

DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL ROLLS OUT ACTIVE TRAVEL NETWORK FOR CAPITAL

Dublin City Council has rolled out a series of proposals for an active travel network to transform the way people walk, wheel and cycle throughout the capital, and has a timeline of up to ten years to deliver over 80 infrastructure projects along the 310km network.

Under new proposals to develop an active travel network across the capital city, Dublin City Council aims to deliver 210km of safe, accessible and convenient active travel infrastructure that incorporates the entire city.

This will be complemented by 90km of active travel infrastructure to be rolled out by BusConnects plus 10km of existing infrastructure, bringing the total size of the proposed network to 310km.

Transport Minister Eamon Ryan acknowledged the scale of the task at hand at the launch of the proposals in October 2022 at Dublin City Council’s Head Office at Woodquay. “It won’t be easy, and I know that. The world is burning; we need to be quicker; we need to be bold,” he noted, highlighting the significance of the proposals and the importance of delivering sustainable transport projects throughout Ireland.

NTA CEO Anne Graham underlined the importance of delivering the proposed network. She added that the network “forms the backbone of the NTA’s CycleConnects Dublin Plan, allowing the people of the city and visitors to cycle safely in the city”.

The Active Travel Network includes 80 bespoke infrastructure projects, each intending to improve the experience of walking, wheeling and cycling throughout the city by reimagining the existing streetscape.

SEVERAL PROJECTS IN PIPELINE

Typical project interventions include the narrowing and reallocation of existing road space, the decluttering of footpaths, the promotion of biodiversity and climate adaptation measures through tree-planting, soft landscaping and nature-based Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), in addition to the enhancement of public spaces to engender social cohesion.

Projects will also consider the additional requirements of impaired people to ensure that the user experience is improved for all. The 80 active travel projects have been grouped into three delivery phases: ‘2022-2024’, ‘2025-2027’ and ‘Post 2027’. This provides Dublin City Council with a timeline of nine to ten years for the delivery of the network.

With four projects already at construction stage, such as Clontarf to City Centre, the Active Travel Network will continue to be developed over the lifespan of the programme, allowing road users and pedestrians alike to realise the benefits of the upgraded network as soon as possible.

IMPLEMENTING INTERIM SCHEMES

Supplementing the permanent projects, interim measures are also proposed to expedite the delivery of active travel infrastructure. Whilst permanent projects will aim to deliver segregated cycling facilities at all appropriate locations, interim measures will comprise lightly segregated cycling facilities alongside changes to traffic layouts and safer pedestrian crossing infrastructure. Interim schemes are proposed to be implemented over the next three years and will remain in place until the permanent scheme for the route is delivered.



Dublin City Council’s proposals for an active travel network were officially launched in October 2022. Pictured at the launch were (l-r): Anne Graham, CEO of the National Transport Authority, Eamon Ryan TD, Transport Minister, Andy G. Walsh, Director of DCC’s Active Travel Programme Office, Lord Mayor of Dublin Caroline Conroy, and Dublin City Council’s Chief Executive Owen Keegan.

Artist’s rendering of detailed design of North Strand Road along the Clontarf to City Centre cycle laneway, where construction commenced March 2022.

The design of interim measures is currently ongoing for 13 projects, with further schemes expected to receive interim measures in the future. Installation of these measures will start in early 2023.

ACTIVE TRAVEL NETWORK

Delivery of the Active Travel Network is the responsibility of Dublin City Council's Active Travel Programme Office (AcTPrO), a multi-disciplinary team established in February 2022. Conceived out of a desire to prioritise the design and construction of infrastructure that supports walking, wheeling and cycling, AcTPrO is a growing team that espouses innovation through holistic design, project transparency and ongoing public engagement.

AcTPrO also aims to improve methods of communication through interactive media, such as the Active Travel Network's GIS maps. The Active Travel Programme Office also intends to provide impetus for behavioural change throughout Dublin by reallocating existing road space away from private vehicles towards pedestrians and cyclists.



Artist's rendering of preliminary design of the Sandyford Clonskeagh to Charlemont Street, where public consultation commenced in January 2023.

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Following the launch of DCC's Active Travel Network proposals, Andy Walsh, Director of AcTPrO, said: "The Active Travel Programme Office has set out a delivery programme that will transform Dublin into a city that connects all the people through a safer and inclusive walk-wheel-cycle network.

"Team members of the fledgling office have put in a great deal of effort over the past eight months and, as the team continues to grow, I'm sure that their effective planning and determination to deliver will be key to the programme's success."

Acknowledging the scale of the project, Walsh continued: "Whilst I anticipate the programme will face many challenges over its lifespan, I am confident that Dublin will be a future cycling city that prioritises access, connectivity and sustainable mobility for all through its network of high-quality interventions."

The Active Travel Network will connect communities to parks, workplaces, schools, sports facilities and transport stations, enhancing the quality of life for Dublin residents. Once complete, up to 95% of residences will be within 400 metres of the upgraded network.

Alongside improving the city's connectivity, the network will also reduce Dublin's transport-related carbon emissions as more people choose to walk, wheel or cycle as a viable and attractive alternative to travelling by car. Visitors to the city will also benefit from the convenient network of active travel infrastructure that will provide access to many of Dublin's attractions and tourist sites.

Indeed, Andy Walsh is convinced that over the next decade "Dublin will become a torch bearer in the development of a comprehensive active travel network, which will serve as a

