

# GoGreenRoutes Limerick

## Background

- Limerick is the third largest city in Ireland with a population of approximately 94,000. It has been recognised internationally for its sustainability efforts, receiving the UNESCO Learning City designation and the European Green Leaf Award in 2020.
- Limerick boasts a network of rich natural habitats centred around the River Shannon, Abbey River, and Ballynacloagh River, alongside wetlands, grasslands, and mature woodlands. However, these green areas are somewhat fragmented.
- The GoGreenRoutes project seeks to enhance the ecological and social value of these spaces by creating multifunctional green linkages and improving connectivity, in line with the European Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- The project focuses on revitalising greenways such as the Castletroy Greenway, which connects schools and communities while promoting biodiversity through native planting.

## Key Activities

- Upgrading the Castletroy Greenway to provide safe, attractive, and accessible active travel routes linking primary and secondary schools and natural habitats.
- Encouraging community involvement in native species planting and ecological enhancement along the greenway.
- Developing natural play areas and seating using local materials to promote wellbeing and social interaction.
- Implementing nature-based solutions such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) to manage surface water and reduce flood risks.

## Key Activities

- Identifying and protecting tranquil areas to mitigate noise pollution, improving public health and enhancing visitor experience.
- Increasing tree canopy cover and vegetative barriers to reduce air pollution and support biodiversity.
- Conducting audits of green spaces to assess biodiversity value and ecological connectivity across the city.
- Establishing a Local Task Force to coordinate community initiatives such as tree planting workshops and biodiversity events like bioblitzes.
- Promoting public awareness and engagement through campaigns encouraging 'Don't Mow, Let It Grow' and other biodiversity-friendly practices.



## Impact

### Environmental Impact

- Enhanced ecological connectivity between fragmented habitats through multifunctional green routes.
- Improved surface water management and flood resilience via SUDS features.
- Increased biodiversity through native species planting and creation of habitats such as insect hotels and pollinator meadows.

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## Impact

- Reduced air and noise pollution along greenways, contributing to healthier urban environments.

## Community Engagement

- Marked increase in greenway usage, including by schoolchildren commuting actively.
- Active participation of local residents in tree planting and biodiversity workshops.
- Strong involvement of volunteers through the Local Task Force, fostering a sense of ownership and stewardship.

## Health and Wellbeing

- Provision of accessible rest areas and natural play spaces supports mental health and social wellbeing.
- Improved opportunities for outdoor physical activity and contact with nature encourage healthier lifestyles.

## Challenges & Solutions

### Challenges:

- Managing surface water runoff and flood risks in an urban riverine environment.
- Ensuring sustained community engagement and volunteer participation over time.
- Addressing noise and air pollution hotspots within the city's green infrastructure.
- Coordinating multi-stakeholder collaboration across diverse sectors and administrative boundaries.

### Solutions:

- Incorporation of SUDS to effectively manage water and support biodiversity
- Establishment of an active local task force to foster ongoing community involvement.
- Development of tailored strategies based on audits and monitoring to guide future green space improvements.

## Tips for Similar Projects

- Promote strong local partnerships and community ownership through dedicated task forces.
- Combine ecological enhancement with social and recreational amenities.
- Conduct thorough audits and monitoring to inform adaptive management and prioritise interventions.
- Promote biodiversity-friendly behaviours through public awareness campaigns and hands-on activities.

## Identified Limitations/Weaknesses

- Surface water management remains a complex issue.
- Some green space enhancements are constrained by urban development pressures and land availability.
- Long-term sustainability depends on continued community interest and funding support.
- Noise pollution reduction efforts are challenging in densely trafficked areas.

## Resources/Links

- [Project Website](#)

## Partners

