

# Galway City Council

## Active Travel and Sustainable Transport

June 2026



Comhairle Cathrach  
na Gaillimhe  
Galway City Council



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# Walking, wheeling and cycling take up to 23,000 cars off Galway roads every day, according to latest Walking and Cycling Index



The National Transport Authority has published the findings of its latest survey of walking, wheeling and cycling in the Galway Metropolitan Area, which reveals that every day, up to 23,000 return walking and cycling non-leisure trips are made by residents who could have used a car. The report shows a marked increase in the number of residents now walking or wheeling at least five times a week, up from 60% in 2023, to 67% in 2025. The survey also reveals that at least 1 in 5 (21%) adult residents cycle at least once a week, with the number of young people aged 16-25 who cycle at least once a week having increased to 35%, up from 31% in 2023.

The Walking and Cycling Index provides the largest assessment of walking, wheeling, and cycling in Ireland and the UK. It is delivered in collaboration with Galway City and County Councils, the National Transport Authority and the sustainable transport charity, Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. Alongside the Galway Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index, the Dublin, Cork, Limerick Shannon, and Waterford Metropolitan Areas are also publishing Index reports.

# Walking and Cycling Index

The **Galway Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index** is based on an independent demographically representative survey of more than 1,100 residents from across Galway Metropolitan Area, aged 16 and above, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle. The Metropolitan Area covers the area from Oranmore to Barna and north to Claregalway.

It reveals that 64% of residents are in favour of additional investment in cycling and 66% are in favour of additional investment in walking and wheeling. Support for the development of more protected cycle infrastructure within the Galway Metropolitan Area remains high, with 82% of residents supporting building cycle tracks physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even where that means less room for other traffic.

## **Key findings from the 2025 Galway Metropolitan Area Walking and Cycling Index:**

- 67% of adult residents walk 5 or more days a week, 55% use a car 5 or more days a week.
- 69% of women walk or wheel 5 or more days a week, up from 64% in 2023.
- 1 in 5 (21%) adults cycle at least once a week.
- 35% of young people aged 16-25 cycle at least once a week, up from 31% in 2023.
- 44% of residents want to walk more, and 38% want to cycle more in the future.
- 82% of residents support building cycle tracks physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even where that means less room for other traffic.
- Every day those who walk, wheel or cycle for non-leisure trips when they could have used a car take up to 23,000 cars off the road in the Galway Metropolitan Area. If all of these cars were in a traffic jam it would tail back 112 kilometres.
- Residents walking, wheeling and cycling create an annual economic benefit for individuals and the Galway Metropolitan Area of €171.1 million.
- Walking, wheeling and cycling improve public health in the Galway Metropolitan Area, preventing 278 long term serious health conditions annually and saving the HSE €3.6million equivalent to the cost of over 60,000 GP appointments.
- Those walking, wheeling and cycling instead of driving, save greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to 36,000 flights from Shannon Airport to London Heathrow Airport.

# Walking and Cycling Index

## Economic Benefits of Active Travel

The report found that walking, wheeling and cycling create an annual economic benefit for individuals and the Galway Metropolitan Area of €171.1m. This includes €1.67 of a net economic benefit for each km cycled instead of driven and €1.19 benefit of each km walked instead of driven. These costs were determined through an analysis of travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

## Environmental Benefits

Every day up to 23,000 return walking, wheeling and cycling trips are made daily in the Galway Metropolitan Area by residents that could have used a car. If these cars were all in a traffic jam, it would tail back 112 kilometres.

The report also found that walking, wheeling and cycling save 4,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in Galway each year, which is equivalent to about 36,000 residents taking flights from Shannon Airport to London Heathrow Airport.

## Health Benefits and Inclusivity

The benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling to the Galway Metropolitan Area are outlined in the report, with the physical activity benefits preventing 278 long-term serious health conditions annually, valued at approx. €3.6million equivalent to the cost of over 60,000 GP appointments.

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**The full report is available at this link.**

In addition, the NTA has recorded two testimonial videos regarding walking and cycling in Galway. **Both videos are available at this webpage.**

# Construction Updates - Ballybane/Castlepark Roads and Bóthar Stiofáin

Significant progress has been made in the delivery of both the **Bóthar Stiofáin Cycle Network Scheme** and the **Ballybane Road and Castlepark Road Cycle Network Scheme** over recent weeks and months.

In Bóthar Stiofáin, the full length of the road has been resurfaced, and works on most side junctions have also been completed. The cycle lanes and new footpaths are open to all users. Some minor works remain, and these will be carried out in the coming weeks, but the majority of the construction works have been completed. Landscaping works will also be completed in the near future.



# Construction Updates - Ballybane/Castlepark Roads and Bóthar Stiofáin

On the East side of the city, road resurfacing works on Ballybane Road and Castlepark Road were completed in May 2026. This includes some resurfacing at Monivea Road, on the sections of the road closest to Ballybane Road.

The project is now entering its closing stages. Over the coming weeks, resurfacing works will be carried out on the side roads and estates leading onto Ballybane and Castlepark Roads. Road marking works will be undertaken and bus shelters are to be installed. We anticipate that the bulk of these works will all be completed before the end of June 2026.



# Monivea Road (East) Active Travel Scheme



Galway City Council intends to lodge a planning application for this development in the near future. This project will provide a safe and attractive route for walkers, wheelers and cyclists, including vulnerable road users. In March, a drop-in public information event was held at the Clayton Hotel, and this was well attended. Observations and submissions made arising out of this event have been collated and considered as part of the planning application.

## What's Proposed

This project will run for approx. 1.7km along Monivea Road (R338) from the Ballybane Road (R865) junction to the Old Ballybrit Road junction (East). The works will include:

- New dedicated facilities for walkers, wheelers and cyclists comprised of footpaths, cycle tracks and shared spaces.
- New signalised and non-signalised road crossings.
- Reduction in road carriageway widths and junction tightening to promote slower speeds and improve safety for all users
- Upgraded facilities at all existing bus stops along the route.
- Upgrading of the R339 Monivea Road / L5029 Castlepark Road junction.

Further information is available by [clicking on this link](#).

# Safe Routes to School - Update



The Active Travel Department has appointed O'Connor Sutton Cronin (OCSC) as design consultants to progress Safe Routes to School Projects throughout the city through design, with a view to bringing the proposal to construction.

OCSCs are reviewing the existing Outline Delivery Plans for each school, which have previously been prepared by An Taisce. Completed designs will be subject to potential planning applications. As part of this process, Galway City Council and OCSC are engaging with the schools as part of this process.

In addition to the projects which form part of the Safe Routes to School programme, OCSC is also engaging with Scoil Bhríde, Shantalla with a view to progressing a front-of-school active travel scheme at this location.

Each project will be developed through preliminary design, statutory processes, detailed design, procurement with the aim of going to construction from Q3 2027. It is planned that St John's, Knocknacarra will commence in Q1 2027. Each scheme is subject to NTA approval, planning consent and available funding.

Safe Routes to School schemes will provide "front of school" treatments which will enhance access to school grounds and create a safe space for students at the front of school. The programme is funded by the Dept. of Transport through the NTA. The programme is delivered by An Taisce and local authorities.

# Galway City Schools Selected Under the SRTS Programme



- Galway Educate Together/ St Joseph's National School, Newcastle
- Scoil Cairtriona, Renmore
- Colaiste Iognaid, Br. Na Mara:
- Gaelscoil Dara, Renmore
- Coláiste Éinde, Threadneedle Road, Salthill,
- St. Patrick's NS, Lombard St.
- St. John the Apostle, Knocknacarra NS, Western Distributor Rd., Knocknacarra,
- Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh, Cnoc na Cathrach
- Claddagh Primary School – St. Dominic's Rd., The Claddagh

In addition, a front-of-school active travel scheme is also proposed for Scoil Bhríde, and this is also currently being progressed.

*Safe Routes to School* schemes have previously been completed at Scoil Iognáid, Raleigh Row and at Scoil Fhursa, Nile Lodge.

# Salmon Weir Bridge Pedestrian Crossing



Construction works on a new pedestrian crossing at the Salmon Weir Bridge have been completed. The crossing is in operation since March 2026.

The Salmon Weir Bridge Pedestrian Crossing Project has delivered a temporary pedestrian crossing across the R863 University Road at Galway Cathedral. This will be a toucan crossing (i.e. signal-controlled crossing for use by walkers, wheelers, and cyclists). It will connect the footway on University Road near Fisheries Field to Droichead an Dóchais and will improve safety for all road users.

Works were completed by Brian Conneely and Co. Ltd. on behalf of Galway City Council. This project has been funded by the National Transport Authority.

# Access Control Works



A suite of works to remove so-called kissing gates at locations throughout the city have been substantially completed over recent weeks.

Works have been carried out at the following locations:

- Cappagh Pitches Main Entrances 1 & 2
- Celia Griffin Memorial Park
- Wellpark Grove
- O'Sullivan Park/Michael Collin Road
- Wellpark Grove/O'Sullivan Park
- Wellpark Grove/Dublin Road
- Coillte Mhuirlinne

This is in addition to works which were carried out at Ballyloughane in late 2025.

Design works are now being conducted to allow for similar works at additional locations, including Westside pitches, Claremont Park and Rockfield Park. Further sites are also being identified, and we anticipate removing more kissing gates from locations throughout the city this year.

# Awards Success for Galway City Active Travel Project



Galway City Council is delighted to have won the 'Best Community Transport Initiative' Award at the 2026 LAMA All-Ireland Community and Council Awards in recognition for a first-of-its-kind active travel project in the heart of the city. The Crescent/Sea Road Active Travel Scheme, which delivered Galway City Council's first ever rain gardens, as well as a suite of road safety enhancements, was named among the winners at the prestigious awards ceremony which recognise and celebrate communities and councils working together.

A rain garden is a novel type of landscaping that helps prevent flooding and enhances drainage by capturing and absorbing rainwater. The two rain gardens at the junction of The Crescent and Sea Road have been installed in areas which were previously part of the roadway, which has now been narrowed. New, wider footpaths have also been constructed in this space. By reducing the width of the roadway, both vehicular traffic speeds and crossing times for walkers and wheelers have been reduced, improving road safety and comfort.

This scheme also saw the construction of a new footpath along The Crescent, linking the 401 Bus Stop to the Medical Centre. Prior to this, there had been no footpath on this side of the road. Two new pedestrian crossings have also been installed, and new safety enhancement works have been completed at nearby Scoil Fhursa as part of the Safe Routes to School Scheme. Works on the project took around five months and were completed in March of last year.

# Awards Success for Galway City Active Travel Project

Mayor of the City of Galway Cllr. Mike Cubbard has congratulated all of those who worked on the project. “The active travel works at The Crescent/Sea Road have improved safety for all road users. The rain gardens have enhanced the aesthetic value of this area, while also delivering important environmental and ecological benefits. It has become a real bright spot in the city centre, and the improved junction is used every day by large numbers of people, including those attending schools and medical appointments nearby. I’m delighted to see that this positive development for Galway has now been recognised on the national stage.”

This is the second consecutive year in which Galway City Council’s Active Travel Department has been recognised at the All-Ireland Community and Council Awards. At last year’s event, the Eglinton Canal Active Travel Project Scheme, which saw the rejuvenation of an historic canal towpath and the construction of new crossings and traffic calming measures to prioritise walkers, wheelers and cyclists, was named as winner of the Best Trail / Waterway in Ireland category.

Chief Executive of Galway City Council Leonard Cleary has paid tribute to all of those who came together to successfully deliver the Crescent/Sea Road project. “I am delighted to again see staff of Galway City Council’s Active Travel Department recognised at these prestigious awards. I wish to commend all of its staff, particularly those who worked directly on the project. I also want to thank our many partners who have helped deliver this scheme, including Elected Representatives and the local community. I also extend my gratitude to the contractors John Madden and Sons Ltd., their many subcontractors and the consulting engineers Clifton Scannell Emerson Associates.”

“In addition, I want to thank the National Transport Authority for their continued financial support for this, and other active travel and sustainable transport developments throughout the city. This funding is vital in allowing Galway City Council to continue to prioritise our ambitious plans to invest in new transport solutions which help to ease congestion, to enable the city to grow in a sustainable fashion and to deliver the many benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling to Galway and its people.”

Now in its 20th year, the LAMA (Local Authority Members Association) All-Ireland Community and Council Awards recognise and celebrate the work of local authorities within communities. This year’s event was held at the Dublin Royal Convention Centre on Saturday 28 February and received a record total of 533 nominations from all 31 Councils.

# Galway Climate Inspirations Festival



The award-winning **Climate Inspirations Festival 2026**, a landmark celebration of creativity, innovation, and community action in response to the climate crisis, will take place from **24-28 June 2026** in various venues throughout Galway City. It brings together artists, scientists, council staff, and local communities to explore how storytelling and culture can accelerate climate solutions.

The five-day festival will feature more than **thirty events**, including interactive exhibitions, climate art installations, live music, a community fair, a melting potluck, sustainability workshops, and keynote talks and panels from sustainability leaders. The programme is designed to spark public imagination and empower communities to take meaningful climate action.

It will centre on Fr. Burke Park, and will include two events focused on Active Travel, both taking place on **Thursday June 25**. The day will begin with a discussion on the **Walking and Cycling Index, Active Travel and Behaviour Change** and then will include a **Guided Tour** of some of the city's Active Travel projects.

Both events are free, but registration is required. Please visit <https://galwayclimatefestival.ie>

# Memorial Plaque Unveiled to Commemorate Private Stephen Griffin



*Private Stephen Griffin's siblings Michael, Mary, Siobhain, Catherine, Seamus, Pdraig, Aine, Tommy and Gabrielle alongside Mayor of the City of Galway, Cllr. Mike Cubbard, at the unveiling of the commemorative plaque in his honour.*

A commemorative plaque has been unveiled to honour a Galway soldier fatally wounded while serving on a peacekeeping mission in Lebanon over 45 years ago. Mayor of the City of Galway, Cllr. Mike Cubbard has joined members of the family of the late Private Stephen Griffin to unveil the stone plaque which has been erected adjacent to Bóthar Stiofáin, Ragoon, which is named in his honour.

Pte Griffin was just 21 years old when he was fatally wounded on April 7, 1980, at At Tiri, South Lebanon. He had been serving there with the 46th Infantry Battalion. He was the first Irish soldier killed by hostile action on UNIFIL service.

A newly installed stone plaque was unveiled at a commemorative ceremony on Sunday April 19, which was supported by Galway City Council and the Irish Defence Forces. Defence Forces chaplain Fr. Paul Murphy said a prayer at the event, which was attended by representatives of Renmore Barracks and some of Pte Griffin's former colleagues from Collins Barracks in Cork, where he had been based.

# Walking Tour for University of Galway Students




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The Active Travel Department recently facilitated a field study by Bachelor of Social Science Students from University of Galway.

The visit began with a presentation on Galway City Council Projects from “Strategy to Implementation”. This briefing was followed by a guided walk to several city-centre projects including Scoil Iognáid, Droichead an Dóchais, the Eglinton Canal Active Travel Scheme and Wolfe Tone Pedestrian Bridge II, in order to demonstrate the link between policy and project implementation.

The visit was led by Dr. Elaine Williams, Lecturer in Geography, and was designed to give the students a first-hand insight into sustainability, urban design, planning, accessibility and walkability. It provided students with an update on completed projects, those in progress, and Galway City Council’s future plans for the development of sustainable active travel infrastructure.



**Thank you for reading.  
Your feedback and  
questions are always  
welcome.**

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