

Introduction

Dear Waterford City & County Council,

South East on Track represents rail users across the South East region. Our campaign focuses on increasing passenger services on the currently operational rail lines in the region (Rosslare-Dublin, Waterford-Dublin, Waterford-Limerick), as well as focusing on the restoration of services on the Wexford-Waterford rail line which is still in situ, although not used regularly since 2010.

According to EPA statistics, Transport is the second largest source of greenhouse gasses in Ireland at 17.7% with Transport's Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions increasing by 6.7% in 2021. It is also worth noting that Road transport accounts for 94% of all transport emissions in Ireland.

(<https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/ghg/transport/>)

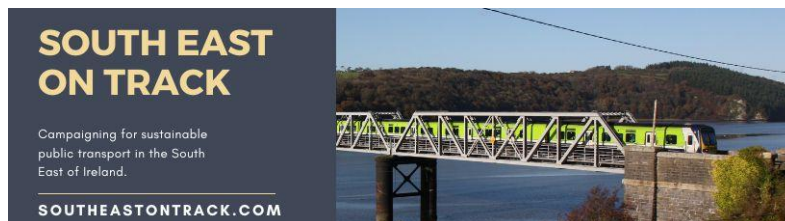
This reflects the importance of rail transport for both freight and passengers for Waterford in the future. According to the European Environment Agency, rail emits 33 gCO₂e per passenger kilometre, whereas private cars emit almost 5 times more GHG per passenger km at 143 gCO₂e per passenger kilometre.

(<https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/rail-and-waterborne-transport>)

As stated in the briefing paper, the private car remains the dominant mode of transport in both Waterford City & County, with 69% of people in the city commuting by car with 66% commuting by car in the county as a whole.

The County Development Plan 2022-2028 calls for a modal shift change within Waterford City, with major growth in use of sustainable transport, with a 335% growth in public transport usage, and a 1920% shift in cycling.

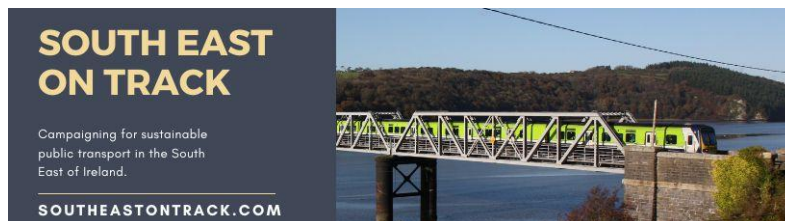
Rail will play an important role in this modal shift. Planners generally assume that most transit users will not walk more than 0.25 miles to bus stops and 0.75 miles to rail stations (https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Impacts_of_Transit_Access_%28Distance_to_Transit%29_Based_on_a_Review_of_the_Empirical_Literature_Policy_Brief.pdf) - in effect, the appeal of a rail station versus a bus stop triples the potential catchment of those willing to walk to a station.



Implementing the Waterford Development Plan 2022-2028

The Development Plan contains assertive objectives with relation to public transport. Priority should be given to working towards implementing the objectives over the course of the lifetime of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan

- **Develop enhanced integration between rail transport with the Metropolitan Area bus and cycle network to ensure the optimal use of the rail network, connecting Waterford at a regional and national level, in catering for the movement of people and goods including development of commuter rail services into Waterford.**
 - The provision of a well integrated railway station, local bus station, and active travel multi-modal facility at the North Quays is vital for the development of the region. As much effort as possible should be made to improve rail services, offer Leap Card provision, and integrate local bus services with rail ahead of the opening of the new station.
 - In other countries, local governments liaise with and assist railway operators with development of appropriate service levels for their towns and regions. Waterford City & County Council should (where possible) attempt to increase the overall provision of rail to Waterford City and encourage usage. Although generally under the remit of national government, the local authority can encourage increased rail usage.
- **There is potential to develop rail freight, such as utilising the Waterford Port and Rosslare Europort rail link for rail freight logistics.**
 - Waterford City & County Council should facilitate rail freight logistics as much as is feasible due to the significant reduction in emissions via rail freight versus road haulage.
- **Rail Transportation Policy Objective Trans 22 We will support the optimal use of the rail network, in catering for the movement of people and goods and thereby enhance the economic corridor between Waterford City and Dublin,**



Key towns of Kilkenny, Carlow, Clonmel and Wexford Town as well as commuter towns such as Carrick On Suir and New Ross.

- Waterford City & County Council will need to liaise constantly with the NTA and Iarnród Éireann to demand better services to and from Waterford City. The eventual medium to long term goal should be a local commuter network, linking Waterford City to Clonmel & Carrick on Suir on the Limerick line, to Wexford and Rosslare on the Wexford line, and to Kilkenny, Carlow and Thomastown on the Dublin line, in addition to the regularly scheduled intercity services.

- **Rail Transportation Policy Objective Trans 23 Support the retention of the Waterford - Rosslare and the New Ross Rail lines for future freight and passenger rail connectivity between Waterford City, Waterford Port (Belview), Wexford Town, Rosslare Town and Europort**
 - The reopening of the Wexford-Waterford railway line has all but been confirmed in the media pending the release of the All-Island Strategic Rail Review. Upon reopening of this line, Waterford City & County Council should demand the following:
 - Demand that the direct Wexford-Waterford “Felthouse Junction” curve be restored allowing Wexford-Waterford trains to bypass Rosslare Strand. Although removed in the 20th Century, the land remains in public ownership and usage of the curve can lead to Wexford-Waterford journey times of under an hour.
 - Insist that Iarnród Éireann (upon the resumption of services) provide commuter services not just to Waterford City, but also to Wexford Town. Communities along the line as far as Ballycullane generally commute in the Wexford versus Waterford direction by a 3:1 ratio. Providing services for this population is vital for reducing transport based emissions.
 - Ensure that there are a variety of public amenities located close to the new railway station to encourage sustainable transport for future passengers.