



Stronger



Connected



Resilient

Enhancing sustainable mobility in the Dingle Peninsula, Ireland



SUMMARY

The Dingle Peninsula's heavy reliance on cars for transportation has detrimental effects on the environment, and the absence of adequate public transport limits residents' mobility. To address this, the Dingle Hub, Local Link Kerry and Bus Eireann have implemented a series of actions to **increase the area's connectivity in a sustainable way**. This includes the Dingle Hub's Pathfinder project which promotes eco-friendly transportation methods on the peninsula, collaborating with public and private sector partners to reduce carbon emissions in the region.



CONTEXT

Dingle Peninsula in the west of Ireland is an area steeped in history, known as one of the few remaining Gaelic-speaking regions, and boasting a rich cultural heritage. It is a prominent tourist destination, witnessing seasonal influxes, and features numerous second homes and holiday residences. Positioned towards the end of the peninsula, Dingle town sits approximately 50 km from Tralee, the county town. Tralee serves as the hub for essential services and is the primary road and rail connection to the rest of the country. The region is heavily reliant on cars for access to it, with adverse effects on the environment and local amenities. This overreliance on private vehicles limits the mobility options for both residents and visitors, who may prefer an alternative means of transport upon arrival.



OBJECTIVES

- > To improve connectivity on the peninsula, both to the county town itself and to the national rail and bus networks, and between the diffuse rural areas in the west of the peninsula and Dingle town, catering to incoming visitors and residents.
- > To improve accessibility to jobs and other activities.
- > To reduce visitor traffic impacts in peak season.
- > To bring about a shift to lower carbon means of travel.

Collectively, these will improve economic and social opportunities in the area, safeguard tourism and reduce environmental impacts.

Themes: Access to services, transport and mobility, urban-rural linkages, energy

Country: Ireland

Organisation: The Dingle Hub and local action group, NGOs. - Local Link Kerry and other, local transport coordination unit - Bus Eireann and other, public sector transport operator

Start & end date: 07/2021 - Ongoing

Budget: 40 000 EUR

Funding sources: The Pathfinder project at the Dingle Hub is co-funded by the Irish Department of Transport's Pathfinder programme Bus Eireann and Local Link services both receive public financial support channelled through the National Transport Authority, in addition to fares paid by users

Website: [Pathfinder project at the Dingle Hub](#)

['Visit the Dingle Peninsula without the Car'](#)

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ACTIVITIES, KEY ACTORS, AND TIMELINE

The **'Visit the Dingle Peninsula without the Car'** initiative significantly strengthened public transport services in 2022. It entailed substantial reinforcement of Bus Eireann bus services from the rail/bus terminal in Tralee and destined for Dingle. Simultaneously, bus services operating between Dingle and the main rural areas, facilitated by Local Link Kerry, saw a considerable increase in frequency from sporadic weekly trips to eight every day. Strategic placement of stops and synchronised schedules ensured seamless integration, enhancing the accessibility and convenience of public transport throughout the region. In December 2023 there were further improvements, with the introduction of new routes and additional departures.

Complementary to this, another activity launched by the Dingle Hub in July 2023 in partnership with Kerry County Council, the **Pathfinder project**, includes various mobility actions aimed at enhancing public transport offerings and promoting more sustainable personal transportation methods. These encompass a diverse range of options, such as cycling, walking, car-pooling and car-sharing. Additionally, the project aims to encourage the adoption of electric vehicles (e-vehicles), integrating two electric buses, installing charging points, and promoting the use of e-cars and e-bikes. Complementary efforts within this project involve strategic marketing and communication campaigns, aimed at raising awareness about the emissions reduction impacts associated with daily travel choices. There is also a focus on bolstering human and financial resources dedicated to mobility solutions, coupled with an extensive evaluation process to gauge the effectiveness of these measures.



RESULTS

There has been a **substantial increase in bus ridership** on Bus Eireann services between Dingle and Tralee, and on Local Link services from Dingle to the western part of the peninsula. During the summer months, monthly ridership on the local services stands at about 5,800, reaching around half this in the off-season. Surveys show that customer satisfaction is very high, with some respondents stating it has allowed them to **remain in their rural area or to move back to their home area**. Others said they no longer needed to take an expensive taxi to Tralee to connect to national rail or bus services, **reducing the cost** of a round-trip to Dublin (the capital) from about 200 EUR to 54 EUR.

As for the Pathfinder project, initial trials of e-vehicles indicate that most daily travel is within vehicle ranges and most charging is done using home chargers.



SUCCESS FACTORS/LESSONS LEARNT

The Pathfinder project, led by the community-based Dingle Hub, leverages its deep local roots to develop innovative and sustainable solutions. Drawing from existing **community relationships and complementary initiatives**, this approach is more effective in generating a positive impact within the community.

The success of the 'Visit the Dingle Peninsula without the Car' initiative taps into a long-suppressed demand, particularly due to the reduction in rural public transport services over the years. Beyond the tourist market, there is interest among the younger population who exhibit less inclination to own and use cars. The Dingle-Tralee **service has become notably more practical for various journeys**, with its capacity now doubled. Furthermore, the local service extending west of Dingle covers areas of exceptional natural beauty that are home to numerous rural inhabitants. The provision of a consistent daily service facilitates a wide array of commutes, essential trips, leisure activities and tourism excursions in both directions. The strategic co-location of these two services in Dingle, situated in a prominent location, significantly contributes to their success.



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