# Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for Blessington eGreenway

January 2024

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## Quality information

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## Revision History

| Revision | Revision date | Details | Authorized | Name | Position |
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# Introduction

This document outlines a monitoring and evaluation plan for Blessington eGreenway as requested in Item 9 (vii) of the ABP Request for Further Information dated 16th March 2023. This monitoring and evaluation plan has been developed with reference to Section 8 of the Rural Cycleway Design (Offline & Greenways) published by Transport Infrastructure Ireland August 2022.

# Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this monitoring and evaluation plan is to facilitate Wicklow County Council to better understand and manage this facility. The plan will involve the collection of user data which will be used to:

- Assess the demand and where to prioritise investments.
- Aid in the planning and construction of present and future interventions.
- Make the case for new proposals.
- Demonstrate and quantify the economic benefits of the interventions.
- Communicate the long-term community gains.

# Data Requirements

Two main types of data will be collected – Quantitative and Qualitative data as outlined in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Data Collection Methods**

| Type | Method | Dataset | Purpose |
|---|---|---|---|
| Quantitative | Automatic counts | No of active travel users | Understand, quantify, and compare the usage of the facilities. Analyse the usage trends over different time periods (e.g. time of day, day of week, season, year over year). Assess and evaluate the impact of an improvement/ intervention. |
| | Manual counts | Cycle parking facilities | Identify popular destinations (trip end data points) and prioritise locations for additional amenities |
| Qualitative | Intercept surveys | User profile | Understand the different types of users and their trip purpose. |
| | | User perceptions | Identify locations and areas for future improvements. |
| | | User expenditure | Understand and quantify the economic impact of the facility. |

*Source: Rural Cycleway Design (Offline & Greenways) published by Transport Infrastructure Ireland August 2022*

The extent of quantitative and qualitative surveys that can be undertaken will depend on the budget and extent of infrastructure available. Nevertheless, the aim of this monitoring and evaluation plan is to set out the types of monitoring and evaluation activities that are expected to be undertaken following the full build out of the scheme.

To help improve the quality of the quantitative data collected, a range of external factors, such as the usage profile of the infrastructure, seasonal variations in usage, and any adjacent

parallel roadway corridors for potential co-location of the counters, will be considered ahead of commissioning the surveys.

*Quantitative Data*

The quantitative data will be collected either manually or through automatic detection technology. Quantitative data to be collected will include the number of users passing a point, user speed, direction, and mode of travel.

Quantitative data will be primarily gathered using automatic traffic counters, which widely available on the open market. It is possible to use solar panels or batteries to provide energy for these counters, and hence they can be used at most places along a Route. Modern counters are also remotely accessible for data gathering purposes.

*Qualitative Data*

The qualitative data will establish user characteristics that are not normally collected through detection technologies and require some form of engagement with the user. This includes information such as user demographic and socio-economic profiles, trip purpose and frequency, as well as user experience and perception of the facilities.

## Analysis and Output

Once collected, the data will be analysed and the output from the analysis will be expressed in a clear and structured manner to enable its use and dissemination. Pre- and post-intervention comparisons can be carried out to quantify and assess the impact of the intervention.

The outputs of the analysis which are intended to be published annually will include, but are not limited to the following:

- Total walking, wheeling, and cycling movements (volume) and percent change.
- Walking, wheeling, and cycling movements (volume) and percent change across different user groups.
- Perceptions of the cycleway – overall, infrastructure and amenities, sense of safety, convenience, etc.
- Economic, environmental and community benefits (e.g. increased spending in town centres, reduced cost of congestion, reduced cost to healthcare, increase in social cohesion and community pride.

# Appendix A: Qualitative Data Collection Intercept Survey

The information presented herein is for sample purposes only and further modification may be required depending on the timing of the survey, budget available and extent of infrastructure available:

**Survey Design**

- The survey shall be designed to consist mainly of multiple-choice answers to allow for efficient completion and analysis of the survey.
- Questions with regard to the respondents' perceptions of the infrastructure shall be designed as open-ended questions to allow for a more impartial response.
- A number of other questions may include the option for open text or 'other (please specify)' options, where relevant, to capture the maximum level of detail.
- The survey should incorporate a range of questions in relation to the user, their trip purpose and daily spend while using the infrastructure to help assess the relevant economic indicators.
- The surveys should be repeated at regular intervals to help capture any changes in usage patterns and/or user perceptions over time.

**Fieldwork**

- Comparing to digital surveys distributed online, the on-site intercept format has been found to produce a representative dataset.
- The number of locations shall be scoped by the Designer while taking into account of the targeted objectives. As highlighted within DN-GEO-03047, there are significant benefits in terms of data validation and integration to be garnered from undertaking surveys adjacent to the quantitative data collection locations.
- To ensure good data capture and anonymisation of responses, a sufficiently large sample size shall be targeted.
- Fieldwork shall be spread over a number of days and time periods to capture the broadest range of insights possible (e.g. school periods, commuting periods, recreation periods, tourism periods).

**Data Fields (Questionnaire Formulation)**

Different types of qualitative data are available for collection depending on the needs, objectives, and scale of the project. In order to facilitate a standardised approach, the qualitative data collection program should aim to collect the following information at a minimum:

- Housekeeping/Background

  This information allows the data to be catalogued for future analyses and integrated with quantitative data collected over a similar time or at similar locations.

  - Location.
  - Date and time
  - Weather condition (this information can often be obtained afterwards from a nearby weather station).

- Demographics and Socio-economic profile

  This information can help agencies better understand the demographics and socio-economic reach of the infrastructure, inform the direction of any marketing or engagement strategies and ensure an equitable access to these amenities:

    - Age group.
    - Gender.
    - Cultural and ethnic background.

- User Type

  This information can help agencies better understand the current use of the infrastructure.

    - Mode of travel at the time of survey – pedestrian, cyclist, etc.
    - Usual mode of travel – walking, biking, transit, driving, etc.
    - Experience level for cyclists – experienced, new, etc.
    - Bike ownership for cyclists – own, borrowed, rented, etc

- Trip Characteristics

  This information can help agencies better understand the current use and reach of the infrastructure.

    - Trip purpose – exercise, tourism, commuting, etc.
    - Frequency of visit.
    - Group size and type, family, etc.
    - Origin and Destination.
    - One-way vs two-way trip.
    - Returning mode of travel for one-way trips.

- User Experience

  This information can help agencies better understand the user's motivation for visiting and identify areas of potential improvements for future investments. Open ended questions in this field can be valuable in capturing the respondent's perceptions of the cycleway in greater detail, providing valuable opportunities in further enhancing the cycleway based on the constructive feedback/ criticisms received.

    - Reason for choosing this section of the cycleway / how heard about cycleway.
    - Favourite cycleway destination.
    - Perception of the cycleway:
        - Overall.
        - Safety.
        - Communication – Website, brochure, map, wayfinding signage, etc.
        - Connivence – parking, café, washrooms, rental services, cleanliness, etc.
        - Additional feedback (in an open format).

In addition to the fields above, Sponsoring Agencies might also want to collect the following information as needed to capture the relevant economic indicators:

- Tourist Profile
  This information can help better quantify the economic impact of a cycleway and is essential in calculating the Return on Investment (RoI) for any cycleway project.
    - Home country/ county.
    - Tour type – self-guided, group tour, etc.
    - Accommodation type and location, and reasons for choice.

- Duration of stay.
- Intention of visiting areas along the cycleway or staying at one location as a base.
- Total spend by category – accommodation, food and drink, transport, sightseeing, gifts, etc.

In summary, careful consideration will be undertaken at the onset of any data collection program to help improve the quality and suitability of the data collected.