



Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area

Walking and Cycling Index 2025



Our vision for walking, wheeling and cycling



John Moran
Mayor of Limerick

As Mayor of Limerick, I am delighted to present the second Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index.

This report shows how active travel continues to play a vital role in shaping a healthier, more sustainable, and more connected Limerick and wider Midwest region.

Every day, our residents walk and wheel the equivalent of seven times around the world, and cycle enough to circle the globe once.

These choices prevent 325 serious long-term health conditions annually, create €145 million in economic benefits for the residents and cut 7,100 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

Public support for active travel remains strong: 84% of residents across the Metropolitan area back measures to stop footpath parking, while 90% support improving off-road walking and cycling paths.

Recently finished projects such as Mill Road and Father Russell Road demonstrate our commitment to delivering high-quality infrastructure.

The expansion of the Tfi Bike scheme stations network has resulted in a 155% increase in bike hire journeys between 2022 and 2024, while the continued roll-out of the successful Safe Routes to School programme is creating safer, more vibrant communities - giving our children a new independence earlier in life.

We will, with continued government support, continue to invest in the infrastructure and initiatives that make walking, wheeling, and cycling the natural choice for everyday journeys.



Cllr. Paul Murphy,
Cathaoirleach Clare
County Council

As Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, I am pleased to welcome the second edition of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index.

This report provides an updated view into how Shannon Metropolitan Area Residents feel towards different modes of transport including walking, wheeling, and cycling.

The results of this survey help influence the type of investment and infrastructure people want, which in turn will contribute to an attractive and sustainable Metropolitan Area.

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The Walking and Cycling Index

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

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years. This is the second report from the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, produced in partnership with the National Transport Authority of Ireland. The data in this report comes from 2025 and includes local walking, wheeling and cycling data, modelling and an independent, demographically representative survey of 1,106 residents aged 16 or above. The survey was conducted from April to August 2025. Independent market research company Ipsos B&A conducted the survey, which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

Across this report we have included comparisons to 2023 data where available.

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

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



Defining wheeling

Some people who use a wheelchair or a mobility scooter may not identify with the term walking and may prefer to use the term wheeling. We use the terms walking and wheeling together to ensure we are as inclusive as possible.

Headlines

Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area

Population^[i]

143,300

115,274 adults

28,026 children

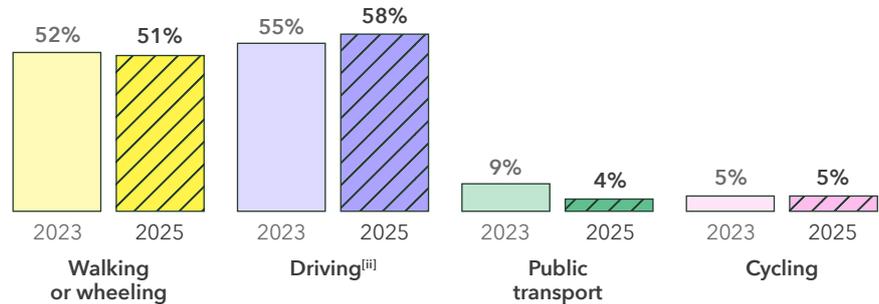


Frequency of different modes of travel

Driving is the most common mode of travel amongst Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area residents, followed by walking and wheeling. Since 2023, walking, wheeling and cycling has stayed about the same.

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

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



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

Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

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

51%

of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week

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

51% of women

51% of men

15%

of residents cycle at least once a week

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

8% of women

23% of men

Not all residents feel safe in their neighbourhood

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

59% of people with a disability

77% of people without a disability

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

62% of people aged 16-25

54% of people aged 66+

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

84% of socio-economic group DE

88% of socio-economic group AB

iii. See footnote on page 6.

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

Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

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

prevents
325
serious long-term
health conditions

creates
€145.4 million
in economic benefit for
individuals and the area

saves
7,100 tonnes
of greenhouse gas emissions

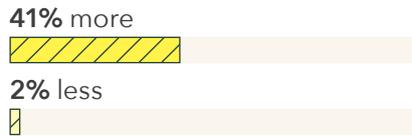
Walking, wheeling and cycling reduces congestion by taking up to 33,000 cars off the roads every day.

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

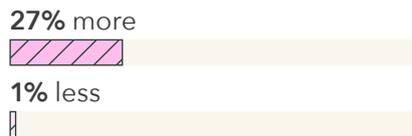
Percentage of residents who would like to use different types of transport more or less in the future:

18% of residents want to drive less. 61% of residents agree that they often use a car because no other transport options are available.

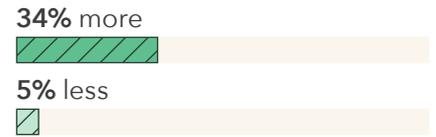
Walk or wheel



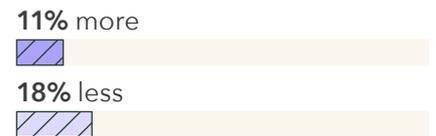
Cycle



Take public transport

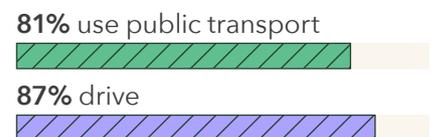
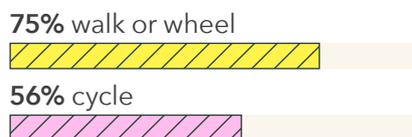


Drive



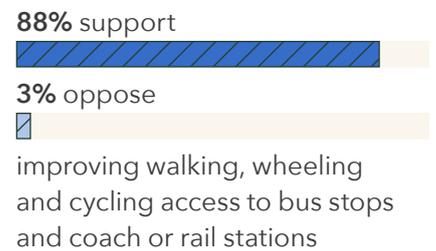
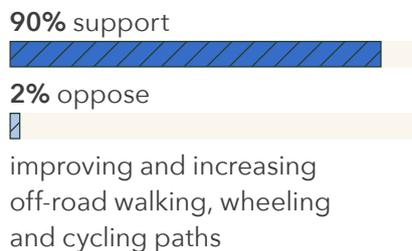
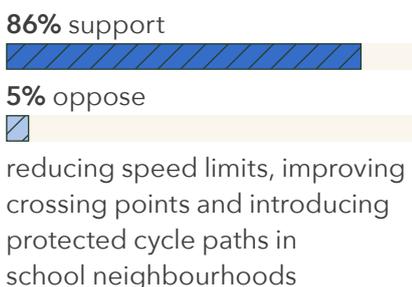
Cycling is seen as less safe than other forms of transport

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



Residents support more connected neighbourhoods

54% of residents support shifting investment from road-building schemes to fund walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. 25% oppose such a shift.



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

Walking and wheeling

Participation, safety and satisfaction



Walking and wheeling participation

Overall in Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area the number of residents walking and wheeling at least five days a week has stayed about the same since 2023.

Although the figures are lower than in 2023, encouragingly most residents still feel safe walking or wheeling in their local area and consider it a good place for doing so.

85%
of all residents
walk or wheel
87% in 2023

51%
of all residents
walk or wheel
at least five
days a week
52% in 2023

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

Gender⁽ⁱ⁾

51% of women



52% in 2023

51% of men



52% in 2023

Ethnicity

54% of people from ethnic minority groups



52% in 2023

51% of white people



52% in 2023

Age

68% of people aged 16-25



69% in 2023

47% of people aged 26-35



52% in 2023

48% of people aged 36-45



55% in 2023

49% of people aged 46-55



45% in 2023

51% of people aged 56-65



47% in 2023

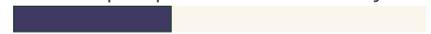
45% of people aged 66+



42% in 2023

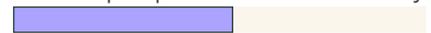
Disability

38% of people with a disability



48% in 2023

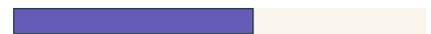
53% of people without a disability



53% in 2023

Socio-economic group⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

58% of AB



57% in 2023

57% of C1



56% in 2023

41% of C2



46% in 2023

47% of DE



48% in 2023

i. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and is not shown.
ii. Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Group C1 is supervisory/clerical and students. Group C2 is skilled manual. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

75%

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

84% in 2023

55%

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

76% in 2023

82%

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

88% in 2023

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

Gender

73% of women



83% in 2023

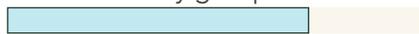
78% of men



85% in 2023

Ethnicity

73% of people from ethnic minority groups



93% in 2023

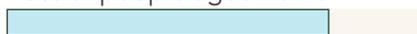
76% of white people



83% in 2023

Age

78% of people aged 16-25



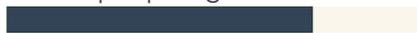
85% in 2023

74% of people aged 26-35



83% in 2023

74% of people aged 36-45



86% in 2023

77% of people aged 46-55



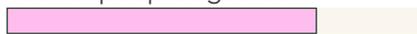
84% in 2023

75% of people aged 56-65



87% in 2023

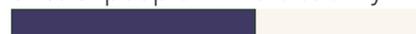
75% of people aged 66+



81% in 2023

Disability

59% of people with a disability



77% in 2023

77% of people without a disability



85% in 2023

Socio-economic group

78% of AB



84% in 2023

77% of C1



83% in 2023

70% of C2



90% in 2023

75% of DE



82% in 2023



Sean Fitzgibbon

I've walked the streets and greenways of Limerick for nearly 50 years, and I wouldn't change it for anything. Some days it's The Three Bridges, weaving over the Shannon past Thomond Bridge and back across Shannon Bridge. Other times it's the quiet, birdsong-filled Canal Bank, or the beautiful University grounds where river views make you pause.

I wander Shannon Fields, the Baggot Estate, and Mungret Park—places that have carried me through grief, joy, and ordinary days. Walking keeps me healthy, but more than that, it keeps me in step with Limerick, the seasons, and myself.

Cycling

Participation, safety and satisfaction



Cycling participation

Currently, 15% of residents cycle at least once a week.

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

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

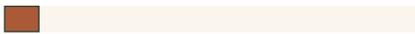
23%
of all residents cycle
22% in 2023

15%
of all residents cycle at least
once a week
15% in 2023

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

Gender

8% of women



10% in 2023

23% of men



20% in 2023

Ethnicity

14% of people from ethnic minority groups



16% in 2023

15% of white people



15% in 2023

Age

33% of people aged 16-25



27% in 2023

16% of people aged 26-35



16% in 2023

17% of people aged 36-45



16% in 2023

15% of people aged 46-55



14% in 2023

7% of people aged 56-65



11% in 2023

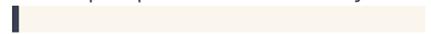
5% of people aged 66+



5% in 2023

Disability

1% of people with a disability



8% in 2023

17% of people without a disability



16% in 2023

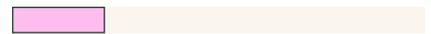
Socio-economic group

17% of AB



14% in 2023

22% of C1



19% in 2023

14% of C2



14% in 2023

8% of DE



10% in 2023

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

Cycling safety and satisfaction

56%

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

71% in 2023

43%

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

66% in 2023

51%

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

73% in 2023

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

Gender

52% of women



72% in 2023

60% of men



70% in 2023

Ethnicity

61% of people from ethnic minority groups



80% in 2023

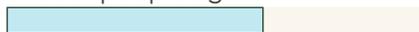
55% of white people



70% in 2023

Age

62% of people aged 16-25



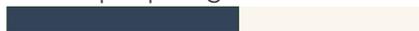
74% in 2023

53% of people aged 26-35



72% in 2023

56% of people aged 36-45



68% in 2023

53% of people aged 46-55



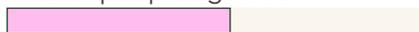
77% in 2023

58% of people aged 56-65



68% in 2023

54% of people aged 66+



69% in 2023

Disability

41% of people with a disability



66% in 2023

57% of people without a disability



72% in 2023

Socio-economic group

58% of AB



66% in 2023

57% of C1



75% in 2023

51% of C2



74% in 2023

56% of DE



68% in 2023



Yvonne Ryan

I enjoyed cycling until I had children. Traditional bike carriers left me nervous, but now I have a long-tail cargo e-bike that comfortably fits my two youngest.

Cycling to school is the norm for them, and it's given my eldest real freedom over his travel needs. Riding to work and school is a great way to start the day- we're never late, and there's no stress about parking or traffic.

My children talk to me more on the bike, sharing little worries without the car radio in the way. We feel lucky to have good infrastructure and wish everyone did.

Benefits of walking and wheeling

Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

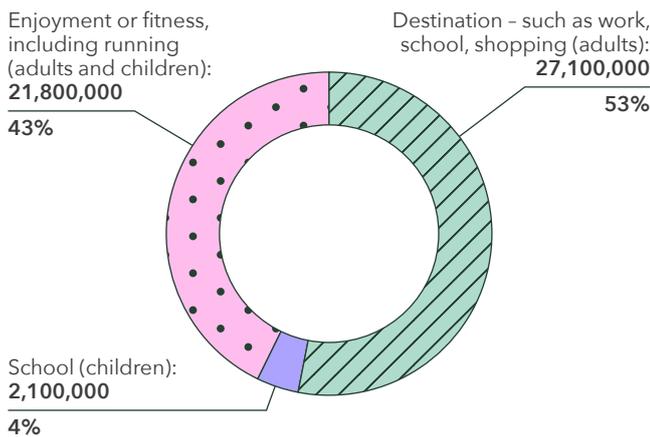


Together, Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area residents walk or wheel 7 times around the world every day

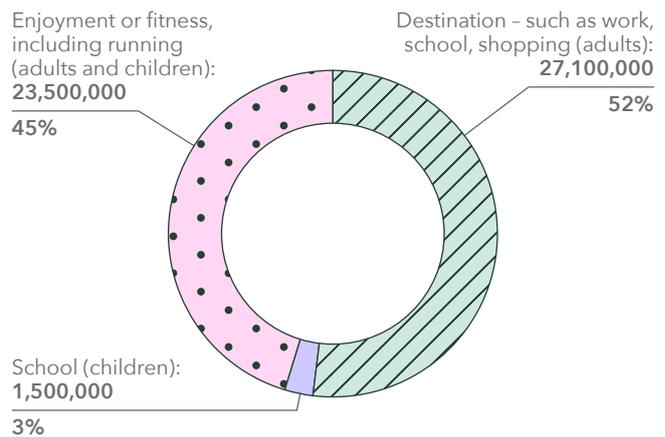
Walking and wheeling improves health and air quality, saves the HSE money, and reduces congestion.

Annual walking and wheeling trips by purpose

51 million trips in 2025 which add up to **103.8 million kilometres**



52.1 million trips in 2023 which add up to **106.6 million kilometres**



The data sources used for modelling school trips by children changed between 2023 and 2025. These results are not directly comparable, please refer to the methodology paper for more details.

Walking and wheeling benefits residents and society

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

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

€123.5 million

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

For these journeys **€1.14** is saved for each kilometre walked or wheeled instead of driven. Over a year this adds up to **€37.9 million** in economic benefit for residents and society from **33.2 million kilometres** walked or wheeled by those that could have used a car.



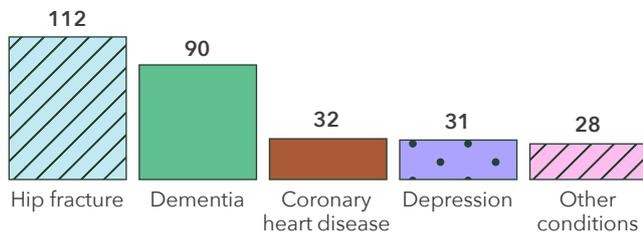
2023 model estimates in this report differ slightly to those published in 2023, due to being recalculated using input data from more robust sources. See methodology report for details.

Walking and wheeling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Walking in the area prevents 292 serious long-term health conditions each year.

289 in 2023

Cases prevented



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

This saves the HSE

€3.6 million per year

€3.7 million in 2023

Equivalent to the cost of

61,000

GP appointments

67,000 in 2023

The physical activity benefits from walking

prevent 49 early deaths annually

50 in 2023

which is valued at

€373 million

€391 million in 2023

Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of walking by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of walking. Wheelchair and mobility scooter trips are modelled as walking trips for the purposes of the MOVES and HEAT models.

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

16,000 kg of NO_x

(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

15,000 kg in 2023

and

1,100 kg of particulates

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

1,100 kg in 2023

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



89% in 2023

Walking and wheeling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By walking or wheeling instead of driving, residents save

5,500 tonnes

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

5,500 tonnes in 2023

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

50,000 people

taking flights

from Shannon Airport to London Heathrow.

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

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

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

Walking and wheeling keeps the area moving

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

30,000 return trips

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

29,000 in 2023

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

145 kilometres

equivalent to the distance from Limerick City to Claremorris.

140 kilometres in 2023

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

Benefits of cycling

Why everyone gains when more people cycle

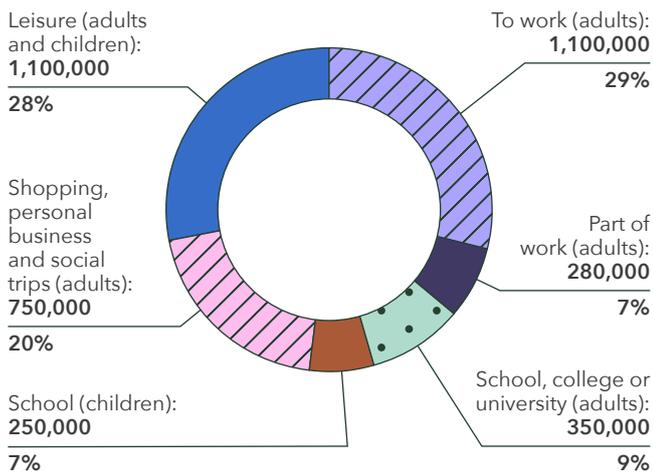


Together, Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area residents cycle once around the world every day

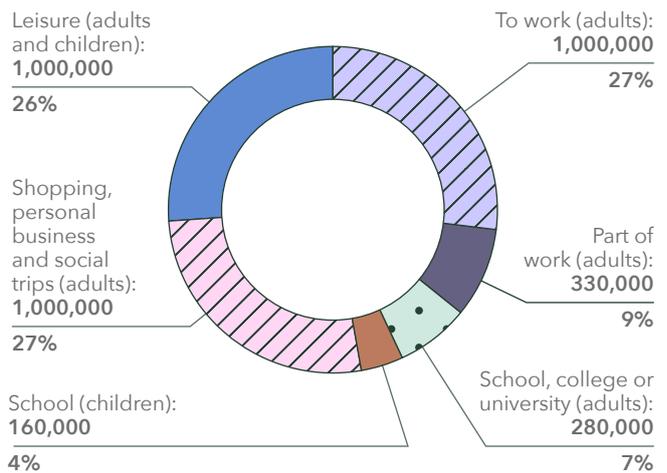
Cycling can be convenient for many local trips, especially in cities and towns. It gives people transport choice and access to education, jobs and community.

Annual cycling trips by purpose

3.8 million trips in 2025 which add up to **21.1 million kilometres**



3.8 million in 2023 which add up to **15.5 million kilometres**



The data sources used for modelling school trips by children changed between 2023 and 2025. These results are not directly comparable, please refer to the methodology paper for more details.

Cycling benefits residents and society

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

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

€21.8 million

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

For these journeys **€1.62** is saved for each kilometre cycled instead of driven. Over a year this adds up to **€15.6 million** in economic benefit for residents and society from **9.6 million kilometres** cycled by those that could have used a car.



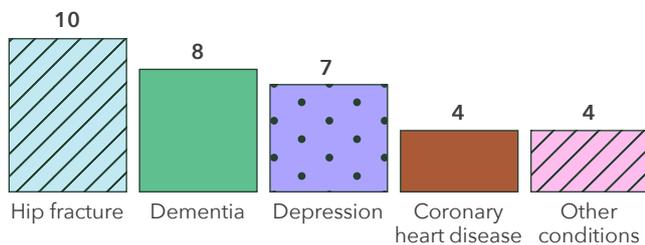
2023 model estimates in this report differ slightly to those published in 2023, due to being recalculated for the inclusion of cycling trips as part of work and using input data from more robust sources. See methodology report for details.

Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Cycling in the area prevents 33 serious long-term health conditions each year.

29 in 2023

Cases prevented



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

This saves the HSE

€450,000 per year

€390,000 in 2023

Equivalent to the cost of

7,500

GP appointments

7,100 in 2023

The physical activity benefits from cycling

prevent 3 early deaths annually

2 in 2023

which is valued at

€23.1 million

€16.7 million in 2023

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

People cycling instead of driving improves air quality, saving:

3,700 kg of NO_x

(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

2,100 kg in 2023

and

285 kg of particulates

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

153 kg in 2023

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



89% in 2023

Cycling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By cycling instead of driving, residents save

1,600 tonnes

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

833 tonnes in 2023

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

15,000 people

taking flights

from Shannon Airport to London Heathrow.

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

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

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

Cycling keeps the area moving

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

2,800 return trips

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

2,700 in 2023

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

13 kilometres

equivalent to the distance from Limerick City to Rockstown Castle.

13 kilometres in 2023

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

Walking and wheeling solutions

What would help make walking and wheeling easier?



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

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

67%

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

75% in 2023

85%

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

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

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

70%

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

75% in 2023

68%

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

74% in 2023

82%

more parks or green spaces close to their home

80% in 2023

75%

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

79% in 2023

Residents want walking and wheeling to better align with buses

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

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



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

72%

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

75%

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

75%

accessible walking and wheeling routes to and from bus stops

76%

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

77%

improved walking and wheeling crossing facilities near bus stops

80%

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

Residents want better streets

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

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

73%

wider footpaths
74% in 2023

75%

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

80%

nicer places along streets to stop and rest, like more benches, trees and shelters
79% in 2023

83%

better footpath accessibility, like level surfaces and dropped kerbs at crossing points
83% in 2023

76%

fewer cars parked on the footpath
79% in 2023

74%

less fear of crime or antisocial behaviour in their area
80% in 2023

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

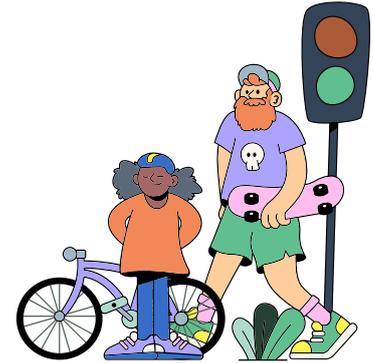
92% have a pedestrian crossing



8% don't have a pedestrian crossing



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



Paul Williams, Canteen

Limerick is the perfect city for walking. The city centre is compact; with everything one could need within easy reach. As a family, we made the decision to go from having two cars to just one—even with a toddler at home.

Living and working in the city, we've found there's rarely a need for a car; in fact, having one often makes getting around slower.

I usually walk to work, as I live very close by. Recently, however, I opened a second business—a bakery at the Milk Market. Although there's a fair bit of moving stock between the two premises, we decided to invest in a cart to transport bread and other items.

The cart has been a brilliant solution: any member of staff can use it, it doesn't require insurance or parking, and storing it is no issue. Walking keeps us moving, simply and sustainably, every day.

Cycling solutions

What would make cycling better?

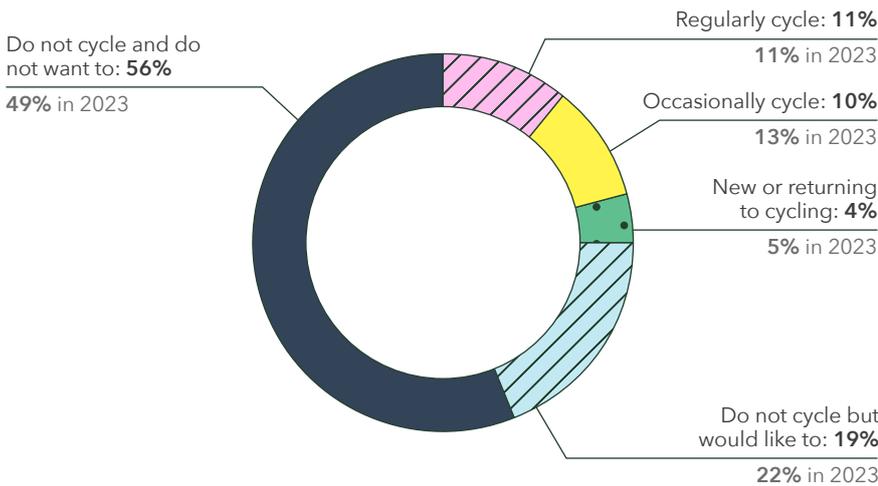


Many residents want to cycle

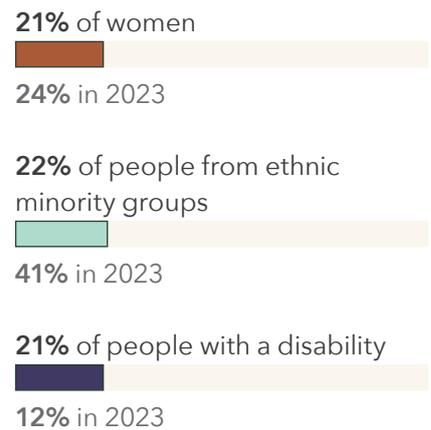
There is considerable appetite to start cycling from residents who don't already.

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

How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?



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



Residents want more support to cycle

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

47%
access to a bicycle
55% in 2023

30%
access to an electric cycle
36% in 2023

25%
access to a cargo cycle with space to carry children or shopping
26% in 2023

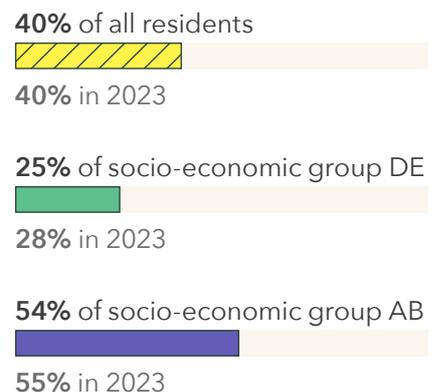
25%
access to an adapted cycle, like a tricycle or handcycle
23% in 2023

49%
access or improvements to a city cycle hiring scheme
61% in 2023

44%
access to secure cycle parking at or near home
49% in 2023

44%
cycling training courses and organised social rides
62% in 2023

Proportions of residents with access to an adult cycle



Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

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

In the area there are:

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

Among residents:

13% of households

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

The area has **28 km** of cycle paths level with the footpath, distinguished by a different surface

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

26 km
of cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

3 km
of signposted routes along quieter streets

68
cycle parking spaces across 2 railway and bus stations

59%
more traffic-free cycle paths away from roads, like through parks or along waterways
70% in 2023

56%
more cycle paths along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians
67% in 2023

59%
more signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets
70% in 2023

55%
better links with public transport, like secure cycle parking at train stations, bus stops/stations
64% in 2023

90%
support improving and increasing local off-road walking, wheeling and cycling paths

69%
support building more cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic
76% in 2023

88%
support improving walking, wheeling and cycling access to bus stops and coach or rail stations



Carol Johansson

I've cycled to work for over ten years, and people ask, "Are you still cycling?" as if I'd grow out of it. But it isn't a phase or a chore; it's joy, independence, and connection- to the city, the outdoors, and colleagues in the bike shed. I hope people continue to feel excited about cycling.

To make that a reality, we need to create an environment where cycling feels safe, convenient, and enjoyable for everyone – regardless of age or experience. In Limerick, one major step forward would be a dedicated pedestrian and cycling bridge across the River Shannon – a real statement of intent that active travel is here to stay.

Neighbourhood solutions

Thriving places, centring children

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

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

Improving the journey to school

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

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

56% support



27% oppose



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

These are known as 'School Streets'.

4 schools

in the area have School Streets schemes

1 school in 2023

86% support



5% oppose



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

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

12 schools

are in the Safer Routes to School programme

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

Giving children the independence to roam, play and develop

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

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

12 years old
to walk or wheel

13 years old
to cycle

14 years old
to use public transport

66%

agree there is space for children to socialise and play

80% in 2023

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

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



Residents support child-safe neighbourhoods

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

56%

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

76% in 2023

75%

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

80% in 2023

77%

support low-traffic neighbourhoods

85% in 2023

16%

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

16% in 2023

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

68% walk or wheel more



51% cycle more



76%

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

23%

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

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

70% walk or wheel more



54% cycle more



Everyone should feel welcome in their neighbourhood

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

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

86%

of all residents



91% in 2023

81%

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

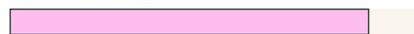
83% in 2023

85% of women



91% in 2023

87% of men



91% in 2023

87% of people from ethnic minority groups



95% in 2023

86% of white people



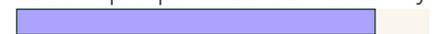
91% in 2023

74% of people with a disability



92% in 2023

87% of people without a disability



91% in 2023

84% of socio-economic group DE



91% in 2023

88% of socio-economic group AB



94% in 2023

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

Developing the area

Improving walking, wheeling and cycling



Active Travel is a great way to get around, while keeping fit, reducing pollution, and saving money at the same time. Active travel benefits both the individual and the city.

The majority of residents in the Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area live in the Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) area. The National Transport Authority (NTA) works in collaboration with LCCC on the delivery of Active Travel projects. This includes the development of segregated cycle lanes and widened footpaths, new walking and cycling bridges, and new pedestrian crossings. The work of the NTA's Active Travel Programme is underpinned by the aims and objectives set out in the Government's Climate Action Plan 2023. One of the key aims cited is to increase the number of walking and cycling networks so that walking, cycling, and public transport will account for 50% of all journeys made by 2030. Projects are funded by the Department of Transport through the National Transport Authority's Active Travel Programme and are managed and delivered by the Local Authorities.

Limerick's Transport for Ireland Bike Rental Scheme opened in 2014. In 2024, it expanded to the University of Limerick campus. Usage of the scheme is growing significantly; the total number of trips in 2024 saw a 155% increase on the 2022 number.

An Active Travel team was established in Limerick to deliver NTA-funded projects, and up to the end of 2024, €96 million has been invested in active travel schemes. Since 2020, the rate of investment has increased significantly, delivering over 100 km of Active Travel infrastructure, providing more opportunities for walking and cycling across the metropolitan area.

Usage of the scheme is growing significantly; the total number of trips in 2024 saw a 155% increase on the 2022 number.



The Mill Road Active Travel Scheme

The Mill Road Active Travel Scheme was completed in the summer of 2025. The scheme has delivered a new 1.4 km off-road walking and cycling route linking schools, residential areas, and the River Shannon. It incorporates new pedestrian crossings, traffic-calming measures, and the planting of more than 280 trees, creating a safer and greener environment for all users. The scheme links a large residential area with schools, enabling active travel and encouraging a modal shift for school journeys, promoting healthier and more sustainable travel choices.



Plassey Park Road scheme

There has been significant investment in the Castletroy area. The Plassey Park Road scheme, opened in 2024, has created a protected junction for cyclists and pedestrians, and ties into existing infrastructure to link to the UL campus. It also provides for bus priority and a new green area, with new trees, landscaping, and benches.



Father Russell Road scheme

There has also been significant delivery on the other side of the city, in Dooradoyle. The Father Russell Road scheme, opened in 2024, provides for a kilometre of segregated cycling and improved pedestrian infrastructure, as well as protected bus stops. This links to the recently opened Raheen to Quinn's Cross (R510) scheme, which has been built to the same standard as Father Russell Road. As part of this project, Safe Routes to School (SRTS) elements were delivered in front of St Nessian's NS, allowing pupils and parents a safer and more pleasant experience at drop-off and pick-up. On both schemes, new trees and wildflower beds have been incorporated.



Safe Routes to School Programme

Under the SRTS programme, nine schools have had safety and placemaking projects delivered. Standout schemes delivered in the last two years are the school zones at St Paul's National School in Dooradoyle and Gaelscoil Sairséal on Shelbourne Road. In Shannon, Clare County Council has delivered a school zone at Clonmoney NS and an improved connection towards the town centre, under the N18.

Looking forward

Better places and streets for everyone

The Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) was published in November 2022. It sets out the framework for an accessible, high-quality and integrated transport network that meets travel demand and supports sustainable growth in Limerick. One of the objectives of this strategy is to develop a strong cycling culture in the Limerick area. This includes the commitment to deliver a safe, comprehensive, attractive, and legible cycle network.

Pathfinder Programme – Limerick City University Connectivity:

Active travel linkages between Limerick's three main third-level institutions - Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), University of Limerick (UL), and Mary Immaculate College - form a demonstrator project under the Pathfinder Programme, part of the National Sustainable Mobility Policy. These projects will converge in the city centre, providing improved infrastructure in the Arthur's Quay area. The project encompasses three schemes: the existing Greenway linking Irishtown in the city centre to UL along the Park Canal and River Shannon; Mary I to City Centre (along South Circular Road); and TUS to City Centre. The TUS to City Centre scheme began construction in 2025, while the Mary I to City Centre scheme is expected to begin in 2026.

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

64% on walking and wheeling



54% on cycling



68% on buses



61% on trains



46% on other forms of public transport



44% on driving



One of the objectives of this strategy is to develop a strong cycling culture in the Limerick area.

Upcoming Schemes:

In addition to the Pathfinder schemes, LCCC is developing a range of key Active Travel projects in the metropolitan area. The east of the city will see the development of Ennis Road as a key spine. The Mill Road, Corbally Active Travel Scheme in front of Scoil Íde to Athlunkard Bridge will be delivered next year. In Shannon, Clare's Active Travel team is delivering new pedestrian crossings and bus stops across the town, tying into the Ballycasey scheme delivered in 2022.

In addition to these capital projects, Limerick will continue to operate its Bike Hub – the first of its kind outside Dublin. This partnership between LCCC, the NTA, social enterprises, and charities provides bike repair and training services. Members of refugee and migrant communities have availed of the Hub's free

services, enhancing their ability to cycle around the city to access education, work, and social activities.

Limerick will also be establishing a Bike Library, in partnership with schools and sports clubs. It will enable families to borrow e-cargo bikes for three months. Results from Dublin, where the scheme has been running for the past few years, show that participation can be a strong driver of travel behaviour change.

Limerick's Active Travel programme is supported by a strong communications team. In 2025, LCCC launched their Active Travel Viewer, an online interactive map showing all existing and planned projects. Additionally, a fortnightly newsletter is published to keep the public informed about progress.



Deirdre McGrath

Although it can take a bit more organisation to walk or cycle to my destination within the city, it's always worth the effort in the end.

There's something rewarding about stepping outside, even if it means planning ahead a little more than usual. Shortly after setting off, I begin to feel good about myself for taking on the simple challenge, and I'm often surprised at how energised and clear-minded I become.

Moving through the city under my own power gives me a stronger sense of connection to my surroundings.

Looking forward, I would love to see even more support for active travel in Limerick—better paths, safer crossings, and continued investment in TFI bikes and buses. That flexibility makes all the difference. After all, variety is the spice of life!

Notes on methodology

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk

Funding and support

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

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