



# [ Residential Survey ]

Survey carried out by  
**B&A (Behaviour & Attitudes Survey Company)**  
on behalf of Cork City Council



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Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí  
Cork City Council

# Research Background and Objectives

Cork City Council is commencing the development of the **Cork City Climate Action Plan**. This plan will specify the adaptation and mitigation measures that the local authority, and other city stakeholders, will carry out in response to climate change. The plan will meet the needs of the EU's Mission Cities and the City Council's statutory LACAP.

Against this background there was a need to access a representative sample of residents in the Cork City Council's administrative area to establish their views on a number of key issues to inform the development of the plan. The information coverage for the survey included the following modules: Resident Profile; Transport; Households; Knowledge & Understanding Of Climate Change & Climate Action; Citywide Action.

The representative survey of those living in the area was conducted using a face-to-face interviewing methodology, whereby all interviewing was conducted in the respondent's home.

The sampling procedure applied by B&A comprised a multi-staged quota-based approach, with respondents selected in direct proportion to population within each of the Local Electoral Areas (LEA) and City Areas (ref. Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028). The survey data was then also weighted as per gender and age within each City Area.

In total, a sample size of 509 resident interviews was delivered for the Survey, with all interviewing conducted in April and May 2023.

# Introduction

# Sample profile

Sample size:  
**509**

## Gender

Male	49%
Female	51%

## Age

16-24 years	17%
25-34 years	20%
35-49 years	26%
50-64 years	21%
65+ years	17%

## Social class\*

ABC1F50+	58%
C2DEF50-	42%

## Local Electoral Areas (LEA)

North West	17%
North East	21%
South West	21%
South Central	21%
South East	20%

## Years living in 'area'

Less than 10yrs ago	24%
11-20 years	12%
20 years+/ 'All my life'	64%

*\*The definitions for Social Grades of A, B, C1, C2, DE, F50+, and F50 are as per the Association of Irish Market Research Organisations (AIMRO) social class grading guidelines: A = Professional, Senior Management; B - Newly qualified professional, Middle Management; C1- Junior Managers, Clerical; C2 - Skilled Workers; D - Semi or unskilled workers; E - State Benefit, Social Welfare only; F - Farming, depending on farm size in acres.*



# Transport

Transport contributes 29% to Cork City’s annual GHG emissions. And concurrent to the development of the Cork City Climate Action Plan, there is significant investment in active travel infrastructure, Cork’s bus network, Cork Commuter Rail and a reduction in public transport fares nationwide by the Department of Transport.

Therefore, it is crucial to develop a deeper understanding of what residents’ behaviours and attitudes are to moving around the city. What distances are people typically travelling on their commute? What barriers are disincentivising walking, cycling and using public transport?

Has ‘working from home’, either partially or full time, after COVID restrictions changed behaviour in transport? Is the

emerging market for electric vehicles attractive to drivers?

Knowing this information, Cork City Council can better derive more relevant transport actions it should include in the forthcoming Cork City Climate Action Plan. Particularly, regarding any potential behavioural change initiatives to encourage people to drive less and walk, cycle and use public transport more.

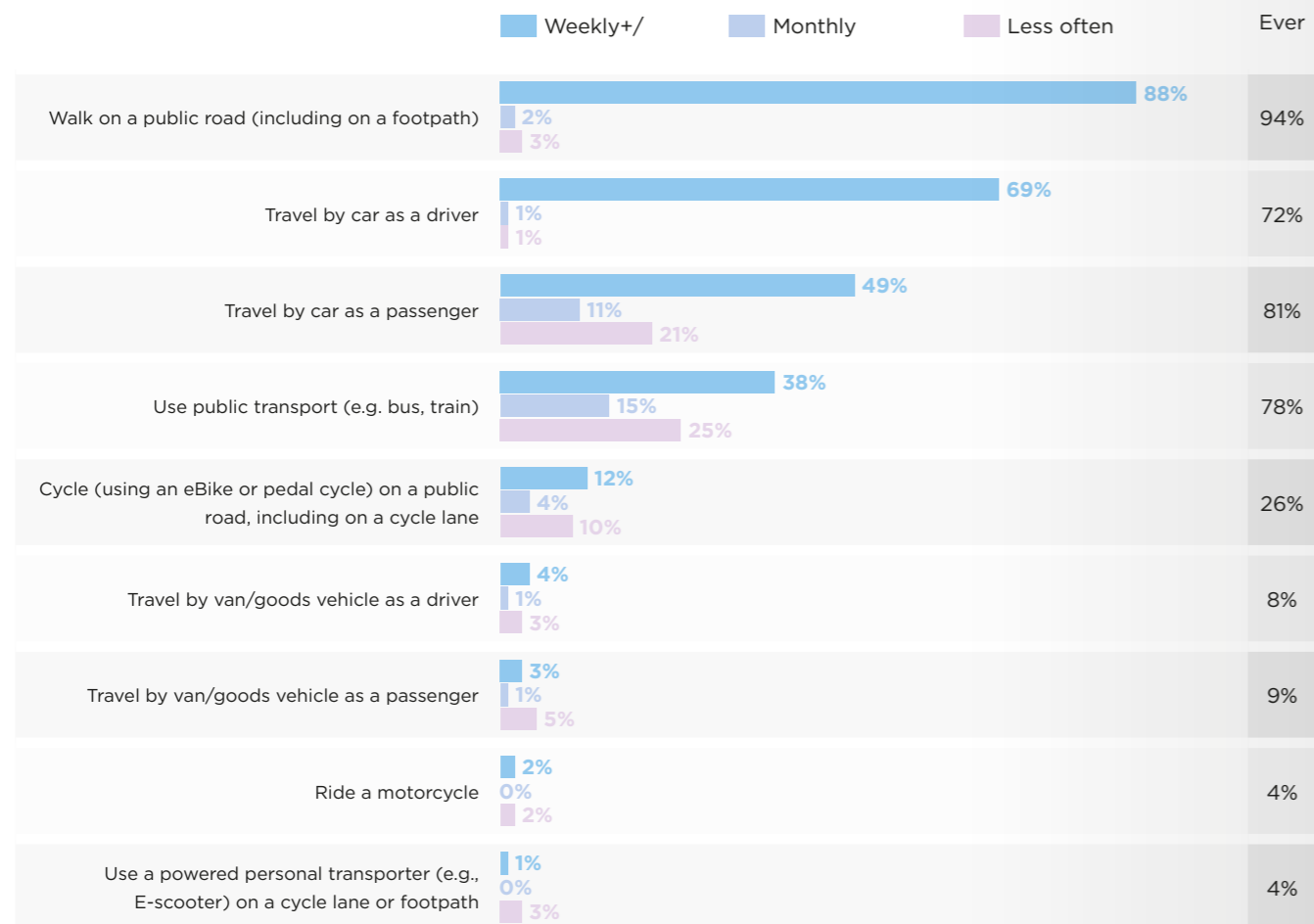


# Transport

# Typical travel mode: past 12 months

**Questions:**  
**Q.6** Which of the following best describes how often you have typically travelled in the following ways in the past 12 months?

**Sample size:**  
**509**



In terms of weekly travel patterns, just under 70% of residents drive-by car, while c. 40% use public transport. 12% of residents are weekly cyclists.

# Typical travel mode: past 12 months (Weekly+)

**Questions:**  
**Q.6** Which of the following best describes how often you have typically travelled in the following ways in the past 12 months?

**Sample size:**  
**509**

	Total	Gender		Age				Social Class		Local Electoral Area (LEA)				
		Male	Female	16-34	35-49	50-64	65+	ABC1 50+	C2DE F50-	North West	North East	South West	South Central	South East
Walk on a public road (including on a footpath)	88%	88%	89%	96%	89%	88%	72%	90%	87%	82%	94%	87%	84%	94%
Travel by car as a driver	69%	68%	70%	52%	84%	83%	68%	75%	62%	49%	79%	74%	53%	88%
Travel by car as a passenger	49%	37%	60%	64%	36%	42%	45%	44%	56%	57%	56%	45%	44%	45%
Use public transport (e.g. bus, train)	38%	38%	39%	55%	27%	23%	36%	36%	42%	46%	38%	35%	36%	38%
Cycle (using an eBike or pedal cycle) on a public road, including on a cycle lane	12%	20%	4%	19%	10%	7%	6%	13%	11%	9%	14%	11%	9%	16%
Travel by van/goods vehicle as a driver	4%	5%	3%	3%	6%	6%	1%	2%	7%	6%	7%	3%	2%	2%
Travel by van/goods vehicle as a passenger	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%	6%	-	1%	6%	6%	3%	-	1%	4%
Ride a motorcycle	2%	4%	-	2%	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%	2%	4%	1%	1%	1%
Use a powered personal transporter (e.g., E-scooter) on a cycle lane or footpath	2%	4%	-	2%	5%	1%	-	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	-	5%

■ Over-index significant difference    ■ Under-index significant difference

The key demographic variation in travel mode is by age with younger adults (16-34 years) being much more likely to be weekly pedestrians, car passengers and public transport users.

# Typical travel mode x length of commute

## Questions:

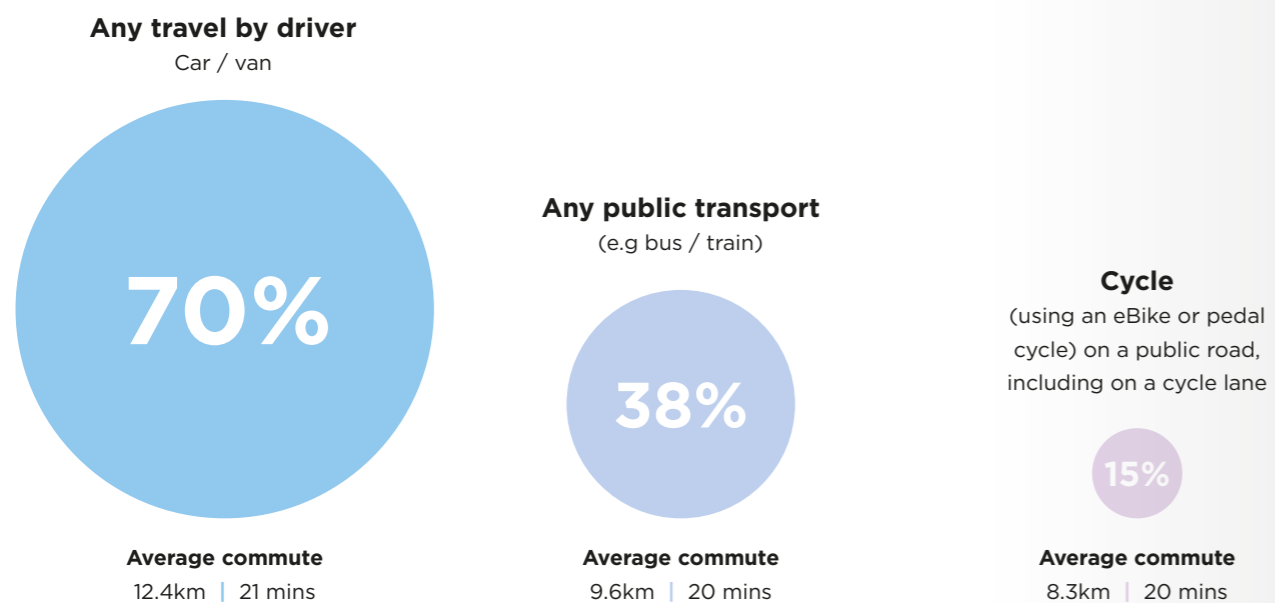
- Q.6** Which of the following best describes how often you have typically travelled in the following ways in the past 12 months?
- Q.7** How far is your typical commute to work or study? (one way)
- Q.8** How long is your typical commute to work or study? (one way)
- Q.9** Which of the following best describes your current work arrangements?

Sample size:

**328**

In employment & students

Used at least weekly (in past 12 months)



**Total average commute for all 328 participants:**  
10.7km | 20 mins

Average commute time across the travel modes of car, public transport and bicycle appears directly comparable at c. 20 minutes.

# Work From Home (WFH) and driving since Covid

## Questions:

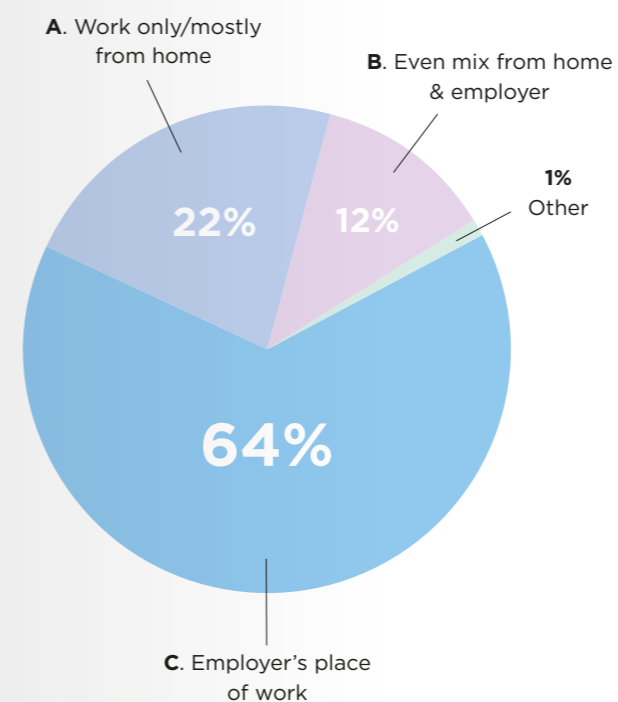
- Q.9** In the past 12 months, do you think you have driven more frequently, less frequently or the same as you did before COVID?
- C.8** Which of the following best describes your current work status?
- C.9** Which of the following best describes your current work arrangements?

Sample size:

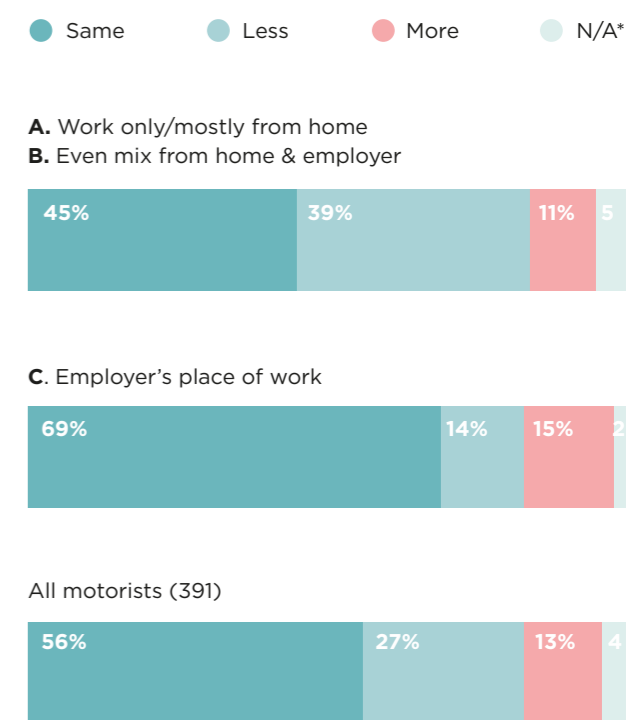
**284**

In employment

Working arrangements



Driving Frequency since Covid



\*Not applicable as I did not drive before COVID

Any change in driving frequency since Covid is directly related to adapted working arrangements: those who work only/mostly from their employer's place of work exhibit on balance no change in driving frequency compared to before the pandemic.

# Electric vehicles: Current and future ownership

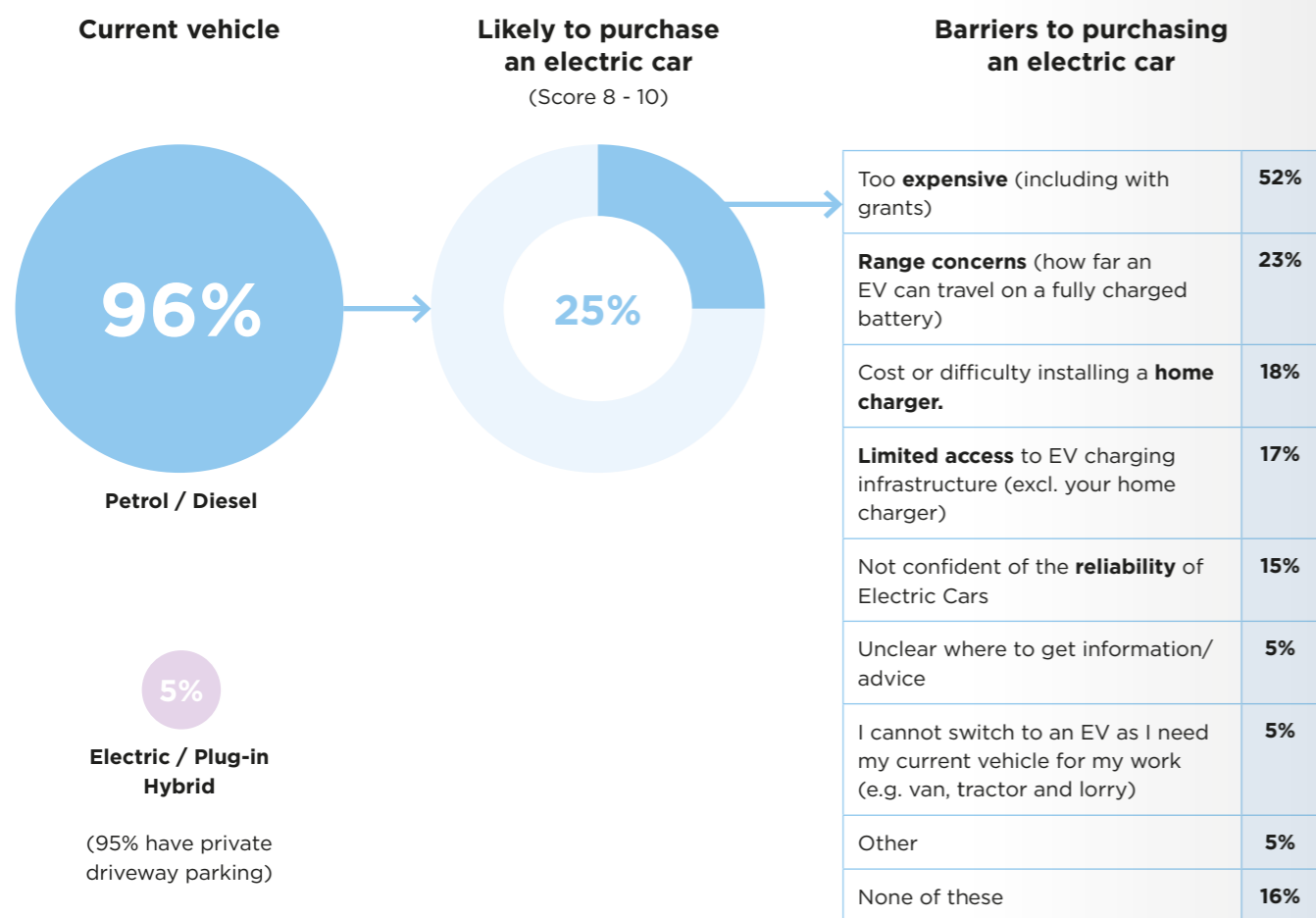
## Questions:

- Q.5a** Do you own or have access to a motor vehicle?
- Q.5b** Which of the following types of motor vehicle do you have access to?
- Q.5c** In terms of parking at your household, do you have access to the following?
- Q.10** How likely are you to purchase a Hybrid or Electric vehicle within the next 3 years?
- Q.11** Which, if any, of the following make you less likely to purchase a Hybrid or Electric vehicle?

Sample size:

**391**

Motorists



1 in 4 petrol/diesel car owners are likely to purchase a hybrid or electric vehicle within the next three years. The key barriers to purchasing are expense and range concerns.

# Public transport: Usage and barriers

## Questions:

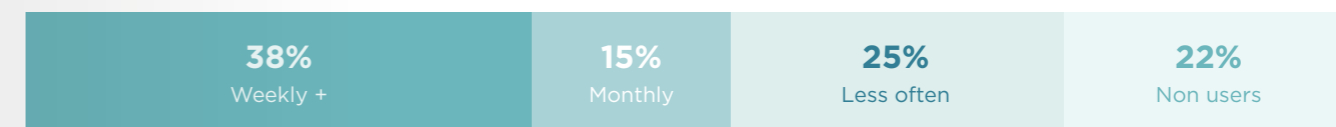
- Q.6** Which of the following best describes how often you have typically travelled in the following ways in the past 12 months?
- Q.12** Which, if any, of the following have resulted in you using public transport in the Cork City area less often than you would like to?

Sample size:

**509**

All adults

## Public transport usage (past 12 months)



## Barriers to use

Barriers to use	Public transport users			
	Weekly +	Monthly	Less often	Non users
<b>Reliability</b> of service	27%	36%	37%	24%
ANY <b>lack</b> of service	15%	28%	23%	22%
<b>Frequency</b> of service	20%	21%	21%	17%
Lack of public transport services near where I commute to	10%	16%	14%	15%
Lack of public transport services near where I live	6%	15%	14%	13%
<b>Cost</b> of fares	7%	3%	4%	4%
Personal safety on public transport	5%	2%	3%	5%
Other	2%	7%	8%	2%
None of these/Not applicable	46%	29%	33%	45%

Just under 40% of residents are weekly users of public transport. A further 40% use public transport less often – the key barriers to more frequent use among this group are perceived reliability and lack of services.



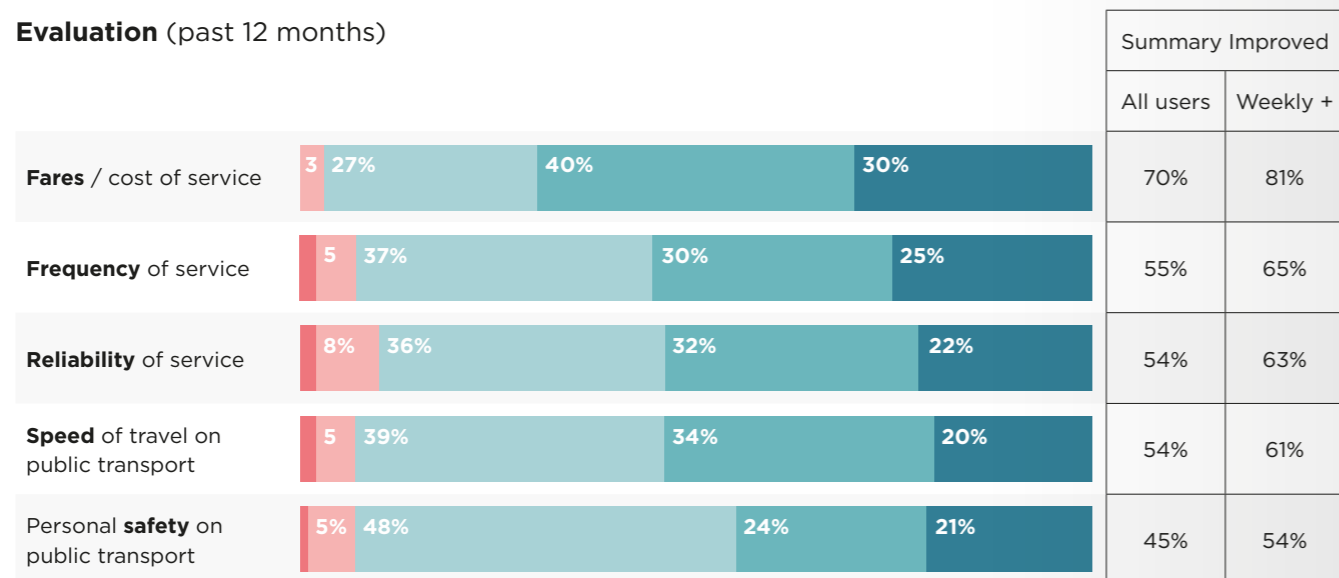
# Public transport: Usage and evaluation (past 12 months)

<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p><b>Q.6</b> Which of the following best describes how often you have typically travelled in the following ways in the past 12 months?</p> <p><b>Q.15</b> Do you think the public transport service provided in the Cork City area has improved or disimproved in the past 12 months for each of the following?</p>	<p><b>Sample size:</b></p> <h2>389</h2> <p>Use public transport</p>
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## Public transport usage (past 12 months)



## Evaluation (past 12 months)



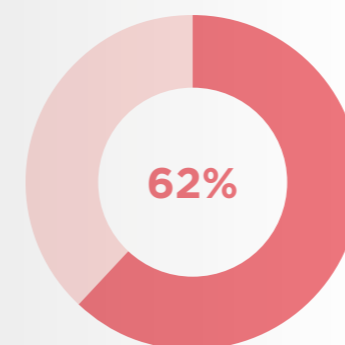
● Disimproved a lot   ● Disimproved a little   ● Neither/nor   ● Improved a little   ● Improved a lot

The evaluation of public transport services in the Cork City area is consistently positive across the main criteria; over 60% of weekly users indicate the service has improved in the past 12 months across fares, frequency, reliability and speed of travel.

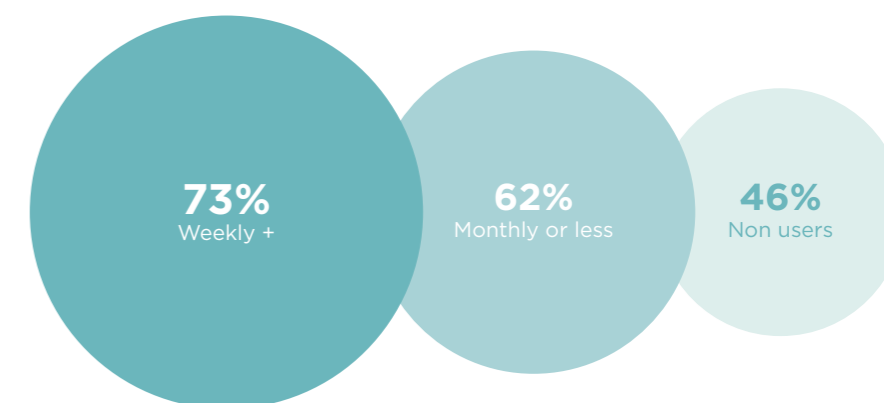
# Public transport: National reduction in fares

<p><b>Questions:</b></p> <p><b>Q.13</b> Prior to this survey, had you heard there was a national reduction in the fares/ prices for public transport last year?</p> <p><b>Q.14</b> Did the reduction in public transport fares last year influence how often you use public transport in the Cork City area?</p>	<p><b>Sample size:</b></p> <h2>509</h2> <p>All adults</p>
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## Overall awareness of fare reduction



## Awareness amongst different public transport users



## Change in usage due to fare reduction



57% Weekly+ users;  
24% monthly or less users;  
10% non-users

The positive evaluation of fares is facilitated by strong awareness of the national reduction in public transport fares: being at 62% of all residents and increasing to 73% among weekly public transport users. 57% of weekly users indicate they are using public transport more due to the fare reduction.

# Cycling: Usage and barriers

## Questions:

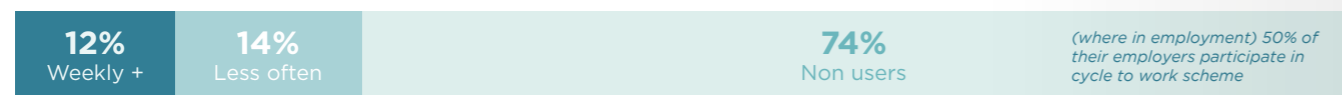
- Q.6** Which of the following best describes how often you have typically travelled in the following ways in the past 12 months?
- Q.16** Which, if any, of the following have resulted in you cycling less often in the Cork City area than you would like to?
- Q.17** Does your employer participate in the Cycle-to-Work Scheme?

Sample size:

**509**

All adults

## Usage (past 12 months)



## Barriers to cycling

		Public transport users		
		Weekly +	Monthly	Less often
Feel unsafe cycling beside road traffic	28%	45%	51%	21%
Lack of segregated cycle lanes throughout the city	15%	30%	36%	9%
Steep or hilly terrain on my commute	12%	20%	22%	9%
ANY Lack of parking	8%	18%	6%	7%
Lack of public bicycle parking spread throughout the city	5%	11%	4%	5%
Fear of potential theft of bicycle	5%	12%	10%	4%
Cost of E-Bikes	5%	7%	7%	4%
Lack of private bicycle parking at workplace/school.	4%	8%	2%	3%
Traffic lights not sensing cyclists	4%	10%	3%	4%
Workplace/school does not have changing facilities available	3%	4%	5%	2%
Having to go the long way around a residential area (e.g. no short cut routes for walkers and cyclists)	2%	4%	3%	2%
Other	5%	5%	11%	3%
None of these	21%	19%	17%	22%
Not applicable as I do not want to cycle in the Cork City area	34%	1%	3%	45%

26% of residents cycle. The key barriers to cycling more frequently are perceived safety, and the related absence of cycle lanes. C. 50% of current cyclists indicate that feeling unsafe cycling beside road traffic results in them cycling less often in the Cork City area.



# Residential (your home)

The built environment is the biggest overall contributor to Cork City's GHG emissions. Households making up 34% of the city's carbon footprint.

There are some existing supports for homeowners wanting to improve their home's energy efficiency. Such as those provided by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). However, most homes are still quite dependent on fossil fuels for their energy needs.

Retrofitting buildings across the city, whether residential or commercial, will be a significant undertaking. Thus, it is

important to understand what barriers residents may be experiencing when considering a retrofit or home energy upgrade.

Has higher energy costs increased people's interest in making the transition? Are some options more popular than others when considering a home energy upgrade?



# Residential



# Home Building Energy Rating (BER)

## Questions:

- Q.20 For approximately how long have you lived in your current home?
- Q.24 Do you know what your home's BER rating is?

## Sample size:

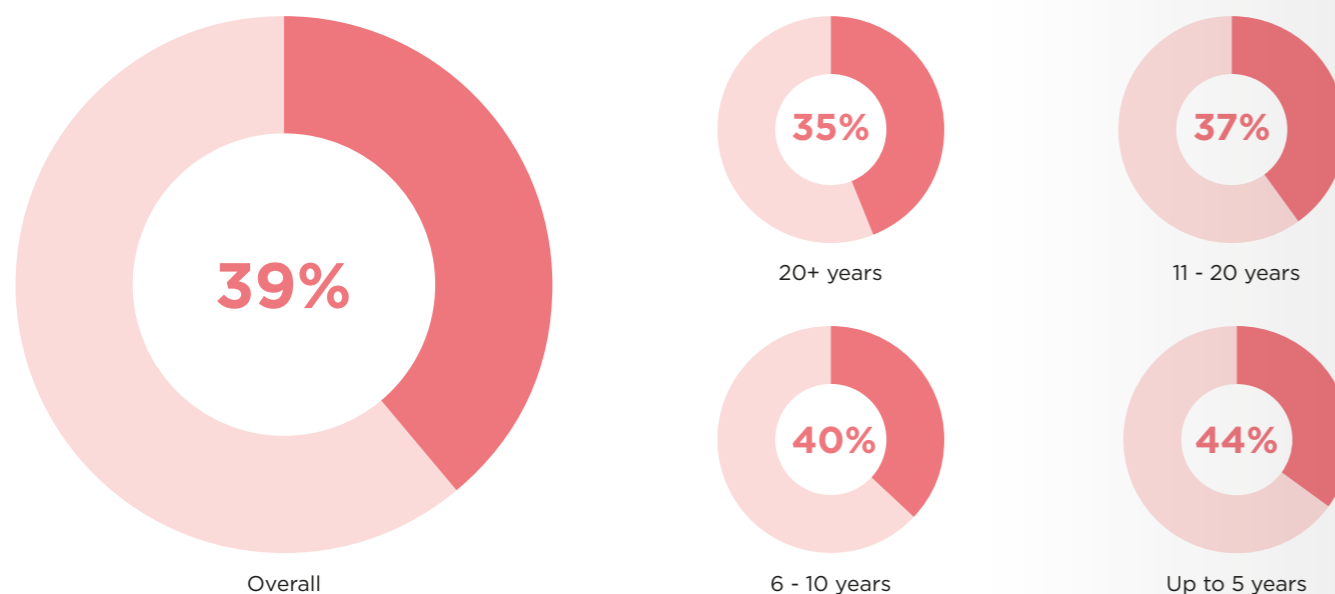
**509**

All adults

### Living in current home for...



### Aware of Home BER rating



Claimed awareness of home BER ratings is at just under 40% of residents. 28% of residents have lived in their current home for five years or less.

# Home Heating

## Questions:

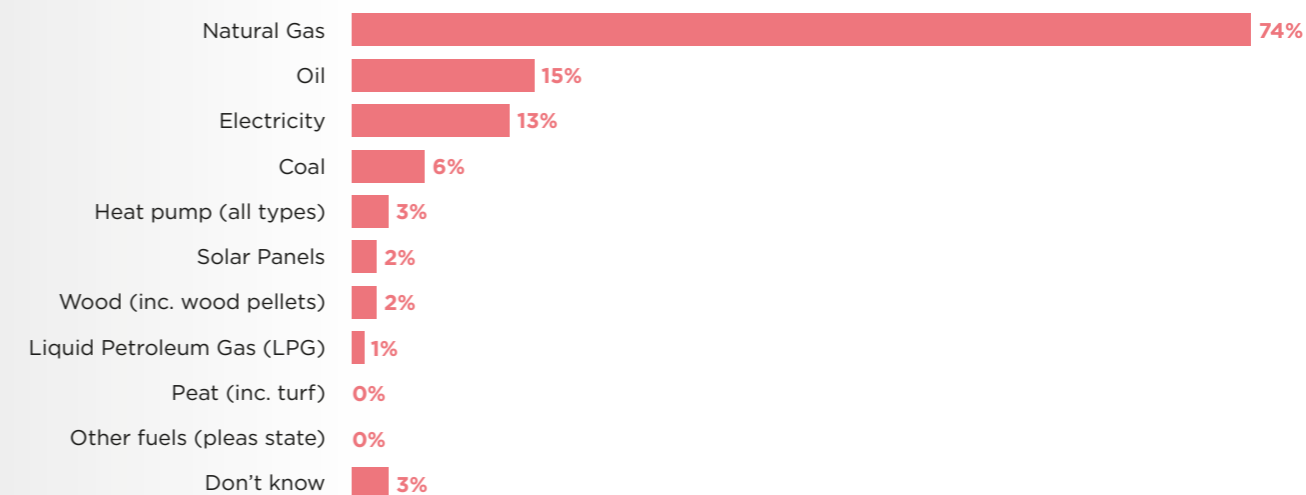
- Q.21 Which of the following does your home use for heating?
- Q.22 Have you considered changing your electricity provider in the past year?
- Q.23 For which of the following reasons have you considered changing your electricity provider in the past year?

## Sample size:

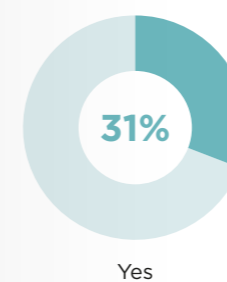
**509**

All adults

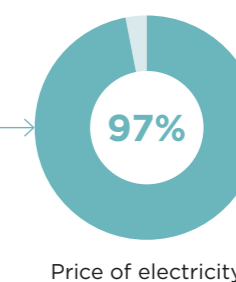
### Types of heating



### Considered changing electricity provider?



### Why?



A striking 31% of residents have considered changing their electricity provider in the past year; almost invariably for price reasons.

# Home Retrofits + Energy Upgrades

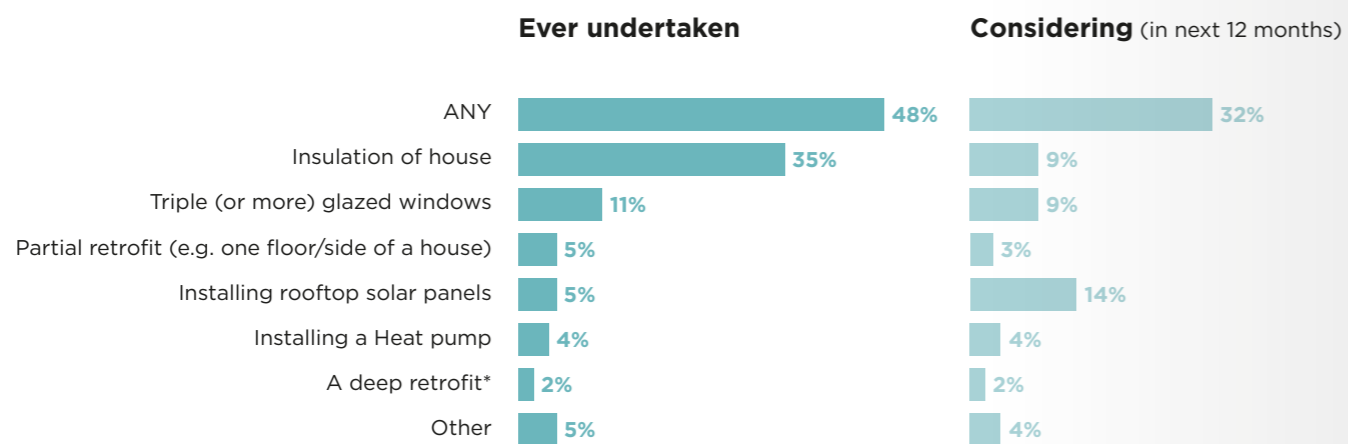
## Questions:

- Q.25** Have you undertaken any of the following retrofits or energy upgrades to your current home?
- Q.26** Are you considering undertaking any the following retrofits or energy upgrades to your current home within the next 12 months?
- Q.27** Which, if any, of the following make you less likely to undertake retrofits or energy upgrades to your current home within the next 12 months?

Sample size:

**381**

All homeowners



\* (carrying out multiple energy upgrades all at once to achieve a BER A-rating)

## Barriers to Retrofits + Upgrades



Near 1 in 3 homeowners are considering undertaking a home retrofit or energy upgrade within the next 12 months. Where previous upgrades focussed on insulation, current considerations appear broader in scope (e.g. note relative interest in solar panels).



# 4

# Knowledge & Understanding Of Climate Change & Climate Action

## Knowledge & Understanding Of Climate Change & Climate Action

This section examines how ‘climate literate’ city residents are, how climate change is impacting their lives now and what indicative support there is for a sample of potential climate actions.

What impacts of climate change have people observed in their localities? How does the city contribute to climate change? People’s knowledge of this is crucial in being able to implement effective behavioural change initiatives.

Knowing city residents’ knowledge and understanding of climate change and climate action is crucial in being able to implement effective behavioural change initiatives and improving public bodies’ communications on these topics.

Terms like ‘just transition’ and ‘net zero’ are frequently used but do people know what they mean?

This survey gauges support for several examples of more specific potential climate actions (e.g. support for reallocating road space for active travel, support for more tree planting). It also seeks to identify whether potential co-benefits of an action in health, economy etc would make residents more or less likely to support that action.



# Is Climate Change Happening?

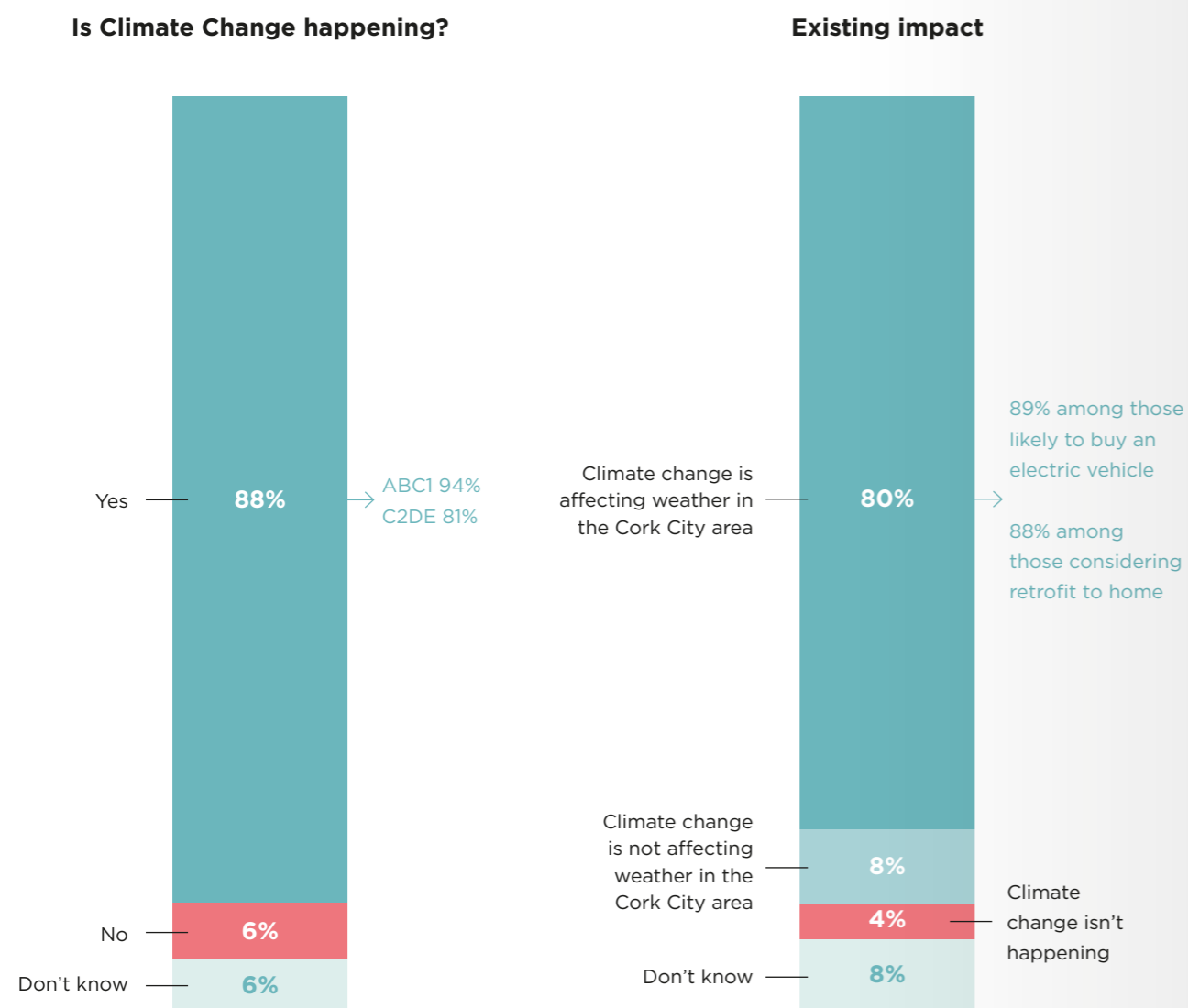
## Questions:

- Q.28a Do you believe Climate Change is happening?
- Q.28b Which of the following statements best reflects your view?

Sample size:

**509**

All adults



80% of residents believe climate change is already affecting weather in the Cork City area

# Climate Change Terms: Clarity of Meaning

## Questions:

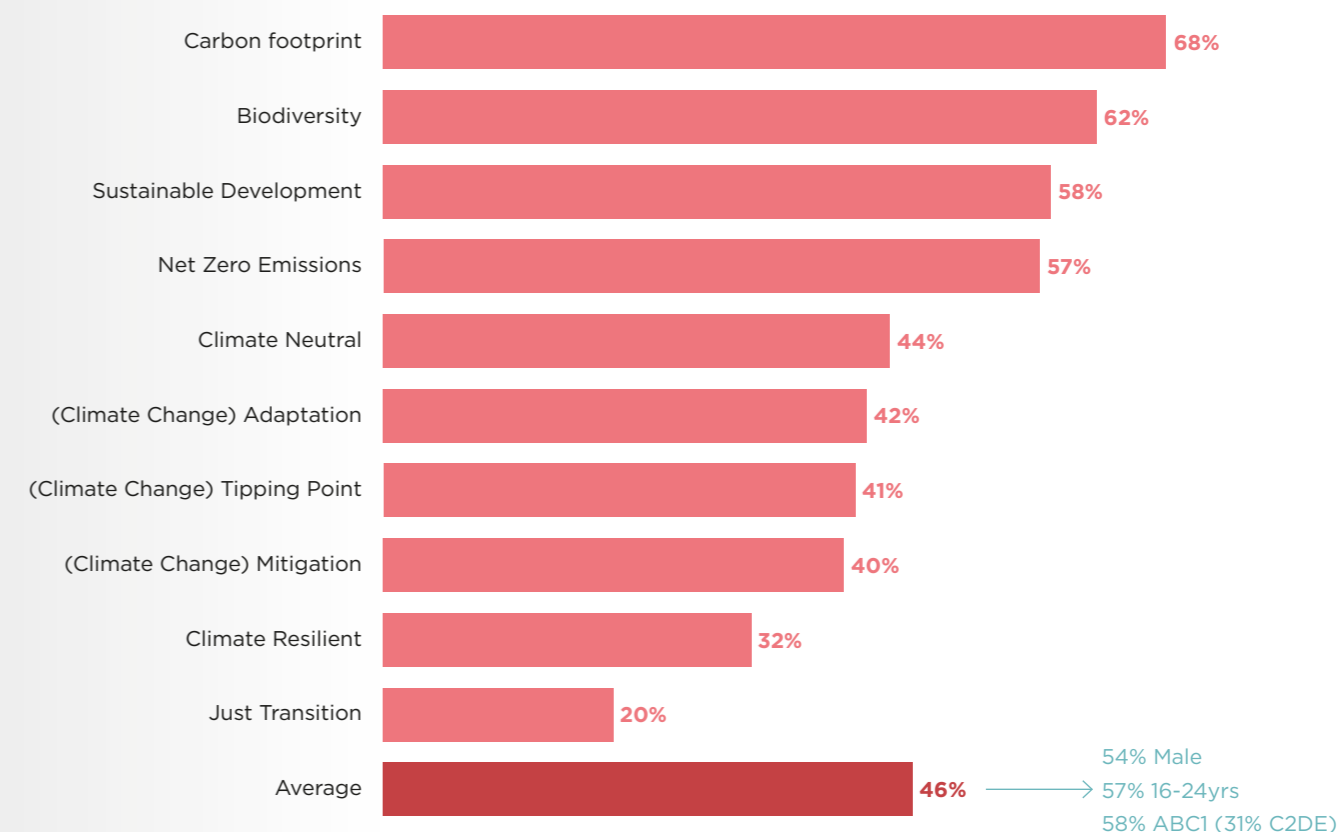
- Q.29 Please tell me how clear a meaning each term has to you.

Sample size:

**509**

All adults

## Very clear (4-5)



Understanding of climate change terms is ultimately modest, while also showing considerable variation: understanding peaks for 'carbon footprint' and 'biodiversity'; 6 of the 10 tested terms are understood by considerably less than 50% of residents.

# Types of Climate Impact

## Questions:

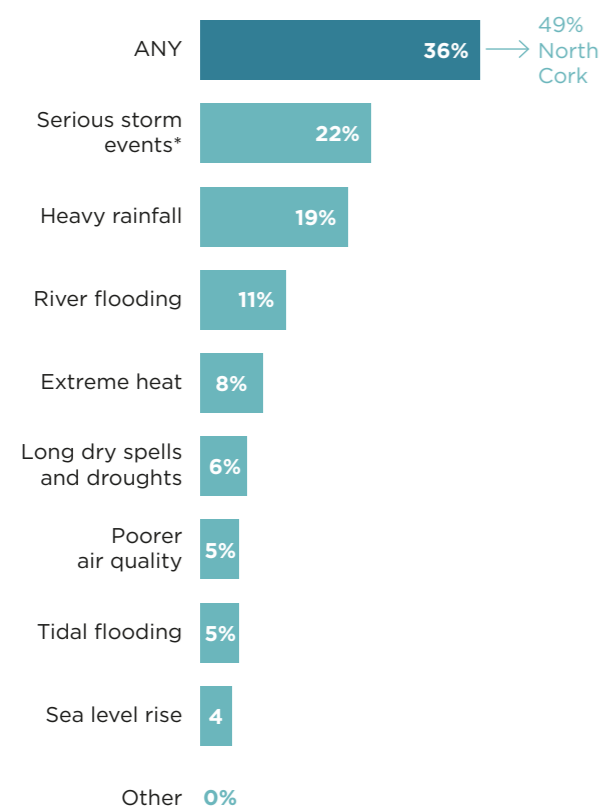
- Q.30** To what extent are you concerned that the following might harm you and your household within the next 10 years?
- Q.31** And to date, have you or your household suffered from any of the following in the Cork City area?

## Sample size:

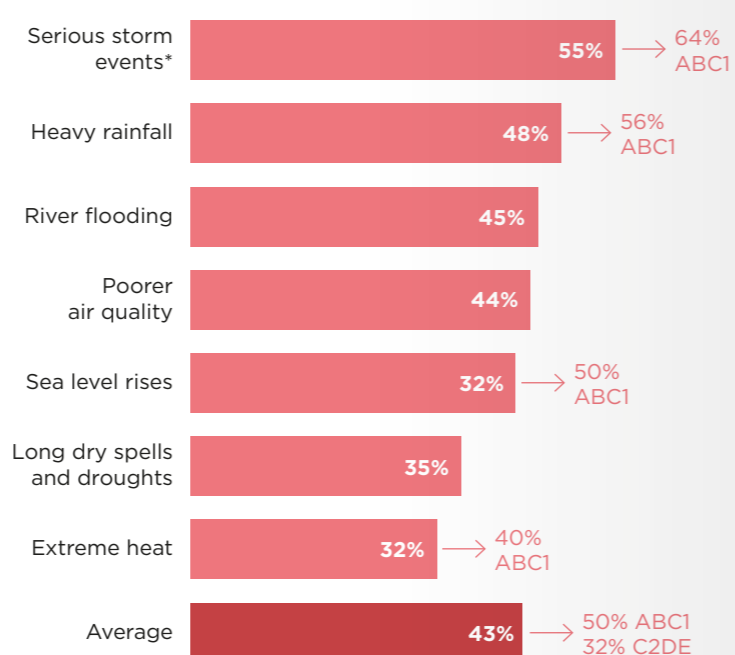
**509**

All adults

### Household already suffered



### High concern will suffer in next 10 years (Score 4-5)



\* i.e. named storms like Storm Ophelia

36% of residents indicate they or their household has already suffered from one of the listed climate impacts. Concern for the next decade peaks for storms, heavy rainfall and river flooding. The intensity of concern exhibits considerable variation by social grade.

# Cork City's GHG emissions: Perceived Contributors

## Questions:

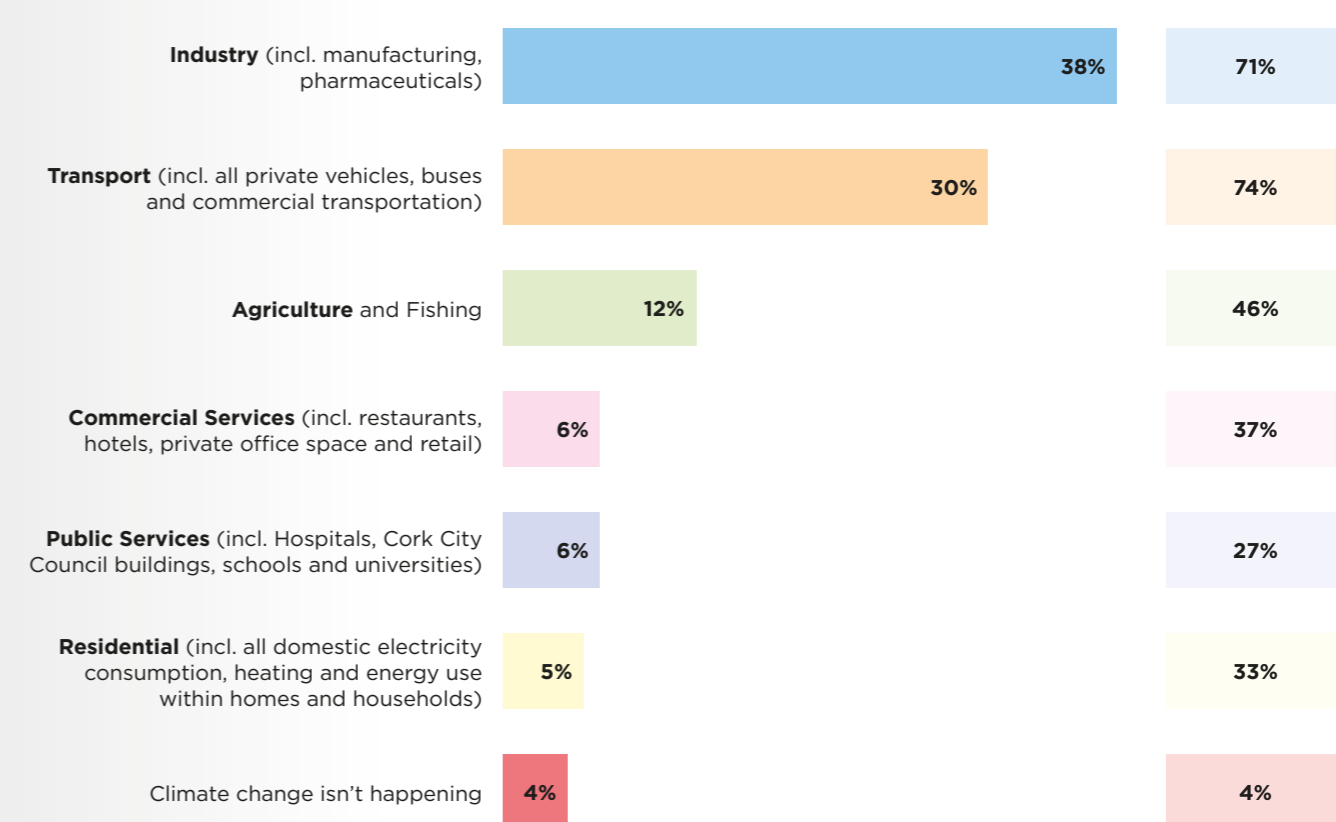
- Q.32** Which of these sectors, do you think, contribute the most and least to Cork City's Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions?

## Sample size:

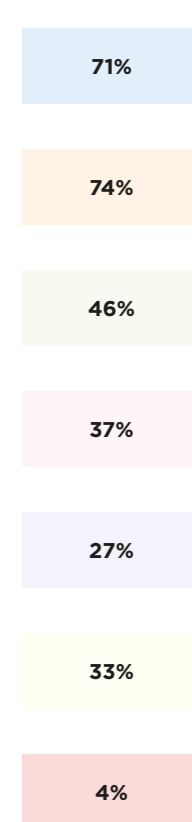
**509**

All adults

### Contributes the most



### Any 'Top 3 Contributors'



Industry and Transport are clearly seen as the sectors which contribute most to the City's GHG emissions; the Agriculture & Fishing sector is a distant third.



# Climate Action 'Co-Benefits'

## Questions:

- Q.33** To what extent did you see the link between the following climate actions and their 'co-benefits' prior to this interview?
- Q.34** For each of these Climate Actions, do their 'co-benefits' make you more or less likely to support each Climate Action in the Cork City area?

Sample size:

**509**

All adults

Climate Actions	Climate Benefits	'I can see a clear link' between this Climate Action and their Co-Benefit'	'This co-benefit makes me much more likely to support this Climate Action'
Investment in active travel infrastructure (e.g. walking routes, cycling lanes)	Healthier and more active lifestyles	63%	47%
Improved frequency and reliability of public transport	Reduction in traffic congestion across the city	60%	48%
Reduced number of private vehicles in the city	Improved air quality	60%	41%
Switching our energy system to renewables	Employment and economic opportunity in the Energy sector	60%	44%
Undertaking a home energy upgrade or retrofitting house	Lower energy bills and long-term savings	52%	48%
	Average	59% → 67% ABC1 48% C2DE	46%

Appreciation of the links between climate actions and their co-benefits is consistently apparent. The potential for the co-benefits to drive more support for climate action is also evident; support is similar across the co-benefits with low energy bills and reducing traffic congestion being the most persuasive.

# Support for Climate Action in Cork City Area

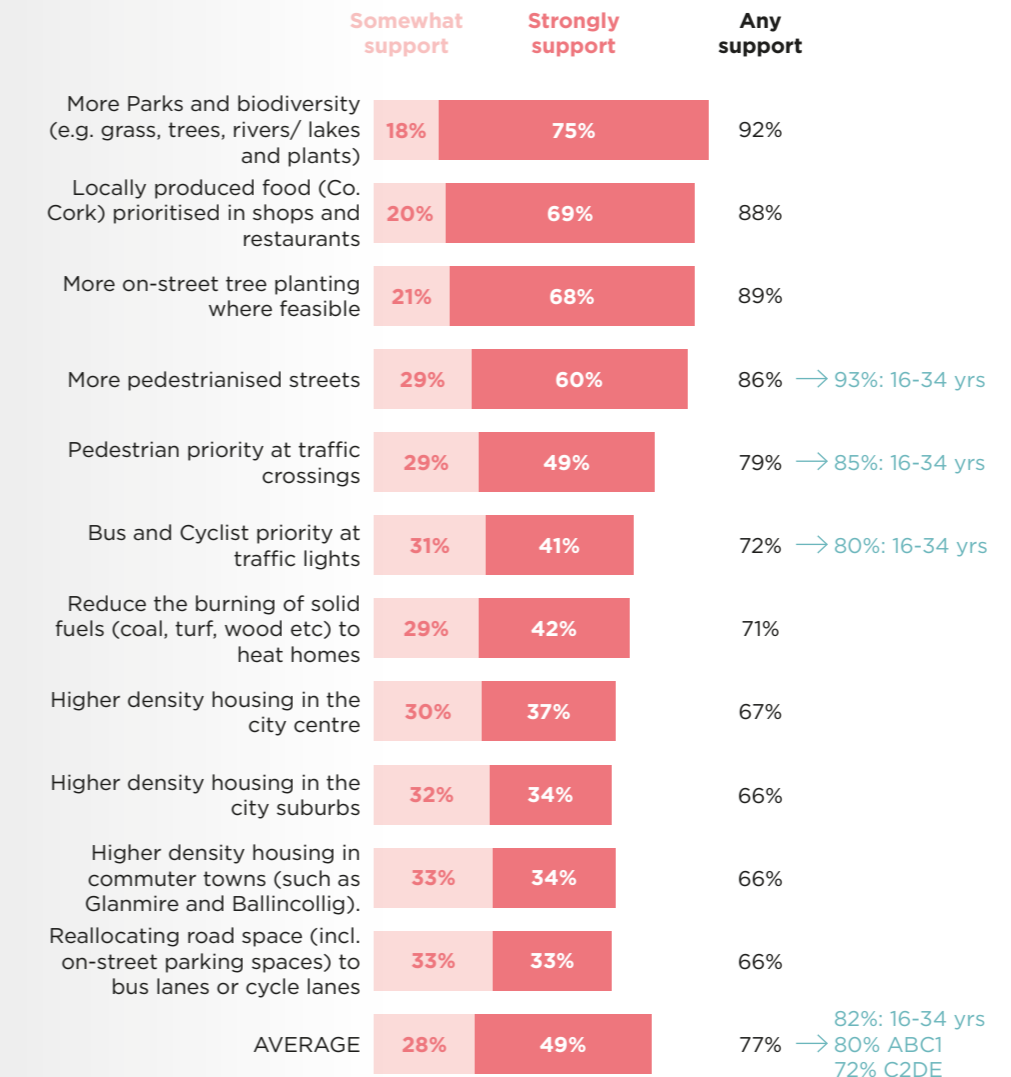
## Questions:

- Q.35** To what extent would you support the following actions being implemented in the Cork City area?
- Q.36** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement for the Cork City area?

Sample size:

**509**

All adults



**“Cork City must transform into a more sustainable place to live and work that is climate neutral and resilient”**

**64%** strongly agree

(72% ABC1; 53% C2DE)

**86%** summary agree

Consistent and positive support is evident for climate actions being implemented in the Cork City area. The top four climate actions are each supported by at least 85% of residents.

# Support for Climate Action in Cork City Area

## Questions:

**Q.35** To what extent would you support the following actions being implemented in the Cork City area?

Sample size:

**509**

All adults

	Gender			Age			
	Total	Male	Female	16-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	<b>509</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>121</b>
More Parks and biodiversity (e.g. grass, trees, rivers/ lakes and plants)	92%	93%	92%	94%	93%	92%	86%
More on-street tree planting where feasible	89%	93%	85%	93%	91%	82%	83%
Locally produced food (Co. Cork) prioritised in shops and restaurants	88%	89%	88%	93%	86%	88%	83%
More pedestrianised streets	86%	87%	86%	93%	85%	80%	81%
Pedestrian priority at traffic crossings	79%	80%	77%	85%	74%	78%	72%
Bus and Cyclist priority at traffic lights	72%	73%	71%	80%	69%	68%	62%
Reduce the burning of solid fuels (coal, turf, wood etc) to heat homes	71%	76%	66%	77%	70%	69%	61%
Higher density housing in the city centre	67%	74%	61%	75%	61%	65%	64%
Reallocating road space (incl. on-street parking spaces) to bus lanes or cycle lanes	66%	69%	63%	73%	64%	64%	55%
Higher density housing in the city suburbs	66%	70%	63%	70%	67%	61%	63%
Higher density housing in commuter towns (such as Glanmire and Ballincollig).	66%	68%	64%	74%	66%	60%	56%
Average	77%	79%	74%	82%	75%	73%	70%

■ Over-index significant difference ■ Under-index significant difference

## Continued

Sample size:

**509**

All adults

	Total	Social Class		Local Electoral Area (LEA)				
		ABC1 50+	C2DE F50-	North West	North East	South West	South Central	South East
	<b>509</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>98</b>
More Parks and biodiversity (e.g. grass, trees, rivers/ lakes and plants)	92%	95%	88%	93%	95%	92%	89%	91%
More on-street tree planting where feasible	89%	92%	84%	83%	84%	94%	89%	93%
Locally produced food (Co. Cork) prioritised in shops and restaurants	88%	91%	84%	82%	92%	90%	82%	95%
More pedestrianised streets	86%	89%	83%	89%	86%	90%	83%	85%
Pedestrian priority at traffic crossings	79%	85%	69%	58%	77%	84%	85%	85%
Bus and Cyclist priority at traffic lights	72%	75%	67%	57%	67%	77%	81%	76%
Reduce the burning of solid fuels (coal, turf, wood etc) to heat homes	71%	75%	64%	53%	75%	80%	76%	67%
Higher density housing in the city centre	67%	68%	67%	73%	73%	66%	64%	63%
Reallocating road space (incl. on-street parking spaces) to bus lanes or cycle lanes	66%	69%	61%	66%	64%	73%	65%	60%
Higher density housing in the city suburbs	66%	69%	63%	58%	75%	64%	67%	64%
Higher density housing in commuter towns (such as Glanmire and Ballincollig).	66%	70%	60%	67%	62%	64%	64%	74%
Average	77%	80%	72%	71%	77%	79%	77%	78%

Support for the climate actions being implemented in the Cork City area is largely consistent across the key demographic groups.

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# Key Learnings

## Key Learnings

### Public Transport

Public transport in the Cork City area is evaluated very positively: over 60% of weekly users indicate the service has improved in the past 12 months across fares, frequency, reliability and speed of travel. The positive evaluation of prices is facilitated by strong awareness of the national reduction in fares.

### Cycling

26% of residents cycle with usage heavily weighted towards men and those under 35 years. The key barriers to cycling more frequently are perceived safety, and the related absence of cycle lanes. C. 50% of current cyclists indicate that feeling unsafe beside road traffic results in them cycling less often in the Cork City area.

### Climate affects

80% of residents believe climate change is already affecting weather in the Cork City area; and over 1 in 3 indicate they or their household has already suffered from one of the climate impacts. Concern for the next decade peaks for storms, heavy rainfall and river flooding, with the intensity of future concern exhibiting considerable variation by social grade.

### Climate action support

Consistent and positive support is evident for the climate actions being implemented in the Cork City area. The top four climate actions are each supported by at least 85% of residents: more parks and biodiversity; more on-street tree planting; prioritisation of locally produced food; more pedestrianised streets. Reallocating road space and higher density housing are more contentious. In contrast to 'Co-benefits', support for the climate actions being implemented in the Cork City area is largely consistent across the key demographic groups.

### Electric/hybrid vehicles

1 in 4 petrol/diesel car owners are likely to purchase a hybrid or electric vehicle within the next three years. The key barriers to purchasing are expense and range concerns. Any change in driving frequency since Covid is directly related to adapted working arrangements: only those who WFH are driving less.

### Home upgrade/retrofit

Near 1 in 3 homeowners are considering undertaking a home retrofit or energy upgrade within the next 12 months. Where previous upgrades focused on insulation, current considerations appear broader in scope. 39% know their current BER rating.

### Actions and benefits

Appreciation of links between climate actions and their co-benefits is consistently apparent. The potential for the co-benefits to drive support for climate action is also evident; support is similar across the co-benefits with low energy bills and reducing traffic congestion being the most persuasive. The development area for 'co-benefits' is to build stronger appreciation and consequent support among the C2DE social grade.



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