



Alan Curran
Galway Cycle Bus Project

What is the
Cycle Bus?



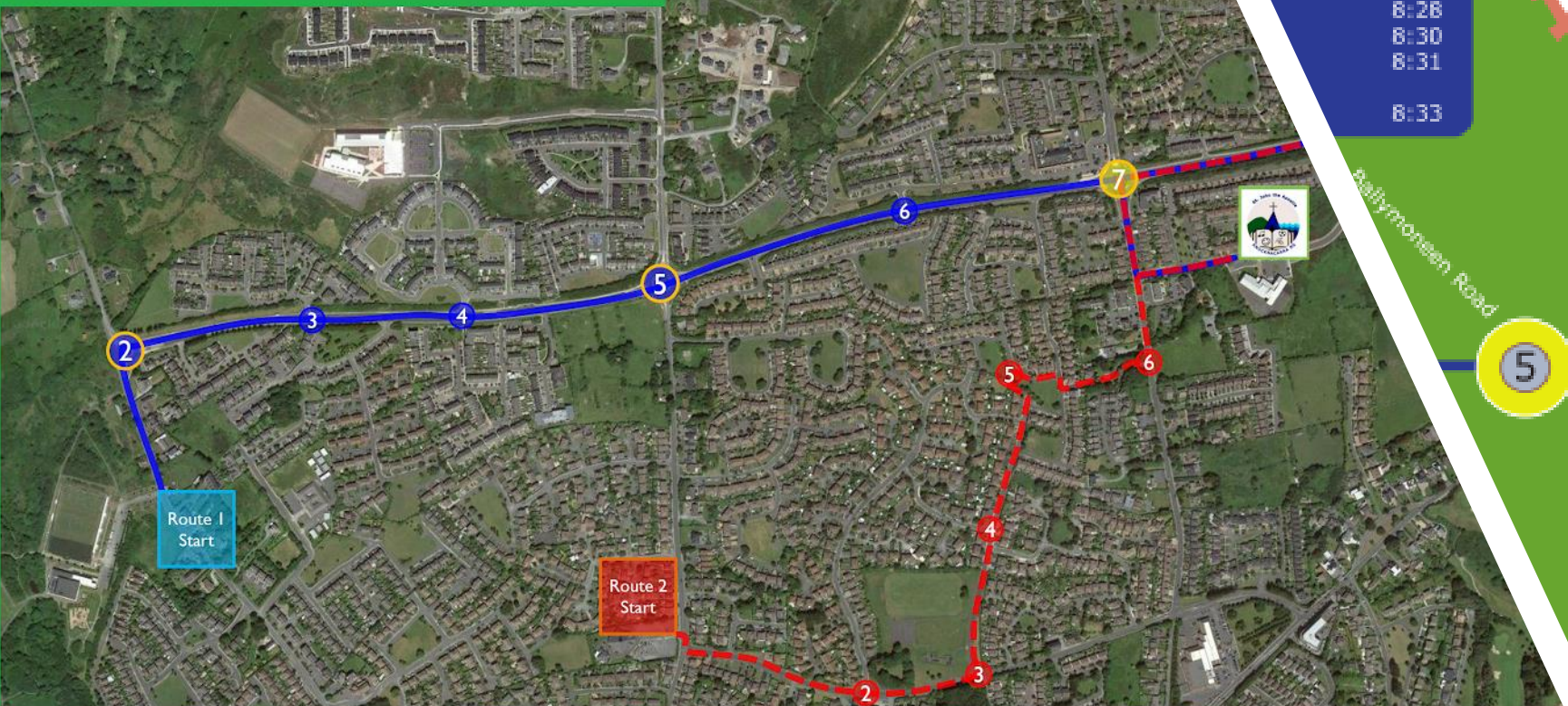


Bus Rothaíochta na Gaillimhe Cnoc na Cathrach



BUS ROTHÁÍOCHTA NA GAILLIMHE CNOC NA CATHRACH

Bus Stop	Time
Cappagh Park	8:15
Cappagh Roundabout	8:17
Binn Bhán	8:19
Fána Búrcá	8:21
Ballymoneen Road	8:23
Drom Óir	8:24
Clybaun Road	8:26
Clybaun Road Roundabout	8:28
St John the Apostle National School	8:30
Bóthar Stiofán	8:31
Millers Lane	8:33



Route 1

Bus Stop	Time
1 Cappagh Park	8:15
2 Cappagh Roundabout	8:17
3 Binn Bhán	8:19
4 Fána Búrcá	8:21
5 Ballymoneen Road	8:23
6 Drom Óir	8:24

Route 2

Bus Stop	Time
1 Knocknacarra Church	8:15
2 Seacrest	8:17
3 Knocknacarra Park	8:18
4 Clybaun Heights	8:20
5 The Rise/Windfield Gardens	8:21
6 Clybaun Road	8:23

Both Routes

Bus Stop	Time
7 Clybaun Road Roundabout	8:28
St John the Apostle National School	8:26
8 Bóthar Stiofán	8:30
9 Millers Lane	8:31
Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh	8:33









Why is it needed?





Why does it work?



Student Experience

- “I love cycling past traffic with my daddy” – Eanna, 5
- “It makes me fit and fast” – Jessie, 8
- “The cycle bus helps wake me up in the morning” – Eoghan, 11
- “I cycle because it makes me happy” – Lauren, 10



Teachers Experiences

“Builds healthier relationships with the children in our classroom, especially for those with behavioural and learning difficulties” – Neasa Bheilbigh, *Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh*

“I’ve found that the children who walk, cycle or scoot to school are more alert, enthusiastic, and engaged in their lessons” – Martina Doyle, *Knocknacarra National School*

“I borrowed my teenage sons bike to help out back in Sept and he hasn’t got it back yet! It has inspired me to cycle again” – Siobhán Daly, *Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh*



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Students per trip

60

40

20

0

Oct

Nov

Dec

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

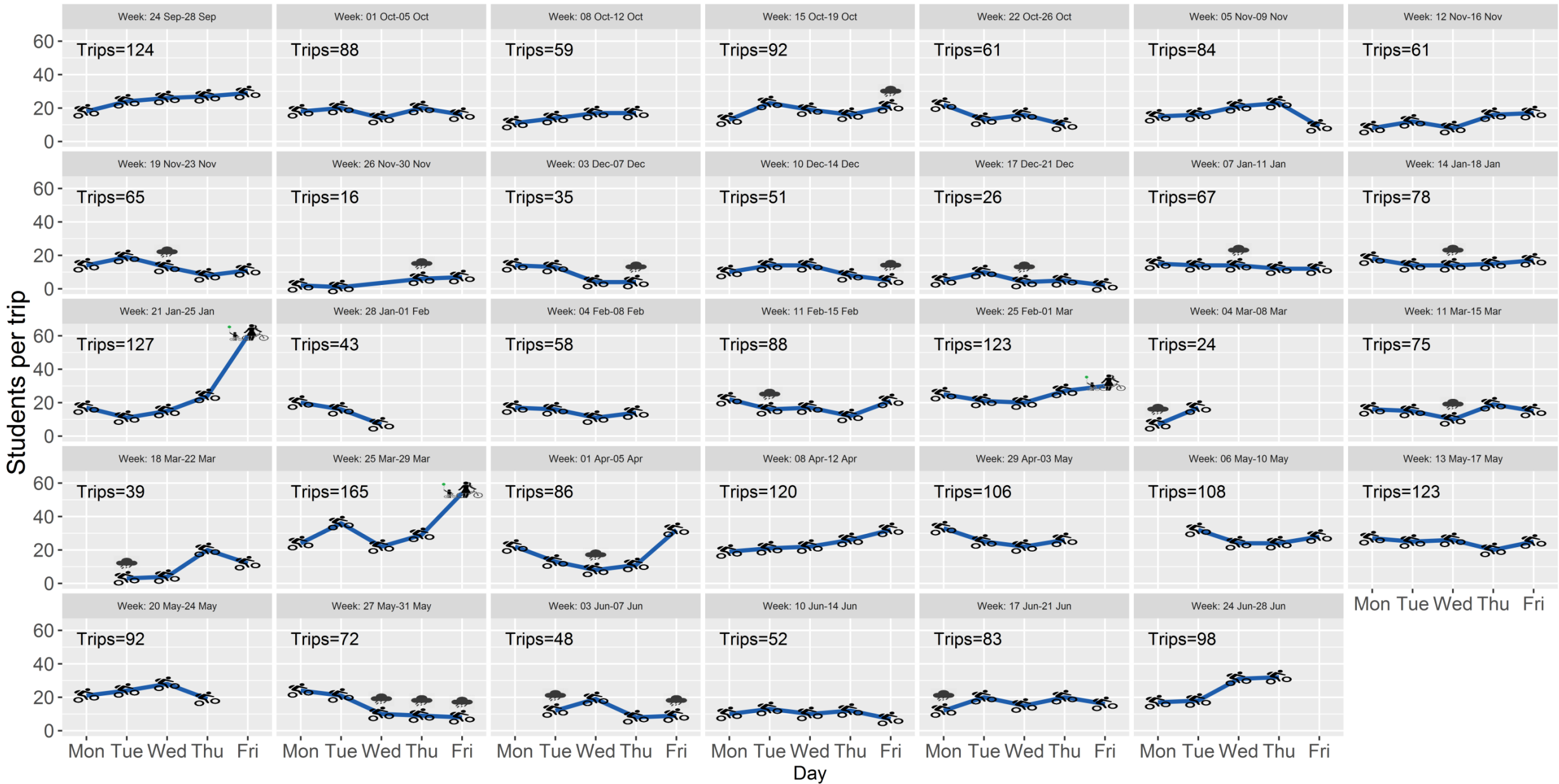
Jul

Date





Bus Rothaíochta na Gaillimhe



6 week plan



6 month plan



6 year plan

Kids break cycle of traffic jams

■ New bike-to-school initiative proving a huge hit with schoolchildren

BY DENISE McNAMARA

UP to 30 children a day are commuting to school on their bike courtesy of a novel 'cycling bus' created in Knocknacarra.

Bus Rothaíochta na Gailimhe or the Galway Cycling Bus takes in a 2km route from Cappagh Park to Knocknacarra National School and Gaelscoil Mhíic Amhlaigh every day during school term along the Western Distributor Road.

The cyclists use a mix of cycle lanes and the road while guided by at least four volunteer marshals and some parents along one of the busiest commuting routes in the city. The convoy begins at Cappagh Road at 8.10am and stops off at all major estates with students joining the single file at the back until reaching their destination by 8.30am.

The initiative attracted 18 on the first day it began this term, with a high of 30 pupils at its most popular. The lowest number fell to 14 on a particularly wet day. The convoy is cancelled in high winds.

Organisers are hoping the initiative will address the downward spiral in cycling to school. The latest Census figures show only 2.5% of children cycle to school nationally, down from 17% in 1986.

St Enda's College secondary school teacher Alan Curran set up the cycling bus so that he could cycle his five-year-old son Eanna to Gaelscoil Mhíic Amhlaigh.

"We need a critical mass - if there's a convoy of children travelling together, the risks are greatly reduced," enthused Alan.

"The feedback is phenomenal. The kids really genuinely love. They have so much energy, they're lively. If you arrive in school after sitting in traffic for 20 minutes you're sluggish. But now they're coming in full of energy after the exercise and the fresh air."

The response from a handful of motorists has been hostile. The 'cycling bus' has been subjected to verbal abuse from some irate drivers who overtake them at speed.

"The vast majority of the motorists are positive and give us a thumbs up. They can see it's 30 kids with adults on bikes which is taking 40 cars off the road. But there are always the few. We had a car beep us yesterday and pass us and 30 seconds later he was stuck in traffic and we sailed by him."

The short-term plan by organisers is to establish the route every day regardless of the weather.

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They are creating a separate route around the city to avoid the worst of the traffic. The route is a loop that starts at Cappagh Park and ends at Gaelscoil Mhíic Amhlaigh.



Children making their way to school along the Western Distributor Road with supervision from adult marshals.

Together schools. "The first week we had a lot of problems with tyres, chains and Drammors is also being replaced because so many of the bikes



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The Bike Bus



The Bike Bus is a new way of getting to school in Knocknacarra, Galway!

If you cycle to school by yourself or with a friend and go to school at Gaelscoil Mhíic Amhlaigh or Knocknacarra National School, you can join the Bike Bus.

What is the Bike Bus?

The Bike Bus is a group of kids (with an adult chaperone) cycling together to school. The starting group will meet at Cappagh Park at ten past eight and on their way to school will pick up people at various 'Pick Up Points'. I think it is safer this way because cars will be more likely to see a big group of bikes rather than one or two. It can also stop people being late for school, because they



Riding to the rescue

Initiatives in Galway and Dublin 8 are aiming to reclaim the streets for cyclists - and woo back those scared to saddle up, writes Catherine Cleary

It's a low bar for a city cycle when the hope is to arrive in one piece. What if urban cycling was a pleasure instead of a white knuckle brush with mortality? Could we guerrilla greenway a route to visit gardens and parks in the green-starved neighbourhood that is the Liberties in Dublin's south inner city? Would it encourage people to dust down bikes barely used because their last trip on a paved cycle path was just too scary?

These were the ideas talked about on a Dublin January night looking at a map of the Liberties in Dublin's Thomas Street. It was the first step in a 'design sprint', a technique used by The Ladder, a programme set up by technology consultant Colm Byrne to help community volunteers apply tech smarts to problems in the real world.

What's wrong with this part of Dublin, our group asked, and how might we fix it? Dublin is not the only city choked by traffic. And we are not the only people dreaming up solutions and putting them into action. Alan Curran and his five-year-old son were blown to school by a tail-wind from the Atlantic the morning we talked by phone. "My son loved it. He barely needed to touch the pedals at all," Curran says.

The secondary school teacher put together Galway's Cycling Bus last September when his son was starting school. He could have strapped him into his SUV and joined the crawl for the two 2km journey, but instead he spoke to a group of parents about setting up a daily group cycle with volunteer marshals to keep children safe. "The

support we got in the first week was incredible," he says. Up to 25 primary school children a day now cycle to school, with nearly 100 parents joining the bus on their monthly family days. One teacher who hadn't cycled for 30 years is now an enthusiastic convert to the convenience of the bike.

"If there are cars behind us they generally give us space. Someone who does pass is usually just up ahead sitting in traffic again," Curran explains. Curran is also part of the Galway Cycling Campaign, which wants to see local authority plans dusted off for an urban green from the city centre to Barna. The 8km stretch could be linked along the Glenties and the canal to RUI, where it could be the Galway Children Greenway.

Conor Cahill of the Dublin Cycling Campaign came along to road-test our initiative, a slow amble on quiet streets in space to let children and less experienced cyclists travel beside more experienced riders. Despite the equally rain, we enjoyed the first Pedals Liberties Loop place last Sunday with stops at We

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