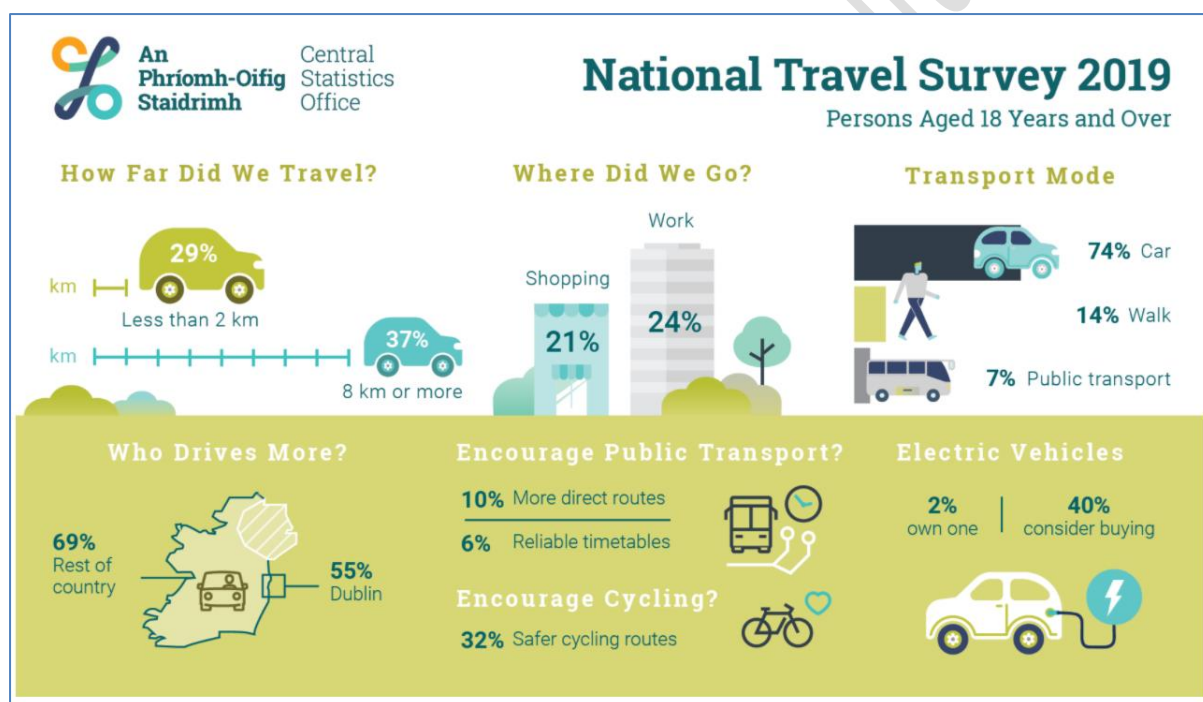
The tourism product offers significant potential, particularly the long-distance greenway and the 'correspond with nature' offering on Sliabh Beagh. The Monaghan Way's current state must be addressed, as too much of it currently is on-road.

3.3 Attitudes and Behaviours towards Walking and Cycling

In order to strengthen the culture around walking and cycling in Co. Monaghan, we must first understand where we are at the moment, and identify the challenges which must be overcome in order to make progress. In this section, we present some of the key data upon which we have based our approach. The data represents many months of research and discussion, as well as attendance at webinars organised by bodies such as the National Transport Authority and the Dutch Cycling Embassy.

We have examined the data, and also reviewed case studies and examples of best practice in order to identify actions which we believe will work in the Co. Monaghan context to promote walking and cycling and deliver behavioural change.

3.3.1 How and Where people Travel – the National Picture



Infographic from the CO's National Travel Survey 2019

Nationally, walking accounted for 13.5% of all journeys made in 2019 (CSO National Travel Survey 2019). One in six journeys (16.5%) that took a quarter of an hour or less were by walking (14.9%) or cycling (1.6%), while walking was used for nearly one in ten (9.8%) journeys in excess of an hour in duration.

Walking (36.1%) or cycling (2%) account for nearly four in every ten (38.1%) of all journeys under two kilometres.

The data reveals differences between how and why men and women travel which are important to consider when planning for development of walking and cycling:

- Men's journeys are more likely to be work-related, and to involve a single, direct journey from home to place of work & vice versa
- Women's journeys, even when work related, are more likely to take in stops along the way – collecting children, getting something for dinner, dropping letters to post office etc. This is known as 'trip chaining'.
- Men are more likely to favour the most direct route between two points, valuing time and convenience over quality of the experience
- Women are more likely to incorporate leisure/ fitness activity into their journey and are more likely to value quality of the route experience over convenience
- When asked what would encourage them to walk/ cycle more, improved safety of routes was a concern for women (40.56%) much more than for men (31.2%)
- Both women and men rated improved infrastructure highly as a motivator to walking and cycling more
- Access to changing facilities was a stronger incentive for men towards adopting walking and cycling for commuting journeys than it was for women

3.3.2 How and Where people Travel – the Monaghan Data

The most recent data available at county level is from **Census 2016**. In Co. Monaghan in that year 39,310 people travelled to work or school each day, with 27,885 (71%) of these making their journey by private motor car/ van. Of the 9.87% of commuters who either walk or cycle, only 179 people (0.45%) completed their journey by bike, indicating that there is much potential to improve on these figures in the coming years.

Population aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work school or college						2016 figure as % of Total
Means of Travel	Work	School or College	Total 2016	Total 2011	% change	
On foot	1761	1938	3699	3843	-3.9	9.4%
Bicycle	127	52	179	150	16.2	0.45%
Bus minibus or coach	279	3738	4017	4231	-5.3	10.22%
Train DART or LUAS	38	17	55	67	-21.8	0.12%
Motorcycle or scooter	25	4	29	28	3.45	0.1%
Car driver	15667	661	16328	14783	9.46	41.54%
Car passenger	1468	7158	8626	7388	14.35	21.94%
Van	2854	77	2931	2684	8.43	7.46%
Other (incl. work mainly from home)	1945	15	1960	2133	-8.8	4.99%
Not stated	1016	470	1486	2087	-40.4	3.78%
Total	25180	14130	39310	37394	4.87	100%

Source: CSO Census of Population 2016

Whilst the growth in the level of cycling (16% increase) is encouraging, it is based on a very low figure and therefore any gains can appear disproportionate. It is more revealing to view walking and

cycling as a % share of the modes of transportation available to the commuters. The level of commuters overall increased by just under 5% during this five-year period; however the increase in the share taken up by walkers and cyclists was just 1%. The biggest gains were made by motor transport (32.24%), demonstrating how difficult it will be to attract commuters away from these modes of transportation.

In terms of journey times, 41% of commuters in Co. Monaghan are making a journey of less than 15 minutes. This suggests that there is significant potential amongst this cohort to generate a shift away from the motor car as the primary means of transportation towards more sustainable modes of transportation, for at least some of their daily journeys.

15,212 people in Co. Monaghan make a journey of less than 15 minutes to their workplace or school each day. This would indicate that walking or cycling is a viable alternative to the motor car for many.

Population aged 5 years and over by journey time to work, school or college				
Journey time	2016	2011	increase (decrease)	% change
Under 15 mins	15212	14297	915	6.01
1/4 hour - under 1/2 hour	10695	10034	661	6.18
1/2 hour - under 3/4 hour	4844	4582	262	5.41
3/4 hour - under 1 hour	1373	1388	-15	-1.09
1 hour - under 1 1/2 hours	1622	1260	362	22.32
1 1/2 hours and over	1165	870	295	25.32
Not stated	2738	2087	651	23.78
Total	37649	34518	3131	8.32

Source: CSO Census of Population 2016

Many of these people live within the five main urban centres, and should therefore be prime candidates for engaging in walking and cycling to work/ school:

No. of people with a commute of less than 15 minutes			
Town	Male	Female	Total
Castleblayney	526	527	1053
Monaghan	1055	1099	2154
Clones	198	212	410
Carrickmacross	699	720	1419
Ballybay*			
Total	2478	2558	5036

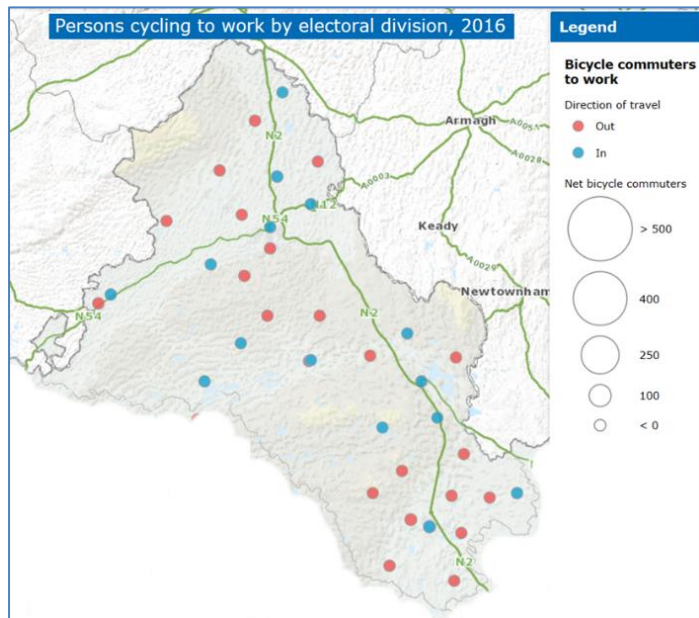
*Data not available for Ballybay

Source: CSO Census of Population 2016

Where do people need to get to?

CSO mapping shows that many of those currently cycling to work and school are doing so not within the urban centres, but to rural locations throughout the county.

The map below illustrates where people have been recorded by the Census as cycling to work/school.

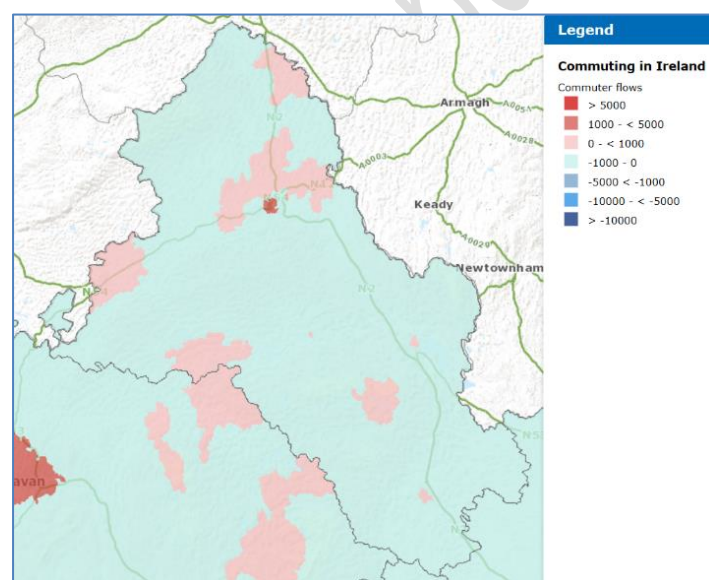


Two things are striking about the data:

- The amount of rural locations featured.
- The lack of numbers centred around the urban areas (a larger number of cyclists would be depicted by a larger circle at that location).

The data speaks of people cycling from necessity on routes which lack cycling infrastructure, with the lack of dedicated cycling infrastructure in the towns continuing to deter commuting by bike in any meaningful numbers.

The following map shows the pattern of daily commuter movement in Co. Monaghan. Areas marked in red/ pink are attracting more commuters in than leave the area each morning, so there is a net positive flow. The largest commuter hub in the county is Monaghan town and its environs.



The majority of the county sees a net outflow of commuters during the day, as represented in the graphic below by the blue areas. Employment around the Lough Egish area, Abbots in Cootehill, and Monaghan Mushrooms to the east of Monaghan town along the Armagh road can be clearly picked out on the map.

Where are people walking and cycling in Co. Monaghan?

We consulted the popular fitness tracker app, Strava, to view its heat maps showing the places people are using for walking/ running and cycling.

Rossmore Park, Muckno, Dartrey all show up, as does Ballybay town park and Clones. There is also activity in the Emyvale/ Emy Lough area. Surprisingly, there is little activity in the Sliabh Beagh region, where there are walking trails. It is apparent that people are choosing to walk/ run on designated, off-road amenities rather than along public roads. This is good news from a road safety perspective. The looped nature of the walks/runs can be clearly seen from the map, indicating a strong preference for this type of amenity.

The busiest cycling route is the N2, but there are some surprises. The route from Monaghan through Tydavnet and on to Clogher is popular, as are Clones – Ballybay – Castleblayney and Cootehill – Ballybay – Castleblayney. Whilst the main roads are the most popular routes, it is interesting to see that the minor roads are also well used, and that linkages abound with our neighbouring counties.

What about the schools?

At the time of the Census in 2016, there were 14,229 students in the county, broken down thusly:

	All	Male	Female
5-12 year	7596	3891	3705
13-18 years	5095	2667	2428
19+	1538	731	807
	14229	7289	6940

Source: CSO Census of Population 2016

The Census reveals that 2112 students, or 14.8% walk to school or college. Only 74 students, or 0.5% cycle, with most of these being in the post Leaving Cert age category.

The proportion of students engaging in active travel modes of transportation is highest in the 19+ age category, which reflects both the growing independence of this age group and perhaps also an awareness amongst this age group of the importance of climate action and the part that sustainable transport has to play in solving the climate crisis.

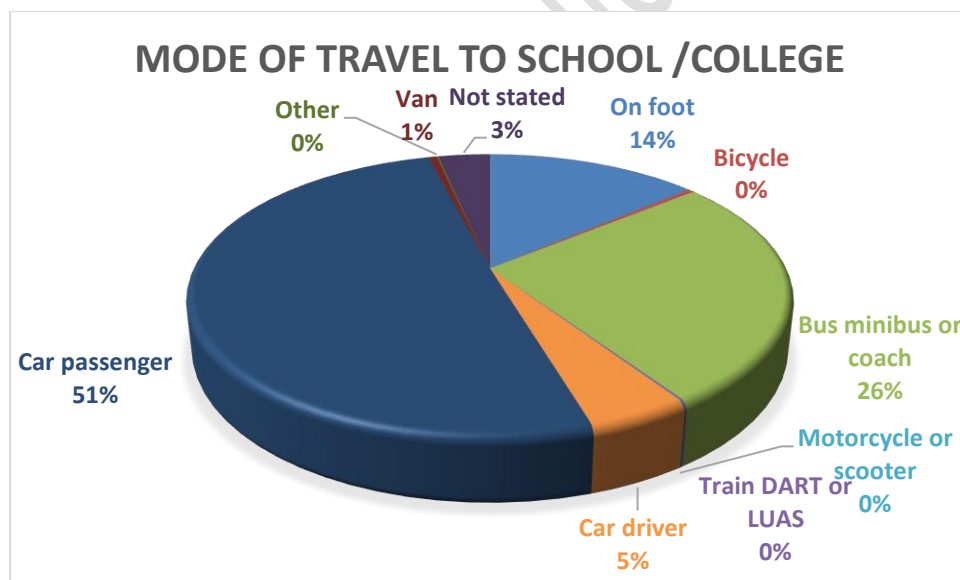
Students Commuting by Active Travel Modes in Co. Monaghan 2016									
Travelling on foot									
Age Group	Male	as % of total males	Female	as % of total females	Both Sexes	as % of Total	Total no of students	Total No of Males	Total No Females
5-12 years	459	11.8	483	13.0	942	12.4	7596	3891	3705
13-18 years	366	13.7	355	14.6	721	14.2	5095	2667	2428
19 +	187	25.6	262	32.5	449	29.2	1538	731	807
Total	1012	13.9	1100	15.9	2112	14.8	14229	7289	6940
Travelling by bike									
Age Group	Male	as % of total males	Female	as % of total females	Both Sexes	as % of Total	Total no of students	Total No of Males	Total No Females
5-12 years	5	1.1	7	1.4	12	0.2	7596	3891	3705
13-18 years	10	2.7	1	0.3	11	0.2	5095	2667	2428
19 +	38	5.2	13	1.6	51	3.3	1538	731	807
Total	53	0.7	21	0.3	74	0.5	14229	7289	6940

Source: CSO Census of Population 2016

The primary school sector may have the largest *number* of children walking to school (942), but this represents the lowest in *percentage terms* across the three sectors. Neither the primary nor secondary schools show much activity in terms of commuting by bike. While in the younger age groups cycle skills and the rules of the road may yet to be learned and safety on the road may therefore be a legitimate concern preventing schools from encouraging children to engage in active travel, it is particularly concerning to see that there is no growth at all in the numbers cycling at secondary level, at which stage this issue should not be so prevalent. The lack of uptake of cycling at secondary level may be accounted for to some extent by the fact that the secondary schools are all located in the towns and many students who live outside the towns will have a longer commute and will therefore opt to take the bus.

A worrying pattern revealed by the data is that while the female rate of engagement in walking is equal if not ahead of males across all three age levels, with cycling, there is no such parity, with participation levels falling behind at secondary level (0.3% of girls cycle compared to 2.7% of boys). The gap widens even further amongst the older students, with only 1.6% of female students aged 19 or older cycling to college compared to 5.2% of male students. This lack of participation in cycling by girls was picked up by the Green Schools programme, which commissioned research into the causes behind the behaviour and have designed a campaign aimed to support young women to cycle more. We have built the promotion of this **#andshecycle** programme into our Strategy, as it is clear from the data that this is an issue in Co. Monaghan.

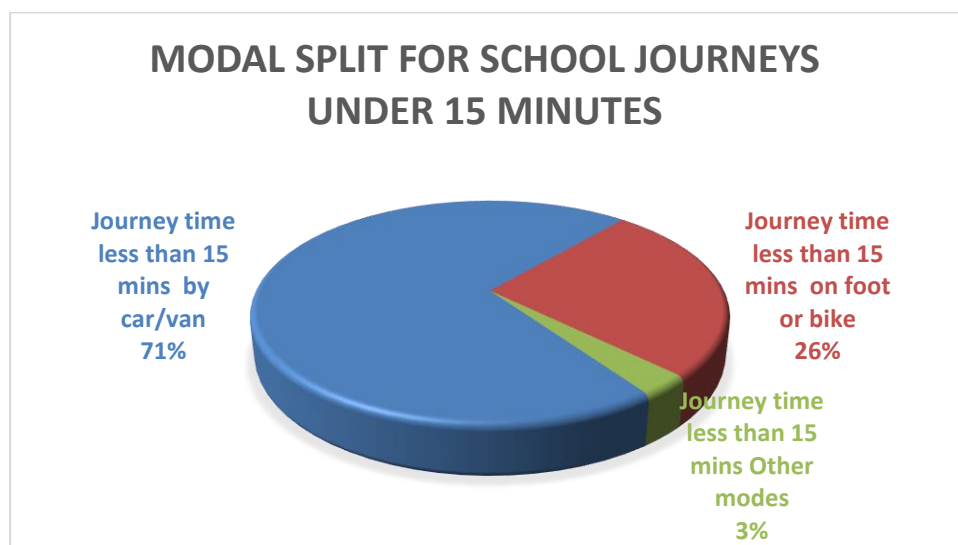
Looking at how students travel, across all ages and distances, 51% travel as a passenger in a private motor car, with a further 5% driving themselves.



How Co. Monaghan students travel to school - Census 2016

Looking at those who have a journey of less than fifteen minutes to make, the percentage of those who make this journey by car actually INCREASES (71%) as a percentage of the whole. The percentage of students journeying by active travel modes (walking or cycling) does increase from 14% to 26%, but there is clearly much room for further gains to be made. Achieving a 50% modal shift of the students in the blue segment shown in the graph below would result in 2,500 students

adopting active travel modes, which would make a significant contribution to the achievement of carbon savings targeted by the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan.



Data from CSO Census 2016

3.3.3 Attitudes towards Walking & Cycling – The National Picture

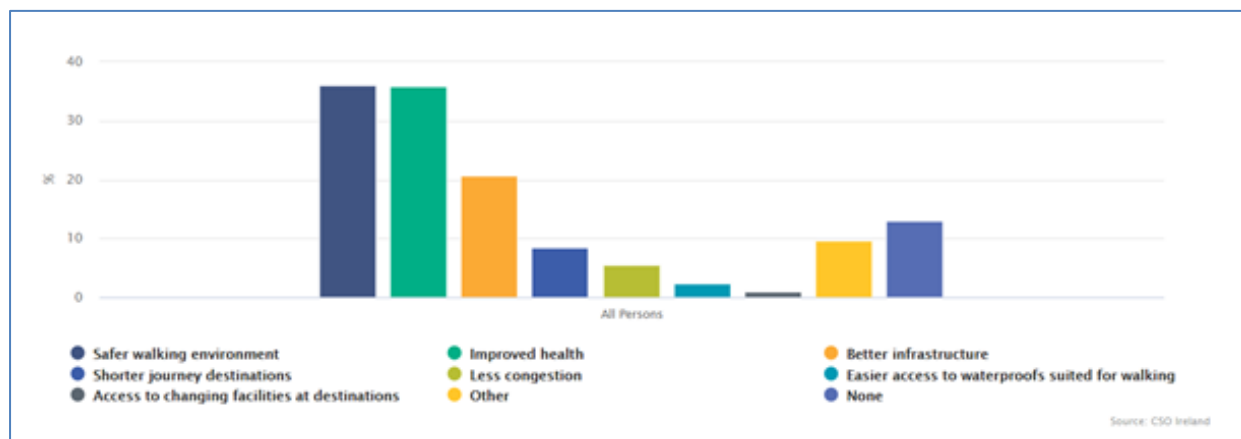
The CSO's **National Travel Survey 2019** revealed that over one fifth (22.8%) of persons aged over 18 years say that they never take a journey by foot, while 4.4% state that they take a journey by foot less than weekly but more than once a month, and 4.3% do so less than monthly. Over half of males (52.2%) aged 75 years and over never take a journey by foot.

For those who take a journey by foot more frequently, 38.5% of persons aged 18 years and over take a journey by foot at least 5 times a week, one in six (16.8%) do so 3 to 4 times a week and 13.2% 1 to 2 times a week.

The average distance that one walked on a typical journey by foot was 3.3km.

Respondents were asked what factors would encourage them to walk more in the future. A safer walking environment was the most common factor cited (36.1%). This was especially a factor amongst women, with over half (51.2%) of females aged 35 to 44 years saying that a safer walking environment would encourage them to walk more.

Improved health was a factor cited by 35.8% of respondents as something which could influence more walking, while one in five (20.6%) cited better infrastructure (such as more footpaths). One in twelve (8.5%) felt that, if they had shorter journey destinations, they would walk more.



CSO National Travel Survey 2019: Factors which would encourage people to walk more

Only 15% of respondents ever choose to take a journey by bicycle – 2.2% at least 5 times a week, while 1.8% do so 3 to 4 times a week and 2.8% 1 to 2 times a week. Only 2.1% of respondents said that they cycle less than weekly but more than once a month. One in sixteen (6.1%) take a journey by bicycle less than monthly.

The average distance of a typical journey by bicycle was 9.5km.

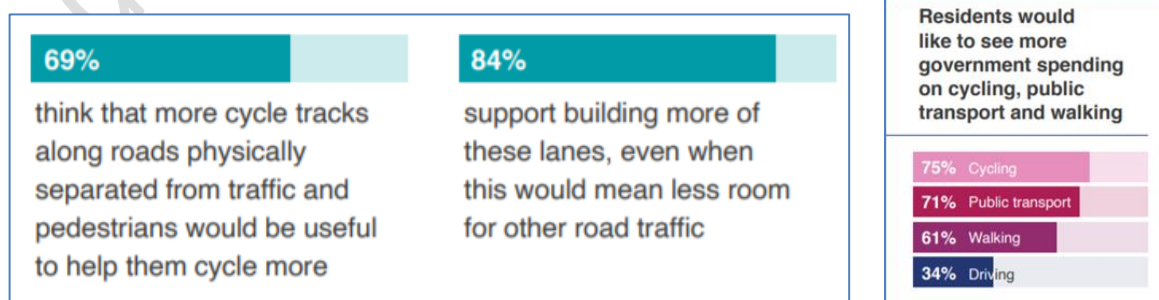
Respondents were asked what factors would encourage them to cycle more in the future. Safer cycling routes was by far the most common factor cited (31.7%), followed by better health (20.5%) and more cycling specific routes (17.3%).

Interestingly, more reliable weather did not feature highly in respondents' thinking when asked about what would encourage them to walk or cycle more. This is in line with research which points out that countries such as the Netherlands have a similar rainfall level to Ireland but a much higher rate of commuting by foot and bike.

'Bikelife' survey by Sustrans

Bike Life is the biggest assessment of cycling in urban areas in the UK, and is conducted by the cycling charity, Sustrans. Transport Infrastructure Ireland requested Sustrans extend the programme to Ireland and in 2019, the scheme included the Dublin metropolitan area for the first time, polling 1600 residents right across the city on their attitudes towards cycling.

Here are some of the key findings of the study which are relevant:



Safety concerns stop cycling being a genuine travel choice for many residents

Many residents are less likely to cycle regularly, for example women and disabled people.

However, all groups want cycling safety to be improved.

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week



Proportion of residents who think cycle safety needs improving



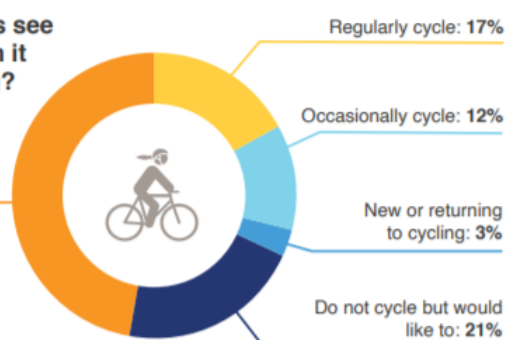
Many Dublin Metropolitan Area residents want to cycle

54%

of residents feel that they should cycle more

How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?

Do not cycle and do not want to: 47%



How inclusive is cycling?

Cycling participation of different demographic groups is not equal.

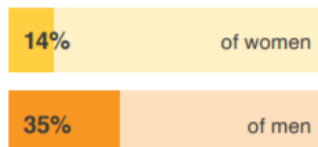
Barriers to cycling can be more pronounced for different demographic groups, however cities with high cycling rates show this is not always the case.

55% of all cycling trips in the Netherlands are made by women. Furthermore, people over 65 make 24% of their trips by cycle, higher than the percentage reported for any other age group over the age of 26.

Pucher and Buehler, 2008. Making Cycling Irresistible Transport Reviews, Vol. 28.

Proportion of residents in different demographic groups who cycle at least once a week

Gender



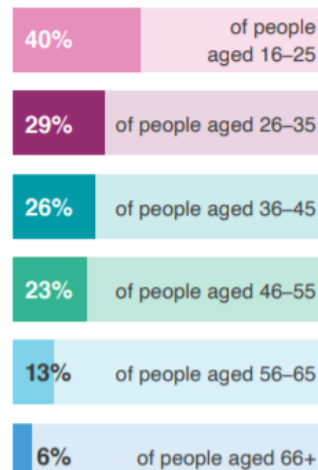
Ethnicity



Disability†



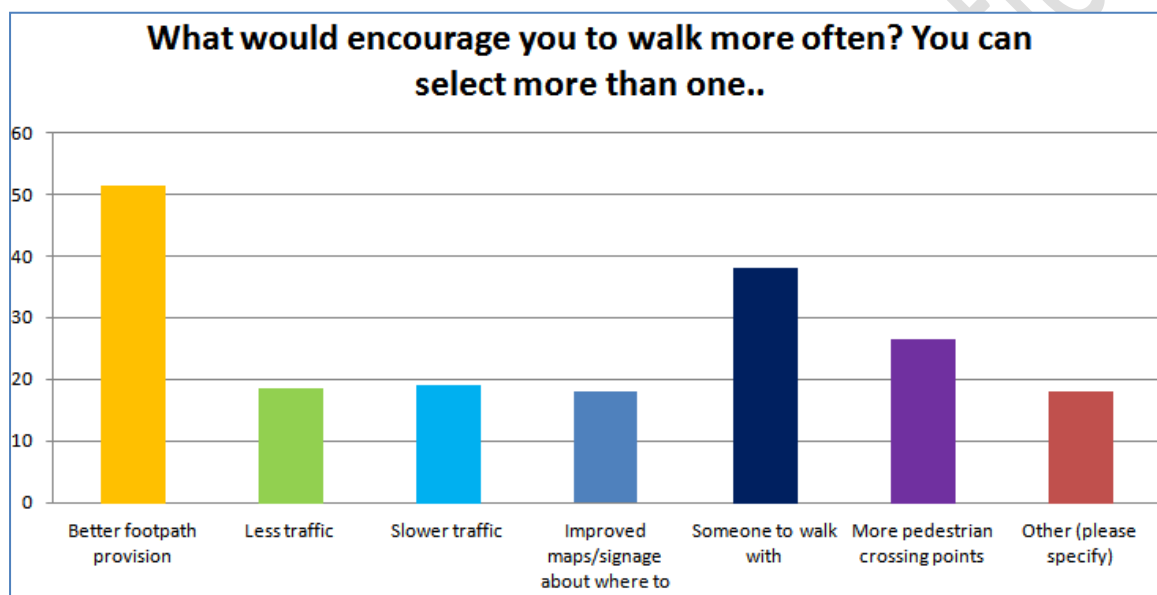
Age



3.3.4 Attitudes in Monaghan

While national surveys do not provide data broken down to local level, we do have some research carried out by Monaghan County Council which helps us to judge whether local attitudes are in line with the national picture.

A public consultation was carried out in Spring 2017 as part of the process of preparing a walking & cycling strategy for Carrickmacross. An online survey was conducted as part of the consultation. When asked why people generally walk, the majority of people said that they walk for leisure or fitness (65%). People were asked what would encourage them to walk more often. 51% said better footpath provision would encourage them to walk more. More pedestrian crossing points and someone to walk with were other key items. Other suggestions included better lighting, cleaner footpaths, designated walking paths and fewer HGV's in the town environs.



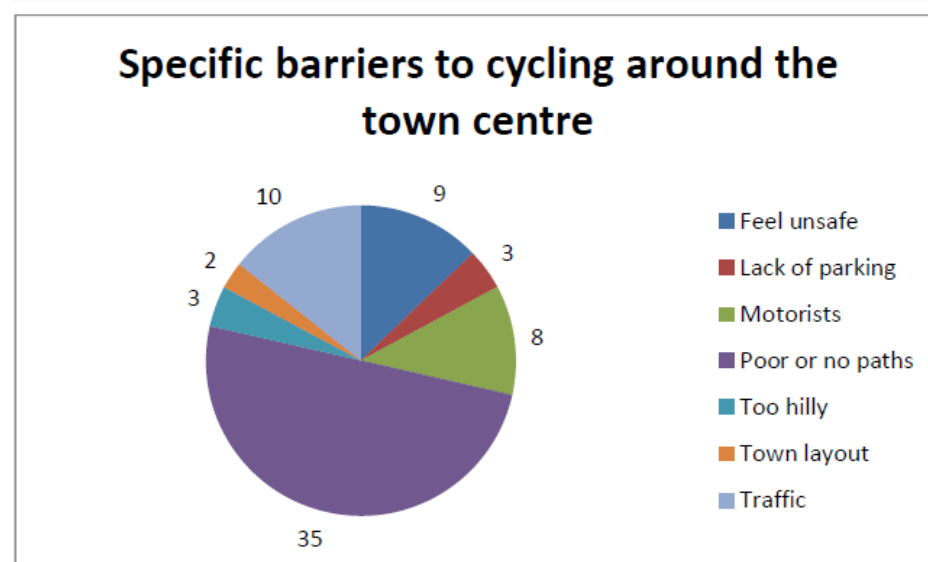
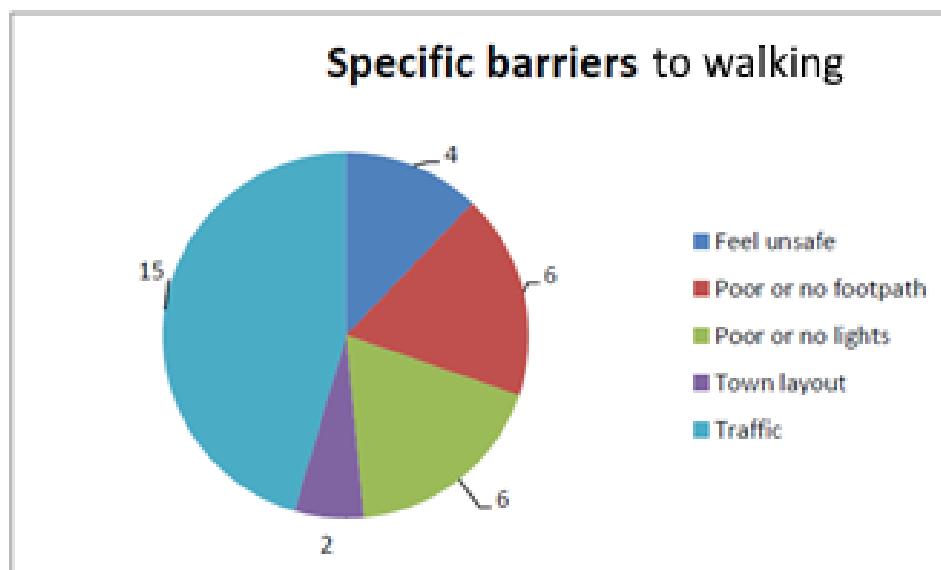
from Carrickmacross Walking & Cycling Strategy 2017

Cycling in the town is not a common mode of transportation. The survey indicated that people generally cycle for leisure and fitness purposes with most respondents cycling distances of between 2km and 5km. As the town had no dedicated cycling lanes at the time of the survey, the low rate of cycle use was not a surprise.

The local surveys mirrored the behaviours and concerns to the national research. Safety is the top concern for both walkers and cyclists, and the availability of safe routes is listed as a top factor which would encourage more people to take up walking and cycling. Fewer people consider themselves to be cyclists than walkers, but there is an interest in taking it up – if some support is provided.

The findings in the Carrickmacross survey mirrored research carried out in 2014 in Monaghan town to coincide with the opening of the Ulster Canal Greenway, so that we could return and measure if the introduction of the Greenway had had an impact on attitudes and behaviours at a later date.

When asked why they walked, the most popular reason was for health (69%). Only 5% of survey participants cited commuting to school or work as their motivation for walking. The barriers identified back then to walking and cycling were as follows:



Barriers to walking & cycling more - Monaghan town attitudes to walking & cycling survey 2013

The actions we have developed in our Strategy are designed to address the barriers identified in these surveys and also to provide support and encouragement to new Active Travellers through a range of promotions and activities.

3.4 Challenges to the Development of Walking & Cycling in Co. Monaghan

Organisational Challenges

The Active Travel/ Walking & Cycling agenda crosses many functional areas within the Council, and there is a danger that as a result of this, the issue could get lost between various departmental priorities and operational plans.

To guard against this happening, and also to ensure that all departments play a full role in the development of this area of Council activity going forward, it is proposed to establish an Interdepartmental Team to focus on Smarter Travel. They will oversee the implementation of this Strategy as part of their work programme.

Furthermore, it is proposed to seek additional resources so that a dedicated staff resource can be allocated to Smarter Travel within the Council.

Starting from a low base of dedicated cycle lanes

In common with much of rural Ireland, Co. Monaghan's rural roads are predominantly single carriageway in design, with no segregation for cyclists. While some recent roads projects have enabled us to begin to develop provision for vulnerable road users – such as the cycleway along the N2 from Monaghan town to Emyvale – progress is slow on creating a network of routes connecting the towns and villages.

Within the five towns, historically precedence has been given to motorised traffic. There has been resistance in the past to developing cycling infrastructure, with retailers fearing a loss of car parking spaces, and the Council itself concerned about traffic flow and congestion in town centres. However, with growing momentum to promote Active Travel as well as take action on climate change and a growing awareness amongst the public of the importance of quality spaces in town centres, priorities are changing, and we are all being challenged to look at what we do and how.

As part of a rethink on town design, town mobility plans will consider how to balance the needs of vehicular traffic to move through the town, the need to provide connectivity between modes of travel (e.g. between cyclists and buses), and the need to ensure that walking and cycling are the most convenient ways of getting around town centres. Routes which attract higher volumes of short journeys will need to be identified and the provision of active travel infrastructure prioritised along these corridors. Once the infrastructure is in place, community engagement activities can be rolled out to support the public to make the shift from unsustainable modes of transportation to walking and cycling.

To aid in rolling out the infrastructure, we will prepare a Cycle Network Plan. The Plan will consist of an overall county framework, and more detailed plans for each town/ village. It will identify the priority routes, the connecting secondary routes, where supports such as cycle lockers and parking need to be located, and will give a priority ranking to each identified project, to act as a guide to the Council in planning for advancing projects through to implementation.

An accompanying GIS map will enable us to update our progress, identify emerging gaps and adjust the Cycle Network over time if necessary.

The cost of adapting the road network in a drumlin landscape

For the most part, the width of Monaghan's roads does not allow for an easy process of adding cycling infrastructure. In the majority of cases, extra land must be purchased, and hedges removed in order to widen the road surface. The county's drumlin topography can add significantly to the cost of a project, where the land falls away steeply at the side of the road, necessitating infill, or where a bank must be taken away to create room for a cycle lane. For Ireland's third smallest local authority, it just isn't financially possible to undertake more than a few kilometres at a time.

Town design issues

The layout of Co. Monaghan's towns and villages dates back hundreds of years, to a time when traffic was horse-drawn (and therefore carriages were narrower) and the traffic passing through was lighter in number and slower in speed. Our streets have struggled to cope with the demands of facilitating large volumes of fast-moving vehicles, and in many cases, they became unpleasant and sometimes unsafe places to be. In recent times, there has been a renewed appreciation of the negative impact of this on everything from air quality to the retail experience, and Town Teams are trying to reclaim town centres for local, slow-moving traffic, with an emphasis on creating a quality urban environment where people feel comfortable to spend time. Public Realm Plans support the work, showing towns the potential for opening up back lands behind streets and enhancing the permeability of the town centres by creating pedestrian links to connect streets.

The pre-vehicular traffic era design width of many of the streets in our county's towns and villages make it difficult to find sufficient width to provide foot and cycle paths in addition to space for parking and the roadway itself. Choices may have to be made between facilitating vehicular traffic or facilitating walking and cycling. Some routes may lend themselves to replacing two-way traffic with one-way systems to make room for cycle lanes and wider pavements.

Combined with the large volume of traffic on those streets, it can be difficult to keep a flow of traffic moving through pinch points and avoid tail backs, yet still create a quality environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Monaghan County Council has prepared a Land Use and Transportation Strategy (LUTS) for Monaghan town, using computer modelling to allow planners to see the effects of trying different road layouts and scenarios on the flow of traffic across the town as a whole before deciding how best to develop the overall layout of the town over the short, medium and long term. This work will guide the way forward in the development of walking and cycling infrastructure in the town.

There is a need to facilitate the integration of transport modes for those wishing to make more of their journeys by sustainable transport means. For example, someone travelling by bus to Dublin may need a secure place to leave their bike whilst away. Town Mobility Plans can help to identify how best to integrate the various modes of transportation so that the user experiences a seamless journey from door to destination.

Whilst national policy is encouraging local authorities towards reclaiming town centre streets for pedestrians and cyclists, the Council must be mindful of lack of alternative routes in some cases, and also of local traders' concerns over loss of business due to a decrease in traffic and parking spaces near their premises. As always, we will pursue a policy of introducing change through consultation.

Traffic volumes

One of the issues which will be most challenging to reconcile with the implementation of this Walking & Cycling Strategy is dealing with the volume of traffic on the roads, and finding ways to keep vulnerable road users safe on busy streets and in fast-moving traffic. Where possible, we will route traffic away from town centres and provide protected cycle lanes which are segregated from the main carriageway by kerbing or other physical barriers. We will also seek to remove large vehicles from town centres where possible, which will have the dual effects of improving air quality and visibility, and should help to make walkers and cyclists feel more comfortable.

The Council is engaged with Transport Infrastructure Ireland on an ambitious project to upgrade the N2. Two separate schemes are currently underway; one to realign the N2 from Clontibret to the border with Northern Ireland, and the other to realign the N2 from Ardee to Castleblayney. The completion of these schemes will take significant volumes of traffic away from the towns and villages along the N2. It will also result in the provision of cycling infrastructure, as it is now a matter of national policy to incorporate cycling infrastructure into all new roads projects.

Public liability insurance

Insurance is a barrier to the development and maintenance of off-road walking routes for community groups, and may become an issue in the future for the Council, particularly should there be an unfavourable court judgement on a public amenity elsewhere in the future, as the insurance industry tends to be risk averse in the underwriting of public spaces.

The National Trails Office provides trails accreditation to routes which meet a minimum standard upon annual inspection. Routes which meet this standard can be insured under a local authority's public liability policy, provided the local authority agrees to undertake the maintenance of the trail. For this reason, it is highly desirable that a community consult with the Council before embarking on the development of a route.

Public access

For recreational walkers, access to the countryside is an issue throughout Ireland, as the country does not have commons land or bridle paths such as exist in the UK. However, the use of permissive access and way leave agreements, along with the foresight of Monaghan County Council in acquiring a considerable length of the Ulster Canal in the 1980's under the Derelict Sites Act, mean that there are some options which can be explored.

Monaghan County Council recently entered into an arrangement with Coillte to take over the development and management of the recreational amenities at Rossmore Forest Park. Innovative partnerships such as this may provide a way forward in opening up other parts of the county for walking and cycling.

Gender-based Issues

The CSO data shows that fewer females cycle than males. The gap appears as girls enter their teens, grows as they enter adulthood and never recovers. We know this is not the case in other countries; indeed in Holland, the cycling culture is led by women, who bring their children everywhere by bike when small, and then as they grow, it is natural to continue to cycle.

Research conducted by An Taisce into the barriers to young women cycling in Ireland reveal that many experience negative attention and even sexual comments whilst cycling and are put off because they are uncomfortable with the attention – or even because they are made to feel unsafe.

An Taisce has designed a promotional campaign **#andshecycles** which aims to promote cycling to women and create a network of cycling ambassadors who will encourage women to cycle more.

Monaghan County Council supports the **#andshecycles** campaign and has built actions designed to promote cycling to women and girls into this Strategy.

Funding

Monaghan County Council is one of the smallest local authorities in Ireland, and has modest capacity in terms of ability to raise funds from its rates base. Therefore, we will be largely reliant on external funding sources to achieve our Active Travel ambitions and to support the development of walking and cycling in the county.

The National Transport Authority (NTA) announced the rollout of new Active Travel funding supports for the smaller local authorities in November 2020. It has indicated that this will be a multi annual programme and will continue for the foreseeable future. On this basis, we hope to be able to increase the number of projects we can afford to undertake each year, and are preparing a scheme of projects on the basis of additional funding being available to us.

Recent programmes developed by the government to support recreation and amenity development in rural areas may be of assistance in advancing some projects, particularly those with a potential to attract tourism. As always, the Sports Capital Programme is an invaluable resource for developing infrastructure of a sporting nature.

3.5 In Conclusion: How the Data has Shaped our Strategy

In the previous sections, we have presented the data which has shaped our thinking and influenced the development of the Actions you will find in the next section. Below, we summarise the implications of the data for Co. Monaghan, and how we have taken account of those in the Strategy.

- **Alignment of Policies:** there is a clear and unequivocal alignment of EU, national, regional and local policy in favour of the introduction of more walking and cycling infrastructure and the promotion of Active Travel modes of transportation. This is a huge point in favour of our work. In particular, the focus on Climate Change Adaptation, and the subsequent pressure to re-imagine town centres, particularly with regard to their role in facilitating citizens' mobility, is creating a new space for discussion around walking and cycling.
- **Carbon Emissions:** As Transport is the second largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions (after agriculture), there is a renewed focus on Active Travel as a mechanism for reducing carbon emissions. The data for Co. Monaghan shows that there is a significant number of commuters who are making journeys of under 15 minutes, which would indicate that these journeys are of a short enough length to perhaps be made on foot or bike instead

of by motor car, as over 70% of these journeys currently are made. It is therefore worthwhile pursuing a strategy to promote a modal shift in this population cohort.

- **Infrastructure provision is critical:** The attitudinal research clearly indicates that behavioural change will not come before the provision of suitable, safe infrastructure, as the lack of said infrastructure has been identified as the number one deterrent to citizens engaging in active travel presently. This is particularly true for cycling.

It is clear from our research that planning for the provision of cycle infrastructure is not something best done in isolation; it should be done as part of a holistic process which takes in the way people experience our towns and villages, and the need to make quality spaces which meet the needs of all. We are fortunate in the timing of our Strategy, in that it coincides with the introduction of the first Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies which are encouraging local authorities to be more forward thinking in imagining the future of their town centres. Monaghan County Council has responded to this by beginning work on an 'Innovation Town' concept for Monaghan town, which plans to see the town become carbon neutral by 2050. The widespread promotion of transportation modes such as walking and cycling will no doubt play an important role in achieving the carbon targets set by the plan.

- **Improvements to the organisation of the work are required:** While much is being done to develop infrastructure and promote walking and cycling within the county, there is no overall plan for the county from which all are working, and the various stakeholders do not have the benefit of a regular platform where they can meet and share information and ideas.

Walking and cycling bring benefits to many aspects of our lives, and it is therefore not surprising that their promotion appears in various plans across several Departments within Monaghan County Council. For the first time, an Active Travel Unit is to be created in the Council and an Inter-Departmental Steering Group formed which will link the various programmes which promote walking and cycling into the work of the Active Travel Unit.

The first pieces of work that the new Unit will commission will be a Cycle Network Plan for the county, and mobility plans for each town. It will be from these documents that the routes to be developed are identified and projects prioritised.

A Walking & Cycling Stakeholders Forum will provide a platform for external stakeholders, such as advocacy groups, schools transport officers, and cycling and walking clubs to engage with the Council and participate in decision-making.

4. The Strategy

4.1 Our Vision of Walking & Cycling in Co. Monaghan

This is how we would like Co. Monaghan to be in five to ten years' time:

"Monaghan is a county which is safe and welcoming to walkers and cyclists. It is easy to get around by foot or bike, and the number of people of all ages choosing to walk and cycle as part of an active lifestyle is above the national average and continues to grow.

There is a good range of walking amenities, and the county enjoys a positive reputation amongst the walking and cycling community for modern, well designed, connected and maintained amenities and infrastructure.

The positive culture in the county around walking and cycling, coupled with the high quality of infrastructure provided, adds to the high quality of life enjoyed by the people of Co. Monaghan. "

4.2 Our Goal:

To create a safe and convenient environment for walking and cycling in Co. Monaghan, promoting an active travel culture where there are safe and convenient walking and cycling choices for all residents and visitors, with active travel being a viable choice for everyday journeys.

The above goal will ultimately contribute to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Goal of making Co. Monaghan **a better place to live, work and visit**

Ultimately, both the Council's Corporate Plan and the wider Local Economic & Community Plan produced by the Local Community Development Committee have at their foundations the goal of making Co. Monaghan a better place to live, work and visit. Making it easier and safer for people to walk and cycle in the county contributes to the achievement of this goal across multiple perspectives. These can be summarised into five themes:

- **Improving our Recreational Amenities.** People walk and cycle for many reasons, including leisure and enjoyment. As such, they can enhance lifestyle and wellbeing, and make the county a better place to live.
- **Improving Wellbeing.** Walking and cycling can improve both physical and mental wellbeing, and can help MCC to achieve objectives around health promotion and improvement of health outcomes.
- **Generating economic activity.** Tourism Ireland reports that both overseas and domestic holiday makers engage in walking as their most popular activity during a break, and cycling is the second most popular. These pursuits are considered trip attractors for a tourism

destination, e.g. the Great Western Greenway. Therefore they offer potential for creating wealth in the county.

- **A convenient mode of transportation.** As we reconsider the function of our town centres and embrace concepts such as permeability and compact design, the value of walking and cycling as modes of transportation suited to the urban environment is coming more to the fore.
- As sustainable forms of transportation, the promotion of walking and cycling helps the Council to deliver on commitments to **Climate Change Adaptation**.

4.3 Our Mission:

1: The development of walking & cycling in Co. Monaghan

2: To make active travel an attractive and realistic choice for short journeys in Monaghan

Monaghan County Council has responsibility for designing, building and managing public roadways, which include footpaths and cycleways. We will provide safe walking and cycling infrastructure which facilitates the growth of a culture of walking and cycling for active travel and for leisure throughout Co. Monaghan.

We also support communities to improve local amenities, and we promote social inclusion and wellbeing. We will encourage and support the promotion of walking and cycling for the contribution they make to the wellbeing of communities and their value as activities which have the capacity to get people to engage with physical activity and make lifestyle changes.

The Council has a responsibility to lead economic development. We will value the contribution that walking and cycling can bring in economic terms to the county, particularly to our growing tourism product.

Supporting the economic, cultural and social development of our towns and villages is the development and maintenance of the public realm, and here is where the Council excels. We act as vision-maker, planner, enabler and deliverer of townscapes, streetscapes, public parks, playgrounds, housing estates, back lands developments. We envision how they relate to one another; how people relate to them, use them, live in them, experience them, and enjoy them. Within this remit, we have the scope to envision how to enable people living in our towns to choose to choose walking or cycling as their preferred mode of transportation for short journeys. Adopting concepts such as the 'ten-minute town' can totally change how and what we prioritise in our town planning schemes going forward.

The Council is a key delivery agent of the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan. We will plan for a future in which walking and cycling play a central role in helping achieve our climate action obligations, and we will encourage all stakeholders to do likewise.

4.4 Our Strategic Objectives

Walking and Cycling are cheap, healthy and pollution-free ways for people to get around and we will aim to make them an easy option for people to use for local journeys. We will do this by making the local transport network as safe and convenient for walking and cycling as possible through our investment in improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and high-quality maintenance.

Objective 1: Create internal conditions necessary to ensure delivery of this Strategy

This objective centres around governance; that is putting in place the internal structures which we need in order to ensure that we can deliver on our walking and cycling ambitions.

We recognise that within the organisation at present, there is no department which is solely focused on the development of walking and cycling. This needs to be corrected if meaningful, incremental and consistent progress is to be made.

Monaghan County Council plans to create a positive culture within Monaghan County Council to support the development of Active Travel. We will create an Active Travel Unit, whose function will be to co-ordinate the work of the various Departments, identify the priorities, prepare plans and drive the projects forward. They will also be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Strategy.

They will be advised in their work by a cross-departmental steering group, which will consist of staff involved in the many programmes and departments which will have a part to play in implementing the Actions contained in this Strategy. This will make it simple to report on progress and discuss any blockages which may occur on projects from time to time.

Objective 2: Plan for a Sustainable Future

The new Active Travel Unit will need to embark on in-depth planning exercises in order to identify the priority projects which need to be undertaken to support the growth of walking and cycling in the county. Mobility Plans and a Cycle Network Plan are priority pieces of work which will be undertaken. The work identified during the implementation of these plans will shape much of the hard infrastructure part of the Strategy.

We are facing many challenges in modern Ireland, not least of which is adapting to climate change by making big changes to how we live. Monaghan County Council is playing its part by looking at how we get around, and how we use our towns. Using mobility planning and transport modelling, and looking at how people wish to experience the open spaces of their towns, we are re-imagining town centres away from spaces which are dominated by the needs of motor vehicles which wished to navigate the streets quickly to look more at the needs of those who live in the towns and wish to experience the streets as places to be. The concept of the 'Ten Minute Town' and the idea that town centres should primarily belong to the pedestrian is something that is growing in Co. Monaghan, and will be explored increasingly during the lifetime of this Strategy.

Objective 3: Make walking and cycling easy options for people to use for local journeys

This is the 'build it' part of the Strategy. Here you will find listed the kind of initiatives we will be pursuing. In general, this section is about giving more priority to the needs of cyclists and walkers than may have been given in the past when carrying out public works.

The actions are still general in terms of the 'where', as this is yet to be identified by the planning actions to be carried out under Objective 2.

Objective 4: Make walking & cycling part of everyday culture in Co. Monaghan

This objective focuses on promoting walking and cycling, and in particular promoting Active Travel, which is defined as a 'purposeful journey' e.g. shopping or commuting to work or school.

While the research points to a willingness by many to adopt walking and cycling as a mode of transportation for short journeys, it also shows up many barriers which must be overcome. The reluctance of young women to cycle in particular is a concern and we intend to support the promotion of An Taisce's new #andshecycle campaign.

The issue of road safety was shown as a concern for many which was preventing them from giving walking, and particularly cycling, a go, so we have included some actions around road safety promotion in here.

A consistent message will need to be generated to raise awareness as these barriers are overcome, so that people are encouraged to 'give it a go'. A comprehensive community engagement campaign will be required to create the culture that will result in the numbers we wish to see on the ground.

We intend to revisit the 'GoMonaghan – Active Travel County' brand with a view to assessing its suitability for use to lead an active travel promotional campaign over the lifetime of this Strategy.



This brand was developed in 2014 with funding from DTTAS, along with the website www.gomonaghan.ie which is still in place. The website carries information about getting around and to the county by bus, bike and foot.

Objective 5: Form partnerships and continue to innovate

Other countries in the EU are further ahead in their thinking on active travel and urban mobility than Ireland, and we will link with EU networks so that we can learn from best practice and advance at a more rapid pace. Four pilot Active Travel Towns in Ireland were also selected in 2012 by DTTAS and

there is learning to be gained from them. We also intend to continue our existing partnerships with the Ulster Canal Greenway Regional Steering Group and the Border Kingdoms Greenway Steering Group, and to maintain strong working partnerships with the LEADER programme, the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, and the Department of Transport.

5. High Level Actions

The following High-Level Actions provide a starting point for the Council's future activity regarding the development of walking and cycling infrastructure and the promotion of walking and cycling activity in the county. This is a rolling document, however, and we expect that as the work continues, more detailed actions will emerge for specific towns and villages, and within specific areas of activity such as Tourism.

These will be captured by the Cycle Network Plan and the GIS mapping system, and progress monitored and co-ordinated through the various phases of project development by the Interdepartmental Team.

The overall drive for implementing the Strategy will come from the Walking & Cycling Unit, which is a key deliverable of the Strategy.

No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
Objective 1: Create internal conditions necessary to ensure delivery of this Strategy				
1.1	Secure resources for, and set up a Walking & Cycling Unit within the Council, with responsibility to drive progress on implementing this Strategy	Funding via NTA, Transportation Directorate to deliver the Unit	Resources secured by end Q1 2021; Staff recruited by end 2021	Walking & Cycling Unit in place by end 2021
1.2	Re-profile the post of Cycling Officer from a part time position within the Community Dept to a full time post within the Walking & Cycling Unit	Transportation & Community Director	When new W&C Unit is in position	Dedicated resource for the development & promotion of cycling in place
1.3	Establish a Walking & Cycling Inter-Departmental Team, to comprise of staff who are involved in the various programmes and initiatives which contribute to the delivery of this Strategy	Walking & Cycling Unit	by end Q1 2021	Terms of reference agreed March 2021. Annual Action Plans agreed and delivered
1.4	Establish a Walking & Cycling & Active Travel Forum, to enable external stakeholders to engage with the LA and have regular input into the work Participants representative of the walking and cycling clubs, education sector, environmental groups, tourism providers and other stakeholders.	Walking & Cycling Unit, with support from Community Development Dept	by end Q1 2022	An active Forum in place, with Forum actively engaging with the Council on Active Travel matters
Objective 2: Plan for a Sustainable Future				
2.1	Produce Masterplan for the development of walking & cycling infrastructure in the county	Walking & Cycling Unit	Procurement commenced for consultancy Q3 2021	Walking & Cycling Masterplan in place by end 2022. Cycle Network Plans in place for each town by mid-2023.

No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
2.2	Develop annual workplan of projects from the County Cycle Network Map & seek resources to progress through design to delivery stage	Walking & Cycling Unit, with support from Roads and MD's	annually	projects delivered, new infrastructure in place
2.3	Prepare a Local Transport Plan for Monaghan town, as per the North Western Regional Assembly's RSES	Monaghan MD, supported by Roads and Walking & Cycling Unit	2021	LTP complete Actions identified in LTP and incorporated into workplan for 2022/3
2.4	Review Monaghan town regeneration schemes to ensure they are maximised for active travel gains across the whole town, following completion of Local Transport Plan	Planning/ Economic Dev	2022	Regeneration schemes reviewed
2.5	Review town public realm plans for Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Ballybay and Clones to incorporate mobility planning, with an emphasis on active travel needs	Planning/ economic dev, with input from Walking & Cycling Unit	By end 2023	Public Realm plans for CMX, Blayney, Ballybay & Clones reviewed & mobility section inserted
2.6	Seek to overcome difficult town centre layouts by trialling temporary measures and learning from those who have been living with the measures introduced	Municipal Districts, with input from Walking & Cycling Unit	As indicated by the Town Network Plans	Solutions to difficult town layouts found & implemented, with public buy-in
2.7	Set up data collection methodologies to ensure that the Walking & Cycling Unit has access to good quality data which will enable them to track the impact that their actions are having over time	IS section, with support of Walking & Cycling Unit	by end 2021	GIS mapping system in place to plot cycling infrastructure by end 2021 Attitudinal study by end Q2 2021. Repeated by end Q2 2026 (every 5 years)

No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
2.8	Integrate the objectives of the Walking & Cycling Strategy with those of other key Council Strategies and Plans	Walking & Cycling Unit	As Plans are reviewed	Actions of this Strategy become aligned with the Council's key policies and plans going forward
2.9	Proof all new Council policies, initiatives and plans to ensure that the development of walking & cycling infrastructure & soft supports is given adequate consideration	Climate Change Team	as new work emerges	Active Travel to be incorporated into the Council's work across all sections
2.10	Proof the Strategy against new National Cycle Framework Policy when available, and against any new Smarter Travel programmes which may be launched	Walking & Cycling Unit	As necessary	Amended Action Plan inserted into Strategy if necessary
2.11	Provide access to quality training and networking opportunities for Council staff on walking & cycling policy and on Active Travel, so that they have the opportunity to learn from best practice. To start with training on our own Strategy in 2021	Walking & Cycling Unit	Online presentation made to staff on Strategy Q 2 2021	All staff to be familiar with this Strategy by end 2021
2.12	Embrace the '10 Minute Town' concept and seek to follow the principle of hyper-proximity in the development of liveable, walking communities, where people can access most of their daily needs within a 10-minute walk/ cycle	Planning Section	review of County Development Plan	'Ten Minute Town' concept adopted as policy in Co. Development Plan
2.13	Maintain a list of priority flagship projects & ensure that continuous progress is maintained on each: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ulster Canal Greenway – Middletown to Castle Saunderson b. Patrick Kavanagh Trail – around Inniskeen c. Monaghan to Sliabh Beagh d. Rossmore Park e. Emy Lough 	Walking & Cycling Unit supported by MD's	Constant review	Projects advanced to planning stage, ready to go should an opportunity for funding be presented

	f. Kingscourt to Carrickmacross to Dundalk via Inniskeen			
No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
2.14	Integrate active travel planning into a wider 'place making' approach to town centre regeneration, building on the principles of 'People and Place'	Planning & Economic Development Units	Constant review	Town centres which are highly permeable, feature attractive spaces where people wish to spend time, and which are connected by quality W&C infrastructure

Objective 3: Make walking and cycling easy options for people to use for local journeys

No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
3.1	Deliver annual programme of infrastructure works, based on priorities identified in Masterplan (2.1)	Municipal Districts, supported by Roads section where needed	Annually	Annual programmes 100% completed each year New infrastructure in place
3.2	Introduce measures to make town centres more pedestrian and cycle-friendly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide pedestrian/ cycling shortcuts to increase the permeability of our town centres - Provide frequent and conveniently placed cycle parking around town centres - Seek to remove Heavy Goods Vehicles from town centres 	Municipal Districts	Annual workplan to be agreed with the Walking & Cycling Unit HGV's to go from town centres: Monaghan town: 2021, Carrickmacross: 2021, Castleblayney: 2024, Clones: 2025	active travel modes given more priority in town centres, more people walking and cycling Journey times in town centres to be reduced for pedestrians & cyclists in comparison to vehicular traffic Cycle parking on every street

No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
3.3	Follow DMURS hierarchy when designing urban streets: pedestrians' and cyclists' needs first	Planning & Economic Development, Town Teams, Municipal Districts	Ongoing	Increase in pedestrians and cyclists saying they feel safe, comfortable and welcome using town centre streets
3.4	Provide dedicated, protected cycle lanes connecting residential areas to town centres and key destinations such as workplaces and public amenities	Project planning: Walking & Cycling Unit Project Executive: Roads/ MD's	Annual workplans	Annual targets to be set by Walking & Cycling Unit
3.5	Identify and prioritise the development of 'safe routes to schools'	Walking & Cycling Unit, supported by Road Safety Officer	As schools complete their Transportation (4th) Flag	Twenty schools to have completed the programme and have 'safe routes' in place by the end of the Strategy
3.6	Develop Car Parks at edge of our commuter towns to encourage people to park outside of town and walk/ cycle or car share onwards. Provide cycle lockers in car parks	Ulster Canal Greenway team - Monaghan town Walking & Cycling Unit to identify sites, MD's and Roads teams to deliver the car parks for the remaining towns	Ulster Canal Greenway car parks by end 2023 Other towns as sites and funding become available	2 commuter car parks delivered in Monaghan by end 2023, 1 each in CMX, Blayney by end 2025
3.7	Develop safe routes to Public Transport hubs, and work with PT providers to provide cycle storage facilities at hubs	Walking & Cycling Unit, with support from Roads, MD's and in partnership with Public Transport providers	Over the lifetime of the Strategy	Good connectivity for walkers and cyclists at bus stations

No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
3.8	Enhance existing residential developments by creating pedestrian/ cycling short cuts to improve connectivity to key amenities/ urban centres	Municipal Districts, with support from Walking & Cycling Unit, Housing Dept and private developers	Ongoing	twenty short cuts to be created over the lifetime of the Strategy
3.9	Continue to utilise upgrades of roads network as opportunities to improve footpaths and cycle paths	Senior Executive Engineer, supported by Project Managers over special roads projects	Ongoing	Every km of new road created to have adequate provision for vulnerable road users.
3.10	Support communities and clubs to develop walking and cycling amenities	Community Development Dept	Ongoing	5 new local walking tracks and cycling amenities delivered by community groups and cycling clubs, with Council support
3.11	Put a maintenance plan in place to care for walking and cycling infrastructure, to include winter maintenance as well as annual maintenance	Municipal Districts	by end Q1 2021	well maintained network, cycle paths gritted in winter
3.12	Develop a way for the public to report issues with the walking/ cycling network	IS section	by end Q2 2022	online GIS-linked service available where faults can be logged
3.13	Provide an orientation point with map in each urban area to inform cyclists of location of infrastructure e.g. secure cycle parking, cycle repair services etc	Walking & Cycling Unit	by end 2022	Information Points in 5 towns
3.14	Ensure walking and cycling routes have adequate signage, and key amenities, town centre etc are signed from the routes	Walking & Cycling Unit, with support from	by end 2023	signs in place

		Municipal districts		
No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
3.15	Provide warning signage to motorists along roads frequently used by walkers/ cyclists	Municipal Districts, supported by Road Safety Awareness Officer & Tourism Officer	ongoing	Routes near Direct Provision Centres assessed 2020, routes near large rural-based businesses assessed 2021, Rural schools reviewed by end 2022
3.16	Support the development of off-road trails	Tourism Development Officer supported by Community Dev Officer & MD's	Ongoing	Emy Lough loop completed by end 2022, Hollywood lake upgraded by end 2023
3.17	Further develop our regional projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ulster Canal Greenway (Monaghan to Clones) - Border Kingdoms route (Kingscourt-Carrickmacross-Inniskeen-Dundalk) - Sliabh Beagh trails (Monaghan and Clones routes to the mountain, and development of the mountain as a destination of excellence) 	Municipal Districts, supported by Tourism Development Officer & Community Development Officer	Ongoing	Phase II Ulster Canal Greenway open by end 2024, Feasibility on Phase III Smithboro to Clones by end 2021, Carrick to Kingscourt on-road by end 2021 Monaghan to Sliabh Beagh by end 2025
3.1	Develop walking and cycling facilities to and within amenity areas; e.g. Lough Muckno, Rossmore Park	Municipal Districts, supported by Tourism Development Officer	Action Ongoing	Cycling trails in Rossmore completed by end 2021, development of trails in Muckno complete by end 2022

Objective 4: Make walking & cycling part of everyday culture in Co. Monaghan				
No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
4.1	Develop and implement a community engagement plan, to incorporate a range of activities and interventions aimed at getting more people walking and cycling more often, particularly for commuting journeys	Walking & Cycling Unit, supported by Community Development unit & Sports Partnership, Town Teams	Starting 2022, when Active Travel Unit staff are in place	An increase in the no. of Active Travel commuters in next Census, an increase in the number of participants year on year in events such as Bike Week, EU Mobility Week etc
4.2	Work with schools to provide safer school environs through the introduction of 'school streets', the development of school traffic plans and other initiatives	Walking & Cycling Unit, supported by Road Safety Officer	As schools complete their Transportation (4th) Flag	thirty schools to have introduced initiatives to improve road safety in the school environs by the end of the Strategy
4.3	Update age friendly walkability audits of all five towns and prepare list of improvement works arising	Social Inclusion Officer, supported by MD's	by end 2022	Updated walkability audits available for all 5 towns
4.4	Deliver the pedestrian and cycling elements of the Council's Road Safety Plan	Road Safety Officer	New Road Safety Plan due in 2021	Road Safety Plan targets achieved
4.5	Support the provision of cycle skills training in schools	Monaghan Sports Partnership	Annual workplan by MSP	10 schools/ 100 children trained annually
4.6	Review the "GoMonaghan - Active Travel County/ Town" brand with a view to using it to front a new promotional campaign	Cycling Officer	Ongoing	New branded campaign in place
4.7	Support businesses and schools to devise Active Travel Plans & participate in national active travel initiatives	Active Travel Officer, Road Safety Officer & Greenway Team	2021-5	Plans in place for 11 secondary schools, 30 national schools, 1 3rd level campus, 5 key business campuses by the

				end of the Strategy's term
No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
4.8	Roll out a Smart Cycle initiative within the Council, to include using E-bikes for staff use and provision of cycle lockers. Record carbon saved by journeys made on bikes. Bikes to be branded, to serve as promotional vehicles when passing through town	Cycling Officer	end Q1 2021	fleet of branded ebikes to be available at Council buildings for staff use. Secure bike storage to be in place. Km travelled recorded & converted to carbon savings
4.9	Support Tidy Towns groups to embrace walking & cycling measures as part of the Sustainable Waste and Resource Management category in the National Tidy Towns competition	Cycling Officer, supported by Community Development Officer and Environmental Awareness Officer	Ongoing	Support given through Tidy Towns Network
4.10	Investigate the feasibility of introducing a Bike Sharing scheme in Monaghan town	Monaghan MD, supported by Cycling Officer	end 2022	Findings presented to MD for consideration
4.11	Promote the Bike to Work scheme - tax breaks for purchasing bikes	Cycling Officer, supported by HR	ongoing	20% of Council staff to have availed of the scheme by the end of the Strategy period. 10 of the county's largest employers to have signed up to the scheme by the end of the Strategy term
4.12	Work with Men's Sheds to develop circular economy project refurbishing old bikes and making available to low income families	Social Inclusion Officer, supported by Migrant	by end 2023	50 bikes refurbished by end 2024

		Integration Officer		
No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
4.13	Develop cycling programmes which target specific population groups (including females, 50+ age group etc) and work with cycling clubs to integrate casual participants into long-term regular participation	Sports Partnership, supported by Age Friendly Officer	by end 2022	2 x Cycling programmes with 40 participants
4.14	Support walking and cycling clubs to provide taster sessions for new members, particularly older people and women	Monaghan sports partnership	by end 2021	5 x taster session / programmes held
4.15	Support the roll out of An Taisce's #andshcycles programme aimed at encouraging more girls to cycle	Monaghan Sports Partnership, with support from Social Inclusion unit	Ongoing	a narrowing of the gap between the number of female and male cyclists in Census 2026 data
4.16	Work with retailers to develop incentives to support shoppers who choose to travel on foot or bike	Cycling Officer, supported by Town Teams	by end 2022	At least 20 shops participating
4.17	Support the delivery of walking and cycling actions in the Healthy Monaghan programme and the Sports Partnership's Strategic Plan	Healthy Monaghan, Monaghan Sports Partnership	Ongoing	More people walking and cycling for health and fitness -an increase in participants in 'Operation Transformation' events, Park Runs, Mental Health walks etc
4.18	Support the development of walking and cycling festivals	Sports Partnership, supported by Tourism Development & Community Development	Ongoing	One new annual weekend walking festival and one new cycling festival to be well bedded in by end of the Plan
4.19	Support the development of 'High Nellie' themed bike tours of Kavanagh Country	Tourism Development Officer,	in place by summer 2021	Fleet of bikes for hire to be managed through the

		supported by MD		Kavanagh Centre, by summer 2021
No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
4.20	Continue to participate in National Bike Week	Monaghan Sports Partnership	Annually	annual series of open / closed events in line with Dept requirements
4.21	Continue to participate in EU Mobility Week	Cycling Officer	Every September	Car Free Day held in at least one town annually. One permanent measure introduced annually
4.22	Promote 'Share the Road' ethos to all road users to encourage a more positive culture towards pedestrians and cyclists by motorists	Cycling Officer & Road Safety Officer	Road Safety Week	Fewer road rage incidents reported
Objective 5: Network, form partnerships and continue to innovate				
5.1	Build strong relationships with new Walking & Cycling Design teams in NTA and within Regional Road Design Office	Walking & Cycling Unit, supported by Roads team	Ongoing	Regular meetings held
5.2	Link with key cycling advocates in Ireland and across Europe, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dutch Cycling Embassy - ELTIS - the EU's urban mobility observatory 	Cycling Officer	immediately	MCC one of the most innovative small local authorities in EU
5.3	Participate in EU Mobility Awards & network with other participants	Walking & Cycling Unit	by end of the term of this Strategy	Successfully participated in the EU Mobility awards with a project
5.4	Capture best practice examples and record learning so that we can continue to improve and innovate moving forward	Walking & Cycling Unit	Annually	Report produced for Council's Annual Report
5.5	Keep up to date with the EU Commission's thinking on active travel through https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/clean-transport-urban-transport/	Walking & Cycling Unit	Ongoing	Monaghan Co Co up to date with EU policy and programmes, and using this knowledge to

				benefit the county
No.	Action	Who will deliver the Action?	When ?	What will success look like?
5.6	Continue to work with our colleagues across the border to develop the Ulster Canal Greenway and the Sliabh Beagh region	Roads Directorate, Economic Dev/ Tourism	Ongoing	Strong alliances in place, active projects in development/ being delivered
5.7	Retain regular dialogue with Bord Failte, Dept of Community & Rural Affairs etc regarding funding opportunities available to advance recreational infrastructure projects	Senior staff	Ongoing	Funding opportunities identified & successful applications made

6. Implementation

It has been announced in early 2021 by the Dept of Transport that it will be resourcing the smaller local authorities to employ dedicated staff to work on walking and cycling projects, in order to respond to the Dept's newly announced Active Travel infrastructure programme for those local authorities. Therefore, we hope that we will be in a position to put a dedicated Active Travel Unit in position during 2021. This will be staffed by an engineer and an admin officer. The NTA has informed the Council that we will have design support from a new cycling unit within the Regional Roads Design Office.

Oversight of the delivery of the Walking & Cycling Strategy will lie with the Active Travel Inter-Departmental Committee which is to be created as an action of the Strategy. The Committee will contain key Council staff which are involved in the delivery of the Strategy, including:

Title	Section
Representative	Roads
Co-Ordinator, Climate Change Adaptation Committee	Environment
Road Safety Officer	Roads
Tourism Officer	Economic Dev
Planning/ Regeneration/ Town Teams	Economic Dev
Greenways Dev Officer	Roads
Sports Partnership Co Ordinator	Community
Healthy Monaghan Co Ordinator	Community
Representative	Ballybay Clones MD
Representative	Carrick Castleblayney MD
Representative	Monaghan MD
Cycling Officer	Community

In addition to the core team, expertise from Housing, Planning, Social Inclusion and other staff will be sought as the need arises.

The Active Travel Committee will prepare annual workplans from the Strategy, and will review progress annually, making adjustments to take account of progress where necessary.

The Strategy contains two broad types of action:

- Direct action, e.g. delivery of an infrastructural project
- Activity designed to promote action in others, e.g. road safety promotion

The Council plays a key role in influencing people to change behaviour in a range of ways, and it is this change of behaviour which delivers the contribution towards smarter travel, road safety improvements etc.

A key piece of work which will be crucial in this regard is the Community Engagement Plan associated with the delivery of Phase II of the Ulster Canal Greenway Phase II project. The Plan will focus on preparing the schools and businesses along the corridor of the greenway, i.e. Smithboro to

Middletown, to take advantage of the new opportunity to commute by foot or bike when the greenway opens.

Whilst the project will work directly with schools, communities and businesses along the route of the Greenway, the impact of the project will be felt by a much wider area, and the learning from the programme will remain with the Council staff beyond the lifetime of the programme, thus benefiting the county far beyond the lifetime of the project itself, and making it a crucial opportunity for our team to kick start real modal shift in commuting patterns in Monaghan.

As ever, the range of our ambitions will be tempered by the availability of resources. It is hoped that with the growing emphasis on climate change adaptation and active travel at European and international level, it will be followed by a growth in funding for projects which have a strong emphasis on promoting modal shift and encouraging active travel. It is our intention to advance our ideas and plans so that the county is well placed to take advantage of any funding opportunities which may arise over the lifetime of this Strategy.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation

A Strategy is meaningless unless you can see if it is working! In the case of our Walking & Cycling Strategy, success would mean:

- More km of cycle lanes in our towns and villages
- More walking trails, maintained in good condition
- More people using the recreational trails in Co. Monaghan
- More people walking and cycling in our towns
- More people commuting by foot and bike

We have set the following **Targets** by which to measure our progress:

- Walking and Cycling in Co. Monaghan will be higher than the national average for commuter trips by Census 2031
- The % of women cycling to have increased by 10% by 2026
- All secondary schools to have Active Travel Plans in place and to have safe routes to school infrastructure in place by 2026
- The county's 10 largest employment campuses to have rolled out Active Travel programmes by end 2026
- Current levels of public satisfaction with Walking and Cycling to improve by 20%

We will measure these by:

- Installing pedestrian and cycle counters on Council-managed trails
- Carrying out periodic traffic counts in the towns
- Carrying out periodic cycle parking counts at schools and cycle shelters
- Conducting an attitudinal survey every five years, to track the change in public sentiment towards walking and cycling, and the Council's performance.

The Inter-Departmental Steering Committee will review progress on the Strategy as part of their terms of reference.

There will be three key Dates in our Monitoring Plan:

Year 1: We will establish the levels of walking and cycling in the county in 2021 and the attitudes and behaviours of Monaghan people towards walking and cycling, so that we can use this data as a baseline to measure the success of our initiatives over subsequent years.

Year 3: We will commission a mid term review of the Strategy, to ascertain if it is still relevant, and to make any necessary adjustments to the Actions for the remaining term.

Year 5: At the end of the term of the Strategy, in order to learn from our work and prepare for the successor to the Strategy, we shall again review our work. A second study into the levels of cycling and walking and the attitudes of people towards walking and cycling will tell us if our promotional campaign is beginning to have the desired effect, and where tweaks may need to be made going forward.

Finally, once the five years are complete, we shall commission an independent report into the Council's work on Active Travel over the years 2021-2026, as organised under this Strategy. The purpose of the report will be to evaluate our processes, policies and practices and make recommendations as to how we can continue to improve as an organisation, nurture innovation and ensure that the people of Monaghan continue to enjoy the high quality of public service they expect and deserve.

Appendix A

Monaghan Land Use & Transportation Strategy (LUTS)

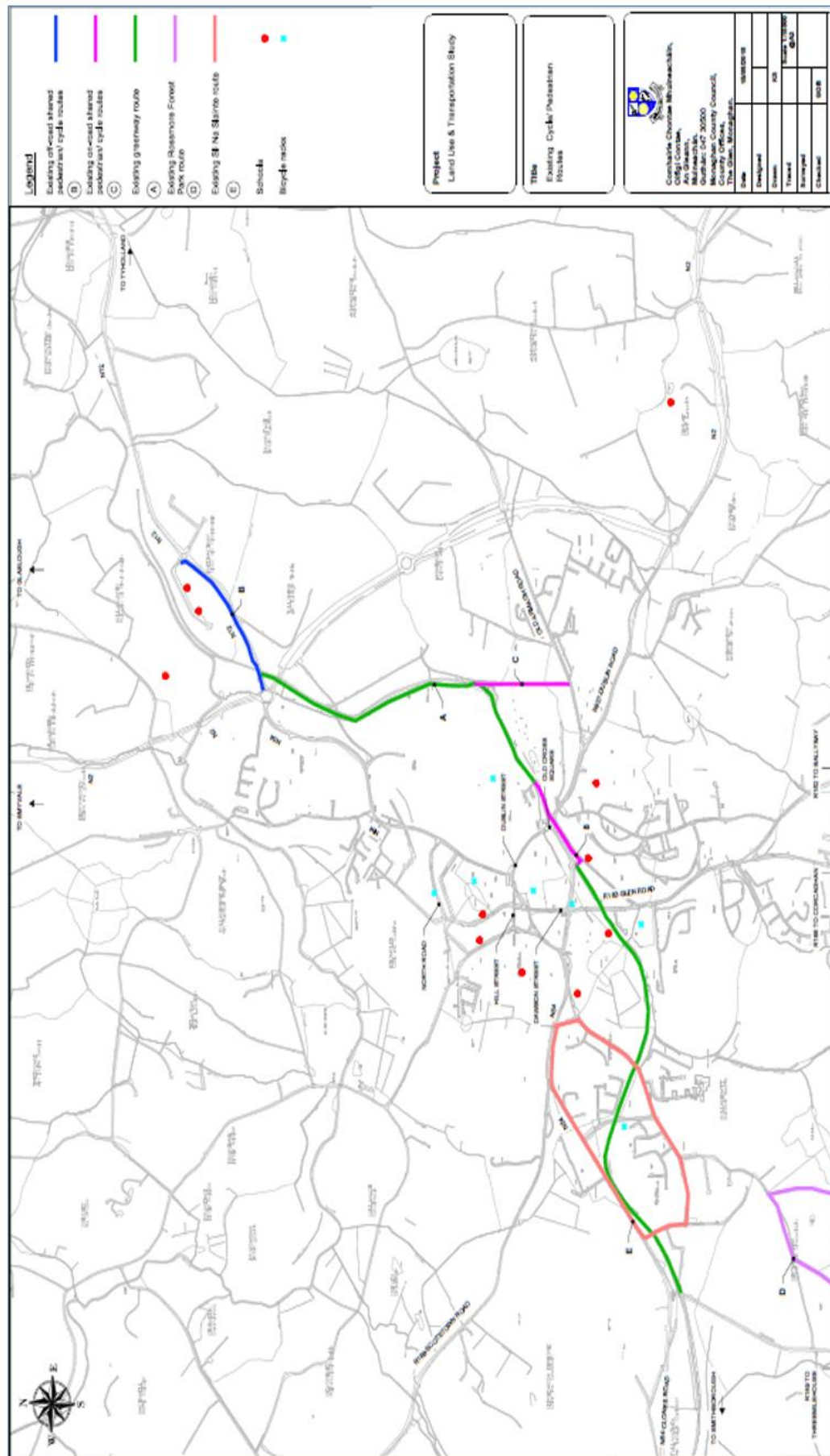
Excerpts pertaining to walking & cycling

Pedestrian counts carried out in 2015 show that the junctions with the highest pedestrian activity are:

1	Market St/ Church Square/ Courthouse Car Park
2	Hill Street / Mill Street
3	Glaslough St/ Dublin St/ The Diamond
4	Margaret Skinnider Roundabout
5	Market Road/ Dawson Street
6	Park St/ Hill Street / Market St
7	Dublin Road/ Pound Hill
8	Old Cross Square/ Rooskey Vale
9	North Road/ Glaslough Street
10	N54 Derry Road/Coolshannagh Road

Existing Cycling Infrastructure, Monaghan Town 2019

(map on next page)



Proposed network of cycle routes post LUTS:

In 2018, a team from Monaghan County Council comprising of the Cycling Officer, the Greenway Officer, the Monaghan Municipal District Co Ordinator, Planner and Roads Engineer reviewed the cycle routes proposed in the 2012 Walking & Cycling Strategy for Monaghan Town produced by Kieran Boyle and considered all other walking and cycling route proposals. They agreed on a new network of cycle routes for the town which comprises of the Greenway Routes, the Boyle cycle routes, cycle route along new link roads and other possible cycle routes along the disused Great Northern Railway line and along laneways.

No.	Category	Route	Timeframe
1	Proposed Greenway Routes	Greenway route (Coolshannagh Roundabout northwards to Tyholland/Middletown)	By 2020
2		Greenway route (N54 at Threemilehouse Road southwards to Smithborough)	
3		Greenway route (N54 at Coolshannagh Roundabout northwards to Glaslough)	
4		N2 By Pass route (Coolshannagh Roundabout to N2 Dublin Road/Latlوران estate)	
5	Proposed cycle paths in 2012 Walking & Cycling Strategy	R162 / R188 (Cootehill Road/Glen Road) MCC Offices to The Corran	By 2021
6		N2 to N54 Derry Road (St Macartans College to North Road/Glaslough St junction)	
7		R937 Dublin Road to N2 (Old Cross Square Roundabout to Collegiate School)	
8		Cross Town (North/South route) Macartan Road/Castle Road/Mall Road junction to North Road via the Diamond	
9	Cycle paths along Proposed Link roads	N2 to N12 Link Road (Annaghagh Roundabout to N12 at Knockaconny)	By 2027
10		Mid town link road (Old Cross Square to Annaghagh Roundabout)	
11		Southern Link Route (N54 Clones Rd to R188 Cootehill Rd)	
12		Southern Link Route (R162 Ballybay Road to N2 Dublin Rd)	
13	Other proposed Cycle Routes	Amenity route from Scotstown Road to North Road (Old railway line)	Ongoing
14		Amenity route from N54 to St Davnet's (Old railway line)	
15		Milltown to Amenity Route (at Gallanagh)	
16		Old Armagh Road (from N2 to junction with Dublin Rd R937)	
17		Cortolvin Road to Rossmore Park & Sli na Slainte Route via Horseshoe Bridge to N54 Monaghan Leisure Centre	
18		Latlorcan Estate (Dublin Rd to N2)	
19		Along the N2 (St Macartan's College) northwards to the N2 Cycle Path on Emyvale Road outside Monaghan Town.	
20		St Davnet's(HSE) lands from N54 to Glaslough Street.	
21		Greenway to entrance to St Davnet's at N54/ Four Seasons	

22		North Road to Glaslough St	
23		Rope Walk & Plantation Road	
24		Annaghagh roundabout along N2 southbound verge to connect with the underpass at Coolshannagh Roundabout	
25		Monaghan Fire Station along N2 south bound verge and under the N2 to connect with Old Armagh road	

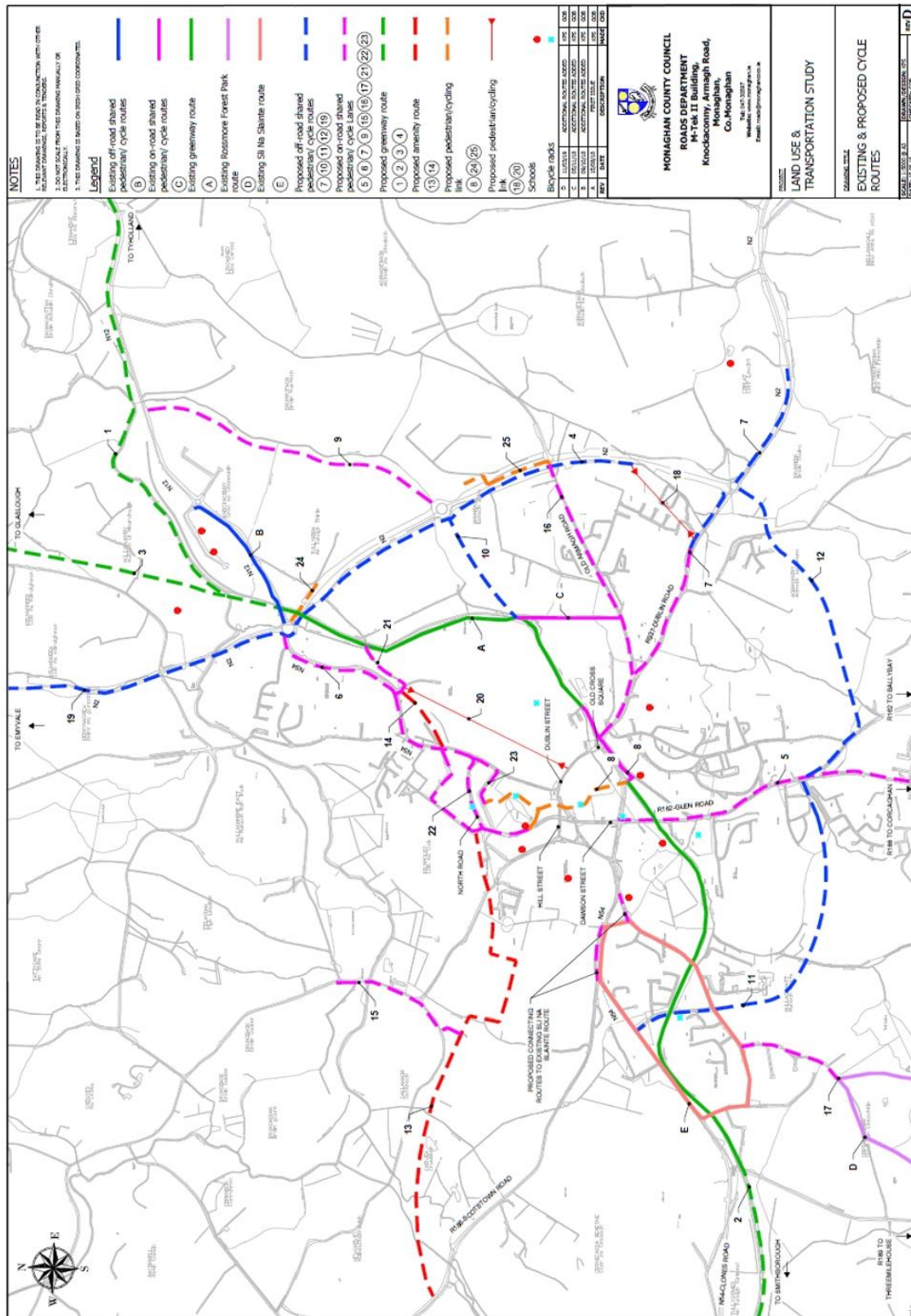
Monaghan Land Use & Transportation Study

**PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Road Id	Road No.	Road Name	Section	Pedestrian Improvements	LUTS Comments/Recommendations
A	R188	COOTEHILL ROAD	Corran Estate entrance to R162-Ballybay Road Junction	Raise crossing and reduce junction radii on minor side road junctions to provide improved pedestrian facilities	Two of the junctions to estates have steep gradients. Therefore not practical build a raised crossing at these locations.
B	R188	GLEN ROAD	Junction R162-Ballybay Road up to Macartan Road / Market Road Junction	Raise crossing and reduce junction radii on minor side road junctions to provide improved pedestrian facilities. Pedestrian Linkage to be provided from Greenway Route adjacent to St. Louis Convent.	Ballybay road junction should be assessed to improve pedestrian facilities. Pedestrian lights were upgraded at the crossing at Tully in 2016. Traffic calming should be considered at this location due to complaints of speeding.
C	N2	DUBLIN ROAD	Latlorcan Glen estate to Old Cross Square	Footpath improvements at the approach of Old Cross Junction. Pedestrian Linkage to be provided from Greenway Route adjacent to Old Cross Junction.	Pedestrian Linkage in place between Greenway and Old Cross Square. A pedestrian crossing has been installed at Beech Hill. Traffic calming should be considered at this location due to complaints of speeding.
F	N54	DERRY ROAD	Coolshannagh Roundabout to Junction to North Road	Footpath improved at Coolshannagh Road Junction.	Recommend improvements to footpaths and closing the slip road.
I	N54	CLONES ROAD	Monaghan Retail Park to Monaghan Leisure Centre	Raise crossing and reduce junction radii on minor side road junctions to provide improved pedestrian facilities	Pedestrian facilities were improved in Nov 2017 with new footpaths.

		MARKET ROAD / MACARTAN ROAD	Park Road Junction to Old Cross Square	Intervention in accordance with Ulster Canal Greenway project	Footpaths in place. No further improvements proposed at present.
M		CORTOLVIN ROAD AND KILLYCONNIGAN RESIDENTIAL ROADS	Cortolvin Road, Killyconnigan, Avondale, AnCorrán	Provide access to Greenway	Access at Horseshoe Bridge, Oriel Way and Killyconnigan in place
R		LIMEGROVE	North road to High road junction	Continue footpath on northern side to North Road junction	Footpath improvements have been completed at this location.
S		All Town Centre Streets	Town Centre Streets and approach routes	Pedestrian crossing improvements at Church Square	One pedestrian crossing in place.

Map of proposed cycle lanes





CYCLING RECOMMENDATIONS

Road Id	Road No.	Road Name	Section	Proposed Cycling Improvements	LUTS Comments/ Recommendations
A	R188	COOTEHILL ROAD	Corran Estate entrance to R162-Ballybay Road Junction	Provision of On Road Cycle lanes. Mandatory Cycle lanes where sufficient width is available. Removal of right turn lanes and central ghost islands.	Recommended to be implemented
B	R188	GLEN ROAD	Junction R162-Ballybay Road up to Macartan Road Junction	Provision of On Road Cycle lanes. Mandatory Cycle lanes when sufficient width permits. Removal of right turn lanes and central ghost islands. Cycle Linkage to be provided from Greenway Route adjacent to St. Louis Convent Greenway	Recommended to be implemented
C	N2	DUBLIN ROAD	Latlorcan Glen estate to Old Cross Square	Provision of On Road Cycle lanes. Mandatory Cycle lanes where sufficient width is available. Removal of right turn lanes and central ghost islands. Cycle Linkage to be provided from Greenway Route adjacent to Old Cross Junction.	Recommended to be implemented Off-road cycle paths recommended as they will connect directly to the greenway at Old Cross Square and from Latlorcan Glen. Adequate width to widen the footpath from the cathedral to Corlat Roundabout to be checked.
D		OLD ARMAGH ROAD	Industrial Estate to Dublin Road Junction	See junction no. 4	Walk/cycle path along bypass from N2 Dublin road to N2 Emyvale Road via Old Armagh Rd is provided for in extension of Ulster Canal Greenway.
E	N2	N2 / Derry Road	St. Macartan's College to Rooskey	Provision of a shared cycleway and footway along the western side of N2 with Toucan Crossing to School Grounds	Extension of greenway removes need for toucan crossing, as greenway will cross under Armagh Road, bringing cycleway to same side of road as school.
F	N54	DERRY ROAD	Rooskey Junction to North Road	Provision of On Road Cycle lanes. Mandatory Cycle lanes where sufficient width is available. Removal of right turn lanes at Coolshannagh Road Junction. See junction no.6	Recommended to be implemented
G	N12	ARMAGH ROAD	Education Campus to Coolshannagh Roundabout	Cycle Linkage to be provided from Greenway Route.	A proposal for a direct connection to the greenway from the MIFET education campus and the business campus at MTEK should be supported and progressed.
H		Coolshannagh Road	Old Tannery to N2 junction	No on road intervention, See junction no. 6 for specific improvements	Recommended to be implemented
I	N54	CLONES ROAD	Monaghan Retail Park to Monaghan Leisure Centre	Provision of On Road Cycle lanes. Mandatory Cycle lanes where sufficient width is available. Removal of right turn lanes and central ghost islands.	This would involve removal of traffic islands. Recommend to be reviewed again.
J	N55	CLONES ROAD	Monaghan Leisure Centre to Park Road Junction	Provision of outbound On Road Cycle lane	As above
K		MARKET ROAD / MACARTAN ROAD	Park Road Junction to Old Cross Square	Intervention in accordance with Ulster Canal Greenway project from Old Cross Square to car park entrance. Cycle lanes from car park entrance to Park Road Roundabout. See junction's no. 1, 2 and 3.	As part of Greenway a contra flow cycle lane was installed in Canal Street and along the linear park. No cycle lane provided from Park Rd to traffic lights junction.
L		PARK ROAD	Clones Road Junction to Horseshoe Bridge	No intervention required.	
M		CORTOLVIN & KILLYCONNIGAN ROADS	Cortolvin Road, Killyconnigan, Avondale, An Corrán	Provision of appropriate Traffic Speed Calming on these roads that provide access to the Greenway and Rossmore Park.	A number of ramps are already in place. An assessment should be carried out to verify if more ramps are necessary.
N			Access Road to Rossmore Forest Park	Provide formal cycle route leading to formal cycling routes within the Park	Improvements should be made to the linkages between Greenway and Park.
O		ORIEL ROAD	Clones Road Junction to Cortolvin Road	Provision of On Road Cycle lanes. Mandatory Cycle lanes where sufficient width is available. Removal of central ghost islands.	To be reviewed again. May be possible to install table top ramps to facilitate greenway. Road widths appear to be checked.
P	N2	N2-BYPASS	Coolshannagh Roundabout to Dublin Road Roundabout	Provision of a shared cycleway and footway along the western side of N2 bypass	Partial greenway has been installed from Old Armagh Rd to Annahagh Road. Funding secured under Ulster Canal Greenway Phase II. This will be completed by end 2019. It will provide an off-road greenway parallel to the bypass along the western fence line.
Q	N2	DUBLIN ROAD	N2 Dublin Road Roundabout to Latlorcan Glen Estate	Provision of a shared cycleway and footway along the northern side of Dublin Road	This should be implemented under the Ulster Canal Greenway extension. This Cycle Route was part of a submission under the Smarter Travel Initiative in 2014. To be assessed using the Monaghan Traffic model and considered again.
R		LIMEGROVE	North road to High road junction	Provision of appropriate Traffic Speed Calming.	This would be very difficult to implement. To be re assessed.
S		All Town Centre Streets	Town Centre Streets and approach routes	Town Centre Street to be 30 kph zone. Mixed-street cycling regime with appropriate road markings. Provide cycle parking at Market Square, Church Square, The Diamond, Library, Peter's Lake Park and Bus Station.	Recommended to implement
T			Pedestrian and Cycle link from Greenway at Macartan Road	Longer term Pedestrian/Cycle link from Greenway at Macartan Road northwards through Church Square, The Diamond and Peter's Lake to Plantation Road and North Road	Signage should be provided under the Greenway Phase II to promote commuting into town centre using the greenway. Car parks are to be provided at the eastern and western edges of the town, to facilitate commuters who wish to 'park and stride' or cycle the rest of the way into work or school

JUNCTION & OTHER SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Id	Location	Road Name	Proposed Improvements	LUTS Comments/ Recommendations
1	Park Road Roundabout	Clones Road / Market Road/ Park Street	Reduce entry lane width from Clones Road; increase deflection by building out northern kerb line and provide Central island markings.	This junction has been identified as a HD15 site by TII as requiring safety measures. An assessment to be carried out by Consultants to propose and design an engineering solution
2	Traffic signals junction at Market Road / Macartan Road / Glen Road / Dawson Street	Market Road / Macartan Road / Glen Road / Dawson Street	Provision of Cycle Advanced Stacking Locations	Recommend a design be prepared and Road Safety Audit be carried out on the design.
3	Old Cross Junction	Old Cross Square / Dublin Road	Section to be developed as part as the Greenway Route. Improve footpath at approach of Dublin Road to the junction.	Footpath improvements have been carried out at this location.
4	Priority Junction at Dublin Road	Dublin Road - Old Armagh Road	Improve approach to the junction by providing short length of cycle lane.	This will be very difficult to implement due to constricted width of the roadway. New Pedestrian crossing has been installed at Beech Hill.
5	Pinch Point on Hill Street / High Street	Hill Street / High Street	Provision of footpaths both sides and vehicular give way at pinch point due north of Hill Street. Currently limited footpath on west side and no footpath on east side.	This will be very difficult to implement due to constricted width of the roadway.
6	Priority Junction at Coolshannagh Road	Coolshannagh Road / Derry Road	Improvement of junction legibility for pedestrian and cyclists including the removal of right turn pocket and build out kerb lines on both sides with cycle lanes on Derry Road. Close of slip road entry to Coolshannagh Road.	This junction to be assessed for installation of traffic signals. Recommend improvements to footpaths and review of closing the slip road.
7	Horseshoe Bridge	Park Road	Provision of footbridge adjacent to narrow bridge over canal with pedestrian and cyclists link down to Greenway Route.	Recommended for review.
8	Access Road to Mullaghmat	Park Road / Cortolvin Road	Provision of short length of footpaths and lighting from Horseshoe Bridge to Estate entrance	Some footpaths have been installed here.
9	Crossing at Cootehill Road	Cootehill Road	Provision of pedestrian crossing to mitigate the lack of footpath at western side or provide footpath at western side. Land acquisition may be required for the latter option.	Provision of a Pedestrian crossing to be reviewed and possibly locating it at Drumbear woods estate.
10	Crossing at North Road	North Road	Provision of pedestrian crossing across North Road at Glaslough Street junction.	There is a zebra crossing at this location. Should be reviewed when the Peace Campus is opened.
11	Crossing at North Road	North Road	Provision of pedestrian crossing from Library to the Peter's Lake Park.	A pedestrian crossing has been installed at Peter's lake.
12	Crossing at Church Square	Church Square	Provision of pedestrian crossing with central median and southern footpath improvements	One pedestrian crossing in place.



Appendix C: Response Form

You can use the form below to send us your thoughts on the Draft Strategy. You can return the form to any Council office, or by posting to the Community Dept, which is based in MTEK II, Armagh Road, Monaghan, H18 YH59.

You can also send in your comments in another format of your choosing – letter, email etc. The email address to use is info@gomonaghan.ie. Please use 'Walking & Cycling Strategy' in the subject header




Public Consultation on Draft County Walking & Cycling Strategy, April 2021


Have your say on the county's first walking & cycling strategy. What infrastructure should be prioritised? What supports are needed to get more people walking and cycling? How can our streetscapes be altered to make walking and cycling safe and attractive modes of transport for all? Could walking and cycling tourism contribute to our economic well being?

1. In the Policy Review (Section 2), have we missed any important policy or strategy which should be taken into account in preparing our Strategy? 0


2. Are there any existing walking or cycling facilities or amenities omitted from Section 3.2? Please supply details, including contact information for the trail/ amenity where possible 0


3. Have we left out any groups or clubs which are currently active in the county in the provision of walking or cycling activities? Please give name of group/ club, details of what they provide, and contact details for secretary or chair or a website/ social media page where possible 0


4. Have we missed any source of walking and cycling data for Co. Monaghan? Please provide details  0

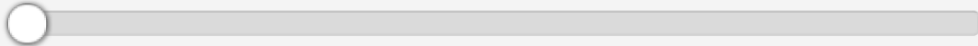
5. Do you agree with the challenges we identify in Section 3.4?  0


- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree | <input type="radio"/> Somewhat disagree |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree |
| <input type="radio"/> Somewhat agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="radio"/> Neither agree nor disagree | |


6. Are there any challenges missing from the list? Please provide details, including why you think the challenge is important and what you feel should be done about it  0


7. Do you think there are any changes needed to our draft Vision, Goals or Objectives? Please give details, including why the change is needed, and what you propose the change should be  0


8. On a scale of one to ten, how strong do you think the proposed Actions are?  0

0  10

9. If you could only choose two things, what do you think will make the biggest impact on walking and cycling levels in Co. Monaghan?  0

10. Are there any actions missing from the Strategy? Please give details, including why you think your action should be included, and the difference you think it would make/ impact it would have  0

11. Anything else you'd like to say?  0

12. We intend to conduct some follow-up focus group interviews as part of the public consultation process. If you would like to be part of a focus group, please leave your contact details here. Your contact information will only be used in relation to this consultation, and will not be stored beyond the lifetime of this consultation.  0

Name

Group/ area of interest

Contact by Email

Contact by Phone