Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan

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National Transport Authority

CONNECTING IRELAND

Rural Mobility Plan

Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan

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Contents

- Background and Development of Connecting Ireland
- Public Consultation
- 2022 Implementation and Early Outcomes
- Supporting Measures

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Background and Development of Connecting Ireland

The Question posed by the transport planning team…

What would it take to be able to live in rural Ireland “without a car”?

What is Connecting Ireland?

- A **five-year programme** of public transport improvements
- Consists of a range of **regional and local bus** service improvements and pilots of complementary non-conventional transport improvements
- A **plan-led intensification** of the Authority's service review process
- To offer a viable **alternative to the car**
- A **partnership** approach to public transport network planning

Objectives	
Quantity	Connecting more people to more opportunities in more places
Quality	Providing an attractive service as an alternative to the car for some trips
Utility	Providing an integrated, useful network
Plan Led	A **systematic** and **strategic** approach to planning public transport services in **rural Ireland**

Timeline

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2019 - 2020

1

Analysis of the Existing Network

2020

2

Revisioning the Network

2020 - 2021

3

Stakeholder Engagement

2021

4

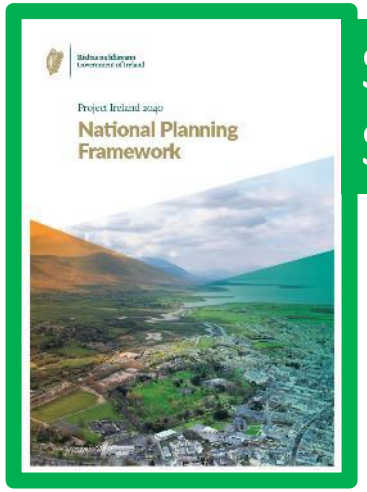
Public Consultation

2022 - 2025

5

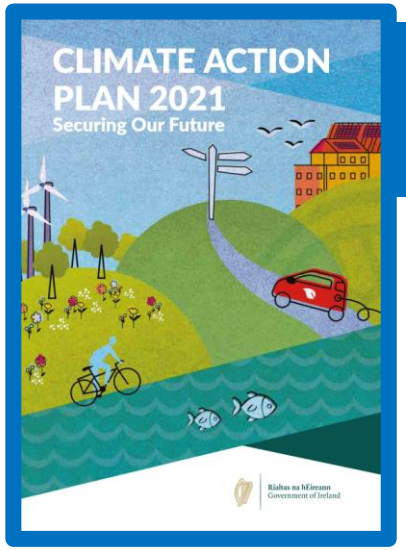
Detailed Planning & Phased Implementation

Policy Context



Strategic Outcomes: “Sustainable Mobility, Enhanced Regional Connectivity, Strengthened Rural Economies”

Major Investment: “Better public transport through the Connecting Ireland bus programme”



2030: 500,000 additional trips by Sustainable Modes

Our Rural Future

Settlement Hierarchy - Based on Project Ireland

Type	Settlement Function						Pop %
	Government	Healthcare	Commercial	Education	Employment	Social	
Rural	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Villages	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Local Centres	Post Office, Social Welfare Branch (Intreo)	Primary & Social Care Services e.g. GP Office, Physiotherapy, Speech & Language Therapy	Grocery Shops, Supermarkets, Restaurants	Library, Secondary Schools, IT / Subsidiary Campuses	Local Businesses, 1 Employment Type from City	Community Centre, Sports Facility	
County Town / Market Town	County Council Offices, Garda Station, Local Enterprise Office, ETB, Court Office	Outpatient & Diagnostic Services, Minor Injury Clinics, Acute Injury Units	Shopping Centres, Warehousing, Comparison Retail, Range of Restaurants	Special Schools, Institutes of Technology	Local Businesses, 2 Employment Types from City	Leisure Centre (Pool), Visitor Centre, Arts & Culture Centre	
Regional Centres							
City	City Council, Garda HQ, High Court	Elective Surgery & Emergency Hospital Services	Department Stores, Specialist Shops, Higher Order Retail	Universities	International Companies, Business Park, Retail Park, IDA Site	Museums, Galleries, Conference/ Concert Arena	

Service Level Criteria to measure current connectivity levels

Service Criteria

A regular service is

- Operates at least every weekday Mo-Fr

- At least one outbound and return trip per day

- Maximum of one interchange to complete a journey

Journey Time Criteria

Journey time must be no longer than

- 30 mins to a Local Centre

- 60 mins to a County Town

- 90 mins to a Regional Centre

- 2 hours to a City

Baseline Audit

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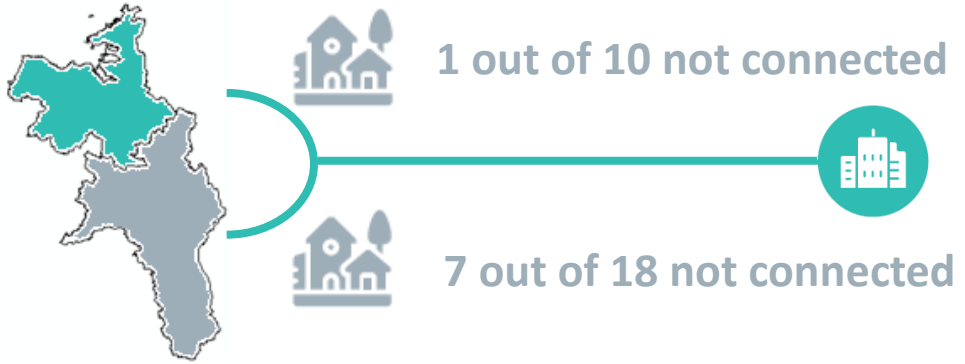
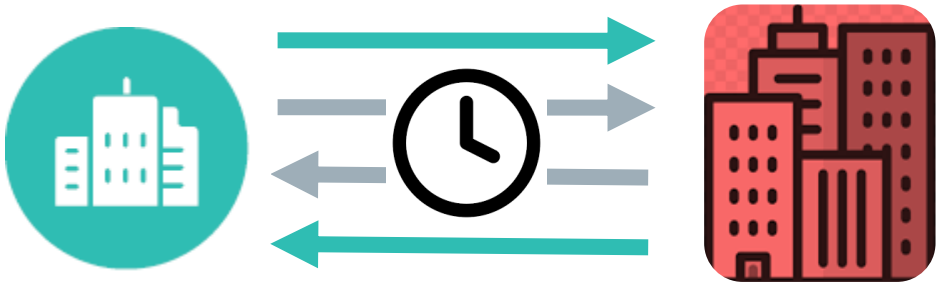
Network Connections

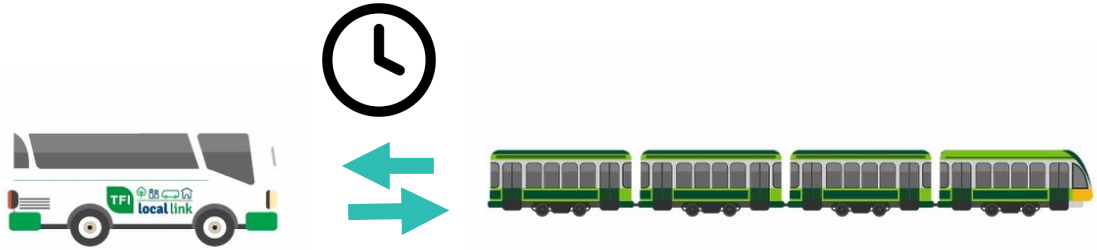
Uneven Connectivity Between Areas



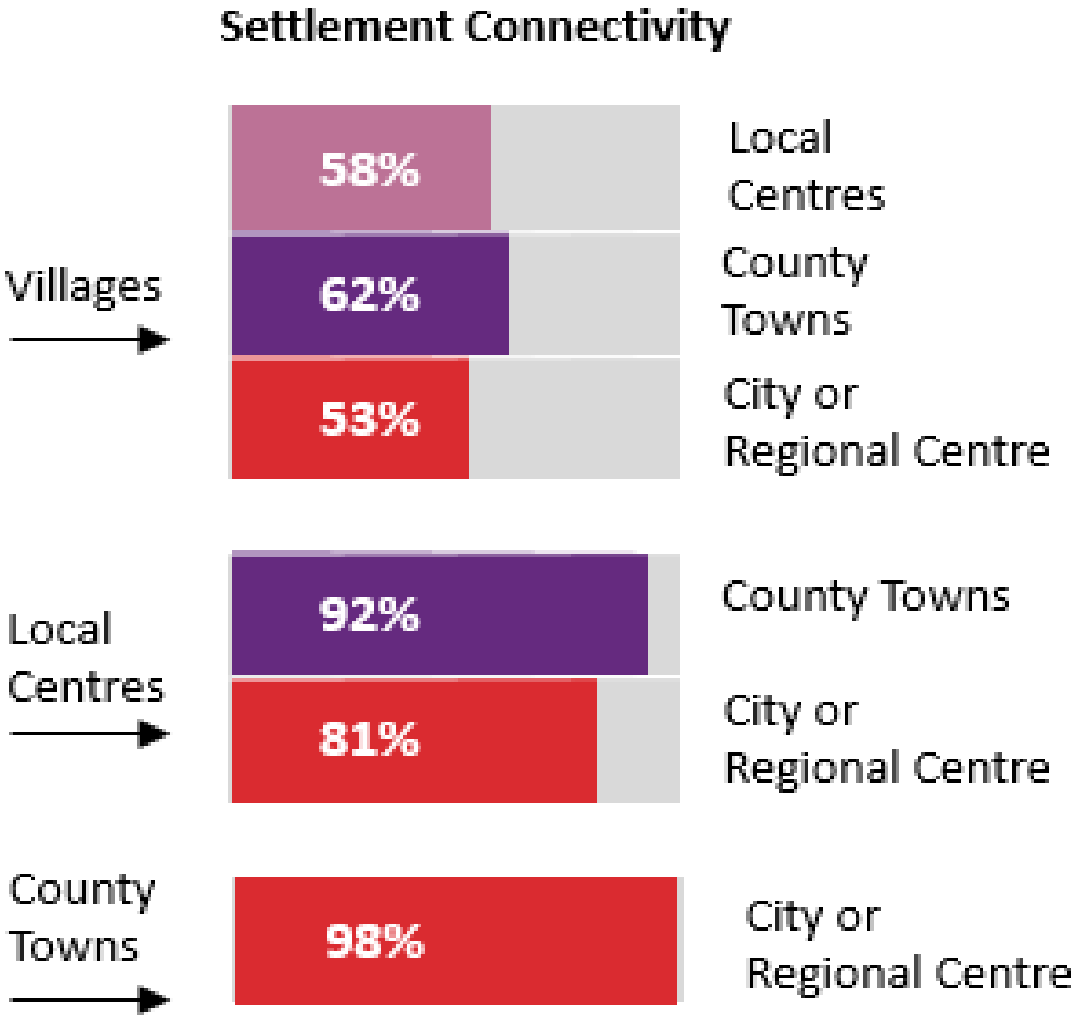
Timetable Frequency + Coverage

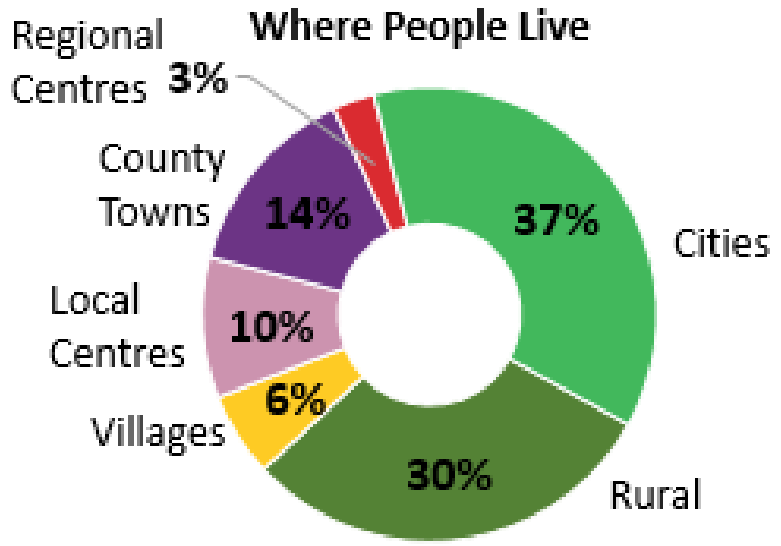


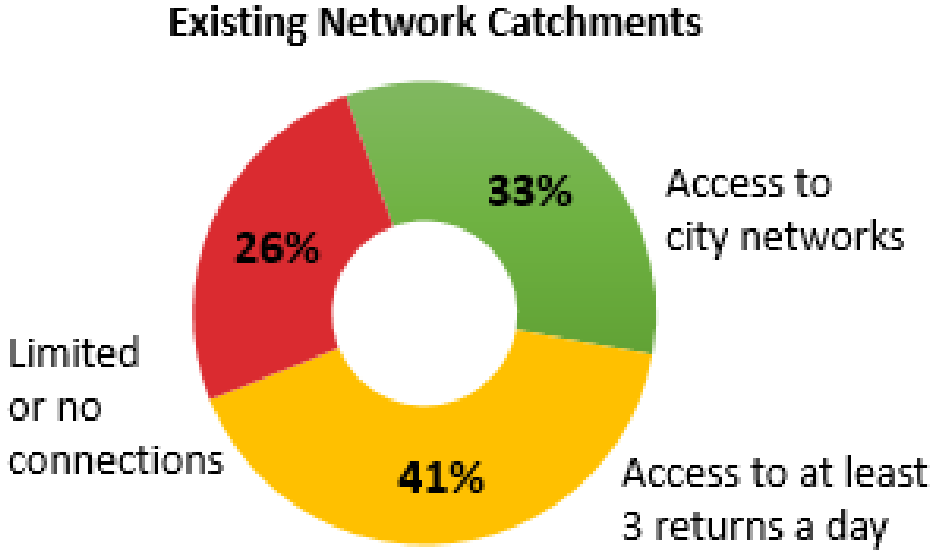
Better Timetable Integration

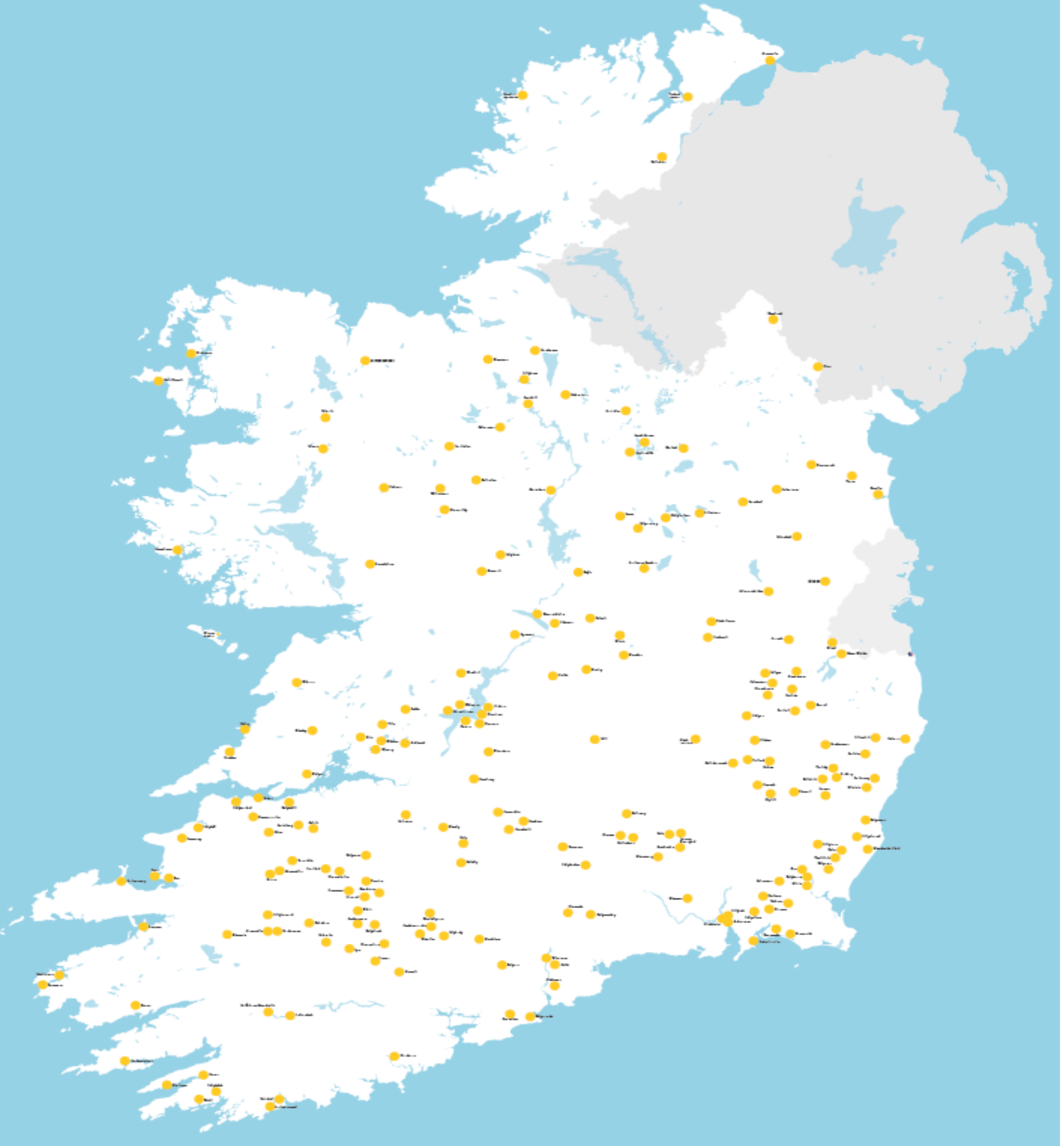


Baseline Audit Findings









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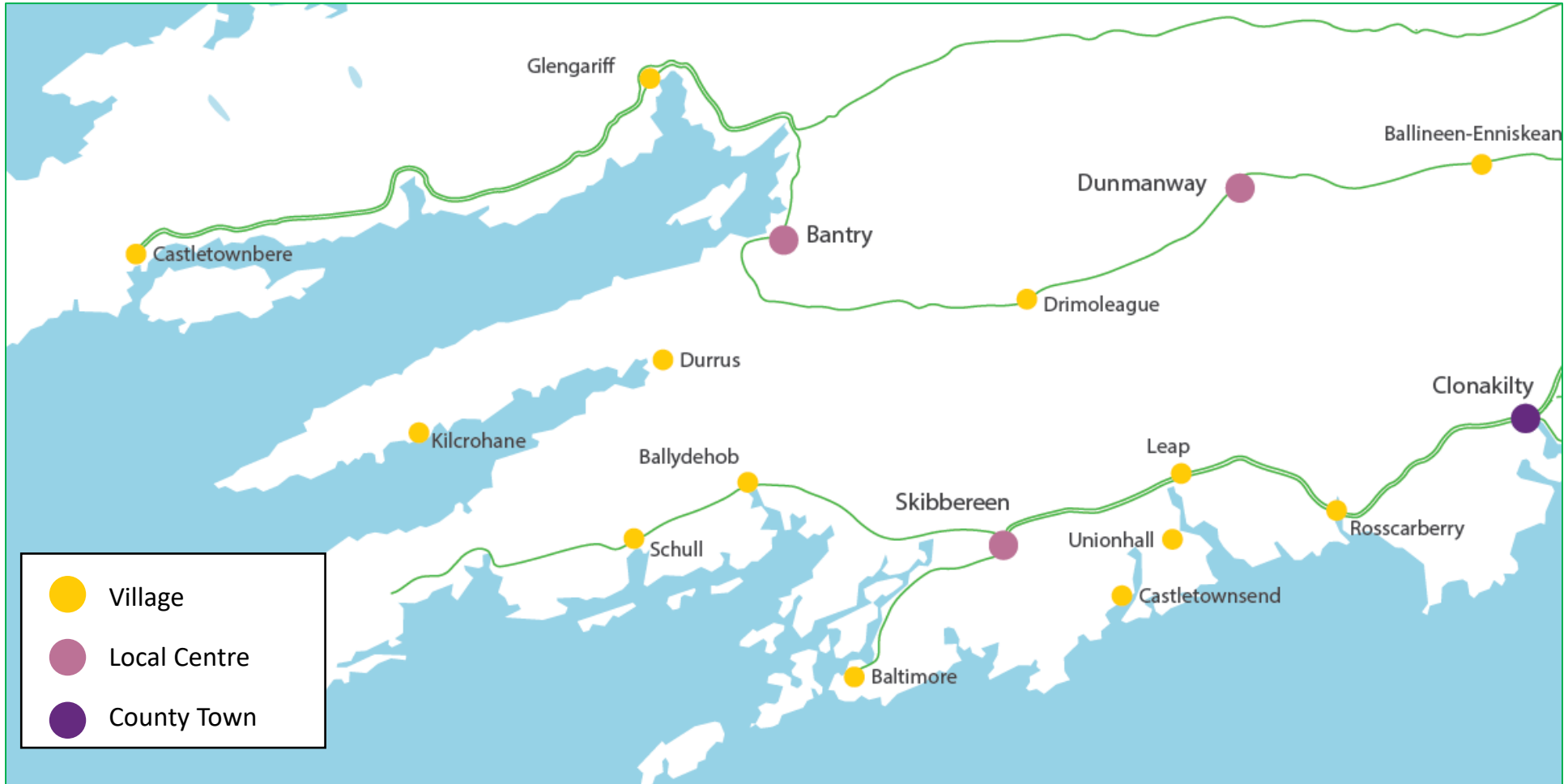
Using this approach allows us to undertake a variety of analyses

For example…this map shows villages that do not meet our connectivity criteria

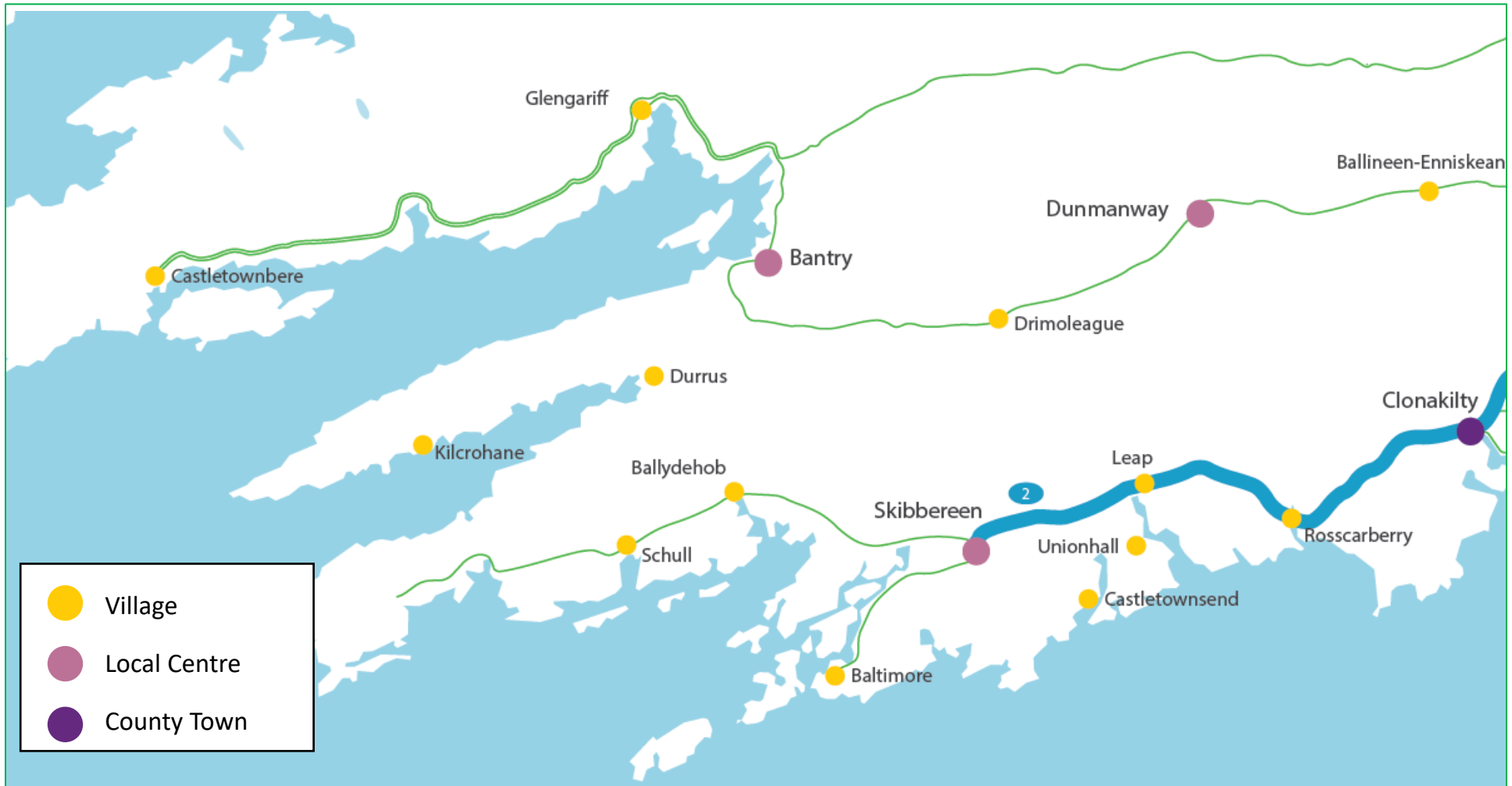
Identified all Settlements in the State as Defined by the CSO

Applied a Settlement Hierarchy Consistent with the NPF

Mapped and Analysed the Existing Public Transport Network



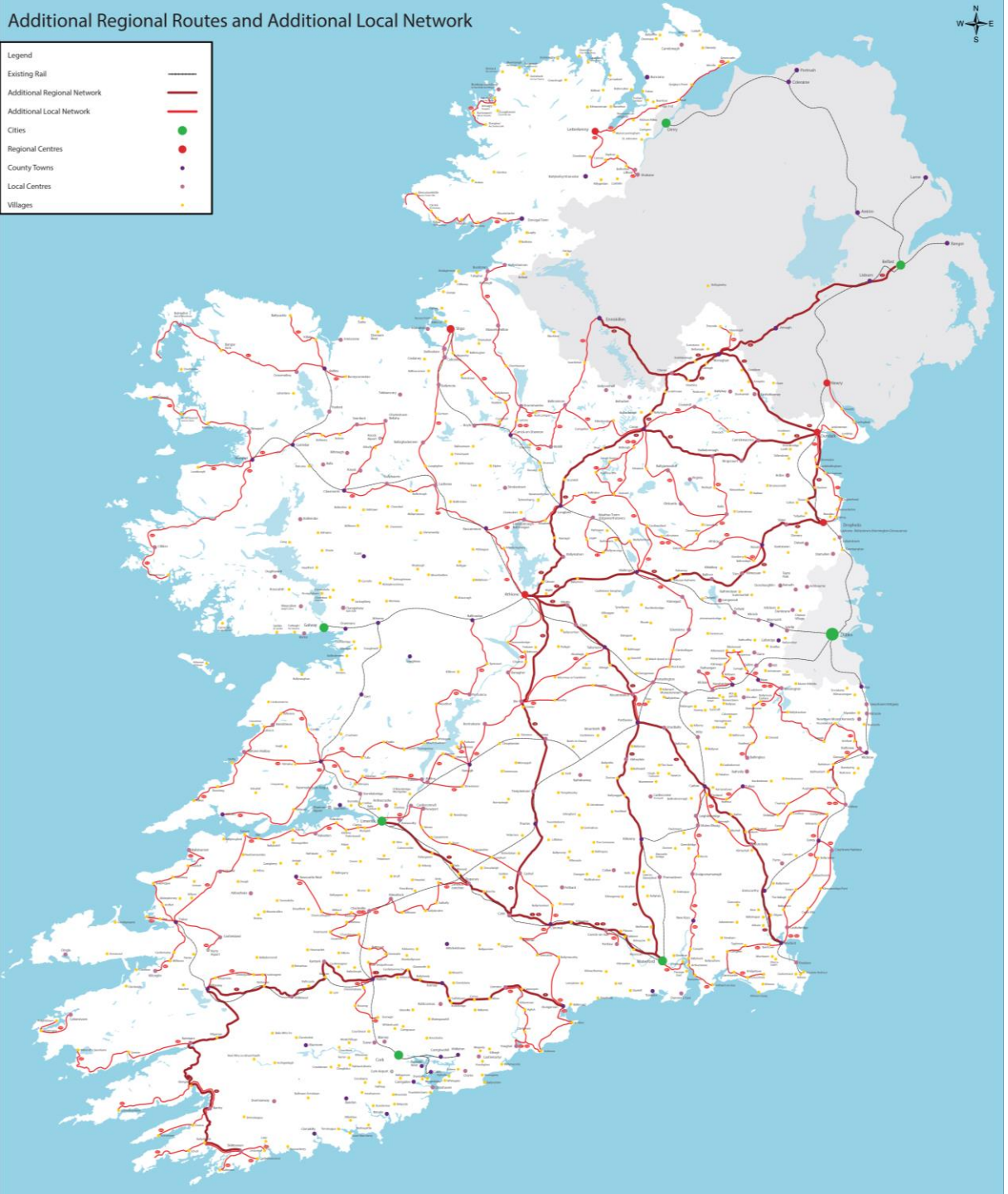
Planned new / improved Services to serve unmet demand



Planned new / improved Services to serve unmet demand

Principles Used in Design

- Increase frequency ….
- Connect smaller settlements to the regional network …
- Cater for all needs…
- Improve timetabling….
- Min 3 return services per day
- Serve key destinations within the town….
- Every day!



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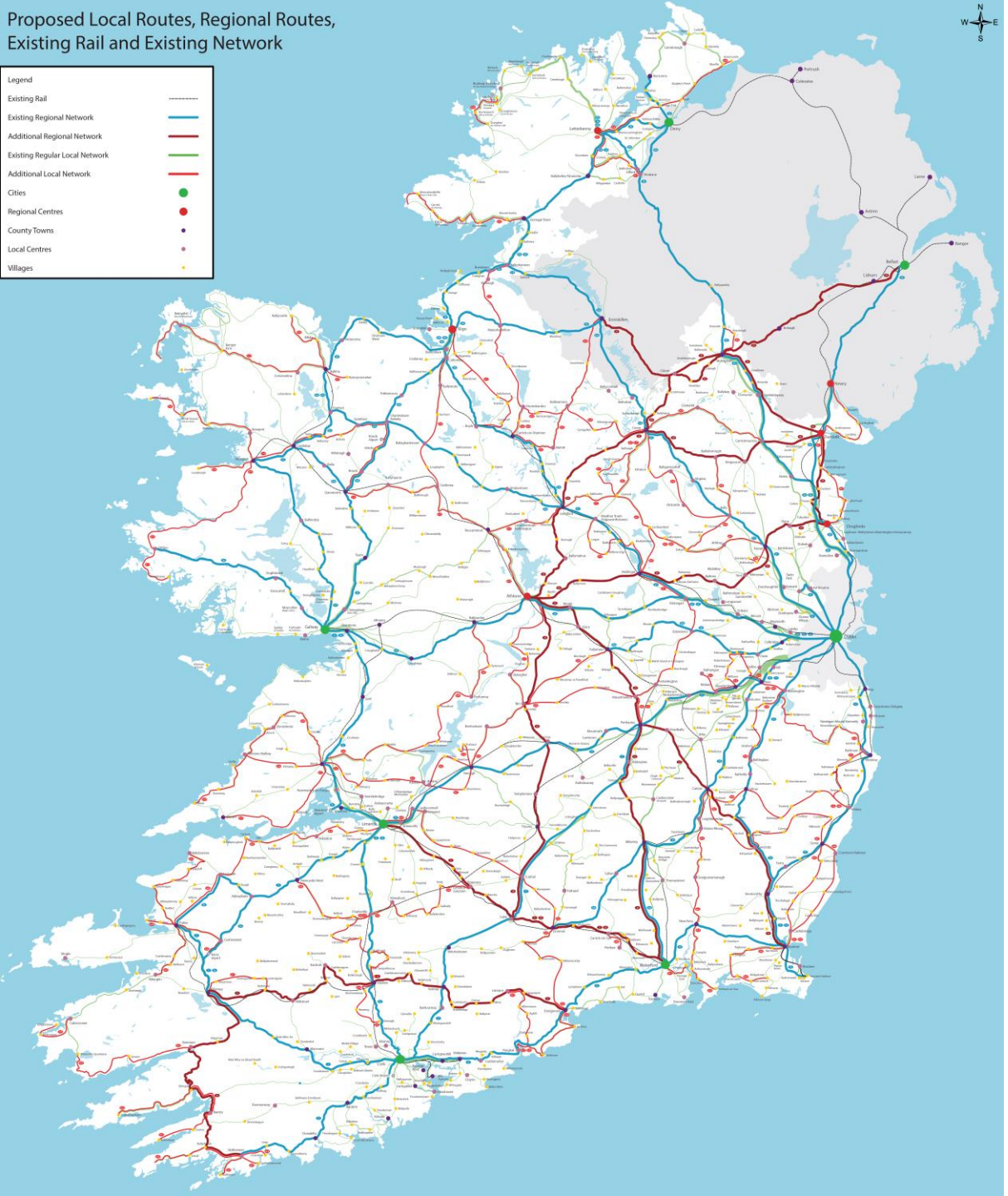
Proposed new additions & enhancements to the network



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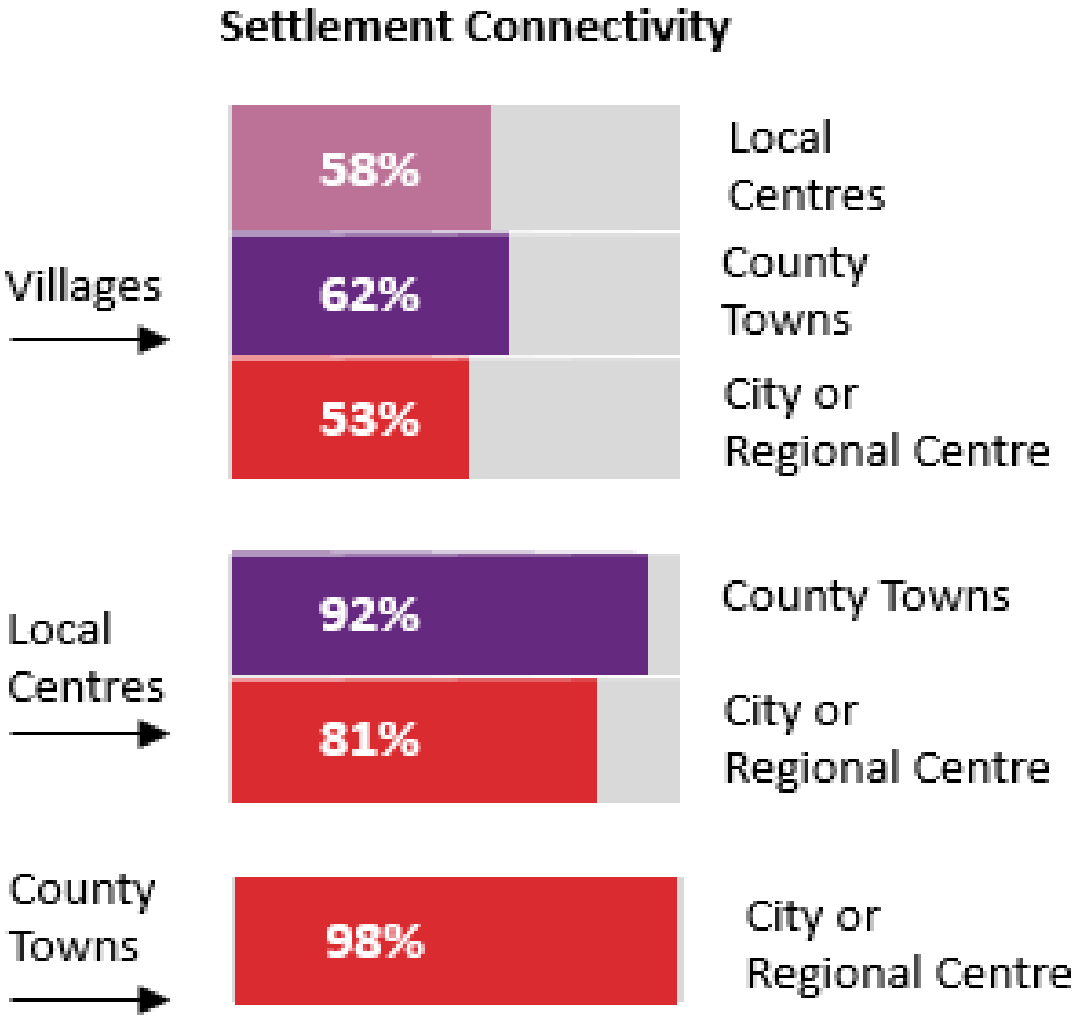
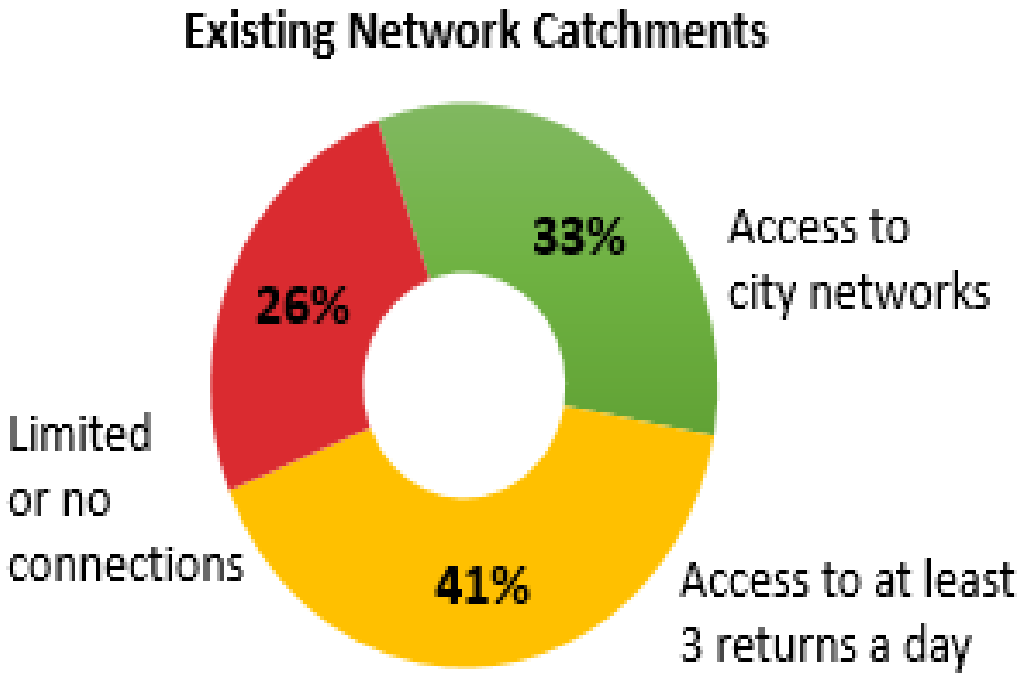
Connecting Ireland Network

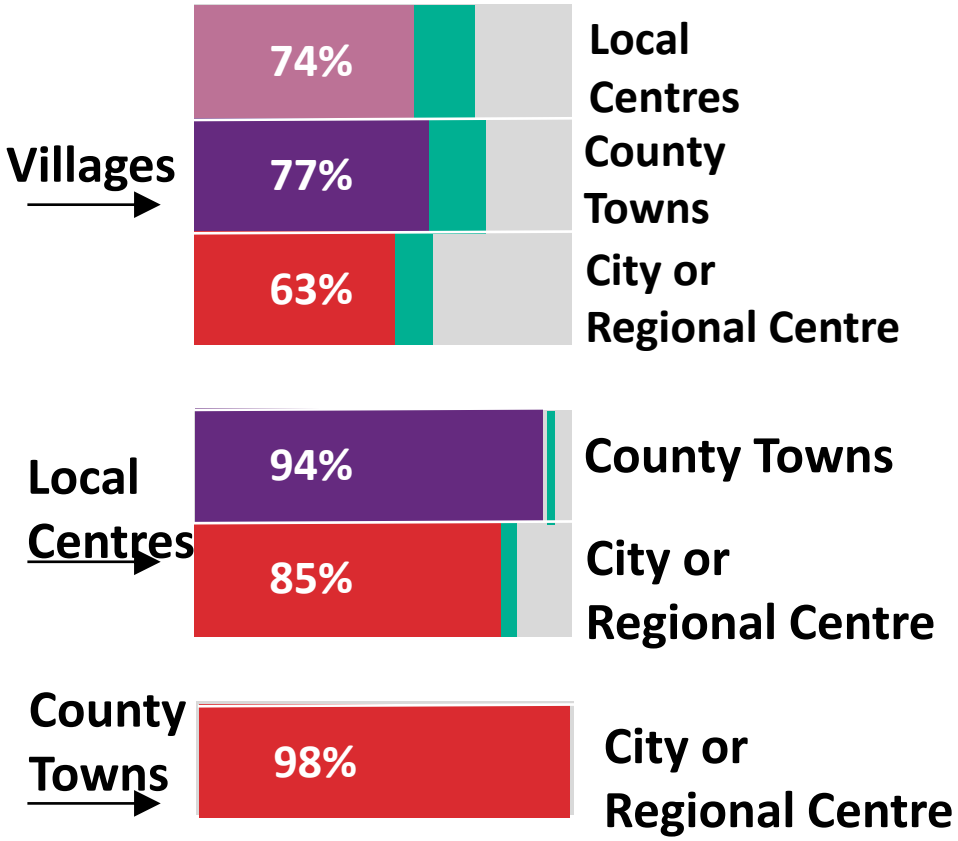
- connects more people to more facilities including healthcare, education and job opportunities:
- 101 new Local Centre connections
- 103 new County Town connections
- 64 new Regional Centre/City connections
- However there are still c. 780,000 people without the minimum level of service

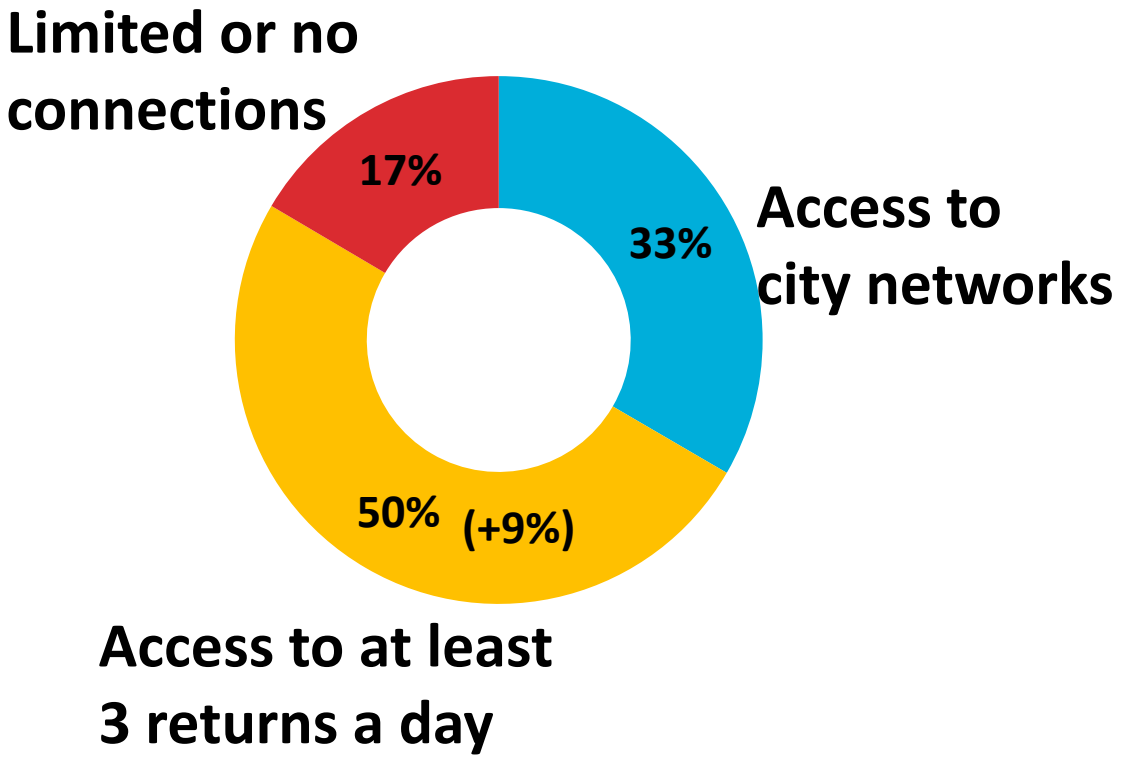
Baseline Audit Findings





Quantitative Benefits of *Connecting Ireland*





Stakeholder Engagement

- **Q4 2020 – Q1 2021**: All Local Authorities

- **Q1 – Q2 2021**: Government & Agencies:
  - Regional Assemblies
  - Office of Planning Regulator
  - Local Government Management Agency
  - Business interest groups

- **Q2 – Q3 2021**: Transport delivery partners:
  - Bus Éireann
  - Irish Rail
  - Coach and Tourism Council
  - Commercial Bus Operators

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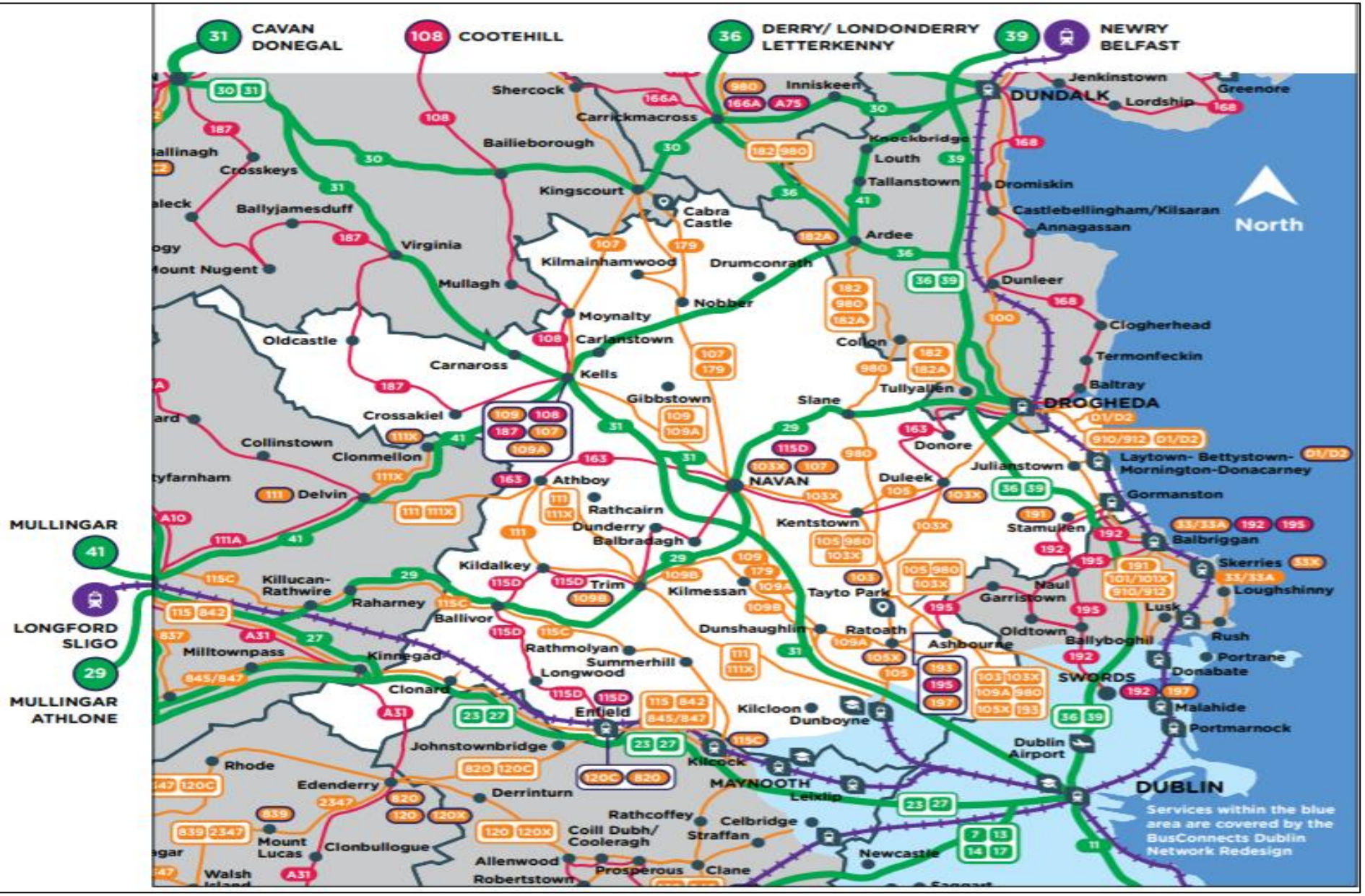
Public Consultation

Preparing for Public Consultation

- Covid a key consideration
- Pitching information at the right level
- Making the information accessible
- Getting the message out there

Current Services – Meath County

Proposed Services – Meath County



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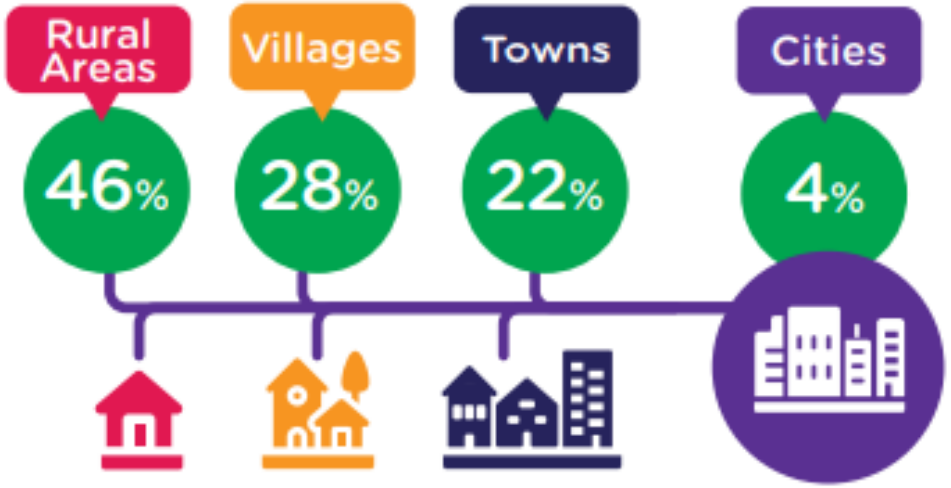
Consultation Feedback

Who Responded?

- 3,343 Individuals
- 12 Members of the Oireachtas
- 192 Organisations / Groups
- 21Councillors

Where were they from?

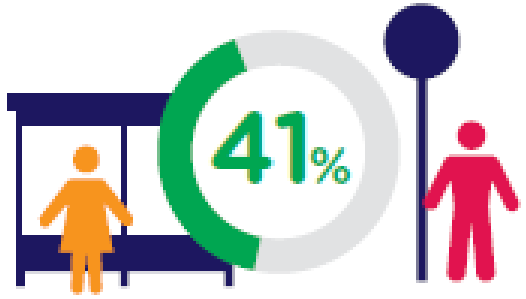


How?

- 3189 Online Feedback Form
- 302 Written Submissions

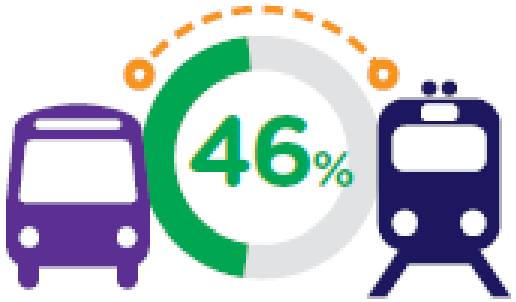
Consultation Feedback

More frequent Services



Stops closer to where they live

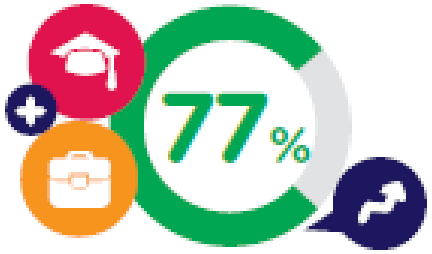
Greater Range of Destinations



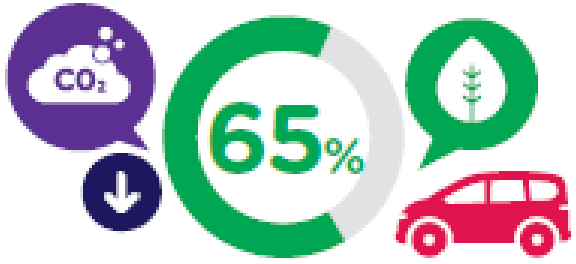
Better Connections

Consultation Feedback

Network is an Improvement



Offers greater Access



Will help reduce CO2

Helps tackle Rural Isolation

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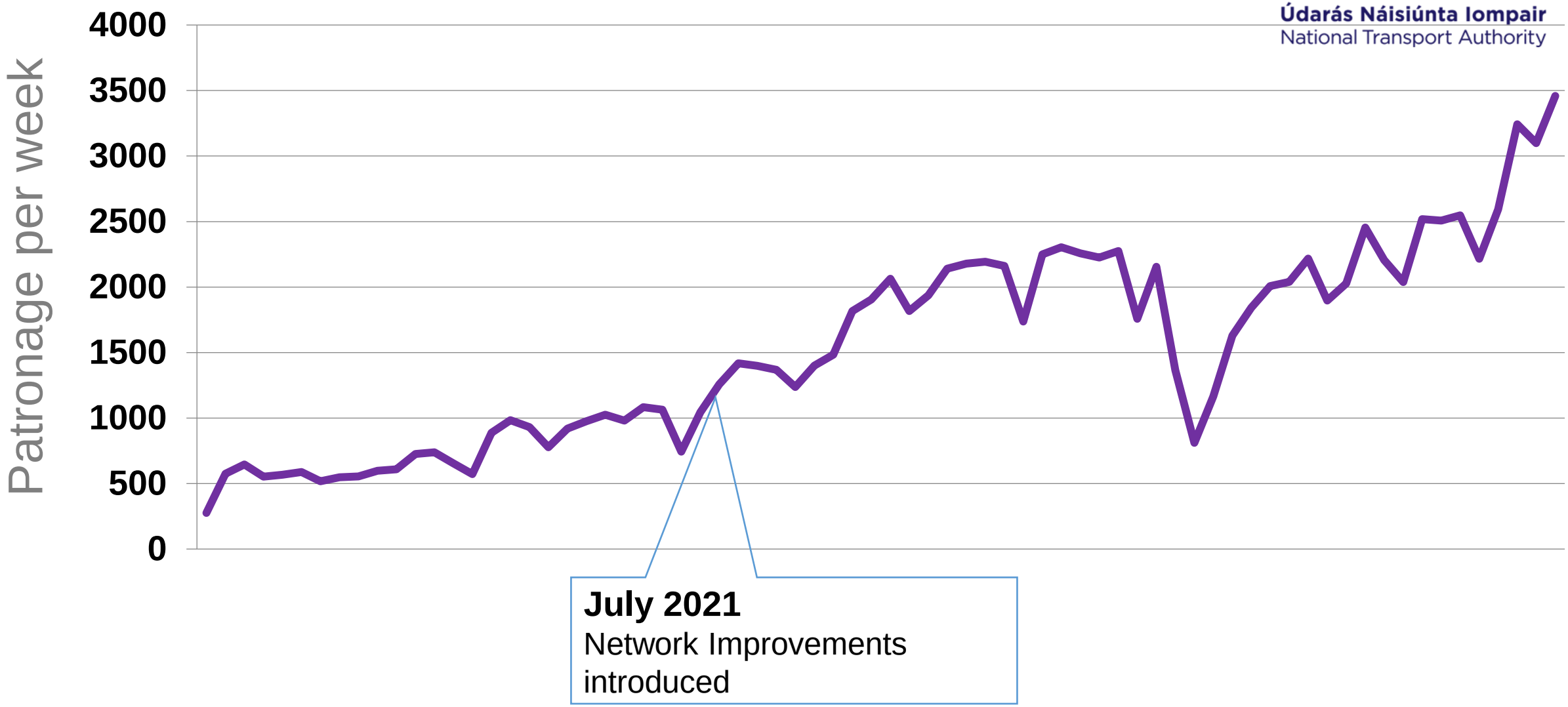
2022 Implementation and Early Outcomes

Phase 1 - 2022 Implementation

- Estimated cost of €55m for programme delivery
- Business Case drafted in compliance with Public Spending Code
- Funding provided for Phase 1
- Over 50 proposals identified for implementation in 2022 providing a balanced geographic spread
- Local Link key to Phase 1 and allocated approximately 75% of additional activity
- Bus Éireann and Commercial Bus Operators (CBO) will also deliver new and enhanced services this year
- Launch of new and enhanced services will be coordinated and supported by local media and provision of customer information

Leitrim Local Link Routes 2021 to 2022



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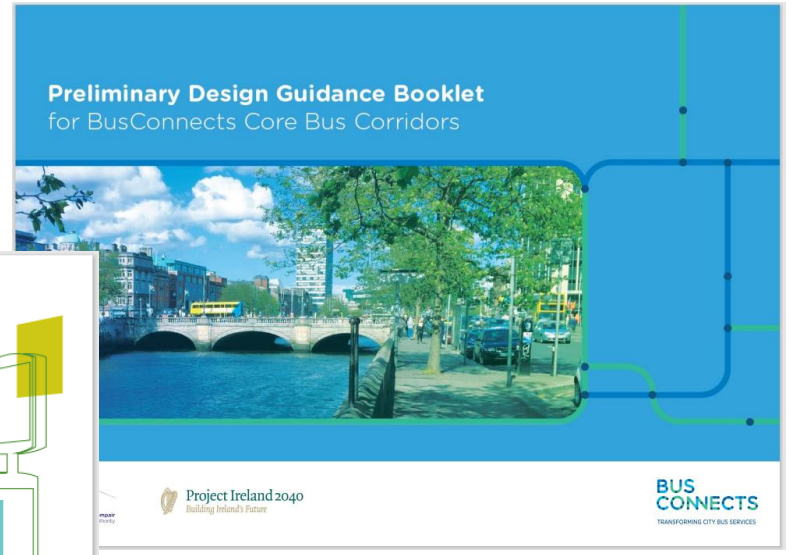
Supporting Measures

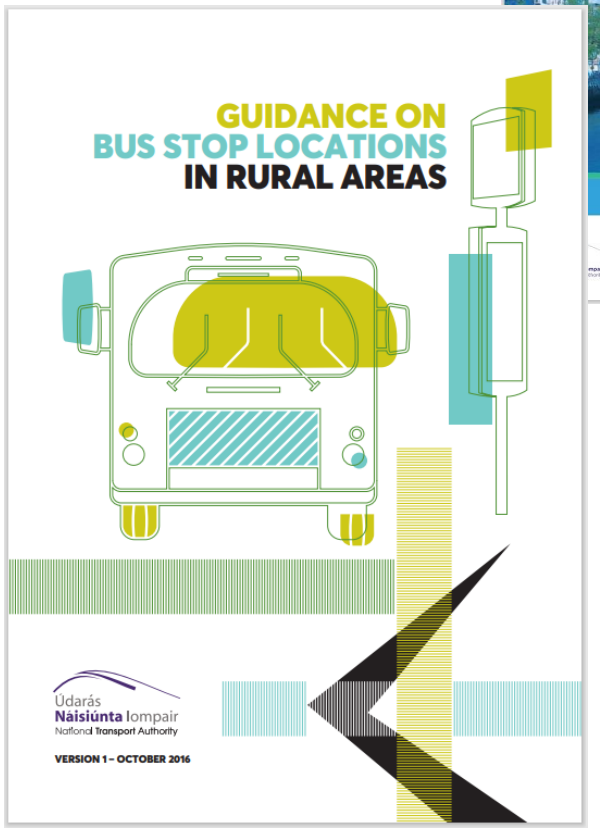
Challenges in delivery

- Approval of bus stops is a function of Roads Authority
- Locating bus stops safely on national, regional and local roads
- Accessibility of bus services is increased the more bus stops that can be provided on the route
- However it has to be balanced with keeping journey time as short as possible
- NTA will fund bus stop and shelter installation to support the utility of the services

Design Guidance

- NTA Draft Bus stop Guidance
- NTA Preliminary Design Guidance Booklet for BusConnects CBC's
- NTA - Design and construction of Bus Pole Foundations and Ancillary works for the National Bus Pole Project
- NTA Guidance on Bus stop locations in Rural Areas 2016
- Cycling by Design -Transport Scotland 2021
- Accessible Bus stops Design Guidance TFL 2017
- NSAI – Accessibility and usability of the built environment 17210 & 17621





Installation of hard standing to allow easier access to the bus stop

Infill of a small section of grass with hard standing and removal of a kerb to allow easier access to the bus stop

Relocation of a stop approx. 150m north, to where the gradient caused by the grass bank is no longer an issue

Cloncurry Cross Enfield - Improvements to two stops

- NTA design, Implementation by Kildare CC - April 2022
- Provision of safer offline stop at 80kph location – previously stopped bus impeded traffic lane.
- Improvements to stop platform, kerbing accessibility, travel information

Cloncurry Cross before and after

Cloncurry Cross before and after – 2nd stop

Questions