

# The Mountains to the Sea Green-Way A Feasibility Study



# Report

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The European Agricultural Fund  
for Rural Development:  
Europe investing in rural areas



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Newtown 2050 is grateful to the County Wicklow Partnership and LEADER for supporting this study with funding. Many local people also generously helped with fundraising activities and took time to respond to surveys and workshops. Finally, hundreds of school children gave many insightful comments and ideas.

***Thank you***

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## ABSTRACT

Throughout history humankind has experienced many crises; wars continue to be waged, economic depressions are commonplace, extreme poverty still afflicts hundreds of millions of people worldwide, COVID-19 reminds us of the 1918 flu pandemic.

Global crises come and go. Not so the climate emergency and loss of biodiversity. This crisis is here to stay and in our betrayal of nature, we have caused it. Irreparable damage to Planet Earth, our home, has already happened. Now is the time to act much more decisively to halt further damage. If we don't look after our home, where will we live?

The challenge presented by climate change and loss of biodiversity is being answered by everyone; local communities, governments and global agencies. The case for action at a local level presents an opportunity to tackle the crisis in an inclusive and responsible way, with equality between us and the flora and fauna on which we depend, and with a vision that is as big as the challenge.

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***Photo Cover Page:***

***Aerial view of Newtownmountkennedy looking south west towards the Wicklow Mountains. The forested escarpment towards the top of the photograph defines the coastal sector of the project area. Recent housing developments are evident in the middle of the photograph.***

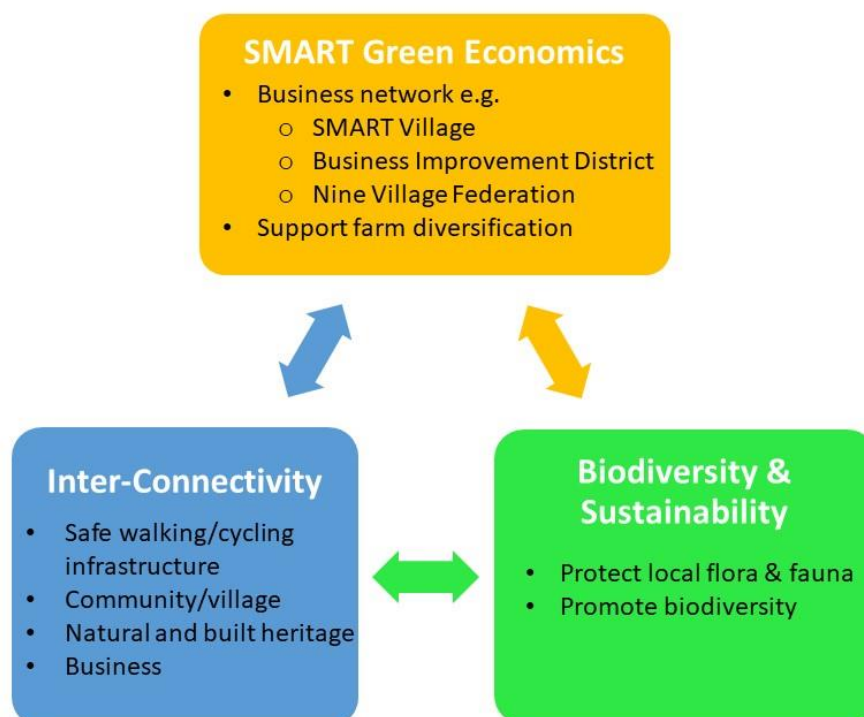
# 1. Executive Summary

## Introduction

- 1.1** This study has researched the feasibility of ‘*The Mountains to the Sea*’, Newtown 2050s vision of a critical infrastructure of interlinking walking and cycling routes, business development, and the promotion of biodiversity and sustainability in an area that embraces nine villages in north east Wicklow stretching from Glendalough to the sea; Newtownmountkennedy, Ashford, Kilcoole, Newcastle, Roundwood, Kilpedder, Laragh, Annamoe, Glendalough.



The vision is underpinned by and further explained in three inter-dependent strategic pillars.



- 1.2** The study has considered the project’s strategic relevance, concluding that, on all levels Newtown 2050s vision and three strategic pillars demonstrate considerable potential to contribute to global, national and regional strategies and initiatives that seek to mitigate the worst effects of climate change and the loss of biodiversity. The vision is inclusive and the scope of the three strategic pillars means everyone can relate to and embrace one or more of the elements. This is a key understanding; that the project advocates community involvement and actions to supplement and complement the activities of government and its agencies. Newtown 2050 views it as essential that local communities and local organisations roll up their sleeves and make their contribution to national and global actions that combat the climate emergency. The people of Wicklow, as evidenced in this study’s findings, want to contribute; this project gives them an opportunity to make a real and tangible contribution to something they feel strongly about.
- 1.3** The outworking and intended outcome of the vision is a sustainable Wicklow, most likely evidenced in a series of transition towns and villages – see section 1.20. Newtown 2050s vision can be looked on as a precursor to enabling people to change their behaviour, adopting a greener way of living on and with this earth.

## Strategic Relevance

- 1.4** Virtually every international, national and regional development strategy produced over the last decade addresses the need to tackle the climate emergency and loss of biodiversity. Perhaps the most stark statistic is contained in the UN Climate Change Annual Report 2019 which states ‘..... an estimated 1 million species are on the brink of extinction owing to human activity’. Newtown 2050s vision resonates with a host of global and national strategies as these examples show:-

### The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; UN

*'Goals for conserving and sustainably using nature may only be achieved through transformative changes across economic, social, political and technological factors'.*



### European Green Deal; European Commission

*'The aim is that the EU will be climate neutral by 2050 by carrying out a series of initiatives that will protect the environment and boost the green economy.'*

### EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2050; European Commission

*'Making nature healthy again is key to our physical and mental wellbeing and is an ally in the fight against climate change and disease outbreaks. It is part of a European recovery that gives more back to the planet than it takes away'.*

### National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP)

*The plan's vision is 'that biodiversity and ecosystems in Ireland are conserved and restored, delivering benefits essential for all sectors of society and that Ireland contributes to efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems'.*

### Tourism Development & Innovation 2016-2022

*In strengthening the appeal of Ireland for international visitors, the strategy aims to strengthen and enrich local communities as they take on an enhanced role in developing tourism at a local level. The strategy recognises Ireland's natural environment as 'the cornerstone of Irish tourism'.*

### Outdoor Recreation Plan for Public Lands and Waters in Ireland 2017-2021

*Health benefits and wellbeing alongside economic benefits are cited as reasons for investing in outdoor recreation. Sport Ireland report - April 2020 - significant increases in walking and cycling during the early stay at home phase of COVID-19 restrictions.*

## Need

### Climate Need

- 1.5** Ireland's National Climate Action Plan 2019 outlines the growing challenge of climate change that is facing Ireland and the rest of the world. The plan recognises *'the accelerating impact of greenhouse gas emissions on climate disruption must be arrested'* and sets out actions for all sectors of the economy. One of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Ireland is the transport sector; in 2018 transport was the second largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in Ireland. Alongside transport, agricultural activity is amongst the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. This project can offer an alternative source of livelihood for the rural community as it looks to diversify its farming activities and embrace climate change.

#### 40 years of Global Change

##### 1980

- 3.7 billion people
- 200 million vehicles
- 45 million barrels oil daily

##### 2020

- 7.8 billion people
- 1.5 billion vehicles
- 100 million barrels oil daily

## Health Need

- 1.6** Need is also evidenced from a health and physical activity perspective. The National Activity Plan reveals Irish statistics on the poor health consequences of physical inactivity to be significantly higher than European and global averages for heart disease, type 2 diabetes, breast cancer and colon cancer. The plan also acknowledges the social and economic cost of physical inactivity both in children and adults. The plan urges local authorities to prioritise the development of walking and cycling infrastructure. Exercising outdoors in rural environments, often referred to as Green Exercise, is increasingly seen to be more beneficial than exercising in urban environments, not least in relation to mental health. Interestingly, COVID-19 lockdowns have resulted in more people walking and cycling with sales of bicycles in 2020 rocketing. It is likely that the increased interest in outdoor recreation will continue at some level, lending weight to the need for this project.

## Green Economics Need

- 1.7** Green economics, that is, connecting a green brand to the economy and promoting the parallel recovery of both, is recognised as the way forward. The need for such an approach is more pronounced in rural economics; in the Mountains to the Sea vision, the idea is that creating networks and partnerships through initiatives such as SMART Villages and Business Improvement Districts (BID) will encourage villages in the project area to share resources and connect businesses, supporting new and existing enterprises and building a vibrant and sustainable rural economy. By way of demonstrating what's possible, the feasibility study researches the *direct economic benefits* of the Great Western Greenway and the Waterford Greenway, and the *indirect economic/societal benefits* resulting from investment in infrastructure projects that promote greater levels of physical activity. Both approaches to measuring economic benefit demonstrate a positive return on investment in walking and cycling routes, although it's noted that this study has not looked at detailed routes or the cost of developing them.

## Consultation

- 1.8** For the purposes of this study, four online surveys were conducted to gather opinions and ideas as well as inform people about the project. Key questions addressed current levels of walking and cycling, how new walking and cycling routes might be used, perceived benefits of the project and the level of support for it. One survey was conducted with the project area's community, another with businesses, a third with primary school children and a fourth with secondary school pupils. Local people were also able to join in online workshops and local organisations were invited to a stakeholders forum.

### Community Survey

- 1.9** The large number of responses – 1,260 – to the community survey is in itself a reflection of the interest in Newtown 2050s vision, the results pointing to widespread support with over 200 people registering for project updates and offering to help move the project forward. Whilst residents of Newtownmountkennedy account for 39% of responses, the three villages of Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole and Kilpedder together account for 70% of the responses. These villages lie close to each other in the coastal sector of the project area and it may be the case that their residents are more aware of Newtown 2050s vision than residents elsewhere in the project area.
- 1.10** The community survey has, through the information obtained, achieved several notable results. It has engaged a significant percentage of those living in the project area, helping them understand and identify with Newtown 2050s vision and strategic objectives and it has sparked the respondents' imagination as to the project's potential to deliver outcomes that will have a positive impact on their lives, on community life and on local biodiversity.

### Business Survey

- 1.11** The business survey – 23 responses – sought views on the SMART Village initiative, the Business Improvement District (BID) initiative and the idea of a Nine Village Federation. Support for and interest in these initiatives in terms of helping businesses in rural settings is evident in all the responses. In relation to SMART Villages, of the nine 'needs/challenges' presented to the respondents, *'job opportunities to allow young people the option of staying/living in their home area'* tops the list whilst *'fast broadband, sustainable travel, biodiversity protection, digital-hubs for remote working, farm diversification, social connections'* are also rated as very/extremely important. The idea of a BID initiative, which involves businesses working, investing and delivering projects as a collective is also favourably received. Similarly, the Nine Village Federation idea has sparked a good deal of interest amongst the respondents. The level of interest in and support for these business initiatives merits further investigation and consultation. The business survey respondents confirm their support for the Green-Way and its potential benefits whilst highlighting concerns such as vehicle parking, ancillary facilities and the need to mitigate the risk of an adverse impact on flora and fauna. The challenge is to successfully promote Wicklow's unique selling point and not to promote its destruction.

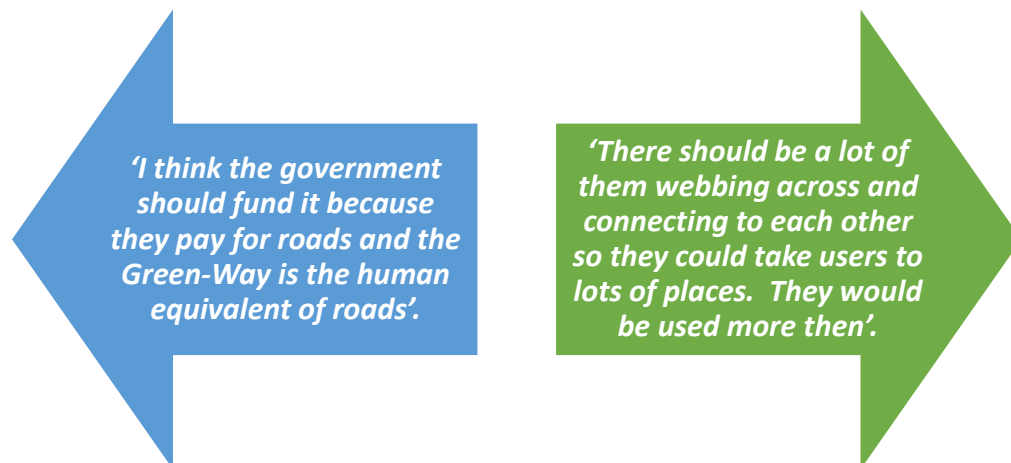
### Schools Survey

- 1.12** Over the coming years the Mountains to the Sea project will have a telling impact on today's children hence the importance of seeking input from this generation. For primary schools that responded to the survey, 58% of the children either walk or cycle to school, however, nearly three times as many children walk as cycle. The lack of suitable paths is cited as one of the reasons why more children cannot walk



or cycle to school. The primary school children were able to express their opinions in final comments; the most perceptive comment covered health benefits, reduced air pollution, impact on climate change and traffic congestions; *'It might make the journey shorter, lead to more exercise and fitness, less air pollution. Would lessen the impact of climate change. Would not be stuck in the car, less cars/traffic on the road. Good for the community'*.

**1.13** For secondary school pupils, nearly two thirds of the 161 respondents rely on family members to get about, that is, being driven, although a significant number walk or cycle to most places. For those that don't walk or cycle much as part of their normal activities, the most frequently cited reason, at 39%, is the lack of safe paths/trails/routes, with a further 18% reckoning that walking or cycling on roads is not a safe option for getting about. The flip side of safety concerns preventing walking and cycling is that 97% of the pupils stated they would walk or cycle more often if safe paths were developed. The open comments recorded by these secondary school pupils - over half of the pupils recorded a comment - demonstrate an excellent understanding amongst young people of the challenges in developing the proposed Green-Way and the benefits that it could bring. Here are two such comments:-



### Online Public Workshops

**1.14** A series of three public workshops was delivered during November 2020; these were delivered online due to COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings. Five topics were covered – here's a sample of key findings:-

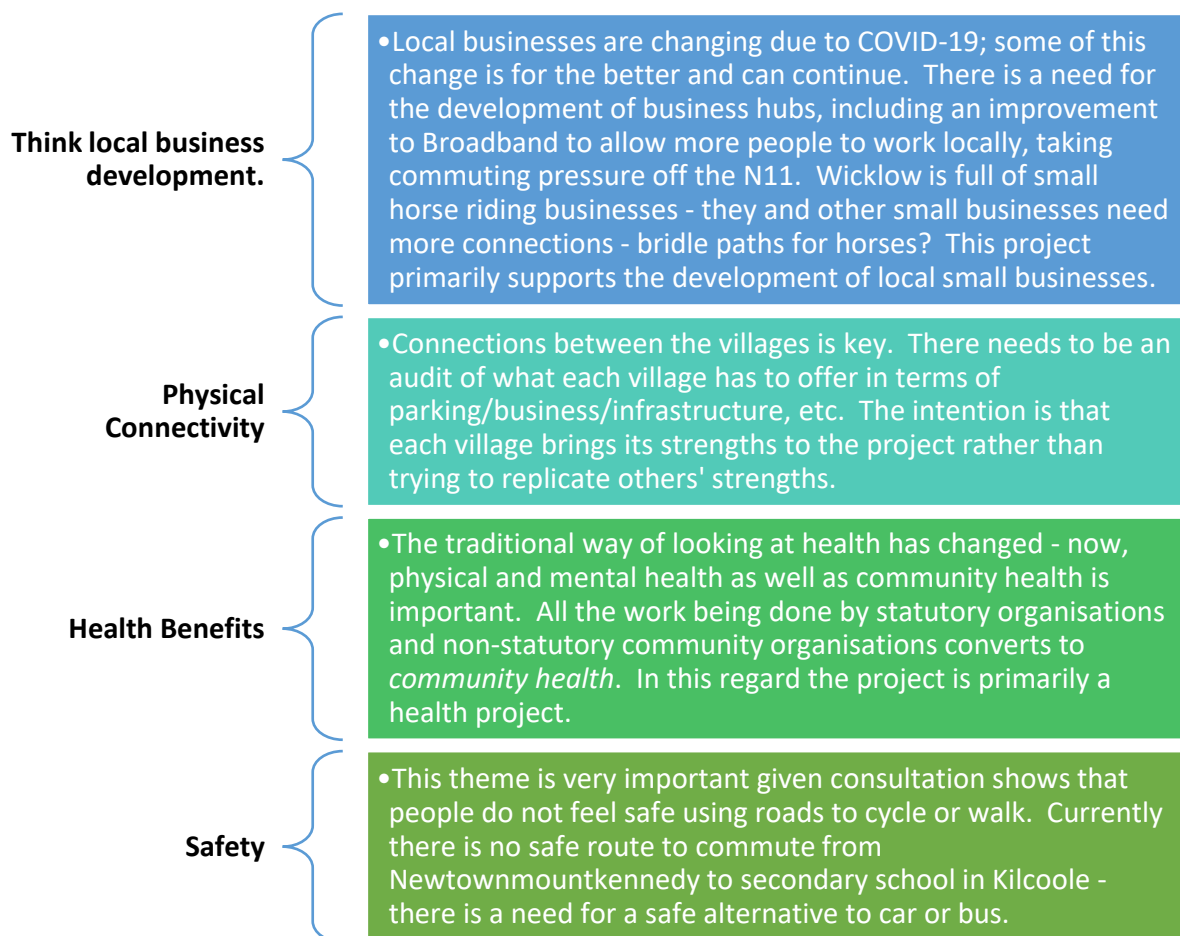
<b>Recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ People see the Green-Way as providing more options and more opportunities for recreational activities, whether cycling, walking, running or even horse-riding. There is a sense that people look forward to having opportunities for outdoor recreation, perhaps as a result of COVID-19 'lockdowns' that have constrained people in getting out of their homes. Having a network of off-road routes that can be easily accessed by people living locally is viewed as a significant step forward in the provision of recreational facilities in the area. Many of the participants suggested they would be able</li></ul>
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	<p>to <i>'stay local'</i> for recreational activities and <i>'explore the surrounding areas'</i>. Whilst the long-term vision is to construct a completely new network of routes, in the meantime certain routes could follow forest tracks or, in suitable locations such as the sea road in Newcastle, a pedestrian and bicycle priority system would discourage non-local traffic whilst promoting active travel.</p>
<b>Nature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being able to connect with nature appears to be an important consideration for families, more than for individuals. This points to parents' recognition of the need to encourage awareness of nature and natural habitats in their children. One comment referred to a <i>'greater appreciation of the outdoors'</i> which implies a greater appreciation of nature.</li> </ul>
<b>Exercise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular exercise reduces the incidence of life-limiting conditions and it's never too late to get started! The workshops emphasised the opportunities for older people to exercise through using the Green-Way, either walking or cycling; one comment suggested <i>'it may encourage some older people to try cycling as they will feel safer than sharing roads with vehicles'</i>. The connection being made between exercise and safety is clear, again highlighting that opportunities for older people to exercise in the project area are, perhaps limited. Another comment draws attention to the fact that having options for exercising close to home means a car journey is not required.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The workshop participants recognise the opportunities for local businesses presented by the Green-Way, for both existing businesses and new businesses. The potential for smaller businesses, locally owned, is viewed as being important. Comments point to a range of businesses including bike rental, outdoor wear, bed &amp; breakfast, cafes and food outlets. The thinking amongst the participants is that the Green-Way will attract not only 'new' visitors but it will also encourage people living locally to stay within the area for the recreational activities that the Green-Way makes possible. Given that the Green-Way routes will link villages, discussion also identified the potential for existing shops to benefit from a spin-off from increased footfall in the area.</li> </ul>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As one of the project's main drivers and objectives, it's perhaps gratifying to note that local people, as evidenced in discussion across all workshops, put the importance of biodiversity and its protection at the top of the list of all impacts. One participant reckons, <i>'if planned and managed properly the Green-Way could create an amazing biodiversity – 25km x 4 or 6 metres is a lot of planting'</i>. Other comments refer to opportunities for localised wilding and creating a wildlife corridor. Another comment draws</li> </ul>

attention to construction of the Green-Way; *‘the materials have to be non-oil based. Keep the insects and wildlife being able to live alongside us’*. Yet another comment highlights the risk that inappropriate lighting would kill insects. This concern regarding biodiversity emphasises the importance of taking care not to compromise the project’s objectives during construction. There is a danger of killing the very thing that makes Wicklow special. An environmental classification index assigned to all areas would highlight areas less critical than others, allowing more or less human intrusion; road-widening is not a sustainable solution.

### Online Stakeholders Forum

**1.15** The Stakeholders Forum was well attended by local organisations and agencies, giving Newtown 2050 an opportunity to explain the project and listen to the views of those who will play a key role in helping to move it forward. The mood of the workshop was positive, lending weight to the validity of Newtown 2050s vision. A key piece of advice is to split the project into ‘bite-size chunks’ that are achievable, each one adding to the overall vision and building momentum along the way. Attendees highlighted the importance of several key themes in the following discussion:-



## Newtownmountkennedy

**1.16** The decision to embrace Newtownmountkennedy as a case study has given rise to several proposals, most notably connecting to the railway station in Greystones and to the secondary school in Kilcoole, so connecting villages in the coastal sector, demonstrating and emphasising how the villages associate with each other. The idea of these local routes was born out of a desire to engage residents in the move towards a sustainable village. As a real and visible project it has the support of many residents, however, the search for off-road cycle and walking routes is just a first step on a much bigger journey which all communities must start to give everyone hope for the planet. Whilst the Mountains to the Sea project will play out differently across the project areas, in Newtownmountkennedy the idea of routes connecting with nearby villages is attractive, real and popular.

### 1. Newtownmountkennedy ↔ Greystones

Northwards from Newtownmountkennedy taking in the Garden Village housing development and Kilpedder then turning east to Greystones, picking up the existing cycle path on the town's outskirts to connect to the train station and schools.

### 2. Newtownmountkennedy ↔ Kilcoole

East from Newtownmountkennedy, connecting to the centre of Kilcoole and Coláiste Chraobh Abhann, a co-educational, multi-denominational second level community college.

**1.17** With HUB13, a *remote working hub*, already operational close to Newtownmountkennedy, it offers an example of how other villages and farm businesses might get involved in the government's recent – December 2020 – announcement prioritising remote working<sup>(1)</sup>. In looking to encourage new and existing businesses in the tourist and food & drink sectors, Newtownmountkennedy will tap into the expertise and resources of agencies such as Fáilte Ireland and initiatives such as Wicklow Naturally. As a destination in its own right Newtownmountkennedy is seen to have a rich history and heritage which could be used to help draw visitors to the village.

**1.18** The promotion of biodiversity and sustainability in Newtownmountkennedy and in the project area can be pursued in two ways:-

- By planting trees, shrubs, wildflowers, etc on either side of two proposed routes between the village and Kilcoole and Greystones. If an average 4 metre width of planting is achieved along these two routes it is estimated

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<sup>(1)</sup> The Department of Community and Rural Development announced it is examining the possibility of developing around 400 remote working hubs.

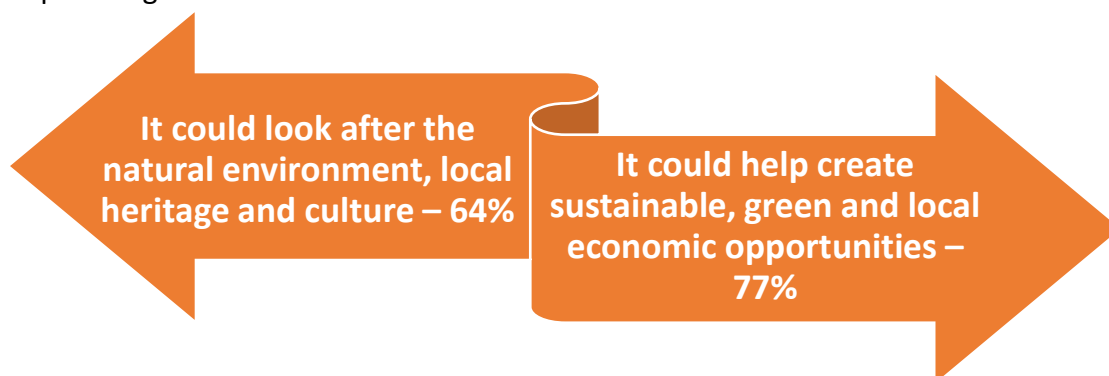


approximately 4 hectares of planting could be put in place<sup>(2)</sup>. Dense planting – about 3 trees per square metre – will maximise the biodiversity gain.

- By designating the project area as a biodiversity reserve and mobilising local people, schools, businesses and stakeholder organisations and agencies to be pro-active in protecting and promoting biodiversity.

### Nine Village Federation

**1.19** Newtown 2050 has brought this vision and project proposal to a point where it has engaged local people, local communities and stakeholder organisations and agencies. The next steps will require an entity that is representative of the entire project area, that is, the nine villages identified by Newtown 2050 and their environs. The idea of a Nine Village Federation<sup>(3)</sup>, mooted by Newtown 2050, was tested in the online community survey by asking ‘Do you support the creation of a Nine Village Federation?’ and proposing eleven potential outcomes for respondents to select. Of the 1,003 survey respondents who addressed this question, 94% expressed support for the idea of a Nine Village Federation. The two top scoring outcomes were:-



Other high scoring outcomes speak of *attracting more visitors, community benefit, promoting and safeguarding biodiversity across the project area, lobbying for continued investment in sustainable green infrastructure, allowing people to make greener choices, help to develop events and programmes unique to the project area.* One such programme could be squads of young ‘Route Rangers’ trained and engaged under the government’s post COVID-19 back to work scheme, physically planning, designing, building and managing Green-Way routes. These teams of young people, employed locally, would partner with and be mentored by experienced professionals, a positive move to help address unemployment in the wake of COVID-19, incentivised by EU Green Deal funding and benefiting the entire community.

<sup>(2)</sup> Assumes 11 kilometres of paths and 2 metres width on each side of the path.

<sup>(3)</sup> At this stage the name is not finally determined – many consultation comments don’t like the use of ‘federation’ – eg, very ‘Game of Thrones’!

## What Works Elsewhere?

**1.20** Bringing Newtown 2050s project to the attention of local communities, organisations and agencies has clearly sparked imaginations and engaged people in the vision. What is achieved by the project will be measured in part by what it helps other achieve. A good starting point is to form the Nine Village Federation. In so doing, Newtown 2050 could usefully check the project’s status against the essential ingredients for a transition community as presented by the Transition Network<sup>(4)</sup>.



<sup>(4)</sup> *The Transition Network is a global ‘movement of communities/coming together to reimagine and rebuild our world’. Member group Laois Environment Action Forum – LEAF – promotes all things green.* [www.transitionnetwork.org](http://www.transitionnetwork.org)

## Feasible?

***feasible (adjective): able to be done***

### The Vision

**1.21** The vision presents highly attractive and desirable concepts that, in fitting with the visions of global, national and regional organisations and strategies have a great deal of integrity even at this aspirational stage. The study simply, yet importantly, tests the idea that a green approach to economics, to connectivity and to biodiversity is relevant and necessary right now. It has tested the idea with organisations, with individuals and with communities in the project area. Whilst the study has not identified a network of routes, the vision has caught the imagination of everyone involved in consultation. Action on climate change, by government and its agencies and by communities, matters to everyone. The study evidences that people are behind the need for a plan and local actions that make a difference to their lives; without a plan in place, past mistakes and missed opportunities will repeat and strategies for addressing climate change risk failing. The big question is who will take the lead on taking actions that will begin to deliver the vision.

### The Strategic Pillars

**1.22 Inter-Connectivity** across the project area is deemed to be feasible but only if it is delivered in a series of projects, each of which is financially and technically realistic, and, well, feasible. Comprising a coastal sector, and an uplands sector the topography of the project area suggests ‘one size fits all’ is not possible, that paths/trails will be a mix of *flat, undulating, hilly, forest, open* to suit the terrain and the land that is secured to host routes. The study has not considered detailed routes, however the entire network could be anything from 25 kilometres to 50 kilometres and above. Indeed, if the early routes are proven to meet their objectives, the potential of the network will only be limited by funding. The two routes put forward for Newtownmountkennedy as early routes need to be further developed and tested for technical and financial feasibility.

**1.23 Green Economics**, explained for this project *as empowering and encouraging local businesses in accommodation, eco-tourism, hospitality, food & drink*, green economics is deemed to be feasible based on evidence gathered from research and consultation. However, any and all efforts to empower and encourage local businesses must be considered in tandem with the ongoing strategies and work of central government, the council and other stakeholder agencies. The work of economic development is specialised, requiring resources, key skills and experience. Care is needed to ensure that efforts to progress economic development within this project supplement strategies and activities that are already in place, therefore, more research is needed to identify how best to

empower and encourage local businesses without risking duplicating or even compromising existing work.

**1.24 Biodiversity & Sustainability** and the creation of a single designated area is, based on the evidence from research and consultation, eminently feasible given that it will be achieved partly through the construction of paths and trails and partly by designating the entire project area as a biodiversity reserve and involving the twelve and a half thousand residents in green living. As a 'Mountains to the Sea' vision, there will clearly be different zones with altitude and terrain changes; this can be seen as an opportunity to educate urban visitors as well as local residents about biodiversity in the field by comparing and contrasting zones. In many ways it will be a showcase for the council and wide government, a test-bed and proving ground for similar initiatives throughout the country.

## What Next?

**1.25** This study evidences the relevance of Newtown 2050s vision and the considerable interest it has generated in people living and working in the project area, in council members and officers and in a wide range of stakeholder organisations and agencies. With Transport Infrastructure Ireland's recent allocation of a team of engineers to County Wicklow for the next five years, the vision may begin to be realised sooner than expected. Most importantly, delivery needs an organisation with effective leadership that is representative of the entire project area. The following steps for What Next? are based on the research and extensive consultation conducted for the study.

### Step 1: Update Residents and Stakeholder Organisations

- **Rationale:** The work of the feasibility study has built a momentum and an expectation that something will happen, as well as building interest in and support for the project. Around 200 individuals who responded to the community survey are willing to help as things move forward, and stakeholder organisations expect to hear more about the project. The study's findings allow Newtown 2050 to present a 'shovel-ready' project to key stakeholder organisations, not least Wicklow County Council in the knowledge that upcoming funding schemes through the LEADER programme will seek to promote biodiversity. It is imperative that lines of communication are maintained.



## Step 2: Establish a Nine Village Federation

- **Rationale:** Newtown 2050 is, by its very name, generally associated with Newtownmountkennedy and its close neighbour Kilcoole, as evidenced in the geographical spread of responses to the community survey, yet the project area covers nine villages. It is important that the entity taking the project forward is representative of the entire project area. The Nine Village Federation, established as a constituted group, will add to the project's credibility and lend weight to funding applications. Care is needed in setting up the federation that the skills and experience needed to move things forward - marketing, financial, technical, leadership, administration, etc - are matched to those stepping forward as volunteers. The federation will need a financial resource to cover operational costs - administration, office accommodation, work programmes, etc. As the federation establishes itself, paid staff will be needed to implement work programmes, however, volunteers will continue to shape, lead and oversee the project.

## Step 3: Prepare a Strategy and Master Plan

- **Rationale:** The complexity of the project points to the need for a strategy and master plan to (i) communicate to residents, stakeholders and potential funders how the work of the federation will make a difference, and (ii) establish a plan of action, setting out a work programme over a period of time. The strategy and master plan demonstrate professionalism in the federation's approach and give accountability for its work. In their preparation it is strongly recommended that the federation engages with and gets buy-in from a range of partner organisations on an ongoing basis.

- 1.26** These three What Next? steps will focus minds and help in taking the project to a point where it can begin to realise Newtown 2050s vision of a unified rural community influencing the way people think about the environment, changing the way people go about their daily lives – and making a difference. The scale and scope of Newtown 2050s Mountains to the Sea vision and the three strategic pillars that underpin it is extensive. However, it is presented at a time when looking the other way is no longer an option.

## Leadership

- 1.27** Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss is clearly a global challenge that is being addressed by governments. The success of their actions will depend in some measure on how they bring communities on board and work with them. To this point The Mountains to the Sea Green-Way vision has been crafted and led by the community. Such a community effort is best continued from the bottom up by a group that takes its lead from Newtown 2050, building on their pioneering work which has recognised the imperative of creating a vision and a community-based solution to climate change that is as big as the challenge.

**1.28** In clustering nine villages to deliver on inter-connectivity, green economics and biodiversity & sustainability, the project is reflected in the county’s development objectives within the upcoming Wicklow County Development Plan 2021-2027. This creates an opportunity for the council to adopt the project, integrate it into the plan and lead the Nine Village Federation to fully realise the project’s considerable potential over the coming years. Local government is encouraged by the Local Government Reform Act 2014 to have a strong role in community development. The Mountains to the Sea Green-Way proposal presents a potential model for collaborative working and themed community development, addressing global challenges through local actions, that can be tested and replicated in like-minded communities across the county, and potentially, across the country.

## The Last Word

**1.29** The outputs and outcomes of Newtown 2050s vision and of government action on climate change and biodiversity loss will be realised in the coming years and decades. The United Nations recognises the role that young people are playing in advocating action, therefore, it is appropriate to give the last word to a young person’s response to the schools’ survey.

***‘More needs to be done for climate change. It’s ridiculous how little we are doing to save our home’.***

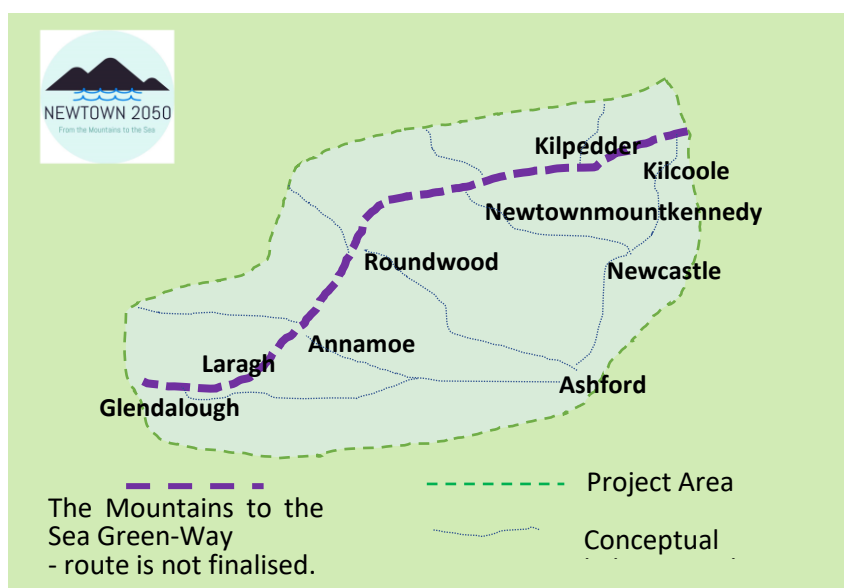
## 2. Introduction

### Vision and Purpose

- 2.1** Commissioned by Newtown 2050, the purpose of this study is to consider the feasibility of developing a critical infrastructure of trails to *‘interlink rural villages in North East Wicklow. It entails creating a green economy, one in which environmental conservation, sustainable tourism, inter-village co-operation and the promotion of businesses under a common, legitimate pure green brand will be valued and promoted’*. Newtown 2050s intention is to engage with and inform local communities and key organisations about their vision through the work of this study. Their mission statement is:-

*‘To assist the sustainable development of our village and environs by the promotion of social and employment opportunities through a sensitive environmental approach and proper planning. To develop the area’s full tourism potential and seek the creation of public access routes for the benefit of the whole community. To foster and establish the development of a smart green economy and built environment that will enhance the quality of life of all residents of the area’.*

- 2.2** The project that will deliver the vision embraces a 10km wide, approximately 25km long project area between Glendalough and the coast.



Within the project area are nine villages – Kilcoole, Newtownmountkennedy, Kilpedder, Newcastle, Roundwood, Glendalough, Ashford, Laragh, Annamoe. The topography of the project area, with a steep escarpment to the west of Newtownmountkennedy, effectively creates two sectors; (i) coastal sector; (ii) uplands sector. Newtown 2050 aims to designate and develop the project area, showcasing projects in sustainable living and ecotourism and to become home to industries and activities that identify with the ‘Green’ brand and contribute to the sustainable image of the area. The vision is to promote ‘biodiversity’ or biological diversity. Quite simply, biodiversity is the name given to the variety of life found on Planet Earth, both plant and wildlife, from the tiniest plant to the biggest animal, on land or in the sea. With biodiversity in mind, the routes will educate users that we are custodians of every living thing.



*The village of Newtownmountkennedy looking west across the coastal sector to the Irish Sea.*

## Strategic Pillars

- 2.3** Newtown 2050 aspires to unite communities and make a positive contribution to the lifestyles of the people living within the area, not in a short term commercial sense but within a long term holistic objective. With that in mind the project has three inter-dependent strategic pillars:-

### Inter-connectivity

- A physical network of paths and trails creating safe school commutes between villages; safe walking and cycling for locals and for work commutes to rail and transport services; options for activity tourism including bed nights. Also, relieving traffic congestion on the N11 to and from Dublin City by enabling a network of remote working hubs in areas where remote working is increasing.



### Economics

- Empowering local businesses to take advantage of gaps in accommodation and activity offerings building on existing products and resources and exploiting the growing interest in ecotourism. Encouraging the growth of local producers of good quality food and drink and hospitality outlets. Co-ordinating the efforts of businesses under a single brand, such as Wicklow Naturally, will benefit everyone.

### Biodiversity and Sustainability

- Creating a single designated area, or transect, embracing pristine areas sensitive to disturbance and areas where greater levels of activity can be tolerated. Being pro-active in the use of natural materials and promoting biodiversity – wildflowers, nature trees – in the development of paths and trails. Embrace farm diversification and mitigate the environmental impact of development in the area.

## Global Need

**2.4** In advocating this project, Newtown 2050, in their awareness and recognition of global climate challenges, seeks to bring to the attention of key influencers and organisations the need to think differently about how people and communities are serviced and supported, and to influence the attitudes of people and communities towards the environment. Climate targets and well-being targets are complementary, requiring both supply and demand policies. Physical infrastructure must be informed by social infrastructure, not vice versa. In the field of energy ‘.....this means focusing on a future of mobility strategies and creating an ambitious platform for public transportation, cycling paths, pedestrian pathways and new ways to stimulate healthy living’.<sup>(5)</sup>

**2.5** A 2019 United Nations report<sup>(6)</sup>, compiled by 145 experts from 50 countries, concluded that ‘nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history. Human actions have severely altered 75% of all land and 66% of the world’s marine environments. Ecosystems are collapsing and biodiversity is disappearing’. Newtown 2050 is wedded to the belief that every government and every community must act to mitigate the scale of change and avert its most harmful effects through intelligent policies and community engagement.

<sup>(5)</sup> Professor Mariana Mazzucato writing in ‘Time’ magazine; 2 November 2020.

<sup>(6)</sup> ‘Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services’. United Nations Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; May 2019.

## Ireland's Response

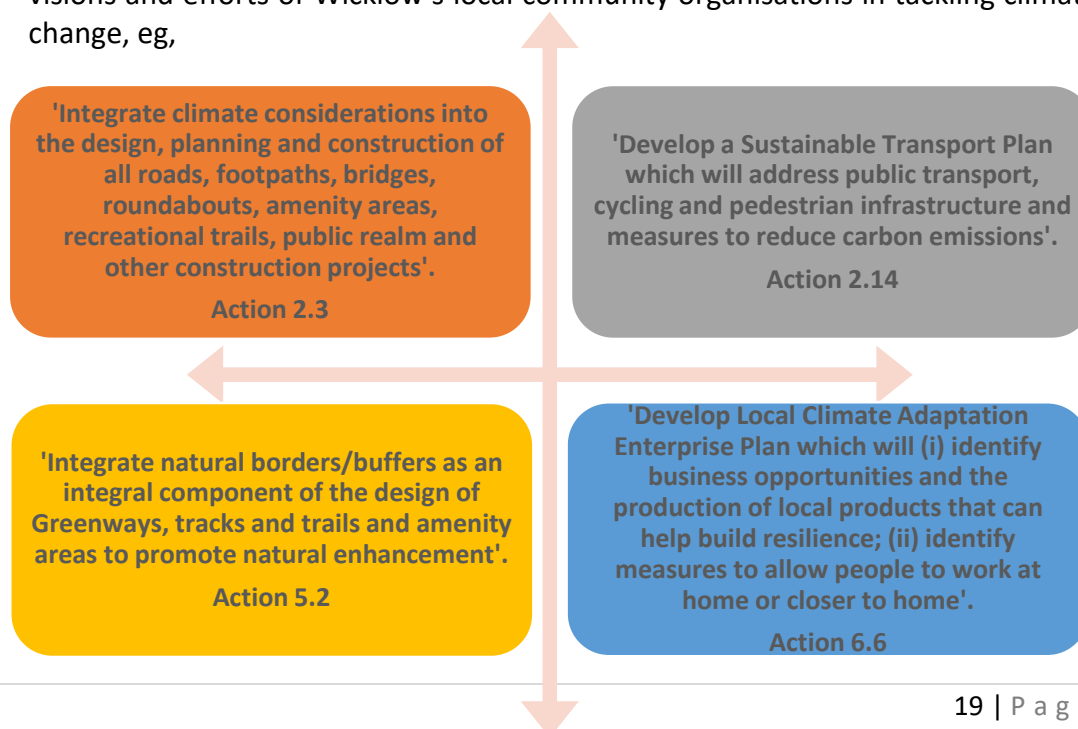
- 2.6 Ireland's Climate Change Advisory Council, an independent advisory body set up in 2016, looks at how Ireland can 'achieve the transition to a low-carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy and society by 2050'. In its annual review – published September 2020 – the council states:-

***'The imperative for climate action remains, despite the understandable immediate focus on COVID-19. Ireland is already seeing the negative impact of climate change and, regardless of the future success of national or global mitigation measures, adaptation to climate change is essential because of the effects of continuing global emissions'.***

- 2.7 The review goes on to state Ireland won't meet its 2020 targets and even with the development of the Climate Action Plan 'huge efforts are required to meet Ireland's existing 2030 targets'. Local authorities are urged to look at their existing functions, integrating climate action and putting adequate resources in place for delivery.
- 2.8 The review highlights the role of *communities, organisations and groups* in tackling climate change challenges at a local level. Regarding transport, the review states 'Better planning at local and regional level can support walking and cycling'.

## County Wicklow's Response

- 2.9 The county's response is evident in the work of the council and many other statutory and voluntary sector organisations. The council leads the way in its Climate Change Adaptation Strategy published in September 2019. The strategy presents six thematic areas with a set of actions. Many of the actions link to the visions and efforts of Wicklow's local community organisations in tackling climate change, eg,



## 3. Strategic Relevance

**3.1** The project’s strategic pillars point to its relevance in contributing to policies and activities taking place at every level as global organisations and governments have come to recognise the urgent need to pursue a co-ordinated response to climate change and to support a green economy. Newtown 2050s vision is to make a difference in helping to mitigate the effects of climate change by focusing on the green ‘brand’. Here’s how it strikes a chord with strategic thinking globally, nationally and locally.

Strategy	Thinking	Strategic Links
Climate Change Annual Report 2019; United Nations	‘Climate change is inherently global. Greenhouse gases affect climate around the world no matter where or by whom they are emitted. We are collectively responsible for addressing climate change. Ecosystems suffer from extreme change; an estimated 1 million species are on the brink of extinction owing to human activity. There is enough scientific certainty to warrant sweeping cohesion’.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduced carbon footprint</li> <li>▪ Encourages sustainable businesses</li> <li>▪ Supports farm diversification</li> <li>▪ Improved interconnectivity between villages</li> </ul>
The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; UN Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nature and its vital contributions to people, which together embody biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services are deteriorating worldwide.</li> <li>▪ Goals for conserving and sustainably using nature may only be achieved through transformative changes across economic, social, political and technological factors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote biodiversity</li> <li>▪ Protect local flora and fauna</li> <li>▪ Designate routes and trails as bee ‘corridors’</li> <li>▪ Designate the project area as an ecosystem reserve</li> </ul>
European Green Deal; European Commission	The European Green Deal plans to make the EUs economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities. The aim is that the EU will be climate neutral <sup>(7)</sup> by 2050.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Carbon footprint reduced</li> <li>▪ Pro-active use of natural materials</li> <li>▪ Biodiversity promoted</li> <li>▪ Green brand promoted</li> </ul>

<sup>(7)</sup> Activities are climate neutral/CO2 neutral if they do not put a strain on the climate, ie, they do not add to greenhouse gases.

Strategy	Thinking	Strategic Links
<p>EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030; European Commission</p>	<p>The strategy explains why we need to protect biodiversity:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is essential for life</li> <li>▪ It provides for businesses</li> <li>▪ Biodiversity loss and the climate crisis are independent. When one gets worse, so does the other.</li> <li>▪ Nature regulates the climate and nature-based solutions are essential for emission reduction and climate adaptation.</li> <li>▪ More than 75% of global food crop types rely on animal pollination.</li> <li>▪ Biodiversity loss results in reduced crop yields, increased economic losses and the loss of potential new sources of medicine.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Biodiversity promoted</li> <li>▪ Local flora and fauna protected</li> <li>▪ Embraces pristine areas sensitive to disturbance</li> <li>▪ Mitigates environmental impact of development</li> </ul>
<p>National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP); Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht</p>	<p>In its third NBAP, Ireland’s vision for Biodiversity is set out, <i>‘that biodiversity and ecosystems in Ireland are conserved and restored, delivering benefits essential for all sectors of society and that Ireland contributes to efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems’</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Designate the project area as an ecosystem/biodiversity reserve</li> <li>▪ Involve local communities in biodiversity awareness, protection and promotion</li> <li>▪ Embraces farm diversification</li> <li>▪ Pro-active use of natural materials</li> </ul>
<p>Tourism Development &amp; Innovation: A Strategy for Investment 2016-2022; Fáilte Ireland</p>	<p>Ireland’s tourism sector engages <i>‘every village, town and city employing in the region of 205,000 people, or 11% of the working population. In total the sector contributes over €6 billion to the economy’</i>. The strategy’s aim is to strengthen the appeal of Ireland to international visitors. In so doing, the objectives include strengthening and enriching local communities as they take on an enhanced role in developing tourism at a local level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Options for activity tourism</li> <li>▪ Encouraging local producers</li> <li>▪ Farm diversification promoted</li> <li>▪ Domestic tourism growth encouraged</li> <li>▪ Longer stays in the project area</li> <li>▪ Tourism ‘honeypots’ relieved through dispersal</li> </ul>

Strategy	Thinking	Strategic Links
Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORP) for Public Lands and Waters in Ireland 2017-2021; National Parks & Wildlife Service, Coillte and others.	State bodies own and manage 15% of the land in Ireland which contributes €15 billion to the national economy. Government invests heavily - €165 million in the 5 years of the ORP – to manage, maintain, upgrade and expand the recreation assets on public lands, with value to the national economy estimated at €142 million annually. A recent research report by Sport Ireland <sup>(8)</sup> evidences an increase in recreational walking from 29% of the population prior to COVID-19 restrictions to 40% during the stay at home phase of restrictions. Running and cycling activity also increased significantly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relieving traffic congestion</li> <li>▪ Safe walking and cycling</li> <li>▪ Safe school commutes</li> <li>▪ Improved health outcomes</li> </ul>
National Trails in Ireland; National Trails Office	There are over 4,000km of designated trails in Ireland. The National Trails Office (NTO) is the central resource for planning and developing recreational trails for <i>‘walking, cycling, horse-riding or canoeing in both urban and rural environments’</i> . The NTOs work is evidenced in, amongst others, the work of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, Sport Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, the National Parks & Wildlife Service, Coillte, Cycling Ireland, Horse Sport Ireland, the Irish Farmers Association.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Critical infrastructure</b> of paths and trails constructed</li> <li>▪ Use of natural materials</li> <li>▪ Surfaces suited to surrounding environment</li> </ul>
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways; Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2018	The Greenways Strategy, launched in 2018 is to <i>‘assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways constructed to an appropriate standard’</i> . It is expected these projects of scale may <i>‘facilitate the development of linked and complementary projects’</i> outwith the strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complements local Greenways</li> <li>▪ Offers nature-focused experience</li> <li>▪ Encourages more recreational activity</li> <li>▪ Provides safe off-road commuting</li> </ul>

<sup>(8)</sup> *‘Impact of COVID-19 Restrictions on Sport and Recreational Walking’; Sport Ireland April 2020.*



## Section Summary

- 3.2** These strategic approaches and others referenced throughout this report demonstrate that the project proposed by Newtown 2050 will contribute to global efforts in the ongoing response to climate change and biodiversity loss. Importantly, a key emphasis in Newtown 2050s vision and mission statement is that the project’s strategic actions are informed by the desire to make a difference in the lives of everyone living in the project area. In this sense the project’s most important outcome is the impact it will have on the social infrastructure of an entire rural area, which will be achieved by engaging and educating communities, and by connecting people to people, addressing global challenges along the way.

## 4. Need

### Introduction

**4.1** The scope of this project includes nine settlements: Kilcoole, Kilpedder, Newtownmountkennedy, Roundwood, Laragh, Annamoe, Glendalough, Ashford, Newcastle. For the purposes of this study these settlements are referenced as ‘villages’ – see Table 4.1 for the settlement classification and hierarchy as presented in the current County Development Plan 2016 – 2022. The nine villages are selected as a result of discussions and consultation carried out by Newtown 2050 prior to the collation of this report. As the project evolves other settlements may be included.

### Socio-Economic Context

#### Population

**4.2** Key population data is presented for the nine villages. The total population of all nine villages is 12,533, nearly 9% of the total population of County Wicklow.

**Table 4.1: Comparison of Key Population Data**

Settlement name and classification	Population Census 2016	% Under16	% Over 65	% travel to school/work by car/motorbike	% travel school/work on foot/bike
<b>Newtownmountkennedy (Moderate growth town)</b>	2,835	26%	10%	62%	10%
<b>Ashford (Small growth town)</b>	1,425	21%	12%	64%	6%
<b>Kilcoole (Small growth town)</b>	4,239	27%	8%	61%	16%
<b>Newcastle (Rural town)</b>	924	23%	12%	67%	4%
<b>Roundwood (Rural town)</b>	948	31%	9%	57%	16%
<b>Kilpedder (Large village)</b>	1,255	23%	12%	69%	2%
<b>Laragh (Large village)</b>	342	19%	9%	55%	19%
<b>Annamoe (Small village)</b>	274	19%	15%	49%	7%
<b>Glendalough (Rural area)</b>	291	14%	14%	52%	16%
<b>County Wicklow</b>	142,425	24%	13%	61%	13%

#### Comments

- ❑ Kilcoole is the largest of the settlements with a population of 4,239.
- ❑ Six of the villages/settlements have a population under 1,000.
- ❑ The top three villages in terms of the percentage of under 16s are Roundwood (31%), Kilcoole (27%) and Newtownmountkennedy (26%), all higher than that for County Wicklow (24%).

- ❑ Laragh (19%) and Annamoe (19%) have lower percentages of under 16s with Glendalough the lowest at just 14%.
- ❑ Annamoe (15%) and Glendalough (14%) have the highest percentage of people over 65, both higher than that for County Wicklow (13%).
- ❑ Kilcoole (8%), Roundwood (9%) and Laragh (9%) all have much lower percentages of older people compared with the other six villages and County Wicklow.
- ❑ Given the rural settings, the percentage of people who travel to school or work by foot or by bicycle ranges from 2% for Kilpedder to 19% for Laragh. This seems a comparatively high value for Laragh and possibly reflects that more people work locally.
- ❑ Kilpedder has the highest percentage of people – 69% – who travel to work/school by car or motorbike.

### Newtownmountkennedy

- 4.3** Located in north east Wicklow, Newtownmountkennedy is within commuting distance of Dublin, 40km to the north, close to the Wicklow Mountains National Park to the west and with access to the sea at Greystones, Kilcoole and Newcastle to the east. Newtownmountkennedy is therefore an attractive residential option both for local families and for people relocating to the area. The town is designated a ‘moderate growth town’ in Wicklow’s County Development Plan; the population increased by 17% between 2011 and 2016, the fastest growing town in Wicklow, with further growth expected to take the population to around 6,000 persons by 2028<sup>(9)</sup>, more than doubling the 2016 population of 2,835. The town has seen a good deal of house building in recent years, eg, the Wicklow Hills housing development has recently completed 250 homes with another approximately 600 planned.



*This 300 year old coach house at the entrance to the village is now a GPs surgery.*

<sup>(9)</sup> Review of Newtownmountkennedy LAP 2018.

- 4.4** Newtownmountkennedy is serviced by a number of shops and a public house on the village’s Main Street with the Mount Kennedy shopping centre just off the street catering for larger retail outlets such as Dunnes Stores. The Parkview 60-bed hotel is the main provider of overnight stays; both the shopping centre and hotel were built in the mid 2000’s at the time of the ‘Celtic Tiger’. Newtown Business and Enterprise Park established in 2012 and located on the south side of the village has 50 industrial and business units. The village is adjacent to the N11 – Dublin city centre is 35km and Wicklow town is 15km. Coillte’s headquarters building is located just north of the town.
- 4.5** Newtownmountkennedy is a thriving community hub with a range of community organisations, including Newtownmountkennedy Community Forum, Newtownmountkennedy Tidy Towns, Newtown 2050 and a number of sporting groups including Newtown GAA, one of the oldest GAA clubs in the county and Newtown United FC. There are three schools in or close to the town; Newtownmountkennedy Primary School, Newtownmountkennedy/Kilcoole Educate Together National School and St Catherine’s Special School on the site of Newcastle Hospital.



*Opened in November 2020, the Artisan Market has shop units for local crafts.*

## Ashford

- 4.6** Located on the eastern side of County Wicklow, approximately 11km south of Newtownmountkennedy, Ashford is the most southerly of the nine settlements in the project area. The village was formerly on the N11 main route from Dublin to Rosslare until bypassed by the M11 in 2004. Described as a ‘scenic village’, Ashford is home to the famous Mount Usher Gardens located on the banks of the River Vartry, one of only three Irish gardens with a top rating from the UK’s ‘The Good Gardens Guide’. The village is connected to the rest of the county via the R763 and R764 to Roundwood and Annamoe and the R772 to Newtownmountkennedy and Wicklow town. The County Development Plan 2016-2022 notes the town historically developed in two points around Ballinalea and Nun’s Cross, avoiding the central valley along the river. During the 20th century, the village then grew in three main areas – along the main road, at Ballinalea (such that these two areas effectively combined), and around Nun’s Cross. Ashford has two churches, a number of pubs, a GAA facility, two primary schools and a range of local shops and businesses. Ashford Studios, a state-of-the-art, purpose-built film and television studio facility, located just north of the village uses many of Wicklow’s natural and built heritage locations in shoots. The sequel to ‘Vikings’, a Netflix production, is to be filmed at the Studios in 2021. Ashford is identified as a ‘small growth town’ and as such the County Development Plan 2016-2022 places importance on local indigenous growth and investment.

## Kilcoole

- 4.7** The village of Kilcoole, located approximately 5km to the east of Newtownmountkennedy is perhaps best known for doubling as the fictional village of Glenroe in RTE’s popular soap opera which ran to 2001. The coast at Kilcoole is accessed by a narrow and somewhat dangerous road – no footpath – leading 1km from the village to a train halt which services the Dublin Rosslare railway line. Parking at the train halt is also used by walkers accessing the coastal path. An area of wetland known as ‘The Murrough’, identified as a Special Protected Area, extends along the coast from Kilcoole, south to Wicklow town. It comprises three distinct areas: Kilcoole Marshes, East Coast Nature Reserve, Broad Lough. This area is home to many endangered species of plant and animals; its significance for biodiversity is recognised by its inclusion in the Natura 2000 network of EU designated sites. The beach in Kilcoole is the summertime home of the Little Tern, one of the few places in Ireland where these birds nest. The whole of the 15km coastline stretch from Greystones, through Kilcoole to Wicklow Town has a pathway of varying quality – the path keeps to the seaward side of the Dublin Rosslare railway line. In the 2013-2019 Local Area Plan, Kilcoole is designated a Level 4 ‘Small Town’, serving a local catchment with a range of shopping facilities, including one supermarket, 2 medium-sized convenience stores (max 1,000m<sup>2</sup>) and a relatively large number of smaller shops.



- 4.8** Kilcoole has a number of community organisations, for example, Kilcoole Tidy Towns, Kilcoole Development Association and Kilcoole Heritage Group. Sporting groups include Kilcoole Athletics Club, St Anthony’s Kilcoole FC and Kilcoole GAC. Kilcoole is serviced by Kilcoole Primary School, enrolment 461 and Coláiste Chraobh Abhann Secondary School with an enrolment of around 800 and expected to rise to over 1,000 by 2022.



***The narrow Sea Road in Kilcoole joins the train halt and the village, a distance of 1.5km. The local community has marked symbols on the road as it is a popular cycling and walking route, yet narrow and hazardous in parts.***

## Newcastle

- 4.9** The coastal settlement of Newcastle is situated 2km to the east of the N11 route on the R761, 4km south of Kilcoole and 4km from Newtownmountkenny. Historically, the town centre developed around the church, rectory, national school and the ruined castle. In the nineteenth century a ‘second’ town centre developed further east around the junctions of the R761 and Sea Road. The town saw further growth in the 1970s with the development of housing estates, a community centre, playground, GAA club and a playground. Together with Avoca, Donard, Roundwood and Shillelagh, Newcastle is identified as a ‘Rural Town’ in the current County Development Plan and recognised as providing economic and social services to populations of these settlements and their rural hinterlands.
- 4.10** Located two kilometres to the east of Newcastle is Blackditch Wood (East Coast Nature Reserve), an 89-hectare priority woodland and wetland Nature Reserve established by Birdwatch Ireland in 2002 and classified as a special protection area. The reserve comprises a variety of habitats, including birch forest, fen and willow scrub, natural grasslands, a conifer plantation and farmland, which support a wide range of birds, flora and insect species. A series of walkways and hides allows access by the public for birdwatching.

## Roundwood

**4.11** Approximately 9km from Newtownmountkennedy along the R756, Roundwood, generally regarded as one of the highest villages in Ireland at 230m above sea level, serves as a principal gateway to the Wicklow Mountains National Park. The village has a range of local retail and community facilities servicing residents and visitors. The current County Development Plan has zoned land to accommodate approximately 200 new houses. Loop walks at close-by Vartry Reservoir Lakes (reservoirs built in the 1860s) were completed in June 2018, offering approximately 20km of walks for local and visitor use. The Roundwood & District Community Council (RDCC) report the addition of this ‘eco-tourism’ product will bring economic benefits to the village. RDCC aspire to link the Vartry Reservoir walks with Bray Head-Sugarloaf Way, the Wicklow Way and the Avonmore Way.



**Roundwood. Visitors pass through the village on their way to Glendalough. Whilst only having a single main street, the village has five bar/restaurants and plenty of take-aways - three in this picture.**

## Kilpedder

**4.12** Kilpedder village is located approximately 2km north of Newtownmountkennedy and close to the Glen of Downs Nature Reserve, a 2 km long wooded glacial valley with steep sides formed of the same quartzite as the two Sugarloaf hills close by. The N11 divides the townland into Kilpedder East and Kilpedder West. In the 20 years between the 1996 and 2016 census, the population of Kilpedder increased from 480 to 1,255 people. In the current County Development Plan Kilpedder is categorised as a ‘Large Village’ and as such the plan notes that “large villages provide a range of community services and facilities and are an important social point for the local community.” The plan recognises that in order to safeguard the future of large villages, it is important that growth is encouraged and facilitated in a sustainable manner and further states the



**Kilpedder. The village borders the N11 against the backdrop of Downs Hill forest.**



boundaries of the villages and rural clusters will be reviewed as part of the 2021-2027 County Development Plan review process.

## Laragh and Glendalough

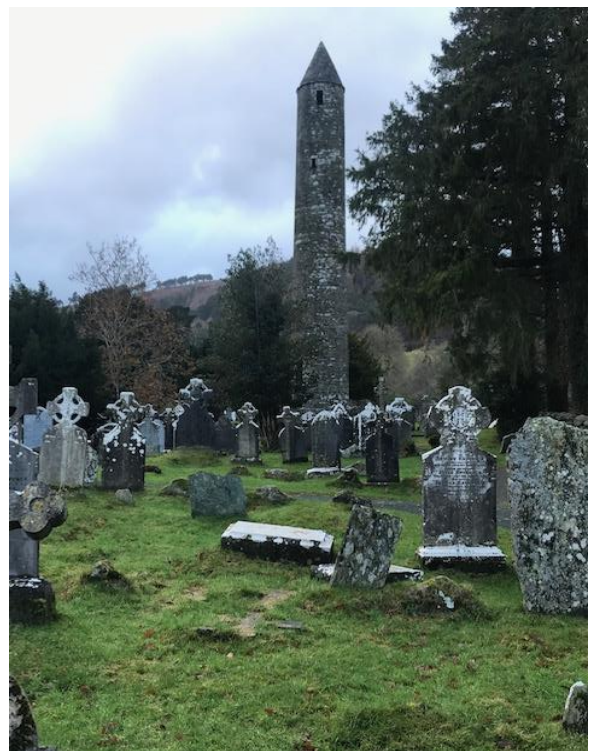
**4.13** The village of Laragh lies at the junction of three roads, R115, R755, and R756 through the Wicklow Mountains, and is primarily known for its proximity (1.5km) to the monastic settlement of Glendalough and the wider Glendalough Valley including the Upper and Lower Lakes. The Upper Lake acts as the main gateway to the Wicklow Mountains National Park. Glendalough also has a strong historic association with lead mining; there is a 'miner's village', long deserted, at the top of the Upper Lake. Laragh is defined as a 'Large Village' in the County Development plan, although its population is approximately one third of Kilpedder, also a 'Large Village'. Glendalough is defined as a rural area.



**Laragh. This stopping point with cafe is fronted by a 'village' green and some provision for parking. The creeper-covered Georgian style house is likely part of the attraction.**

**4.14** The 'Laragh-Glendalough Settlement and Tourism Plan 2016-2022' notes the following:-

*'The area performs two main functions - firstly, Glendalough acts as a prime tourist attraction, attracting both international and local visitors; and secondly, the village of Laragh provides a service function, providing for the day-to-day needs of the local population and some of the service needs of visitors. The retail and social services that Laragh provides includes a number of convenience shops, a primary school, post office, Brockagh Community Centre, Catholic and Church of Ireland Churches and GAA pitches. Tourist infrastructure in the area includes a variety of service and accommodation options including The Glendalough Hotel and craft shops, Lynham's Hotel, The Wicklow*



**Glendalough National Park offers a range of walking trails from easy to 'hill walk'.**

*Heather Restaurant and accommodation, Celtic Crafts shop, the Woollen Mills Factory Outlet, and a number of B&Bs, guest houses and youth hostels'. 'Glendalough is one of Ireland's prime tourist attractions, it is considered that the economic benefit that should be resulting from the nearly 1 million visitors that come to the area every year, is not being fully realised.*

## Annamoe

- 4.15** Annamoe village is located approximately half-way between Roundwood and Laragh on the R755 from Roundwood to Rathdrum. The village comprises a number of houses located linearly along the R755 south of the bridge over the Annamoe River. This small stone humpback bridge is noted as a common place for tourists to stop and view the Wicklow Hills. Annamoe Trout Fishery, a 4-acre lake offering fly or bait fishing, is found on the upstream side of the bridge. The great spotted woodpecker, the first species of woodpecker to settle in Ireland around 2010, is found in woodlands near the village. Annamoe is the smallest settlement in the cluster of nine villages; residents likely look to Roundwood and Laragh for shopping and services.



**Annamoe. This attractive antiques 'shop' is the only shop in the village.**

## Rationale for Expenditure

### The National Climate Action Plan 2019 and Programme for Government 2020

- 4.16** The National Climate Action Plan has committed to an additional 500,000 public transport and active travel journeys daily by 2035 as part of a suite of measures to reduce transport emissions by approximately half in the next decade. Programme for Government (PFG) calls for an average 7% annual reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions from 2021 to 2030 and to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. Actions in PFG related to cycling and walking for which the transport sector is tasked with undertaking are as follows:-

**Table 4.2: Programme for Government - Actions related to Cycling and Walking**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>‘Each local authority will be immediately mandated to carry out an assessment of their road network, to see where space can be re-allocated for pedestrians and cyclists. This should be done immediately’.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>‘The Government will commit to an allocation of 10% of the total transport capital budget for cycling projects and an allocation of 10% of the total capital budget for pedestrian infrastructure. The Government’s commitment to cycling and pedestrian projects will be set at 20% of the 2020 capital budget (€360 million) per year for the lifetime of the Government’.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>‘In addition to this expenditure commitment, we will undertake other measures to help enable the continued increase in the numbers of people walking and cycling each day. We will: Mandate that every local authority, with assistance from the National Transport Authority (NTA), adopts a high-quality cycling policy, carries out an assessment of their roads network and develops cycle network plans, which will be implemented with the help of a suitably qualified Cycling Officer with clear powers and roles.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>‘Dramatically increase the number of children walking and cycling to primary and secondary school by mandating the Department of Transport to work with schools across Ireland, local authorities, the Green Schools programme and local initiatives, including Cycle, Bus and School Streets’.</i></li> </ul>

**4.17** As noted in the online survey for this study, 75% of respondents feel current provision in the project area for cycling and walking is ‘Not Safe’ or ‘Somewhat Unsafe’. Whilst there are a number of reasons why more people do not cycle or walk more, it is becoming widely recognised that roads are not safe for these activities. The National Travel Survey 2020 in the UK found that 66% of adults agreed that *‘it is too dangerous for me to cycle on the roads’*. It is of interest to note that safety is a key element of Greater Manchester’s vision to construct 1,800 miles of a fully joined up cycling and walking network; *‘the network must be **safe** enough for a 12-year child to use and navigate’*.

### Smarter Travel

**4.18** For at least two generations, planning and transport practice in Ireland has focused on the car. The unintended consequence of this has been to suppress walking and cycling across all sectors of society resulting in reduced levels of physical activity resulting in poorer health, whilst air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise. *‘Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future, A New Transport Policy for Ireland’* was published in 2009. It set out national transport policy for 2009 to 2020 and contained 49 actions covering four themes. In an open report



published in July 2020 to The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development,<sup>(10)</sup> An Taisce noted the following:-

*‘A cornerstone target of the Smarter Travel policy was that commuting journeys made by car should drop from 65% to 45% by 2020 while commuter journeys by walking, cycling and public transport should increase to account for 55%. As the 2016 census data from the Central Statistics Office demonstrate, Ireland has failed to achieve that - the share of car journeys to work has risen since 2005 and actually surpassed the Smarter Travel baseline’.*

**4.19** Projects such as the proposed network of linked trails have a high-level of public support and there is a clear demand for increased safe cycling and walking infrastructure in order to help reduce car dependency, thereby helping to combat climate change. Both the online survey and online focus groups demonstrate an overwhelming desire to have infrastructure in place that allows a reduction in car journeys through access to safe cycling and walking provision. In the survey, 60% of respondents reckon they could reduce car trips by 25% if they had access to safe walking/cycling infrastructure.

### Sustainable Mobility Policy Review

**4.20** The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTS) carried out an extensive public consultation on its Sustainable Mobility Policy from November 2019 to February 2020. Sustainable Mobility, as defined by the DTTS, can be described as linking people and places in a sustainable way by supporting:-

- ❑ comfortable and affordable journeys to and from work, home, school, college, shops and leisure;
- ❑ travelling by cleaner and greener transport, and;
- ❑ a shift away from the private car to greater use of active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport (e.g. bus, rail, tram)

**4.21** The review examines all aspects of active travel and public transport policy and will result in the development of a new 10 year sustainable mobility policy framework. The new policy will support Programme for Government and replace Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020 and the National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020. Relevant to this project are the references to walking and cycling submissions to be considered in the new policy; the following examples are noted in the review:-

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<sup>(10)</sup> The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation that works to build better policies for better lives; Ireland is a member country.

- ❑ There was a view among submissions that there is an imbalance towards catering for motor traffic and that current policy favours car dependency and road building.
- ❑ Submissions stressed the importance of physically separate cycling infrastructure as an overarching goal.
- ❑ Mandate the use of The World Health Organisation Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) in the economic assessment of all publicly funded projects.

### Health and the Importance of Physical Activity

**4.22** The National Activity Plan for Ireland launched in January 2016 draws attention to some stark statistics:-

- ❑ Only 19% of primary and 12% of post-primary school children meet physical activity recommendations with girls less likely than boys to meet the recommendations and the likelihood of meeting the recommendations decreasing with increasing age.
- ❑ 10% of active sports participants at primary school have dropped out of sport by the first year of post-primary.
- ❑ One in four children are unfit, overweight or obese and have elevated blood pressure. The Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative’s 2017 report stated *‘we still have a significant way to go in creating environments in our homes, schools and communities where every child has the potential to grow and develop healthy from birth into adulthood. Excess weight in children will damage their health both now and into the future’*. Childhood obesity has enormous health implications for individuals and for society in the future; obesity is a major killer.
- ❑ Only 32% of adults are meeting the national physical activity recommendations.

**4.23** The National Activity Plan further reveals Irish statistics on the poor health consequences of physical inactivity to be significantly higher than European and global averages for heart disease, type 2 diabetes, breast cancer and colon cancer. The plan also acknowledges the social and economic cost of physical inactivity; for example, inactive children are at risk of poorer self-esteem, higher anxiety and higher stress levels and more likely to smoke, use alcohol and illegal drugs than active children. For adults, inactive employees have double the number of days off work due to sickness compared to physically active employees. In later life, inactive people have much poorer mental and physical health outcomes, putting an obvious burden on the healthcare system. The plan notes:-

***“Being physically active is one of the most important steps that people of all ages can take to improve their health and wellbeing.”***

**4.24** There is of course no one solution to getting people more active, instead, provision of more active lifestyles is required in all aspects of modern living that includes

being able to walk and cycle more as part of normal daily activities. The proposed network of safe walking/cycling trails aligns well with targets laid out in the National Activity Plan which state that local authorities should prioritise the development of walking and cycling infrastructure, for example, through the creation of connected cycle and footpath networks as well as in the development of local and regional parks. Without this sort of critical infrastructure there is a risk that the health of people living in east Wicklow will suffer through lack of opportunities for easily accessible physical recreation.

### Green Exercise

- 4.25** There is an increasing body of research demonstrating the physical and mental health benefits of exercising outdoors in natural environments, often referred to as ‘Green Exercise’. Studies report the importance of the walking environment – *‘walking has a greater effect and cognitive restorative effect for adults of poor mental health in rural as opposed to urban settings’*.<sup>(11)</sup> The UK mental-health charity MIND ran a study of ‘green exercise’ (physical activity outdoors), questioning people involved in gardening, conservation and cycling as well as walking groups. Of those surveyed, 90% said they feel green exercise benefits their physical health – but an even higher proportion, 94%, feel that it improves their mental health<sup>(12)</sup>. The potential causal relationship for improved mental and physical health through use of green space can be demonstrated – see Appendix 2. A network of trails as proposed would create opportunities for people to be more active in attractive health-giving natural environments.

### Greenways in Ireland

- 4.26** Ireland has seen significant development in Greenways, initially guided by the National Cycle Network and delivered through the Smarter Travel<sup>(13)</sup> policy (2009) and the National Cycle Policy Framework (2009). The National Cycle Network is broadly defined as a 2,000km network of thirteen corridors, prioritising traffic-free sections. The government’s *‘Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways’*, published in 2018, notes a change in investment. The focus of the strategy is on Greenways of scale of not less than 20km whilst investment in shorter Greenways falls under the remit of existing programmes such as the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme and government departments such as the Department of Rural and Community Development. The strategy looks to develop Greenways of strategic significance primarily to capitalise on tourism potential, wherein National Greenways are defined as at least 100 km and Regional Greenways are at least 20 km in length. The perception of how a Greenway is defined has changed with time and location. Newtown 2050s vision for the Mountains to the Sea Green-Way embraces trails and routes in different

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<sup>(11)</sup> C3 Collaborating for Health *Review: The benefits of regular walking for health, well-being and the environment, September 2011*. C3 is a registered charity based in London.

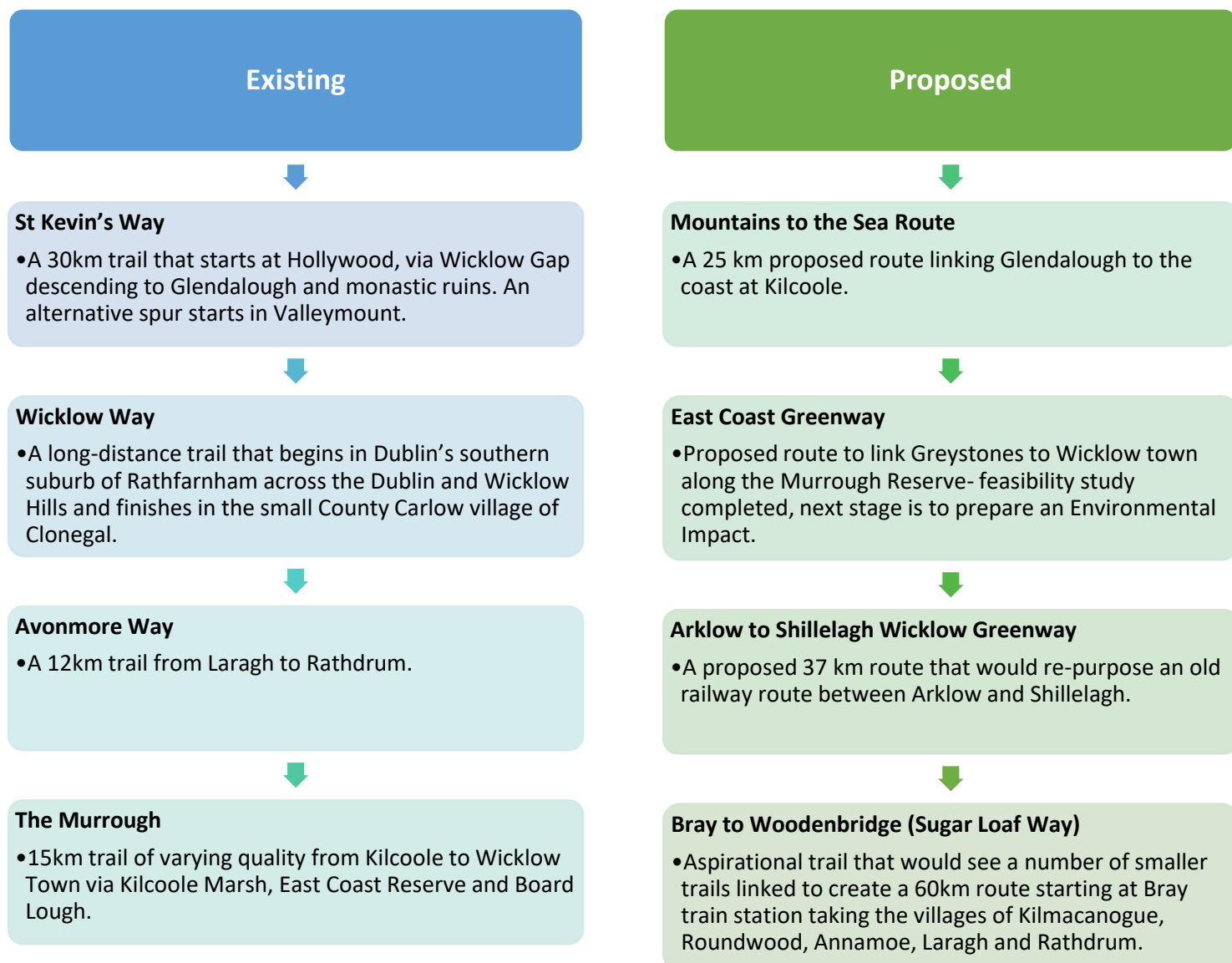
<sup>(12)</sup> MIND, *Ecotherapy: The Green Agenda for Mental Health (2007)*.

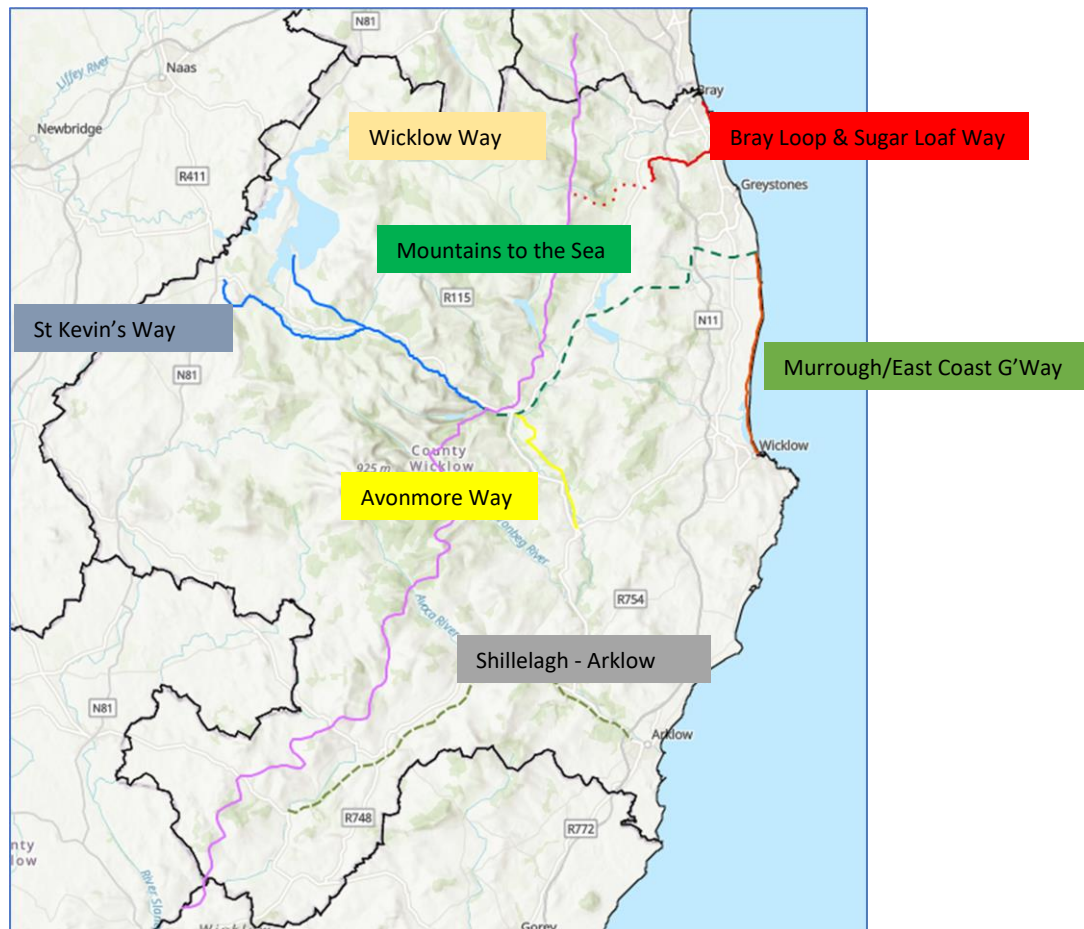
<sup>(13)</sup> *Smarter Travel promotes the use and development of sustainable means of transport – walking, cycling and public transport*.

geographies but with a unifying purpose, that of environmental and community benefit.

## Wicklow Long Distance Trails and Greenways

**4.27** Wicklow is home to the largest area of mountains and hills in Ireland. The highest mountain, Lugnaquilla, at 925m is the highest mountain in Ireland outside County Kerry. Whilst there are many well recognised walks and trails there is just one Greenway in the county, the Blessington Greenway, a 6.5 km trail that links the historic town of Blessington and the Palladian mansion at Russborough House. There are four existing long-distance trails and four proposed trails/Greenways in the county as follows:-





**Map showing existing and proposed long distance trails in Wicklow;  
routes are approximate**

**4.28** It is noted the council has launched a public consultation exercise for the proposed development of a short section (5km) of Greenway from Kilmacanogue to Southern Cross at Bray Retail Park; consultation runs to January 2021.

### Economic Benefits of Greenways/Trails

**4.29** The economic benefits of Greenways/trails can broadly be viewed as being of *direct* or *indirect* financial benefit. Direct economic benefits include user spends on food, accommodation, equipment hire and other visitor related expenses whilst indirect economic benefits can include benefits generated through a range of health, wellbeing, social and environmental outcomes for which an economic value can be calculated. Whilst Greenway users will be both residents and visitors, it is expected that residents will account for a larger proportion of the indirect benefits and visitors account for more of the direct economic benefits. Both direct and indirect economic benefits are presented in fuller detail in the following sections.

### Direct Economic Benefits

**4.30** Tourism is one of the largest and most important sectors of the national economy, providing employment for approximately 260,000 people. In 2018, out-of-state



(Overseas and North Ireland) tourist expenditure amounted to €5.6 billion whilst domestic tourism expenditure amounted to €2 billion, making tourism a hugely important industry. With regard to County Wicklow, Fáilte Ireland's figures for 2017 indicate 275,000 overseas visitors generated a revenue of €73m with a further 319,000 domestic visitors generating an estimated €49m in revenue. Wicklow is part the Ireland's Ancient East brand.

**4.31** Fáilte Ireland recognises that Greenways infrastructure plays an important role in Irish tourism. They boost the appeal of Ireland in the travel market, add value to the existing high tourism offering and support the development of rural communities and job creation in the rural economy, as well as protecting and promoting natural assets and biodiversity. Fáilte Ireland's ambition is for Ireland to be recognized internationally as a year-round activity destination. They note there has been significant growth in cycling tourism in Ireland in recent years; in 2018 it was the second largest activity with 450,000 overseas visitors participating in cycling while on holiday. A projected annual growth in cycling tourism of 4% is expected to continue to 2028. The development of a critical infrastructure of trails as proposed through this project aligns well with Fáilte Ireland's tourism vision and would be a valuable tourism asset both for the area and for County Wicklow. The following two case studies, for the Great Western Greenway and the Waterford Greenway, demonstrate the potential direct economic benefits of Greenways; they are presented as Appendix 3.

#### Indirect Economic Benefits

**4.32** Three modelling approaches (PARC, SROI, HEAT) demonstrate how the return on investment in infrastructure such as a Greenway can be calculated in terms of reduced health costs resulting from increased physical activity, and how broader outcomes such as biodiversity, active travel, social connections and others can be accounted for; see Appendix 4 for detailed analysis of each approach.

## Section Summary

**4.33** For some time government has worked to effect a modal shift in how people choose to travel in everyday life even as major road networks are improved to facilitate cars. Measures to promote active travel, thereby reducing car journeys, have not met targets to date. It's clear that at least part of the challenge is that commutes to work have become longer as more city-based workers move to live in outlying rural areas, meaning that active travel options – walking, cycling – are often not an option. What's needed is the holistic approach presented by Newtown 2050 that makes active travel viable by promoting remote working, walking and cycling connections between villages, public transport stations and bus stops, local business development and a greater appreciation of the environment. This 'packaging' approach is intended to better support the rural community in a way that is both green and sustainable.

## 5. Consultation

### Online Surveys

**5.1** For the purposes of this project four online surveys were conducted as detailed below. The community survey and business survey allowed a broad cross-section of the community, both within the project area and the wider county of Wicklow, to engage in the consultation process. In addition, the school surveys captured the views of young people aged 11 to 18 years, an age group often overlooked in such consultation exercises. A comprehensive analysis of survey results is presented as Appendix 5.

Type of survey	Number of responses	Period of distribution	Platform
<b>Community Survey</b>	1,260 individuals	7 September to 30 November 2020	Survey Monkey
<b>Business Survey</b>	23 businesses	21 September to 30 November 2020	Survey Monkey
<b>Secondary School Survey</b>	220 pupils from three schools	24 October to 30 November 2020	Survey Monkey
<b>Primary School Survey</b>	4 classes from 3 schools: Kilcoole Primary School, St Francis National School, Newcastle and Newtownmountkennedy Primary School	14 October to 30 November 2020	Google Documents – the class teacher asked the questions and recorded the number of responses by a show of hands.

### Community Survey Results

**5.2** The community survey captured information on a range of topics including gender, age, employment status, walking/cycling habits, potential use of the proposed Green-Way, reduction in car journeys, creation of a Nine Village Federation, and the perceived benefits of the project. The level of interest in the community consultation, partly reflected in the large number of survey responses – 1,260 – is in itself an indication of support for Newtown 2050s vision, further evidenced in the survey responses. Whilst residents of Newtownmountkennedy account for 39% of the responses, the three villages of Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole and Kilpedder together account for 70% of the responses. These villages lie close to each other in the lower reaches of the Wicklow Hills and it may be the case that their residents are more aware of Newtown 2050s vision than residents elsewhere in the project area; they may also identify with the vision as being peculiar to village communities.

- 5.3** The profile of respondents is of interest, as 60% are the 35 years to 45 years age band, whilst 65% have children. This suggests young families have a particular interest in and that they understand the proposed project and how it can benefit parents and children, especially the improved facilities for cycling and walking that it will deliver. Currently, cycling and walking activity is at a low ebb in the project area with 75% of respondents rating provision for cycling, walking and running as either *not safe* (42%) or *somewhat unsafe* (33%). Almost two-thirds of children *never* or *rarely* walk or cycle to school with 57% saying *it's not safe*; a safe cycling/walking route to school could persuade a significant number of children who presently travel to and from school by car to try a more sustainable and healthier way to travel. Backing up this possibility is the 78% of respondents who are open to making less use of their car and making more trips on off-road trails, with nearly all of these respondents reckoning they could reduce the number of their car journeys by at least 28%. Only a third of respondents said *no* to the possibility of investing in an electric bike for everyday travel on the proposed Green-Way so this is something that should be factored into the design of key sections of the network, say, between villages and schools.
- 5.4** Responses to the question '*.... how would you see yourself, family members and visitors using the proposed Green-Way?*' most likely reflect a perception that Greenways are intended primarily for exercise, leisure and pleasure rather than journeying to/from school or a place of work or connecting communities. The project's strategic pillars – *inter-connectivity; green economics; biodiversity & sustainability* – must constantly be kept to the forefront when advocating the project's merits to encourage a holistic understanding of and support for its vision.
- 5.5** People need to see how they, their families and their community will benefit from an infrastructure project in order for them to give it their support. The series of seven 'benefits' statements posed in the survey received high levels of support, from 96% agreeing the *Green-Way would attract more visitors to the area*, to 70% agreeing it *would provide safe travel routes to school, work and social destinations*. The 'softer' benefit of making the countryside and nature more accessible is well up the list at 93%; given that most of the respondents already live in rural areas this suggests that countryside access needs to be improved and, that when it is improved, people will respond accordingly.
- 5.6** The idea of a Nine Village Federation is supported by 92% of respondents. This lends weight to the project's inter-connectivity objective from a social perspective. The top scoring reasons as to why people think a federation is a good idea are '*it could help create sustainable, green and local economic opportunities*', and '*it could help look after the natural environment, local heritage and culture*'. Co-operation between the villages is part of Newtown 2050s vision and the formation of a federation with effective leadership has considerable potential in actioning the vision.

- 5.7 The community survey has, through the information obtained, achieved several notable results:-

It has engaged a significant percentage of those living in the project area, helping them understand and identify with Newtown 2050s vision and strategic objectives.

It has sparked the respondents' imagination as to the project's potential to deliver outcomes that will have a positive impact on their lives and community life in general.

It demonstrates that the idea of the villages in the project area working together to deliver the vision has widespread support. Importantly, nearly 200 respondents have indicated they are willing to get directly involved in helping to move things forward.

### Long Answer Comments

- 5.8 The community survey included five long answer questions – a full copy of these responses is presented as Appendix 1. In total, 674 comments were recorded, the vast majority in favour of the project. Over 200 people registered their contact details to offer assistance and giving permission for Newtown 20250 to contact them with project updates.
- 5.9 A small number of these comments raised concern about the project. These can be categorised into three broad areas; (i) concern for biodiversity as a result of increased use of the countryside; (ii) concern that existing infrastructure cannot cope with increased visitors (parking, toilets, littering etc); and, (iii) concern regarding anti-social behaviour on or near the route. What is called for is more wildness and remoteness; getting the right balance between more access to the countryside and promoting, not endangering, biodiversity will be challenging.

## Business Survey Results

- 5.10 Economics is one of the project's three strategic pillars:-

*'Empowering local businesses to take advantage of gaps in accommodation and activity offerings, building on existing products and resources and exploiting the growing interest in ecotourism. Encouraging the growth of local producers of good quality food and drink and hospitality outlets. Co-ordinating the efforts of businesses under a single brand, such as Wicklow Naturally, will benefit everyone'.*

Tourism is clearly a key element here, however, Newtown 2050s vision broadens the project's responsibility to include all businesses; *'..... the promotion of businesses under a common, legitimate pure green brand will be valued and promoted'*. One idea that the business survey explored is the setting up of business hubs to facilitate people working locally.

**5.11** Of the 23 businesses which responded, 7 are located in Newtownmountkennedy. Interestingly, 10 businesses in the uplands area responded, perhaps demonstrating the need for support in developing existing businesses in particularly rural locations. About half of the respondents stated that at least 60% of their business activity is related to tourism. Most of the respondents *definitely support* the proposed Green-Way with the remainder stating they would *need to know more about it* before giving it their full support. All the respondents see the possibility of new business opportunities being generated by more tourists, however, a small number of businesses which responded - 3 - have no links to tourism and consequently do not see their business benefiting from more tourists.

**5.12** The business survey sought views on the SMART Village initiative, the Business Improvement District (BID) initiative and the idea of a Nine Village Federation. Support for and interest in these initiatives in terms of helping businesses in rural settings is evident in all the responses. In relation to SMART Villages, of the nine *'needs/challenges'* presented to the respondents, *'job opportunities to allow young people the option of staying/living in their home area'* tops the list whilst *'fast broadband, sustainable travel, biodiversity protection, digital-hubs for remote working, farm diversification, social connections'* are also rated as very/extremely important. The idea of a BID initiative which involves businesses working, investing and delivering projects as a collective is also favourably received. Similarly, the Nine Villages Federation idea has sparked a good deal of interest amongst the respondents. The level of interest in these business initiatives merits further investigation and consultation. The open comments recorded by the business survey respondents confirm their support for the proposed Green-Way and its potential benefits whilst highlighting concerns such as vehicle parking, ancillary facilities and the need to mitigate any environmental impact on flora and fauna.

## Schools' Survey

**5.13** The schools' survey was distributed during October 2020 electronically to all secondary schools in the county – 14 no. – and all primary schools in the project area. Responses were received from three primary and two secondary schools.

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Primary   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Saint Francis National School, Newcastle</li><li>▪ Kilcoole Primary School</li><li>▪ Newtownmountkennedy Primary School</li></ul> |
| Secondary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ St Gerard's School, Bray</li><li>▪ Temple Carrig School, Greystones</li><li>▪ Coláiste Chraobh Abhann, Kilcoole</li></ul>         |



### 5.14 Primary Schools

- ❑ Whilst 51% of children who responded to the survey travel to/from school by car, a significant 58% either walk – 43%, or cycle – 15% with the remaining 3% travelling by bus. That 58% either walk or cycle is perhaps a reflection of the relative proximity of primary schools to residential areas within villages. However, nearly three times as many children walk as cycle to/from school.
- ❑ Looking at the reasons as to why children don't walk or cycle to/from school, 16% stated there are no suitable paths whilst 14% said their parents don't allow them to walk or cycle to/from school. The provision of paths for cycling and walking may help to change parental attitudes. Only 11% of the children said they don't have a bicycle; this could be addressed through bicycle loan schemes.
- ❑ Children were asked 'Where else do you walk or cycle to'? A significant 45% walk or cycle with their parents 'for fun' whilst the same percentage walks or cycles to a local play park. The biggest percentage – 72% - walk or cycle to visit friends, most likely in their immediate neighbourhood. Nearly all of the children – 91% - agree that the Green-Way is a good idea whilst 81% reckon they would cycle/walk more if it is built.
- ❑ A range of activity options that the children might be interested in was suggested to them. The most popular are *nature walks with school* and *family walking trips* whilst half of the children said they would *walk or cycle to school*.
- ❑ The children were able to express their opinions in final comments. The most perceptive comment covered health benefits, reduced air pollution, impact on climate change and traffic congestion; *'It might make the journey shorter, lead to more exercise and fitness, less air pollution. Would lessen the impact of climate change. Would not be stuck in the car, less cars/traffic on the road. Good for the community'*.

### 5.15 Secondary Schools

- ❑ A total of 220 pupils between the three participating schools submitted a response, of which a third were 13 year olds; pupils in year groups 8 to 11 accounted for 82% of the responses.
- ❑ Nearly two thirds of pupils rely on family members to *get about*, that is, being driven, although 46% either walk – 28%, or cycle – 18%, to most places. For those that don't walk or cycle much as part of their normal activities, the most frequently cited reason is the *lack of safe paths/trails/routes*, with a further 18% reckoning that *walking or cycling on roads is not a safe option for getting about*. The flip side of safety concerns preventing walking and cycling is that 97% of the pupils stated they would walk or cycle more often if safe paths were developed. Thinking about how often they would use the proposed Green-Way 82% of the pupils would use it at least a *few times a month* with the top activities being fitness activities and using it with family and friends.

- The open comments recorded by these secondary school pupils - over half of the pupils recorded a comment – demonstrate an excellent understanding of the challenges in developing the proposed Green-Way and the benefits that it could bring. Here are two such comments:-

*'I think the government should fund it because they pay for roads and the Green-Way is the human equivalent of roads'.*



*'There should be a lot of them webbing across and connecting to each other so they could take users to lots of places. They would be used more then'.*

## Online Public Workshops

- 5.16** A series of three public workshops was delivered during November 2020. These were delivered online due to COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings. Each workshop addressed the same five topics:-



### Topic 1: What difference would the Green-Way make to me?

The Green-Way has the potential to make a difference to individuals' lives through using it and what that means for recreational opportunities, for ways of getting around and for health outcomes. This discussion encouraged people to think about themselves and how their lives might change. A number of key themes and describing words emerge:-

### Safety

- Uppermost in people's minds is safety, both in walking, cycling and recreational activity such as running. One participant made the point *'there are no facilities in Newtownmountkennedy for the elderly in wheelchairs or young children in buggies to walk safely'*.

### Connections

- The potential for people to walk/cycle/jog between villages is recognised. The vision is presented as 'The Mountains to the Sea' and several participants look forward to the opportunity to travel the 25 kilometre (approximately) distance as a day-trip adventure.

### Recreation

- People see the Green-Way as providing more options and more opportunities for recreational activities, whether cycling, walking, running or even horse-riding. There is a sense that people look forward to having opportunities for outdoor recreation, perhaps as a result of COVID-19 'lockdowns' that have constrained people in getting out of their homes. Having a network of off-road routes that can be easily accessed by people living locally is viewed as a significant step forward in the provision of recreational facilities in the area. Many of the participants suggested they would be able to 'stay local' for recreational activities and 'explore the surrounding areas'.

### Less Car Use

- The road system in the project area is not particularly suited to other modes of transport, especially cycling. With a network of routes that welcome cyclists the participants feel they will be able to reduce their use of the car, especially for shorter journeys between villages. There is a sense that people look forward to having less reliance on cars, that the Green-Way will lead to lifestyle changes; one participant stated *'I would actually get to use my bike'*. It is often the case that roads in rural areas are not welcoming to cyclists, yet the sale of bicycles in Ireland increased by 30% in 2020 over 2019, likely due to COVID-19.

### Health

- Many participants made the connection between using the Green-Way and improved physical and mental health. There is a sense of frustration that living in the project area means there are fewer opportunities for health-promoting and accessible exercise with some participants travelling - by car - outside the area to access facilities. The prospect of a Green-Way on people's doorstep is clearly linked to improved health outcomes by the participants.

### Nature

- Perhaps surprisingly the opportunity presented by the Green-Way to get out into nature and appreciate the environment was mentioned less than other aspects that directly affect individuals' lives. Comments related to nature include *'I'll be able to explore the countryside'*, *'I'll see new parts of the countryside'* and *'I'll show off the area to my friends and family'*. The bigger picture of biodiversity and climate challenges addressed through this project need to be communicated alongside the benefits to individuals.

## Topic 2: What would the impact be on families?

The potential to impact on families is quite different from the difference the Green-Way will make to individuals. This discussion encouraged people to consider the impact on family groups, especially those with young children. The following themes emerged across each workshop:-

### Safety

- As in the previous discussion topic, safety is high on the list. Several mentions were made of *'safe, sustainable travel to/from school'* which would have the knock-on effect of reducing short car journeys between home and school. People see the routes as being *'safe and inclusive for those walking or with mobility devices for exercise/travel'*. The Green-Way is clearly linked with people being able to access safe walks in the project area.

### Nature

- Being able to connect with nature appears to be an important consideration for families, more than for individuals. This points to parents' recognition of the need to encourage awareness of nature and natural habitats in their children. One comment referred to a *'greater appreciation of the outdoors'* which implies a greater appreciation of nature.

### Family & Community

- Perhaps unsurprisingly the possibilities for families spending time together presented by the Green-Way are seen as being important. One suggestion is *'..... it will enable the family to get out of houses and integrate in the community'*. Another participant suggests the Green-Way is *'..... a way for the community to come together with a shared goal'*. This latter point recognises that the project to develop the Green-Way will bring people together for a common purpose. 'Family' and 'community' are viewed here as one and the same thing; one comment suggests the Green-Way will give a *'greater sense of identity for Wicklow newcomers'* whilst another reckons it will create *'opportunities for intergenerational activities'*. There is a sense that the project will give the area an identity with one comment referring to *'community pride'*.

### Health

- Following on from the emphasis on health benefits for individuals it's also an important outcome for families. The workshop participants look forward to establishing *'healthy habits in children for life (cycling)'* and the positive impact on mental health. These and similar comments point to parents' growing understanding of the need to involve children in exercise for mental as well as physical health. Often it is difficult to access recreational facilities in rural settings so the Green-Way is seen as an important asset for families as well as for the community.

### Social

- There is a view that the Green-Way will be somewhere that people can meet; *'a meeting point for family members'* is how one participant put it, whilst another said *'it will give easy access for community and social involvement, eg, walking groups'*. The simple impact of people meeting and talking on the Green-Way and the benefits to families and the wider community are recognised here.

### Topic 3: What would the impact be on older<sup>(14)</sup> people?

As Ireland's population gets older, especially in rural areas, and life expectancy increases, people need places to walk, exercise and socialise, moving easily between communities and staying in touch with each other. The physical and mental health benefits of regular exercise and socialising among older people are well documented. The discussion shows a clear understanding of these benefits.

The 2016 census reveals 37.2% of the population is aged 45 and over compared with 27.6% in 1986. The average age of the rural population is 2.4 years older than the urban population.

#### Safety & Access

- Having somewhere safe for older people to walk is a common theme across the workshops; several people wondered about the surface, suggesting wheelchairs/pushchairs should be able to access the routes. The issue of safety and accessibility is raised across the workshop topics. This begins to inform how routes should be constructed; whilst it will not be possible for routes to always be flat, there should at least be 'inclusive' sections, suitable for wheelchairs and mobility aids and generally safe for older people.

#### Connections

- For older people, connections are as much about connecting with each other as they are about connecting places. In this regard some participants wondered about the need for ancillary facilities such as seating and even cafes which *'are not currently present at many walking spots'*. About half of the participants talked about how the Green-Way would *'decrease isolation in older people through connecting villages and neighbours'* and encourage *'community activities to combat loneliness'*. Other comments similarly spoke of how integration with others in the community would alleviate loneliness whilst some suggested the Green-Way would provide volunteering opportunities in caring for the route and participating in group projects. Village life can benefit enormously through volunteering, especially by older people, who are likely to be retired from full-time employment.

#### Exercise

- Regular exercise reduces the incidence of life-limiting conditions and it's never too late to get started! The workshops emphasised the opportunities for older people to exercise through using the Green-Way, either walking or cycling; one comment suggested *'it may encourage some older people to try cycling as they will feel safer than sharing roads with vehicles'*. The connection being made between exercise and safety is clear, again highlighting that opportunities for older people to exercise in the project area at the moment are, perhaps limited. Another comment draws attention to the fact that having options for exercising close to home means a car journey is not required.

<sup>(14)</sup> For statistical and public administrative purposes 'older people' are generally regarded as 60 or 65 years and above.



## Topic 4: What would the impact be on local businesses?

With 'Green Economics' one of the project's strategic pillars, workshop participants were encouraged to consider how they think local businesses might benefit from the Green-Way, not only existing businesses but also through opportunities for new businesses. A good deal of the commentary is linked to more people coming into the area through domestic and/or international tourism.

### Opportunities

- The workshop participants recognise the opportunities for local businesses presented by the Green-Way, for both existing businesses and new businesses. The potential for smaller businesses, locally owned, is viewed as being important. Comments point to a range of businesses including bike rental, outdoor wear, bed & breakfast, cafes and food outlets. The thinking amongst the participants is that the Green-Way will attract not only 'new' visitors but it will also encourage people living locally to stay within the area for the recreational activities that the Green-Way makes possible. Given that the Green-Way routes will link villages, discussion also identified the potential for existing shops to benefit from a spin-off from increased footfall in the area.

### Start-ups

- The participants also see opportunities for start-up businesses to meet the needs of people visiting and using the Green-Way. Ideas for start-ups reflect the 'green' brand that the Green-Way will promote, including food and drink producers, farm diversification, heritage tours, walking guides, equipment hire, etc. The potential for start-ups is reckoned to be limited only by the eventual scale and scope of the routes and how they are marketed.

### Support

- For local businesses to derive benefit from the Green-Way the workshop participants see a need for them to be supported. What 'support' will look like is not yet clear, however, it could include (i) mentoring to be aware of emerging opportunities and how to take advantage of them; (ii) marketing; (iii) product development (iv) inclusion in Green-Way branding.

### Competition

- There is clearly some concern that, in drawing attention to the project area non-local businesses may become interested in setting up shop; the specific concern is that some new businesses, perhaps even 'multi-nationals' would have a detrimental impact on small local businesses. Such a development would seem to fly in the face of the project's objectives in relation to empowering local businesses and encouraging local producers; efforts will be needed to avoid this happening.

## Topic 5: What would the impact be on the environment?

In each workshop session this was the last topic to be introduced. The discussion demonstrates a clear understanding of environmental issues and the positive impact that the Green-Way will have. There is also an understanding of the need for environmentally-friendly construction of the Green-Way and the need for care in its operational management.

### Biodiversity

- As one of the project's main drivers and objectives, it's perhaps gratifying to note that local people, as evidenced in discussion across all workshops, put the importance of biodiversity and its protection at the top of the list of all impacts. One participant reckons, *'if planned and managed properly the Green-Way could create an amazing biodiversity – 25km x 4 or 6 metres is a lot of planting'*. Other comments refer to opportunities for localised wilding and creating a wildlife corridor. Another comment draws attention to construction of the Green-Way, *'the materials have to be non-oil based. Keep the insects and wildlife being able to live alongside us'*. Yet another comment highlights the risk that inappropriate lighting would kill insects. This concern regarding biodiversity emphasises the importance of taking care not to compromise the project's objectives during construction.

### Management

- Beyond construction, concerns are also raised regarding management, as evidenced in the following comment, *'poor management can result in very negative impacts – litter, traffic, damage to habitats, etc and this is a particularly sensitive area'*. Other comments relating to management referred to the need for route maintenance, eg, drainage, surface condition and the maintenance of ancillary elements such as signage, litter bins, seating, fencing.

### Education

- The opportunity to educate people about biodiversity and climate change is seen as a critical part of the project, particularly school-age children. The starting point here is children being able to use sections of the Green-Way to travel – walk or cycle – to and from school. The importance of appropriate signage is highlighted by participants. Whilst education about the project's objectives is important, workshop discussion also highlighted the need to educate people to respect the Green-Way; examples put forward of unacceptable behaviour include lighting fires, littering, dog fouling, disturbing wildlife and farm animals.

### Reduce Carbon Emissions

- As with biodiversity, the impact of the Green-Way on climate change through reducing car journeys and the resultant reduction in carbon emissions is fully understood by the workshop participants. One participant sees this as a significant opportunity for the project, *'If through the Green-Way project, we make a significant effort to reduce carbon emissions aligned to local development, this could put the area on the Irish map in terms of awards given we are the Garden of Ireland'*.

## Stakeholder's Forum

**5.17** Held in November 2020 this virtual workshop brought together a Stakeholder's Forum, comprising representatives of key organisations which have an interest in the vision proposed by Newtown 2050. The objective of the workshop was two-fold; (i) to inform these organisations about the project and the rationale behind it, ie, climate change and the loss of biodiversity; (ii) to hear how the work of other organisations complements Newtown 2050s vision. Representatives from the following organisations were in attendance:-

- ❖ Wicklow County Council – elected members, planning department
- ❖ Wicklow Tourism
- ❖ Newtownmountkennedy Community Forum
- ❖ County Wicklow Partnership
- ❖ National Parks & Wildlife Service
- ❖ Newtown 2050
- ❖ Teagasc Agriculture & Food Development Authority

Also invited but unable to attend were the Wicklow Uplands Council and Coillte, both of which had been consulted before the workshop, and Simon Harris, TD for Wicklow and Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

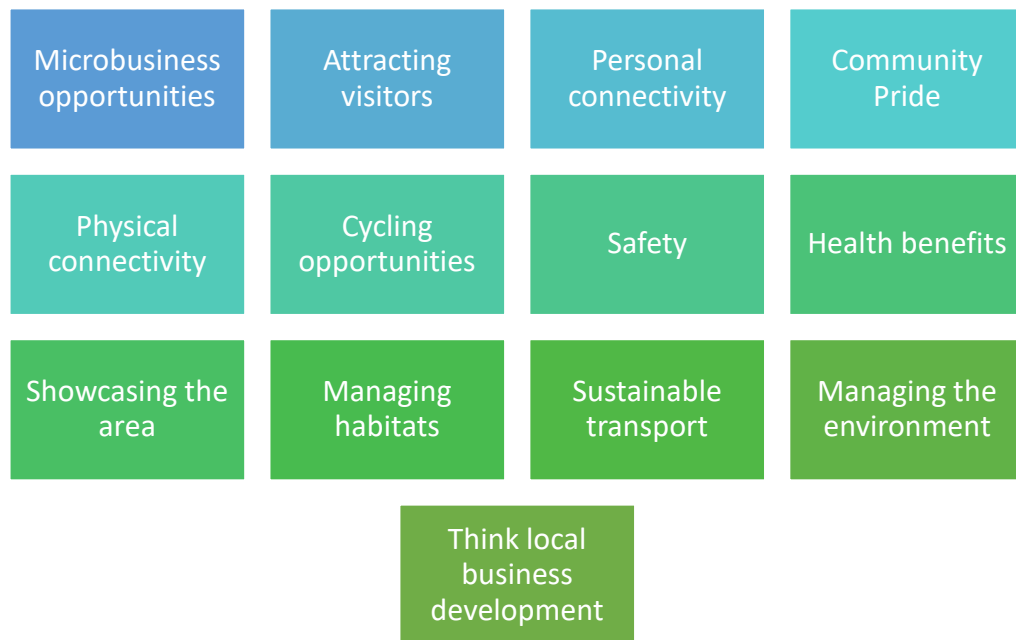
Also invited and in attendance was a representative from the consultancy team commissioned by Fáilte Ireland and partners to prepare a Visitor Experience and Management Master Plan (Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park) and Visitor Orientation Recommendations (Co Wicklow). The consultant's remit includes the preparation of a Recreational Trail Master Plan.

**5.18** The Forum commenced with a presentation, describing the vision, the project's strategic pillars and a summary of the survey and consultation work undertaken in the weeks prior to the workshop. The first of two 'work' sessions asked the attendees to consider how Newtown 2050s vision fits with the strategic plans of their organisation. Here's a summary of the comments and discussion:-

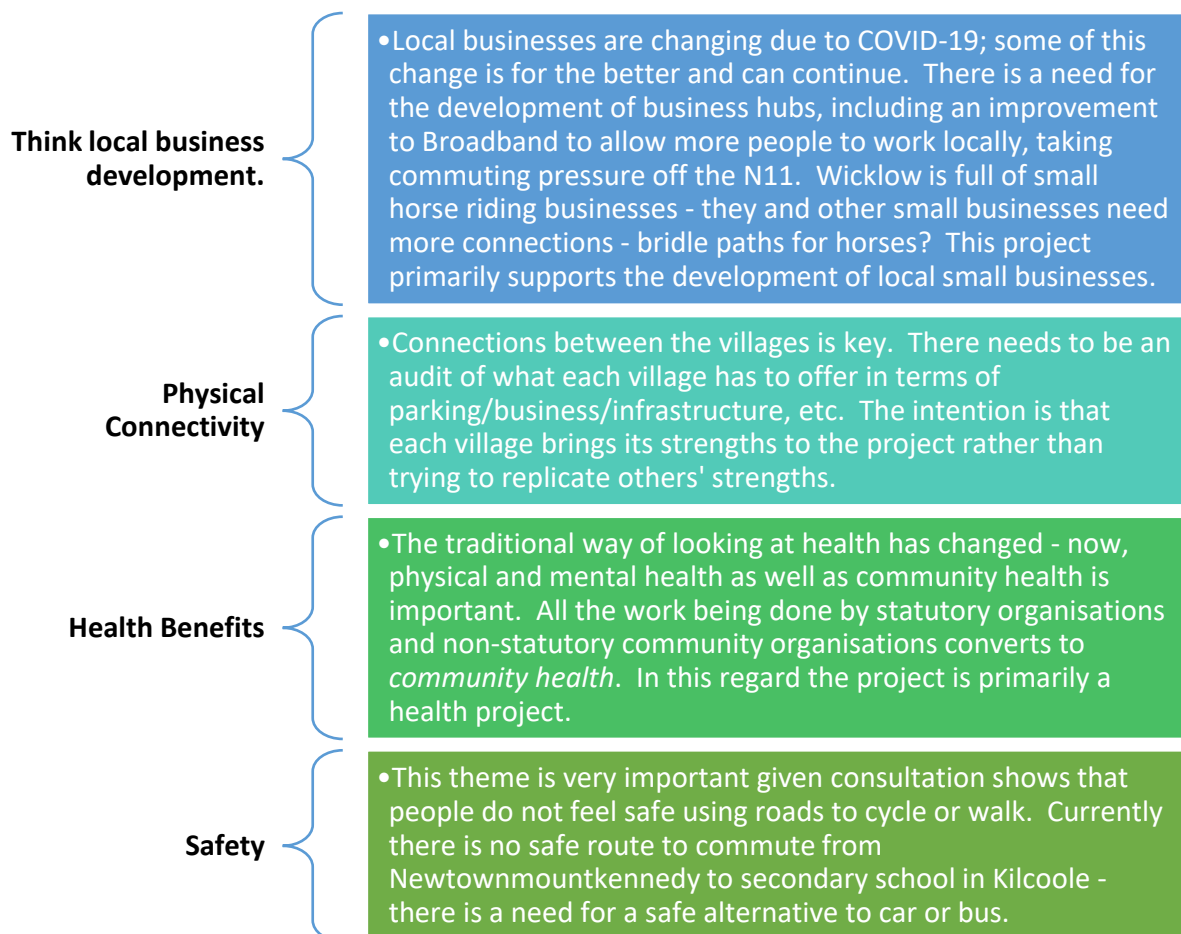
- ❖ *Newtownmountkennedy Community Forum* see the project as bringing groups and residents in the village together and contributing to more community engagement. Newtown 2050s vision is supported by the village community and its businesses, recognising the project will help to link local villages by ways that reduce the carbon footprint. Children getting to and from school presents a particular opportunity for this project, especially thinking of children living in Newtownmountkennedy and attending the secondary school in Kilcoole.
- ❖ Three elected members serving on *Wicklow County Council* were present. They made a number of points:-

- (i) Newtown 2050s vision clearly fits with the county’s tourism plan which looks at various ‘honeypot’ tourist sites and how to disperse visitors to other parts of the county. Connectivity, as referenced in Newtown 2050s vision, is at the very heart of the county tourism plan, the objective being to extend the length of time visitors remain in the area. One of the key tourist sites from which the council is keen to disperse visitors is Glendalough.
  - (ii) A good deal of work has taken place in the Roundwood area in terms of local walks. The county is under-provided in bed-nights and places to stay, however, there are hotels which could be better utilised.
  - (iii) Landowners will have concerns when it comes to route planning; how these concerns are handled will be a critical element in delivering the project.
  - (iv) The project will need to look at the development plans/strategies for the villages in the project area to be informed of their infrastructural needs.
  - (v) The early thinking for this project was to achieve connectivity between Roundwood, Kilcoole, Newtownmountkennedy and the coast. This is something that should happen, however, there is a risk that if the project is too big the cost will mean nothing will happen. The focus should be on smaller projects that, taken together achieve the vision in the long term. Newtown 2050s representative responded to this concern by confirming that the vision will be progressed through a number of projects, each of which will be designed to be achievable in terms of cost.
- ❖ *Wicklow Tourism’s* representative highlighted that eco-tourism is the way forward, especially in light of international trends in tourism. Cycling around the villages in the project rather than having to drive is an attractive proposition. Wicklow Tourism is keen to see how the project will progress.
  - ❖ *Wicklow County Council (Planning Department)* views this as a very interesting project that is well worth pursuing given that connectivity between the villages is an issue. There is a need for a master plan/strategy for routes and trails in the county and Newtown 2050s project could feed into Fáilte Ireland’s Visitor Experience and Management Master Plan project. Adhering to Greenway specifications may be an issue if Newtown 2050s project is focusing on trails and connectivity between villages. Funding opportunities for smaller projects are more plentiful than for larger projects. There is no doubt about the huge growth in walking and cycling trails in Ireland; the question is posed – is it possible to create and obtain funding for a long distance route which is not necessarily a Greenway?
  - ❖ The *County Wicklow Partnership* representative agrees that achieving connectivity between one village and another, not necessarily by a Greenway, has examples of what can be achieved, such as Cinque Terra in Italy, where five coastal villages are connected by trails. Regarding LEADER funding, any community project that includes walks is eligible to apply. There are also grants for start-up businesses such as cycle rental.

The second work session sought to identify key themes coming out of the foregoing discussion. To start the discussion, the key themes emerging from the survey responses were presented on screen, as follows:-



**5.19** Attendees highlighted the importance of several key themes in the following discussion:-





## Section Summary

- 5.20** The approach to consultation was partly shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic, necessitating online workshops and survey work carried out solely by electronic means. Despite these restrictions, consultation has engaged a great many individuals and stakeholder groups; the community survey obtained responses from 10% of the project area's population. However, the level of engagement from schools and local businesses was low, when matched against the level of engagement from individuals. Having said this, the information obtained across all consultation methods points to a great deal of interest in and support for the project's vision and the three strategic pillars, effectively mandating the project to move forward.
- 5.21** Whilst consultation produces key information and statistics in response to set questions and discussion topics, the *open comment* opportunity in survey work often reveals important issues, ideas or simply expressions of support that complement responses to set questions. Appendix 1 presents the complete set of open comments to the community, business and schools surveys – 887 responses in total. It isn't possible to review each and every comment in this analysis however it is recommended that the comments are used to help inform discussion on the strategy and masterplan for the project when the time is right as they offer advice on what can be achieved, where care is needed and what should be avoided. Reading all the comments gives the reader an overwhelming sense of local interest in the proposed project and its objectives, support for it going forward, eager anticipation of how it will impact positively on everyone's lives, and finally, pride that it will be happening on the doorsteps of the villages' residents. Here is a small selection of the open comments:-

### Community Survey

- *'Overall in favour! Would like more detail in map, to know more about its path and end point in Kilcoole. Would it connect to Greystones/DART or some sort of transport connection? Green-Way of this kind would be a huge benefit to us as a family and we could switch to 1 car instead of 2.'*
- *'Adequate funding needed to see the project through. Proper joined-up thinking to bring it all together. Proper funding to pay local people to make this happen – stop over-reliance on volunteers and treat this as a wise and lucrative investment into sustainable regeneration for the area and a Just Transition for farmers seeking to diversify.'*
- *'Depending on the route it could end up funnelling visitors into specific areas, eg, Glendalough effect. There is a view that we sacrifice Glendalough to commercial tourism and that keeps the rest of the uplands unspoilt – be careful what we wish for.'*
- *'Greenways can cause considerable damage to the local environment by destroying habitats.'*

## Business Survey

- *'I am involved in marketing consultancy. This will encourage more local business, more prosperous economy, lead to more work'.*
- *'We could develop our 'gate to plate' offering for passers-by, especially at sweetcorn time'.*
- *'Parking central to the village of Roundwood. If the Green-Way goes ahead we will need parking more central to the village itself'.*
- *'Any initiative that enables our communities to develop and flourish, while simultaneously protecting an area of outstanding natural beauty is to be applauded. Best of luck and we will do what we can to support'.*

## Schools' Survey

- *'Instead of driving to a place to do a non-environmentally friendly activity, people can have fun and exercise in the Green-Way'.*
- *'Less people using cars to get places will obviously release less emissions but more needs to be done for climate change. It is ridiculous how little we are doing to save our home'.*
- *'I think government and local councils should fund it. They should be built near a main road so that it can be accessed easily by tourists but then diverge from the road so that the scenery would be more pleasant. It should go through multiple towns and villages so that there are different places where it can be accessed and where people can take a break. I think it should end by the sea, possibly Greystones'.*

## 6. Newtownmountkennedy

### Introduction

- 6.1** Newtownmountkennedy<sup>(15)</sup> is a growing settlement, variously referred to as a village or small town; it is categorised as a *large town* in the current County Development Plan. In recent years housing developments have significantly increased the village's population and permission is in place for a further 630 houses. Lying just off the N11 it has effectively become a commuter village for many of its residents; approximate distances by road to larger conurbations are:-



The Dublin Area Rapid Transit (DART) train service runs between Greystones and Dublin whilst the South Western Commuter Train service runs between Wexford/Rosslare and Dublin with a halt at Kilcoole.

- 6.2** Within the coastal sector of the project area the villages/settlements lying closest to Newtownmountkennedy are Kilcoole (4km), Kilpedder (2.5km), Greystones (7km), Newcastle (4.4km), Ashford (8.8km). Road distances from Newtownmountkennedy to villages/settlements in the uplands sector are:-

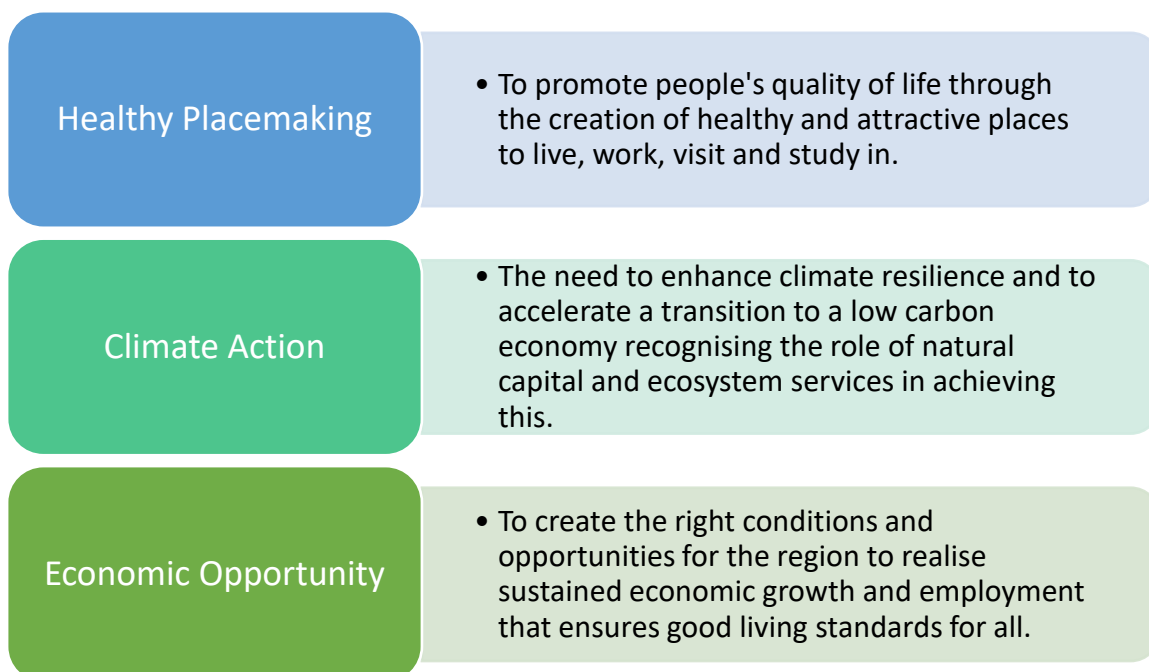


<sup>(15)</sup> 'Newtownmountkennedy' is often shortened to 'Newtown'.

6.3 Newtownmountkennedy lies between the Irish Sea and the Wicklow Mountains in an idyllic rural setting. The village of Kilcoole is its nearest neighbour; with Kilcoole accounting for 22% and Newtownmountkennedy accounting for 39% of the community survey responses there is clearly an affinity between the two villages. The nearest secondary school to Newtownmountkennedy - Coláiste Chraobh Abhann - is in Kilcoole and a wide range of services and retail outlets in Kilcoole supplement the offering in Newtownmountkennedy.

## Planning Context

6.4 The Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022 is presently under review as the new County Development Plan 2021-2027 takes shape. Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 the County is required to make a development plan every six years, addressing mandatory objectives which include the *'zoning of land, provision of infrastructure, the conservation and protection of the built and natural environment, the development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration, the preservation of the character of the landscape and the promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas'*.<sup>(16)</sup> Furthermore, Wicklow's new development plan is informed by the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region – adopted June 2019 – which promotes three key principles – Healthy Placemaking, Climate Action, Economic Opportunity.



<sup>(16)</sup> Wicklow County Development Plan 2021-2027; Issues Booklet. Wicklow County Council.

- 6.5** Whereas in the County Development Plan 2016-2022 Newtownmountkennedy is designated as one of six *principal growth towns*, the RSES identifies Bray and Wicklow-Rathnew as the county’s key towns, with all other towns to be designated as either ‘Self-Sustaining Growth Towns’ or ‘Self-Sustaining Towns’ based on assessment criteria. Set out in the RSES, sustainable development that ‘*promotes compact growth, reduces transport demand and encourages low carbon transport modes*’ is highlighted as one of the primary areas of transition for the region. There is a strongly held view within Newtown 2050s members that housing developments in Newtownmountkennedy have already reached and even exceeded the village’s capacity for sustainable development; housing growth over the past decade has increased the number of vehicles on the N11 for commutes and everyday living, and low carbon transports modes – active travel – have not been encouraged. Many local people support the regional authority’s view that land in the village earmarked for large-scale residential development should be de-zoned and significant barriers on future expansion put in place.
- 6.6** It’s noted that Newtown 2050s three strategic pillars closely align with the policies and objectives proposed for the new County Development Plan<sup>(17)</sup>, evidenced in a sample of numbered recommendations that appear in recent council papers:-

<b>51.</b>	Include policies to support new employment development in appropriate locations that will improve economic resilience and reduce to (sic) need for unsustainable commuting patterns.
<b>53.</b>	To retain and enhance policies and objectives with regard to enterprise development to ensure that entrepreneurialism and enterprise is promoted, smaller local businesses are fully supported and the development of co-working spaces/hubs is facilitated.
<b>65.</b>	To provide greater focus for walking trails, cycling infrastructure, greenways and blueways taking into account the potential benefits for local people and tourists.
<b>70.</b>	As part of the green infrastructure strategy to assess the feasibility of providing access to the Coillte forests located centrally in Newtownmountkennedy.
<b>76.</b>	<b>To investigate the feasibility of providing a pedestrian and cycle link between Newtownmountkennedy and Coláiste Chraobh Abhann Secondary School in Kilcoole.</b>
<b>96.</b>	The new County Development Plan will address recommendations of the Pollinator Plan where relevant.
<b>105.</b>	Include a new objective to encourage great consideration for biodiversity in the design, layout and planting of open space areas.

<sup>(17)</sup> Wicklow County Council County Development Plan: Chief Executive’s Report on Pre-Draft Consultation. June 2020.



## Delivering the Mountains to the Sea Vision for Newtownmountkennedy

- 6.7 The vision presented by Newtown 2050 will not be achieved in a single project; rather, it will be achieved incrementally in a series of projects over a period of years. Each of the three strategic pillars will require a detailed Master Plan, demonstrating how projects and actions will be taken forward and how, upon their delivery, they will collectively add to the vision. With this in mind, a good starting point is to look at Newtownmountkennedy and its environs to consider projects that have the potential to deliver aspects of the three strategic pillars.

### Strategic Pillar: Inter-Connectivity

***‘A critical infrastructure of paths and trails creating safe school commutes between villages; safe walking and cycling for locals and for work commutes to rail and transport services; options for activity tourism including bed nights. Also, relieving traffic congestion on the N11 by enabling a network of remote working hubs in areas where remote working is increasing’.***

### Paths and Trails

- 6.8 Newtown 2050s vision embraces environmental conservation and the promotion of a pure green brand, therefore the creation of paths and trails must also deliver on Biodiversity & Sustainability whilst delivering on Inter-Connectivity. Holding good to the relationship between these two strategic pillars helps inform how paths and trails will be designed and constructed, how they will look, how they will be used and how they will impact on local communities and on visitors. Different sectors within the project area have different priorities for types of use whilst the physical environment – flat, undulating, hilly, forest, open – will determine design and construction and, consequently, who will use the trails.
- 6.9 Whilst the study has not explored potential routes for trails and paths, an assessment of the project area and the sectors within it points to three categories of path/trail.

**Category 1: Paths**

**What will it look like?**

- Mostly flat, with gentle undulations, if any.
- Mostly open environment, fenced through farmland.
- Wide path - minimum 3 metres - with all-weather flat surface for walking and wheels.
- Planting - minimum 2 metres to each side of path.
- Lighting if required for intended use.

**How will it be used?**

- Commuting
- Connecting villages
- Recreation/leisure
- Activity tourism
- Home to School

**Where will it be?**

- Best suited to the coastal sector but also in uplands sector where the physical environment allows.

**Category 2: Paths/Trails**

**What will it look like?**

- Mix of flat and hills, forest and open.
- Wide path/trail where possible - minimum 3 metres - with flat and hard surface for walking and wheels.
- Mix of natural habitat and supplementary planting - 2 metres - to each side of trail.
- Natural materials used for construction, blending with surrounding environment.
- No lighting.

**How will it be used?**

- Connecting villages
- Recreation/leisure
- Activity tourism

**Where will it be?**

- Best suited to uplands sector but also in coastal sector determined by the terrain.

**Category 3: Trails**

**What will it look like?**

- Mix of hills and forest.
- Trail wide - up to 3 metres - where possible. surface contour dependent on terrain.
- Mostly natural habitat but with supplementary planting where necessary.
- Trail surface mix of free draining material and compacted earth; walking, fat tyre bikes.

**How will it be used?**

- Recreation/leisure
- Activity tourism

**Where will it be?**

- Almost exclusively the uplands sector.

**6.10** *Category 1: Paths* is the preferred option that best delivers Newtown 2050s vision and it is hoped that the majority of routes will be able to host this category; indeed, when it comes to identifying potential routes it is this category that should inform route-finding first and foremost. *Category 2: Paths/Trails* and *Category 3: Trails* are put forward here in recognition of the differing physical environments within the project area and the uncertainty at this stage of where routes can be placed. Perhaps a final category – **Category 4** – could be the idea of the Glendalough Camino, bringing together all the routes between Glendalough and the sea, presented as a long distance trail network.

**6.11** This study confirms that, for Newtownmountkennedy two inter-village routes are likely to be viable:-

**1. Newtownmountkennedy ↔ Greystones**  
Northwards from Newtownmountkennedy taking in the Garden Village housing development and Kilpedder then turning east to Greystones, picking up the existing cycle path on the town's outskirts to connect to the train station and schools.

**2. Newtownmountkennedy ↔ Kilcoole**  
East from Newtownmountkennedy, connecting to the centre of Kilcoole and Coláiste Chraobh Abhann. This is a co-educational, multi-denominational second level community college.

**6.12** These routes will trial the assertion, based on evidence coming out of the research for this study, that appropriately constructed routes connecting key places will reduce car journeys by facilitating walking and cycling. Both routes are selected for particular reasons; the Greystones route primarily to facilitate business commuters – but also schools; the Kilcoole route primarily to facilitate travel to/from schools. However, it is anticipated both routes will also attract a wide range of recreational users. They also open up opportunities for ‘spurs’ eg, on the Kilcoole route a spur to Kilquade, potentially following the ancient Mass Path onwards into Kilcoole.

**6.13** The route between Newtownmountkennedy and Kilcoole is of special interest as many of Newtownmountkennedy’s children transfer from the village’s primary school to Coláiste Chraobh Abhann in Kilcoole. This newly built community college, opened in 2003, is expected to grow from around 800 students to over 1,000 by 2022. Its catchment includes Newtownmountkennedy. The community survey points to almost two-thirds of pupils never or rarely walking to school presently, but 97% of pupils would walk or cycle more often if safe paths are developed .

### Remote Working Hubs

**6.14** The COVID-19 pandemic has brought home the need to be able to ‘work remotely’, meaning working close to home rather than travelling into city-based offices. For example, an organisation may facilitate staff to work remotely for part of the week,

or a start-up business may look for locally-based office accommodation in favour of the daily commute to city-based office accommodation. Having been thoroughly tested during 2020, remote working is not only here to stay but is reckoned to increase, at a time when office-based organisations are encouraged to reduce their carbon footprint and communications technology enables remote meetings. In December 2020 the government announced it is looking at the possibility of developing ‘more than 400’ remote working hubs and the Minister for Rural and Community Development, in allocating €5million in the 2021 budget, has made remote working a priority.

**6.15** The project area offers particular opportunities for the development of remote working hubs, not least by way of farm diversification. The scale of proposed housing development in Newtownmountkennedy and across the project area points to increasing demand for remote working hubs in the project area in the coming years. These hubs will be partly facilitated by improved physical connectivity between villages, so enabling travel from home to work by walking or cycling.



***HUB13’s relaxation lounge where people can meet and share ideas.***

**6.16** The development of remote working hubs in the project area will also help deliver on Newtown 2050s other strategic pillars – Economics, Biodiversity & Sustainability. The hubs will contribute to a more equitable distribution of jobs across the county whilst fewer car journeys will reduce CO2 emissions. They will also enhance the quality of life for users – and their families; the average Wicklow motorist commuting to and from Dublin spends up to 2 hours in their car daily and three-quarters of commuters reported they are *unhappy* or *very unhappy* with their commute in a recent survey<sup>(18)</sup>.

## HUB13

HUB13 is located just outside Newtownmountkennedy in a 150 year old repurposed sawmill/joinery workshop. Developed and managed by a local entrepreneur and opened in August 2019, it offers co-working office and workshop space aimed at the tech and design sector. HUB13 has a strong business community ethos, explaining that *‘co-working spaces are communities of people, who work in the same space, share ideas, dreams – and love it!’* The objective is to have a blend of businesses in a social environment where people can get to know each other and share skills and knowledge.

With occupancy at 85% HUB13s clients include internet consultants, financial, legal and language experts, as well as an outdoor equipment supplier. The 10 hot desks, 4 offices, meeting room and community space, all with high-speed Wi-Fi, retain the feel of the joinery workshop with sympathetic use of wood and natural materials throughout. Future plans for the site include allotments and charging points for electric vehicles, helping to promote a green lifestyle.

<sup>(18)</sup> Wicklow Commuter Study; Wicklow County Council 2019.

## Strategic Pillar: Smart Green Economics

***‘Empowering local businesses to take advantages of gaps in accommodation and activity offerings, building on existing products and resources and exploiting the growing interest in ecotourism. Encouraging the growth of local producers of good quality food and drink and hospitality outlets. Co-ordinating the efforts of businesses under a single brand, such as Wicklow Naturally, will benefit everyone’.***

- 6.17** Wicklow County Council leads on business development and support in the county through the Local Enterprise Office which can then refer clients to an appropriate state agency, if specialist advice or support is needed. The main focus of this strategic pillar is on business opportunities that arise from visitors and tourists, especially the growing interest in eco-tourism, that is, tourists looking to experience and learn about the natural environment and travel sustainably. The intention is to create business opportunities linked to the critical infrastructure of paths and trails. Survey work for this study lends weight to the assertion that the Green-Way will attract more visitors to the area and that it has the potential to *‘attract and increase economic opportunities and business in the area’*. It is widely accepted that demand for visitor accommodation exceeds supply and the survey results support the view that the Green-Way will encourage new bed & breakfast businesses, partly through farm diversification, and many other existing and new enterprises, focusing on the green brand.
- 6.18** Newtown 2050 recognises that economic development, especially in the area of tourism requires specialist knowledge, skills and experience and that there are many agencies dedicated to this task. Fáilte Ireland is the lead agency on tourism development in the county, reflected in its commissioning of a tourism master plan for Glendalough which is considering a proposal to disperse visitors throughout the county – Glendalough experiences around half a million visits annually – with a focus on family inclusive activities and outdoor experiences.
- 6.19** Wicklow County Council’s ‘Food and Beverage Strategy for County Wicklow 2019-2021’ provides support to existing and emerging food and drink businesses. The strategy was developed by ‘Wicklow Naturally’, *‘the single promotional voice which tells the story of food and drink produced in County Wicklow. It is a brand created to celebrate the food and drink producers who work hard to deliver high quality products to consumers through the hospitality sector, retail, food and drink events as well as key tourism events’*. ‘Wicklow Naturally’ is a membership network which promotes sustainability and growth among its members.
- 6.20** In seeking to create a physical network of paths and trails interlinking villages, Newtown 2050s vision has the potential to work with and complement the work of Fáilte Ireland, Wicklow Naturally and other agencies by bringing the villages within the project area to the attention of visitors and promoting the qualities that make them attractive. In so doing, each village should consider what they can put



forward as a key attraction(s) and develop the attraction(s). It may be the case that the nine villages decide on a common theme to which each village can attach its own unique attractions. Business opportunities arising from the common theme and each village’s unique attraction, not least bed & breakfast, can be identified and supported. It is in the joining of the villages in the project area and creating a single ‘brand’ that will best empower and encourage local businesses across a range of producers and services. The idea of branding an area to help attract visitors and support the visitors’ economy is precisely the approach adopted with great success by Fáilte Ireland – eg, Ireland’s Ancient East – and Wicklow County Council. The same idea could work in progressing Newtown 2050s vision of a unified project area that is an attraction in its own right.

- 6.21** The village of Newtownmountkennedy, like all Irish villages has an interesting history, offering considerable potential to develop a heritage and history trail that focuses on the village and its environs. There is also some potential to develop a biodiversity trail. The village’s Main Street was once on the main route between Dublin and Wexford, however, the N11 now by-passes the town to the east. The Parkview Hotel – opened 2008 – is in the Main Street, offering 60 rooms. Nearby hotels include the Druids Glen Hotel & Golf Resort - 145 rooms – and the Glenview Hotel & Leisure Club – 71 rooms. There are also several B&B accommodations in and close to the village. Centrally located within the project area, the village can be a base for visitors wishing to tour the area over a period of days.
  
- 6.22** A review of Newtownmountkennedy’s ‘Archive of Buildings, Streets and Features’ compiled by local residents<sup>(19)</sup> points to a substantial number of buildings and features upon which an historical/heritage tour of the village could be based, including:-

Kiladreenan Church & Graveyard	The Old Cornerhouse	The Old Flour Mill	Kilmurry Church & Graveyard
Mount Kennedy House & Demesne	Valle Pacis/Old Corn Mill	St Joseph's RC Church	The Old Cobblers
St Matthew's Church of Ireland	Trudder Grange	Springmount House	Carisbrook Mews

<sup>(19)</sup> The archive was compiled in 1997/1998 therefore an update would reveal which buildings and features remain in place and development of new buildings such as the hotel, retail units and housing.

**6.23** Perhaps a possible ‘draw’ for such a tour is the part that Newtownmountkennedy played in the 1798 rebellion, most notably in the Battle of Newtownmountkennedy fought on 30 May 1798 in which many native Irish Rebels died, followed by the execution in the village of the Rebel’s leader, Michael Neil. A memorial to him is in the village’s Main Street.

### Strategic Pillar: Biodiversity and Sustainability

***‘Creating a single designated area, or transect, embracing pristine areas sensitive to disturbance and areas where greater levels of activity can be tolerated. Being pro-active in the use of natural materials and promoting biodiversity – wildflowers, nature, trees – in the development of paths and trails. Embrace farm diversification and mitigate the environmental impact of development in the area’.***

**6.24** This strategic pillar goes hand in hand with the development of paths and trails and it informs their design. The understanding is that biodiversity is given the same importance as the development of walking and cycling infrastructure. Therefore, paths and trails should be designed so that they promote biodiversity and facilitate human use equally. This can be achieved in a number of ways, for example:-

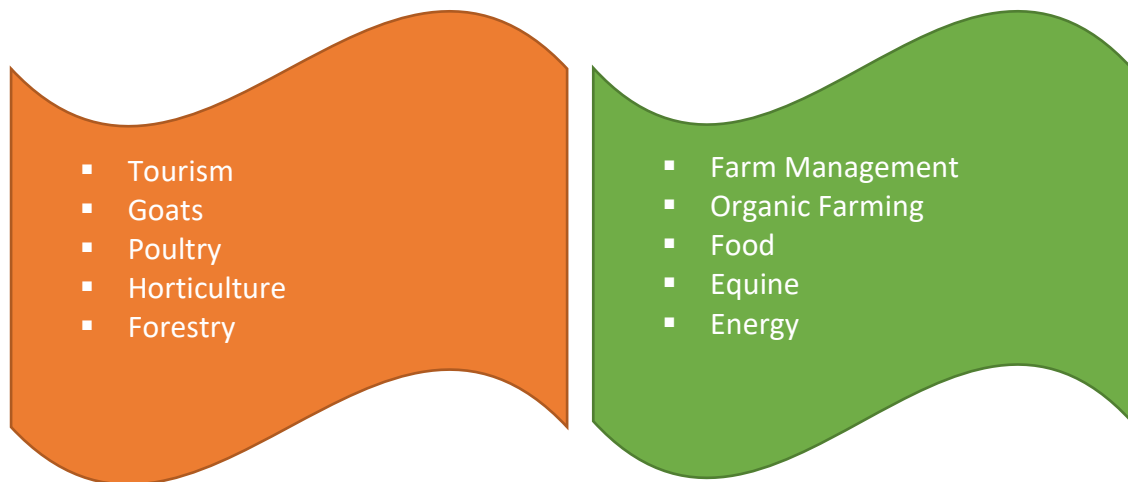
Designing routes that have a wide path for walking/cycling and wide margins for planting trees, shrubs and wildflowers.

Having regard to bee corridors (B-Lines), facilitating bees to move between areas of planting for pollination.

Planting pollinator-friendly trees, shrubs and wildflowers.

**6.25** A great deal of expertise and support in relation to planting for biodiversity in Ireland is available to Newtown 2050. For example, the National Biodiversity Data Centre, under the aegis of the Heritage Council and working with partners devised the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020 with guidelines for local communities to play their role in implementing the plan. Teagasc, the Agriculture and Food Development Authority, focused on biodiversity in its September 2020 series of sustainable agriculture webinars, looking at hedgerows, supporting pollination and

farmland biodiversity. Teagasc also advises on farm diversification, with a series of rural development factsheets, covering:-



**6.26** Creating a single biodiversity – designated area, that is, the 250 square kilometre project area, is clearly a massive task that can only be implemented by engaging the people and organisations who live and work in the area. Beyond what is achievable within the paths and trails, the need for biodiversity protection and development can be adopted by the community of villages and implemented in gardens, schools, businesses, public spaces and farms. Such a community effort is best led by a representative community organisation such as Newtown 2050, drawing on advice and support from the council and stakeholder agencies and organisations. In this regard, Newtown 2050 will advocate a community approach to biodiversity and sustainability and put in place an implementation plan that signposts people to advisory agencies.

## Activity Programme

**6.27** In looking ahead it's useful to consider how the Green-Way in the Newtownmountkennedy and surrounding area might be used. Rather than leaving it to chance, an activity programme will focus efforts on key themes and identify aims, objectives, target groups and actions, complete with target numbers and partner organisations. The activity programme is, in effect, a work plan that ensures, when it is built, the Green-Way will be used as intended. A sample activity programme is presented as Appendix 6 covering three key themes; Active Travel; Health; Social. Implementing an activity programme requires resources, not least in the form of staff, experienced in the delivery of similar programmes.

## 7. Feasible?

***feasible (adjective): able to be done***

### The Vision

- 7.1** The vision is deemed to be feasible as the evidence shows that it demonstrates and convinces the community within the project area that *action on climate change by the community* matters, that government and its agencies cannot do it unaided, that they need everyone to buy into the challenge and do their bit. This, therefore, is the importance of the vision and the actions that will progress it. If the community is not behind it, government strategies will struggle to meet their timebound targets.

### The Strategic Pillars

- 7.2 Inter-Connectivity** across the project area is deemed to be feasible but only if it is delivered in a series of projects, each of which is financially and technically realistic, and, well, feasible. Comprising a coastal sector and an uplands sector the topography of the project area suggests ‘one size fits all’ is not possible, that paths/trails will be a mix of *flat, undulating, hilly, forest, open* to suit the terrain and the land that is secured to host routes. The study has not considered detailed routes, however the entire network could be anything from 25 kilometres to 50 kilometres and above. Indeed, if the early routes are proven to meet their objectives, the potential of the network will only be limited by funding. The two routes put forward for Newtownmountkennedy need to be further developed and tested for technical and financial feasibility.
- 7.3 Economics**, explained for this project *as empowering and encouraging local businesses in accommodation, eco-tourism, hospitality, food & drink* is deemed to be feasible based on evidence gathered from research and consultation. However, any and all efforts to empower and encourage local businesses must be considered in tandem with the ongoing strategies and work of central government, the County Council and other stakeholder agencies. The work of economic development is specialised, requiring resources, key skills and experience. Care is needed to ensure that efforts to progress economic development within this project supplement strategies and activities that are already in place, therefore, more research is needed to identify how best to empower and encourage local businesses without risking duplicating or even compromising existing work.
- 7.4 Biodiversity & Sustainability** and the creation of a single designated area is, based on the evidence from research and consultation, eminently feasible given that it will be achieved partly through the construction of paths and trails and partly by designating the entire project area as a biodiversity reserve and involving the twelve and a half thousand residents in green living.

## What Next?

**7.5** This study evidences the relevance of Newtown 2050s vision and the considerable interest it has generated in people living and working in the project area, in council members and officers and in a wide range of stakeholder organisations and agencies. Newtown 2050 has created the vision and brought it to the attention of the community in north east Wicklow, gaining a good deal of support along the way. The vision will not be realised in a single effort; rather it will be achieved in incremental projects, working to a master plan, with the beneficial outcomes of one project helping to smooth the path for the next project, each building towards the vision. With Transport Infrastructure Ireland's recent allocation of a team of engineers to County Wicklow for the next five years, the vision may begin to be realised sooner than expected. Most importantly, delivery needs an organisation with effective leadership that is representative of the entire project area. The following steps for What Next? are based on the research and extensive consultation conducted for the study.

### Step 1: Update Residents and Stakeholder Organisations

- **Rationale:** The work of the feasibility study has built a momentum and an expectation that something will happen, as well as building interest in and support for the project. Around 200 individuals who responded to the community survey are willing to help as things move forward and stakeholder organisations expect to hear more about the project. It is imperative that lines of communication are maintained on an ongoing basis.

### Step 2: Establish a Nine Village Federation

- **Rationale:** Newtown 2050 is, by its very name, generally associated with Newtownmountkennedy and its close neighbour Kilcoole, as evidenced in the geographical spread of responses to the community survey, yet the project area covers nine villages. It is important that the entity taking the project forward is representative of the entire project area. The Nine Village Federation, established as a constituted group, will add to the project's credibility and lend weight to funding applications. Care is needed in setting up the federation that the skills and experience needed to move things forward - marketing, financial, technical, leadership, administration, etc - are evident in those stepping forward as volunteers. The federation will need a financial resource to cover operational costs - administration, office accommodation, work programmes, etc. As the federation establishes itself, paid staff will be needed to implement work programmes, however, volunteers will continue to shape, lead and oversee the project.

### Step 3: Prepare a Strategy and Master Plan

- **Rationale:** The complexity of the project points to the need for a strategy and master plan to (i) communicate to residents, stakeholders and potential funders how the work of the federation will make a difference, and (ii) establish a plan of action, setting out a work programme over a period of time. The strategy and master plan demonstrate professionalism in the federation's approach and give accountability for its work. In their preparation it is strongly recommended that the federation engages with and gets buy-in from a range of partner organisations on an ongoing basis.



- 7.6 These three What Next? steps will focus minds and help in taking the project to a point where it can begin to realise Newtown 2050s vision of a unified rural community influencing the way people think about the environment, changing the way people go about their daily lives – and making a difference. The scale and scope of Newtown 2050s Mountains to the Sea vision and the three strategic pillars that underpin it is extensive. However, it is presented at a time when looking the other way is no longer an option. Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss is clearly a global challenge that is being addressed by regions and nations; the success of their actions will depend in some measure by how they bring local communities on board and support them in their efforts.

## Leadership

- 7.7 Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss is clearly a global challenge that is being addressed by governments. The success of their actions will depend in some measure on how they bring communities on board and work with them. To this point The Mountains to the Sea Green-Way vision has been crafted and led by the community. Such a community effort is best continued from the bottom up by a group that takes its lead from Newtown 2050, building on their pioneering work which has recognised the imperative in creating a vision and a community-based solution to climate change that is as big as the challenge.
- 7.8 In clustering nine villages to deliver on inter-connectivity, green economics and biodiversity & sustainability, the project is reflected in the county’s development objectives within the upcoming Wicklow County Development Plan 2021-2027. This creates an opportunity for the council to adopt the project, integrate it into the plan and lead the Nine Village Federation to fully realise the project’s considerable potential over the coming years. Local government is encouraged by the Local Government Reform Act 2014 to have a strong role in community development. The Mountains to the Sea Green-Way proposal presents a potential model for collaborative working and themed community development, addressing global challenges through local actions, that can be tested and replicated in like-minded communities across the county, and potentially, across the country.

## The Last Word

- 7.9 The outputs and outcomes of Newtown 2050s vision and of government action on climate change and biodiversity loss will be realised in the coming years and decades. The United Nations recognises the role that young people are playing in advocating action, therefore, it is appropriate to give the last word to a young person’s response to the schools’ survey.

***‘More needs to be done for climate change. It’s ridiculous how little we are doing to save our home’.***

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **Surveys – Open Comments**

**Community Survey**

**Business Survey**

**Secondary School Survey**

**Primary School Survey**

## Community Survey 2020

	Page No
Q23 - Copy of the comments for respondents who answered they not supportive of the proposed development of The Mountains to the Sea Greenway. (n=27).	2
Q29 - Do you have any concerns about the development of a Greenway in the Project Area? If so please tell us. (n=202)	4
Q33 - Any final comments? We thank you for your answers so far and encourage you to record any other comments in support or otherwise of this project. (n=188)	13
Q34 - What do you think of the name 'The Nine Village Federation' - do you have any suggestions for an alternative name for this proposed group/body?(n=257).	22
Q35 - Lastly! If you are interested in assisting in any way with this project, please record below your name and email address and/or mobile number. A member of N2050 will be in contact with you. Note that your contact details will only be used for the purposes of this project and will be stored and used according to Otium Leisure Consultancy's GDPR policy.	30

Q23 - Copy of the comments for respondents who answered they not supportive of the proposed development of The Mountains to the Sea Greenway. (n=27).

1. Would like a greenway to go from Wicklow to Glendalough
2. Infrastructure to Wicklow does not support. Additional construction through nature is not required. Tourism spots already overrun
3. It would require CPO of private land
4. It will inevitably be away from the main roads, and therefore be more tourist than local use. I also think there is far greater tourism potential by making loops and/ or end to end routes on existing fire roads. Many are dead ends, less than a few 100m's from another fire road or road. I'd also have doubts about adding horses to a shared use space.
5. Very little consultation with landowners. Why Glendalough as an area already congested with visitors. Many other areas in Wicklow
6. It would have to be disability friendly. This should be the first thing to be considered before the able bodied person. This issue is normally the last to be considered or "slotted in" if there's enough funding ...just look at question 18 next.....correct this question to be inclusive of all disabled and elderly members of the public.
7. Not safe. Roads are too narrow and dangerous not enough room for centre whitelines or for vehicles to safely pass without slowing or stopping. No room for either pedestrians or cyclists.
8. I'd be keen to ensure that no wildlife habitats or ecosystems were adversely affected by a route like this.
9. Love the idea, particularly for linking villages together, but would need to be done sensitive to the needs of the environment
10. I need to be sure this won't go near the nature reserve/tern colony along Kilcoole beach. I would support if this could be assured
11. I am concerned that the Greenway would damage Kilcoole's delicate eco-system, particularly the little tern colony on the beach, and the many other vulnerable plant and animal species along Kilcoole's shoreline and adjacent wetlands. I would prefer if this project and all its associated works and inevitable increase in human traffic and man made infrastructure could be prevented.
12. It needs to be expanded and brought along the Avonmore to Rathdrum and then to Wicklow. You'd have an amazing loop along so many amenities. And connect so many children to their schools.
13. Newcastle & Ashford could be included would be an advantage
14. Would have liked to see it going through Newcastle
15. Sort the roads and public transport out before asking people to walk in areas where they can barely get to work!
16. I live in Dublin
17. Need to know more. Are you going to take farmland from farmers? How will this be purchased?
18. Need to see impact on biodiversity and local environment
19. Kilcoole beach is an EU protected area and anymore people encouraged to use it will destroy it . It also depends where it's going as there are beautiful walks there like Ballydonarea loop that I would hate seen destroyed for cyclists and cyclists usually don't give way to walkers.

<p>Sea road can barely fit cars either side, it's no way to widen it and it's a residential area to many who need their cars Greenways are not Green they destroy much of the biodiversity and nature that they are in and many environmentalists are against them because of that. We can't keep destroying our biodiversity and calling in Green just because cyclists are using it.</p>
<p>20. Experience with cyclists locally is large gangs speeding through with little regard for other users. Use of these routes by these individuals endanger walkers, riders and especially small children. Clear segregation of cyclists would be essential for success as on existing cycle ways they simply ignore the bike tracks as claim pedestrians wander round them or they are in too bad condition or they have to yield to traffic at junctions. Also by question below suggests use of electric bikes on this which means segregated cycle paths absolutely essential as kids or animals get run over.</p>
<p>21. Stop trying to put greenways in Kilcoole and destroying our nature reserve!</p>
<p>22. A similar idea was proposed by Friends Of the Murrough a long time ago for a link from Wicklow town to Glendalough. They had proposed the Wicklow coastal way along the coastal path from Bray head to Wicklow Head as possible similar walk to the very popular Wicklow Way. An extension to this walk was for it to go inland then to Glendalough and create a link between both linear walks through the county. Maybe this walk idea could be added to make more links between all the county towns.</p>
<p>23. I am supportive of safe cycle and foot paths, however, this proposed greenway is another tourist attraction which draws more cars into the area, increasing car usage, NOT reducing it.</p>
<p>24. Would think it should include Ashford.<sup>9</sup></p>
<p>25. It would bring too many people to the area</p>
<p>26. 'Greenway' often feels like a way of greenwashing an economic development which will in effect make areas less green. Serious study, not by a leisure company, required.</p>
<p>27. Green ways can cause considerable damage to the local environment by destroying habitats.</p>



Q29 Do you have any concerns about the development of a Greenway in the Project Area? If so please tell us. (n=202)

1.	Accessing high value and vulnerable natural habitats through the greenway might be slightly concerning in case it might have high impact natural life in the area. Potential littering and damaging the habitats might lead to loss of biodiversity, do caution and potential restrictions might be needed in terms of accessibility to such areas. More education and sign posts warning about vulnerable habitats is important. Also, to minimise the impact of a potential greenway, passes needed to avoid green way dividing the Natural habitats if going through.
2.	Adequate funding to see the project through Proper, joined-up thinking to bring it all together Proper funding to pay local people to make this happen. Stop the over-reliance on volunteers & treat this as a wise & lucrative investment into sustainable regeneration for the area & a Just Transition for farmers seeking to diversify.
3.	All landowners that are affected by green way must be compensated fairly
4.	All other greenway projects have had very positive outcomes
5.	An environmental impact assessment would need to be done. It should have minimal disruption to nature and wildlife, a cost benefit analysis would need to be done including externalities such as damage to the environment
6.	Anti-social behaviour, dumping, burglary
7.	Any damage to wildlife and possibility of littering or pollution
8.	Any made ground for the greenway should be environmentally compensated, i.e enhanced biodiversity margins, no spray maintenance controls, protection for local waterways
9.	As above. If it is to create an infrastructure to get closer to nature without just carving a path through our already beautiful countryside great. If it simply is an economic exercise it'll just destroy even more nature. The route must be carefully planned to avoid any destruction to trees and habitat along our hedgerows and rivers.
10.	As always, when something new is 'created' in an area... there is a danger of loss of habitat and biodiversity... there is always a consequence, an imbalance created... can the greenway be created without causing any harm?
11.	As stated above
12.	As stated above, greenways destroy habitats. The idea of allowing people to access the countryside in a way which leaves the countryside undamaged is a pipe dream. Our local flora and fauna are disappearing rapidly. Yes this would be a good plan for bringing money to local businesses and residents, but remember that this is a country where fly-tipping is almost a national sport.
13.	Biodiversity and sustainability is very important and the project would need to focus on these. Wicklow has enough spruce and logging so it would be nice to see native woodland incorporated into the greenway.
14.	Can the Greenway accommodate amounts of new people to the area on day trips etc?
15.	Car parking
16.	Challenges by NIMBYism, make it wide enough to cater for cyclists and walkers so they don't clash

17.	Concerned about the possibility of dogs chasing sheep, of the real need for urban dwellers to be more aware of the concerns of farmers and dwellers en route about security, insurance difficulties and the danger of animals injuring walkers.
18.	Concerns about associated car parks eg associated crime , littering and dumping and correct consultation with local land owners
19.	Concerns about the natural environment, encroachment of land and protection of species of insect, birds, and other wildlife.
20.	Concerns That existing wildlife flora and fauna may be disturbed or damaged and that the area will become littered or abused in some way!
21.	Damage to the wildlife area. Too much traffic of cars and people into the village
22.	depending on route could end up funnelling visitors into specific areas. eg Glendalough effect ... some views that we sacrifice Glendalough to commercial tourism and that keeps the rest of the Uplands unspoilt ... so careful what we wish for
23.	Depending on the size of the greenaway, I'd be a bit concerned about cyclist walkers, runners and horses all in the same place. I think its a great idea for a greenaway as the westport achill one is very good and popular, I just would be concerned about horses too, maybe in certain sections they'd be enough room but I would be discouraged from using my bike if I had to worry about horses.
24.	Disruption with years of development and the compulsory purchase of private land.
25.	Do not exclude Newcastle, Birdwatch Ireland sanctuary, coastal walk along the breaches, etc
26.	Do not over develop it. Let it exist in the landscape but not detract from it.
27.	Don't want it. Period
28.	Ensure that all land owners are happy to participate, that there is a management programme in place for the greenway and to deal with additional rubbish along the way and to prohibit wild camping along the greenway.
29.	Environment
30.	Fantastic idea
31.	Glendalough can get over crowded.
32.	Good idea - I would certainly support this project assuming the design is good.
33.	Greenways are best when they have a dedicated route. If it stops and starts and has road crossings and is on and off cycle lanes it is not as safe or enjoyable.
34.	Greenways are pushed Green when they encourage to many people to an area and that destroys wildlife habitat and biodiversity and this we need to stop and most Environmentalists , zoologists hate Greenways because of that. Cyclists don't give way to pedestrians on the pavements and often cycle at speed on them and these Greenways will be unsafe for pedestrians . Greenways are not Green because of their destruction to wildlife habitat and because of the numbers of people they bring to an area and people push all this for economic greed so Greedway is a more apt name and pushing Greenways on the countryside needs to stop.
35.	'Greenways tend to be tarred, would be nice to see a more natural surface e.g. Barrow Way'
36.	Greystones, Bray and Kilcoole have already started and this is just another route that is duplication of routes all going to Glendalough or the Wicklow Way. Developers are paying for the development of the Delgany to GlenO'Downs route. The project as it stands seems enormous and very spread out

37.	Has to be environmentally friendly
38.	have accommodation self-catering in Ashford. Would be a new activity for my customers
39.	Homes being impacted
40.	Hordes of walkers, cyclists, tourists and social misfits invading and destroying the countryside.
41.	Horses using the greenway. It's very difficult to safely mix horse riding with other recreational users.
42.	How building process will impact environment
43.	How will it impact natural wildlife. Migration trails etc.
44.	Hurry up.. 😊 Get us all active .
45.	I am concerned about the impact of a greenway on our beleaguered wildlife and remaining natural areas, especially around access to the greenway (parking) and littering with the increased visitor numbers. This project must take into account both human and non human populations.
46.	I hope this greenway would have provision for cyclists and not just walkers
47.	I know nothing about this new greenway so although I'm supportive of developing the area I would need a lot more information about the project: the proposed route as well as how it will be implemented.
48.	I live in a forest because i wanted quietness I am pisted off by tourists who think I am a guide
49.	I moved to a newtownmountkennedy a number of years ago and my physical health has gone downhill since, which of course impacts on ones mental health. I don't understand why there are so few amenities to enable people to live healthy lives day to day in the area. In a wider context, the route is an area that is always overlooked due to the towns to the north and the south of it. The people and the businesses need to be given a chance for once.
50.	I think there's too many questions about route. And about cost. I think more pavement on existing routes would reduce car journeys more. It will be very dependent on being on the route.  I would see more potential in existing fire roads for cycling and walking.  I do also have concerns about the amount of questions regarding horses. Is the proposal really to mix commuting cyclists, children going to school with horses?
51.	I will be 75 when its completed:(
52.	I would be afraid it might lead to some harm to nature, i.e. plants and animals, and to more littering and more congestion from lack of parking facilities.
53.	I would like to see horse riding being a part of the greenway
54.	I would like to see the proposed route to see the effect it might have on existing walking trails and habitats
55.	I would worry about disturbance of wildlife, tree felling etc. For example when the greenway was proposed along the beach from kilcoole, I would not have supported that, due to disturbance of the little tern nesting site. I like the idea of a green way in the proposed site here but I would want to know what was being done to minimise disturbance of wildlife and nature before I fully supported it.

56.	I would worry about the fact that we are closer to Dublin and already have trouble with unsavoury characters camping without adhering to leave no trace principles. In other words I would worry about policing of the green way.
57.	I wouldnt like to see it effect to much wood land,
58.	I wouldn't like to think of woodland or animal habitats being destroyed for the sake of a Greenway.
59.	I'd like to see trees & biodiversity preserved & encouraged as much as possible.
60.	I'd be worried that it would disturb habitats or trees etc would be cut down to facilitate it. I would like it to be very conscious of protecting existing ecosystems.
61.	I'd like to be sure that animals and environment are minded and impacted as little as possible
62.	If it is not done in a way that is sensitive to the environment and to the needs of the people living adjacent to it then the project could backfire.
63.	If the start/end point by the sea is kilcoole then it would be beneficial if the wexford trains stopped at kilcoole station atbthe weekend. This would enable people to ise public transport to get to the trail with their bikes.
64.	Important to allow access for horse back riders
65.	In the uplands I just don't think it would be suitable for going to school or to work because of the distance involved
66.	Increased motor traffic to get to the green way. Disruption of nature in it's set up
67.	Increased tourist demand putting stress on poor resources for locals. Eg space on Greenway or in national park and traffic on small roads. There are times of year when the glendalough valley is inaccessible to locals . But infrastructure may pull the attraction out and support villages further afield. Also promoting walking and nature related activities encourage sustainable tourist with nature at the centre
68.	Inevitably people would drive to the area to use the Greenway. Proper parking facilities are absolutely essential along the route. In other Greenway there's agro between cyclists and pedestrians would there be separate lanes for each? Is the path itself sympathetic to the environment? There's a danger of it being a victim of its own success - the Bray cliff walk is virtually unusable as its just too busy- even has an ice cream van enroute. * I think it is a brilliant idea though for locals to get from village to village as the roads are currently too dangerous to walk or cycle.
69.	Influx of people especially over summer without adequate facilities. Not Eco friendly construction or maintenance. Littering and dog poo. Anti social behaviour. Impact on home owners tax.
70.	It could be quite steep in parts for day trippers
71.	It might not be accessible by public transport (ie coming from Dublin) which is problematic for people who want to visit it.
72.	It must be sensitive to the environment, be part of the environment that we love and not damage it.
73.	It needs to be a proper functional Greenway, not one that stops and starts at every driveway making it unsafe and slow. Room for Bikes and Walkers. Proper surface that doesn't cut tyres. Cleaned of debris regularly. Allow for further development to popular areas Greystones and Bray, this would allow for use by locals for transport and commuting and not just tourists.
74.	It will never happen. Too much private land required.

75.	It would appear that an Arklow/Bray coastal walk would be good
76.	It would be important that the plan would be achieved by obtaining the consent of those whose land or other property would be affected. No CPO's
77.	It would be useful if it was plotted clearly on google maps or other apps
78.	It would have to be designed and policed to avoid rough elements.
79.	It's a great idea
80.	It's already the busiest area in the country for recreation. Please take them somewhere else.
81.	It's continued maintenance would have to be a huge priority
82.	Its environmental impact should be assessed and appropriate mitigation measures put in place. There should be net biodiversity gain from any such project.
83.	Just ensure that no part of the Greenway is on the main roads. The Waterford Greenway is a nightmare at the Dungarvan end as bike hire locations mean entirely too many people on the footpaths with bikes as there are no cycle lanes in the town.
84.	keep the horses off it
85.	Kelly drains might gate it off
86.	Lack of consultation. Ideas of lowlanders unaware of the existing network and communities on the route, schools, etc
87.	Lack of parking in Roundwood at weekends has led to dangerous parking. Would like to see more parking in the village rather on outskirts.
88.	Laragh is already v congested with tourists at peak times. Not sure this is the best route.
89.	Length of time until it is completed
90.	Let there be community consultation and leadership..look at best practice in other Greenway projects
91.	Litter may become an issue and there would need to be regular rangers on duty along the route so it's safe and seen as such
92.	Litter, parking nearby, we all saw brittas bay and glendalough as lockdown ended. An improvement on public transport at beginning or end of greenway.
93.	Littering of the countryside by users. Who would be responsible for maintenance of the route? Will it cross private lands & will landowners be fearful of insurance claims? Secure parking facilities at trail heads for visitors will be required. It is good to have some areas of the countryside that are not accessible so please use existing trails rather than breaking 'new' ground.  Hope this project goes ahead, the best of luck with it all.
94.	Loss of biodiversity, littering and unauthorized camping
95.	Love the idea! It would be fantastic for us as a family and for the area.
96.	Main one is impact on the environment and potentially mix of users eg professional cyclists versus family/hobby and pedestrians. Experience in other areas is walking fraught as some bikes doing up to 50kph
97.	Make sure it doesn't impact the environment rather it should compliment it
98.	May be difficult to get a route that meets gradient requirements for a multi-use route - steep drop between Roundwood / Newtownmountkennedy.
99.	Might attract too many people and some may not respect countryside.
100.	My concern: it needs to be expanded to include so many more areas in Wicklow. Make the Garden of Ireland into the Garden of Ireland by bike!!!



101.	My concerns would be for the protection of the nature reserve in Kilcoole/Newcastle .
102.	My only concern is how long it may take to get a greenway as it will be such an important benefit to the whole area.
103.	My only concern is that it is not being done fast enough
104.	Need to ensure it does not upset or impact farm land ie leaving gates open. Possible litter polution.
105.	Need to ensure that increased visitor car traffic doesn't lead to congestion on N11 and approx rods from Dublin. Same applies to Kilmac to Glendalough route
106.	No concerns but I would suggest the end at Laragh / Glendalough to be designed with a view to a future connection to the Blessington Greenway, and further connections to towns beyond Laragh.
107.	No concerns, as long as its not impacting farmers too much by splitting farmland
108.	No concerns, greenways are a fantastic amenity
109.	No concerns, would be delighted, especuallbif it created a safe cycle route to secondary school in kilcoole.
110.	No concerns. There is a huge mountain and road biking community in this area. It would provide good access to Ballinastoe and other biking areas. Also would be well used by the various tri and athletics clubs in the area.
111.	No- I like the other ones I've cycled along and they've been positive for the local community
112.	No it would be a wonderful local amenity, it's had such a positive impact when done elsewhere.
113.	No love the idea!
114.	No need for such a thing, waste of money.
115.	No only positives.
116.	No sounds like a great idea - would support this initiative - not sure about the horses!
117.	No use building it unless there's an appropriate level of funding for maintenance and especially frequent litter clearance. Sadly many people don't respect these areas. Bins for dog poop too.
118.	No, build it please, and i would help in anyway I could
119.	No, can't happen soon enough.
120.	No, I don't have any concerns.
121.	No, I think it's a great idea 😊👍
122.	No, if it takes bikes in particular off the main roads at the moment then it would be fantastic
123.	No, it seems to be a great idea
124.	No, it will greatly enhance our family trips to the area.
125.	No, this would be a fantastic amenity, as would the proposed coastal greenway between Greystones and Wicklow Town
126.	No. I believe any projects that can remove cars, help reduce pollution, potentially increase local economic activity, increase physical exercise, health and well-being should only be encouraged and accommodated.
127.	No-I think it sounds like a fantastic idea!
128.	None . I d love that
129.	None i have used and enjoyed greenways elsewhere in the country
130.	None let's do it!!

131.	None please start it fantastic idea
132.	None presently
133.	None really need a sage link from Newtown to kilcoole hopefully this would be it
134.	None whatsoever
135.	None. This needs to happen.
136.	Nope  The one in Waterford to Dungarvan is excellent
137.	Nope, sounds great
138.	Not as a concept. I'd like to see it being linked back to other trails. Maybe laragh-rathdrum-avoca- Arklow. I think a longer route would benefit all villages.
139.	Not at all. The only thing is that planning for 2050 when should be one of priority for now
140.	Not at the moment
141.	Not aware of any
142.	Not sure as I don't know the plans. Compulsory purchase of family lands
143.	Not sure exactly where route is been planned, is it in farmers fields alongside main road or how are they doing it.
144.	Not sure that horses mix with bicycles and pedestrians
145.	Only makes sense if it takes all the bicycle racers off the road and onto dedicated paths.
146.	Opening up large tracts of land could increase to prevalence of illegal dumping.  Linkage to the train at Kilcoole and Greystones DART station is key to develop tourism. It would be great to start the trail in Newcastle which is the last stop on the 84 bus route and give economic boost to that village too. The sea route from Newcastle to Kilcoole could be the first stretch past the wildlife of the breaches and little tern colony - you could bring in Bird Watch Ireland too.
147.	Over reliance on poorly paid tourist jobs and seasonal work instead of investing in decent employment
148.	Overall in favour! Would like more detail in map, to know more about its path and end point in Kilcoole. Would it connect to Greystones/dart or some sort of transport connection? Greenway of this kind would be huge benefit to us as a family, and could mean we could switch to needing only one car instead of 2. And would make so much easier to contribute more to local economy.
149.	Parking is already an issue, needs resolution before additional tourists are added into the mix
150.	Parking would need to be provided for people travelling to the greenway so it would avoid reckless parking on roadsides and narrow country lanes.
151.	Please do this.
152.	Please include off road motocross opportunities / an area to for 4x4 driving.
153.	Pollution through littering and anti-social behaviour so adequate recycling and policing to ensure a safe enjoyable day or staycation
154.	Project deadlines. Construction asking for more money after contract was already done. Local moaning michaels and mary saying its disrupting their quiet country life. Fuck it all just build it for a better ireland.
155.	Protecting biodiversity, having aesthetic furniture, stiles, fencing, not urban style.
156.	Protection of biodiversity Indiginous trees

157.	Protection of the natural world
158.	Public transport links to the beginning and end areas needs to be considered in the proposed project to ensure the trail is accessible at multiple locations eg. 133 bus eireann bus can provide wider scope for tourists than Dublin Bus so hubs in Newtown and Kilpedder May be an advantage. Smaller circular routes eg kilcoole to Roundwood to Ashford may be useful to incorporate local needs. Similar to the plans in place in Blackrock to Sandycove - local needs and links should be considered as well as tourist opportunities to ensure locals feel included and can utilise the infrastructure.
159.	Public Transport to and from start and end stages for walkers, hikers, runners etc would be a distinct advantage. Possible link-in with existing trails , eg Wicklow Way would also be desirable. Possibility to provide a looped walk to counteract lack of transport infrastructure.
160.	Re above question regarding Farm diversification etc, Wicklow C.C. planners need to remove blinkers and get onboard for this to succeed in this area.
161.	Safe Car parking for tourists and residents
162.	Safe walking area without thoughtless cyclists as is the case at the moment.  Safe walking area for walkers cordoned off.
163.	Safety and security. Noise levels. Unwanted Crowd gatherings. Unwanted Impacts for existing neighbourhoods. Possible negative impacts for the local environment example pollution, waste etc, Ongoing maintenance responsibilities.
164.	Secure Parking and multiple access points to greenway should be made available.
165.	Security and protection of property
166.	See above.
167.	Should link up with public transport  Should link up with wicklow way  Should link up with Murrough  Needs water stops and sign posts
168.	That it doesn't impact the road network
169.	That it is done to benefit the local natural environment and that no glyphosate is used.
170.	That it may become too commercial and that local shops/cafes and accommodation would become over priced. Also that more visitors to the area could distrust natural wildlife and litter the area.
171.	That it wouldn't be well connected to existing infrastructure or that at some points it would just disappear. I would also be concerned with increased litter. It would need to be thoughtfully designed to not impact on the existing connectivity of forests.
172.	That the Council would see this as a toco's exercise, and would refuse permission/support for the creation of a network of greenways connecting towns and villages throughout the country, and connecting the coastal locations. It would be better for everyone, including green tourists and the environment to create a network of greenways.
173.	The destruction of existing natural habitats in the construction of the greenway

174.	<p>The kilcool tern colony/nature reserve.. This needs to stay well away from that area. If the trail is to finish in kilcoole village and not continue to the beach area, I would support this.</p> <p>I do think you will need to provide dedicated parking along the route to cater to the tourists and to ensure they don't block locals' drives or routes etc.</p>
175.	<p>The only concern would be lack trash/poo bins as it seems very common that Wicklow has a lack of bins in general. Pollution would be an issue and dog fouling which is already a problem among those towns listed along the greenway.</p>
176.	<p>The proposed is using already dangerous roads which are in serious need of upgrade and maintenance</p>
177.	<p>The roads are narrow and are difficult to travel on on winter. There are tons of tourists who leave rubbish every where and there is no space for locals already there is few jobs in either area most people just flood the N11 to head to dublin for work. This will only result in low paid tourist jobs and seasonal work and economic opportunities we need better infrastructure and j investment in decent employment</p>
178.	<p>The route would have to be planned to provide a gentle increase in slope as you make your way to glendalough as opposed to sudden steep inclines. With the hopeful construction of the Greystones-Wicklow greenway this could transform commuting patterns in the area if the two greenways intersect. Any junctions with the existing road network would need to be carefully planned for safety with very clear priority markings for cars and cyclists.</p>
179.	<p>The sooner the better</p>
180.	<p>The time ot will take to happen. Something like this would benefit now not in 30 years after 45 consultations and appeals for funding for 20 years</p>
181.	<p>There needs to people patrolling it or you will have the same litter that happened this summer in the wicklow mountains left by campers</p>
182.	<p>There should be a link from kilcoole to Newcastle</p>
183.	<p>There will need to be enough car parks along the route or else traffic will block villages along route and Carparks should be in the villages so as to help local business</p>
184.	<p>There would have to be reasonable separation between walkers and cyclists.</p>
185.	<p>Think it should consider an additional route via Ashford</p>
186.	<p>Traffic on Newtown to Roundwood road already very heavy, road is in bad condition and not suitable for cyclists especially Slaughter Hill</p>
187.	<p>Unless it crossed farmers land</p>
188.	<p>When people come from abroad and spend a night in Wicklow town they find it is very cut off from the mountains. Routes and connections should also be considered from Wicklow town.</p>
189.	<p>Where would visiting walkers park? Use toilet facilities? Dispose of their waste? Who would monitor/control the environmental impact?</p>
190.	<p>Wildlife in Old woodlands, car parking. Newcastle/Kilcoole/the Breeches/Broadlough are protected areas as far as I know...and the coast soil stability gets heavily influenced by the east winds, can flood a lot. As its meant to. A delicate area, uncertain if it'll adapt to an extra 200+ people there on those rare hot weather weekends.</p>

191.	Wildlife protection.  Dealing with rubbish.
192.	Will it be possible to camp somewhere? How will it be maintained to protect the environment?
193.	Will Wicklow County Council be supportive of planning applications from farming families and others on the proposed route to allow them to diversify? Our personal experience is that WCC absolutely does not support farming families or families living in rural Wicklow communities who look for planning to enable their family members to stay in the local communities where they grew up and want to continue to live and raise their families.
194.	Wonderful idea - it would be such a stunning route, wow
195.	Would be supportive as long as there is no environmental impact
196.	Would want it to be developed in a sustainable way with houses close to the route taken into consideration. Also, bins at key points along the route would be useful
197.	Yes - it is widely proven in the roundwood area that tourism only helps the few and causes more problems for local communities -
198.	Yes - it needs to be done to minimise impact on environment. Ensure it adds to area for both locals and visitors. Would hate to see a 'cement' greenway destroy local habitats
199.	yes it would destroy what we have
200.	Yes my concerns - as I live along the likely route are for the extra traffic - ironic! Toilets/rubbish/noise etc
201.	You don't want to encourage too many visitors otherwise you will have noise pollution, littering and destruction of a beautiful environment. Definitely need a cycling route - it's very dangerous at the moment with lots of bikes on the roads up.in Roundwood to Glendalough.
202.	Zero tolerance of anti social behaviour is vital. Policing by Gardaí on bikes would be desirable to ensure a continued positive attitude towards its usage.

Q33 . Any final comments? We thank you for your answers so far and encourage you to record any other comments in support or otherwise of this project. (n=188)

1.	This would be of incredible value to horse riders all over Wicklow and surrounding areas. The roads are no longer a safe place to take our horses, presenting a danger to both us and the drivers. This initiative would be fantastic for all the community to come together and claim back a bit of natural land that we have mostly lost
2.	A difficult choice between economics and environment.
3.	A great idea
4.	A great idea , scenery here is begging to be appreciated more
5.	A great idea. Anything that promotes the outdoors and exercise should be encouraged. There is a lack of safe cycling areas in this area in particular when with children the roads are narrow and busy. This would be very welcome
6.	A great initiative. There are not nearly enough accessible off road trails in this area of natural beauty.
7.	A key part of such projects must be the supporting infrastructure. Many of the paths created recently - welcome as they are for those of us working in tourism - do not have sufficient back-up infrastructure (parking in particular)
8.	A lovely idea . A route through lovely scenery connecting other tourist areas in wicklow.
9.	A safe cycling option from the Greystones and Kilcoole to Newtownmountkennedy, Roundwood and beyond is needed ASAP. We've seen the uptake in cycling since the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic. Also, I feel, Kilcoole and Newtown would benefit as stopping off points instead of people passing through with the development of a greenway.
10.	Access for local horse owners would be great, as horse numbers are low in the area. If the idea is connecting with nature it creates a more synergistic picture. As well correct planning can create bridleways that can withstand horses regularly using it if they are intended for that purpose without minimal maintenance.
11.	Actual greenway definitions may impose additional and possibly unnecessary cost - examine if trail as effective as greenway.
12.	All for the betterment of the area
13.	Am very pleased to see the possible inclusion of a bridle path in the plans. The roads in this area are too dangerous for horse and riders anymore and it is such a shame to lose such an important part of our heritage and culture.
14.	Amazing if this happens I have watched Westport overs the years and how one town has planned this would be great a great achievement if 9 villages come together
15.	An ambitious project but very worthy
16.	Any greenway anywhere in Ireland has had far more positive outcomes on rural employment, jobs growth, tourism growth and health and mental well being
17.	Any sustainable development is welcome - however with development increases the risk of local issues from increased numbers - careful consideration should be given to protect communities as well as development -
18.	As a horse rider the green way would provide a safe environment for myself and friends to enjoy our hobby away from dangerous roads.
19.	As before - the design of the final Laragh section should be future proofed so that future connections to other greenways should be "bolt on".



20.	As long as it doesnt line the pockets of politicians or developers I will be 100 percent behind this. Ill volunteer or whatever. This is something that can improve life around the local areas
21.	As things are now I feel that I'm taking a risk everytime I go for a cycle in the area and at times I regret to say that I prefer to be less environmentally friendly and drive to an area with an existing green way than endanger myself locally. I've badly broken my elbow while cycling and I know only too well what the consequences of an accident are.
22.	Best wishes to you all
23.	Brilliant idea. These Greenways have been very successful elsewhere.
24.	Can't come soon enough! Especially with so many people working from home now and having greater opp to appreciate local amenities.
25.	Concern about increased crime in the area,
26.	Constant upkeep and patrolling will be needed to take care of the greenaway, of litter left by people using it.
27.	Create the greenway, not the motorway
28.	Cycled the Waterford greenway 3 years ago - best family experience by far- never felt closer to nature, wasn't expecting the spiritual experience of being alone in nature and thought that the services on route from bike hire, accommodation, food and treats and shops all worked together to ensure a positive experience - they were all clearly invested in the greenway The cohesiveness was evident among all the traders we met on route - best of luck
29.	Delighted to take part with this survey. Greenway project has my full support
30.	Depending on route, it would be a good opportunity to promote the local secondary school kids to cycle to school as a lot of them live outside the village. A bike to school program perhaps ..  On a negative note, I would be concerned about anti social behaviour along the route between village's and would like to know what plans are to deal with this
31.	Dog/animal friendly
32.	Don't forget the Elderly.
33.	Encourage everyone to pull together save our green ways & help educate people to protect our environment before it's too late
34.	Exciting and well done to all involved
35.	Fantastic idea!
36.	Fantastic project, best of luck with it.
37.	fantastic vision
38.	For this project please consider the SDGs wwhen asesing the impacts on our communities. There's a delicatae balance to be had in improving economy and attracting visitors, and having too many visitors which may bring negative impact to the environment. With these considerations in mind it is a welcome project
39.	From a walking perspective the Greenway should link in with other long distance routes such as the Wicklow Way and Bray to the Sugarloaf trail. For cycling, it should offer a pleasant alternative route for both road leisure cyclists and mountain bikers to Laragh and beyond.
40.	From my experience greenways are great at attracting new visitors to an area, therefore additional spending.
41.	Fully supportive of this initiative
42.	Get the project started quickly and working for local communities. Go for a phased implementation and opening if funding constraints occur.

43.	Getting the balance between the various user types would be crucial to the success of the project. A cycle speedway would not encourage walkers, nor would narrow and steep pathways suit cyclists.
44.	gfood idea but the timeframe is very long. Need small quick wins
45.	Good luck
46.	Good luck
47.	Good Luck & well done on all your work
48.	Good luck with it! Great idea!
49.	Good luck with this.. great initiative!
50.	Good luck!
51.	Great idea
52.	Great idea & greenways in other parts of country have been v successful
53.	Great idea for the community!
54.	Great idea keep it up but I think you need to bring the route through the nine villages or within touching distance of them
55.	Great idea, along with the proposed rural link buses to glendalough/roundwood/wicklow/greystones, it could dramatically reduce tourist car traffic to glendalough, especially with bike rental at train stations in north wicklow. Having spent the last year in the Netherlands it was so easy and relaxing to explore the countryside by bike without worrying about being hit by a truck!
56.	Great idea, I hope it goes ahead.
57.	Great idea, would help in any way I could.
58.	Great idea. This would be great for Wicklow
59.	Great project but Roundwood needs better transport links to Dart so that visitors can come from Dublin on the train
60.	Great project, would love to see it progressed to completion in the next few years. Great opportunity to link in with Wicklow way tourists, bringing them on an overnight detour to the sea and encouraging spend on the areas.
61.	Have a look at the Project in Belgium <a href="https://www.vlaanderen-fietsland.be/nl/routeplanner">https://www.vlaanderen-fietsland.be/nl/routeplanner</a> it's a nice example on numbering greenway links so people can plan the length of their trip and the destination. The app provides you with suggestions on which route/links to follow and shows you where to stop for refreshments, shopping, tourist attractions or accommodations. It exists for more than 10 years and is very popular in Belgium! A real success story! Looking forward to something similar in Ireland 😊
62.	Have just been to dungarvan greenway to Waterford and spent time there with people who did it all. Very interesting to see what it's done. Dungarvan is hopping, so busy and buzzing and full of people midweek in sept. Everywhere we went over the week, kilmeaden, ardmore , all very visible cyclists and people connected with greenway evident every day. Really made me see the impact something like that has on an area in so many ways. Made me think it's very worthwhile investing in these things- people love them and it brings attention and business in many sectors.
63.	Hope it would attract responsible visitors.
64.	I cycle everyday on the roads around my home in Ashford towards the mountains for exercise, and I think the development of a safe accessible multi-use path from laragh/glendalough to roundwood and the reservoirs would be a great idea given the flatish terrain. I think for someone who was not a regular cyclist or walker the climb from Newtown to roundwood might be a bit hard, but as electric bikes get more common this might be less of an issue. Overall I think this

	<p>would be a great addition to the region, making recreational activities much more accessible and providing more local opportunities as people might stop in the towns and villages along the route.</p> <p>I split my time between Ashford and Cambridge, UK, where we have excellent cycling infrastructure out into the fens surrounding the city, enabling trips to small villages or neighbouring towns completely off the main roads on mixed use paths and small country lanes</p>
65.	I don't want it. The area I live is quite and I want to keep it that way.
66.	I fully support the greenway. I think it would a great addition to my area.
67.	I genuinely can't think of any negatives.. (Unless the scheme/greenway services become very corporate, expensive and inaccessible somehow..)
68.	I grew up in this area and always wanted these places linked so I could visit family and friends before I could drive so I think it's a great idea.
69.	I have done many of the existing greenways. Signs to local attractions are key. Cafes, b&b, open gardens, etc. Where possible business should be facilitated to have paths linking to greenway. Locals tend to use it for shorter walks, rather than the whole length.
70.	I have seen the benefits of the Waterford greenway and I think this is a great idea. It is a fine balance to incorporate space for users and carparks while also netting these costs against the benefits to everyone but especially the environment.
71.	I live 5ins from start of Waterford Greenway, from Greystones and think it would work really well here too.
72.	I live in Garden Village but spend a lot of time in kilcoole, to walk there I go via the Ballyronan road which is very dangerous to walk. A Greenway connecting kilpedder to the mass path would allow me to walk safely to kilcoole.
73.	I note Ashford and Newcastle town and village are shown as part of this idea but the greenway won't pass through these areas. What if you added the idea of the Wicklow coastal way into the mix from Kilcoole to Wicklow town and then another link greenway from Wicklow town through rathnew , Ashford and on to Annamoe to link with the route and also one from Newcastle to either Newtownmountkennedy or Ashford to the main greenway.
74.	I sense this is trying to encourage landowners to give right of ways for the proposed greenways by suggesting lots of opportunities for them to diversify into tourism, crafts or food. If so I wouldn't bother as those interested in such most likely already are exploiting such opportunities. In my view the organization should focus on ensuring users are responsible and sensitive, leave no rubbish, and respect landowners rights.
75.	I strongly support the initiative of multiple villages combining together to benefit from all opportunities this greenway could bring to the area. I feel that a bridleway similar to the Beara Way in Cork would bring massive tourism to the area both local and national with potential for international. Zaras planet is a Wicklow based international equestrian holiday company im sure they could give important advice.
76.	I strongly support this type of development and feel that there should be far more formal facilities for walking etc. in the Dublin/Wicklow area. But am not in a position to become involved with the project. But may you have great success.
77.	I support all efforts to encourage outdoor activity linked to environmental protection, taking local needs into account,
78.	I support greener travel, and a safer environment for vulnerable road users. However, I am not convinced shifting us off the roads is the answer. If anything, the presence of a greenway has the potential to make vulnerable road users still using the roads even more vulnerable.

79.	I think it is a really great idea, it is a way of growing towns and villages in a sustainable way and would really benefit everyone
80.	I think it would massively increase cycling in the project area. It should be built at an appropriately wide scale as I have been on other greenways such as the Westport Achill route which was far too narrow in sections. I expect that given the denser population that this route would be far busier. I and others would definitely become cycle commuters if this route is built so it needs to be suitable for that too. During the lockdown it was safe to cycle in Roundwood but now it is dangerous again. There are a lot of club cyclists on the roads here every weekend and a lot of drivers act very aggressively towards them. I doubt a greenway would have any attraction for these cyclists. This may cause increased resentment towards any cyclists who continue to use the roads if a greenway is built so driver education should be considered.
81.	I think it's a fantastic project
82.	I think it's a great idea
83.	I think it's a great idea and can proceed soon without too much disagreement.
84.	I think the investment will be huge, depriving local social housing and education of public funding, and the returns will benefit very few, most of whom will be incomers, not locals. It will also put local environment and heritage at risk.
85.	I think this could be a very worthwhile project for the area and the residents and business' living there.
86.	I think this is a amazing idea that could bring so much to each of the villages. If executed right it could be a great resource for both locals and tourists.
87.	I wish you would create a greenway from Bray to Enniskerry and to the Wicklow way.
88.	i would be concerned for traffic and cost of parking locally in newtown
89.	I would do shorter surveys in future. This is much too long, a less committed person would have given up and gone back to Facebook. If you want a diversity of participation make something easier to complete. How about a short and longer version. Also these days surveys have estimated time it takes to complete as standard. You should let people know as they will just sign off on this before they complete it. Thanks.
90.	I would like to see a more detailed of the proposed route of the greenaway
91.	I would wholeheartedly support this proposal and hope very much that it gets the go ahead! It would allow me to cycle to and from work and allow my children to cycle to and from school, which is currently impossible due to a dangerous road.
92.	I'd like to think something like this would be carried through but what happened the proposed greenway from Wicklow to greystones or Wicklow to glendalough? Lots of opportunity to open up the whole county. Why is the county town left in the cold once again?
93.	If horses are on the trail who will clean up the dung left behind
94.	If linking with public transport, ferrying of private bikes might be an issue.
95.	If the greenway was to be used for commuting or linking with local transport people would expect lighting for safety, this would have a negative impact on the local wildlife
96.	If there could be a circular route including Ashford, Newcastle etc that ran along the coast that would make the route ideal. A lot of people prefer to do a circular route rather than a straight line back and forth.
97.	If you build it people will come from all over the country to use it.  Look at the Waterford greenway as an example, lots of people travel to use it and spend money in the local economy.

I have used the Waterford greenway several times and its fantastic to see all the small local businesses benefit financially from it.

Also a small campsite somewhere along the route just for walkers/hikers/backpackers, bikepackers/cycle tourers would be fantastic as well.

All the facilities that would be needed in the campsite is a shower or 2, 1 or 2 toilets, a small kitchen, a few picnic tables

It will encourage people to stay in the locality to spend their cash in the local shops/pubs and restaurants.

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 98.  | Improved public transport would be badly needed to improve viability of the project.   |
| 99.  | In principle, the greenway, and the drive to create a sustainable rural environment is very very positive. Another key point is that enabling people to carry out their daily activities closer to the earth and environment generates greater love of, and care for, your place. Great opportunity for promoting more education in the environment in all weathers too!   |
| 100. | Include wicklow town and stop annexing it.....   |
| 101. | Increasing rail traffic is important... the infrastructure is there, just ask Irish Rail to stop at Kilcoole.  |
| 102. | irish rail and dublin bus /bus Eireann are difficult to persuade to do anything!   |
| 103. | It has lots of advantages. It is important that it is not only seen as a potential money making project and it should be approached very sensitively with the protection of wildlife and natural habitats kept in the core of all actions. I am also not sure how the participation of Ashford and Newcastle will contribute to the project as much as the other villages. A lot of the questions being asked didn't fully speak to me as the proposed green way would not be passing through where I live - between Ashford and Newcastle. So maybe it needs to be made clear about how people living in this area would benefit from this project even though it wouldn't be direct benefits.. |
| 104. | It is important the greenway is linked to the main transport hub in greystones for visitors from dublin to really work   |
| 105. | It would be a huge boost for the area  |
| 106. | It would be good to connect with greystones too to allow a link with the dart!   |
| 107. | It would be great to see more about this and have the opportunity to be involved from the beginning.   |
| 108. | It would be great to see something like this being developed. It's important to do an environmental assessment (I'm sure you know) and ensure that it wouldn't pass through areas that are sensitive to sconstruction or nest spots for protected species.   |
| 109. | It would definitely enhance the area. Greenways have become so popular and a staycation destination  |
| 110. | It's a good idea   |
| 111. | It's a great idea, let's hurry up and do it 😊  |
| 112. | It's a great idea, safe passage for kids getting to school and opening up country side for all to use and appreciate and bringing visitors to the area   |
| 113. | It's fantastic can't wait to go on it one day  |
| 114. | It's important to develop a good public transport connections to those areas which will be affordable and with good timetables..ie early morning, later morning, return late afternoon, evening. It does not need to be from Dublin, but from Wicklow, Bray, Greystones so people can  |

	use public transport all the way for a day trip. Thank you! (the good example is LocalLink but it should be extended from Glendalough to Greystones or Bray).
115.	I've been on the Greenway in Westport, Mayo one of things that I noticed was all age groups of the local community used sections of the greenway. It is a very safe way to travel and limits the exposure to other road vehicles. In this area there has been a large increase in houses and cars, yet there is no infrastructure improvement in foot paths or cycle lanes.
116.	leave Kilcoole alone
117.	Like the idea of this... very good initiative.
118.	Link it up to Greystones Bray cliff walk to create a mega hiking trail
119.	Living in Roundwood, I know that there is a shortage of tourist accommodation. Speaking to a few farming folk in the area they are willing and able to provide this though "wouldn't bother as it'll never get planning" This is major issue which needs to be addressed.
120.	Local community groups to be included in the planning process Environment and sustainability to be prioritised
121.	Looking forward to it can't wait...
122.	Lots of the trails and paths you have to devine to as the narrow roads are dangerous
123.	Love idea!
124.	More greenways should be built and this one would be fantastic linking to multiple others in Glendalough
125.	More of this please and as soon as possible
126.	More public transport to connect with other towns. Direct bus to dart or Luas. More shops and amenities in the town
127.	My interest is purely recreational, however we all need to be thinking broader in terms of the future of the areas with the impacts of C19 and climate change enabling businesses to diversify and us to attract more people into the areas involved.
128.	my main fear is damage to existing ecosystems, anti social behaviour and problems with parking if additional visitors driving to the starting points.
129.	My only concern is that this, of necessity, is a steep route, the highest village in Ireland to sea level. Other green routes that I'm aware of are relatively flat which makes for easier cycling. Being over 70 that's a big factor
130.	Myself and my husband are very interested in this and already have ideas of running a local sustainable environmentally supportive business in the area
131.	Need to engage with Government to deal with outdoor insurance companies. All UK insurance companies have pulled out of Ireland due to the ridiculous sue culture that is a poisons cancer killing the outdoor industry. I know alot of companies who closed their doors due to this.
132.	Need to pay attention to the track surface and adequately wide gates and stiles to allow access to wide buggies and wheelchairs. Some recent greenway gates are too narrow and difficult to navigate. Litter bins should be made available eg Big Belly bins that require little maintenance b'
133.	Needs a plan to manage overuse
134.	Next time I visit, I would be very excited to explore the areas along the Greenway and make this one of the focal points of my trip. A great deal of my family still lives in the area, like my father for example, and I would very much look forward to learning more about this area and engaging with it in a meaningful way. The Greenway would enable me to do this.
135.	No
136.	No
137.	No point linking with bus and rail routes unless they will allow bikes to be taken onboard



138.	Not necessary wast of time and money
139.	One word: think bigger!
140.	Path should include Newcastle and Ashford .  Currently lots of Large groups of weekend cyclists use the coast road from Bray to Rathnew and also horse riders use the roads. It is dangerous for other road users Such as young families to get out and use the roads, walking or cycling slowly. If there cant be a cycle/bridle path then there needs yo be an alternative for outdoor exercise.
141.	Please consider making it a circle as outlined above
142.	Please consider making this wheelchair accessible with paved paths not gravel which is NOT wheelchair friendly.
143.	Please do not delay, harness the momentum for this type of project and get it done a s a p ,
144.	Please don't proceed if your intention is to pave over our beautiful beach and surrounds with a bicycle path.
145.	Please ensure that the greenway also facilitates horse riding also.
146.	Please start this asap.
147.	Possibly a second start point in Bray...the dart connection reduces the need for buses . People can catch the dart to Bray and start the Greenway from there. Maybe!!
148.	Provide more information now so that people living in these areas, like myself, can fully understand what is being proposed.
149.	Provision of a local bus link between start and finish of the route by linking into existing transport providers including public and private providers, including Irish rail.
150.	Question 4 should be what is your SEX not your Gender.
151.	Really love this idea especially if developed as a bridle other for horses-just be sure to include suitable horse box parking
152.	Right now the route from Newtownmountkennedy to the sea is unsafe for walking /walking. We need that Greenway.
153.	SAFE LINK from Newtown to Kilcoole (and therefore Dart..More bus routes and to Dunlin generally) badly needed for the area.
154.	Seek support and promote the campaign within local cycling and walking clubs
155.	Sending kids alone to school along a greenaway, given seclusion, I would see as a safety risk
156.	Should be developed in consultation and agreement with stakeholders including landowners
157.	Such incredible scenery in these environs & so much is only safely accessible by car. I'd LOVE to be able to cycle this route with my family. It would be amazing to see other potential routes joining it too - for example laragh-ashford-the murrough. I've cycled the Mayo & Waterford greenways several times in all weathers - each time I've wondered why these green routes aren't available around us in Wicklow, with all we have to offer. This is a fantastic idea.
158.	Survey implies that local facilities not used- reservoir walks almost like Grafton st at weekends, likewise Wicklow and St Kevin's ways
159.	Thanks to all concerned for all the work so far. Great idea.
160.	The coast road from Bray to Newcastle is dangerous for cyclists at present- especially the weekends  The area is growing hugely and needs an amenity like this  Bring in the Newcastle leg of the trail. It's got history, birds, the sea, wildlife and bus linkage

161.	The Greenway is a terrific idea but I would suggest the promotion of it should focus on social and recreational use. The ambition to have it incorporated in local people's commutes might be a step too far at this point.
162.	The most important thing for long term is to get the project underway with simple improvements for everyone including tourists to see. Tidy interesting including quaint villages and traffic control. The rest would easily follow through demand.  Currently there is very little to recommend places such as Newtown. These places are scruffy, badly laid out with poor development strategies.
163.	The new local link Glendalough to Wicklow through Roundwood needs to pick people up/drop off from/to house gates along the main road - such a waste that it only picks up from villages.
164.	The project appears to be another 'tourist attraction' bringing yet more tourists into the area - the reality is that this would be predominantly by car, thereby encouraging car usage.
165.	The proposed route would certainly make a safe link on a route which is hard to access for most. Even locals have to drive to access local walks as there aren't adequate paths, safe roads etc from their houses to scenic locations. There are  NO public bridleways in Wicklow & indeed very few in Ireland so this would certainly be a unique feature of this particular route should it be included.
166.	There are two distinct things at play here,  1 a viable route to connect bus, education, shops etc  2 a leisure route to attract tourists etc  They would appear to be different. This is a fabulous proposal which I would think falls into the second category. ( It depends on the final route of course. )  Don't over egg the pudding with this. It is very unlikely to cover both. Just go for the second option all-out.  Best of luck.
167.	There's some fantastic musicians in the area. It would be a waste not to involve them in events etc.
168.	Think it would be a great asset to the area. Look at the success of other greenways in the country.
169.	This is a fantastic way to promote local villages and to add to their uniqueness!!
170.	This is a great idea and fully support it. Although I don't live in the nine village area, I do own a business in one of the area and have lots of friends in the nine villages and therefore would spend much leisure time in the areas.
171.	This is a great initiative and the fact that it is proposing to provide a link to the Wicklow mountains is really innovative
172.	This is an essential amenity for school children to get to and from secondary school safely.
173.	This Project is long overdue. In my opinion this is the only way to get our region attractive for people to live in and to visit. If it doesn't happen this region will become a place to live temporarily in ( not home for life) and to visit for a few hours rather than few days.
174.	This seems to be crossing one of the proposed routes for n11 upgrade. Would that not destroy the green aspect for substantial bit given major motorway? I am happy to support a greenway but

	reading these questions there seem to be competing objectives. Greener commuting and leisure visitors. Commuting is people focused on getting to work speeding along on cycles or electric bikes or scooters. Maybe even motorbikes and scooters. Leisure tourism is more relaxed cycling, walking and horse riding. Will there be a commuter “lane” ? Otherwise it’s just another road with no cars being only difference.
175.	This sounds too good to be true, especially as a horse ride who has been forced off the roads due to the volume of traffic! Please include a bridle path!!
176.	Tie is with other key areas neighbouring. greystones/Delagany are obviously candidates but also Bray Enniskerry. Complementary
177.	Unless bus links are improved this will just lead to a tourist route and nothing more
178.	Very difficult to deliver a Greenway due to concerns of private landowners, there may be more easily achieved Greenway routes in Wicklow, should the Greenway options be considered at county-level to decide on most useful route?
179.	Volunteering will be essential to engage with people who will wish to support the Greenway and linked trails.
180.	Walking and cycling only. No to horse riding on the routes or it will not be acceptable
181.	What a great idea! I support it wholeheartedly.
182.	What type of surface would you be thinking? Use existing trails?
183.	who cares for and maintains the area? the council or local people
184.	Wonderful project. Badly needed. Needs to be handled in a sensitive manner with consideration for all including our creature habitat.
185.	would be a great project for the area- it would need to be an accredited greenway as that guarantees a certain level of quality for the user - would also help with branding.
186.	Would be good to tie in with The Wicklow Passport idea as currently available from local libraries.  There could be a market for cycling lessons for kids.
187.	Would like to see the village of Newcastle included
188.	Would love to walk the 2km to Roundwood with my children. Terrible that I drive 2km to the village then drive to go for a walk! Far prefer to incorporate walk into daily routine but too dangerous at the moment. Also have pony and would love to be able to bring her out hacking.

Q34. What do you think of the name 'The Nine Village Federation' - do you have any suggestions for an alternative name for this proposed group/body? (n=257).

1.	"Federation" maybe sounds a bit serious?? Would Route/Trail/Welcome be a good substitution? Or something in Irish?
2.	It's very Game of Thrones like it!
3.	1.The Wicklow Nine. 2.Nine Towns Wicklow. 3.The nine villages of northern Wicklow. (TNVNW)
4.	9 Villages 1 Vision
5.	9VF- tee shirts!!!
6.	A bit corporate sounding, something shorter and snappier.
7.	A bit unwieldy i think
8.	A good idea but not a good name! It sounds like some sort of political splinter group! And including a specific number limits its expansion if other villages wanted to join in the future. How about something simple like 'The Wicklow Village Partnership', 'Wicklow Integrated Village Initiative (WIVI)' or 'Wicklow Integrated Communities Initiative (WICI)'. Strapline for the latter two ideas could be something along the lines of "Villages/Communities integrated with the environment, with the economy and with each other" ..
9.	Awful name, could be in east Germany. Nothing local about it.
10.	B'fharr liom rud éigin as Gaeilge Eg Naoi le chéile Or more picturesque/ collegial Eg Mountains to Sea Alliance or 'nine valleys co-op'
11.	Caroline Costigan
12.	Could be improved
13.	Could the no of towns grow. I don't see any mention of Newcastle for example. Mountain to Sea route does create an image.
14.	Council of Nine Villages
15.	Crap name The Wicklow Green Way ?
16.	Definitely needs a better name, as it is it sounds like something from The Hobbit crossed with Star Trek. Sorry, no suggestions at this time.
17.	Dislike- sounds like the 7 Nations Army
18.	Don't like federation.. 9 Village Formation / Alignment / Evolution / Foundation / Trust
19.	Don't like the name don't have a good alternative
20.	Don't like the name I'm afraid. North Wicklow village community. ??
21.	Don't like the word Federation - too hard/pompous
22.	Don't like the word Federation- something like Collaboratve,Co-operation, Meitheal or some word to inspire cohesive thinking among the residents/villages.
23.	Don't like it (reminds of 7 nation army) but have no better suggestion
24.	Don't like it, something a bit more quaint or local perhaps

25.	Don't like it. - but in fairness don't have an alternative suggestion - maybe Wicklow Greenway Villages or something like that.
26.	Don't like the term federation. This could be dropped. Alternatively Greenway Support Villages?
27.	Don't really like federation. Do you think it may extend or reduce from nine so is that limiting? The nine villages. Villages of north Wicklow (way....) villages of east wicklow...
28.	Drop the "Federation" part. Just go with "Nine Villages".
29.	East Wicklow Sisters
30.	East Wicklow Villages Group
31.	Federation ... very post soviet
32.	Federation = star trek 😊  Maybe just drop the federation. And use something softer like network?
33.	Federation a bit serious. Nine village link up group
34.	Federation is a bit Ahh! But love the whole idea.
35.	Federation is just too American just go with 9 Villages
36.	Federation is strange. Kind of American or something. But I can't think of what could be used in place. 'Project'? 'Nine Villages Project'?
37.	Federation sounds a bit cold. Nine village community is warmer.
38.	Federation sounds a bit over the top, Americanised, maybe co-OP or association.
39.	Federation sounds a bit serious. Something softer would be nicer. What if the body expands to more than 9 villages - you'd have to change the name. I'm not suggesting alternatives here, sorry.
40.	Federation sounds a little bit strange...
41.	Federation sounds like a brewery or something out of Star Wars. The Wicklow Greenway The Wicklow Trail Wicklow Coast to Mountain Trail
42.	Federation sounds like we're heading into space....how about The Nine Village Natural space or Community, or Harmony,
43.	Federation sounds to corporate, would suggest "partnership"
44.	'Federation', comes across as quite a harsh, official word. I think that 'partnership' is a better fit and gives more of a sense of equality whereby every location has a joint interest in the project. A reminder that this is a collective project to benefit all communities by working together.
45.	Garden County Greenway
46.	Go away
47.	Good
48.	good
49.	Good
50.	Good
51.	Good choice!
52.	Good name
53.	Good name
54.	Good name

55.	Good name but if you don't use a number you can perhaps grow with inclusions of other villages in time
56.	Good name!
57.	Grand
58.	Great
59.	Great
60.	Great idea, joined up thinking
61.	Great name
62.	Great name
63.	Great name
64.	Great name.. get the White Stripes to write the anthem for the Federation once we proclaim independence!
65.	Great proposal.
66.	Green Alliance
67.	Green Village Regeneration Federation
68.	green villages project
69.	Group
70.	Has a good solid ring to it.
71.	How does it identify the where? Wicklow's Nine Tribes
72.	I don't like it- it smacks of feudalism and exclusion. As I said earlier, there is also a risk, as often happens with councils, that they will think that they have fulfilled their role in relation to developing one ring fenced enclave and then neglect the need for continuing the initiative across the whole county - wouldn't it be nice if Wicklow county were recognised and protected as a 'lung' for the greater Dublin area, but not held back at the same time? Opportunities for home working with good broadband abound at the moment.
73.	I don't like it sounds like something from Star Wars!!! But honestly struggling to think of something else!
74.	I don't like the word federation in there - it's a bit unfriendly
75.	I don't like the word federation The nine village greenway
76.	I don't love it but nor can I contribute a better idea at the moment!
77.	I don't have an idea for a different name but I don't think Federation is suitable..."Group".. "co-op" maybe
78.	I don't like the name particularly the word federation it sounds very "government" like. Maybe something like "Hill to Coast Nine Villages Project"
79.	I don't like the name, but cannot think of any good alternatives.
80.	I feel the word federation is too formal. Would also need to feature a local name to connect with the area and define it as a Wicklow project for those outside the area.
81.	I like it
82.	I like it
83.	I like it!
84.	I like the name, but Kilcoole isn't a village anymore due to the amount of development over the last decade (I'm not sure about the other 'villages')
85.	I like the name.



86.	I think it is too long
87.	I think it needs to be shorter
88.	I think it sounds like a political party!  A friendlier, greener, and more illuminating name would go a long way to promote this great idea 👍😊
89.	I think it sounds like something from star trek. I really don't like it.
90.	I think just nine villages as in cinque terra. I don't like the word federation.
91.	If I don't know what it is then it doesn't really tell me anything about it.
92.	I'm unsure about the 'Federation' it sounds rather old 'Eastern Block', would something nearer Community suit better?
93.	It could be more marketable/catchy Federation makes it sound like a but Communist!
94.	It does sound like an Olympic Committee. I love the name tho. or Mountains to See Wicklow Programme.
95.	It does what it says. No need to over think it .
96.	It is not a very friendly sounding name, sounds more like something from communist Russia
97.	It is odd as Newtown is not a village it is the fastest growing town kn Europe so maybe call it rural links
98.	It sounds a bit Star Trek meets Glenroe... but I have no alternatives.
99.	It sounds a bit star wars-ish!! "Your Community working together for every one"
100.	It sounds like a Russian comparison - I don't think - it needs to be catchy I think to market it - 9VT - 9 villages together eg
101.	It sounds like a Soviet Union organisation. Take a local poll for an alternative.
102.	It's a bit corporate. Something lighter and catchier might be better.
103.	It's awful. Cold, clinical - sounds like a Chinese communist subdivision of the 1930s. It's not in the least bit compelling or attractive - retire it immediately! Do not use the word "federation" unless you want to scare people & drive them away! Wicklow is known as the "Garden of Ireland" You can't get more romantic than that! Branding should be "The Garden of Ireland" The west Cork branding for a similar scheme was the "Fuschia" brand, which was brilliant. I'd be very interested in being involved in developing this great project!
104.	It's clunky but understandable
105.	It's strong and different Slightly intriguing !!
106.	It's a good name.
107.	It's a good name. it's possible you may need to pick a name that links in the geographical location ('East Wicklow Nine Village Federation')
108.	It's good. Perhaps consider incorporating the word "Wicklow"
109.	its not a great name but ive no suggestions at the moment
110.	It's ok

111.	It's ok, growing on me. Nine village council. Nine Village Co-OP...hard to get Wicklow in there. Wicklow Greenway Village Council. I can't think if anything better so Nine Village Council is grand.
112.	It's quite a mouthful, and it doesn't tell me anything really. I think you should consider changing it to something shorter that indicates the project rather than those involved.
113.	Its very exclusive and sounds a bit intimidating. Would suggest something more open like the north wicklow greenway community federation
114.	Just 'The Nine Villages' - I don't really like Federation
115.	Just simply 'The Nine Villages' would be better. It is more romantic, mysterious sounding. The word federation has quite harsh connotations.
116.	Like it but "The Nine Wicklow Village Federation " would be better.
117.	Like the name
118.	Love it.
119.	Maggie Rozbicka
120.	Maybe drop the word 'federation'.
121.	Maybe replace Federation with Group or Circle
122.	Maybe there is a word from the first letter of each village. Nine village sounds good.
123.	Mid Wicklow Greenway Group
124.	Mountain to Sea Group
125.	My objection to the whole concept is why Laragh and Glendalough as already congested areas. Better to improve lot of other areas
126.	Name is perfect for the plan
127.	naoi sráidbhaile pobal amháin (Nine villages one community)
128.	Newtown Greenway
129.	nine up
130.	Nine village greenaway.
131.	Nine Villages includes the route villages on the Greenway. Federation might appear overly political or beurocratic. Possibly use of Community as an option.
132.	Nine Villages sounds nice but Federation sounds a Soviet era type.
133.	No
134.	No
135.	No
136.	No
137.	No
138.	No
139.	No option either way
140.	No other suggestions but name could be worked on.
141.	No sounds good enough.
142.	No suggestion
143.	No The Nine Village part sounds good but Federation sounds a bit military!
144.	No.
145.	No.
146.	No. But would be great to get the wider community working together. It's worth considering the Wicklow upland council model as it's working well

147.	North Wicklow Nine
148.	North Wicklow Village Council
149.	Not a bad name, little bit like the cinque terra in Italy! A little bit clunky though. Federation sounds a bit Soviet/star trek-ish... And if it ever expanded at either end( Hollywood, Killincarrig?) or had off shoots (Ashford, Moneystown?) to include more villages, it would need a rebrand! It will also connect with the Wicklow way, so should somehow link with the naming/branding of it?
150.	Not a fan. Sounds like a sci fi movie
151.	Not a good name. Sounds a bit communist- e.l too formal anyway... wicklow mountains to sea villages?
152.	Not a great name ....
153.	not a great name TBH
154.	Not a great name to be honest. It describes the amount of villages but doesn't describe the setting or function. Could apply to anywhere. Suggest something like Wicklow Uplands to the Sea Community Forum' not suggesting this actual name but something along those lines.
155.	Not a great name, however great idea in principle.
156.	Not a great name. Can't think of anything better
157.	Not at the moment
158.	Not at the moment.
159.	Not crazy about the name, 'Federation' is a bit dramatic.
160.	Not great name
161.	Not great, but no better ideas!
162.	Not mad about it to honest think it should be something softer federation sounds v official and stern. Wicklow greenway nine village link or something like that
163.	Not sue if the Federation bit, The Nine Villages sounds better
164.	Not sure about federation in name. Maybe The Garden Villages Initiative/linkup
165.	Not sure about the word federation ,something more Irish/ local perhaps.
166.	Not sure I like the word federation. Reminds me of Communism!...., Maybe Nine Village 'Alliance'.....
167.	Not sure sounds a bit too much like union speak.
168.	Not veing inspired right now but I find the word federation off-putting
169.	Not very catchy
170.	Ok
171.	Perfect
172.	Perfect
173.	Perhaps the words 'North Wicklow' might be included which would immediatly help people know where the Federation is?
174.	Pick another name. Wicklow mountains to the sea greenway is better. Have a competition!
175.	Sea to mountain over 9 stones.
176.	Seems a bit weird like the bad guys in stars wars or something too political. The Garden County Nine or GCN for short sounds better

177.	Seems fine - don't think anybody could be offended by it! Can always increase the number if you add more villages!
178.	should reference Wicklow in some way, "Nine Village Federation" could be anywhere.
179.	Silly
180.	Something a bit more catchy would be better if that is going to be the public name.
181.	Something more pithy would be better. If anything occurs to me I will forward it at a later stage.
182.	Something that reflects Wicklow's history and heritage. A federation does not sound very friendly! (A bit Germán frankly!)
183.	Sounds a bit communist, Russian Federation. Pick something more in keeping with the area. Local historical figures etc.
184.	Sounds a bit formal.
185.	Sounds a bit political
186.	Sounds a bit sinister. What about 9 village co-operation/connection, or 9 village link
187.	Sounds a bit Star Wars
188.	Sounds good
189.	Sounds good
190.	Sounds good gets everyone involved
191.	Sounds good, might include something indicating where the 9 villages are, like the name of the old barony/civil parish or something more abstract?
192.	Sounds great
193.	Sounds like something from Star Trek. How about The Greenway Villages Alliance?
194.	Sounds like something out of star wars
195.	Sounds like something out of Star Wars! Sorry no other suggestions
196.	Sounds like they belong in Star Trek !
197.	Sounds too like a startrek body. Maybe the G9 (too much like the G8!) How about the GW9. Greenway or Greenway Wicklow?
198.	Sráid bhaile na n~naoi
199.	St. Kevin's Greenway
200.	Sustainable village network?
201.	Terrible
202.	That's a good name
203.	The far side of the pale
204.	The Federation part i don't like.The whole name doesn't identify with what it is about. To me it's American sound.Needs a rural culture tone to it. The Nine Village Greenway,keep it simple.
205.	The Fine Nine? Can you bring in the word greenway somehow, to say what it is - clearly? Think the name you have is a tad cumbersome maybe
206.	'The finest nine' garden villages of Ireland.
207.	The Garden County Greenway.
208.	The Garden of Ireland Way
209.	The Green Nine
210.	The Group of Nine

211.	The idea of 9 villages is lovely, however federation sounds intimidating and unattractive. I would suggest using The Nine Village Project” which sounds more inclusive and less instructive.
212.	The meaning of the word federation is not suitable to describe rural towns and villages in county wicklow.
213.	The name isn't inspiring! Makes me think of an African Aid project!
214.	The name sounds a bit harsh or like a political party to me. Maybe something like the Wicklow Mountains Greenway or Wicklow Coast to Mountains Greenway.  I think that this is a great vision and I wish the team working on it strength to work through the obstacles and endurance to see it through to the end.
215.	The name sounds excellent
216.	The Nine
217.	The Nine Village community
218.	The Nine Village Community sounds more friendly
219.	The Nine Village Co-op Nine Villages United
220.	The Nine Village Federation caps the membership it would be nice to leave it open for others to join for example Newcastle/ Ashford.
221.	The Nine Village Sustainable Federation
222.	The Nine Villages
223.	The nine villages of the National Park.
224.	The Nine Villages.
225.	The Nines Greenway
226.	The north wicklow green way. Between the mountains and the sea
227.	The North Wicklow Greenway, although the Nine Village Federation does work well.
228.	The NVF sounds like a terrorist group! Perhaps North East Wicklow (NEW) Living Group or NEW Sustainable Villages?
229.	The only anomaly I see at the moment is that Newtownmountkenedy is now officially a town because of its population size and not a village. I don't know about the other places - maybe they are still all villages? I'm And I don't really like the term 'Federation'. Can't we just name it The East Wicklow Mountains to the Sea Greenway ... or something to that effect?
230.	The sublime nine The Wicklow way The Greenway through the garden The green mile
231.	The Village Collective
232.	The village people federation.
233.	The Wicklow 9 Village
234.	The Wicklow East Federation
235.	The Wicklow Foothills Alliance
236.	The Wicklow nine?
237.	Think perhaps Wicklow should be included in the title and also consider if other villages wish to join at a later stage and branding - definitely should have Wicklow in the title - if I was to find fault at all with the title perhaps sounds a bit Star Trek like !

238.	'think the name could be better, the current name doesn't tell me what or where the group is
239.	Too business like. Not indicate of rural village cohesiveness
240.	Too long
241.	Too long and fédération is inappropriate. Just call it '9 villages'
242.	Try and get "Wicklow" in there too.
243.	Unnecessary
244.	Use capital letters of all nine villages to create a word which makes some sense
245.	Very dismissive of Ashford and Newcastle that are also in the projected area but not on the line
246.	Viking trail
247.	Village cohesion group
248.	Villagers working together for future generations to come
249.	Villages Unite - don't like Federation
250.	Well thought out name
251.	Wicklow Foundation
252.	Wicklow Greenway Partnership
253.	Wicklow Greenway Villages / Group /co-op
254.	Wicklow mountain to sea village federation (keep it open for a wider network in future)
255.	Wicklow Village Collective
256.	With the size of Kilcoole and Newtown now they have the risk of missing that village tag based of recent growth
257.	Would "The nine village alliance" sound better?



Q35 Lastly! If you are interested in assisting in any way with this project, please record below your name and email address and/or mobile number. A member of N2050 will be in contact with you. Note that your contact details will only be used for the purposes of this project and will be stored and used according to Otium Leisure Consultancy's GDPR policy.

***Over 200 people recorded their details. Their records are held separately in accordance with GDPR.***

## Business Survey

**Q19. How do you think the proposed Greenway could further develop your business i.e., what opportunities can you see? Please provide as much detail as you can. If you answered 'no' to the previous two questions, skip this question.**

1. More youth, school and Gaisce groups walking the route for Gaisce projects or TY programs
2. Enhanced safe routes to market for more walkers and cyclists. Opportunity to package up with Waterford Greenway on a walking or cycle tour along east coast.
3. The Mountains to Sea Greenway would allow us to setup events and associated services on the route
4. a single route does not embrace possibilities of variable routes as the sea is not only a single destination in WW: there are many routes there
5. We believe that the greenway will open up an opportunity fo our business to gain visibility and open us up potential clients outside of our immediate area.
6. It would be great for tourist treks, the lane we are on is great and very little traffic but would be lovely to have a vehicle free riding path.
7. Stay in Glendalough area overnight and combine with walks in the area
8. More people mean more services needed
9. I am involved in Marketing consultancy. This will encourage more local businesses, more prosperous economy. Leads to more work
10. we could develop our 'gate to plate offering ' for passers-by especially sweetcorn time.

**Q20. Do you have any concerns about the development of a Greenway in the Project Area? If so, please tell us.**

1. No not really. More off-road routes that are easy to navigate are what the area needs. Especially if they link in with other waymarked trails. Many tourists coming here find it difficult to access the coast without a car.
2. I need to know how and where the greenway comes into Roundwood. If the track is too far from the village people won't come off at Roundwood and any business will be lost to Glendalough. We have just got a car park for Roundwood BUT it is to far outside the village and at the wrong side of the village which will not help business but will take business away from us. I'm finding it harder and harder to keep my business going, Covid is just another nail in my coffin
3. 1-A lot of the smaller back roads could have heavier loads of traffic on the weekends with people driving out here to do the walk. This could lead to issues with heavy farm machinery that also use these roads and travel at a much slower pace. The back roads are often not as well maintained as the main roads and foot paths, etc would have to be put in place for the safety of the person walking  2-the pathways would have to be clearly marked to help stop people straying onto privately owned farmland

4. It could only make sense if it were seen as a network of routes, some already open. You should think more communities rather than a single route.
5. No.
6. I am concerned at the impact of an increase in visitor / day tripper / cyclist numbers in the Roundwood/Laragh/Glendalough areas, particularly during weekends. The road and services infrastructure are currently sub-optimal for the volumes visiting and detrimental to the sense of community, particularly in the Laragh area where it is virtually impossible to access the village on weekends due to traffic volumes.
7. Want to keep Laragh simple - no Chinese granite .. like Greystones...
8. Protect landowners
9. Anti-social activities, littering, dumping

**Q23. Are there other needs/challenges in the Project Area not mentioned in the previous question? Please tell us about them below.**

1. Public transport links in the project area are poor especially east-west. It is almost impossible to get from Roundwood to Greystones or Kilcoole.
2. Parking central to the village of Roundwood. If the greenway goes ahead then we will need parking more central to the village itself
3. The centre of the village needs a car park that can accommodate a few tour businesses. All we see is tourists passing us by because they have nowhere to stop and park
4. - if a walk route is going to be established then an important aspect would be to create a decent sized car park at the beginning / end of the route. all too often walkways are established and the carparks serving them are too small leaving them full at the weekends and then cars park along the public road, which impedes traffic flow for locals.  - another thought might be to seek government funding and plant a small hard wood forest along the walk, this will help local biodiversity and help offset any negative effects of the higher footfall on wildlife in a local area
5. Infrastructure around the trail is key. The Glendalough area is already hard stressed by influx of visitors, so trail development needs to factor in access, parking, bins and toilet facilities to match the new influx of visitors and ensure there is not too much traffic driven onto narrow country lanes causing irritation for local traffic
6. Achieving an effective balance between the interests and needs of the resident community and protection of the environment with the drive to increase visitor numbers.
7. Improve the visitor experience and also protect the locals
8. Influx of day trippers from the greater Dublin area
9. Wicklow is a place to stay not just visit ...so more hotels and B+B accommodation in the area and work together to achieve this

10. The promotion of Wicklow Naturally could work really well with this concept, all local producers' food as an offering along the Greenway

**Q27. Any final comments? We thank you for your answers so far and encourage you to record any other comments in support or otherwise of this project.**

1. The proposed green way will need facilities included along the route. Secure car parking, links to dart and bus services, toilets, and waste disposal. And even camping areas or on farm options. 30 years ago, when the Wicklow-Way was introduced 150 people walked it a year today that number walk it every day, so you need to provide additional support (where are all these people meant to go to the toilet. Where do they dispose of waste? Where can they leave a car securely? Where can they stay overnight if no B&Bs are close by?
2. Thank you. Pleas think on a wider scale! as considered in later questions
3. We really hope that this project goes ahead as we feel that it would be a valuable addition to the local area.
4. Tourism is the strongest chance our community has to get over our current terrible situation.
5. Any initiative that enables our communities to develop and flourish, while simultaneously protecting an area of outstanding natural beauty, is to be applauded. Thank you.
6. Best of luck and we will do what we can to support.

## Secondary School Survey

**Q13. Please tell us HOW you think the development, and use of Greenways/off-road trails, could help reduce Climate Change?**

1. As you could cycle to your sports match and hang out with friends
2. Because a lot of my friends live in Newtown and I would love to be able to cycle there instead of relying on my parents or the bus
3. Because it will decrease the emissions of cars
4. Because it will motivate more people to move and use the Greenways instead of driving.
5. Because it would be a good way to get around instead of driving
6. Because more people would be cycling and walking places instead of driving
7. Because people that live in the area might work Or go to school at the other end of the green way and could possibly walk or cycle to work or school
8. Because people will have a chance to walk, run and cycle more if there is a safe path to do it on.
9. Because people would be safer travelling places on foot
10. Because we are saving a lot of plants
11. Because you would be using less car or gas transport
12. Because, people would be encouraged to cycle your bike and walk more
13. Bins for the different types of wait e.g. recycling, biodegradable dog bags, rental bikes
14. By creating a route that is purely for walking/cycling spanning a large area.
15. By cycling or walking instead of driving there are no emissions from cars
16. By letting us cut down on emissions by walking or cycling instead of driving.
17. By people using it to travel instead of cars.
18. Cuz u won't be using fuel
19. Greenways surrounded by trees and nature would be more environmentally friendly than industrial roads
20. Hopefully, people would use it to travel more, and rely less on cars. Also, perhaps it would encourage people to increase their activity, and for example on the weekend, rather than driving places, they might take some exercise by using the greenway. They may increase overall fitness and encourage people to incorporate walking or cycling to get to their destination, more often.
21. I think a greenway will encourage more people to walk or cycle places rather than driving therefore reducing the amount of carbon emitted.
22. I think it could help reduce climate change by less travel in cars to different places and more greenery.
23. I think less people would be driving, lowering the emissions of greenhouse gases from cars.
24. I think that it will encourage people to get out and walk or cycle places more because it is fully dedicated to that purpose and it would reduce car usage.
25. If in a town environment maybe but if it's mainly in the countryside I would say that people would use it more for leisure/fitness as opposed to a travel route
26. If people were more encouraged to safely walk and cycle more, it could possibly reduce the amount of people who have to commute via car
27. If there are safe places to walk or cycle less people would use cars

28. Instead of driving to a place to do a non environmentally good activity, people can have fun and exercise in the greenway
29. It could help because less people will be driving places if there is a walking trail that is safe
30. It could help if people use it for their daily commutes instead of cars.
31. It might encourage people to not drive as much
32. It saves people from driving and therefore reducing the scale of climate change in Wicklow
33. It will get people to walk or cycle to work and school
34. It would because there would be less people driving
35. It would encourage people to use their cars less so it would decrease greenhouse gas emissions
36. It would help reduce the number of people on the road
37. It would motivate people to walk, cycle and appreciate nature more
38. It would reduce the amount of gasses from because more people will be walking and cycling to places
39. It would stop people from using their cars.
40. Less carbon emissions from cars, as people might cycle more.
41. Less cars
42. Less cars and busses will be used in the area and if people have the chance to be more active by walking they should take it
43. Less driving
44. Less people are driving
45. Less people driving
46. less people getting lifts meaning less fossil fuel emissions and preserving nature along the greenway.
47. Less people using cars to get places will obviously release less emissions, but more things need to be done for climate change it is ridiculous how little we are doing to save our home we need to be switching our energy sources to renewable energies not household's business and factories that can actually make the difference
48. Less people will be driving in cars, buses, or any other kind of vehicle and therefore less fumes will be being released and less petrol and diesel will be used
49. Less people would drive
50. Less use of cars, trains buses etc.
51. Less use of motor vehicles
52. More people may choose to walk or cycle if this option is available
53. More people will get used to walking and cycling places
54. More people would use the greenways instead of driving
55. Off road paths will encourage more people to cycle as it will be safer and it would be a lot quieter and more pleasant to walk away from the road
56. Options such as cycling become more viable when greenways are in place, reducing the need for cars on the road.
57. People are not using their cars as much
58. People can use cars less
59. People may drive to less places if there is a good way to walk/cycle there. People wouldn't have to travel by car to go to a forest or garden centre for a walk.
60. people will walk / cycle more on these off-road trails and this reduces people's carbon footprint
61. People would be less inclined to drive somewhere if there are safe paths near-by. It also provides an alternative, eco-friendly activity that people do not have to drive to.



62. People would cycle/walk/run to more places and there would be less need for polluting cars.
63. People would drive less
64. People would hopefully be walking and cycling more and driving less.
65. People would use cars less because they have a new safe way to travel
66. People would use their cars less
67. People would walk/cycle more maybe
68. People wouldn't drive as much
69. Reduce carbon footprint
70. Reducing cars on the road
71. So less people drive
72. There need to be equally as many if not more greenway than normal road for it to make a difference
73. There will be less cars used which will reduce the amount of gases used in Ireland.
74. There would be less people in cars
75. They allow more plants to be planted, increase the use of transport non-dependent on fossil fuels
76. They are better for the environment by getting people out of their cars and cycling/walking more. Reduces CO2 emissions
77. To cycle to school is clean to use why a car isn't
78. Travel and meeting friends being done through cycling/running/walking, thereby cutting down on carbon emissions for the days it is used
79. We cut down on petrol and diesel and gas and it will help Global Warming! So if there are greenways people won't use cars as much and it could help the planet.
80. Well, it's decreasing the amount of roads and building being made

**Q16. If you are supportive of building the proposed Greenway, who do you think should be responsible for developing Greenway. How should Greenways be funded/paid for? Where should they be built? Please let us know your thoughts below.**

1. Ask for donations
2. By whoever wants the greenway
3. Council should fund, with community fundraisers too.
4. County council
5. County council in cooperation with local people, landowners and groups / committees along the route. Ideally by the government, however in the absence of sufficient funding fundraising could help.
6. Don't destroy loads of trees. Get it in a kind of clearing where there is isn't much trees then make a trail in the middle And plant trees around it
7. Donation
8. Funded
9. Funded by the government. Should be built in populated areas so many people will have easy access to the greenway
10. Funded by the state
11. funded through the council and government, along coastal trails and places of heritage and wildlife.
12. Fundraiser
13. Fundraisers could be done in schools/churches
14. Government and crowd funded initiative. Proposed plan looks good
15. Government cuz they got all the cash
16. Government. Car taxes
17. Greenways should be built right through the middle of towns to bring more trees into city's in an attempt to stem global warming
18. Greenways should be funded by the community who are supportive. Greenway should be built in forests and other scenic areas.
19. Have a big fundraiser or maybe a run to a start funding for it. Maybe charge €5 per person to take part
20. I believe that the entire Wicklow community should chip in
21. I don't know
22. I don't know
23. I think the greenway should be funded by the government, if not do a few fundraisers as people would definitely donate I would say
24. I think fundraisers would help
25. I think it should be proposed to county councils, or even to the Government to turn it into a more nationwide appeal. Fundraisers could be organised along with funding from the government. It would be great to see more safe paths around towns, down the seafront from for example Greystones to Wicklow town, and from the mountains coming into the towns also.
26. I think it should be the government because they pay for roads to e built and a greenway is a human equivalent of that.

27. I think it should get funding from the council and locals who want it should get involved as well.
28. I think that a group of volunteers should help organise with the people setting up.
29. I think that the council and the government should be in charge of funding and building as it is probably too much to handle for a private sector and I think that the proposed route is a good place for it to be built
30. I think that the government should pay for them. I think they should be built in as many places as possible
31. I think that they should be funded by donations or funding by the government in places like bray or Greystones where the car usage is high
32. I think the community across Wicklow could help donate money to the making of the greenway.
33. I think the council should pay maybe
34. I think the government and county council should be responsible for developing and, funding greenways. I think they should be built along the coastline or other areas with scenic views and nature.
35. I think the government and local councils should fund it. Some fundraisers could also be done because I feel lots of people would be supportive of a greenway so they might contribute a bit to help it be built. I think they should be built near a main road so that it can be accessed easily by tourists but then diverge from the road so that the scenery would be more pleasant. Sea views would provide additional attraction as well. It should go through multiple towns and villages so that there are different places where it can be accessed and where people can take a break. I think it should end by the sea possibly Greystones.
36. I think the government should be responsible for the greenway and children should do bag packing
37. I think the government should fund the project. I would love if they built it from Greystones to Newtown.
38. I think the government should pay for it as it's an investment in our country and a move to reduce climate change, and I think they should be built all around Ireland in places with natural beauty, so more people can see more of the hidden features of our country.
39. I think the government should pay for it as they pay for building all the houses and other buildings so they should pay for nature.
40. I think the government should pay for them
41. I think the Greenways should be funded. Isn't the route already planned?
42. I think the local people on the greenway should pay
43. I think the local government should fund for the appropriate greenway. I think they should be built in really beautiful parts of the country.
44. I think the people who use the greenway track should be in charge of keeping it clean.
45. I think they could be paid for by doing lots of activities for people and doing fundraisers
46. I think they should be built in highly populated counties
47. I'm not certain of where they should be built in relation to the above map, anywhere that is cut through will anger some people. Even so, I believe the overall

benefit will be worth it. As for pay, donations (likely through fundraisers) seem the best way to go. I can't imagine many being supportive of forced tax payments. Younger people could also be encouraged to hold fundraisers as part of volunteer work which they could be rewarded for within their schools in some way
48. I'm not sure
49. It should be accessible from Newtown forest It could be funded by the government or fundraising schools could do non uniform days to raise money for it.
50. It should be funded by doing fundraisers and the government should help fund it and people across the county should bring publicity and awareness too.
51. Local organisation, like Coillte for example, and local volunteers should help to develop the Greenway. The government should pay for any equipment or workers with the yearly budget they have for helping with transport and the climate crisis. Find places with already existing bike paths that can be improved and then see if there is space for off road tracks in between these already existing bike paths.
52. Maybe during the winter builders should start building it because not as many people would be out and then it will be ready for the summer. The people running it should fund it.
53. Maybe it should be supported by the Government and It could be near Greystones
54. Raise money and government
55. Set up donations, the government etc.
56. The council should build the greenway and they should be built in the Wicklow Mountains
57. The county council
58. The Country Council
59. The county council and government should help to fund it but I think someone local with nature and building experience should design and lead it with fundraising and the local community supporting the funding of it if they can.
60. The county council and the government should co-fund it
61. The county council or community funded by a car wash or bake sale or mask sale In farm land or community space
62. The government
63. The government
64. The government
65. The government
66. The government should fund them like they do with the other ones and the win low county council should look after them
67. The government should pay but they should pay for Covid expenses before a path.
68. The government should pay for the greenways.
69. The government.
70. The person doing it
71. The person who's running the survey
72. There should be a certain amount of state funding for it I suppose, but I think that if so many people are in support of the idea of a greenway, fundraiser may prove to have a plentiful outcome. In regards to who should be responsible and where,

<p>I'm not really sure, however, I am in support on the proposed route above as it seems to be quite close to everywhere and easily accessible.</p>
<p>73. There should be a lot of them webbing across and connecting to each other so they could take to lots of places. They would be used more then.</p>
<p>74. They should be built away from busy roads e.g. motorways so people aren't inhaling the pollution from vehicles. It would also be noisier if it was built near a busy road. That being said, it should be built in an accessible location that goes to/through big towns, as if it is going to be an alternative for commuters, it must go close enough to their places of work.</p>
<p>75. Up the coast on diesel and the extra money is the money for Greenway</p>
<p>76. Wicklow County Council, fundraisers</p>

**Q18. Any final comments? We thank you for your answers so far and encourage you to record any other comments in support or otherwise of this project.**

1. Could there be a mountain bike trail for bikes
2. Good idea.
3. Great idea!
4. Great plan and I hope it gets passed!
5. I like the environment.
6. I think it is a great idea because really enjoy the greenway in Mayo
7. I think it is a great idea, and gets more people out exercising
8. I think that the greenway is a great idea and should defo be looked into further!
9. I think this is a brilliant idea and would really promote more sustainable living. In addition to this, it would simply be a lovely activity for a weekend or holiday, to go for a cycle along the greenway. I think it is a facility that is definitely needed in Wicklow, and i wish you every success in your developments of this project
10. I think this is a great idea because I would use it a lot and it sounds like a great way to stop Climate Change. Before this I had never heard of a Greenway but now, I really want to cycle and walk on one. This is a great idea that should go ahead,
11. I was unaware of this plan until now, but when I saw this survey, I was ecstatic. I love to go on long cycles with my friends but I am very nervous when cycling on busy roads so I am in full support of a local Greenway and I think it would be very beneficial to the community.
12. If you put up signposts at certain places with information it could be good for example this is Glendalough built in the ... and was used by the ... little pieces of information that would get us to learn new things about the history of our surrounding places we never knew. Definitely make the green way a wide enough space to allow people to pass with a 2 meter gap (this would reassure some people who want to go on walks but see scared of seeing people). Have good viewpoint son route where people can stop and take a quick breather and appreciate Wicklow county.
13. Nah thanks tho !
14. Please build a greenway! 😊
15. Please do it that would be class
16. Thank you
17. The greenway could be a great way to bring in tourists to Wicklow and something really good for the locals and environment
18. Will the proposed paths encourage biodiversity?



## Primary School Survey

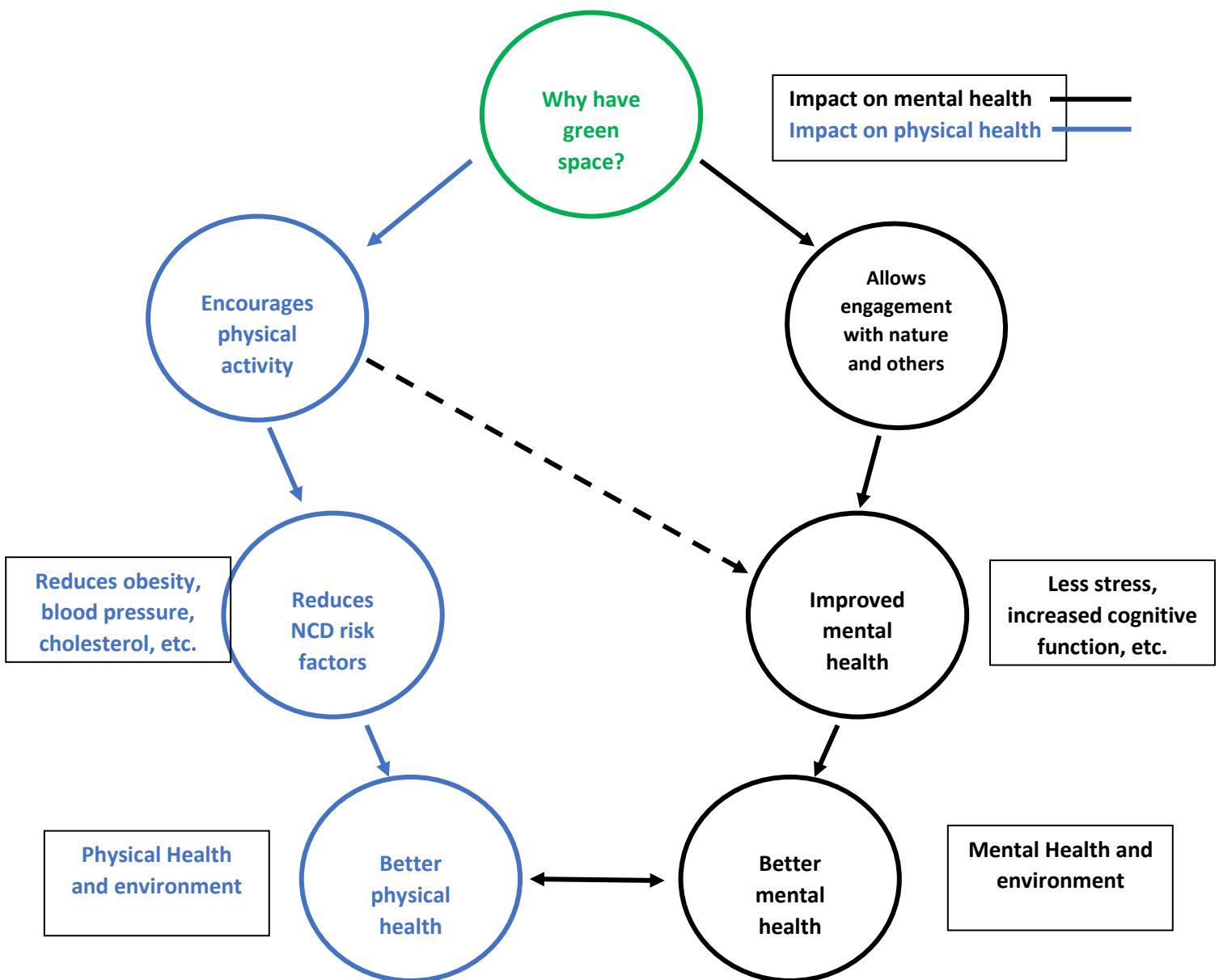
**Q11. If lots of people used a Greenway to get to school, to go to work, or to go see friends, how do you think this would make life better? Finish this sentence and add another sentence if you would like to. "Having a greenway near me would make life better because .....**

1. We could cycle and walk safely-reduce Co2-healthy-add variety to walks-more trees/wildflowers
2. There would be less cars so less pollution and it would be a good place to exercise.
3. It's a healthier, safer nicer way to get out. It's a new place to go. Encourage more people to walk or cycle. Good way to explore nature.
4. Might make the journey shorter Lead to more exercise and fitness Less air pollution Would lessen the impact the impact of climate change Would not be stuck in the car Less cars/traffic on the road Good for the community

# **APPENDIX 2**

## **Model**

### **Benefits of Green Space on Physical and Mental Health**



**Figure 1:- Walking in green space – benefits for physical and mental health**

# **APPENDIX 3**

## **Greenway Case Studies**

## Great Western Greenway (GWG) Case Study

The Great Western Greenway (Westport-Newport-Mulranny-Achill) in County Mayo is a 42km traffic-free cycling and walking facility that primarily follows the line of the old Great Western Railway which closed in 1937. It is a partnership between Fáilte Ireland, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, Mayo County Council and the local community. The first 18km of the Greenway, from Newport to Mulranny, opened in 2010, while the two extensions linking south to Westport and east to Achill formally opened in July 2011, lengthening the route to 42 km, mostly off-road. The overall cost of the GWG was €5.7 million (National Trails Office, 2012).

An economic impact assessment carried out by Fitzpatrick Associates<sup>(20)</sup> in 2011 employed user count data and user surveys to calculate economic returns as summarised in Table 4.3. Here, the average daily spend and estimation of the total input to the local economy in 2011 is calculated for three types of identified users: *local* (live close to GWG), *domestic* (live in Ireland), *international* (live outside Ireland).

GWG – Economic Impact Assessment Summary			
User Type	Number of visits in 2011	Average daily spend	Total spend in 2011
Local	34,400	€27.31	€939,550
Domestic	14,800	€49.85	€3,544,832
International	8,000	€50.71	€2,754,993
		<b>Total</b>	<b>€7,239,375</b>

Of the €7.2 million calculated total spend in the local economy, Fitzpatrick Associates suggest 45% to 60% is directly related to the development of the Greenway i.e., visitors cited the Greenway as their main reason for coming to the area. The Greenway therefore would pay for itself in two to three years based on these economic benefits alone.

## Waterford Greenway Case Study

At 46 km, Waterford Greenway is currently the longest Greenway in Ireland. The trail, linking Waterford City to Dungarvan, officially opened in March 2017. Automatic cycle and pedestrian counters installed at key points along the extent of the Greenway provide valuable usage data. The Greenway has been highly successful to date in attracting local users and visitors, averaging over 250,000 visits annually.

An extensive *baseline intercept user survey*<sup>(21)</sup> was carried out by AECOM in August and October 2017, with a total of 1,177 respondents. The in-depth survey gathered data on a

<sup>(20)</sup> *Great Western Greenway – Economic Impact Case Study – Final Report 2011.*

<sup>(21)</sup> *Waterford Greenway Intercept Survey 2017.*

broad range of questions including travel mode, gender, age, where users live, purpose of visit, and perception of the Greenway. In addition, the survey asked a number of questions related to economic spend by users whilst visiting the Greenway. This data is presented to demonstrate an approximate direct economic addition to the local economy of the area from accommodation, bike hire and food and drink, estimated to total €7.2 million annually.

Estimation of Economic Benefits for Waterford Greenway		
Statistic from Aecom Survey 2017	Survey statistic applied to the number of users as collected from the automatic counters	Comments
Total annual number of walking trips (users)	106,000	Gathered using automatic counters – the Aecom Survey states the raw count figures are calibrated to avoid double counting for return trips.
Total annual number of cycling trips (users)	142,000	
Total annual number of users (cycling & walking)	248,000	
66% of total users are from Waterford	0.66 x 248,000 = 163,680	Totals are calculated using the % from the survey.
34% of total users are from elsewhere in Ireland	0.34 x 248,000 = 84,320	
2% of total users are overseas and N. Ireland	0.02 x 248,000 = 4,960	
36% of total users said they were visiting/sightseeing	0.36 x 248,000 = 89,280	
26% of cycling users hired a bicycle	0.26 x 142,000 = 36,920	
70% of visitors from outside Waterford travelled to Waterford solely to use the Greenway	0.7 x 84,320 = 59,024	
40% of visitors from outside Waterford were staying in paid overnight accommodation	0.4 x (84,320+4,960) = 35,712	
41% of overnight stays were at a hotel	0.41 x 35,712 = 14,642	
The average spend on accommodation was €109.50 per night	€109.50 x 35,712 = €3,910,464	
41% of the sample spent on average €28.50 on food and drink	€28.50 x 0.41 x 248,000 = €2,897,880	
11% of cycling users spent €27.50 on bike hire	€24.70 x 0.11 x 142,000 = €385,814	
<b>Total estimated annual spend by visitors</b>	<b>€7,194,158</b>	



Whilst the above calculation is an estimate based on the Aecom baseline intercept survey and annual visitor numbers, it gives a broad indication of the potential income sources. A number of observations are relevant:-

- Overnight accommodation accounts for 35% of the potential revenue. A tourism attraction such as a Greenway has a greater economic benefit if it is of sufficient length to necessitate overnight stays. It is of interest to note Fáilte Ireland's submission to the consultation for the Wicklow County Plan 2021 -2027:

*“Wicklow must expand the volume and quality of the visitor accommodation available to visitors. This is the biggest constraint to growth of the visitor economy in Wicklow. With around 3% of all Ireland overnights and spend, and just over 2% of available serviced visitor accommodation stock, expanding the supply would create the foundations for success.”*

- 77% of the businesses which completed the business survey for this study think the proposed Green-Way could attract visitors to the area.
- 45% of businesses think their business could grow as a result of the proposed Green-Way.
- In addition, the following economic benefits cited from the Great Western Greenway<sup>(22)</sup> further demonstrate the economic potential:-
  - 47% of local business reported an increase in turnover since development of the Greenway.
  - 33% of local businesses reported an increased business expenditure in the area in terms of wages and purchase of local goods and services.
  - It is estimated that 38 new full time equivalent jobs have been created and a further 56 full time equivalent jobs sustained due to the Greenway.

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<sup>(22)</sup> Great Western Greenway – Economic Impact Case Study – Final Report.

# **APPENDIX 4**

## **Indirect Economic Benefits Modelling Approaches**

### 1. Physical Activity and Regeneration of Connswater (PARC) Study

Led by a multi-disciplinary team, the Centre of Excellence for Public Health NI based at Queens University Belfast, researched and reported on the potential health impacts of the Connswater Community Greenway (CCG)<sup>(23)</sup> on local residents using the new Greenway to do more physical activity. The study also ‘weighed-up’ the costs of building the Greenway against the projected health benefits gained from increased physical activity levels, to consider whether the CCG could be a cost-effective investment for public health.

The PARC study results indicated that, (i) if just 2% of those people living near the Connswater Community Greenway who are currently inactive, completed at least 150 minutes/week of physical activity as a result of the CCG, over 40 years, then a total of 184 new cases of chronic diseases and 17 deaths could be prevented; (ii) if 10% of those people who are currently inactive became active, over 40 years, then a total of 886 new cases of chronic diseases and 75 deaths could be prevented; (iii) each scenario is calculated to be cost-effective, ranging from £4,469/DALY to £18,411/DALY, which is well within the accepted UK cost-effectiveness threshold.

### 2. Social Return On Investment (SROI) of An Urban Greenway<sup>(24)</sup>

This is an update study to the above PARC analysis on the Connswater Community Greenway. Here, cost benefit analysis is presented using a Social Return on Investment (SROI) framework which takes a wider view of the benefits of Greenways to include other outcomes in addition to health; these can include for example, biodiversity, tourism, and house prices.

In essence the study hypothesises that the Greenway leads to increased physical activity, increases in worker productivity, job opportunities, reduced anti-social behaviour and crime, increases in tourism, reduced flood risk, and climate risk mitigations through changes in travel from car to walking/cycling. The monetary value of these benefits is compared with the cost of generating these benefits and presented as a net monetary benefit, or *return on investment*. The SROI analysis finds that every £1 invested in the Connswater Community Greenway generates an expected £2 to £6 return and it should therefore pay for itself two to six times over during its lifetime.

### 3. Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) : World Health Organisation<sup>(25)</sup>

The use of the HEAT model provides an estimate of the economic benefits accruing as a result of lower death rates among more active populations. It has been designed to be used by transport planners, traffic engineers and special interest groups – eg, walking/cycling groups - as well as being of interest to health promotion experts and health economists. It evaluates the reduced mortality from past and/or current levels of walking

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<sup>(23)</sup> *The Connswater Community Greenway when finished will extend 9km through East Belfast following the Connswater, Knock and Loop rivers connecting open and green spaces.*

<sup>(24)</sup> *Ruth F. Hunter , Mary A.T. Dallat , Mark A. Tully , Leonie Heron , Ciaran O’Neill & Frank Kee; on behalf of the PARC Study Research Team (2020): Social Return On Investment Analysis of An Urban Greenway, Cities & Health.*

<sup>(25)</sup> *WHO (2011), “Health economic assessment tools (HEAT) for walking and for cycling **Methodology and user guide** ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OF TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND POLICIES.”*

and cycling, and the economic consequences of a potential future change in levels of walking and cycling. The model is available free online and can be used to assess the following question: *'If x people cycle or walk y distance on most days, what is the economic value of mortality rate improvements'?*

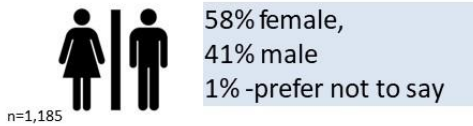
In an example presented within Appendix 4, if the resident population increases the amount of time they walk a day by 10 minutes this would prevent 20 premature deaths – each premature death has an equivalent value of approximately €5 million. If walking is increased by 20 minutes a day for 20 years the reduction in premature deaths is 40, and 60 if walking is increased by 30 minutes a day.

PARC, SROI and HEAT are recognised modelling approaches which allow funders to assess the potential impact that investment in infrastructures such as trails and Greenways can make to populations on a number of levels - city, region, country. PARC and HEAT models focus primarily on health outcomes from an increase in physical activity whereas SROI analysis is broader and assesses the impact of infrastructure development by looking at environmental, social and economic factors.

# **APPENDIX 5**

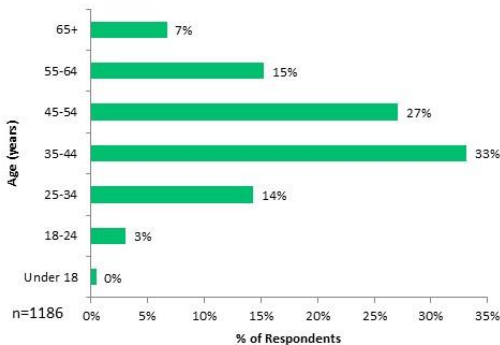
## **Survey Results**

## Profile of respondents



77% - employed/self-employed (n=1,190)

### Age Profile



65% of respondents have children  
n=1,175

60% of respondents are 35 to 45 years old.

### Remarks

The profile of respondents shows a broad spread in age with 75% being in the 35- to 65-year-old age group. There are fewer responses for the over 65s, perhaps due to the requirement for online completion. Almost two thirds of respondents have children and three quarters are either employed or self-employed.

## Where Respondents Live



74% (n=933) live within the project area (not all indicated their nearest village in the table.)

Village/Town	No. of Res	% Res
Newtownmountkenedy	346	39%
Kilcoole	195	22%
Kilpedder	80	9%
Roundwood	75	8%
Ashford	56	6%
Newcastle	37	4%
Laragh	34	4%
Greystones	23	3%
Other*	17	2%
Delgany	12	1%
Annamoe	13	1%
Bray	5	1%
Glendalough	3	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>100%</b>

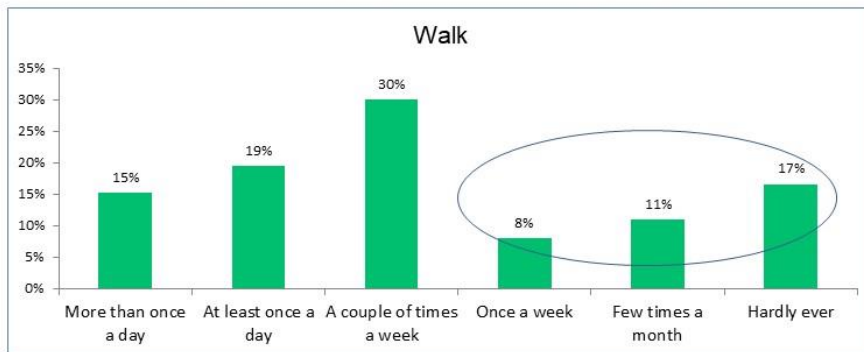
\* Wicklow Town, Kilquade, Rathdrum, Rathnew, Redcross

### Remarks

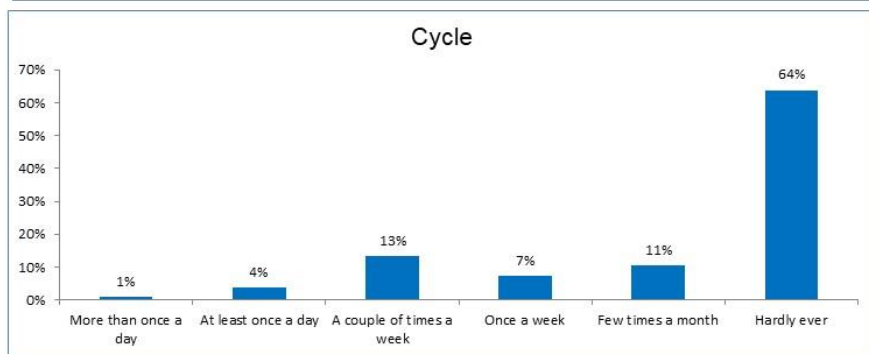
Approximately three-quarters of respondents live within the project area. The most represented town is Newtownmountkenedy with a total of 346 responses which approximates to a response from 1 in 6 of the village's adult population. Of the 275 respondents who live outside the project area 59% (162) are from County Wicklow, 27% (74) from Dublin and 14% (39) from a number of counties across Ireland. There are also 12 respondents from UK, Europe, USA and Canada.



### How often respondents Cycle or Walk in the project area



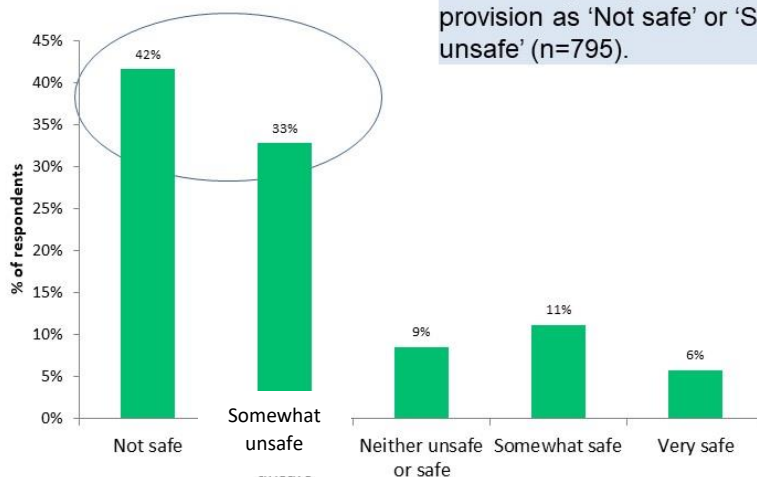
36% of respondents walk to destinations 'Once a week' or less (n=810).



64% of respondents 'Hardly ever' cycle (n=811).

**Remarks**  
When it comes to cycling, almost two thirds of respondents 'Hardly ever' cycle and only 25% cycle on a weekly basis. There are likely to be a number of reasons for this, however it is widely recognised that sharing roads with cars is not attractive to the leisure cyclist or as a family activity. For walking, approximately a third of respondents walk to destinations such as shops, entertainment, work etc. at least once a day or more, whilst over a third walk much less frequently.

### How would you rate in terms of safety, the provision of cycling, walking and running facilities in the project area?



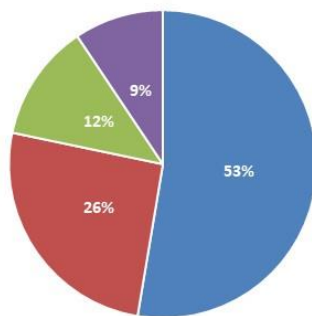
75% rate cycling, walking, running provision as 'Not safe' or 'Somewhat unsafe' (n=795).

**Remarks**  
For the majority of residents, public roads are the only route to travel between villages in the area. Three quarters of respondents rate this provision as 'Not safe' or 'Somewhat unsafe' for cycling, walking and running. This is not an unusual response. It is becoming more widely accepted that in order to increase cycling participation, infrastructure which separates vehicular and cycling traffic is required. The Netherlands is often used as an example; here, the government proactively invested in dedicated cycling infrastructure in the 1970s. In 2020 27% of all trips are made by bike\* in the Netherlands.

\*figures/#:~:text=The%20figure%20is%20around%2027,increased%20by%2012%25%20since%202005.

### How often children cycle or walk to school.

■ Never ■ Usually ■ Sometimes ■ Rarely



62% of children 'Never' or 'Rarely' walk or cycle to school (n=511).

Main reasons why children do not walk or cycle to school are (n=437):

- 57% said it's not safe, there is too much traffic.
- 33% said there are no footpaths.
- 33% said distance too far.

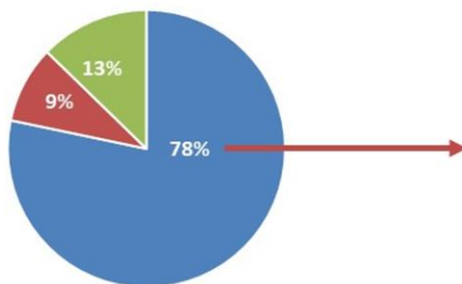
#### Remarks

It is widely reported the number of children who walk or cycle to school has decreased dramatically in the last 20 years. The 2016 Census records a 14.2% increase in journeys to school by car for Wicklow County.

In the project area almost two thirds of children 'Never' or 'Rarely' walk to school. Whilst a third of respondents said the distance is too far to walk/cycle to school, 57% said it was not safe to do so, 33% of respondents said there are no footpaths.

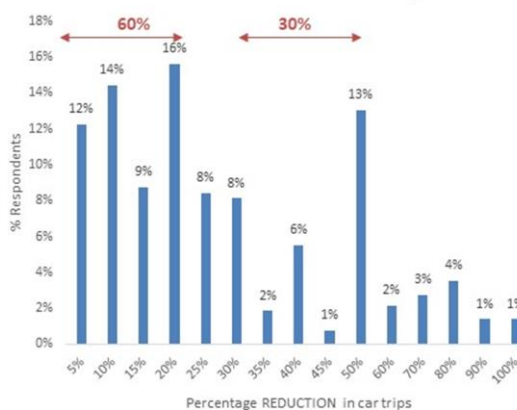
### Would you use cars less, by making more trips on off-road trails and tracks?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't think so



78% of respondents are open to the idea of using their car less and making more trips on off-road trails. (n=791)

Estimated % REDUCTION in car trips

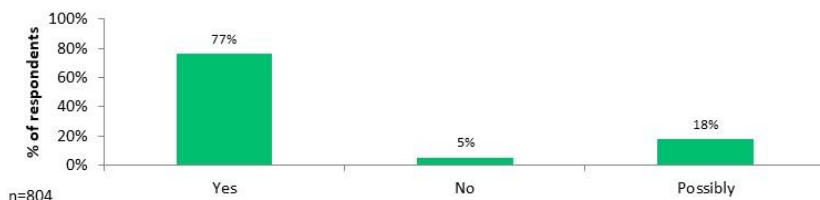


- 60% think they could reduce car trips by up to 25%
- 30% think they could reduce car trips by up to 50% (n=661)

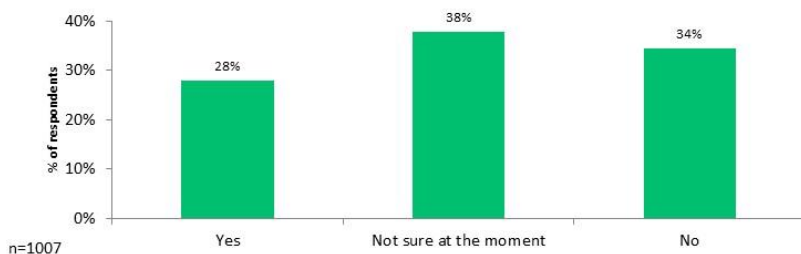
#### Remarks

Respondents indicate a desire for a 'modal' shift from car journeys to more use of off-road trails and tracks such as a Greenway. Whilst it may be optimistic, 60% (397) of the respondents said they could reduce car trips by 25% if there were more off-road trails. This indicates a desire to change the travel mode of shorter journeys. A further 30% of respondents feel they could reduce their car journeys by 50%. So, 90% of respondents reckon they could reduce car journeys by at least 25%.

Do you think the development of a bridle path would encourage tourism locally and create safe travel by horse?



Would you consider investing in an electric bike for everyday travel on the proposed Green-Way?



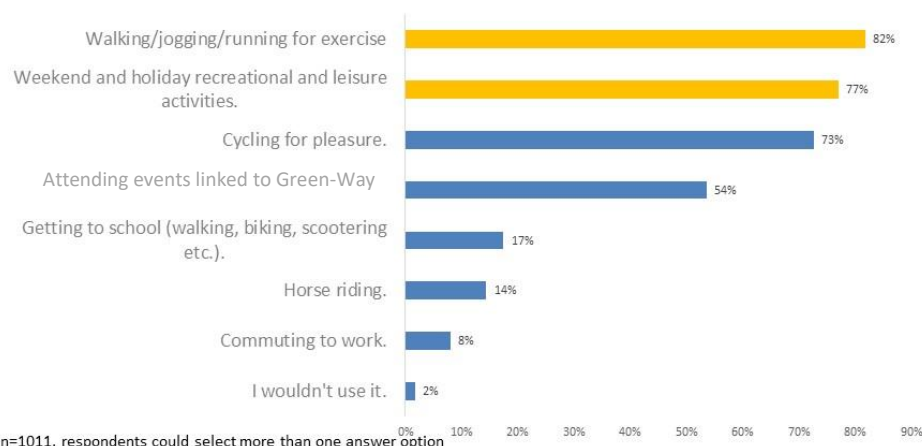
**Remarks**

The area supports a number of horse-riding businesses; the provision of bridle paths is recognised by 77% of respondents as beneficial for tourism and will create safer travel by horse.

With an increase in the availability of electric bikes, it is of interest to see that just over a quarter of respondents would consider investing in one. As the cost of electric bikes is expected to decrease, this is likely to become a more popular mode of transport.

How would you see yourself, family members, and visitors using the proposed Green-Way?

The most popular activities on the proposed Green-Way are:  
1) exercise and 2) weekend & holiday/recreational and leisure activities.

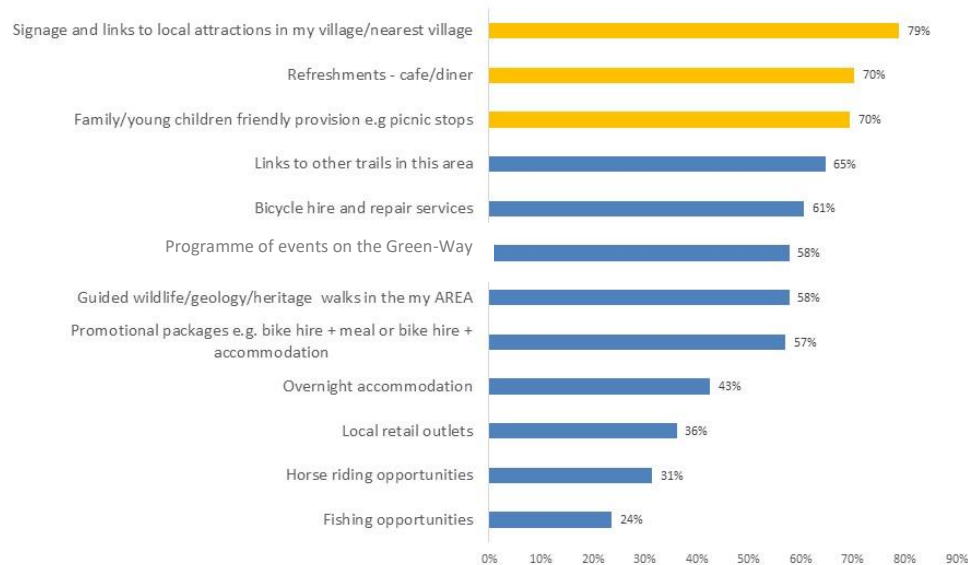


**Remarks**

It is clear respondents see the provision of a Green-Way will allow the opportunity for physical activity and weekend/holiday recreational and leisure activities. From a health perspective any increase in physical activity is desirable.

Fewer respondents see the trail as being used for travel to school/work, most likely due to the fact that routes have not yet been identified.

### What type of activities/provision do you think would encourage the use of the section of the proposed Mountains to the Sea Green-Way in your AREA or VILLAGE?



n=990, respondents could select more than one answer option

#### Remarks

A network of routes such as being proposed has the potential to be many things to many people. However, central to the vision is that the routes will connect each community thereby encouraging locals/visitors to connect and sample the individuality of each village. Signage and links to local attractions is top of the respondents' choice for this question. In addition, the availability of refreshments and child friendly provision is highly rated by 70% of respondents.

### Benefits

n=1,003



96% agree the Green-Way would attract more visitors to the area.



93% agree the Green-Way would make the countryside and nature more accessible to me and/or my family members.



93% agree the Green-Way has the potential to attract and increase economic opportunities and business in the area.



88% agree the Green-Way would enable Farm diversification i.e. B&B accommodation, artisan food production, provision of remote working facilities, and others.



87% agree the Green-Way would allow me and/or my family members to walk/jog/run and cycle more often as part of our daily or weekly routine.



73% agree the Green-Way provide opportunities for protecting plant and animal species.



70% agree the Green-Way would provide safe travel routes to school, work and social destinations.

#### Remarks

Respondents agree there are many benefits the development of a Green-Way trail can bring to area. Overwhelmingly, respondents agree the proposed development will bring more visitors to the area, make the countryside more accessible and has the potential to increase business opportunities in the area. Slightly fewer respondents, but still a significant number, agree that the Green-Way will allow more chance for physical activity, protect flora and fauna and provide safe travel to school/work.



## Do you support the creation of the Nine Village Federation?

94% (n= 947) support the concept of the **Nine Village Federation** and think it could:

Help create sustainable, green and local economic opportunities.	77%
Look after the natural environment, local heritage and culture.	64%
Brand and market the Green-Way to attract, local, national and international visitors.	60%
Ensure the Nine Village Federation is for the benefit of the local community and environment.	59%
Promote and safeguard biodiversity in the whole area and in particular along the route of The Mountains to the Sea Green-Way	54%
Lobby local and national government for continued investment in sustainable green infrastructure in the area.	53%
Continue to develop infrastructure to allow more people to make greener choices.	49%
Help develop events and programmes unique to the area.	47%
Develop educational resources for schools.	37%
Incorporate bridle routes for horse associated businesses and tourism?	21%
Promote political cohesiveness to represent the Nine Village area.	16%

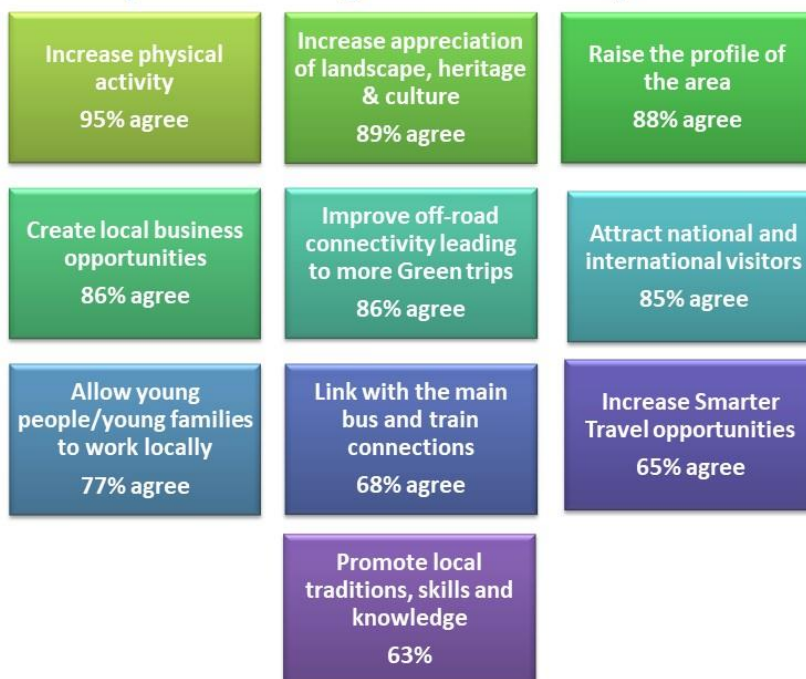
n=1,003

### Remarks

Integral to the proposed project is a clustering of nine villages in the project area to form a Nine Village Federation to promote the sustainable economic wellbeing of all who live in the project area. The federation would aim to bring villages, businesses, and municipal bodies together to create opportunities to strengthen and sustain vibrant communities, thereby safeguarding the area's heritage and natural environment. Ninety four percent of respondents support the idea of forming an entity such as the Nine Village Federation.

## The Green-Way and Nine Village Federation have potential to:

n=994



### Remarks

As a summary to the community survey respondents recognise the potential outcomes the proposed project can bring to an area. These outcomes encompass a holistic view of the local community, visitors, the natural and built environment and how people interact with it.

## Profile of businesses

Business Location	No.	Business Type	No.	% of business related to tourism/visitors	No. of businesses
Newtownmountkenedy	7	Office/Commercial	3		
Roundwood	4	Arts/Culture	3		
Annamoe	3	Farming	3	10%	12
Laragh	3	Activity Operator	3	20%	0
Kilcoole	1	Restaurant/Cafe	2	30%	0
Newcastle	1	B&B/Self-catering	2	40%	0
Greenan	1	Retail	1	50%	0
Ashford	1	Caravan/Camping	1	60%	3
Wicklow Co.	1	Visitor attraction	1	70%	1
		Tour operator	1	80%	0
		Coaching	1	90%	1
		HR Consulting	1	100%	4
		Horse Riding School	1		

Supportive of proposed Green-Way	No.	%
Yes I definitely support the proposed Green-Way.	17	77
Would need to know more about it.	5	23
No I am not supportive of the proposed Green-Way.	0	0

### Remarks

Twenty-two businesses completed the short survey. It is noted that the number of business replies to the survey is smaller than hoped; the return rate may have been affected by the restrictions due to COVID-19. However, these survey results provide useful insights. 77% of the businesses support the proposed project and the remaining 23% (5 businesses) would like to learn more about the project – of these five businesses, two are farming businesses and one a restaurant/café.

## Business Benefit

Do you think the development of the proposed Green-Way could bring new business opportunities to the project area?

Answer Choices	%	Number
Yes	77%	17
No	0%	0
Possibly	23%	5

Do you think the proposed Green-Way has the potential to attract tourists and visitors to the project area?

Answer Choices	%	Number
Yes	73%	16
No	0%	0
Possibly	27%	6

Do you think your business would benefit/grow due to an increase in the number of tourists/visitors to the project area?

Answer Choices	%	Number
Yes	45%	9
No	15%	3
Possibly	40%	8

- More youth, school and Gaisce groups walking the route for Gaisce projects or TY programs
- Enhanced safe routes to market for more walkers and cyclists. Opportunity to package up with Waterford Greenway on a walking or cycle tour along east coast.
- The Mountains to Sea Green-Way would allow us to setup events and associated services on the route
- A single route does not embrace possibilities of variable routes as the sea is not only a single destination in WW: there are many routes there
- We believe that the Green-Way will open up an opportunity for our business to gain visibility and open us to potential clients outside of our immediate area.
- It would be great for tourist treks, the lane we are on is great and very little traffic but would be lovely to have a vehicle free riding path.
- Stay in Glendalough area overnight and combine with walks in the area
- More people mean more services needed
- I am involved in Marketing consultancy. This will encourage more local businesses, more prosperous economy. Leads to more work
- We could develop our 'gate to plate offering' for passers by especially sweetcorn time.

### Remarks

77% of respondents think the proposed development of the Green-Way could attract visitors to the area and therefore increase business opportunities. 45% of businesses think their business could grow as a result of the Green-Way, 40% are less sure and think it could 'possibly' help grow their business.

An example of how one business reckons how they could grow: *'We could develop our 'gate to plate offering' for passers-by especially at sweetcorn time.'*



### SMART Village Initiative

Q21. Have you heard of the SMART Village Initiative?

Answer Choices	%	Number
Yes	32%	7
No	68%	15
		Answered 22

Q22. The SMART Village approach looks to address the needs and underlying challenges of the local area. How important do you think it is to address the below 'needs/challenges' in the Project Area? Where 1 is not very important and 5 is very important.

Answer Choices	Not at all important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very/Extremely Important
Job/work opportunities to allow young people the option of staying/living in their home area?	0	0	0	22
Fast broadband connection to the whole area?	0	1	0	21
Further develop transport infrastructure to allow more 'green' sustainable travel?	0	0	1	21
Sustainable development of the area in a way that is sensitive to local biodiversity?	0	0	2	20
Digital-hub facilities to allow people to work remotely and reduce time spent commuting?	0	0	4	18
Support and develop farm diversification business opportunities e.g. accommodation, repurposing of farm buildings, artisan foods, crafts, etc?	0	1	3	18
Further develop social connections across the whole area both in the countryside and villages/hamlets?	0	0	3	18
Increase the number of visitors to the WHOLE area through tourism opportunities?	0	1	5	16
Increase political representation of the Project Area i.e. develop a stronger voice?	1	0	8	13

### Remarks

The EU SMART Village approach is an initiative to support rural communities in putting measures in place to help retain and attract people to live and work in their locality, for example, through digital and/or social innovation.

The top three 'needs/challenges' in the area identified by the respondents are: *local job/work opportunities; fast broadband; development of green travel infrastructure.*

### Nine Village Federation

Part of the vision for this project is to form the Nine Village Federation to promote the sustainable economic wellbeing of all who live in the project area. The federation aims to bring villages, businesses, and municipal bodies together to create opportunities to strengthen and sustain vibrant communities thereby safeguarding the area's heritage and natural environment. Do you think this is a good idea? Do you support the creation of the Nine Village Federation

Answer Choices	%	Number
Yes	95%	21
No	0%	0
Not sure	5%	1

Q26. Would you/your business be interested in further exploring the above-mentioned three initiatives (i.e. SMART Village, Business Improvement District, Nine Village Federation) in the Project Area in relation to the development of the proposed Green-Way?

Answer Choices	Yes	No	Maybe at a later stage
Interested in SMART Village?	17	0	5
Interested in Business Improvement District?	17	1	4
Interested in Nine Village Federation?	18	0	4
Happy to be contacted regarding these initiatives?	15	1	5

### Business Improvement District (BID)

Linked to the Nine Village Federation concept is the potential to form a Business Improvement District (BID). A BID is a private-sector led initiative where businesses within a clearly defined geographical area, work together, invest and collectively deliver projects that will make an impact on their area over an agreed period (no more than 5 years). Each BID business member pays a fee/levy which is used to deliver the BID projects as identified in the BID business plan. Examples in Ireland include Sligo, Drogheda, and Dublin. Rural examples are found in Scotland: Tweed Valley BID and Inverness & Loch Ness BID centred on tourism. BIDs allow the business community and local authorities to work together to improve the local trading environment. Do you think the creation of a Business Improvement District in this area is worth considering?

Answer Choices	%	Number
Yes the creation of a BID in this area is definitely worth considering	68%	15
No the creation of a BID in this area is definitely not worth considering	5%	1
I'm not sure. I would need more information	27%	6

### Remarks

Two further business type initiatives, a Nine Village Federation (NVF) and the Business Improvement District (BID) are suggested in the survey in order to gauge support. Both the NVF and the BID schemes require businesses to come together, work, promote and be represented under an umbrella entity. All three concepts, SMART Village, NVF, BID, are favourably viewed by the respondents – a larger survey is required to further explore these business development initiatives.

## Business Respondents' Comments

- The proposed green way will need facilities included along the route. Secure car parking, links to dart and bus services, toilets and waste disposal. And even camping areas or on farm options. 30 years ago when the Wicklow-Way was introduced 150 people walked it a year today that number walk it every day so you need to provide additional support (where are all these people meant to go to the toilet. Where do they dispose of waste? Where can they leave a car securely? Where can they stay overnight if no B&Bs are close by?)
- Thank you. Please think on a wider scale! as considered in later questions.
- We really hope that this projects goes ahead as we feel that it would be a valuable addition to the local area.
- Tourism is the strongest chance our community has to get over our current terrible situation .
- Any initiative that enables our communities to develop and flourish, while simultaneously protecting an area of outstanding natural beauty, is to be applauded. Thank you.
- Best of luck and we will do what we can to support.
- Public transport links in the project area are poor especially east-west. It is almost impossible to get from Roundwood to Greystones or Kilcoole.
- Parking central to the village of Roundwood. If the Green-Way goes ahead then we will need parking more central to the village itself
- The centre of the village needs a car park that can accommodate a few tour business. All we see is tourists passing us by because they have nowhere to stop and park
- If a walk route is going to be established then an important aspect would be to create a decent sized car park at the beginning / end of the route. all too often walkways are established and the car parks serving them are too small leaving them full at the weekends and then cars park along the public road, which impedes traffic flow for locals.
- - another thought might be to seek government funding and plant a small hard wood forest along the walk, this will help local biodiversity and help offset any negative affects of the higher footfall on wildlife in a local area
- Achieving an effective balance between the interests and needs of the resident community and protection of the environment with the drive to increase visitor numbers.
- The promotion of Wicklow Naturally could work really well with this concept ..all locally produced food as an offering along the Green-Way

### Remarks

These comments, whilst they are supportive of the project, highlight some concerns, in particular car parking and other amenities. There is a desire to achieve a balance between the needs of local people and nature.

## Online Survey – Primary Schools



October 2020

Questionnaire length - **10 questions** asked by the teacher – pupils responded by a 'show of hands'

### Response Total – 3 schools (4 classes)

- Saint Francis' National School, Newcastle
- Kilcoole Primary School
- Newtownmountkennedy Primary School – 5<sup>th</sup> Class A
- Newtownmountkennedy Primary School- 5<sup>th</sup> Class B

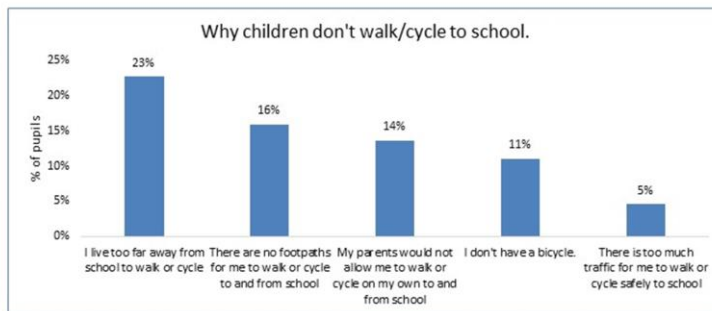
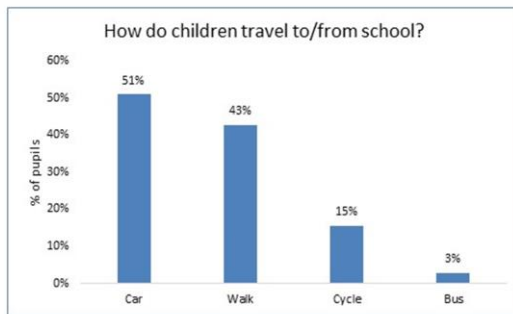
### Remarks

This survey was offered via a Google Docs link to all primary schools in the project area. Responses were received from three schools representing four classes. Whilst this a small response rate the findings are likely to be representative of other schools in the area.

**Remarks**

Over half of the pupils travel to/from school by car, a significant 43% walk and just 15% cycle and 3% travel by bus.

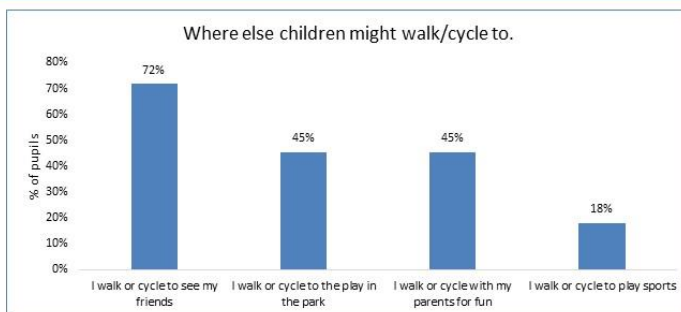
The children selected a number of reasons why they don't walk or cycle to school; 23% of children feel they *live too far away*. 16% of pupils said there are *no footpaths* and 14% felt their *parents would not allow them to walk or cycle on their own to/from school*.



**Remarks**

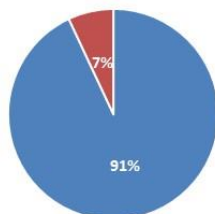
Although over half of the children may not cycle or walk to school they do walk/cycle to see friends (72%) and the park (45%). 45% said they also walk or cycle with their parents for fun.

Just over 90% of the children think the proposed Greenway is a 'Good Idea' and 82% think they would walk/cycle more if it was built.



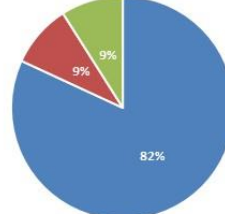
Is the Green-Way a 'Good' or 'Bad' idea?

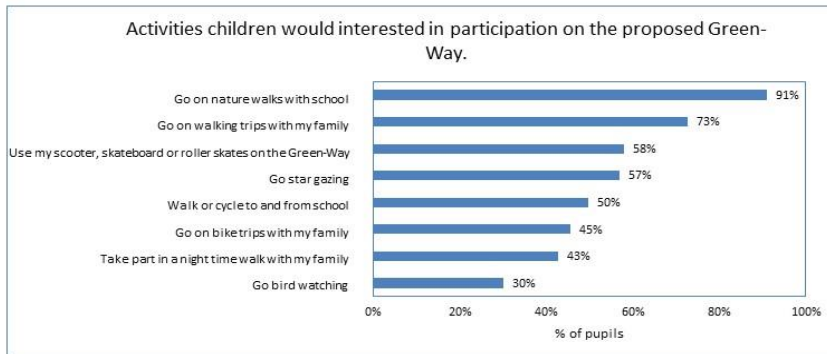
■ A good idea? ■ A Bad idea?



Would you cycle/walk more if a Green-Way is built?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Maybe





**Remarks**

Nature walks with the school was top of the list for the children when asked what activities they would be interested in doing on the proposed Green-Way.

**Final Comments**

- We could cycle and walk safely-reduce Co2-healthy-add variety to walks-more trees/wild flowers-
- There would be less cars so less pollution and it would be a good place to exercise.
- It's a healthier, safer nicer way to get out. Its a new place to go. Encourage more people to walk or cycle. Good way to explore nature.
- "Might make the journey shorter, lead to more exercise and fitness, less air pollution. Would lessen the impact of climate change. Would not be stuck in the car, less cars/traffic on the road. Good for the community"

## Online Survey – Secondary Schools



October 2020

Questionnaire length - **20 questions** taking on average 4 mins to complete



**Response Total – 3 schools**

St Gerard's School Bray – 48 responses

Temple Carrig Greystones – 113 responses

Coláiste Chraobh Abhann, Kilcoole – 59 responses

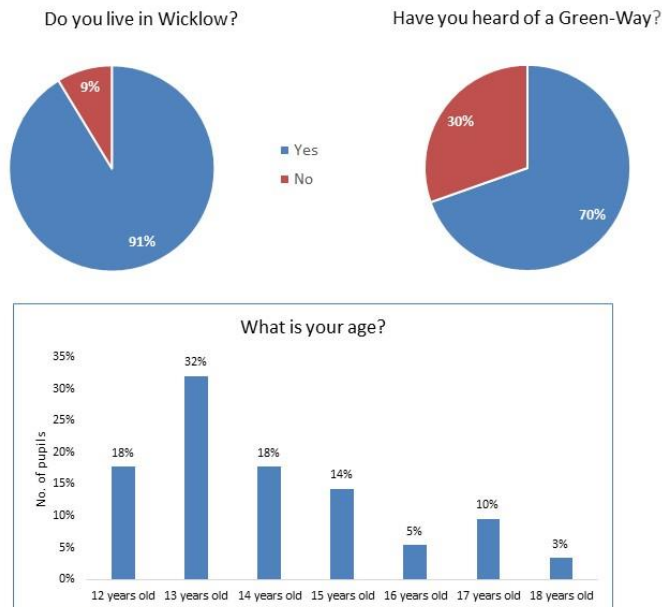


**82% of pupils support project**

**Remarks**

Of the fourteen post-primary schools in Wicklow two schools kindly distributed a survey specifically designed for this age group. A number of schools were just too busy or did not have the online platform to be able to facilitate an electronic survey. A total of 220 responses are captured from three schools.

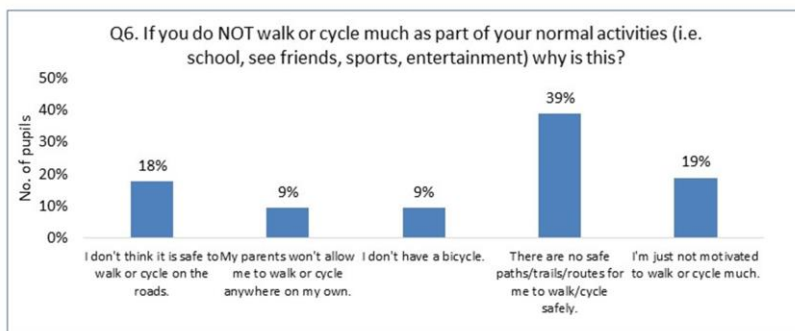
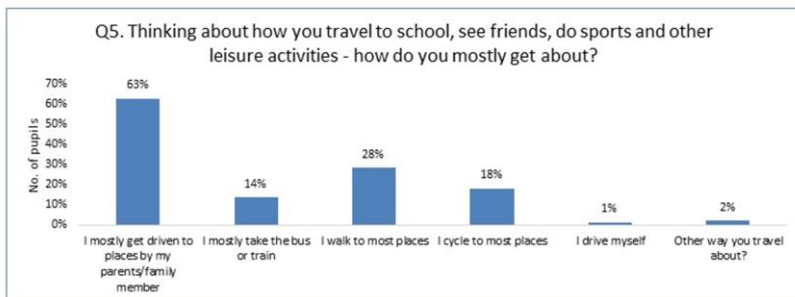




**Remarks**

Over 90% of the school pupils live in County Wicklow (both schools draw enrolment from neighbouring counties).

Over two thirds of the pupils have heard of a Greenway and the largest response rate is from 13-year olds.

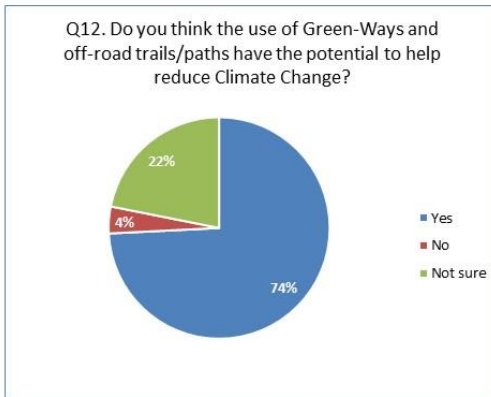
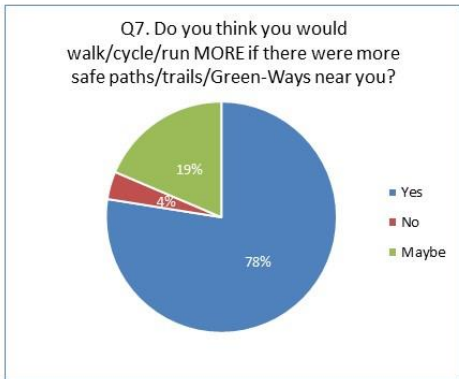


**Remarks**

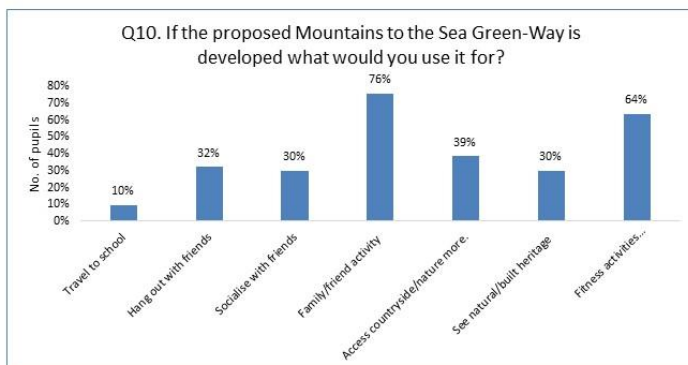
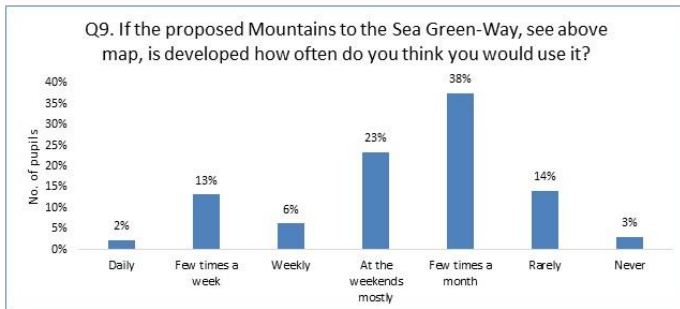
Almost two thirds (63%) of pupils rely on family members to 'get about', while a significant 28% walk to most places – this is likely to be influenced by whether the respondent lives in an urban or rural setting.

The main reason selected as to why the pupils do not walk or cycle as part of normal activities is related to feeling safe on roads: 57% responded that either *there are no safe roads/trails*, or they think *it isn't safe to walk or cycle on roads*.

**Remarks**  
Almost 80% of pupils think they would cycle more if there were increased provision of safe paths/trails and almost three quarters feel use of Green-Ways and trails have the potential to help reduce Climate Change.



**Survey Results**



**Remarks**  
Just 17% of pupils reckon they would either 'Rarely' or 'Never' use the Green-Way. A quarter of respondents think they would use it mostly at the weekends, and almost 40% would use it a few times a month.  
  
Just 10% of respondents think they would use the Green-way to travel to school; the top two activities are use with family/friends and for fitness activities.



Q16. If you are supportive of building the proposed Green-Way, who do you think should be responsible for developing Green-Way. How should Green-Ways be funded/paid for? Where should they be built? Please let us know your thoughts below.

**“I think it should be the government because they pay for roads to be built and a Green-Way is a human equivalent of that.”**

Because a lot of my friends live in Newtown and I would love to be able to cycle there instead of relying on my parents or the bus

Green-Ways surrounded by trees and nature would be more environmentally friendly than industrial roads

There need to be equally as many if not more Green-Way than normal road for it to make a difference

There should be a lot of them webbing across and connecting to each other so they could take to lots of places. They would be used more then.

I think this is a brilliant idea and would really promote more sustainable living. In addition to this, it would simply be a lovely activity for a weekend or holiday, to go for a cycle along the Green-Way. I think it is a facility that is definitely needed in Wicklow, and I wish you every success in your developments of this project

#### Remarks

Over half of the pupils took the time to record a long answer response – these examples reflect the sentiment of the majority. There is a strong desire for projects such as this to allow young people to travel more independently and connect with nature.

# **APPENDIX 6**

## **Draft Activity Programme**

## ACTIVE TRAVEL

**Aim: To increase the number of people in Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole, Kilpedder, Newcastle travelling to school, shops and places of work on foot and by bicycle.**

Objective	Target Group	Actions	No. of participants	Partners
Increase the number of primary and secondary school children travelling to school on foot or by bike using the Green-Way and any associated link routes	5 to 18 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communicate Active Travel Initiative to all schools in the area.</li> <li>▪ Design and distribute child friendly map/app of cycle/walk routes to all schools.</li> <li>▪ Develop and deliver 'beginners learn to ride programme on the Green-Way'.</li> <li>▪ Provide training to volunteers to teach children and adults to cycle – see <a href="https://irishcentreforcycling.ie/">https://irishcentreforcycling.ie/</a>.</li> <li>▪ Look into a 'bike share' or 'help to buy bike scheme' for those on lower incomes.</li> <li>▪ Explore bike swap scheme for children who have outgrown bike.</li> <li>▪ Liaise with local cycling club for volunteer help.</li> <li>▪ Establish a bike repair shop in each school – bike maintenance could be incorporated in school curriculum.</li> <li>▪ Run 'cyclist aware campaigns' for car drivers in the area.</li> </ul>	<p>Aim to have at least 30% of the School population choosing Active Travel options to school at least once a week.</p> <p>Increase by 5% per annum.</p> <p><i>Primary Schools – (846)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Newtownmountkennedy Primary School – 260</li> <li>○ St Catherine's - 100</li> <li>○ Newtownmountkennedy/Kilcoole Educate Together National School - 25</li> <li>○ Kilcoole Primary School - 461</li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary School</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Coláiste Chraobh Abhann, Kilcoole - 602</li> </ul>	Local schools, Local clubs, An Taisce/Wicklow Local Sports Partnership

**HEALTH**

**Aim 2: To make a positive impact on health by increasing the increase the level of participation in recreational CYCLING by residents in Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole, Kilpedder and Newcastle and environs generally and specifically to generate increased participation in the following user groups: girls, women, older people, over 50s men, people with disabilities and the long term inactive.**

Objective	Target Group	Actions	No. of participants	Partners
Increase the number of people using the Green-Way for recreational cycling	All age groups and abilities	<p>Develop a range of cycling activities to suit a broad range of abilities and fitness for example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Youth Club cycling activity</li> <li>2. Over 50s cycling</li> <li>3. Girls/women’s cycling</li> <li>4. Disability cycling</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Liaise with health sector and GP to facilitate exercise referrals.</li> <li>▪ Develop and promote cycling events such as: Village Charity Cycle – Cycling Sundays, Green-Way Bike Day etc.</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities for Bikeability Leadership courses.</li> <li>▪ Liaise with local cycling/triathlon groups to encourage progression from Green-Way to club cycling activities for those who may be interested.</li> <li>▪ Establish links with a cycle repair shop – could link with youth training apprenticeship opportunity.</li> <li>▪ Look to provide a bike share scheme at key points throughout the area.</li> </ul>	<p>Weekly cycle on the Green-Way (20 to 30 participants)</p> <p>As above</p> <p>3 x 6 week programme for 15 to 20 participants</p> <p>Weekly cycle on the Green-Way (20 to 30 participants).</p> <p>As needed.</p> <p>Aim to run 4 community cycling events annually.</p> <p>Train 10 to 20 cycling instructors annually.</p>	<p>Council, Wicklow Local Sports Partnership Community groups, cycle and triathlon groups, youth clubs</p>

**SOCIAL**

**Aim: To increase social cohesion and sense of community through provision of a broad range of educational, social and cultural events.**

Objective	Target Group	Actions	No. of participants	Partners
Design, deliver and promote a broad range of events, activities and gatherings centred on the Green-Way promoting Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole, Kilpedder and Newcastle as key destinations to live, work and visit	All age groups and abilities	<p>Establish and run events attracting a broad spectrum of participants both from the county and beyond for example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish a regular Saturday morning Park Run on the Green-Way.</li> <li>2. Incorporate Green-Way route into any established sporting events in the county.</li> <li>3. Establish an annual Green-Way Festival.</li> <li>4. Collaborate with village heritage groups to develop and run joint activities/events.</li> <li>5. Collaborate with existing community organisations to run joint events.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a range of walk/cycle tourist packages linking with overnight accommodation in the area.</li> <li>▪ Develop an environmental education programme for schools in partnership with Green-Schools based on Biodiversity along the Green-Way and surrounding area.</li> <li>▪ Develop historical/ industrial heritage programme relating to the key locations with associated walks and talks for the schools and the public.</li> <li>▪ Develop a number of ‘outdoor classroom’ sites on the Green-Way to promote hands-on learning in biodiversity, heritage and sites of historical significance.</li> <li>▪ Develop biodiversity trails and guided walks suitable for all the family.</li> <li>▪ Explore the provision of camping, glamping opportunities just off the Green-Way.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	Council, Wicklow Local Sports Partnership, cycle and triathlon groups, youth clubs, An Taisce, Tidy Towns, heritage, conservation groups.	Council, Wicklow Local Sports Partnership Community groups, cycle and triathlon groups, youth clubs

Objective	Target Group	Actions	No. of participants	Partners
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set-up a Friends of M2S Green-Way Group</li> <li>▪ Explore business partnerships to support and grow usage of the Green-Way.</li> <li>▪ Establish a Green-Way Conservation Group and liaise with other similar local and county organisations</li> </ul>		