



Review of Passenger Transport Services in County Louth



April 2010

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BE	Bus Éireann
CART	Cavan Area Rural Transport
CDB	County Development Board
CDP	County Development Plan
CIE	Córas Iompar Éireann
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DED	District Electoral Division
DES	Department of Education and Science
DoEHLG	Department of the Environment and Local Government
DoT	Department of Transport
DHC	Derek Halden Consultants
DRT	Demand Responsive Services
DSFA	Department of Social and Family Affairs
ED	Electoral Division
EU	European Union
FTP	Free Travel Pass
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Geographic Positioning Systems
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IWA	Irish Wheelchair Association
GDA	Greater Dublin Area
LDSIP	Local Development Social Inclusion Programme
LITS	Local Integrated Transport Services
LUTS	Land Use and Transportation Study
MIDAS	Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme
NDP	National Development Plan
NSS	National Spatial Strategy
NTA	National Transport Authority
PATS	Passenger Assistants Training Scheme
PLUTS	Planning, Land Use and Transportation Studies
POWCAR	Place of Work – Census of Anonymised Records
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PSO	Public Service Obligation
PT	Public Transport
PTS	Patient Transport Service
RPGs	Regional Planning Guidelines
RPTOL	Road Passenger Transport Operators Licence
RTI	Rural Transport Initiative
RTP	Rural Transport Programme
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SPSV	Small Public Service Vehicles
STS	School Transport Scheme
ToR	Terms of Reference

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

This study has been prepared for Louth County Council by Fitzpatrick Associates Economic Consultants, Dublin, with DHC Consultants, Edinburgh. The overall objectives of the study were to:

- **identify effective ways of improving access to important services through a more comprehensive local passenger transport service to meet the needs of key target groups¹;**
- **identify opportunities for rationalisation and better deployment of existing resources.**

The work programme involved a review of relevant existing literature, assembly and analysis of existing data, a transport user perception survey carried out in the county, consultations with a variety of key organisations (including Louth County Council, Bus Éireann, Iarnród Éireann, Pobal, Louth Rural Linx, private transport operators, HSE and Department of Education), data analysis and modelling regarding access to passenger transport services in the county, and development of conclusions and proposals, including proposed management structures for transport co-ordination in the county.

2. Background and Context

Louth is a distinct county in an Irish context. It is relatively small, its population is relatively urban by Irish standards, it contains the two large urban centres of Drogheda and Dundalk, and it is located on the Dublin-Belfast corridor and within commuting distance of Dublin. This location is reflected in relatively good north-south road and rail infrastructure and associated scheduled passenger transport services.

National, regional and local policy towards passenger transport services is in principle relatively benign and supportive. A long-standing interest in passenger transport services from a social inclusion viewpoint has also recently been boosted by a greater emphasis on environment and sustainability issues.

There have been a variety of initiatives over the last decade and more to improve local transport services, with particular emphasis on the services in rural areas. These include increased

¹ Key target groups were defined for the purpose of the study as older people, especially those living in isolated rural areas; young people; people on low incomes; and people with disabilities.

subvention of Bus Éireann routes, together with the local transport initiative which supports non-conventional services in rural areas only, including in County Louth.²

Nevertheless, challenges still remain for an individual county with regard to developing transport policy and services. Firstly, even prior to the current economic crisis, national willingness to subvent passenger transport services was limited. Secondly, national policy is undergoing considerable change, with the publication of *Sustainable Transport* and the creation of the new National Transport Authority both occurring during the period when this project was undertaken. Thirdly, national transport investment is still heavily dominated by infrastructure rather than service provision, and is also somewhat qualitative and aspirational in relation to service standards. Finally, both national policy and expenditure is centrally led and controlled, with departments and agencies each having distinct separate responsibilities and with limited and variable co-ordination at local level.

3. Passenger Transport Provision in County Louth

As noted earlier, partially due to its location, Louth is relatively well-served by scheduled conventional passenger services. These consist principally of Iarnród Éireann services with major stations in both Drogheda and Dundalk on the Dublin-Belfast line, as well as extensive Bus Éireann bus services. These are also supplemented by a number of private operators, mainly operating Dublin commuter or local town services.

Similarly to other counties, these services are supplemented by a series of dedicated provision targeted at specific beneficiary groups. The major examples are the school bus system funded by the Department of Education and Science and operated on its behalf by Bus Éireann, as well as support for non-emergency transport provided by the HSE, and Rural Transport Programme support to Louth Rural Linx. Louth also has a large number of taxis and hackneys relative to its population.

Public subvention of passenger transport in the county is estimated at approximately €10 mn annually, excluding Iarnród Éireann.³ The bulk of this relates to school transport, with other main element being the Bus Éireann subvention and the Free Travel Pass, followed by the HSE and RTI.

4. Louth User Perceptions

As part of the study a survey of a sample of the adult population was carried out using a postal questionnaire. Details are contained in the main report.

² Louth Rural Linx is funded under the National Rural Transport Programme.

³ It is not meaningful to try to assign a proportion of the Iarnród Éireann national subvention to County Louth.

The predominant mode of transport in County Louth is the private car. Overall, an estimated 88% use cars either as a driver or passenger to make most of their journeys. Most households have a car, and many have multiple cars. Most people use the car as their main means of transport. Public transport is therefore currently a secondary consideration in most people's travel planning.

Reflecting this, most residents of Louth are reasonably satisfied with their current level of transport access to desired destinations. This is true overall, but also even of most target groups where satisfaction levels are in excess of 70%. It does, of course, still leave a significant minority of the population who are not satisfied with their current level of transport services, including both private car and public transport.

About 55% of people feel that they can also access shops and services by public transport if they wish, but this percentage is much lower among rural dwellers. People are also less satisfied with frequency, again particularly in the case of rural dwellers.

On average, about half the population say they regard the bus service in their area as satisfactory, and feel that they have adequate information about it. These percentages are higher in the case of older people, possibly because of their greater experience of using the services.

In terms of specific groups, people living in rural areas and younger people emerge as the least satisfied with their current provision. Interestingly, while the former group has received considerable attention in this regard, the latter have not.

5. Service Adequacy and Gaps

The study involved extensive quantitative "accessibility" analysis of where people in County Louth live and how they travel to different destinations, and their potential to use public transport.

The overall implications of our quantitative analysis of existing provision are that the Louth situation is quite positive, particularly in an Irish context outside a major urban centre.

As noted above, the majority of residents have access to their own or family cars. From a pure accessibility perspective – as distinct from an environmental or sustainability one – this means that the majority of individuals and households are relatively self-contained in terms of meeting their immediate transport needs.

Furthermore, a majority of the population in most locations appears to have relatively good access to scheduled public transport services, principally bus services provided by Bus Éireann and other service providers.

However, important gaps remain in relation to specific services (particularly hospital services) for disadvantaged groups who do not have use of their own car, and in some areas.

Further development of the system therefore necessitates a combination of increasing access to the services that already exist, developing further 'collect and connect' type services for people in more remote areas, and improving the service provided by existing scheduled services.

From the qualitative research and consultations, a number of additional specific issues arise:

- ambiguities about who is responsible for what;
- the quality and location of some bus-stops;
- communication gaps in terms of people's access to information;
- absence of a clear agreed local transport service plan.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The report's key conclusions and recommendations are:

- that alongside improvements in scheduled services, the priorities for County Louth are an improvement in 'collect and connect' services, particularly in remote rural areas, as well as making all public transport more accessible to users through better information, easily located timetables etc;
- that key themes of future strategy must be achieving more for less, i.e. increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of existing expenditure rather than anticipating major new expenditure in the present climate;
- that a key requirement is to improve co-ordination among the various separate stakeholders involved in transport planning or provision in County Louth;
- that there is a need for greater clarity, including clarity for the public, regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of the various players, particularly in relation to such matters as improvements in information provision or improvement of bus-stops designation of interchange locations.

We therefore propose an incremental approach to developing and sustaining planning and co-ordination activity to attract buy-in from all the key stakeholders.

Consequently we propose a staged approach be taken to improved planning and co-ordination, involving:

- (a) establishment of a Louth Transport Planning and Co-ordination Committee (LTPCC) among the key stakeholders, building on structures that already exist;
- (b) preparation of an agreed passenger transport strategy and action plan based on the work for this report and other inputs;
- (c) establishment in due course of a transport planning and co-ordination office;
- (d) further evolution of this into functions including procurement co-ordination, establishment of a transport broker service;
- (e) that the transport co-ordination function should be funded by the agencies involved, in particular that the current RTI co-ordination resources could be diverted to this wider county-level function.

More detailed conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter 6 of the report.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

In County Louth, as elsewhere, transport services are a vital enabler of economic and social activity. They determine people's level of access to many other services and thus have a major impact on their quality of life generally. This includes access to work, education, social services, family and friends, leisure, and many other purposes. The nature and type of transport services also have significant environmental implications.

Access to transport services is especially critical to potentially excluded groups including older people, young people, people in rural areas, people on low incomes, and people with disabilities. Surveys in Louth and elsewhere in Ireland repeatedly confirm that these groups have relatively low levels of private car availability, and frequently also have low access to convenient public transport services.

The nature and location of services is also constantly changing, necessitating a response from the transport system to ensure that people do not become excluded. In many places services such as rural shops, health facilities, schools, post offices and public houses are closing, and in other locations new commercial and housing developments are bringing new opportunities. Transport network coverage must evolve, respecting expectations of traditional users but responding to new needs.

Over the past 10 years there has been increasing appreciation in Ireland of the importance of local public transport services, of promoting accessibility in transport services, and more recently of more sustainable forms of transport. This is evident in the range of policy initiatives that have emerged at both national and local levels, including:

- efforts to develop a rural transport policy, through the work of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Rural Transport and the Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Public Transport;
- preparation in 2001 and 2002 of rural transport audits and needs assessments in all major local authority areas including County Louth;
- establishment of the pilot Rural Transport Initiative (RTI), and the subsequent roll-out of the Rural Transport Programme (RTP);
- development of major transport strategies for urban areas, including the transport strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), the Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) and the preparation of land use and transportation studies (LUTS) for other towns and cities;
- extension of Bus Éireann rural routes;
- opening up of the taxi and bus markets to new entrants;

- the recent development and publication of 'Smarter Travel', the Department of Transport's new sustainable transport policy for Ireland;
- establishment in 2009 of the National Transport Authority.

These initiatives have been paralleled by the emergence of a growing mix of conventional local bus and rail services with non-conventional services such as taxis, mini-buses and other demand-responsive and community-based services.

1.2 Objectives of Improved Local Transport Services

As summarised in Figure 1.1, there are a variety of policy objectives behind increasing interest in local transport services. This is because the traditional transport planning paradigm of 'trip making' has not proved to be adequate for the needs of more integrated systems serving people's needs. Access is now being planned more explicitly in most countries, and accessibility aims include an interest in promoting social inclusion (as in the present study) and integrating people without transport access into the economy and society more widely. Economic and labour market concerns to promote access to employment opportunities are also a policy objective, as is interest in good public transport services from an environmental sustainability and spatial planning perspective.

FIGURE 1.1: RURAL TRANSPORT/ACCESS IN IRELAND – UNDERLYING ISSUES

Type of Issue	Overall Objective	Main Target Groups	Access To?
Social/exclusion	Ensuring access for excluded rural residents	Low income, disability, elderly, people living alone, very remote areas, non car-owners	Social, health, recreational, education
Economic/labour market	Ensuring access to employment	People in the labour market, or potentially in it	Employment, training
Sustainability/spatial	Minimising reliance on private car commuting, reducing congestion on rural and urban locations and reducing emissions.	All rural residents who must commute to work or for other reasons	Employment, shops, recreation, social services

However, while these distinctions in motivation and primary objectives can be made, transport is ultimately a horizontal 'enabler'. In particular, public transport is by definition available to all users⁴, and many of the required destinations and services are common across users.

⁴ Transport systems that are targeted exclusively at specific groups, e.g. school transport or dedicated transport for people with severe disabilities, may be publicly-funded but are not 'public transport' in the strict sense.

1.3 Project Objectives

The present study on Passenger Transport Services in County Louth has been carried out as part of a suite of initiatives by Louth County Council aimed at improving the quality of life of its citizens and making public services more responsive to the needs of key target groups. One example is 'Age Friendly County', which aims to make Louth Ireland's first county with an age-friendly approach to all service provision, including local transport. Specifically, it has been identified that providing appropriate passenger options within existing resources was critical to the success of these initiatives as a whole.

Undertaking the present study also reflects an initiative already committed to in the Louth County Development Plan⁵. In addition, it reflects a broader commitment in the Louth County Development Board Strategy 2002-12 to ensure that 'each individual in Louth has an equal opportunity to access public transport services to meet their individual needs'⁶.

The overall objectives of the study as defined in the ToR are two-fold:

- **to identify effective ways of improving access to important services through a more comprehensive local passenger transport service to meet the needs of key target groups;**
- **to identify opportunities for rationalisation and better deployment of existing resources.**

Regarding the first objective, key target groups are listed as older people (especially those living in more isolated rural areas), young people, people on low incomes and people with mobility, sensory, or cognitive impairments.

Regarding the second study objective, much previous local transport needs analysis in Louth and elsewhere focused on developing new community-based services to meet identified service gaps. Dovetailing with the current national financial climate, this study focused on meeting identified needs from existing resources via rationalisation and better deployment.

Within the overall objectives, the study ToR envisaged three specific components:

1. identifying passenger transport needs of key target groups in the county, both met demand and latent demand, and comparing this to existing supply;

⁵ Louth County Council, *Draft County Development Plan 2009-15*, Chapter 8, 'Transport and Communications', Section 8.9, 2009.

⁶ Louth County Development Board, *Louth Working Together for the Future, Integrated Plan for Social, Economic and Cultural Development of the County, 2002-12*, 2002.

2. identifying the cost of the current system, designing more optimal solutions and offsetting the costs of these solutions;
3. addressing how to deliver and manage this new improved network.

1.4 Work Programme

1.4.1 Work Programme Phases

The work programme consisted of nine phases as described below.

Phase 1: Inception

This involved initial consultations with the client, initial exploration of key parameters, options and knowledge of data sources, and fine tuning of the work programme. It also provided us with an understanding of any priorities, particular foci or other important dimensions of which we should be aware.

Phase 2: Review of Existing Literature

This included review of documentation at a number of levels. At local level we reviewed such key documents as the County Development Plan, local area plans, social inclusion plans, the LEADER Rural Transport Plans, and existing surveys of the local community (e.g. the recent rural transport needs survey carried out by Louth LEADER Partnership).

At a national level, the phase included a review of key policy documents such as 'Smarter Travel', 'Progressing Rural Transport in Ireland', transport strategies for the Greater Dublin Area, annual and other reports on the major public transport operators (e.g. Bus Éireann, Iarnród Éireann) and relevant documents from the Commission for Taxi Regulation.

Phase 3: Assembly and Analysis of Existing Data

This included identification and assembly of relevant qualitative and quantitative data. National sources included the Central Statistics Office (CSO) data, including the Place of Work – Census of Anonymised Records (POWCAR) data. We also obtained access to the database used for the recent analysis of rural transport accessibility undertaken for Pobal. Existing data locally was also obtained from sources such as service providers and Health Service Executive (HSE).

The location of trip attractors such as hospitals, schools, post offices, banks etc. was sourced from the public authorities. The necessary approach was agreed with the client at inception.

Phase 4: Consultations

Bilateral consultations were held with key organisations locally, including Louth County Council, Bus Éireann, Iarnród Éireann, Pobal, Louth Rural Linx, private transport operators, and relevant social service providers including HSE and Department of Education.

Phase 5: Transport User Perception Survey

This phase of the work programme involved carrying out a survey of a sample of the population in County Louth, to obtain information on people's perceptions of their access to transport, their perceptions about the level of availability of transport, and their views on important factors such as travel cost, time, frequency, information, reliability and security.

This was done by means of postal survey, using a sample of randomly selected adults chosen from the electoral register.

Phase 6: International Benchmarking

This phase of the work programme drew on the international experience and expertise of DHC. The international benchmarking element of the project had a focus on specific issues:

- approaches to local transport planning and provision, particularly in the UK, informed our assessment of requirements and potential approaches in County Louth, including cost and cost-effectiveness;
- knowledge of local transport planning and co-ordination arrangements in the UK, with suitable acknowledgement of different Irish conditions, informed our judgement of the management, structures and approaches best suited to Ireland.

Phase 7: Data Analysis/Modelling

A database model of accessibility was developed to define spatially the factors that affect the ability of people to travel from where they live to a range of service types for which data has been available. The database was used to manage the qualitative and quantitative data on accessibility measured in various terms: stated access; revealed/expressed accessibility; community/measured accessibility.

Phase 8: Identification of Management Structures

Phase 8 was the final stage in the analysis. Potential management structures were identified from a variety of sources: the evident co-ordination needs in the county; models of co-ordination used elsewhere, including internationally and also under the Rural Transport Initiative in Ireland; and consultations with the stakeholders.

Arising out of this, approaches were developed which are presented in the later sections in this report.

Phase 9: Reporting

During the work period of the study interim reports were provided on a monthly basis, which outlined progress to date and corresponded with monthly progress meetings

A draft report including the key findings and recommendations of the study was made available to the client for discussion prior to finalisation, and agreed edits or changes were incorporated in the final report.

1.4.2 Work Programme Limitations

The study faced a number of challenges in its implementation which should be brought to readers' attention:

- (a) the accessibility planning method used is reliant on availability of high quality, digitalised up-to-date data on the location of services. Data obtained for Louth was problematic in this regard, with many minor errors and gaps;
- (b) the study took place against an evolving policy and financial landscape, including such major developments as publication of Sustainable Transport, establishment of the new National Transport Authority and ongoing pilot projects on improved local transport co-ordination in the Border Region, including Louth;
- (c) a disappointing level of response to the user perception survey;
- (d) in scale the study was relatively small in terms of time-scale and resources by comparison with land-use and transportation studies.

1.5 Report Structure

The report structure is as follows:

- the present Chapter 1 sets out the study background, objectives and methodology;
- Chapter 2 provides a brief scene-setting profile of County Louth;
- Chapter 3 describes rural transport needs as set out in national and local policy documents, and as perceived by Louth residents in the 'User Perception' survey;
- Chapter 4 describes the current passenger transport services operating in County Louth;
- Chapter 5 analyses the current service adequacy and gaps in provision in terms of an accessibility model;
- Chapter 6 sets out the report's conclusions and recommendations.

2. Profile of County Louth

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is a short scene-setting one. It briefly examines the size, demographic structure, settlement pattern, economy and transport infrastructure of County Louth in order to set the scene for the subsequent description and analysis of local passenger transport services.

2.2 Size/Area/Topography

Louth is the smallest Irish county, covering 83,199 km². It is located on the corridor between the island's two major cities, Dublin and Belfast. This is also reflected in a strong north-south pattern of transport infrastructure and services.

It has 120 kilometres of coastline running from the Boyne Estuary in the south to Carlingford Lough in the north. Louth borders four other counties, namely Meath, Monaghan, Armagh and Down. The Cooley Mountains in the north-east of the county are the highest area in the county. Rivers in the county run from the west into the sea on the east, and the principal rivers are the Boyne, Fane, Glyde and Dee.

2.3 Demography

The population of County Louth in 2006 was 111,267, an increase of 9.3% on the 2002 census figure. The number of males at 55,335 and females at 55,932 were almost equal. The population of County Louth amounted to 2.8% of the total population of the state.

Table 2.1 below shows that the population in the active 25-64 age groups grew fastest in the 2002-06 period.

TABLE 2.1: POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION COUNTY LOUTH, 2006		
Age Group	Population 2006	% Increase 2002-2006
0-24	40,660	3.0
25-44	35,570	15.1
45-64	23,432	12.0
65+	11,605	10.2
SOURCE: CENSUS OF POPULATION 2006		

A total of 10,414 persons or 9.4% of the total population stated that they had a disability in 2006. This is in line with the national average of 9.3%. Table 2.2 shows the types of disability reported.

TABLE 2.2: PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY IN COUNTY LOUTH, 2006

Total	Sight or Hearing Impaired	Physical Impaired	Learning or Intellectual Impaired	Psychological or Emotional Impaired	Other (Balancing figure)	% Total Population
10,414	2,082	4,842	1,816	1,621	53	9.4
100%	20.0%	46.5%	17.4%	15.6%	0.5%	

SOURCE: CENSUS OF POPULATION 2006

2.4 Settlement Pattern

Notwithstanding its relatively small size, County Louth contains the two largest towns in the state, Drogheda and Dundalk. By 2006 these were the seventh and eighth largest towns – with populations of 35,090 and 35,085 respectively. The National Spatial Strategy designated Dundalk as a Gateway and identified Drogheda as a Primary Development Centre.

Ardee, with a population of 4,694, is also an urban area. As a result, 64.4% of the population of the county lives in urban areas and 35.6% of the population lives in rural areas. This makes Louth one of the most urbanised counties.

TABLE 2.3: POPULATION OF TOWNS (INCL. ENVIRONS) COUNTY LOUTH 2002-06

Town	2002	2006	% Change
Drogheda	31,020	35,090	13.1
Dundalk	32,505	35,085	7.9
Ardee	3,948	4,694	18.9

SOURCE: CENSUS OF POPULATION 2006

There are a number of other smaller towns and villages in the county including Baltray – 121; Carlingford – 623; Clogherhead – 1,558; Collon – 564; Dunleer – 1,449; Dromiskin – 992; Jenkinstown – 237; Knockbridge – 427; Louth – 549; Omeath – 439 Tallanstown – 653 Termonfeckin – 653 and Tullyallen – 1,036.

In the period 2002-2006 the population growth in the Greater Dublin Area had a significant impact on population growth in the county, with towns experiencing rapid growth in commuter-based housing and population.

The density of population in the county in 2006 was 1,337 persons per hectare. This is more than double the state average of 0.604 persons per h.a. but substantially below the density of 12,895 persons per h.a. in County Dublin.

Louth County Council Draft County Development Plan 2009-2015 sets out a Target Population Allocation taking into account DoEHLG and Border Regional Authority data. The population of the county is projected to grow by 17.6% in the period 2006 to 2016, with this growth concentrated in Dundalk and Drogheda which are to grow by 20%.

TABLE 2.4: TARGET POPULATION ALLOCATION COUNTY LOUTH, 2006-16

	Population 2006	Population 2016	Increase	% Increase
County Louth	111,267	130,900	19,633	17.6
Dundalk	35,085	42,300	7,215	20.5
Drogheda	35,090	42,108	7,018	20.0
Ardee	4,301	4,700	399	9.3
Dunleer	2,340	2,540	200	8.5
Category 1 Settlements	10,022	11,746	1,724	17.2
Category 11 Settlements & Rural	24,429	27,506	3,077	12.6

SOURCE: DRAFT LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2009-15, BASED ON DOE AND BORDER REGIONAL AUTHORITY MINIMUM TARGET POPULATIONS

2.5 Economic Activity and Incomes

2.5.1 Pattern of Economic Activity

The principal private sectors of Commerce, Manufacturing and Construction account for about 59% of total employment while the public sectors of Education, Health and Public Administration account for 27.3%. Reflecting the urban nature of the county, a low share of employment is engaged in agriculture which is included in 'other' in Table 2.5.

TABLE 2.5: SECTORAL BREAKDOWN OF EMPLOYMENT COUNTY LOUTH, 2006

Commerce	10,756	31.1
Education, health and social	7,705	22.3
Manufacturing	6,200	17.9
Construction	1,828	5.3
Public administration	1,720	5.0
Transport / communications	1,583	4.6
Other	4,752	13.8
Total	34,545	100.0

SOURCE: LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2009-2015 - CSO, POWCAR DATASET

Louth has a long history of industry in traditional sectors such as engineering, cement, food processing and footwear and tobacco manufacturing. Most of these, with the exceptions of cement and food processing, have now closed but the county has been successful in attraction of foreign direct investment.

While economic activity and employment in the county has declined since 2006, the county is well placed on the Dublin/Belfast Economic Corridor to benefit from any upturn in the domestic and world economies. It has excellent access by road and rail to international ports and airports, a highly educated and skilled labour force, an Institute of Technology in Dundalk, an existing base of overseas and domestic businesses and high quality business parks with modern buildings available in Dundalk and Drogheda. IDA Ireland has developed a Strategic Site for biopharmaceutical industries at Dundalk and is also marketing the region for IT and financial and internationally traded services.

2.5.2 Income Levels

Income levels in Louth at €24,850 per person in 2006 were more or less on par with national averages (€25,728). Income levels in Louth are well above the average for the Border Midland West Region, and they are equal to or higher than in most other counties outside the GDA (i.e. Dublin City and County, Kildare, Meath and Wicklow). However, notwithstanding this, the county also has some pockets with high levels of deprivation, especially in the two main urban centres.

According to the Haase Index of Deprivation⁷, the NUTS III Border Region (i.e. Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan, Sligo) is the most disadvantaged region in Ireland. However, the index also shows that County Louth is marginally less disadvantaged compared to the region as a whole, and it is not characterised by particular extremes either with regard to affluence or deprivation.

The most affluent areas are to the south of Dundalk, while the most disadvantaged areas are found within the two urban areas of Dundalk and Drogheda. The most disadvantaged Electoral Divisions (EDs) are Dundalk Urban No. 1, Dundalk Urban No. 2, West Gate, Fair Gate and Drumcar. However, only the first of these would be classified as 'very disadvantaged' under the index.

2.6 Transport Infrastructure

Louth benefits from high quality road and rail infrastructure running north/south from Dublin to Belfast through the county. The M1 motorway is part of the strategic Euroroute 1 connecting the ports of Larne, Dublin and Rosslare to Europe. This also provides rapid access to international airports at Dublin and Belfast. The M1 passes close to both Dundalk and Drogheda and provides high quality road access for these towns. The N2 linking Dublin with the North West provides access for Ardee and the west of the county. The roads running east/west carry smaller volumes of traffic and are of lower standard, national secondary and regional routes.

⁷ Haase, T. and Pratschke, J. *New Measures of Deprivation for the Republic of Ireland*, Dublin, Pobal (2008).

The Dublin /Belfast railway line also runs through the county with stations at Dundalk and Drogheda. This line has been improved in recent years with new rolling stock and park-and-ride facilities at both stations.

Car ownership levels in Louth are slightly below the national average, reflecting its relatively urbanised nature and its transport corridor location. It also has a higher than average proportion of its population travelling less than five kilometres to work, and a higher proportion of the population either working or cycling to work.

However, it also has a higher than average proportion of people travelling to work by car, a higher than average proportion of people travelling more than 14 kilometres to work, and a higher than average proportion of people travelling to work by rail. This probably reflects the county's emergence as an important part of the Dublin commuter belt over the past ten years.

TABLE 2.6: SELECTED TRANSPORT DATA FOR CO. LOUTH

	Louth	State
Cars per 1,000 Population (2007) ¹	383.8	444.1
Taxis and Hackneys per 1,000 Population (2007) ¹	6.3	6.1
% Private Households with No Car	21.3	19.7
% Private Households with At Least 1 Car	78.7	80.3
% Private Households with At Least 2 Cars	38.0	41.7
% Private Households with At Least 3 Cars	7.3	8.7
% Private Households with At Least 4 Cars	2.0	2.4
% Working Age Population Travelling < 5 Kilometres to Work (2006)	28.5	23.4
% Working Age Population Travelling > 14 Kilometres to Work (2006)	31.1	28.3
% Working Age Population Travelling to Work by Car (2006)	65.3	62.6
% Working Age Population Travelling to Work by Bus (2006)	2.8	6.1
% Working Age Population Travelling to Work by Rail (2006)	3.1	2.9
% Working Age Population Walking or Cycling to Work (2006)	14.5	12.8

¹ Figures for private cars and taxis/hackneys relate to 2007 data. Population denominator in each case is drawn from 2006 Census data.

Also directly pertinent to this study is the availability of private cars per household. While again slightly lower than the national average, this is still very high and a major factor in travel patterns in the county. Nearly eight in ten households have a car, and nearly four in ten have two cars.

2.7 Key Implications

A number of key features of Louth emerge from this chapter, which are important from a local passenger transport planning perspective. These include:

- its relatively small size;
- its relatively urban nature, including the two large towns of Dundalk and Drogheda;
- its relatively developed transport infrastructure, including road and rail, especially on a north-south basis;
- its proximity to Dublin and the de facto inclusion of the south of the county in the Dublin commuting area.

These are themes arising in the subsequent description and analysis of later chapters.

3 Transport Needs: Policy and User Perceptions

3.1 Introduction

Transport needs can be defined at a number of levels. These include policy 'service objectives' in the area of transport needs; 'user perceptions' of what transport needs are in areas; 'existing provision' of services and how these cater for social and economic needs and comparisons between different groups.

This chapter deals with the first two of these, while Chapter 4 looks at the third.

3.2 Transport Needs Identified in Policies

3.2.1 National Transport Policy

Transport 21

Transport 21, published by the Department of Transport in 2005, is the capital investment framework through which Ireland's transport system is being developed over the 2006-15 period. The projects and programmes that make up Transport 21 (which also incorporate the transport priorities and projects highlighted in the National Development Plan 2007-13), have four aims, which are to:

- increase accessibility, i.e. making it easier for everybody to get to and from work, school, college, shopping and business;
- ensure sustainability, i.e. recognising that a modern transport system must be sustainable from an economic and environmental perspective;
- expand capacity, i.e. addressing existing deficiencies and providing for future growth;
- enhance quality, i.e. improving safety, accessibility, integration, reliability, speed and comfort.

Transport 21 is divided into two investment programmes, which are a national programme and a programme for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA). The main objectives of the national programme, which are of relevance to County Louth, are to:

- create a high quality, efficient national road and rail network that is consistent with the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) objectives of a strong, competitive economic position, a high quality environment and a better quality of life for all people;
- strengthen national, regional and local public transport services in Ireland, including public transport services in the main provincial cities.

In a County Louth context, this has so far incorporated the completion of the M1 Dublin-Belfast route as well as improvements to the rolling stock operated by Iarnród Éireann, improvements in the fleet for PSO services operated by Bus Éireann and infrastructural investment in rail under the Railway Safety Programme. However, the GDA programme will also impact on Louth through plans for the electrification of the Northern rail line from Dublin to Drogheda.

Transport 21 does not directly assist in defining national or local transport objectives or targets from a passenger transport service perspective.

Smarter Travel

*Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future*⁸ is a new sustainable transport policy for Ireland for the period 2009-20. Delivering this policy is a key objective of Government because transport and travel trends in Ireland have long been perceived to be unsustainable. For example, the current low levels of use of sustainable modes of transport, such as public transport or cycling, are regarded as being less than optimal.

Despite investment promoted through Transport 21, it is expected that transport congestion will get worse, transport emissions will continue to grow, economic competitiveness will suffer and quality of life will decline unless more sustainable transport policies are adopted. The Government has thus reaffirmed its vision for sustainability in transport by setting down key goals, which are to:

- improve quality of life and accessibility to transport for all and, in particular, for people with reduced mobility and those who may experience isolation due to lack of transport;
- improve economic competitiveness through maximising the efficiency of the transport system and alleviating congestion and infrastructural bottlenecks;
- minimise the negative impacts of transport on the local and global environment through reducing localised air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions;
- reduce overall travel demand and commuting distances travelled by the private car;
- improve security of energy supply by reducing dependency on imported fossil fuels.

Smarter Travel thus reiterates the overall economic, social and environmental objectives of national transport policy, and highlights the latter to a status not previously given.

Supporting these key goals is a suite of nearly 50 actions designed to encourage smarter travel, deliver alternative ways of travelling, improve the efficiency of motorised transport and ensure integrated delivery of policy and planning. A summary of these key action areas is provided in Table

⁸ *Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future: A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020*, Department of Transport, 2009.

3.1 below. It can be seen that better public passenger transport services, including local public transport, is central to many of these.

TABLE 3.1: SUMMARY OF KEY ACTION AREAS IN IRELAND'S SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT POLICY	
Actions to Encourage Smarter Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better alignment of spatial planning and transport in Ireland including enhanced legislation, better integration of land use and transport planning and wider roll-out of LUTS-type strategies ▪ Better alignment of employment policy with transport planning, including targets for e-working in public organisations and supports for e-working in the private sector ▪ Use of mobility management, including school travel plans in every school and college, workplace travel plans and personalised travel plans ▪ More efficient movement of goods, including a specific strategy for the freight sector in Ireland ▪ Fiscal measures to influence travel behaviour, including measures to reduce car use and achieve a shift to alternatives modes of transport
Actions to Deliver Alternative Ways of Travelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage greater use of public transport in Ireland through provision of safe, accessible, integrated and reliable services ▪ Encourage greater use of cycling and walking as sustainable transport modes so that 450,000 will walk or cycle to work by 2020 ▪ Support for public and private sector initiatives to establish car clubs in Ireland, including designated parking for car clubs ▪ Examine ways to give priority to other forms of motorised transport, e.g. mopeds and segways (two wheeled electrically powered vehicles) ▪ Promote greater integration of different transport modes through integrated ticket arrangements, park and ride facilities, improved road priority measures and establishment of a national travel information portal
Actions to Improve the Efficiency of Motorised Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Address road safety and emission reductions, through improving information for road users, prioritising road space for public transport, reducing fuel consumption and emissions and optimising capacity for goods transport and business travel ▪ Promote fuel economy and the use of renewable energy in transport, including biofuels targets, alternative technologies for motor vehicles, ongoing review of tax regimes for VRT and VAT, and research ▪ Promote more efficient driver behaviour through driving more moderately, using on-board fuel monitors and avoiding rapid acceleration and excessive braking
Actions to Ensure Integrated Delivery of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce overarching legislation to support the government's sustainable travel and transport vision ▪ Retain an interdepartmental working group to advise government on progress and propose any changes in strategy ▪ Establish a National Sustainable Travel Office to oversee delivery of many of the policy initiatives ▪ Provide better arrangements at a national level, including the establishment of the Dublin Transportation Authority ▪ Work closely with local authorities to ensure better integration between sustainable land use and transport planning ▪ Establish all island arrangements for transport planning, including alignment of local sustainable transport strategies on a cross-border basis in the border area ▪ Develop demonstration sustainable transport towns and areas to identify and implement examples of transport sustainability best practice
SOURCE: SMARTER TRAVEL – A SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUTURE	

3.2.2 Rural Transport Policy

Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Public Transport (2002): In 2001, an Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Public Transport (chaired by the Department of Transport), was established to progress the rural transport agenda by:

- a) compiling a National Rural Transport Survey, based on the results of rural transport audits and needs assessments conducted by City and County Development Boards (CDBs) across all rural counties, including County Louth;
- b) examining related policy developments in Ireland, and considering the experience of providing rural transport services in other countries;
- c) forwarding proposals for a possible new policy on rural transport.

The associated National Rural Transport Survey collated the findings of responses from 12,000 rural residents in Ireland, drawn from each of the individual surveys carried out in 29 local authority/CDB areas. Its key findings are outlined in Table 3.2 below.

TABLE 3.2: KEY FINDINGS OF THE NATIONAL RURAL TRANSPORT SURVEY 2002

- Lack of transport was not a problem for the majority of rural residents, but it was for a significant minority of people who had little access to a car. About 83% of rural residents were found to always/frequently have access to a car, while 17% of residents rarely/never had access to a car.
- Among those who rarely/never had access to a car, there were a number of particularly vulnerable key target groups. These included women, older people, people on low incomes, and people with mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments.
- Levels of unmet transport need, and the use of public transport, were (as would be expected) higher among those who rarely/never had a car. About 25% of rural residents had unmet transport needs, averaging 2-3 weekly round-trips, including trips for shopping, leisure, work, medical, education and other purposes.
- 60% of rural District Electoral Divisions (DEDs) had some level of scheduled public transport service, while 40% of rural DEDs did not. Frequency and timing of services varied widely, however, and some vulnerable groups found it difficult to access services, e.g. collection points were too far away.
- Taxi and hackney availability varied across areas, being generally concentrated in and around larger towns. While taxis and hackneys can in principle provide a rural public transport service anywhere, cost was a major factor in more remote areas.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RURAL TRANSPORT SURVEY 2002

These findings, and other research carried out by the Committee, helped it to develop a view on what the objectives of a rural transport policy should be. This view stated that rural transport policy should have two co-equal objectives:

- **sustainable transport:** to develop a more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable approach to transport and settlement patterns in rural areas through the increased use of public transport⁹;
- **social inclusion:** to ensure that most rural residents, regardless of access to cars, should be able to make regular independent trips to their nearest town.

With these two objectives in mind, the Committee proposed the 'collect and connect' model as the optimal solution for providing rural transport services in Ireland. This model is a two-tiered system that combines the benefits of both conventional and non-conventional public transport, using each in the circumstances in which it is most appropriate. It would involve:

- the use of mostly non-conventional, semi-scheduled or demand-responsive services to bring rural residents in key target groups to their local centre, e.g. small town;
- to dovetail with this, a basic network of scheduled services would be provided, connecting local centres to the county or other appropriate major market town in whose hinterlands the local centre is located.

The Committee also argued that the implementation of a rural transport policy would need the active involvement and co-operation of a variety of key players. Suggestions in this regard included the following:

- the Department of Transport, as the 'lead' organisation in terms of policy development and funding;
- other departments maintaining their specific responsibilities, e.g. the Department of Education and Science in relation to school transport and the Department of Social and Family Affairs in relation to the Free Travel Pass (FTP);
- local authorities, with a new role in route planning and overall regulation through county-level consultative structures;
- the community and voluntary sector, with a key role in local rural transport and continued responsibility for delivering non-conventional transport service within 'collect and connect', in tapping into unused potential to develop non-conventional transport services through models such as brokerage, and in articulating the needs of the marginalised.

Progressing Rural Public Transport in Ireland (2006): in early 2006, the Department of Transport commissioned Fitzpatrick Associates (assisted by Steer Davies Gleave) to provide consultancy

⁹ There are numerous definitions available for what constitutes sustainable transport. Most definitions display a high degree of commonality, however. They refer to sustainable transport systems providing a basic requirement to meet society's and the economy's mobility needs. They also refer to social equity elements of sustainability, i.e. that transport systems should be affordable, accessible and safe. In addition, they share references to environmental impacts, both in terms of operating within carrying capacities and avoiding pollution of natural resources.

support to the Department in relation to development of rural public transport services in Ireland. The report, 'Progressing Rural Transport in Ireland', was used as a basis for public consultation on the future roll-out of rural public transport services, and it has laid a basis for the roll-out of the subsequent Rural Transport Programme (RTP). Building on the work of the 2002 report, it stated that twin complementary objectives for developing rural transport in Ireland should be:

- ***social inclusion:*** *to ensure that, irrespective of their level of access to a car, rural residents should be able to make regular independent trips to their nearest large or medium-sized town;*
- ***sustainable transport:*** *to help develop a more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable approach to rural transport and settlement patterns in rural areas through increased use of public transport.*

The order of these objectives was reversed compared to the 2002 report, with the practical implication that, under any option for the future, the core social inclusion objective must be kept at the forefront. This was a recognition of the reality and logic of Government policy as already espoused, and means that broader roll-out of rural public transport must be capable of meeting the explicit needs of excluded rural groups rather than just the general rural transport user.

The social inclusion and sustainable transport objectives that were reaffirmed in the 2006 report also gave rise to two corresponding targets:

- rural residents in excluded groups without access to a car should have the option to make a minimum of one weekly trip to their nearest local town, county town or large market town;
- in all rural counties, there should be at least a weekly scheduled bus service connecting county towns (or similar market towns as appropriate) to all towns in the size category below this level.

These were set as minimum targets. Over time, the direction of policy would allow more ambitious areas to aspire to more ambitious targets. However, this could not be at the expense of the achievement of the minimum social inclusion objective. It also means that further expansion of services in areas already covered under the pilot Rural Transport Initiative (RTI) cannot take precedence over putting a minimum level of service in areas where there is no service.

Lastly, the 2006 report put forward a number of options for progressing rural public transport in Ireland. These options were:

- ***Option 1: Existing Target Groups***, which involved a continuation of the status quo in terms of focus and activity, but rolling this out nationally. In effect, therefore, this involved services that provided for the RTI's target group coverage;

- **Option 2: Wider Target Groups**, which involved broader coverage of socially excluded groups. This option would target services that specifically meet a more broad range of the needs of socially excluded groups, including older people, people on low incomes, people with mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments, or young people;
- **Option 3: Wider Rural Public Transport**, which extended target group coverage to include all potential users of rural transport. Services would therefore not be targeted solely at the socially excluded, however defined, but could also provide services for work purposes, for example.

Each option was defined by the target group(s) being served, with the target group coverage gradually broadening under each option. The services, vehicles and operators needed are thereafter heavily determined by the needs of the target group(s). The recommended option was for Option 2 in the short-term, retaining the aim of gradually moving to an Option 3 situation in the longer-term.

Rural Transport Programme: The RTP was officially launched in 2006 following the completion of the RTI and the Department of Transport's consultation process on the national rural public transport policy. The RTP was initiated as a response to the growing acknowledgement of the economic and social impacts of inadequate transport in rural areas and the increasing level of interest amongst community and local development groups in developing and implementing locally based solutions. The programme has been shaped by the consultation process on national rural public transport, it is funded by the Department of Transport and is managed on their behalf by Pobal. It has expanded the reach of the RTI to provide national coverage and is delivered locally through 37 community-based groups, all of whom provide rural transport services to their local area and operate on a not-for-profit basis.

The aim of the programme is '*to provide a quality nationwide community-based public transport system in rural Ireland which responds to local needs*'. Its key objectives are to:

- provide, enhance and sustain a nationwide community-based public transport system in rural areas;
- maximise existing transport assets and utilise new technology where necessary in the co-ordination and development of transport;
- act as a catalyst in providing models of partnership at all levels where key sectors actively engage in transport provision;
- ensure equality of access for all, including older people as well as people with mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments;
- maintain, promote and develop models of good practice;
- continue to influence rural public transport policy.

3.2.3 Policy at Regional Level

Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the Border Region have been developed to implement the Government's National Spatial Strategy (NSS) in Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo. They provide a spatial framework at regional level, which is intended to embrace the uniqueness of the Region and facilitate its development. They will inform future National Development Plans (NDPs) and will influence future funding for the Region.

The RPGs have established a vision for the Border Region in 2020. By this time, the Guidelines envisage that the Region will be 'a competitive area recognised as, and prospering from, its unique interface between two economies (the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland), where economic success will benefit all, through the building of distinct sub-regional identities, in an outstanding natural environment, with innovative people, which in themselves will be our most valuable asset'. It is anticipated that this vision will be achieved through:

- concentration of critical mass and the promotion and development of the three new Regional Gateways of Dundalk, Sligo and Letterkenny, as a priority for investment, and as key employment locations, with appropriate first-class infrastructure and with an indigenous, educated and skilled labour force;
- further enhancing the urban structure in the Region by building on the strengths of the Hubs of Cavan and Monaghan, the Primary Development Centre of Drogheda, the Regionally Strategic Town of Carrick-on-Shannon and other key towns and villages;
- building on distinct sub-regional identities and promoting strategic links with Northern Ireland;
- sustaining rural areas and rural communities;
- sustaining the uniqueness of the Gaeltacht;
- supporting the international marketing of the Region through distinct images of particular locations, with an emphasis on the quality of the natural environment and its benefits;
- targeting and co-ordinating key transport and communication links;
- provision of a high quality built and physical environment, with essential infrastructure including housing, transport, water services, schools, healthcare, retail, community and recreational facilities.

In a transport context, effective infrastructure is required as a pre-condition for achieving the vision for the Region. A key issue for the RPGs, therefore, is the lack of connectivity within the Region, notwithstanding the significant infrastructure provision in recent years (particularly in the Louth area). Key transport objectives outlined in the RPGs include:

- ensuring that all strategic radial road and rail routes serving the Region achieve the level of service comparable to other strategic radial routes throughout the rest of the country;

- promoting the phased development of an East West link from Sligo to Dundalk, as a medium-term priority, with short-term priority for the preparation of an overall design;
- promoting a greater cultural acceptance of use of public transport throughout the Region;
- exploring, with other relevant public, private and community organisations, a range of innovative rural transport proposals including rural park-and-ride schemes, rural car pooling and car sharing schemes, and rural bus schemes;
- supporting the preparation of a Regional Cross-Border Connectivity Programme to upgrade important cross-border roads and to support cross-border rail links as part of a balanced transport strategy.

In a community development context, the significant contribution of community services is explicitly recognised in the RPGs, including their role in serving socially excluded groups. Key community development objectives outlined in the RPGs therefore include:

- promoting social inclusion and addressing the issue of poverty;
- prioritising the maintenance of existing community infrastructural services in urban, rural peripheral and socially disadvantaged communities;
- continuing close co-operation with local community groups and identifying and building on indigenous strengths of local areas;
- ensuring that the integration into the development of settlements receives a proactive approach in development plans and continued attention from CDBs and the range of appropriate agencies;
- promoting inter-agency liaison and co-operation with statutory and other organisations to support community infrastructural development within the Region;
- promoting inter-regional and cross-border community-based initiatives;
- seeking to provide connectivity in rural areas to enable communities to access social, cultural and economic opportunities.

3.2.4 Policy at Local Level

Draft Louth County Development Plan 2009-15

As noted in Chapter 1, Louth County Council has already identified improved local public transport services as a key objective, in the context of its wider physical and economic planning.

The Draft Louth County Development Plan 2009-15 outlines an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Louth over the timescale of the plan. According to the plan, the challenge facing County Louth in this period is to promote and regulate the future development of the county in a manner that will improve living standards and enable the social and cultural development of its inhabitants without jeopardising the ability of future generations of Louth

people to do likewise. This in essence is the fundamental principle of sustainable development, which is a recurring theme throughout the plan.

The Draft Plan also sets out a vision for County Louth into the future as a place: where people want to live, work, visit and invest now and in the future; which is well planned, well managed, safe and inclusive; and where there exists equality of opportunity for all. The realisation of this vision will be sought by seeking to secure a suite of key overall strategic objectives, which are to:

- direct new development in accordance with the settlement strategy that will provide for the sustainable development of the county for the period 2009-15 and beyond. This will require development to be accessible and energy efficient and to include high quality infrastructure and services;
- facilitate the implementation of a countywide economic renaissance through implementation of the Economic Development Strategy for County Louth 2009-15. This will, insofar as is possible, seek to provide employment opportunities at locations that are near to the majority of the county's inhabitants;
- facilitate and promote the economic development of the county, based on the exploitation of its favourable location on the mid-point of Dublin-Belfast corridor and the connectivity that this provides to external markets and services;
- provide a framework for the management and regulation of development and use of land that will guide day-to-day planning decisions;
- protect and nurture the county's rich natural and man-made resources, heritage and other amenities in accordance with plans and policies developed to specifically address these areas in order that the full potential of the county can be realised, particularly in terms of attracting tourists and visitors to the county;
- plan for greater social inclusion and improvements to the quality of life of all the inhabitants of the county;
- protect rural communities in a sustainable manner by encouraging compact development in the county's smaller towns and villages and by protecting the open countryside from urban generated and unsustainable one-off housing;
- provide a framework for sustainable development through efficient energy use and facilitate an increase in the use of renewable energy;
- secure the provision of high quality physical infrastructure to trigger and support appropriate development within the county;
- recognise the value of people as a human resource to be cherished within families, communities and the economy. This will be achieved in the plan through optimising opportunities for health, education and welfare.

In a transport context, the plan sets out a number of objectives that are intended to support the achievement of the overall strategic objectives outlined above. These are to:

- carry out a transport audit and mapping study of County Louth to examine the way in which local transport passenger services can be improved and the potential of public service vehicles can be used to provide a wider public service when not needed for their primary function¹⁰;
- co-operate with relevant transport authorities and operators, both public and private, to secure improvements in and expansions of the public transport in the county;
- encourage a modal shift from use of the private car towards more sustainable modes such as public transport, cycling and walking;
- secure, in co-operation with Iarnród Éireann, improved rail services in County Louth, particularly for the mid- and south-Louth areas;
- support the opening of the Drogheda-Navan railway line for passenger services;
- support the improvement of rail-based park-and-ride facilities in Dundalk and Drogheda, and in conjunction with any new railway station located in the county;
- work in co-operation with other public bodies, agencies and community groups, to secure improvements in public transportation within the county and greater integration of existing and any new services;
- encourage the provision of enhanced public transport services and infrastructure both within and between the main towns of the county;
- ensure that bus routes and adequate services are provided within all new proposals for substantial residential developments;
- investigate the feasibility of providing bus-based park-and-ride facilities at urban-based motorway interchanges and other strategic locations elsewhere in County Louth;
- support Louth LEADER Partnership in the provision of improved public transport in the rural areas of the county.

Economic Development Strategy for County Louth

The Economic Development Strategy for County Louth for the period between 2009 and 2015 coincides with the timeframe adopted in the new County Development Plan for Louth. This strategy outlines a series of priorities for development of the county, based on a detailed analysis of the socio-economic position of County Louth and the development opportunities that emerge from the detailed assessment. The development priorities that underpin the strategy are outlined in Table 3.3 below.

¹⁰ This objective is one of the drivers behind the current study.

In a transport context, the strategy makes a number of recommendations that address specific infrastructure and services requirements to facilitate economic and population growth. These include:

- selected road investments, designed to ensure continued high levels of connectivity within the county;
- local authorities and Iarnród Éireann to investigate the feasibility and sustainability of developing one or more new rail stations north of Drogheda;
- Iarnród Éireann to ensure that investment in existing rail stations in Drogheda and Dundalk meets the requirements of rail passengers;
- improvements in inter-urban bus linkages/capacity between major centres, including Dundalk-Ardee and Ardee-Drogheda;
- improvements in capacity of urban bus services in Drogheda and Dundalk;
- installation of Quality Bus Corridors, where feasible and sustainable, in Drogheda and Dundalk;
- investigation of potential sites for park-and-ride facilities in Drogheda and Dundalk;
- consideration of the merits of bringing Louth within the remit of the new Dublin Transportation Authority so as to ensure a co-ordinated approach to transport planning in the North-East.

TABLE 3.3: KEY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES FOR COUNTY LOUTH

- The new County Development Plan for Louth should target an increase in the population of the county and its main towns to approach 150,000 persons in the administrative county and around 190,000 persons in the wider economic area surrounding the county by 2015-20.¹
- The County Development Plan for Louth should facilitate commercial and other development to provide additional employment of between 17,000 and 22,000 jobs in the administrative and economic areas respectively to support the targeted expansion in population.
- The Economic Development Strategy should develop a diversified economic base that reduces Louth's vulnerability to any one sector or a limited number of potentially vulnerable sectors.
- A labour and skills strategy should be implemented that supports the required growth in the workforce while addressing the specific skills required to support the sectoral economic strategy.
- The strategy must ensure continued and intensified efforts are directed as a priority at addressing specific challenges faced by the county in the areas of unemployment and social exclusion.
- A number of specific infrastructure requirements must be addressed in the county to facilitate economic and population growth.
- Town centre development should continue to focus on ensuring the development of attractive centres for the county's main towns.
- A marketing and branding strategy should be implemented, which capitalises on the strengths of Louth and its constituent main towns as locations for investment and tourism.
- A co-ordinated and consistent approach to the implementation and delivery of the Economic Development Strategy is required, supported by appropriate structures at local authority and agency level.
- A range of public, private and public-private partnership (PPP) funding options should be explored to support the delivery of infrastructure and other priorities within the Economic Development Strategy.

¹ The County Development Plan for Louth has subsequently projected a population for the administrative county of 130,900 by 2016 and 137,088 by 2021.

SOURCE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR COUNTY LOUTH 2009-15

County Louth Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2002-12

Louth County Development Board (CDB) launched its 10-year integrated strategy in April 2002. The strategy covers ten areas of strategic significance, which are: culture; social inclusion; quality of life; childcare; lifelong learning; community and voluntary sector development; enterprise and investment; tourism; agriculture and rural development; and infrastructure and planning.

Under infrastructure and planning, the CDB strategy for County Louth has outlined key strategic transport objectives in the areas of rail networks and local transport. These objectives are to:

- ensure that rail services in County Louth meet the needs of a growing population;
- ensure that each individual in Louth has an equal opportunity to access public transport services to meet their individual needs.

Louth Rural Transport Needs and Aims

Louth Community Linx is one of the 37 community-based groups that are funded to provide rural transport services under the RTP. It currently provides semi-flexible public transport services on 14 existing routes in the county, with the intention of expanding its range of services across rural parts of County Louth in due course, see Figure 3.1.

The services currently provided by Louth Community Linx are underpinned by the group's business plan for the 2008-10 period. This plan sets out the aims and ethos of the group as being to design and implement an innovative, community-led service that provides affordable, accessible services designed to integrate with existing public transport provision, and thereby to improve the quality of life for those in danger of isolation.

These aims have in turn been informed by an assessment of needs carried out by the group, which incorporated a review of services currently available as well as user perceptions on transport needs. The information obtained from this assessment has suggested that there is a need to provide more appropriate public transport services for the benefit of Free Travel Pass (FTP) holders, given a relative under-utilisation of this facility. The population profile that might therefore benefit most from improved provision would be groups such as older people, people on low incomes and people with disabilities.

In addition, it was concluded that there is an unfulfilled need for public transport for young people, particularly those who do not have access to the family car or other forms of transport. Also, the more structured provision of services to allow ready access to healthcare facilities may be merited, while supporting public transport services for adult education programmes might be considered in the context of encouraging broader community access.

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Louth Disability Implementation Plan

Louth County Council has also adopted a Disability Implementation Plan 2008-2015. This plan covers a wide range of issues including human resources, access to and design of the built environment, access and facilities for people with disabilities at Council properties, procurement, access auditing, disability proofing/accessibility proofing, interagency co-ordination. The focus of the detailed actions outlined in the plan are very much on access and facilities within buildings, parks, beaches and even a landfill site.

There is very little direct attention in the plan to how people with disabilities can travel to these properties. There are however references to:

- improving access around the county by upgrading footpaths, streets, carparking and roads;
- carrying out access audits on streets and roads in County Louth;
- developing use of the CDB mechanisms to ensure that disability remains a key focus of service providers in the county.

3.3 Perceptions of Louth Residents

3.3.1 Survey Description

One of the three core components of this study as set out in the Terms of Reference was 'Identifying needs of key target groups in the county (met demand and latent demand) and compare to existing supply'. To assess these needs a survey of Transport Access Needs and Opportunities of County Louth residents was carried out in November 2009. The survey was designed to obtain the views of residents on their access to services, on existing use of transport types and journeys made.

Questionnaires were posted to 2,000 adults selected at random from each electoral division in the County Louth Electoral Register and 221 responses were received, a response rate of 11%. Of these responses, 55% were from females and 45% were from males. Some 19% of respondents stated that they have a long term illness or disability. This figure is high relative to the Census figure for persons with disability of 9.4%. A copy of the survey questionnaire is included in Annex 1.

The survey yielded a very large volume of information. A summary of what are deemed to be the more significant findings in relation to the requirements of the Terms of Reference are presented here. More detailed information and tables are included in the Annex. Results are taken into account in the analysis in Section 3.4 below.

The Terms of Reference specified that 'The key target groups are older people especially those living in more isolated rural areas, young people, people on low incomes and people with mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments'. The Electoral Register is broken down by Electoral Division and

this enabled the responses from rural addresses to be identified. Questions were included in the questionnaire relating to age, income and disability which enabled responses from other key target groups to be identified and analysed.

For the purposes of this study, working definitions of the key target groups were adopted. These definitions and the number of responses received were:

- Rural – residents in Electoral Divisions that are classified by CSO as rural – 68 responses;
- Older People – 65 years or older – 65 responses;
- Young People – 18-24 – 10 responses – Note low number of responses for this age group means results need to be interpreted with caution;
- People on Low Incomes – personal gross annual income of €0 - €9,999 – 42 responses;
- People with mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments – responses declaring a long-lasting illness, health problem or disability that limits daily activity or work – 44 responses.

3.3.2 Overview of Results of Survey

The private car is the predominant form of transport in County Louth. The great majority (84%) of respondents have access to cars, 73% consider that they have no practical alternative to car travel and use cars without considering alternative forms of transport. These results apply to varying degrees to the majority in all target groups.

The majority (82%) indicate that they are satisfied with transport in the County, as they consider that they can access the shops and services that they need and are happy with the amount of travel that they undertake (72%). Older people and people with disabilities and low incomes record highest satisfaction with the amount of travel that they take. This may reflect lower expectations.

The cost of travel and travel times are not seen as barriers by the majority. For the majority, walking and bus are the next most used forms of transport after private cars but at a much lower rate of use. Usage of taxi, train and cycle are very low.

There is however a sizable minority of 23% for whom lack of transport means that they travel less often than they want. This is reflected in the responses of target groups regarding their access to services: rural dwellers (23%), people with low incomes (17%) and young people (25%) disagree or strongly disagree that they can access services. Rural dwellers also express lower satisfaction with access to shops and services by bus and are least happy with the amount of travel that they undertake.

Rural dwellers (64%) also have more households with two or more cars and have the highest rates of car availability, usage, preference and 87% consider that there are no practical alternatives to

most of their car trips. Rural dwellers have the lowest satisfaction ratings for all aspects of bus services while older people and people with disabilities have the highest.

Thus while car transport and to a much lesser extent walking and bus transport meet the needs of the majority, rural dwellers, people with low incomes and young people are less satisfied with these transport options. The needs of older people and people with disabilities appear to be better served by the existing range of transport options.

Figure 3.2 summarise key survey results, overall and by respondent categories, and more detailed survey results are available in Annex 1.

3.3.3 Transport Access to Key Services

Over 80% of all respondents report that they can access the shops and services that they need. There is also a broad equality in the responses across the key target groups, with the exception of rural dwellers where reported access falls below 70%. Older people and people with disabilities show high rates of access to shops and services.

A significant minority (11% of total responses, 23% of rural responses) disagree or strongly disagree that they can access services.

The reported rate of ability to access services specifically by bus is somewhat lower at 55% for total respondents, with older people, young people and people with disabilities reporting higher rates. Rural dwellers report that only 33% have bus access.

Older people and people with disabilities report the highest rates of satisfaction with their amount of travel at 85% and 77%. Rural dwellers at 47% again are least happy with their amount of travel. Reliance on lifts from family and friends is low and broadly equal across all groups ranging from 22% for total respondents and older people to 27% for people with disabilities.

3.3.4 Car Availability, Type of Transport Used and Preferences

The rate of car availability is highest for rural dwellers and older people at over 80% and lowest for people with disabilities and young people at 62% and 57% respectively. Approximately 10% of households do not have a passenger vehicle (car or van) and 90% have at least one. Non car-ownership is highest in households of people with disabilities (27%) and Older People (19%).

Car driving at 73% is the dominant form of transport, with rural dwellers (73%) driving most and people on low incomes (48%) driving least. Bus usage is zero for rural dwellers and in low single figures for all other target groups except young people where it is 23%. It should be remembered that the sample size for young people is small.

Car travel is the preferred form of travel for total respondents at 88% and all target groups ranging from 100% for young people to 79% for people with disabilities.

While 77% of total respondents hold a full driving licence there is a clear differential between rural dwellers and older people of whom over 75% have licences and the other target groups where between only 48% and 60% hold full licences.

3.3.5 Views on Bus Services

Only 34% of total respondents consider that bus services allow them to reach important facilities/services. Among target groups this rating drops to 28% for rural dwellers and rises to 56% for older people. Views on the frequency of bus services mirror the views on access to important services with rural dwellers giving the lowest rating of 23%. As would be expected, the great majority (89%) of older people and 80% of people with disabilities have free/concessionary travel passes.

3.3.6 Willingness to Change Car Usage

Approximately half of respondents are unwilling to change their car usage and this view is fairly consistent across all target groups – except rural dwellers who are more willing to change at 43%. The majority (73%) of total respondents consider there is no practical alternative to car usage. This percentage rises to 87% for rural dwellers and drops to 48% for young people. With the exception of young people, over 60% do not consider other options to car travel.

However, contradicting the views above that they do not consider other options, over 50% state that they are quite flexible about types of transport, this rises to 77% for young people. In a further contradiction of their commitment to car travel, 79% of total respondents state that being environmentally responsible is important to them as a person.

3.3.7 Existing Travel Patterns

Travel to work is the greatest trip generator at 4.5 return trips per week for total respondents. This rises to over 5 for young people and rural dwellers and is less than 2 for other target groups. Education, food shopping and social/recreation are important trip generators for varying groups. Young people and rural dwellers appear to travel most.

Car/van travel is the dominant form of transport for all trips at over 80%. Walking and bus travel come next and taxi, train and cycle travel are reported as minimal. One exception to this is taxi usage for social/recreational use. As would be expected the great majority of all trips are taken on weekdays, this especially applies to work/business and education related trips. Shopping and social/recreation are the principal trip generators at weekends.

The employment status of respondents can be expected to impact on their travel patterns. For total respondents 32% are in full time employment, 29% are retired and the balance is spread across other categories. Employment status varies greatly across the target groups e.g. 41% rural dwellers are in full time employment, 89% of older people are retired, 36% of young people are unemployed, low incomes are widely distributed and 61% of people with disabilities are retired.

3.3.8 Analysis of Barriers

Of all respondents, 23% state that they travel less often than they wish. This is broadly similar for all target groups – with the exception of people with disabilities and low incomes where it is higher at 32% and 31% respectively.

Cost of travel is not reported to be the main barrier to travel for the majority of respondents in any of the key target groups. Only 18% of total respondents report it as a barrier and only 9% of people with low incomes report it as a barrier. More rural dwellers see cost as the main barrier than other key target groups. Travel time appears to be even less of a barrier than cost with 15% identifying time as a barrier. More rural dwellers (20%) see time as the main barrier than other target groups.

Just under 50% total respondents regard bus services in their area as generally reliable. This rises to 68% for older people and fall to 35% for young people. Views on ease of access to good information about bus services are similar to views on reliability, with just over 50% stating they can easily get information. About 70% of older people and 68% of people with disabilities say they can easily get good information but this falls to 23% for young people. Views on feeling safe and secure when using a bus are more positive with 66.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Views on feeling safe are similar across all target groups.

3.3.9 Needs Identified in 2001 Survey

In October 2001 a postal survey of County Louth rural residents was carried out by Mentor Economic Developments Limited. It was part of a wider study carried out for Border County Development Boards of which Louth is one. The objective of the study was to discover the travel patterns and needs of rural residents in the county. The 2001 survey covered rural areas only while the 2009 survey covered all areas of the county but identified rural dwellers. The questionnaires for the two surveys were not identical but some questions were common to both.

The principal findings of the 2001 survey are shown in Annex 2 and, where available, corresponding results for 2009 are shown for comparative purposes. While there are some differences between the results of the two surveys, there are more similarities than differences and the results are broadly similar.

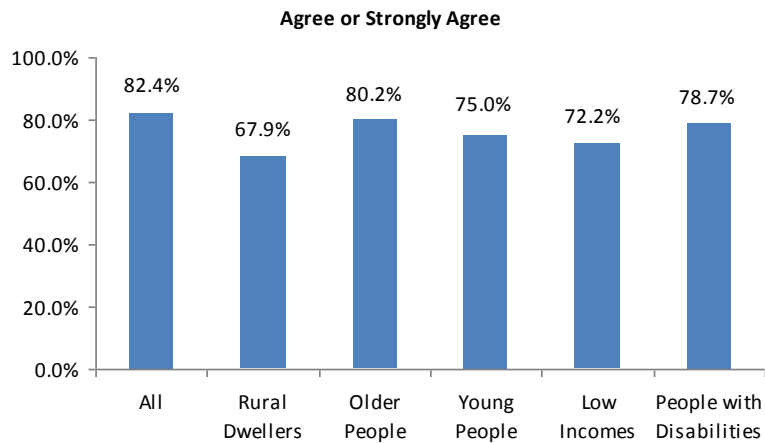
3.4 Key Findings

Key findings from the chapter are:

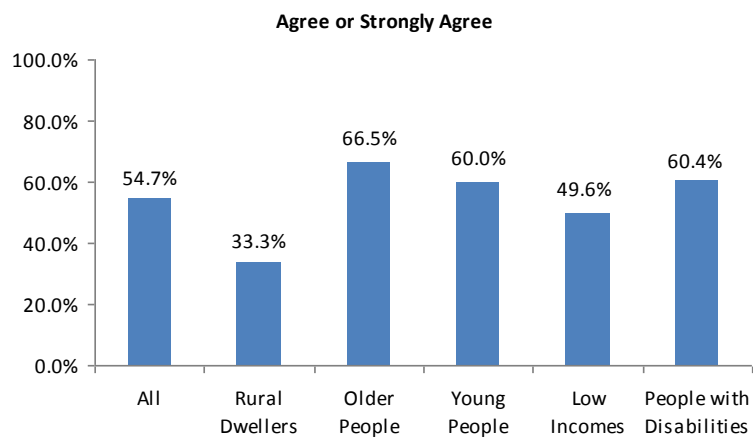
- the prevalence of a relatively benign policy towards local passenger transport planning and services, with this receiving a renewed impetus from the focus on sustainable transport, alongside previous preoccupation with primarily social service dimensions;
- a continued emphasis however in policy on broad objectives and aspirations, and continued absence of clear national service standards against which an individual county such as Louth might either plan or benchmark itself;
- the fact that most residents of Louth are reasonably satisfied with their transport access, albeit that this is heavily reliant on the use of private cars;
- the existence of a significant minority of people, roughly 20%, who are less satisfied with their transport access and the fact that this tends to be higher among some specific target groups. The survey in particular identifies the rural residents and younger people as less satisfied with transport generally, including public transport, than the rest of the population.

FIGURE 3.2: SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS

I can access the shops and services that I need



I can access shops and services by bus if I want to



I am happy with the amount of travel that I undertake

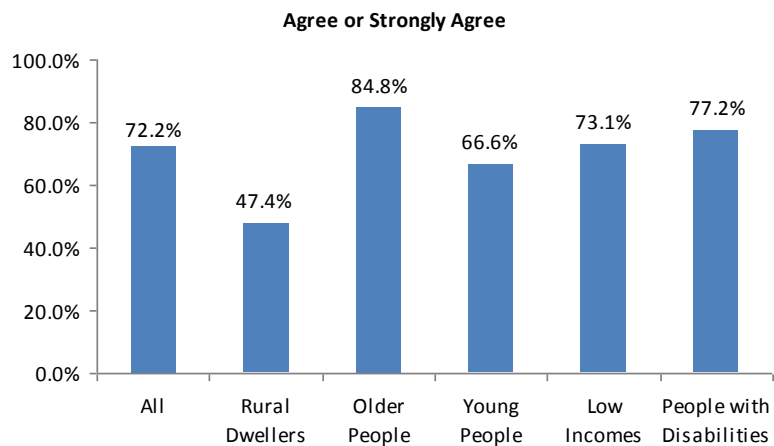
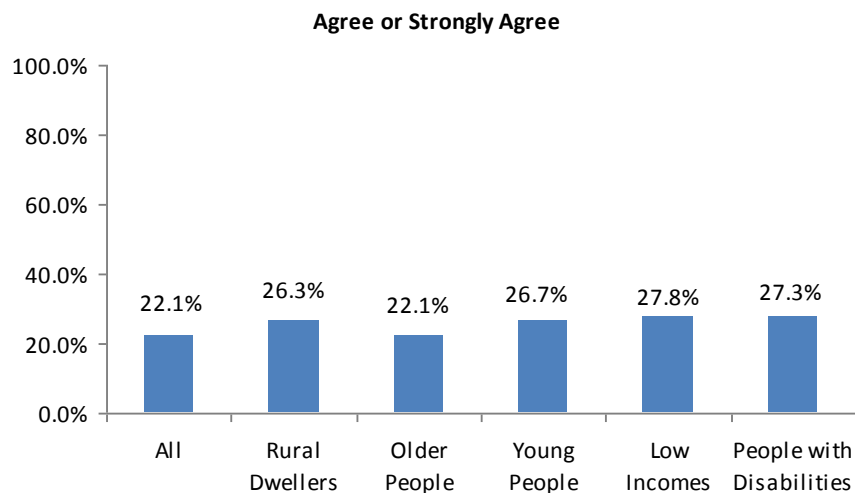
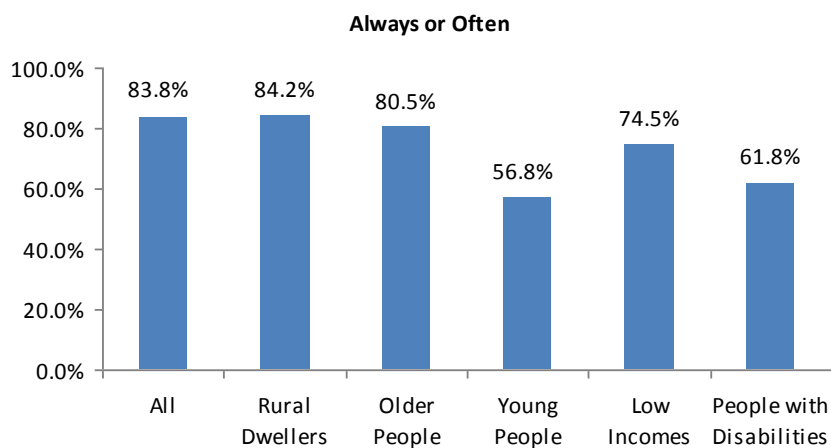


FIGURE 3.2: SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS (CONT'D)

I rely on lifts from family and friends to access the places that I want to go to



How often is a car/van available to you personally for use weekday daytime as a driver or passenger?



I travel by car where possible either as a driver or passenger

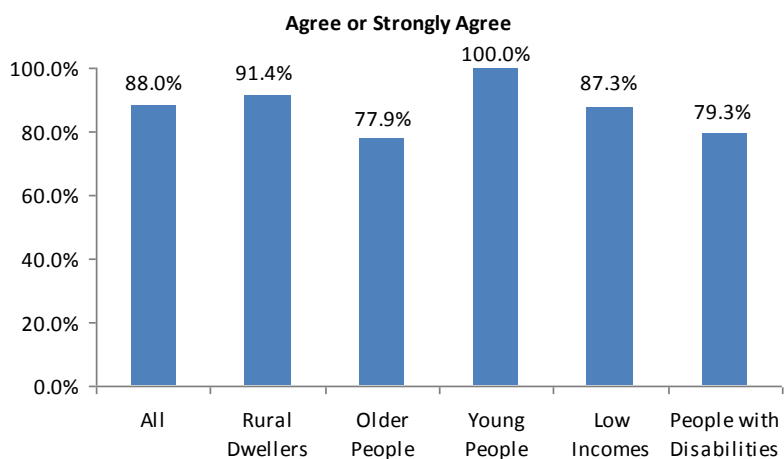
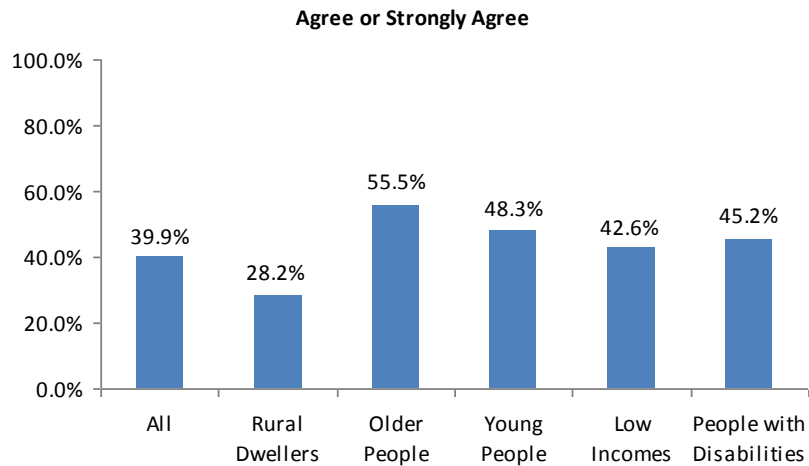
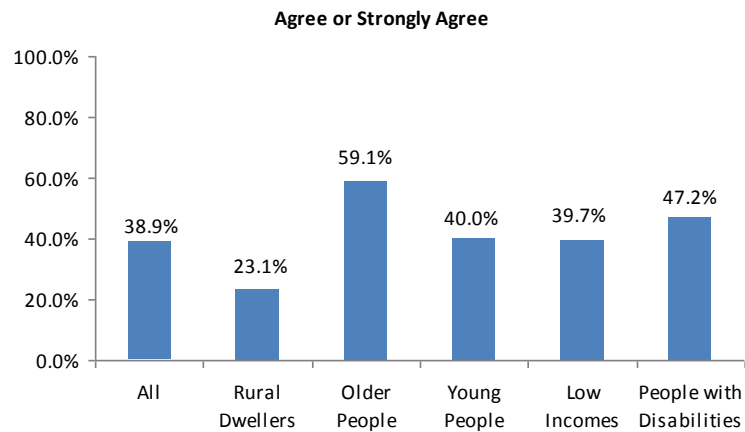


FIGURE 3.2: SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS (CONT'D)

Bus services in my area allow me to reach the most important facilities/services



Bus services in my area operate frequently enough to meet my needs



Do you hold a free/concessionary travel pass?

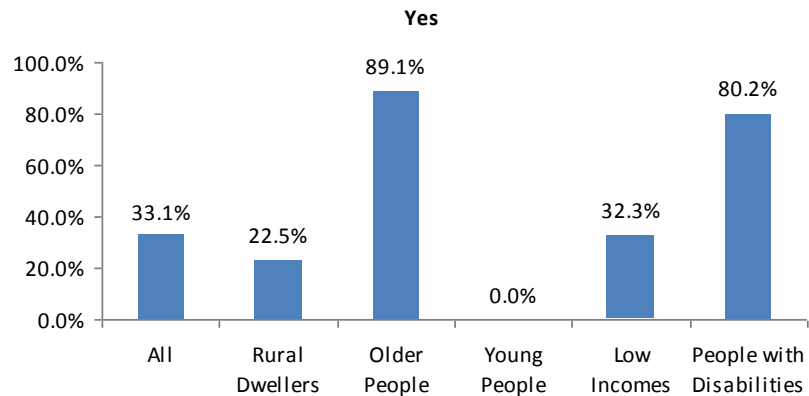
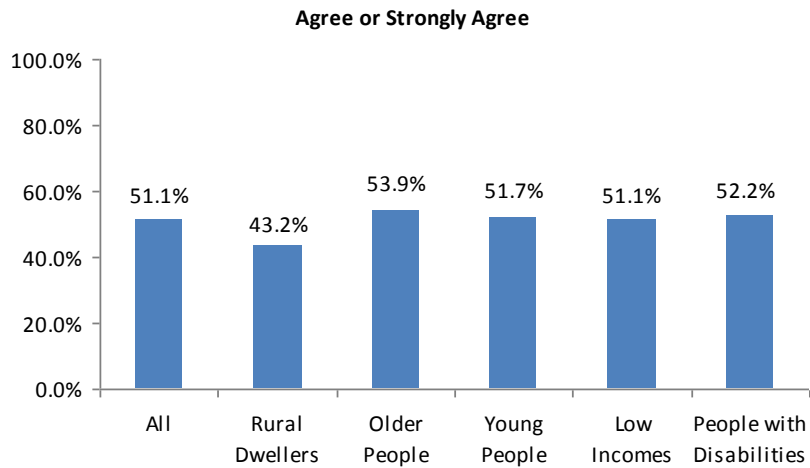
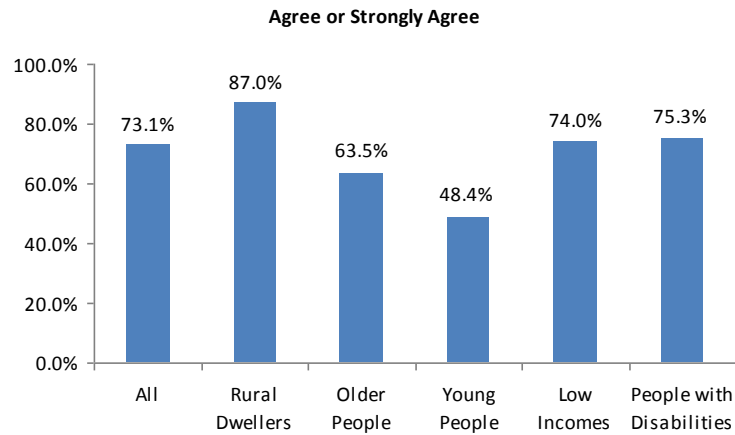


FIGURE 3.2: SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS (CONT'D)

I am not interested in reducing my car use



There are no practical alternatives to most of the car trips I make



When I am getting ready to go out, I usually don't think about how I'm going to travel, I just get in my car

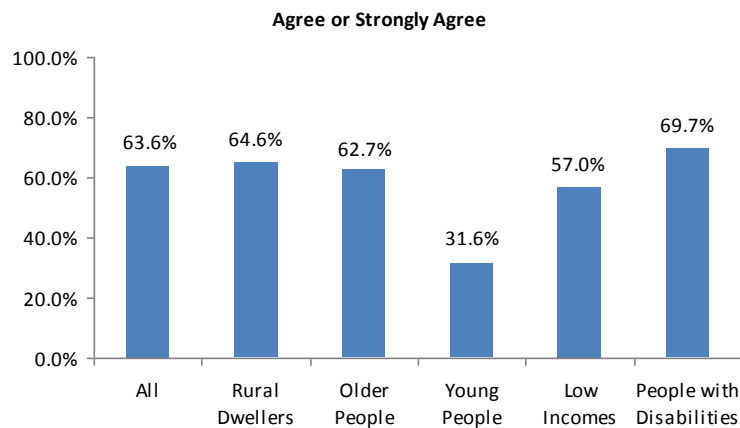
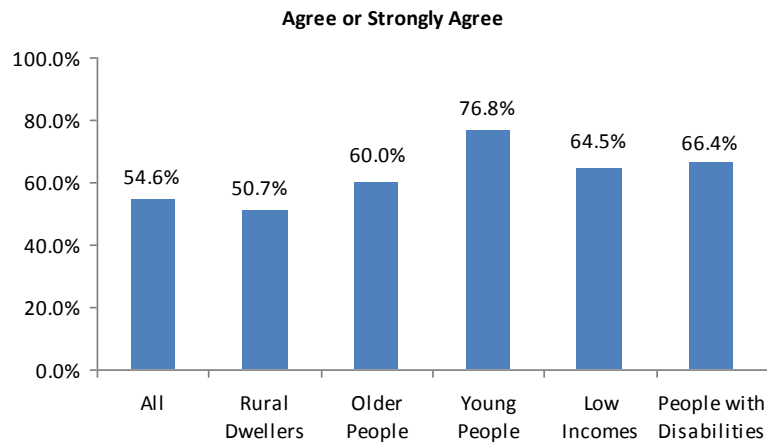
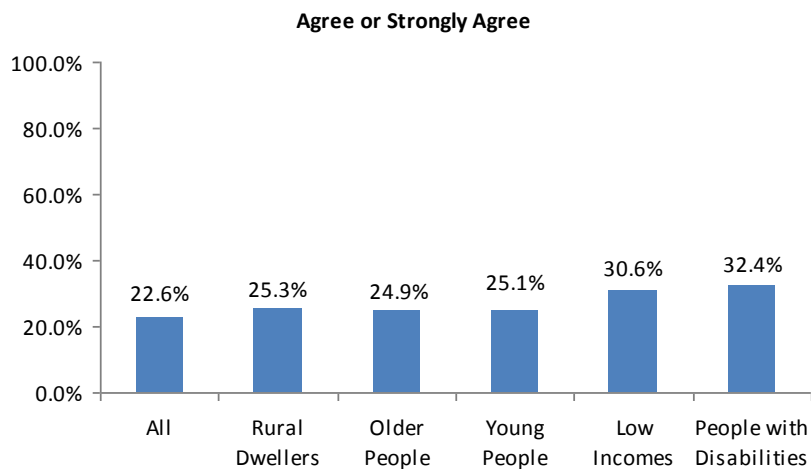


FIGURE 3.2: SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS (CONT'D)

I am quite flexible about what types of transport I use



Lack of transport services means that I travel less often than I want



The cost of travel is the main reason I do not travel more

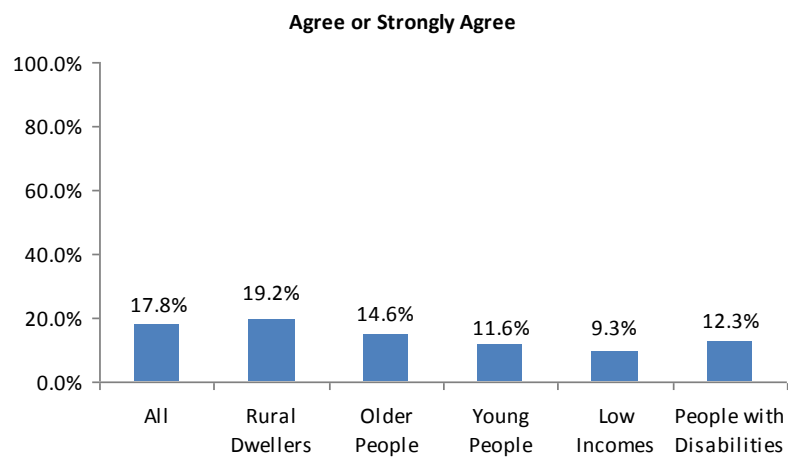
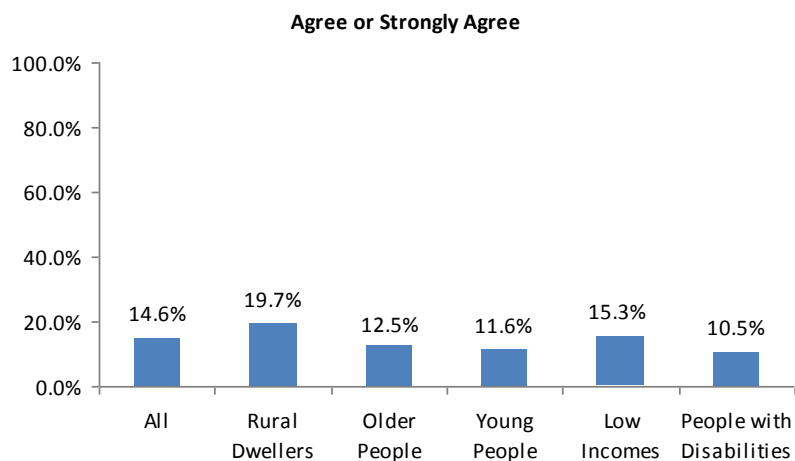
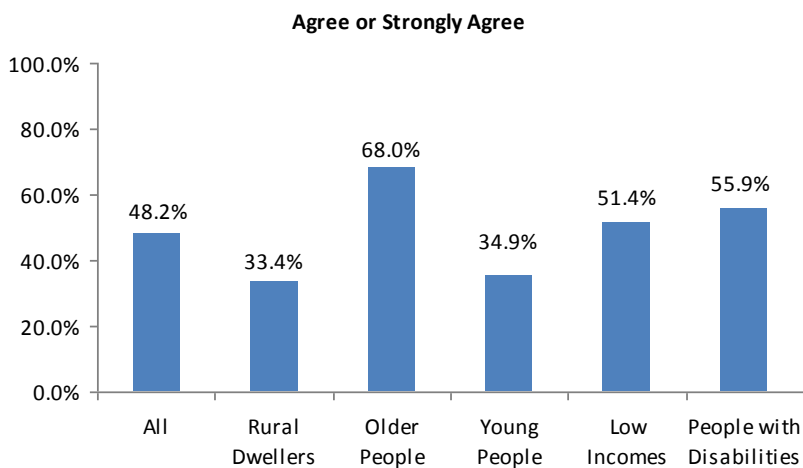


FIGURE 3.2: SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS (CONT'D)

The time it takes to travel is the main reason I do not travel more



Bus services in my area are generally reliable



I can easily get good information about bus services

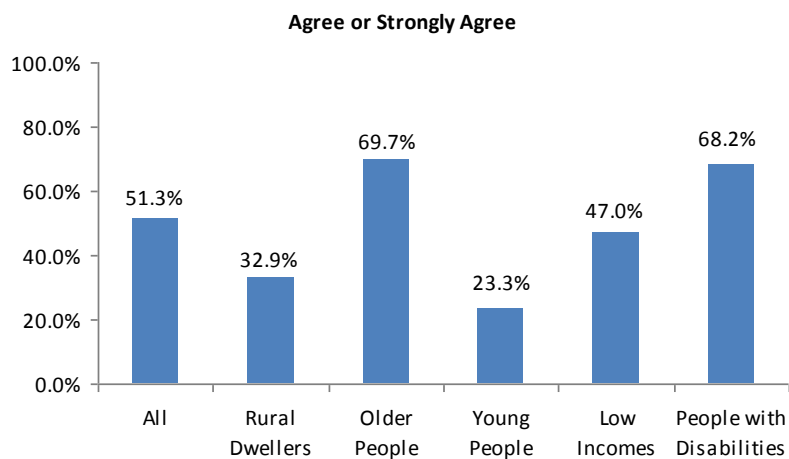
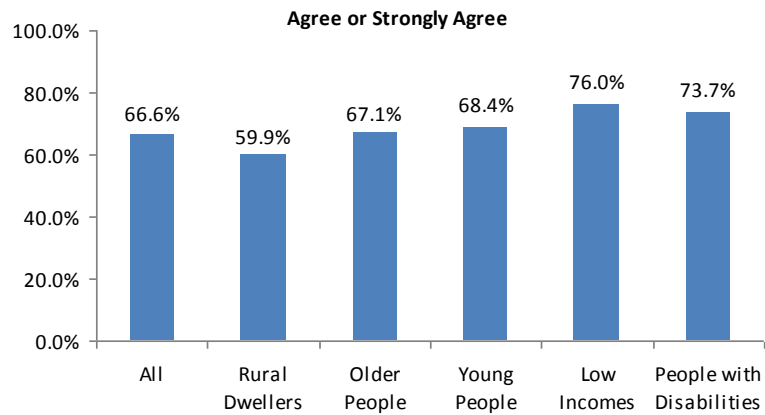


FIGURE 3.2: SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS (CONT'D)

I feel safe and secure using a bus



4. Passenger Transport Services in Louth

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines existing public transport provision in County Louth, including conventional public transport as well as dedicated school and educational transport. Section 4.2 examines the main providers, Section 4.3 examines the funding of transport services in the county, Section 4.4 considers current transport planning, management and delivery in Louth, and Section 4.5 summarises the relevant national transport regulatory framework.

4.2 Transport Services Supply

4.2.1 Introduction

The bulk of passenger scheduled public transport service provided in County Louth is made up of scheduled bus services. These are mostly provided by Bus Éireann, but also include a number of private operator services and other services.

4.2.2 Bus Éireann

Services operated by Bus Éireann in County Louth incorporate about 20 routes/services, comprising a mix of commercially run Expressway services, publicly funded commuter and stage carriage services and publicly funded town services in Drogheda and Dundalk. The range and frequency of these services has also increased significantly in the last decade. About nine of these services offer more than 10 trips daily in both directions (including intra-urban town routes), with five offering more than 20 trips daily. Routes with the highest frequencies also tend to be routes that provide connection to/from Dublin. Most other Bus Éireann routes provide between 5-10 trips daily, though many of these offer service on a Monday-Saturday basis only.¹¹

It should also be noted that most of these services would have several intermediate stops at many other locations within County Louth. Further details are available on individual route timetables.

All but three of Bus Éireann's services in County Louth (the 001, 070 and 100X routes) receive subsidy as Public Service Obligations (PSOs). In total, over 2,300 trips per week are provided in Louth on PSO services, including about 1,550 commuter and stage carriage trips and 750 town trips. The level and range of service that Bus Éireann provides on these services, however, is very much dependent on the level of subsidy provided.

¹¹ Services operated jointly with Ulsterbus are included in Bus Éireann schedules.

TABLE 4.1: BUS ÉIREANN SCHEDULED SERVICES IN COUNTY LOUTH

Route No.	Service	Daily Frequency	Comment
001	Dublin-Belfast	24-26	Most serve Drogheda and Dundalk
032	Dublin-Monaghan	9-10	Serves Ardee By-pass
033	Dublin-Derry	11	Serves Ardee By-pass
070	Dundalk-Drogheda-Athlone	1	Onward connection to Galway
100	Drogheda-Dundalk	11-14	-
100X	Dublin-Newry	15	-
101	Dublin-Drogheda	24-42	Reduced service on Sunday
160	Dundalk-Newry	13	Monday to Saturday only
161	Dundalk-Newry	9	Monday to Saturday only
162	Cavan-Monaghan-Dundalk	1	During school/college term only
163	Drogheda-Donore	5-6	-
166	Dundalk-Carrickmacross	5-6	-
167	Dundalk-Ardee	5	Monday to Saturday only
168	Dundalk-Annagassan	2	Monday to Saturday only
177	Dublin-Ardee-Clones	26-27	-
182	Drogheda-Ardee	5	Monday to Saturday only
186	Drogheda-Grangebellew	2-3	Monday to Saturday only
188	Drogheda-Trim	4-8	-
189	Drogheda-Clogher	5	Monday to Saturday only
190	Drogheda-Laytown	4-9	Monday to Saturday only
-	Drogheda Town Services	19-21	Monday to Saturday only
-	Dundalk Town Services	6-21	Reduced service on Sunday

Note: Most of these routes would provide intermediate stops at different locations in Louth along each route. Route 162 also serves Greenore, Carlingford and Omeath. **Services operated jointly with Ulsterbus are included in Bus Éireann schedules.**

SOURCE: BUS ÉIREANN TIMETABLES

Figure 4.1 below shows a map of all Bus Éireann services in County Louth.

There are about eight other regular scheduled services operated by private operators in County Louth. These include two services offering links to Dublin and Belfast (with between 15 and 20 services daily) and a series of local routes operating in the Dundalk area. These local services provide between five and 20 services daily, though they generally operate on a Monday-Friday or Monday-Saturday basis only.

As with Bus Éireann services, these private services would also have several intermediate stops at other locations within County Louth.

FIGURE 4.1: MAP OF BUS ÉIREANN SERVICES IN COUNTY LOUTH



SOURCE: LOUTH LINX BUSINESS PLAN 2008-10, FIGURE 3.6

TABLE 4.2: PRIVATE OPERATOR SCHEDULED BUS SERVICES IN COUNTY LOUTH

Operator	Service	Daily Frequency	Comment
Aircoach	Dublin Airport-Belfast	15	-
Matthews	Dundalk-Drogheda-Dublin	10-20	Reduced service at weekends
Halpennys	Dundalk-Bay Estate	10-17	Monday to Saturday only
Halpennys	Dundalk-Willow Grove	7	Monday to Friday only
Halpennys	Dundalk-Armagh Road	6	Monday to Friday only
Halpennys	Dundalk-Newry	4	Monday to Saturday only
Halpennys	Dundalk-Muirhevnemor	19-20	Monday to Saturday only
Halpennys	Blackrock-Dundalk	7-8	Monday to Saturday only

SOURCE: PRIVATE OPERATOR TIMETABLES

4.2.3 Rural Transport Programme (RTP)

Services funded under the RTP in County Louth are provided by Louth Linx. It has operated semi-flexible services since August 2008, which can incorporate door-to-door service if required. The group's website lists 14 routes, most of which connect rural parts of Louth to the main urban centres of Drogheda, Dundalk and Ardee, generally with service provided once a week on each route. Rural areas accessed by these services include Togher, Kilkerley, Carlingford, Stickillan, Churchtown, Tallanstown, Castlebellingham, Collon, Kilcurry, Duffy's Cross and Monasterboice.

TABLE 4.3: SERVICES OPERATED BY LOUTH LINX UNDER THE RURAL TRANSPORT PROGRAMME

From	To	Frequency	Day
Togher and District	Drogheda	Weekly	Wednesday
Kilkerley/Knockbridge	Dundalk	Weekly	Friday
Carlingford and District	Dundalk	Weekly	Friday
Stickillan/Dromin and District	Ardee	Weekly	Friday
Churchtown and District	Ardee	Weekly	Friday
Tallanstown and District	Ardee	Weekly	Friday
Castlebellingham	Dundalk	Weekly	Friday
Collon and District	Drogheda	Weekly	Friday
Kilcurry/Hackballscross	Dundalk	Weekly	Friday
Duffy's Cross	Dundalk	Weekly	Friday
Monasterboice	Drogheda	Weekly	Thursday
Collon and District	Dundalk	Monthly	Monday
Togher and District	Dundalk	Monthly	Monday
Dundalk	Omeath	Weekly (July-Dec)	Sunday

SOURCE: LOUTH LINX WEBSITE

The low frequency of the scheduled services means they provide a key local social service, but do not constitute a fully fledged public transport service allowing daily commuting.

4.2.4 Iarnród Éireann

County Louth also has access to passenger transport services provided by Iarnród Éireann. This includes services on its Dublin-Belfast line (operated in conjunction with Northern Ireland Railways) and services on its Dundalk-Drogheda-Dublin commuter route.

The Dublin-Belfast service offers eight daily services from Monday to Saturday, with service reduced to five daily services on Sunday. Most of these services stop in both Drogheda and Dundalk. The commuter route, meanwhile, offers about 26 services between Drogheda and Dublin during weekdays, with about 20-21 services on Saturday and about nine services on Sunday.¹² From Dundalk, on the other hand, it offers six daily services to Dublin on weekdays, five daily services on Saturday and one daily service on Sunday. All services on the commuter route are additional to those on the main Dublin-Belfast route.

4.2.5 Taxis and Hackneys

Licence statistics for small public service vehicles (SPSVs) are based on where a vehicle is licensed, i.e. at which centre a vehicle is awarded a licence or has it renewed. SPSVs can technically operate throughout the country, however, though where a vehicle is licensed is a good guide to where it operates.

On this basis, statistics available from the Commission for Taxi Regulation suggest that County Louth is relatively well served by taxis, hackneys and other SPSVs. Table 4.4 below, for example, shows that nearly 740 vehicles are licensed in Louth, or about 2.7% of the total of nearly 27,100 licences held nationwide. Louth also has a very high per capita share of SPSVs and taxis/hackneys, with Dublin and Meath being the only counties in Ireland with a higher share of vehicles licensed in their areas.

TABLE 4.4: SPSV LICENCES BY CATEGORY IN COUNTY LOUTH (NOVEMBER 2009)

Category	Number
Taxis	520
Hackneys	131
Limousines	41
Wheelchair-accessible Vehicles	47
TOTAL	739
SPSVs per 1,000 Population	6.6
Taxis and Hackneys per 1,000 Population	5.9
Hackneys per 1,000 Population	1.2
SOURCE: DERIVED FROM COMMISSION FOR TAXI REGULATION	

SPSV drivers, on the other hand, must be licensed to operate in a relevant area. There are currently over 1,600 SPSV driver licence holders in County Louth, or about 3.4% of the total of over 47,300 licences held nationally. In addition, nearly 1,200 other drivers, or 2.5% of all licence holders, have

¹² Services operated jointly with Northern Ireland Railways are included in Iarnród Éireann schedules.

Louth as a secondary area on their licence¹³. These figures therefore also suggest that the level of taxi and hackney services available in Louth is quite high.

The high concentration of taxis and hackneys in Louth is primarily driven by the two large urban centres situated in the county, i.e. Drogheda and Dundalk. Outside of these towns, however, SPSVs may be less easy to access. The county's share of hackneys only, for example, ranks just 16th among all counties. Traditionally, hackneys are also more likely to be found outside the major urban centres.

4.2.6 Health Service Executive

The HSE does not have a statutory responsibility to provide transport for service users. However, it provides transport on a discretionary basis under powers that derive from Section 57 of the Health Act 1970, and its general principle underlying the provision of transport is that it will be provided where there is a medical or clinical need. The range of services provided includes:

- dialysis journeys to Dublin and Northern Ireland;
- daily services to workshops for clients with autistic, physical, sensory and intellectual needs;
- daily services to schools for clients with autistic, physical, sensory and intellectual needs;
- taxis required for medical card patients travelling to out-patient appointments who have no access to public transport;
- child psychiatry appointments;
- clients who are in the child protection process, facilitating access meetings and visits, and transport ordered by the court for children and chaperones;
- clients using community-based services for speech, language and audiology clinics;
- clients discharged from acute hospitals to home or to nursing homes for convalescence;
- taxis for delivery of x-rays etc. to other regions.

In its North-East Region (which includes Louth), the HSE also contracts four 16-seater minibuses from taxi companies. These operate two daily return scheduled services as follows:

- from Dundalk Hospital to Drogheda Hospital and onward in a loop, serving acute hospitals in Dublin to transport patients for out-patient appointments. Patients who are not resident in hospitals in the North-East make their own way to the hospital for onward transport;
- from Ardee Hospital and other collection points to the adult day care centre in Drumcar, for clients with autistic, physical, sensory and intellectual needs.

The North-East Region also owns four patient transport services (PTS) vehicles, which can accommodate two stretchered and two seated patients. One of these vehicles is based in Dundalk.

¹³ It should be noted that some SPSV driver licence holders do not work as a taxi or hackney driver at all, and hold the licence 'just in case' they might need it in the future.

These vehicles are operated by a two-person crew and normally transport stable hospital patients. Patients are transported to out-patient appointments, and the vehicles are also used for inter hospital transfers.

4.2.7 School Transport

As elsewhere, the School Transport Scheme (STS) is part of the national scheme, which is run by Bus Éireann on behalf of the Department of Education and Science. The scheme is also subject to specific guidelines, which have been set by the Department.

Services provided under the scheme range from conventional school transport services, linked to catchment boundary policies set by the Department, and special needs services. Bus Éireann may either operate STS services itself or it may contract services to a private operator.

No figures have been provided for the operation of the scheme in County Louth. On a national basis, however, in its direct operations under the scheme, Bus Éireann uses over 650 of its own vehicles, while private contractors provide another 3,300 vehicles, i.e. nearly 4,000 vehicles in total.

There are also about 125,000 children availing of the STS nationally, generating nearly 46 mn passenger journeys a year. The total number of routes operated nationally, meanwhile, is approximately 5,000.

At present, the Department of Education and Science is carrying out a Value for Money Review of the STS. The findings of this review are expected to be published during 2010.

4.2.8 Patronage

There was limited data available to this study on the patronage of passenger transport services in County Louth. What data is available shows that:

- there were 1,866,000 passenger journeys on PSO-funded services operated by Bus Éireann in County Louth in 2009. This included 843,000 on commuter services to Dublin, 543,000 on town services in Drogheda and Dundalk, and 480,000 on other rural/stage carriage services;
- there were 10,309 passenger journeys on RTP services operated in County Louth in 2009;
- there were 18,240 free travel pass holders in County Louth in 2009.

In addition, it should be noted that Louth passengers would be among those carried on Bus Éireann's Expressway network (which carries approximately 8-9 mn passenger journeys a year nationally) and on private operator services in the county. Similarly, school children in Louth avail of services under the School Transport Scheme, which generates nearly 46 mn passenger journeys a year nationally.

The results of the survey carried out for this study, meanwhile, suggest that only a small proportion of the population in County Louth uses public transport services five times or more in a week. However, usage of public transport grows for between 1-4 trips a week and for use of such services at least once a month.

TABLE 4.5: FREQUENCY OF USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN COUNTY LOUTH

	5+ Times a Week	2-4 Times a Week	Once a Week	At Least Once a Month	Less Than Once a Month	Never	TOTAL
Scheduled Bus	2.8%	5.0%	5.9%	12.7%	37.1%	36.4%	100.0%
Other Bus	1.2%	2.4%	2.7%	6.4%	33.9%	53.5%	100.0%
Rail	1.8%	1.1%	0.6%	9.2%	45.4%	41.9%	100.0%
Taxi	0.6%	1.4%	14.2%	16.0%	26.2%	41.6%	100.0%

SOURCE: TRANSPORT SURVEY

4.3 Funding of Public Transport

Table 4.5 below provides an indicative estimate of the level of public funding that is provided for passenger transport services in County Louth. Based on the data available and assumptions used, it is estimated that about €10.9 mn is provided for passenger transport services in Louth, of which €6.5 involves school transport but excludes Iarnród Éireann. This funding is provided from the following sources:

- funding provided to Bus Éireann for the operation of PSO services in Louth;
- funding provided to Louth Linx;
- funding provided to eligible persons under the Free Travel Pass;
- funding provided by the HSE for transport services;
- funding towards cost of providing school transport in Louth.

Excluding the indicative estimate for school transport services in Louth (as it is not 'public transport') the total funding for passenger transport services is estimated at €4.3 mn.

It should also be noted that in recent years the cost to Bus Éireann of providing PSO services has exceeded the subsidy provided, and the shortfall has been met from Bus Éireann's own resources. In 2008, for example, the total subsidy provided for PSO services nationally was €41.9 mn, but the overall cost of providing the services was €49.0 mn.

TABLE 4.6: FUNDING OF PASSENGER TRANSPORT SERVICES IN COUNTY LOUTH 2008/09

Source	Description	Funding	%
PSO Services	Bus Éireann was provided with a total PSO subsidy of €41.9 mn in 2008. Indicative subsidy for Louth services calculated on the basis of the county's share of the national population excluding Dublin (3.64%).	€1,523,194	14.0
RTP	Operational funding for Louth Linx, provided by Pobal on behalf of the Department of Transport in 2009.	€175,000	0.2
Free Travel Pass	Funding provided by the Department of Social and Family Affairs, and estimate for Louth is derived by multiplying the number of pass holders in Louth by the average cost per pass of the scheme. There were 18,240 pass holders in County Louth in 2009, out of a total number of 677,577 pass holders nationally. Average cost per pass in 2008 was €102.94, or €68.4 mn in funding for nearly 665,000 passes.	€1,877,626	17.3
HSE	Estimated HSE expenditure on taxi and hackney services in County Louth in 2008.	€747,000	6.9
SUB-TOTAL		€4,322,820	39.9
School Transport	Total cost of the STS estimated at €178 mn in 2009. Indicative cost for Louth calculated on the basis of the county's share of school going population excluding Dublin (3.67%).	€6,532,600	60.1
TOTAL		€10,855,420	100.0
Note: There are no figures available for the exact PSO, Free Travel Pass or STS subsidy attributable to County Louth. Population has been used to give an indication PSO and STS subsidy for Louth, and the Dublin population has been excluded from the calculation. Also, there are no figures provided for rail because it is not possible to indicatively attribute a portion of PSO funding here to Louth.			
SOURCE: BUS ÉIREANN, CIÉ ANNUAL REPORT, LOUTH LINX BUSINESS PLAN 2008-10, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY AFFAIRS, HSE			

4.4 Transport Planning, Management and Delivery

4.4.1 Introduction

Management of the passenger transport system in County Louth is split between a variety of operators and providers of passenger transport services. These also include organisations with a variety of different types of roles – funding, planning, management and operation of vehicles. As the following sections show, some do most of these things, some only fund, some fund and to some extent plan, and some but by no means all actually operate vehicles.

As elsewhere, there is no overall management or co-ordination structure to co-ordinate all passenger transport, although some pilot initiatives have recently taken place to try to improve the integration of services in the county.

4.4.2 Bus Éireann

Bus Éireann is the largest provider of passenger transport services in County Louth, and therefore the largest manager of services in the county. Services in the county are managed within Bus Éireann's Eastern Region. However, the company operates its network at a national level, and on an integrated basis, providing service for people to travel from any point on its network to another. This is facilitated through integrated timetables, interchange points, journey planners and through-fare ticketing.

TABLE 4.7: PLANNING APPROACH ADOPTED BY BUS ÉIREANN

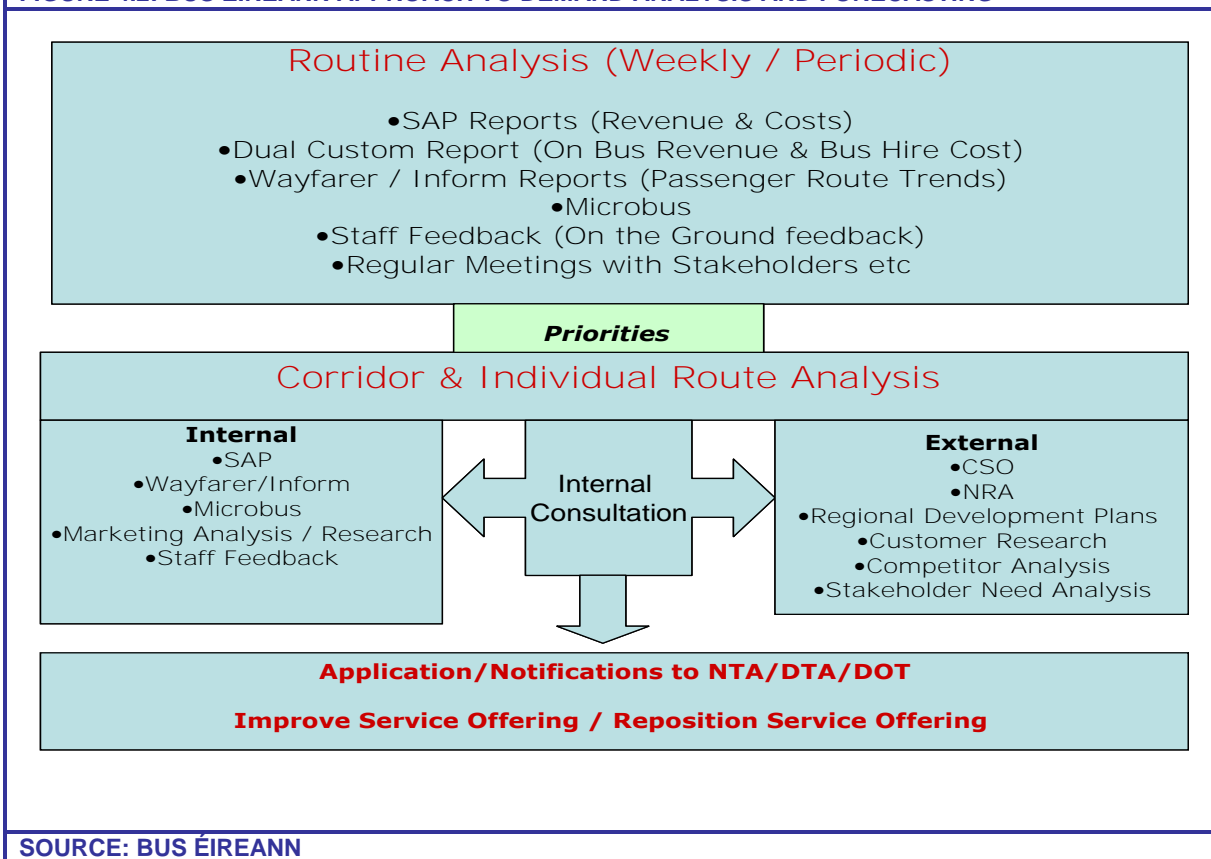
Strategic (3-10 Years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NSS, Regional Planning Guidelines, County Development Plans, PLUTS, Transport 21, 2020 Vision, population estimates etc ▪ Bus Éireann Business Plans, Bus Éireann Development Plans, Bus Éireann Fleet Renewal Programme
Tactical (1-3 Years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Route and corridor reviews, stakeholder consultation, internal proposals
Operational (<1 Year)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Period and quarterly reviews, route and corridor research, local traffic conditions, road construction etc
SOURCE: BUS ÉIREANN	

Bus Éireann also adopts a systematic approach to demand analysis and forecasting across the country. Routine analysis is supported by corridor and individual route analysis, as per the illustration below.

Under Bus Éireann's *'Transport 21 Development Plan 2007-09'* for socially and economically necessary services, Bus Éireann proposed a substantial improvement and expansion in the level, frequency and quality of its range of socially and economically necessary services throughout the country to assist in fostering sustainable balanced regional development, social and economic inclusion, modal shift, increased accessibility and environmental emissions reduction.

As noted earlier, school transport is also run by Bus Éireann on behalf of the Department of Education and Science, and the scheme is run on a national basis.

FIGURE 4.2: BUS ÉIREANN APPROACH TO DEMAND ANALYSIS AND FORECASTING



4.4.3 Louth Rural Linx

The RTP is probably the main manager of non-conventional passenger transport services in County Louth. As noted earlier in Chapter 3, services funded under the RTP in Louth are provided by Louth Linx. This body is operated by Louth LEADER Partnership, the body responsible for delivering social inclusion and related programmes at a local level in Louth, including the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) 2007-13 and the National Rural Development Programme 2007-13.

Louth Linx does not operate its own vehicles or employ staff to directly provide its transport services. Instead, services are sub-contracted from private operators on a tender basis.

Identification of service needs in rural parts of Louth has been carried out through a review of existing services available, through a local community survey and transport operator survey, and through stakeholder consultation. This and other related planning activity has contributed to the Louth Linx Business Plan, which covers the 2008-10 period.

The management structure for RTP operations includes a full-time RTP co-ordinator, who is responsible for the day-to-day management of RTP business, supported by a financial administrator and a service dispatcher. Louth LEADER Partnership has also set up a Rural Transport Advisory Committee to advise it on all technical matters relating to the development and delivery of services.

4.4.4 Health Service Executive

Within the HSE, transport services are dealt with on a regional rather than on a county basis. Services in County Louth are therefore part of the North-East Region service covering counties Louth, Meath, Cavan and Monaghan.

However, prior to the establishment of the HSE, the powers to provide non-emergency transport were interpreted and implemented differently under each of the ten autonomous Health Boards that were subsequently merged into the HSE. As a result, there is no single model of service provision, reflecting the fact that there are different patient transport service demands across rural, suburban and city areas. Having said this, the HSE is now seeking to bring greater consistency to transport provision and is also seeking to control budgets, and a review of transport services within the organisation is nearing completion.

In addition, the HSE is also interested in co-operating with other transport providers to provide services for HSE service users, e.g. working with Cavan Area Rural Transport in County Cavan. Areas where transport companies could assist the HSE include routing of services and location of bus-stops to service hospitals, which would benefit outpatients, visitors and staff.

4.4.5 Management of Other Services

For other passenger transport services operated in County Louth, the main points to note are as follows:

- the main private operators that have services in County Louth are Matthews Coach Hire, Halpenny Travel and Aircoach, and their services are managed at the individual company level. Both Matthews' and Halpennys' services are substantially concentrated on Louth, while Aircoach's single service in the county is a through-route (Dublin Airport-Belfast) that picks up and sets down passengers in Louth;
- services provided by Iarnród Éireann in County Louth are managed at a national level rather than local level, given that the rail network in Ireland generally is relatively small and service in Louth is mainly confined to a single through-route (Dublin-Belfast).
- operators of taxi and hackney services are, in most cases, self-employed. This means that they manage their own service arrangements and they decide when to make themselves available for service. Booking and management of services can be facilitated to some extent by dispatch centres, however they cannot compel self-employed drivers to operate at specified times.

4.4.6 Initiatives to Improve Integration of Services

Integration of passenger transport services within County Louth is at present quite limited. During 2009, however, the Local Integrated Transport Services project (LITS) was established to assess how Bus Éireann, the RTP/Pobal, the HSE and organisations that provide transport for people with

disabilities can work together in partnership to achieve greater synergies, meet identified transport needs and deliver increased value for money for the Exchequer. The initiative, which has been undertaken in close liaison with the Department of Transport and (more recently) the Department of Education and Science, is being piloted in the North-East (inc. Louth) and North-West of Ireland. Over 20 pilot projects have been identified for these areas, which are taking place between the last quarter of 2009 and the first half of 2010. The range of pilot projects that have been proposed include the following:

- *'collect and connect' type services*, with passengers collected at their door and brought to an interchange point to connect to scheduled services;
- *hospital feeder services*, whereby Bus Éireann and rural transport services feed to Bus Éireann town services to connect to the local hospitals for clinic appointments;
- *co-ordination of disability services*, in which increased co-ordination between the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA), RTP and Bus Éireann is being investigated to reduce service duplication and increase fleet utilisation;
- *ticketing integration*, with increased levels of ticketing and fares co-ordination between Bus Éireann and the RTP, including planning for an Integrated Ticketing Scheme;
- *co-ordinated information provision and journey planning*, designed to provide better information for the range of passenger groups, including older people;
- *increased synchronisation of partner systems and processes*, where a range of areas are being investigated including training, procurement of services and materials, IT utilisation and marketing/PR systems;
- *policy development on transport*, including 'joined up thinking' on related issues.

In County Louth, pilot activities have included: an integrated service connection to Louth Hospital using the current Bus Éireann Dundalk Town service and the Drogheda-Dundalk service to serve Louth Hospital using Long Walk Shopping Centre/Bus Station as a hub to integrate with longer distance Bus Éireann services; a combined ticketing solution, through the use of a voucher system, to facilitate the integration of services between partner groups and provide 'hassle free' transfer from RTP services to Bus Éireann services and vice versa; a joint website initiative to promote the integration of services between Bus Éireann and the RTP; and a pilot Sunday service linking Dundalk to Carlingford for two months before Christmas.

The pilot projects will be externally evaluated in early 2010, with a view to mainstreaming. The intended benefits that LITS would create in relation to developing a quality transport system (urban and rural) are as follows:

- joined-up thinking based on the existing range of programmes and services available for people living in rural areas, in particular older people;

- making better use of the existing range of networks and services that are currently provided by the partner groups, and how to provide 'more for less' within the constraints of the present fiscal situation;
- building on existing policies and operational procedures relating to children and for people with disabilities.

Feedback from participants suggests that the process has been extremely positive to date, and the level of commitment and energy that has been brought to the process by partner groups is very encouraging.

4.5 Transport Regulatory Framework

4.5.1 Introduction

The major aspects of regulatory policy that affect passenger transport services in County Louth are (a) the regulation of bus services and (b) the regulation of taxi and hackney services.

4.5.2 Bus Regulation

The key piece of legislation that has governed the provision of bus services in Ireland is the Road Transport Act 1932, as amended. This Act set up a licensing system for operators, whereby bus companies operating in Ireland are required to have a licence for services issued by the Department of Transport. Licences cover services with potential to pick up or set down passengers at various points on the line of a route, and they specify whether services are to be operated on a regular or occasional basis. Licence applicants can also be required to specify elements of the service to be provided, including the terminal points of the service, the route covered and the intermediate stops incorporated, the vehicles and capacity used, and the fare structure and corresponding fares to be charged. In order to obtain a passenger licence, applicants must also hold a Road Passenger Transport Operator's Licence (RPTOL) or Community Licence that governs access to the profession, or the applicant must show that those sub-contracted to provide the service on their behalf hold a valid RPTOL.

The operation of bus services by Bus Éireann has been governed by the Transport Acts of 1944, 1958 and 1986. Under the 1958 Act, Bus Éireann was made exempt from the route licensing requirements applied to other bus operators. However, it must notify the Department of Transport about any proposed new routes, and it cannot compete with a licensed service without the consent of the Minister for Transport. Bus Éireann's single only fares are also controlled by the Minister for Transport.

For rural transport, RTP services are being treated as 'private hire' services, which means that, up to now, RTP groups have not been required to go through the normal route licensing process (though

proposed routes are approved by the Department of Transport)¹⁴. However, some groups have opted to be part of the passenger licensing regime and currently hold passenger licences for their services. Also, the introduction of the new National Transport Authority (see below) might impact on the licensing of RTP services in the future.

4.5.3 Taxi and Hackney Regulation

Since November 2000, all restrictions on the number of taxis and hackneys that can be licensed in Ireland have been removed. In terms of their services, only taxis can pick up passengers on the street or on taxi ranks, while hackneys can only be hired by telephone or from designated dispatch centres.

Both taxi and hackney operations are generally licensed for a particular taximeter or hackney area, which normally coincides with the relevant local authority area. In practice, taximeter areas tend to involve urban areas only, though there are some exceptions to this. Taxis are also subject to price control, though they can negotiate prices with customers when operating journeys that are outside the taximeter area, while hackneys are not subject to any form of price control.

Up to 2004, taxis and hackneys were licensed by local authorities in accordance with regulations imposed by Statutory Instrument. This system was changed, however, under the terms of the Taxi Regulation Act 2003, which led to the establishment of the Commission for Taxi Regulation in September 2004. The Commission's main function has been to develop and maintain a new regulatory framework for the control of taxis, hackneys and limousines, which aims to lead to a quality and customer-oriented licensing system.

All taxis and hackneys are now licensed centrally by the Commission rather than by their local authority as heretofore. The Commission has also introduced a national taxi fare structure as well as a series of other new standards.

4.5.4 Public Transport Regulation Act 2009

The Public Transport Regulation Act 2009, which came into effect in December 2009, establishes further changes to the framework for the licensing of commercial public bus passenger services and the introduction of new contractual arrangements for the procurement of public land transport services on a national basis. Some of the relevant changes introduced in the Act are as follows:

- it establishes a National Transport Authority (NTA), which will incorporate functions previously carried out by the Dublin Transport Authority and the Commission for Taxi Regulation;

¹⁴ Private hire is generally deemed to be outside the scope of the Road Transport Act 1932 as amended, and a passenger licence is not required by operators who provide a private hire service where a bus is hired on behalf of a group for an all-in charge.

- it gives effect to EU regulations that establish a single contractual structure for PSO services in member states. These regulations state that there has to be a 'competent local authority' or other authority that is responsible for contracting PSO services in a particular area. Competent authorities also generally will have 'internal operators', who can be contracted for services by direct award for existing services;
- Ireland has been granted a derogation under these regulations to contract under a competent national authority so long as there are no competent local authorities in the country. Under the Act, the NTA is the competent national authority, and Córas Iompair Éireann and its constituent companies will be the State's internal operator;
- the NTA now enters into contracts by direct award with the internal operator for existing PSO services, which have to be in place by 3 December 2009. Direct award to internal operators only applies to existing PSO services, however, and any new PSO services will have to be put out to tender;
- for licensing of commercial services, licences are issued for services as long as they do not impact on a PSO service.

The NTA will therefore be the only authority that can award PSO services in the country. County Councils like Louth will not be able to directly enter into contracts for services because they would then be deemed a competent local authority, which would be outside Ireland's derogation to operate under the regulation. In future, however, the NTA may develop a clear and close working relationship with local authorities as they could play a strong role in helping the NTA to identify service needs at a local level.

4.6 Key Findings

Key findings of this chapter are:

- Louth has an extensive public transport network by Irish standards, provided principally by Bus Éireann and Iarnród Éireann, but also supplemented by private scheduled operators. This runs mainly on a north-south basis, reflecting the county's location on the Dublin-Belfast corridor;
- it also benefits from a series of other dedicated passenger transport services, the largest of which is the school bus system, together with the smaller activities in this regard of the Louth Rural Linx and the HSE.

We estimate that, excluding Iarnród Éireann, approximately €10 mn in public funding was spent annually in Louth during the years 2008/9. Of this, €6.5 mn is accounted for by school transport and the balance by the Bus Éireann PSO subsidies, Free Travel Pass, HSE and RTP. Policy and funding are both primarily driven from, and decided at, national level, with the exception of the HSE where there is considerable local discretion.

5. Service Adequacy and Gaps

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of our analysis of service adequacy and gaps in County Louth. Section 5.2 describes the ‘accessibility analysis’ which we utilise as the core quantitative information. Section 5.3 presents the accessibility analysis results. Finally Section 5.4 presents the key findings and implications of the analysis.

5.2 Analytical Framework

5.2.1 Overview

This chapter is based on a form of ‘accessibility analysis’ that attempts to graphically show the extent to which public transport provides opportunities for people living in Louth to access services. Accessibility analysis aims to do this by bringing together information on the following variables:

- existing public transport services, where they start from and where they go to, and the travel time taken to move between different places;
- travel times by private car between different places in the county, as a proxy for taxi and hackney travel and as a comparison for public transport times;
- the location of employment to which people need to travel;
- the location of other key services such as shops, schools, medical services, post offices.

This information is then pooled in linked databases, and mapped using GIS techniques to show what travel opportunities are currently available to people to access employment and services.

The accessibility analysis here focuses principally on travel time because:

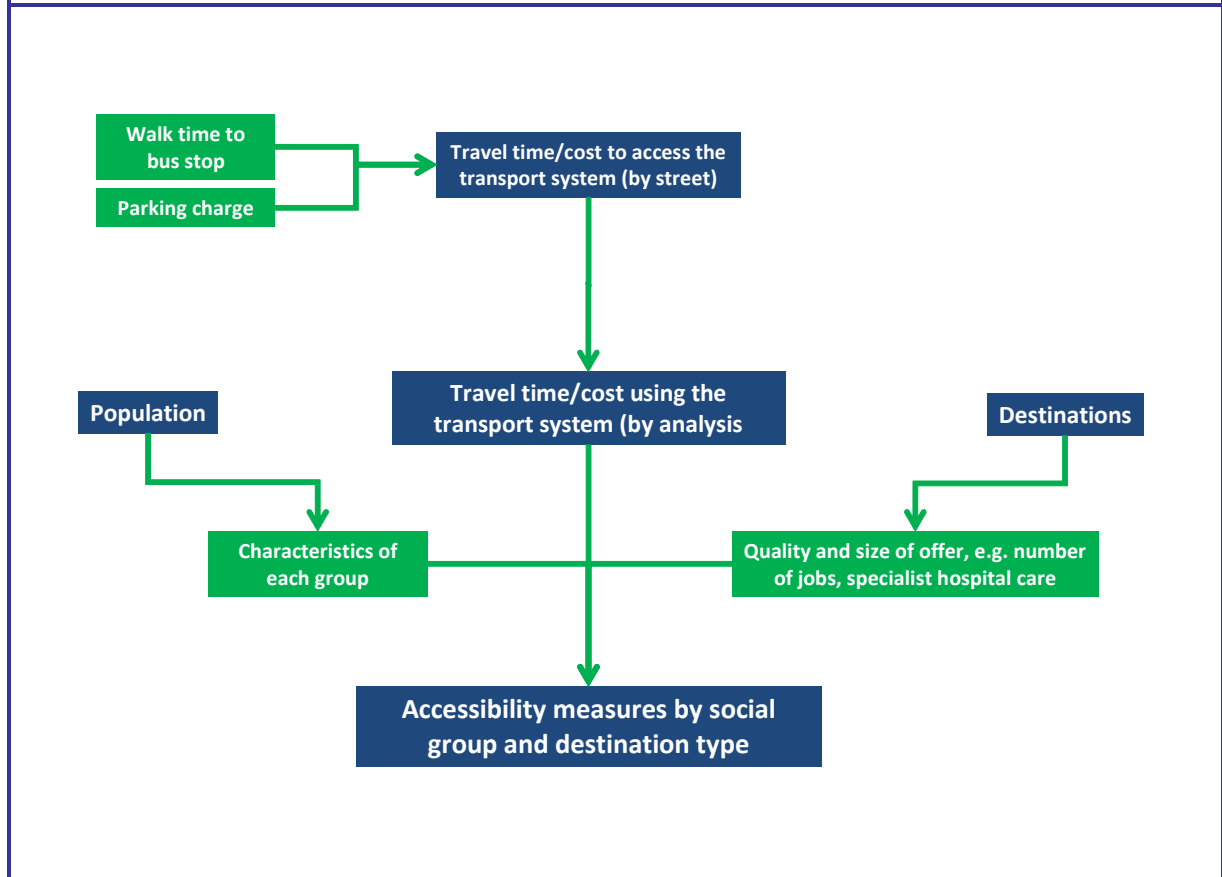
- data is available for travel times, through bus timetables and road network data, and through the location of most services and facilities;
- travel costs by car, taxi and to a lesser extent bus are broadly proportional to the time spent travelling.

5.2.2 Data Sources

Accessibility analysis requires extensive and detailed data.

The analysis must be able to show the opportunities available for any group of people to travel to any defined set of services. This is done in a series of linked database tables describing:

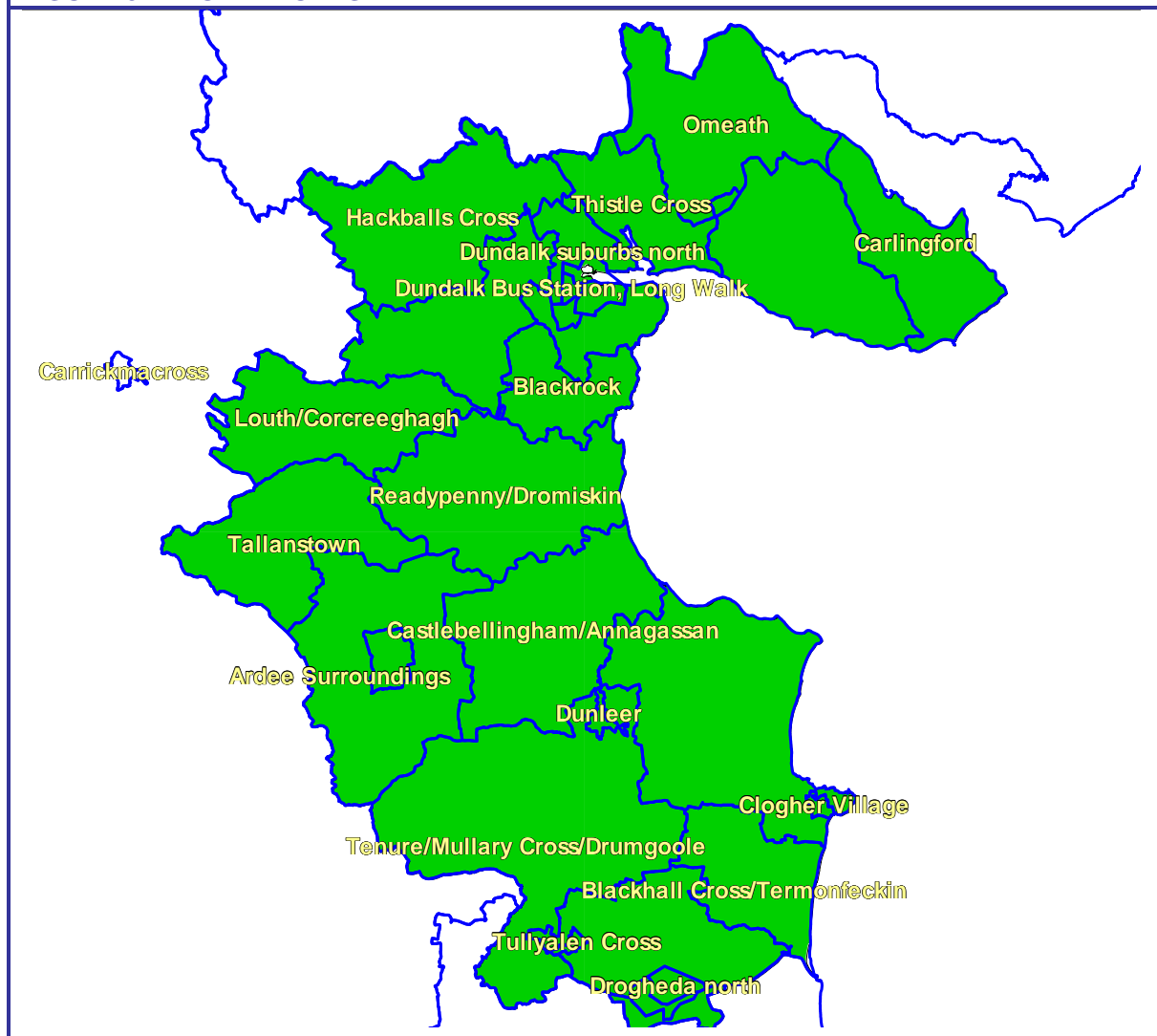
- the people and their key characteristics;
- the services and destinations that people wish to access, the extent to which any particular destination provides for people's needs and the range of activities linked to each destination;
- the characteristics of the passenger transport system including travel times and other information when available.

FIGURE 5.1: STRUCTURE OF ACCESSIBILITY ANALYSIS

It is necessary to calculate travel times by car, as this can act as a proxy for taxi travel and lifts from friends and relatives, and help to show the performance of the passenger transport network. The calculation procedure used is as summarised in Figure 5.1. In the figure, the main analysis modules used are shown in blue and the data and parameter inputs in green.

In the present analysis, the Electoral Divisions (ED) in County Louth have been combined into zones, and in some instances split where there is a town with a bus-stop but a large hinterland to the town with no access to a bus-stop. Within the EDs, there are 695 townlands where the population resides. The analysis therefore relies on two zoning systems:

- the individual townlands in County Louth;
- the zones as shown in Figure 5.2.

FIGURE 5.2: MODEL ZONES

5.2.3 Key Parameters and Assumptions

There are a number of key transport parameters and assumptions underlying the accessibility analysis, including key parameters and assumptions regarding journey times. The key parameters and assumptions used are as follows:

- the door-to-door journey time of any trip is assumed to include three components – the travel time from the townland to the zone centroid, the travel time between zone centroids and the travel time from destination zone centroid to the final destination point. This is important in interpreting subsequent findings, e.g. to say 90% of Louth residents live within x minutes from a shop we mean that they live in a townland, the centre of which is x minutes from a shop;

- it is assumed that people will walk up to 2 km to a bus-stop. This is equivalent to an intra-zonal walk time of 25 minutes. People living more than 25 minutes from the bus-stop, on the other hand, are assumed not to have access to the bus network;¹⁵
- bus travel times are assumed to be as per the bus timetables. The travel time assumed for any journey is the minimum journey time that can be made at least twice a day outbound and twice a day inbound¹⁶;
- the minimum journey time on any trip which involves boarding a bus or train is assumed to be 10 minutes. This is to ensure that short urban journeys are not underestimated¹⁷;
- it is assumed that 10 minutes are added for journeys that involve interchange between public transport. In practice, for many journeys, people will be able to choose buses that achieve shorter interchange times, so 10 minutes is likely to be reasonably representative as an average¹⁸;
- finally, it is assumed that all parking is free and that people can drive door to door unimpeded by road congestion or parking constraints. Note that for trips into the town and city centres this will underestimate travel times since parking and traffic congestion is present at some times of day.

Other key aspects of the parameters and assumptions underlying the analysis are described below.

Public Transport. Existing public transport supply is described in Chapter 4. Data was extracted from published timetables to derive bus-stop to bus-stop journey times in line with the parameters above. The road network is defined by the digital tele-atlas data which classifies each link in the network. In order to calculate travel times default speeds have been allocated to each road type as shown in Table 5.1.

¹⁵ This assumption does not imply that people necessarily do or should do so.

¹⁶ Some journeys can be made faster in peak periods due to 'express' buses but only one set of journey times has been used.

¹⁷ Although the timetabled journey may be only a few minutes in practical terms public transport journey times always average at more than 10 minutes.

¹⁸ Services that would attract interchange (e.g. longer distance 'express' services via hubs in Dundalk or Drogheda) are generally half hourly, so people would on average not need to wait more than 15 minutes based on random bus schedules.

TABLE 5.1: ASSUMED ROAD NETWORK LINK SPEEDS

Road Classification	Walk Speed (km/hr)	Car Speed (km/h)
Motorway	0	100
National Primary Routes	4.8	75
National Secondary Routes	4.8	65
Non-National Roads	4.8	60
Local Street	4.8	35
Private Road - Restricted Access	4.8	30
Private Road - Public Access	4.8	30
Pedestrian Street	4.8	0
Alley	4.8	0

Taxis and Hackneys: As referred to in Chapter 4, there is a relatively good supply of taxi operators providing services across County Louth. It is therefore assumed that residents are always able to make a trip – at higher cost – using a taxi when no bus service is available. The car travel times are used as a proxy for the journey times that can be achieved by taxi.

If a booking centre were to be established to facilitate pre-booking of shared taxi trips then based on the current taxi tariff shared taxi journeys should be deliverable at costs to users not dissimilar to current bus fares. Therefore, decisions on whether to provide a scheduled bus, a demand responsive bus, a shared minibus or taxi depends on which is the most cost effective way to close a gap in the network.

Employment: Employment data was taken from the data in the County Louth economic development strategy for three categories of employment. The employment in the towns of Ardee, Drogheda, Dundalk has been distributed between the model zones according to population and the remaining population has been distributed between the rural zones. Total employment is divided into two main categories as shown in Table 5.2.

TABLE 5.2: EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

Market and Non Market Services	Agriculture and Industry
Commerce and trade	Agriculture, forestry and fishing
Transport and communications	Building and construction
Public administration	Manufacturing industries
Professional services	
Other services	

Services: Other destinations information has been assembled from the address point data for: food shops; schools; medical practices; hospitals; dentists; chemists; post offices; legal services/lawyers; and hairdressers.

In each case the address point data was checked using Internet searches to check for completeness and accuracy of service providers. However, reliance was placed on available electronic sources and Council staff were also asked to check data for any inaccuracies.

Transport Hubs: A group of other services and opportunities which can be essential for good accessibility include: cinemas; leisure centres; sports facilities; banks; cash machines; and care homes. In order to deal with these, a more general measure of transport network coverage is created by looking at access to local transport hubs. These hubs are the bus and rail stations in Dundalk and Drogheda and are used as a proxy for access to:

- locations in the centre of the two major towns;
- locations further afield such as in Dublin where more specialised services are available.

5.3 Accessibility Analysis Results

5.3.1 Access to employment

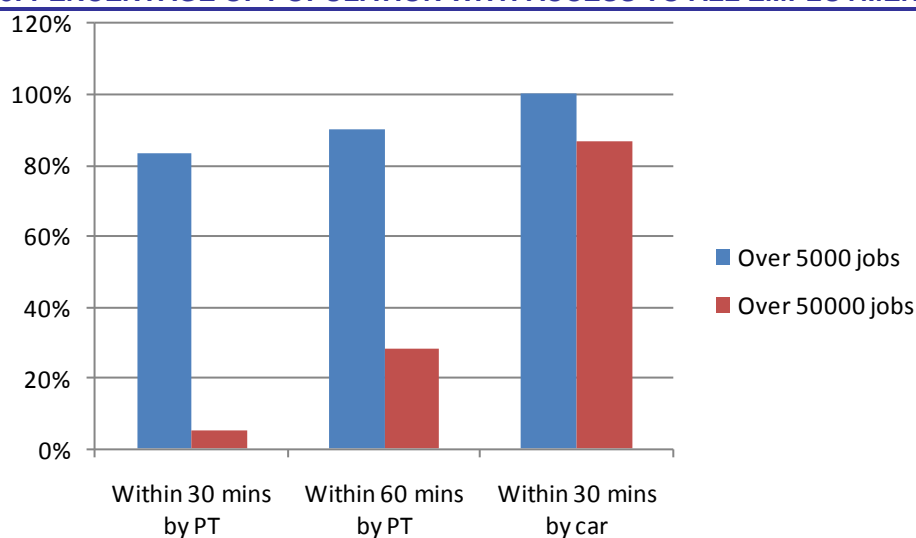
Figure 5.3 shows that over 90% of people in County Louth can travel from their homes to locations where there are more than 5,000 jobs within 60 minutes by either walking or public transport or both, i.e. that 90% of people live in a townland the centre of which is no more than 60 minutes by public transport from a job centre of 5,000+. By comparison, in England, over 48% of people have access to 5,000 jobs within only 20 minutes and 92% within 40 minutes¹⁹. Although County Louth has poorer access than the average for England, it has better access to jobs than many English rural counties such as Oxfordshire or Shropshire.

However, less than 30% of the population of County Louth has access to a labour market of 50,000 jobs. Research in the UK²⁰ has shown that for most people the prospects of obtaining work rises steadily with the size of the labour market up to 50,000 jobs, regardless of skill levels, and then levels off. Therefore increasing access for more people to ensure they can access over 50,000 jobs within a reasonable community time is important.

¹⁹ Department of Transport (UK), *Core National Accessibility Indices*, 2008.

²⁰ Cooper, *Accessibility Indicators for London*, 2009.

FIGURE 5.3: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO ALL EMPLOYMENT



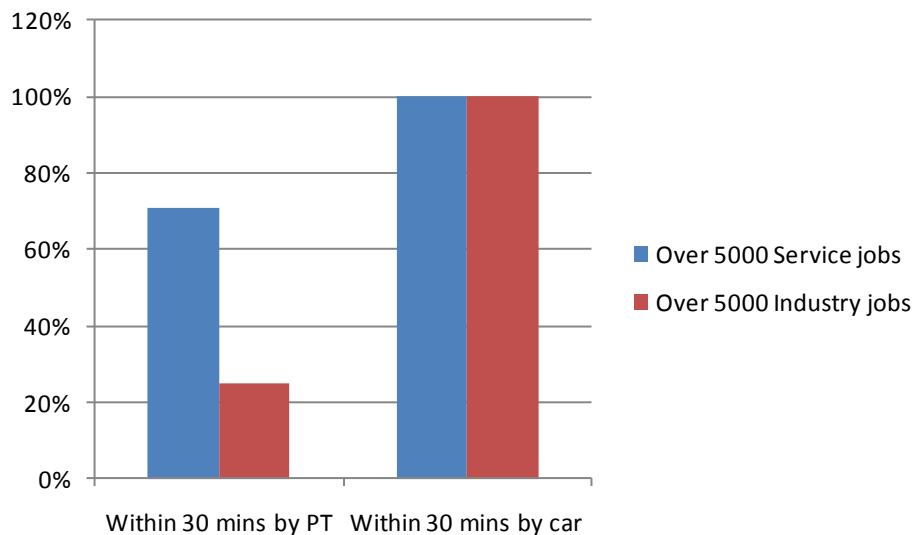
Note: PT – public transport

Further analysis shows that the level of access from the total population shown in the chart above also apply to age and gender-based sub-groups, and the percentages for each age groups and by gender are very similar.

Figure 5.4 shows that all residents have access to more than 5,000 service sector jobs within 30 minutes by car, and 87% to more than 50,000 jobs, so reaching employment is much easier by car.

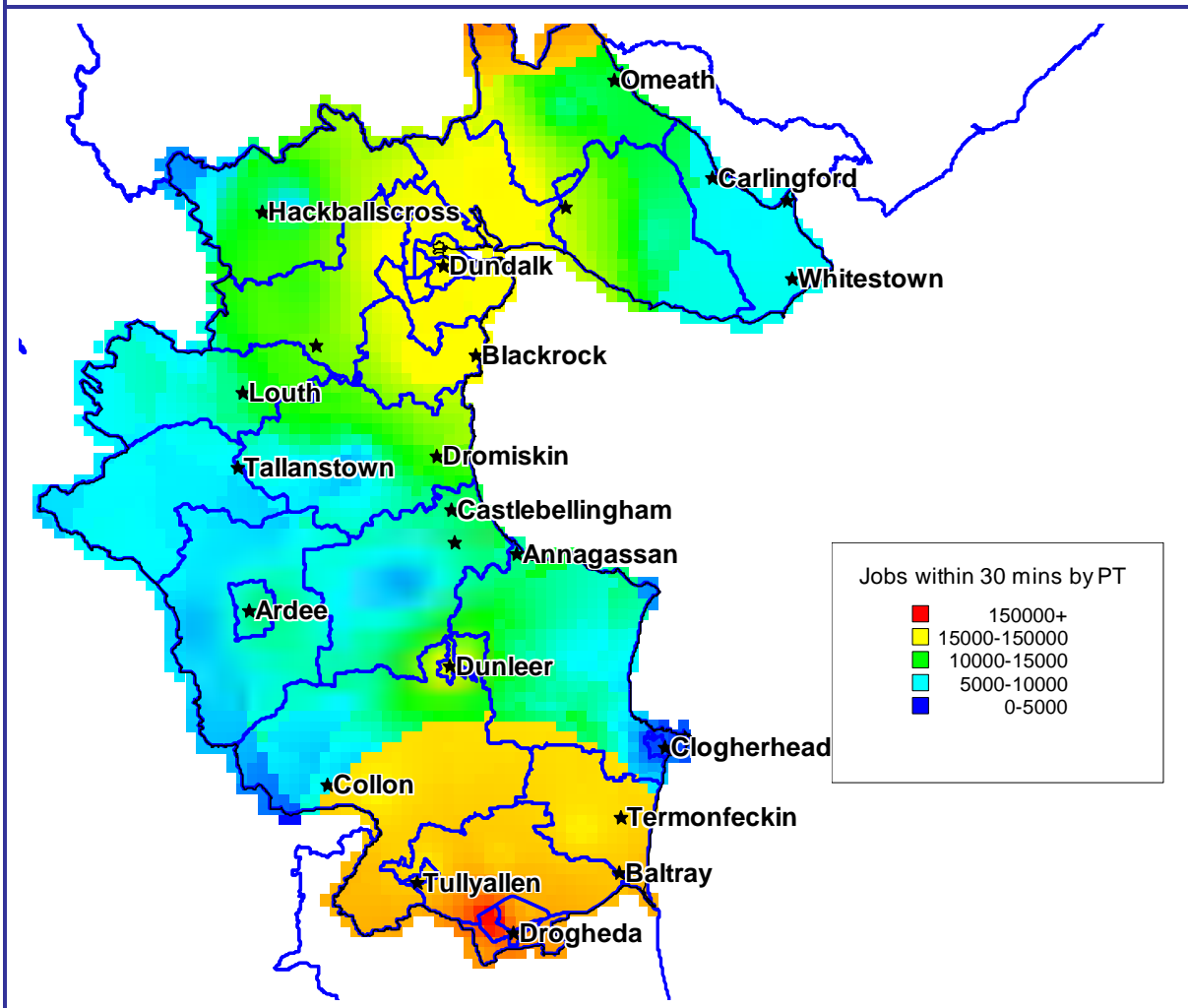
The distribution of access to employment can be seen from Figure 5.5. Residents in the south of the county with access to the major employment markets in Dublin have excellent accessibility, and those in the north of the county also have good access to those in Northern Ireland. However, in the west access to employment is poorer.

FIGURE 5.4: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO INDUSTRIAL AND SERVICE EMPLOYMENT



Note: PT – public transport

FIGURE 5.5: NUMBER OF JOBS WITHIN 30 MINUTES BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT



5.3.2 Access to Services

This section examines opportunities for Louth residents to access various types of service using public transport. We differentiate between:

- Local services, e.g. Chemist; Dentist; Food; Medical Practice/GP.
- Specialised (regional) services: e.g. Hospital; Transport hubs as a proxy for being able to access other opportunities through the core public transport network.

Table 5.4 shows the average travel times, using public transport, for residents of County Louth to access each of these services²¹. The table shows that overall there is good public transport accessibility to local services. The UK average figures shown in the table include both urban and rural areas. County Louth has comparable levels of access despite being relatively rural by UK standards.

TABLE 5.4: COMPARISON OF AVERAGE TRAVEL TIMES TO NEAREST SERVICES FOR COUNTY LOUTH AND UK¹ (PT ONLY)

Mode	Destination	County Louth (mins)	UK (mins)
Walk/Public Transport	Chemists	16	19
	Dentists	23	18
	Food shop	9	9
	Medical Practice	16	11
	Hospital	33	25
	Transport Hubs	27	22
	Post office	14	14
Drive	Hospital	9	4
	Transport Hubs	10	-

¹Not all of these service types are available in all parts of the UK so some values relate to England and Wales only and some to Scotland.

PT = public transport

The average travel time to a hospital does not compare favourably with the averages in the UK. This means that although centralising specialised healthcare services can allow better healthcare to be provided there can also be higher associated transport costs.

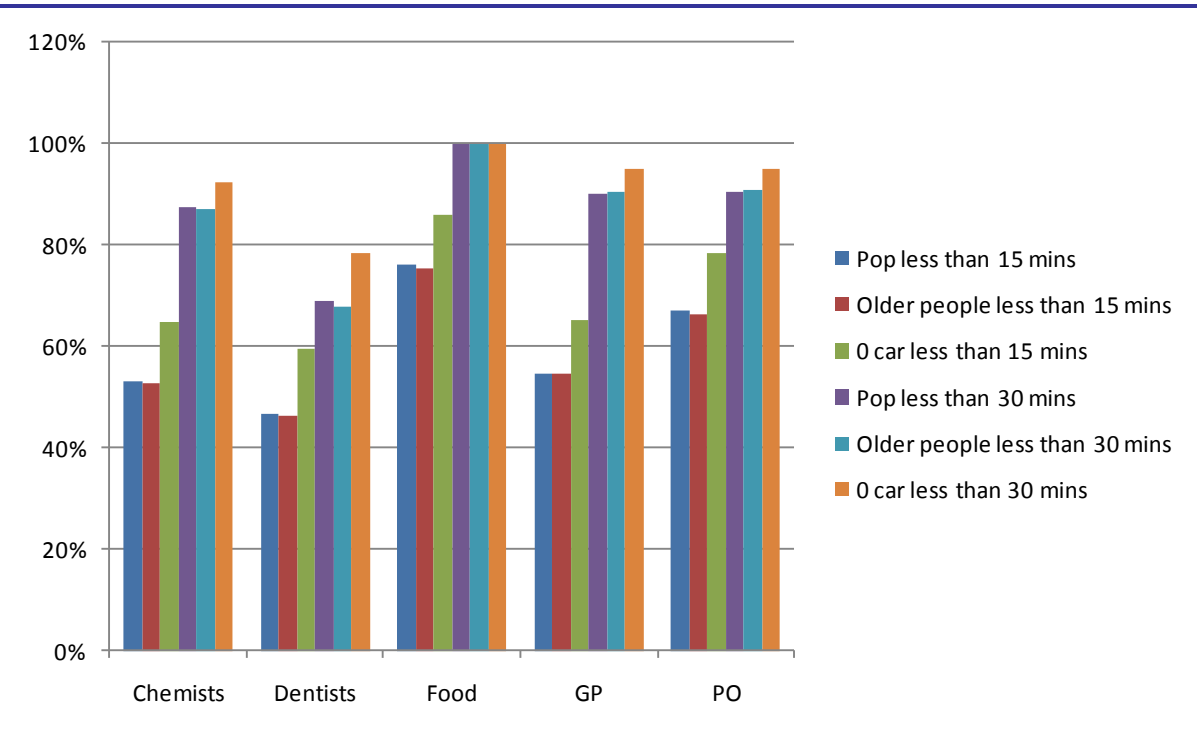
Figure 5.6 shows the percentage of the population and of various sub-groups who can reach local services within either 15 or 30 minutes from their townland, using public transport. Figure 5.8 shows the same analysis for regional services. It shows that, based on this analysis, all people in Louth can reach a food shop within 30 minutes, i.e. 30 minutes from the centre of their townland. This trip purpose is usually made several times per week so good access is essential. Post offices, GPs and chemists are also accessible to about 90% of the population.

²¹ Average travel time is the travel time for the population of each townland weighted by the resident population to reach each service type.

For all trip purposes the households without cars have better public transport access. This is to be expected, since the people who do not own cars tend to live in more accessible locations.

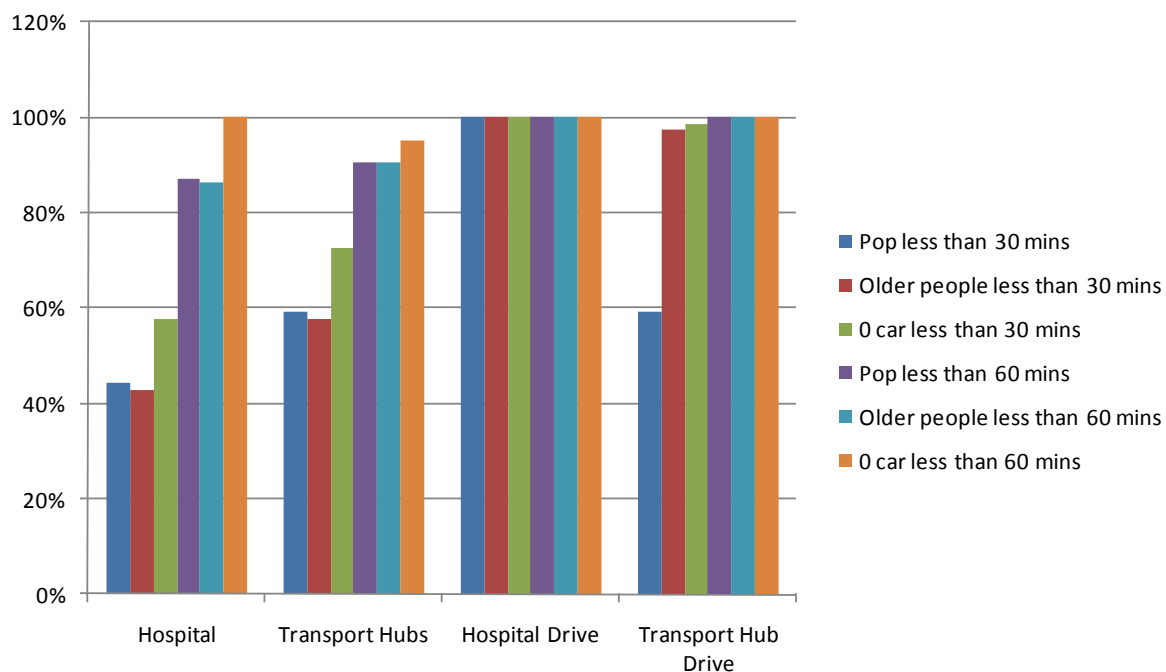
However when other social and economic comparisons are made there appears to be no difference in levels of access. This suggests that levels of access are similar for different groups.

FIGURE 5.6: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY TRAVEL TIME TO LOCAL SERVICES



A similar picture emerges for longer distance trips for more specialised 'regional' services. However, many people in the area are quite reliant on travel to destinations outside the county.

FIGURE 5.7: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY TRAVEL TIME TO REGIONAL SERVICES



5.3.3 Access to Local Transport Hubs

The bus and rail stations in Dundalk and Drogheda allow onward good connections for residents to access many opportunities and services not available locally. They are also in the centres of the two towns so access to these locations is also a proxy for access to the many other services and facilities available in the towns. Figure 5.8 shows the non-car travel time to reach these hubs from each part of County Louth.

Only for the very rural areas of the county are journey times in excess of 60 minutes. The frequent and regular bus services between the major centres allow most people to travel to the towns provided they can reach the local bus-stops. As stated earlier, in the analysis it is assumed that a walk to a bus-stop of up to 2 km would be possible but in practice this is often not possible:

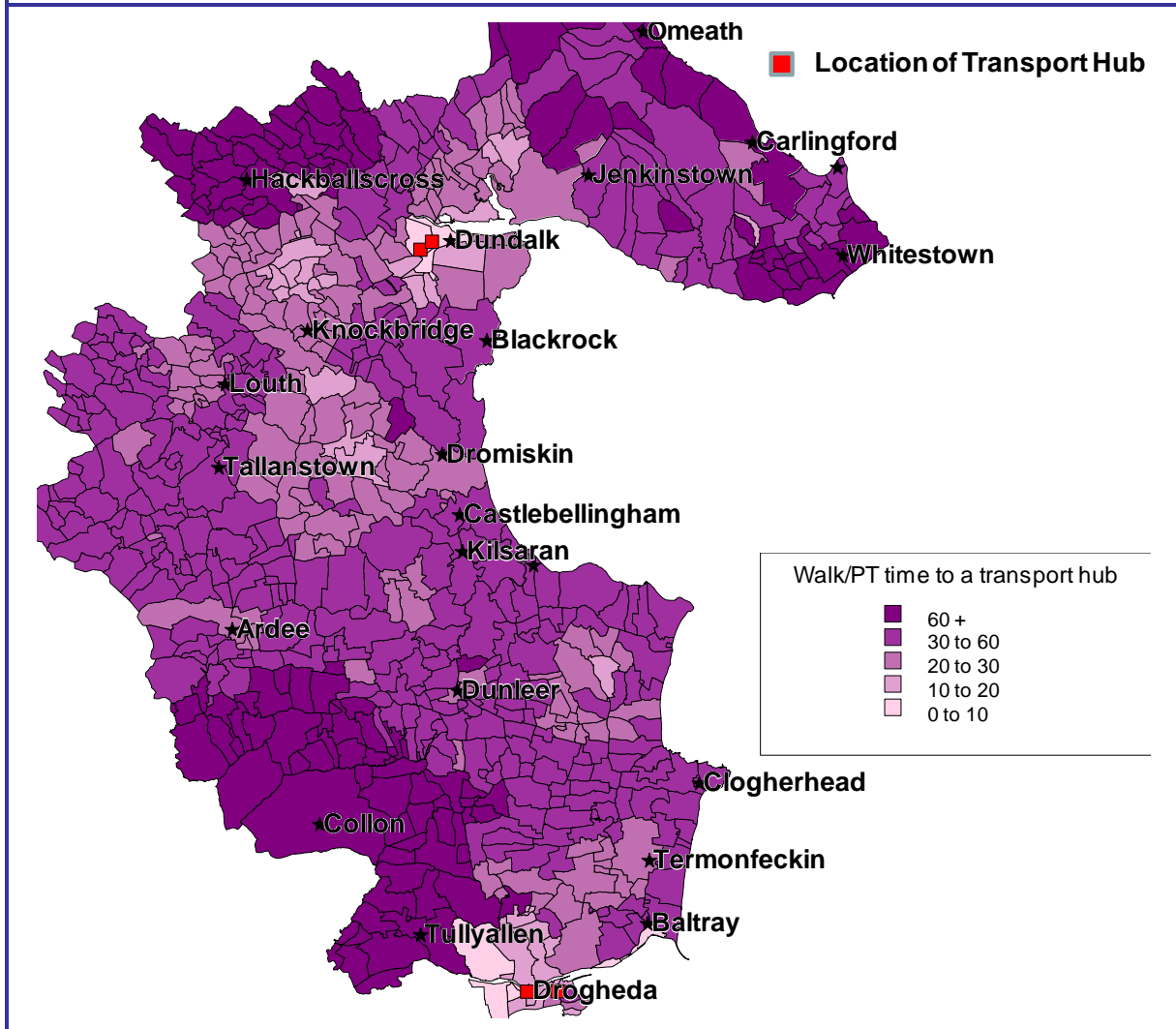
- rural roads are often unlit and have no footpath;
- less mobile people may not be able to walk this distance;
- there might be nowhere safe to wait for a bus once residents have walked to the bus route.

Local connections to public transport therefore also need to include action such as:

- 'collect and connect' transport where people are collected from their house or a location they can reach and transported to a location where they can access the transport system;

- upgrading of infrastructure such as footpaths, road crossings, bus shelters, seats and other features to ensure that people can have safe access to public transport;
- improved information (ideally with real time updates) so that people can make informed judgements about which bus to access. A major deterrent to using rural buses is waiting without information, being unsure if or when a bus will arrive. A system such as this was recently recommended to Bus Éireann²² and similar systems already exist elsewhere (e.g. Birmingham, Edinburgh, Helsinki). Existing systems can generally be viewed through smartphones where there is mobile phone coverage.

FIGURE 5.8: NON CAR TRAVEL TIME TO TRANSPORT HUBS BY DED



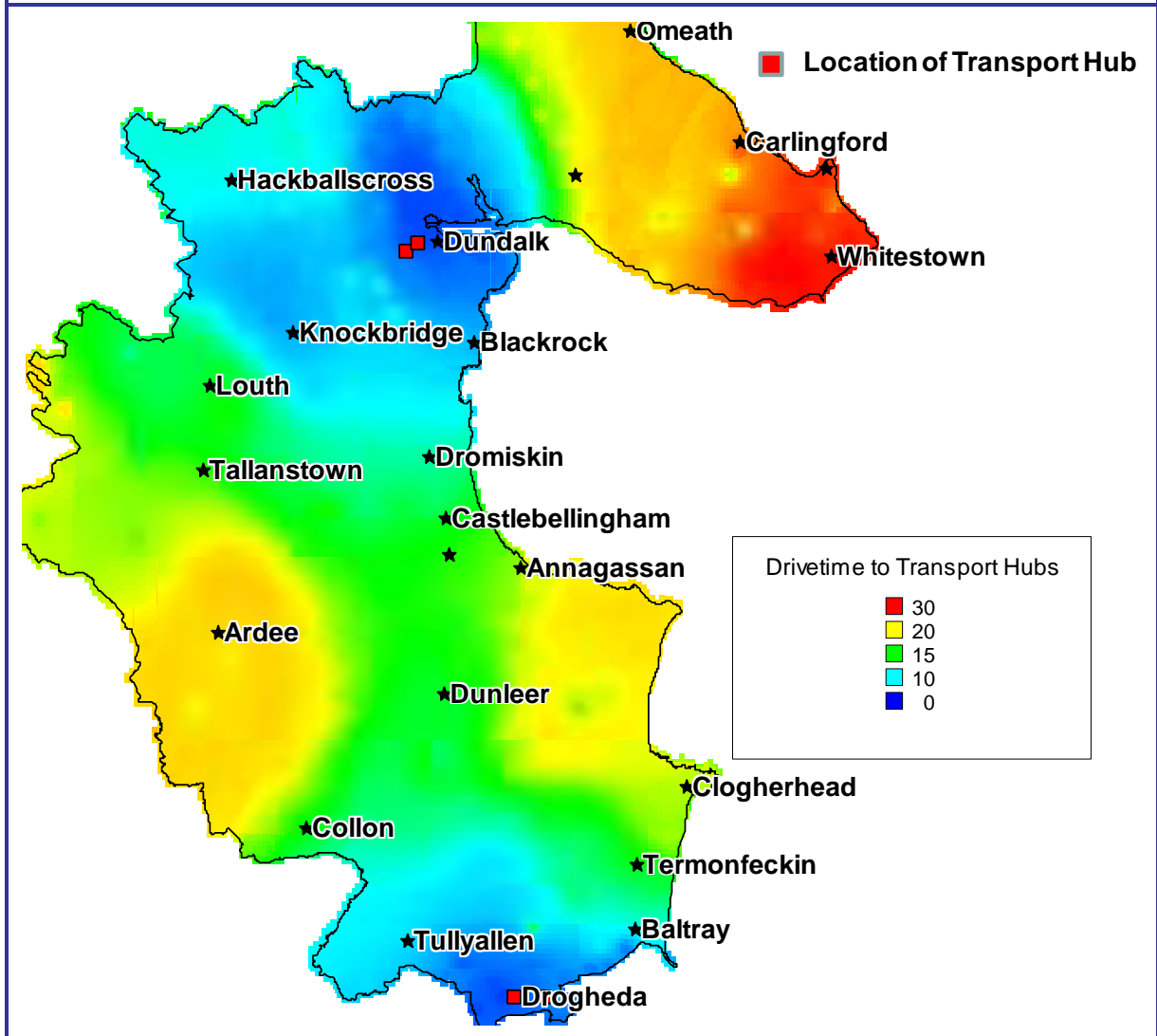
Even for many people with cars, public transport can also provide an attractive option for travel to Dublin or other major centres in Ireland. Maintaining the high frequency and speed of the inter-urban bus services will be important for public transport accessibility. The relatively short car travel times to

²² Deloitte, *Cost and Efficiency Review of Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann*, 2009.

access the core public transport routes, even from locations without regular public transport services such as Hackballscross, means that County Louth is well placed to offer attractive park and ride and kiss and ride²³ opportunities.

Figure 5.9 shows that the transport hubs can be accessed in less than 30 minutes from most of the county. In Wales the average time to access a key public transport node by public transport is 22 minutes compared with 27 in County Louth. However, the services available from the key hubs in Dundalk and Drogheda are considerably more frequent and faster than for many of the Welsh hubs.

FIGURE 5.9: DRIVE TIMES TO TRANSPORT HUBS

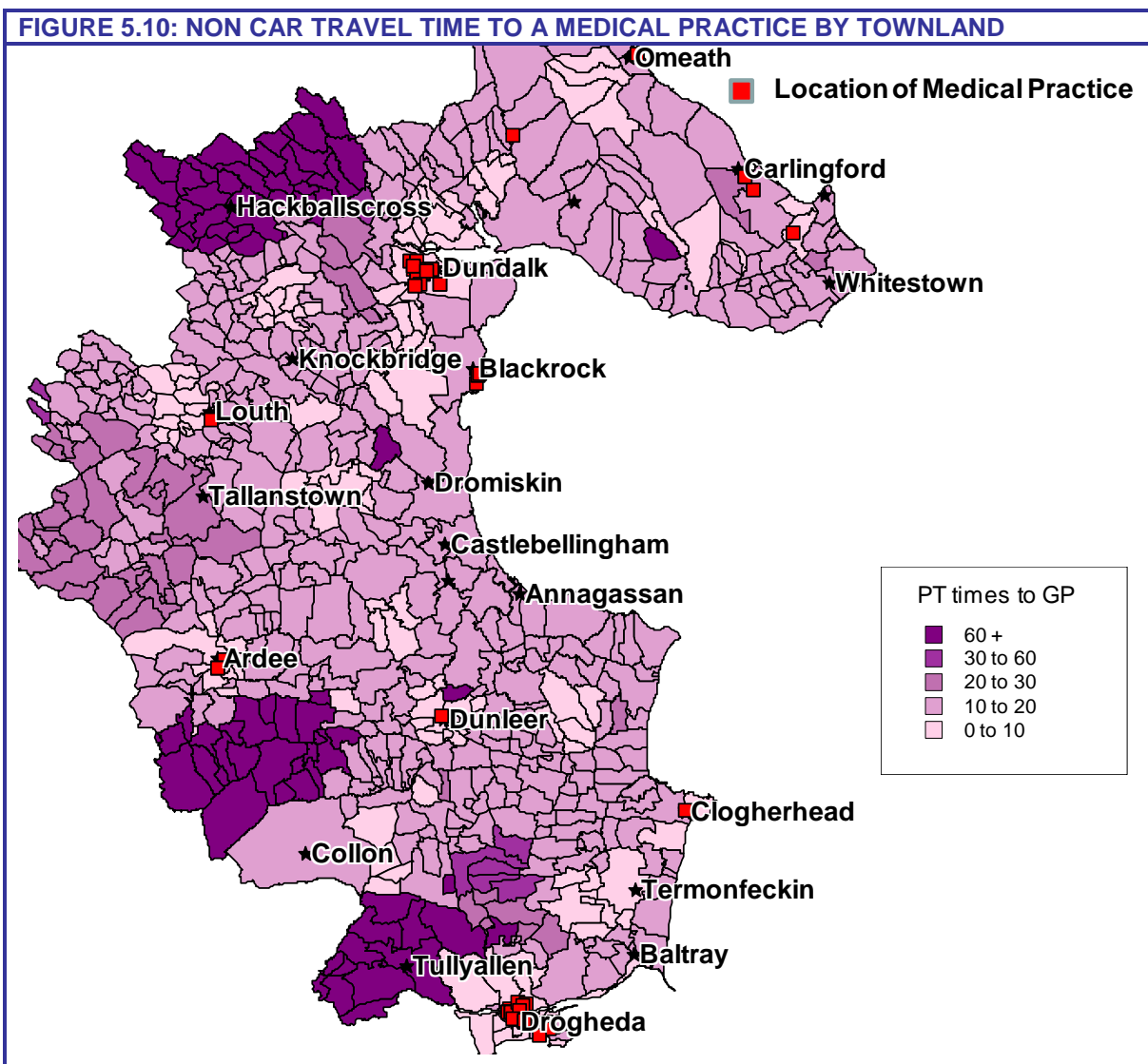


²³ Where a partner offers a lift to the public transport network.

5.3.4 Access to healthcare

Access to four types of healthcare service was analysed: Medical practice; Chemist; Dentist; Hospital.

Figure 5.10 shows that most settlements have medical practices ensuring good access for rural and urban dwellers.

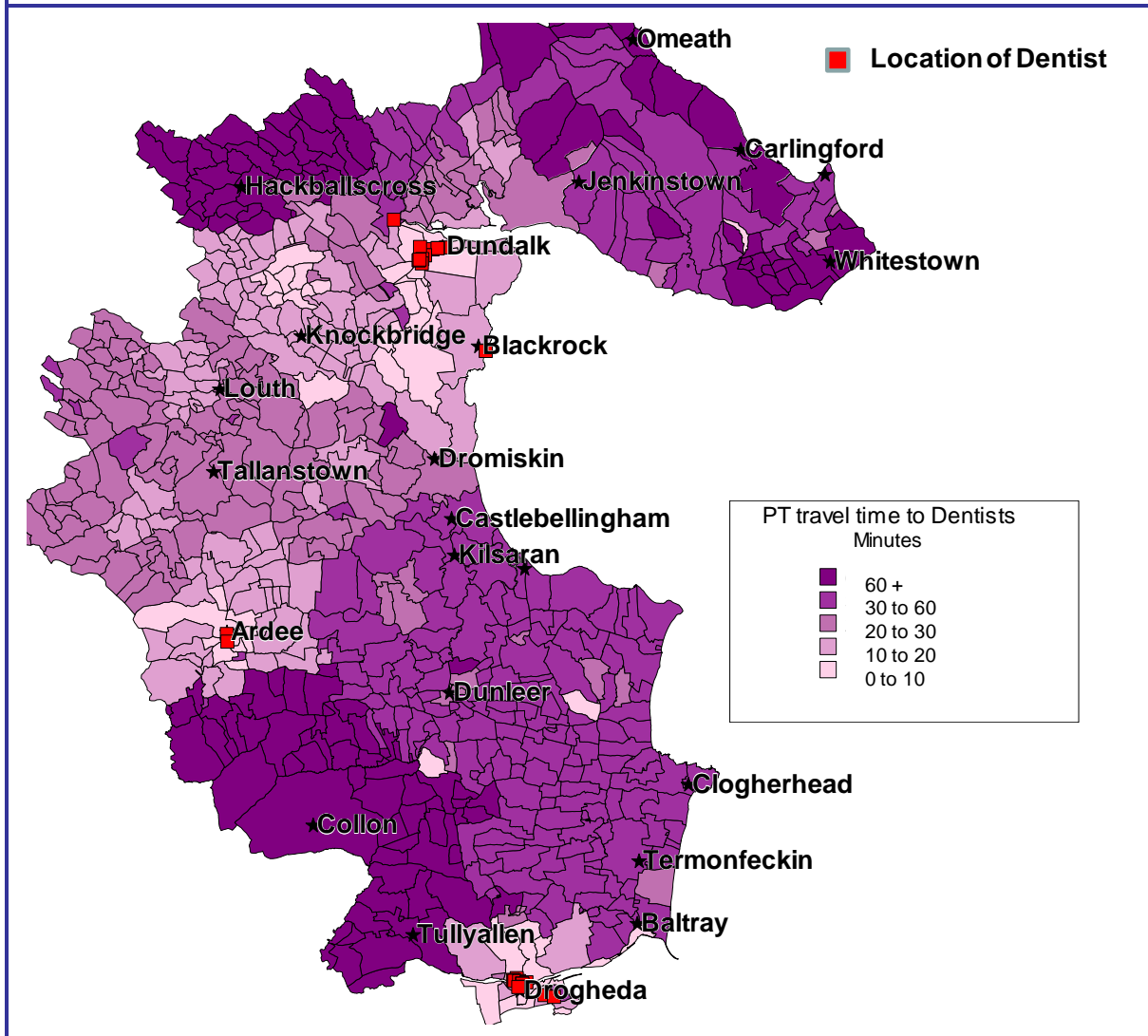


The analysis shows that there are fewer chemists than medical practices, so residents may find that having been prescribed medicines they need to travel to a neighbouring village to reach a chemist.

Dentists are not accessed so regularly by most people and are largely contained within the major towns. This means that locations with poor public transport would not offer a public transport option for a return trip to a dentist.

Figure 5.11 shows that in many parts of County Louth residents without a car would need to get a taxi or a lift from a friend or relative if they were to be able to visit the dentist.

FIGURE 5.11: NON CAR TRAVEL TIME TO A DENTIST BY TOWNLAND



Drive times to hospitals are on average only a fifth of the public transport times. This compares with access to the local transport hubs where drive times are about a third of the public transport times on average. Hospitals are therefore relatively less accessible by public transport despite being major trip generators, particularly for low mobility groups.

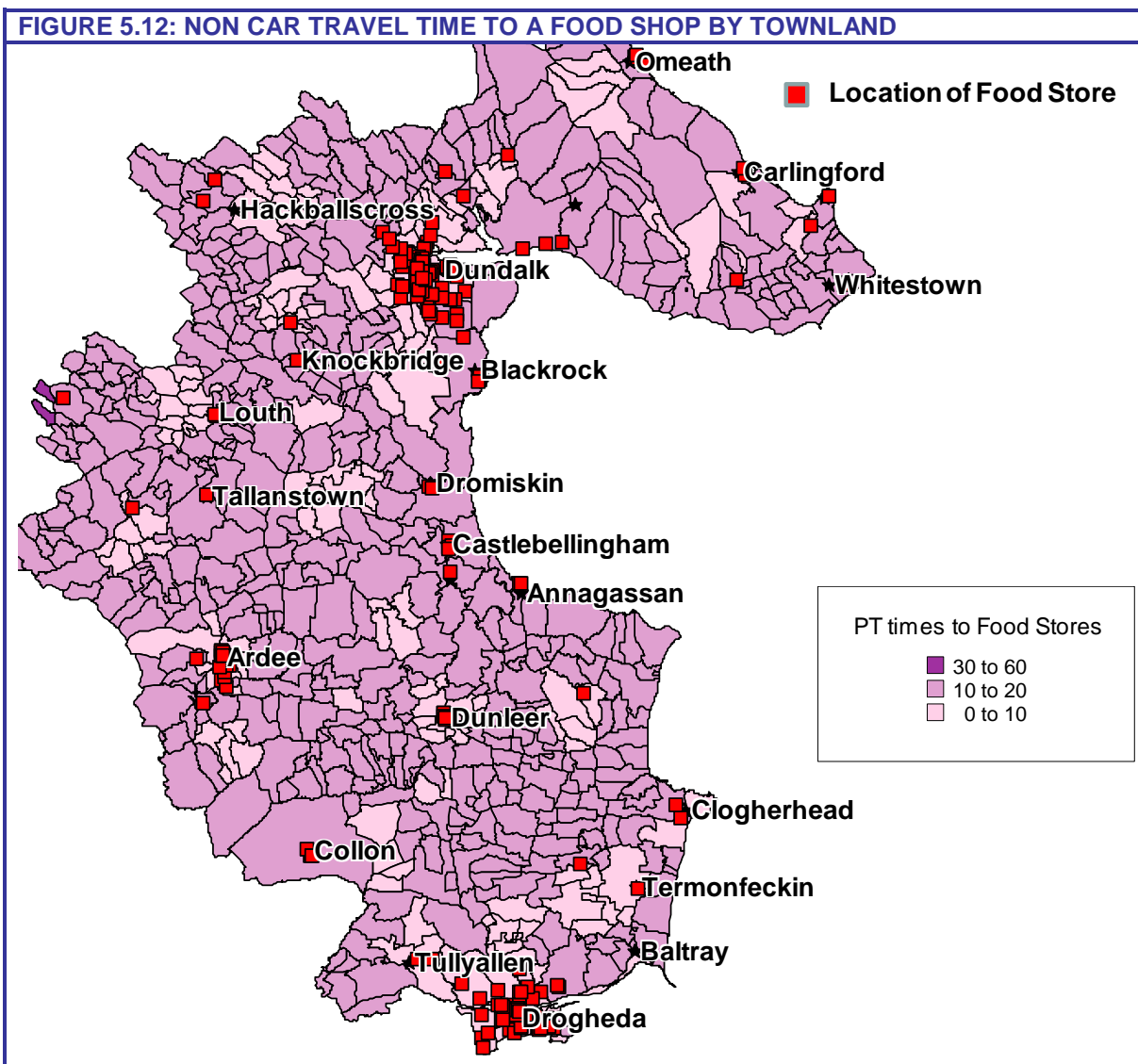
Although patients may often need high care services, such as door-to-door transport, there are many reasons why good hospital access for the general population is beneficial:

- Non car-owners can visit friends and relatives in hospital;
- The costs of regular trips for check-ups or other treatment can be high if taxis are being used regularly;
- Hospital parking is increasingly under pressure so the ability for more staff and visitors to use public transport is helpful;
- There are health benefits if the healthcare sector supports a move away from car dependency by staff, patients and visitors.

5.3.5 Access to Food Shops

There is widespread provision of foodstores giving most people in County Louth good access to a local store.

Figure 5.12 shows that all townlands are within 20 minutes of a foodstore using public transport.



5.4 Key Findings

The overall implication of the analysis is that the scheduled public transport position in Louth is quite positive, particularly in an Irish context outside a major urban centre.

Chapter 4 already stated that the majority of its residents have access to their own or family cars. From a pure accessibility perspective, as distinct from an environmental or sustainability one, this means that the majority of individuals and households are relatively self-contained in terms of meeting their immediate transport needs.

Furthermore, a majority of the population in most locations appears to have relatively good access to scheduled public transport services, principally bus services provided by Bus Éireann and other service providers.

However, some gaps remain, particularly in relation to specific groups and for those living in more remote rural areas, who do not have use of their own car.

Further development of the system, therefore, necessitates a combination of increasing people's access to the services that already exist, in both urban and rural areas, the development of further 'collect and connect' type services for people in remoter areas, and improving the service provided by existing scheduled services.

From the qualitative research and consultations, a number of other more specific issues arise:

- lack of a clear agreed local transport service plan. Local communities do not know how to get something such as a footpath improvement or a new bus shelter in place. Some bus-stops are not in the optimal place. There is also no electronic data on when bus services run and where;
- closing the communications gap. People may think that they cannot use the bus, e.g. to get to the shops and that they have enough information about bus services. However, we know that once local access to bus-stop issues have been resolved, people have access to a bus, yet they do not have enough information to make good choices;
- who pays and who delivers? Management of transport needs clear separate client and contractor functions. There is a need to run services to meet people's needs. This has been already recognised and the new National Transport Authority has taken on the client function for bus transport at national level.

6. Managing and Delivering the Changes

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the report's conclusions and proposals, based on the analysis and findings of the earlier chapters.

Section 6.2 sets out the key findings from the analysis, and the challenges in making proposals for the future. Section 6.3 sets out our proposals for the way ahead regarding local passenger transport provision in County Louth, key issues arising in this regard, and the specific initiatives that need to be undertaken. Section 6.6 sets out our proposals regarding new co-ordination structure through which future plans should be implemented.

6.2 Key Findings and Challenges Ahead

6.2.1 Key Findings

A number of key findings emerge from the earlier chapters that are critical to the planning of passenger transport provision in Louth in the period ahead.

Firstly, the private car is king: in common with the rest of the country, Louth is a very car-dominated society. While its level of car ownership is actually slightly below the national average, nevertheless most households in Louth have a car, and the car is the predominant mode of transport for most people to work and for leisure.

In the short-term this clearly has the benefit that most people are therefore not dependent on the public transport system for their primary transport needs. However, it has the longer-term disadvantages of making a good public transport system harder to provide, particularly for those who don't have access to a car, and of course it raises sustainability issues that are central to national and international concern.

This finding also highlights the importance of objectives in defining a local passenger transport system, i.e. is it to meet the unmet needs of passengers on the one hand, or is it to improve sustainability on the other hand. In the long-term the two objectives coincide, but in the short-term this is not necessarily so.

Secondly, reflecting the above, the majority of the population in County Louth, is broadly satisfied with their current access to both transport services themselves, and their access to the destinations to which they travel. Including usage of cars, over 80% of residents expressed satisfaction with their

current level of access to shops and services. Even among vulnerable target groups this percentage is still close to or above 70%. This of course still leaves a sizeable minority who are not satisfied with provision.

Thirdly, the level of public transport provision in Louth is relatively good by Irish and even international standards. In most townlands in County Louth it is feasible to travel to and from work and shops using public transport.

Fourthly, leaving aside environmental sustainability, the immediate transport needs of people in County Louth relate to vulnerable groups, including rural dwellers, older people, younger people, people on low incomes, and people with disabilities. These generally constitute a significant minority in terms of their perception of access to transport generally, and specifically their satisfaction with public transport. Based on our survey results, the groups with particularly significant and consistent departures from general satisfaction levels are rural dwellers and younger people.

Finally, indications from both the survey and the accessibility analysis also indicate that groups with particular difficulties are broadly spread across the county, rather than there being major transport blackspots. Most differences therefore relate to socio-economic status rather than geographical location, albeit within the general finding that people in rural areas, and particularly remote rural areas, will predictably have particular difficulties vis-à-vis public transport usage.

6.2.2 Challenges in Improving the Passenger Transport System

Improving public transport services in County Louth faces a number of immediate challenges:

- the nature of the problems as set out in Section 6.2.1 means that they may affect many people who are harder to reach and who are widely dispersed;
- as documented in the main report, both car availability and scheduled conventional public transport services in Louth are already relatively good;
- while nationally there is a considerable amount of relatively benign policy towards local transport passenger services, this tends to be of a reasonably broad and aspirational nature. In particular, there are no clear service objectives or standards against which Louth can be compared and hence no barometer of what in an Irish context constitutes adequate or inadequate public transport provision;
- most of the policy and much of the delivery of transport services in a county such as Louth is decided centrally with relatively low levels of local discretion. This relates in particular to the public transport services of Iarnród Éireann and Bus Éireann, the school transport system, but also even to the resource-level of the Rural Transport Programme;
- many national policies relevant to local transport services are evolving, including in relation to sustainable transport, in relation to the future of the Rural Transport Programme, and in relation

to the subvention of non-profitable passenger transport services via recent establishment of the new National Transport Authority;

- the current economic and fiscal climate is a major new challenge which means that the focus of public transport service planning and delivery is likely to need to shift from expansion to preservation of services, and public subvention for passenger transport services either has already, or is likely to, come under increasing scrutiny.

6.2.3 Opportunities

The present time can also be seen as one of opportunities in regards to passenger transport services for a variety of reasons:

- in an economic downturn, it is likely that at least some people may have second thoughts about the cost of private car ownership and reliance on this, and may be willing to consider public transport usage;
- national policy towards public transport is increasingly favourable, and in particular has the boost of a stronger sustainability emphasis and not just a social service one as might have been the case in the past;
- the current climate of achieving 'more for less' may create a more positive attitude towards inter-agency co-operation and resource-sharing, and renewed interest in cost-reducing options.

6.2.4 Overall Strategy

There are in principle four core elements of improving public transport provision for the residents of Louth or other locations:

- (a) to improve or at least preserve existing conventional scheduled services, the element on which most focus tends naturally to fall;
- (b) improvement or preservation of associated non-conventional demand-led services, including their linkages with scheduled services, as is the focus of Louth Rural Linx. It can also include other partners such as the HSE;
- (c) other means to improve access for residents to existing public transport services. This includes both hard and soft initiatives, including better information on public transport services, better associated infrastructure such as bus-stops and their location, better interconnectivity between different forms of public transport services, and availability of facilities such as park-and-ride and bus lanes;
- (d) improved co-ordination between the above three.

6.3 Future Transport Strategy: Issues and Elements

6.3.1 *Achieving Better Value for Money*

There are two main mechanisms that will enable extra trips to be delivered within existing resources to improve transport for people:

- Making better use of the existing resources (staff, vehicles, administration, equipment, ICT) through:
 - more effective management;
 - more efficient scheduling;
 - service rationing/planning to maximise trips;
 - co-ordination of demand across agencies;
 - co-ordination of supply across agencies;
 - more appropriate mix of resources to match demand;
 - better marketing.
- obtaining additional investment through:
 - greater contribution from individual or institutional users (directly through higher fares/charges or indirectly through greater use of concessionary travel);
 - increased contribution from agency funders (local and national);
 - greater volunteer labour/community involvement contribution;
 - local fund-raising/cross-subsidy from other activities.

In County Louth the planning and scheduling of fixed bus services is already delivering good network coverage as shown by the accessibility analysis. The discussion below therefore concentrates on the potential gains that can be delivered through co-ordination, including management of demand-responsive services.

6.3.2 *The Peak Demand Issue*

There are a number of operational pressures towards integration, notably the 'peak demand problem', most graphically illustrated by the twice-daily influx of vehicles to the schools and day centres, and to a lesser extent, major health facilities. Some of these vehicles (e.g. dedicated school buses) otherwise stand idle for the rest of the day, and during the school holidays.

Although catering for 'average' demand would be cost-effective, the need to cope with peaks requires expensive resources used for only a brief period each day. Most agencies simply accept this as an inevitable cost, often because transport costs represent only a small proportion of the overall cost of the service. However, a variety of approaches can be considered to improve the situation, summarised as:

- *Vehicle capacity sharing* – where peak vehicle demands for different uses do not coincide, joint operation requires fewer vehicles, assuming that vehicles and staff are interchangeable. Even where peaks coincide, savings may still accrue in areas such as management, depot facilities and scale economies, but do not generate the additional passenger trip capacity which is the primary motivation for co-ordination;
- *Joint scheduling* – practicable where catchment areas and times roughly overlap, this involves mixing of passengers for two or more destinations. Savings of 15% are common for joint scheduling where destinations are reasonably close and passengers are randomly distributed. Each base may retain its own vehicle, and time savings may give quality improvements or additional passenger capacity. However, where education and social work are willing to even consider such shared use, in practice the mixing of passengers of different types may remain a significant barrier;
- *Marginal cost peak pricing* – current uniform cost structures distort the perception of transport costs, which in other fields employ differential pricing, so that peak services cost more. Clearer cost centres and purchaser/provider separation can inform service managers about the cost implications of different choices in the nature, timing and flexibility of transport provided;
- *Marketing spare capacity* – there can be periods of spare transport capacity, which there is usually little pressure to ‘market’ as selling passenger transport is not the education or HSE business. However, marketing the service could dilute fixed costs;
- *Flexible opening hours* – Examples of greater flexibility are common in the social work sector where there has been a trend towards more flexible attendance arrangements at day centres, with some acting more as ‘drop-in’ centres and including 6 or 7 day opening. Development of more flexible services and centre opening times enable some savings due to reductions in peak demand. However, moves towards more flexible and decentralised services may themselves add to costs and need to take account of the impact on carers and support systems put into service users’ homes. There are also a few examples where schools have altered start and finish times in order to benefit financially from transport savings (a proportion of savings have been paid to the school as an incentive). More commonly, however, schools have provided greater flexibility to transport co-ordinators by extending the slots within which pupils may be on the premises before and after the formal opening times. Even a 5 minute extension can have a significant impact on costs;
- *Buy-in peak capacity* – one approach is to cover average demand through a core fleet (either owned or contracted, or a mixture) and to buy in cover for the peak demand from other operators with spare capacity, assuming this (e.g. accessible vehicles) is readily available. However, unless adequate budgets are provided, this may simply result in unmet demand;
- *Split shifts* – an effective cost control strategy pays staff only for the time during which they are required; e.g. split shifts, or combination with other necessary jobs. The latter is particularly effective where the duties are directly complementary; e.g. as per the practice within education

where passenger assistants are also employed as welfare assistants. This can also be applied within social work using a proportion of social work care assistants as passenger assistants / drivers. Potential criticism of vehicles thus being out of use in off-peak periods may be minimised if complementary uses can be found for the vehicles, e.g. among schools or voluntary groups.

The variety of different approaches, and the complexity of some of them, means that experience across Europe is that individual transport operators operating their own vehicles have not proved to be able to produce rational solutions to the peak demand problem, and thus some central planning and co-ordination is helpful.

6.3.3 *Building on What is Already There*

There are a number of parties who currently provide the funding for transport in County Louth and who need to clarify the criteria that will be used to match funding to delivery priorities: the Department of Transport/NTA; DES, DSFA the HSE, and the RTP/Pobal. Each of these has relationships with different providers and in some cases relationships with multiple transport providers including bus, taxi and community transport operators.

County Louth has generally good scheduled bus services. Measures which skew changes in current provision to deliver improvements can often be easier and more effective than attempting to start new services. This is especially so in the present economic climate.

The bus (and links to rail) networks work most efficiently as hub and spoke networks and it is at the bottom tier of this that the new demand-responsive services, including Louth Rural Linx services, are needed, such as 'collect and connect'. However interchange can reduce the attractiveness of public transport for some people so it is important to ensure that interchange is managed effectively and that efficient higher cost door-to-door provision is also available for people who prefer not to interchange.

Achieving publicly acceptable and consistent standards may be challenging since public expectations are often governed by expectations from past delivery. Public engagement is needed to ensure that community leaders support and advocate the changes to help deliver better access for all.

The customer interface is often staff on vehicles such as bus drivers so ensuring that all staff are committed to the improvements, and can assist with the dissemination of information about changes, will be important. Staff training will be key, not just for dealing with able-bodied customers but ensuring that MIDAS and PATS training is available to all people who may be transporting more vulnerable travellers, including those in the taxi and community sector.

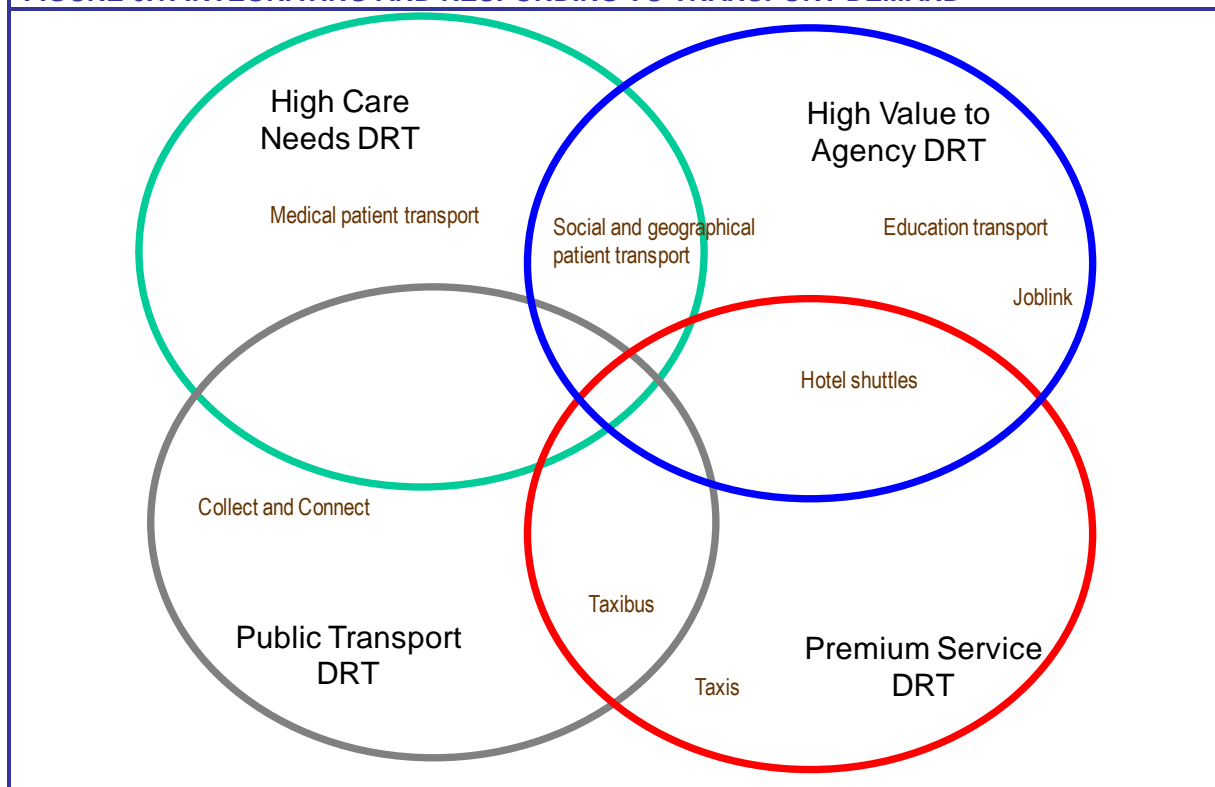
Practical details about information provision, multi-operator tickets, managing feedback on consumer satisfaction, timetabling of services and management of shared infrastructure helps to foster more integrated approaches to delivery. Lack of attention to shared priorities can result in poor communication systems or confusing signals being sent out.

Despite recent improvements, there is little overlap between provision for different purposes at present. Figure 6.1 illustrates how the separate service delivery can be co-ordinated by greater overlap between the different provision. Efficient transport delivery in rural areas where there is lower demand has much greater overlap than in the urban areas where vehicles may be at capacity working on single sector operation. The management of co-ordination is expensive so it should only be attempted where it delivers overall savings.

The types of additional service envisaged are all Demand Responsive Transport (DRT). Flexible and DRT includes services which:

- Are booked in advance by users and only run when there are people to carry. These demand responsive forms of transport include taxis, private hire vehicles including airport transfer services, community transport, dial-a-ride and ring-and-ride.
- Are booked or arranged by public agencies to respond to travel needs for patient transport, school transport, social services and employment agencies.
- Run on a fixed route unless people book in advance to request a diversion based on their required travel needs. Flexibility is sometimes only needed at certain times of day or on certain days of the week. These include many rural public transport services and other transport serving areas of low demand.

FIGURE 6.1: INTEGRATING AND RESPONDING TO TRANSPORT DEMAND



6.3.4 Potential for Increased Co-operation

In Chapter 4 it was shown that the main budgets for public passenger transport are:

- funding provided to Bus Éireann for the operation of PSO services in Louth;
- funding provided to Louth Linx;
- funding provided to eligible persons under the Free Travel Pass;
- funding provided by the HSE for transport services.

The recent review of Bus Éireann²⁴ suggested that improved co-ordination would allow better use to be made of this budget. For example, if Bus Éireann or other providers supply or could develop even better services this would reduce the need for the HSE to provide or fund transport.

In order to achieve this type of co-ordination international good practice^{25 26} suggests it is important to ensure clarity on four functions for passenger transport planning and delivery:

²⁴ Deloitte, *Cost and Efficiency Review of Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann*, 2009.

²⁵ Audit Commission, *Going Places: Taking People to and from Education, Social Services and Health Care*, 2001.

²⁶ Virgil, *Final Report*. ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/transport/docs/summaries/urban_virgil_report.pdf, 2000.

- policy making and policy content;
- budget holding;
- organising;
- provision.

Issues that may constitute a challenge to co-ordination occur at all four levels above. However, most pressure for co-ordination focuses on operational integration and especially on the vehicles, e.g. underused school buses. This is, however, rarely a good starting point since vehicle costs are only a minor part of passenger transport operating costs (staff costs amount to 70% plus and the greater the care level, the greater the staffing costs are likely to be).

Operating costs and effectiveness will be determined by the way in which stated policies are implemented within given budgets. In County Louth one initial challenge will be to clarify which public agency locally could take a leadership role for co-ordination of a defined set of services: the County Council, Bus Éireann, Rural Linx, etc.

This problem exists in many countries but is particularly acute in Ireland, given the prevalence of local public organisations reporting ‘vertically’ to the central government, and the relatively limited range of functions of Irish local government. The starting point is, therefore, to consider policy harmonisation and to identify where the most significant budgets are held, before moving on to operational integration, i.e. demand-side integration should precede supply-side integration.

In a recent report, the UK Audit Commission concluded that greater integration of the passenger transport functions identified above can produce:

- Better quality services;
- Better access to services by disadvantaged groups;
- More efficient resource utilisation;
- Greater development opportunities.

6.3.5 Towards an Action Plan

Based on this review the sections below summarise priority actions needed in County Louth to tackle the problems that have been identified. These are divided into two categories:

- Investing in Transport for People (i.e. the transport supply side actions);
- Investing in People for Transport (i.e. actions directed at the demand side transport user).

These need to be developed by the suggested new planning and co-ordination mechanisms proposed in Section 6.4 into a more detailed and prioritised action-list with timescales, budgets, management and delivery roles and responsibilities.

Investing in Transport for People

Action 1: Hub and spoke bus developments including interchange improvements.

Implementation Approach: required in all areas. Prioritise improvements in the areas showing 60+ minutes for travel in Chapter 5.

Action 2: road and traffic management changes to prioritise vehicles with more passengers per vehicle.

Implementation Approach: to develop a programme of site based travel plans to look at drop off/parking/stops at hospitals and make recommendations to the relevant organisation for roads, buildings, transport operation and other changes. This should start with the largest trip attractors in the urban areas but should eventually include any location, urban or rural.

A key aim should be to turn the energy of people who are concerned about a problem into action that helps to solve it.

Action 3: Co-ordinating supply with the transport response “demand responsive transport” (DRT).

Implementation Approach: Identify where and how to set up a transport co-ordination centre following the advice in this report (see Section 6.4 for more details).

Action 4: Continued support for scheduled or demand responsive transport that cannot cover its costs of operation.

Implementation Approach: Co-ordinate proposals to reallocate the budgets available to transport in County Louth to deliver improved accessibility, including use of spare capacity/under-utilised resources.

Action 5: Safety and quality improvements for access to public transport.

Implementation Approach: Launch a programme of safer routes to and for public transport, i.e. systematically upgrade roads, footpaths and streetscape to improve the quality of public transport journeys. This should include shelters in selected locations.

Action 6: Services for special groups such as those with high care needs or others requiring bespoke services.

Implementation Approach: Establish a co-ordination centre to procure a programme that ensures that all people can make trips. This can build from the provision offered by Louth Linx to offer trips to a wider range of origins and destinations.

Investing in People for Transport

Action 1: Travel training

Implementation Approach: Council to engage with volunteering groups in the area and develop a programme of travel training.

Action 2: Travel information

Implementation Approach: Promote installation of GPS tracking on all buses and other public transport in County Louth so that residents can view the location of vehicles in real time to help plan their journeys.

Clarify who will create an electronic timetable database of transport services including the terms and eligibility for use of DRT services.

Action 3: Community cars.

Implementation Approach: New transport co-ordination centre to work with volunteer organisations to increase the number of volunteer drivers and assistants.

Action 4: Trip sharing.

Implementation Approach: Develop a trip share scheme to manage shared travel, with the co-ordination role being to ensure effective protection for both people offering and taking lifts.

Action 5: Vehicle sharing.

Implementation Approach: Co-ordination centre to manage shared use of minibuses (e.g. those owned by statutory agencies) and perhaps also cars.

Action 6: Personal travel allowances.

Implementation Approach: Link payments for transport to clearer eligibility criteria. Ensure that eligibility criteria are clearly defined in all partner agencies.

6.4 Co-ordination Structure

6.4.1 Towards an Action Plan

Our specific proposal for management and delivery is that Louth County Council, together with the other local partners, develop a staged approach to improving transport services co-ordination in the county. We propose these stages, which can grow incrementally over time:

Stage 1 – Transport Planning and Co-ordination Committee (LTPCC): this could build on the existing structures in the County, including policy committees, CDB and Louth Rural Linx to constitute a county-level transport co-ordination group. This would implement the Plan, by increasing co-ordination between bodies which all retain their own distinct roles, budgets and responsibilities. Key early focus should be on co-ordinated planning and on addressing information gaps.²⁷

Stage 2 – A Shared Plan: this would involve the preparation of a shared public transport services plan for the county, led by the local authority, and including close co-operation with other key players including Bus Éireann, other transport operators, Louth Rural Linx, HSE, DES and the Department of Social and Family Affairs, and such other local interests as these parties may think appropriate. This would build on the work of the present report and the ongoing pilot projects, the experience of other local authorities and of other RTP Groups around the country. It should develop a series of specific actions to be undertaken, and identify the parties responsible for these.

Stage 3 – Louth Transport Planning and Co-ordination Unit: building on the then existing LTPCC, this could be done by creating a joint unit of a number of the key stakeholders with the role of stimulating a series of joint activities. These joint activities might include improved information for users, and establishment of an electronic database.

Stage 4 – Co-ordinated Purchasing: this could involve a number of the funding organisations (not necessarily all) attempting to purchase transport services, e.g. minibus and taxi on a co-ordinated basis. This, and all other proposals here, would of course be subject to the requirements of relevant national transport and procurement legislation and regulation.

Stage 5 – Local Transport Brokerage Office: this role would probably be best sub-contracted to a suitable operational entity, e.g. it might be based on the existing resources of Louth Rural Linx, with its remit extended to local transport generally.

6.5 Resources

6.5.1 Service Subvention

The analysis in the main report has already suggested that current annual public subvention of scheduled passenger transport services in County Louth is approximately €10 mn. This excludes an Iarnród Éireann figure. A working supposition for the immediate years ahead is that this amount is unlikely to rise and that therefore the focus should be on achieving the best value for money from it.

²⁷ Difficulties with access to up-to-date geo-coded information was a significant challenge for the present study.

As set out in the previous section, we do not anticipate that in the short term it is feasible to literally pool these resources locally, instead they are likely to continue to be funded as separate streams centrally. Therefore, our proposals regarding co-ordination in Section 6.4 above are aimed at ensuring that this level of resources can be utilised to best effect locally on a partnership basis.

6.5.2 Resourcing Co-ordination Functions

A specific feature of our proposals is a build-up of staged co-ordination which will itself have costs.

Costs are likely to be relatively small in Steps 1 and 2, e.g. perhaps €50,000-€100,000 per annum. However, by the time Step 3 is reached, more significant co-ordination costs of perhaps €200,000-€300,000 might be likely. Regarding sources for this, a number of potential sources are:

- (a) that the RTP co-ordination resources be utilised for a broader transportation unit rather than being dedicated exclusively to the RTP;²⁸
- (b) that dedicated funding be sought from the Department of Transport on the basis that Louth is developing a pilot initiative with potential replicability in other counties, and with a focus on value for money;
- (c) that the Council also makes a contribution either in cash or in kind. The view may be taken by the Council that it has no money for such initiatives at present, but this is clearly a matter of priorities. With any fixed budget the Council will have a degree of discretion on to what matters it accord priorities;²⁹
- (d) that resources saved by other funding, e.g. HSE be used to support co-ordination.

Generally, a key purpose of co-ordination is to save money so if this is happening resources saved could be used to fund the co-ordination. The focus would also be on improving usage of existing assets including vehicles, and on use of voluntary inputs where possible.

6.5.3 Voluntary Car Schemes

A relatively under-utilised method of demand-responsive transport provision is that of voluntary car schemes, i.e. structured lift-giving. This is quite prevalent in the UK, but has received relatively little attention in Ireland to date. However, it could be argued that Ireland's widely dispersed rural population, combined with a high level of car ownership, makes this highly pertinent. It is therefore a dimension which could be pursued more rigorously in Louth as a national pathfinder.

²⁸ This proposal relates to the RTP resources for management/co-ordination as opposed to actual service provision.

²⁹ Potential in-kind contributions could be staff or office premises.

6.5.4 The School Bus System

The issue of utilising the resources of the school bus system as a basis for improved conventional or non-conventional passenger transport services is consistently raised in Louth and elsewhere. As outlined in the main report, the Irish and therefore Louth school transport system, in common with that in a variety of other countries, has a number of key features:

- it receives dedicated funding from the education system, with a transport provider (Bus Éireann) supplying the services on a contract basis;
- Bus Éireann does this utilising a mix of its own and contracted-in vehicles from the private sector. At national level the ratio between these is strongly towards the latter;
- Bus Éireann's own school bus fleet tends to be vehicles which have cascaded downwards from the conventional scheduled services.

Discussion about using the school bus system generally relates not to opening up school routes to people other than students, but rather to use of the vehicles and drivers during downtime, as a relatively cost-effective resource.

However, as noted above, much of the school-bus fleet is contracted in and not owned by Bus Éireann. To the extent that the school bus system is contracted in, then these vehicles and drivers are, in principle, available for other users during non-school times if resources are available to fund this. So this becomes an issue of resources, not of co-ordination.

The more complex issue is whether the Bus Éireann owned part of the school bus fleet and drivers could be utilised to provide non-conventional services during off-peak hours. Bus Éireann has historically been unenthusiastic about this, pointing out a number of challenges. These challenges include the fact that these are older vehicles so increased usage would reduce their lifespan as school buses, the legal and insurance problems around such alternative uses, and the suitability of the relatively large vehicles involved for demand-responsive services, especially in rural areas. This is an issue which needs to be explored nationally rather than on a Louth specific basis.

6.6 Wider Role of the Council

There are two main mechanisms for improving the ability of people to get to their desired destinations:

- (a) improving the capacity of people to travel;
- (b) improving the transport to align its capabilities with local people and their needs.

The main emphasis of our analysis and this report has been on the second of these, but we have also placed considerable focus on the first, such as issues of information provision.

However, it should be noted that there is a third important element of improving accessibility. This is the development of plans and programmes to ensure that the locations for service delivery allow efficient access, i.e. that services are brought to the people rather than necessarily taking the people to the services.

This is a very important dimension from the point of view of the local authority as planning authority. It includes discharge of the Council's own planning responsibilities, and also the need for joint working with other public and private bodies regarding service delivery, including influencing development locations, measures to encourage service delivery in suitable locations, and measures to ensure that major attractors are not located in the areas where there is no, and there is no provision for, and no prospect of any provision for, public transport.

Annexes

Annex 1: Results of Survey of Transport Access Needs and Opportunities, County Louth 2009

A postal survey of transport access needs and opportunities of County Louth residents was carried out for this study in November 2009. The survey was designed to obtain the views of residents on their access to services, existing use of transport types and journeys made. Questionnaires were posted to 2000 persons selected at random from each electoral division in the County Louth electoral register and 221 responses were received, a response rate of 11%. Of these responses, 55% were from females and 45% were from males. Some 19% of respondents stated that they have a long term illness or disability. This figure is high relative to the Census figure for persons with disability of 9.4%.

The survey has yielded a very large volume of information and what is presented below is a summary of what are deemed to be the more significant findings in relation to the requirements of the Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference specified 'The key target groups are older people especially those living in more isolated rural areas, young people, people on low incomes and people with mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments'. The Electoral Register is broken down by Electoral Division and this enabled the responses from rural addresses to be identified. Questions were included in the questionnaire relating to age, income and disability which enabled responses from other key target groups to be identified and analysed.

For the purposes of this study, working definitions of the key target groups were adopted. These definitions and the number of responses received were:

- Rural – residents in Electoral Divisions that are classified by CSO as rural – 68 responses.
- Older People – 65 years or older – 65 responses.
- Young People – 18-24 – 10 responses – Note low number of responses for this age group means results need to be interpreted with caution.
- People on Low Incomes – personal gross annual income of €0-€9,999 – 42 responses.
- People with mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments – responses declaring a long-lasting illness, health problem or disability that limits daily activity or work – 44 responses.

Results of the survey are presented for each key target group.

Questionnaire Used for Survey



Survey of Transport Access Needs and Opportunities



Louth County Council is examining ways to make local transport services more responsive to the needs of residents, and in this way improve quality of life in the county. This questionnaire seeks your views on access to important services and the ways in which transport could be improved. You are therefore asked to complete it. You have been chosen at random from the Electoral Register for County Louth.

Please be assured that the information you provide will be treated as entirely **confidential** and will only be used in aggregate form to advise national and local government on how to make best use of transport resources in County Louth. The questionnaire should take around 10 minutes to complete.

If you have any queries about the questionnaire, please phone Monica Keane at Fitzpatrick Associates, Tel: 01-4966008.

Thank you very much for your time and help and we look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire in the enclosed **freepost** envelope.

YOUR ACCESS TO KEY SERVICES

Q1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about accessing key services? (Please only tick one box on each line)

1. I can access the shops and services that I need
2. I am able to access shops and services by bus if I want to.
3. I am happy with the amount of travel I undertake.
4. Lack of transport services means I travel less often than I want.
5. I rely on lifts from family and friends to access the places I need to go
6. The cost of travel is the main reason I do not travel more.
7. The time it takes to travel is the main reason I do not travel more.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Feel free to add comments here about difficulties you have accessing services and facility

Q2 How often is a car/van, etc. available to you personally for use as a driver or passenger? (Please only tick one box on each line)

	Always	Often	Rarely	Never
Weekday daytime	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Weekday evening	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Saturday daytime	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Saturday evening	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Sunday daytime	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Sunday evening	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

Q3 How many passenger vehicles (car, van etc.) are there in your household?

None <input type="checkbox"/> 0	One <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Two <input type="checkbox"/> 2	3 or more <input type="checkbox"/> 3
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YOUR USE OF TRANSPORT AND PERCEPTIONS OF TRANSPORT TYPES

Q4. How frequently do you use each type of transport?
(Please tick only one box on each line)

	5 or more times weekly	2-4 times weekly	About once weekly	Less than once weekly but at least once monthly	Less than once monthly	Never
1. Private car as a driver	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
2. Private car as a passenger	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
3. Scheduled bus or coach	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
4. Other bus/coach/minibus	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
5. Train	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
6. Taxi	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
7. Bicycle	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
8. Motorcycle	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
9. Walking to and from a destination	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
10. Other (please write in below)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your experiences of transport in the County? (Please tick only one box on each line)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I travel by car where possible either as driver or passenger	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
2. When I cannot travel by car I prefer to use a taxi	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
3. Bus services operating in my area allow me to reach the most important facilities /services	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
4. Bus services in my area operate frequently enough to meet my needs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
5. Bus fares in my area are about right	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
6. Bus services in my area are generally reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
7. Bus services use comfortable good quality vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
8. I can easily get good information about bus services in my area	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
9. I feel safe and secure using a bus	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Q6. With regard to your car usage as a driver or as a passenger, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following? (Please tick only one box on each line)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I am not interested in reducing my car use	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
2. There are no practical alternatives to most of the car trips I make	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
3. When I am getting ready to go out, I usually don't think about how I am going to travel, I just get in my car	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
4. Reducing my car use would make me feel good	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
5. I am quite flexible about what types of transport I use	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
6. Traffic congestion is a problem in my area	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
7. Being environmentally responsible is important to me as a person	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

ABOUT THE JOURNEYS YOU MAKE

Q7. How many return trips do you make per week, by purpose and means of transport?

Trip purpose ▼

Number of
RETURN trips
per WEEK
(approx)
Please put in
relevant box
below
▼

Means of Transport used for this trip
(Please tick box)

Most Frequent
Destination for this trip
(e.g. Dundalk centre)
Please write in below
▼

1. Work
2. School or further education
3. Business travel
4. Food shopping
5. Other shopping
6. Hospital/ health centre
7. Personal business e.g. bank, post office
8. Social/ recreational
9. Other (please state) ▼

	Car	Van	Walk	Bus	Taxi	Train	Cycle	
1. Work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. School or further education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Business travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Food shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Other shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Hospital/ health centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Personal business e.g. bank, post office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Social/ recreational	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Other (please state) ▼	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Q8. When do you mostly make these trips?
(Please tick one box per line for each trip type made)

1. Work
2. School or further education
3. Business travel
4. Food shopping
5. Other shopping
6. Hospital/ health centre
7. Personal business e.g. bank, post office
8. Social/ recreational
9. Other (please state)

	Weekday daytime	Weekday evening	Saturday daytime	Saturday evening	Sunday anytime
1. Work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. School or further education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Business travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Food shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Other shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Hospital/ health centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Personal business e.g. bank, post office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Social/ recreational	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ABOUT YOU

Q9. How old are you? (Please only tick one box)

18-24 <input type="checkbox"/>	25-34 <input type="checkbox"/>	35-44 <input type="checkbox"/>	45-54 <input type="checkbox"/>	55-64 <input type="checkbox"/>	65-74 <input type="checkbox"/>	75 or over <input type="checkbox"/>
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Q10. What gender are you? (Please only tick one box)

Male ☐

Female ☐

Q11. Do you have a long-lasting illness, health problem or disability that limits your daily activity or the kind of work that you can do?
(Please only tick one box)

Yes ☐

No ☐

Q12 . Do you have any of the following long-lasting conditions?

Please tick Yes OR No
for each condition

- a) blindness, deafness or a severe vision or hearing impairment
- b) a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying
- c) a learning or intellectual disability
- d) a psychological or emotional condition
- e) other, including any chronic illness

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q13. What is your ethnic or cultural background?
(Choose ONE section from A to D, then tick the appropriate box)

A. White	1. Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. Irish Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3. Any other White background	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Black or Black Irish	4. African	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5. Any other Black background	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Asian or Asian Irish	6. Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
	7. Any other Asian background	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Other, including mixed background	8. Other , please write description	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q14. How many years have you lived at your current address? (Please only tick one box)

0-1 year	<input type="checkbox"/>	1-2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	2-3 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	3-4 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	4-5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 or more	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Q15. Do you hold a current full driving licence? (Please only tick one box)

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q16. Do you hold a free/concessionary travel pass? (Please only tick one box)

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q17. What is your current employment status? (Please tick one box only)

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1. In full time employment | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 |
| 2. In part time employment | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 |
| 3. Self employed | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 |
| 4. In full time education | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| 5. Unemployed/looking for work | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| 6. Retired (pensioner) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| 7. Sick/disabled (not able to work but not retired) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 |
| 8. Home and family duties | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8 |
| 9. Other (please specify) | | |

Q18. What is your personal gross annual income from earnings, benefits, pensions and any other sources for 2009? (Please only tick one box)

€0-€9,999	€10,000- €19,999	€20,000- €39,999	€40,000- €59,999	€60,000- €79,999	€80,000- €99,999	€100,000+
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Please put your completed form in the FREEPOST envelope and return it to us
Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.**

Annex 2: Transport Access to Key Services

Over 80% of respondents report that they can access the shops and services that they need and there is a broad equality in the responses across the key target groups with the exception of rural dwellers where access falls below 70%. Older people and people with disabilities show high rates of access. A minority (10.8% of total responses, 23.1% of rural responses) disagree or strongly disagree that they can access services.

Table A1: I can access the shops and services that I need						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	82.4%	67.9%	80.2%	75%	72.2%	78.7%

The reported rate of ability to access services by bus is somewhat lower at 54.7% for total respondents, with older people, young people and people with disabilities reporting higher rates. Rural dwellers report that only 33.3% have bus access.

Table A2 I can access the shops and services by bus if I want to						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	54.7%	33.3%	66.5%	60%	49.6%	60.4%

Older people and people with disabilities report the highest rates of being happy with their amount of travel at 84.8% and 77.2%. Rural dwellers again are least happy with their amount of travel.

Table A3 I am happy with the amount of travel that I undertake						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	72.2%	47.4%	84.8%	66.6%	73.1%	77.2%

Reliance on lifts from family and friends is low and similar across all groups ranging from 22.1% for total respondents and older people to 27.3% for people with disabilities

Table A4 I rely on lifts from family and friends to access the places that I want to go.

	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	22.1%	26.3%	22.1%	26.7%	27.8%	27.3%

Car Availability

The rate of car availability is highest for rural dwellers and older people at over 80% and lowest for people with disabilities and young people at 61.8% and 56.8% respectively.

Table A5 How often is a car/van available to personally for use weekday daytime as driver or passenger?

	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Always or often %	83.8%	84.2%	80.5%	56.8%	74.5%	61.8%

Approximately 10% of households do not have a passenger vehicle (car or van) and 90% have at least one. No car ownership is highest in households of people with disabilities (26.6%) and older people (19.4%).

Table A6 How many passenger vehicles are there in your household?

	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
None %	10.4%	12.0%	19.4%	0%	12.9%	26.6%
One %	40.0%	24.1%	51.5%	11.6%	32.7%	43.8%
Two or more %	48.1%	63.8%	29.1%	88.3%	54.4%	29.6%

While 77% of total respondents hold a full driving licence there is a clear differential between rural dwellers and older people of whom over 75% have licences and the other target groups where between only 48% and 60% hold full licences leaving high percentages without licences.

Table A7 Do you hold a full driving licence?

	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Yes	76.8%	79.5%	75.9%	48.4%	53.6%	59.5%

Frequency of Use of Type of Transport

Car driving at 73.1% is the dominant form of transport with rural dwellers driving most and people on low incomes driving least at 47.6%. Bus usage is zero for rural dwellers and in low single

figures for all other target groups except young people where it is 23.3%. It should be remembered that the sample size for young people is small.

Table A8 How frequently do you use types of transport – 5 or more times weekly						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Car as Driver	73.1%	75%	58.0%	60%	47.6%	58.9%
Car as Passenger	12.7%	16.5%	7.0%	20%	14.9%	19.7%
Scheduled Bus or Coach	2.8%	0%	1.9%	23.3%	2.9%	5.6%
Walk	17.7%	9.2%	23.9%	23.3%	15.1%	21.0%

Travel Preferences

Car travel is the preferred form of travel for total respondents at 88% and all target groups ranging from 100% for young people to 79.3% for people with disabilities.

Table A9 I travel by car where possible either as driver or passenger						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	88.0%	91.4%	77.9%	100%	87.3%	79.3%

Views on Bus Services

Only 39.9% of total respondents consider that bus services allow them to reach important facilities/services. This rating drops to 28.5% for rural dwellers and rises to 55.5% for older people

Table A10 Bus services in my area allow me to reach the most important facilities/services						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	39.9%	28.2%	55.5%	48.3%	42.6%	45.2%

Views on the adequacy of the frequency of bus services mirror the views on access to important services with rural dwellers giving the lowest rating of 23.1%.

Table A11 Bus services in my area operate frequently enough to meet my needs						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	38.9%	23.1%	59.1%	40.0%	39.7%	47.2%

As would be expected, the great majority (89%) of older people and 80% of people with disabilities have free/concessionary travel passes.

Table A12 Do You hold a free/concessionary travel pass?						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Yes	33.1%	22.5%	89.1%	0%	32.3%	80.2%

Willingness to Change Car Usage

Approximately half of respondents are unwilling to change their car usage and this view is consistent across all target groups except rural dwellers who are more willing to change at 43.2%

Table A13 I am not interested in reducing my car use						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	51.1%	43.2%	53.9%	51.7%	51.1%	52.2%

The majority (73.1%) of total respondents consider there is no practical alternative to car usage. This rises to 87% for rural dwellers and drops to 48.4% for young people.

A14 There are no practical alternatives to most of the car trips I make						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	73.1%	87.0%	63.5%	48.4%	74.0%	75.3%

With the exception of young people, over 60% do not consider other options to car travel.

Table A15 When I am getting ready to go out, I usually don't think about how I'm going to travel, I just get in my car.

	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	63.6%	64.6%	62.7%	31.6%	57%	69.7%

However, contradicting the views above that they do not consider other options, over 50% state that they are quite flexible about types of transport, this rises to 76.8% for young people.

A16 I am quite flexible about what types of transport I use.

	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	54.6%	50.7%	60.0%	76.8%	64.5%	66.4%

In a further contradiction of their commitment to car travel, 79.3% of total respondents state that being environmentally responsible is important to them as a person. Young people are again the exception with only 40% stating that being environmentally responsible is important to them as a person.

Table A17 Being environmentally responsible is important to me as a person.

	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	79.3%	82.3%	98.3%	40.0%	84.4%	75.6%

Existing Travel Patterns

Travel to work is the greatest trip generator at 4.5 return trips per week for total respondents. This rises to over 5 for young people and rural dwellers and is less than 2 for other target groups. Education, food shopping and social/recreation are important trip generators for varying groups. Young people and rural dwellers appear to travel most.

Table A18 How many return trips do you make per week – average number per respondent						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Work	4.5	5.04	1.30	5.14	1.55	1.65
Education	2.6	3.54	0.57	3.45	2.83	2.36
Business	2.3	4.00	0.80	2.64	0.35	0.97
Food Shopping	2.2	1.95	2.96	1.66	1.70	2.54
Other Shopping	1.5	1.33	1.33	1.28	1.50	1.36
Health	0.4	0.42	0.47	0.26	0.71	0.63
Personal Business	1.3	1.20	1.71	1.12	0.91	1.56
Social/ Recreation	2.3	2.18	2.66	3.02	2.21	1.78

Car/van travel is the dominant form of transport for all trips at over 80%. Walking and bus travel come next and taxi, train and cycle travel are reported as minimal. One exception to this is taxi usage for social/recreational use.

Table A19 Total Respondents – Means of Transport Used for Trips %						
	Car/Van	Walk	Bus	Taxi	Train	Cycle
Work	88	7	4	1	3	3
Education	86	5	11	0	0	0
Business	82	6	7	0	6	0
Food Shopping	89	8	4	0	0	1
Other Shopping	82	10	9	2	1	2
Health	78	6	15	3	0	1
Personal Business	69	22	5	1	0	4
Social/ Recreation	81	11	5	11	1	2

As would be expected the great majority of all trips are taken on weekdays, this especially applies to work/business and education related trips. Shopping and social/recreation are the principal trip generators at weekends.

Table A20 Total Respondents – When do you mostly make these trips %						
	Weekday Daytime	Weekday Evening	Saturday Daytime	Saturday Evening	Sunday Anytime	
Work	91.1	6.1	1.1	0	1.6	
Education	82.2	16.3	0	0	1.5	
Business	85.6	5.7	4.2	0	3.6	
Food Shopping	65.0	16.5	15.8	1.1	1.7	
Other Shopping	57.6	11.1	25.4	0	5.9	
Health	89.3	7.3	1.3	0	2.2	
Personal Business	87.4	5.5	4.0	2.3	0.8	
Social/ Recreation	20.5	36.9	6.2	23.7	12.6	

The employment status of respondents can be expected to impact on their travel patterns. For total respondents 32% are in full time employment, 29% are retired and the balance is spread across other categories. Employment status varies greatly across the target groups e.g. 41% rural dwellers are in full time employment, 89% of older people are retired, 36% of young people are unemployed, low incomes are widely distributed and 61% of people with disabilities are retired.

Table A21 What is your current employment status?						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Full Time Employment	32.4%	40.7%	0%	32.1%	2.0%	0%
Part Time Employment	7.0%	6.2%	1.8%	9.5%	16.3%	2.6%
Self Employed	3.7%	3.7%	1.8%	0%	0%	2.6%
Full Time Education	1.9%	1.2%	0%	22.6%	7.6%	0%
Unemployed	6.0%	6.2%	0%	35.8%	13.1%	2.6%
Retired	29.2%	19.8%	89.1%	0%	24.3%	61.3%
Sick/Disabled	6.0%	6.2%	0%	0%	11.6%	21.9%
Home Duties	9.6%	14.8%	7.4%	0%	23.1%	8.9%

3.2.2 Analysis of Barriers

Lack of transport is reported to mean that respondents travel less often than they want by only 22.6% of total respondents. This is broadly similar for all target groups with the exception of people with disabilities and low incomes at 32.4% and 30.6% respectively.

Table A22 Lack of transport services means that I travel less often than I want						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree %	22.6%	25.3%	24.9%	25.1%	30.6%	32.4%

Cost of travel is not reported to be the main barrier to travel for the majority of respondents in any of the key target groups. Only 17.8% of total respondents report it as a barrier and only 9.3% of people with low incomes report it as a barrier. More rural dwellers see cost as the main barrier than other key target groups.

Table A23 The cost of travel is the main reason I do not travel more						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree	17.8%	19.2%	14.6%	11.6%	9.3%	12.3%

Travel time appears to be even less of a barrier than cost with 14.6% identifying time as a barrier. More rural dwellers (19.7%) see time as the main barrier than other target groups.

Table A24 The time it takes to travel is the main reason I do not travel more						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree	14.6%	19.7%	12.5%	11.6%	15.3%	10.5%

Just under 50% total respondents regard bus services in their area as generally reliable. This rises to 68% for older people and fall to 35% for young people.

Table A25 Bus services in my area are generally reliable						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree	48.2%	33.4%	68.0%	34.9%	51.4%	55.9%

Views on ease of access to good information about bus services are similar to views on reliability with just over 50% stating they can easily get information. 70% of older people and 68% of people with disabilities say they can easily get good information but this falls to 23% for young people.

Table A26 I can easily get good information about bus services						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree	51.3%	32.9%	69.7%	23.3%	47.0%	68.2%

Views on feeling safe and secure when using a bus are more positive with 66.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Views are similar across all target groups.

Table A27 I feel safe and secure using a bus						
	Total Respondents	Rural	Older People	Young People	Low Incomes	People with Disabilities
Strongly Agree or Agree	66.6%	59.9%	67.1%	68.4%	76.0%	73.7%

COMPARISON OF FINDINGS OF 2001 AND 2009 SURVEYS ¹	
Findings 2001 Survey	Findings 2009 Survey – Rural dwellers only unless otherwise specified.
The private car is the main form of transport in Louth. The survey showed 61.2% of respondents lived in households with two or more cars, 6.1% lived in households with no car.	The private car is still the main form of transport, used for over 80% of trips.
The percentage of households with no cars was much higher for older people (23%), people with illness or disability (19%) and lower income groups (25%).	Compared to the 2001 results, the percentage of households with no cars is lower for older people (19.4%), increased for people with illness or disability (26.6%) and halved for lower income groups (12.9%). Urban and rural data used.
12% rarely or never have a car available for personal use while 69% always have a car available. Car availability is highest for 25-44 year olds.	For weekday daytime, 15.9% rarely or never have a car available for personal use while 79.3% always have a car available. For urban and rural respondents, car availability is highest for 25-44 year olds.
People who rarely or never have a car available make 30% fewer trips than average.	Data not collected.
For young people, work and social activities are the most important trips. For older people and people with illness or disabilities, shopping and visits to relatives and friends are most important.	For young people, work and social activities are the most important trips. For older people and people with illness or disabilities, shopping and social/recreational are most important. Urban and rural data used.
The nearest large town is the most important destination for most journey types except for food shopping where medium sized towns are important.	Data not collected.
31% of key target groups identified trips they would like to make but were unable to make due to lack of transport.	22.6% of total respondents reported they travel less often than they want due to lack of transport. This is higher for people with disabilities and low incomes at 32.4% and 30.6% respectively. Urban and rural data used.
The most strongly favoured (27%) form of new service is a no pre-booking and nearby stop direct service. A pre-booked, direct, door-to-door service, i.e. similar to a hackney or taxi service is also a popular choice.	Data not collected.
24% state the cost of transport service would greatly affect their use while for the remainder it would not.	19.2% state the cost of transport is the main reason they do not travel more.
¹ The 2001 survey was a survey of rural dwellers only, the 2009 survey covered rural and urban. For comparison purposes, rural dweller data from the 2009 survey have been used where data are available.	