

# SUSTAINABILITY IN MOTION

2024 ▶ 2030



# Our sustainability commitments

Iarnród Éireann is the backbone of a public transport network that prioritises sustainable mobility for our citizens, visitors, communities, and companies.

We in Iarnród Éireann place sustainability not only at the heart of the service and infrastructure we deliver, but also at the heart of how we deliver them. A sustainable national transport system, with our railway network playing a pivotal role, raises the quality of life by:



Our growing team of over 4,600 colleagues are working every day to achieve this, in what we do today, and in how we build for the future.

We will continue working to advance **environmental sustainability** by:

- Decarbonising transport through implementing our Climate Action Plan.
- Ensuring climate change resilience through implementing our Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- Reducing our impact on the natural environment.
- Proactively protecting and enhancing biodiversity.



We are working to advance **social sustainability**:

- Being an employer that champions equality, diversity and inclusion, health and wellbeing and provides rewarding careers to our people.
- Being a good neighbour to those who live and work beside our network.
- Remaining transparent in what we do.
- Promoting social inclusion, helping to enhance the communities we serve, and crucially ensuring our services are accessible to all who wish to travel with us.
- Ensuring safety for all – our customers, our employees, and the general public.

We are working to advance **economic sustainability**:

- By building that network and delivering those services, and integrating with other modes including active travel to ensure sustainable mobility is available to all;
- Ensuring our supply chain and procurement practices are sustainable;
- Supporting regional development;
- Leading in the facilitating of transport-orientated development; and
- Strengthening the role of rail in freight transport, and building international connectivity as port authority for Rosslare Europort.

Iarnród Éireann's role as a sustainable national transport system is recognised in the publication of the All-Island Strategic Rail Review commissioned by the Governments of Ireland/Northern Ireland which proposes a very significant increase in capacity of our existing infrastructure and future expansion of the rail network across the island.

The goals are clear, as are the challenges. We will report to our customers and our stakeholders annually on our progress. From platform to boardroom, sustainability is a journey to which we are committed.

**Jim Meade**

Chief Executive

Our actions align with and support the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), of which we were named an SDG Champion by the Dept. of the Environment in 2023, Ireland's Climate Action Plan, Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (2023 – 2030), the European Green Deal, the CIÉ Group's Sustainability Strategy and the EU's "Fit for 55" initiative.



# Our 2030 Sustainability Goals

Strengthen relationships within communities, our team, and external stakeholders.

Continued demonstration of transparency and accountability and reporting compliance.

100 acres of native planting  
Pollinator Plans for every station  
Implement our Biodiversity Action Plan

51% reduction in emissions through our Climate Action Plan  
Ensure the resilience of our infrastructure & fleet to climate change

70% reduction in general waste  
40% reduction on hazardous waste

Support Transport Orientated Development  
Retain our position as the safest railway in Europe

Reduce inequalities by supporting access to rail services

Empower a thriving workplace focused on Health & Wellbeing

Promote lifelong learning across all teams

Increase our skilled workforce through our Apprentice Programme

Double the number of female employees and increase representation in leadership roles

Target a reduction in water usage by 20%

80% electricity supplied from renewable sources  
All new builds to be Near Zero standard  
140 buildings to be upgraded to BER B

Support economic growth with our Capital Programmes and by trebling rail freight volumes

Treble rail freight volumes

100% digitisation of infrastructure, fleet maintenance and customer information systems

Promote modal shift targeting 80 million journeys.  
Expand our network with more new stations

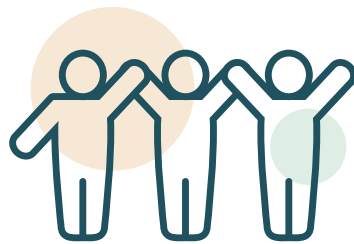




## Environmental

### Work with partners to:

- ▷ Deliver our Climate Action Plan to reduce carbon emissions through electrification, modal shift, improved energy efficiency, and renewable power sources
- ▷ Protect our environment and infrastructure at risk of climate-related disruption
- ▷ Enhance biodiversity and prioritise circular economy initiatives and waste management practices
- ▷ Reduce our use of natural resources like construction materials, water and fossil fuels



## Social

### Foster a diverse and inclusive society by ensuring access and opportunity for all

- ▷ Customer-driven, putting customers at the heart of the railway, and our services in reach of all people
- ▷ Be safe for our customers, our employees, and other citizens and property
- ▷ Be an employer of choice for a diverse workforce, whose wellbeing is supported at all times
- ▷ Enhancing the lives of those we serve and the communities adjacent to the railway
- ▷ Being open and accountable in our decision making, and report on our progress towards our sustainability goals



## Economic

### Providing a high-quality public transport service that tackles congestion, stimulates economic activity, and connects communities, businesses and organisations

- ▷ Maximising the capability, capacity and efficiency of the rail network
- ▷ Providing an end-to-end journey, working together with all transport modes, including active travel, to provide an integrated, accessible and affordable transport service
- ▷ Supporting a vibrant, sustainable economy through our services and through supporting transport orientated development, as well as sustainable regional development



# Environmental sustainability



## Decarbonising Transport by implementing our Climate Action Plan



- ▷ All diesel fleets will operate with at least a 35% biofuel/Hydotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) blend.
- ▷ Fuel all track maintenance, freight operations with HVO, Green Hydrogen or electricity where feasible.
- ▷ Existing and new DART fleet will benefit from increasing renewable energy content of the national grid, doubling to 80% by 2030 compared to c.40% currently, as well as the proposed Iarnród Éireann Corporate Power Purchasing Agreements (CPPAs).
- ▷ Photovoltaic solar panels will be installed across Iarnród Éireann buildings where feasible.
- ▷ Intercity railcar fleet will be converted to hybrid power with on-board battery, delivering a carbon emission reduction of up to 30% subject to funding.
- ▷ Upgrades to the remaining Dublin commuter rail fleet to deliver a 20% reduction in fuel consumption and emissions subject to funding.
- ▷ Building upgrades will deliver improved energy efficiencies with BERs going from G to B/C whilst protecting the heritage of our buildings.
- ▷ All new buildings and major upgrades to be built to Nearly Zero Energy Building Standard.
- ▷ Reducing our electric and gas consumption by 1.5% to 2% per annum through supply side initiatives and demand side reductions.



### Case study: Net Zero Work Site

As a pathfinder to achieving a 51% reduction in carbon emissions goal by 2030 and net zero by 2050, Iarnród Éireann undertook a net zero rail works site for the first time over the October Bank Holiday Weekend 2023 on the main Dublin to Belfast Line with the works entailing over a mile of ballast cleaning – ballast cleaning is an essential part of track maintenance, the ballast (stones) on the track bed get worn down over time, with the ballast fitting together less easily, reducing its effectiveness – this hinders drainage and the flexibility of the ballast to constrain the track as trains pass over. Ballast cleaning removes the worn ballast, screens it, and replaces the “dirty” worn ballast with new ballast.

All plant, including On-track machines (OTM's), welfare facilities, vehicles, small plant, and equipment operated on an alternative power source or biofuel. All road rail vehicles on site were fuelled by HVO rather than traditional diesel. This reduced greenhouse gas emissions from the operation of excavators, dumpers etc by up to 90%. All small plant and equipment were battery operated for the first time.

Electric Vehicles (EVs) were on site to transport staff, tools, and equipment to and from the site and green welfare facilities with smart design were in place with energy efficient processes saving 98% energy compared to traditional units.

The move from diesel to alternative power source/biofuel delivered a reduction in noise levels and a 90% reduction in emissions on site. To offset the remaining 10% of our carbon emissions, 300 native trees have been planted at Ballykilty, Co. Wexford.

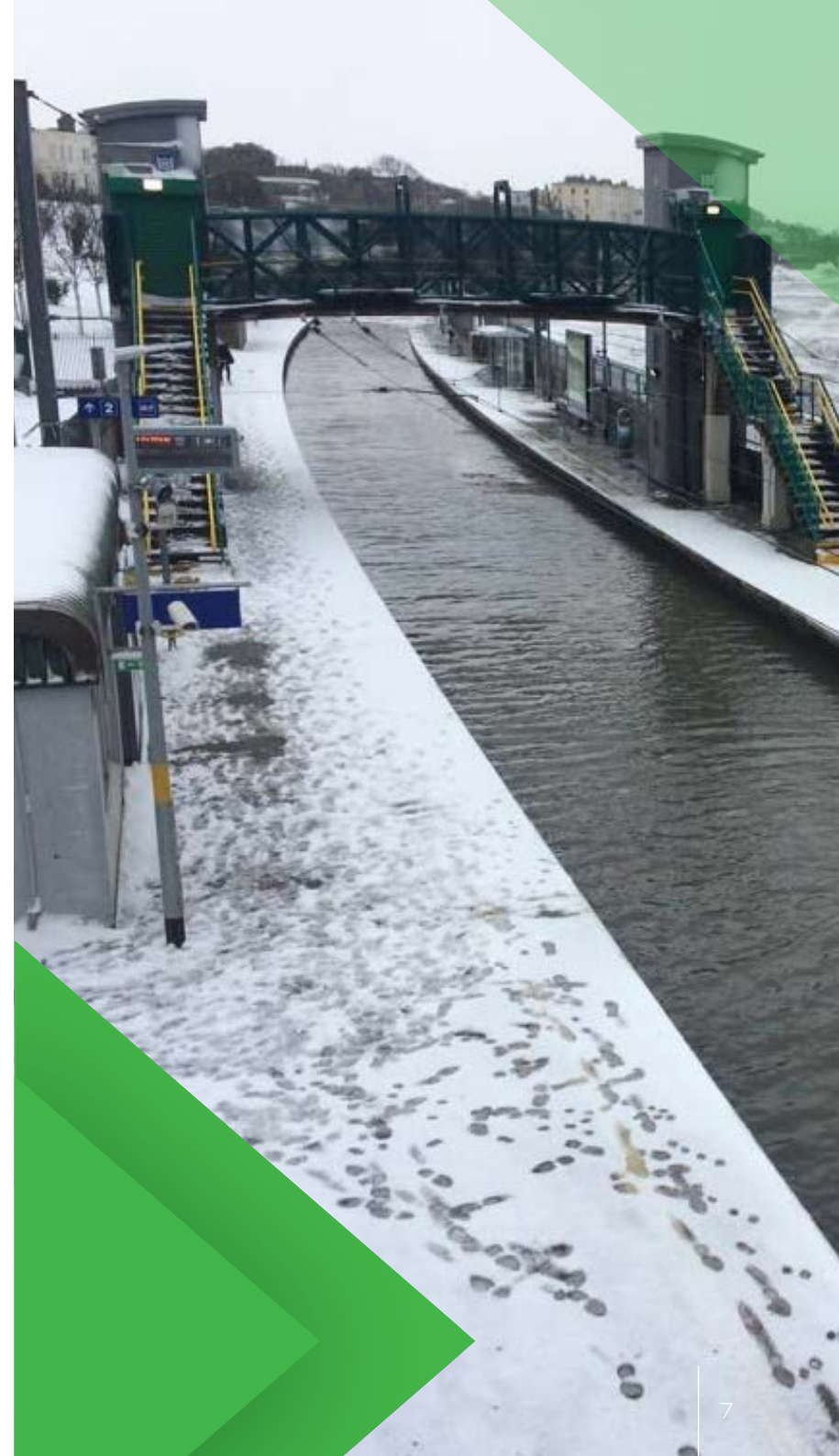
## Climate adaptation: building resilience against climate change



As Infrastructure Manager for the national rail network, we have seen the impact of our changing climate directly: more flood incidents, more coastal defence requirements, severe storms including winter storms impacting our services.

We are committed to building resilience in our network and services to protect our ability to provide our essential public services against the growing challenges of climate change.

- ▶ Working with infrastructure partners and Government departments on a partnership approach to climate change adaptation
- ▶ Implementing our Climate Adaptation Strategy, to continuously enhance the resilience of key infrastructure and our fleet to the increased frequency of adverse weather events, thus reducing service disruptions.
- ▶ Secure the future of the Dublin to Rosslare line, 45% of which lies directly adjacent to the coastline leaving several sections highly susceptible to accelerated erosion by delivering the East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Projects
- ▶ Working with partner agencies to deliver Ballycar, Co Clare, and other flood relief works
- ▶ Deliver the Infrastructure Manager Multi-Annual Contract (IMMAC) annual maintenance and renewal work programme
- ▶ Deliver the full Cork route rehabilitation project
- ▶ Deliver a station upgrade and painting programme across all stations, and at a seven-year cycle





## Case study – Developing our Climate Action Plan

Our approach to Climate Adaptation is founded on the six-stage process outlined in the 'Transport Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan' (2019).



### Climate Adaptation Mission

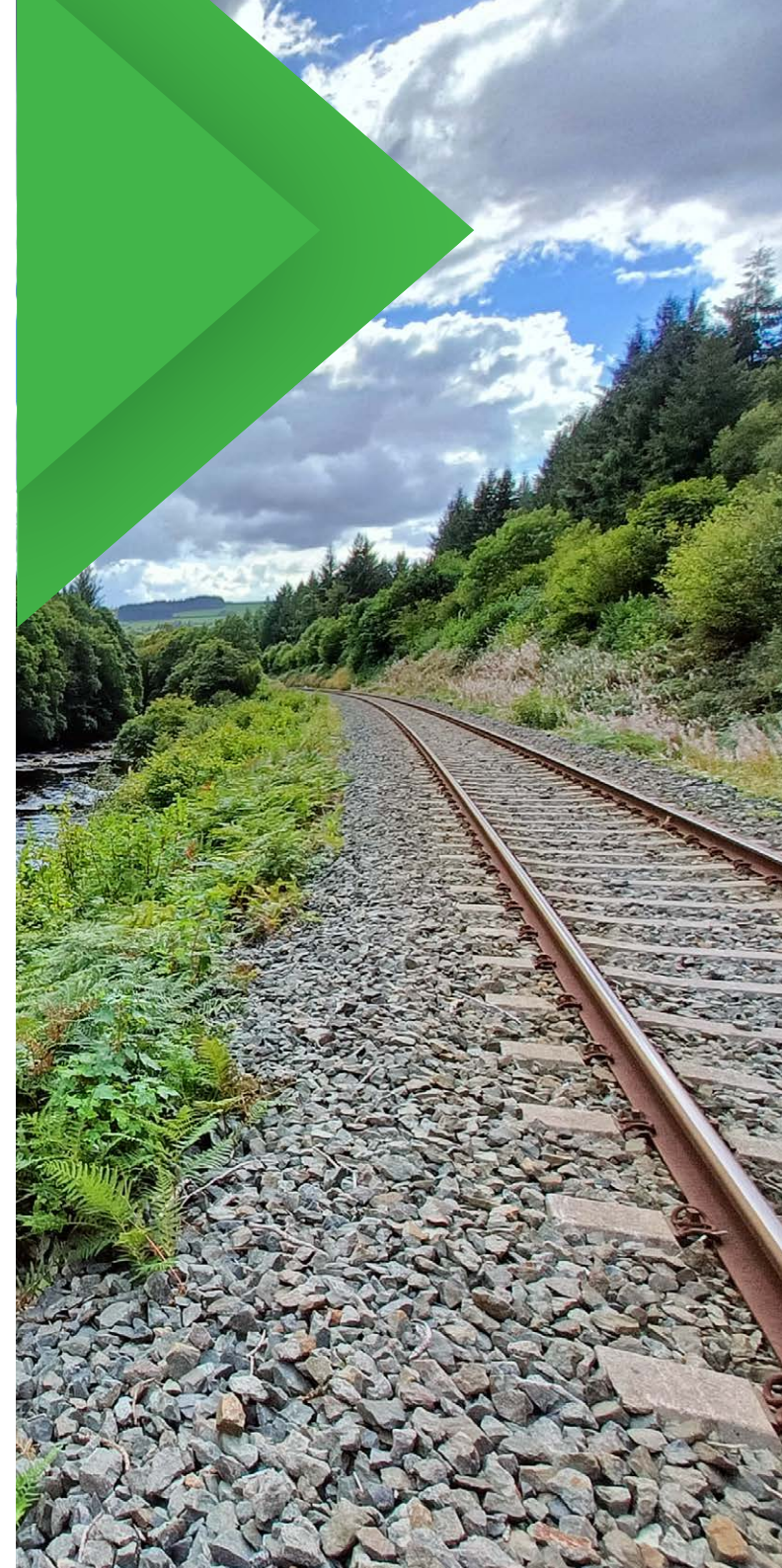
Focus on adjustments to ensure that we are better prepared for climate change impacts by:

- Protecting people and infrastructure,
- Building resilience to increasingly more severe and frequent climate events
- Reducing recovery times.



As an example, our Climate Adaptation Plan for operational resilience includes:

- Dynamic weather management protocol.
- Updating safety and emergency standards
- Roll-out of key communications and control systems for enhanced performance and safety
- Biennial updating of the Network Wide Risk Model
- Modifications to existing fleets to cater for deep cold and heavy snowfalls.
- New trains extreme weather capacity.
- Measures to address local adverse weather impacts.
- Deliver IMMAC infrastructure maintenance and renewal programme





## Environmental management and circular economy



Iarnród Éireann recognises that we have a responsibility to reduce our environmental impact by operating and improving the business in a way that minimises the negative impacts and maximises the benefits of the railway to the environment.

We promote initiatives which minimise resource usage including water, reduce activity impact, and incorporate green procurement principles through our supply chain.

### Circular Economy

We have introduced several programmes to support our team adopt a circular system.

- Streamlined processes in train maintenance minimising materials use and waste.
- Refurbishment of train components in house to increase direct reuse and reduce transport emissions.
- Reduce track infrastructure material with ballast cleaning and rail milling.

### Green Procurement

Our Sustainable Procurement Policy ensures that environmental and social considerations are addressed in each procurement process, and it also sets out targets for the inclusion of sustainable and green selection and award criteria to promote sustainability and best practices in our supply chain. Iarnród Éireann is a proud founding partner of the Supply Chain Sustainability School in Ireland, which is an industry led programme that supports business by providing a platform and resources to develop skills and build knowledge, in turn making our supply chain greener, raising standards in sustainability, and driving innovation.

### Water Stewardship Programme

We have a target of reducing our water consumption by 20% by 2030, this will be a huge challenge with the rise in demand for maintenance and train washing as our fleet expands and services increase across the network in the coming years.

A programme has been introduced installing water meters across the network which will allow better monitoring of water usage. By monitoring our consumption more closely, we can address leaks more quickly and highlight opportunities for reductions at key points along the network minimising our water waste and maximising efficient use of this natural resource.



### Case study: Fleet Systems Support (FSS) Electronic Repair Shop

Train components are often sent to off-site facilities for repair or discarded and replaced if too costly to fix. A repair shop was started in our Drogheda Depot in 2009 by a group of Technicians and Engineers as a trial. As at March 2024 it has shown a total savings of €42.5M with an average of €5.5 million saved per annum by fixing components in-house. Repairing on-site increases the longevity of components and improves overall fleet performance by providing faster turnaround times. It also cuts emissions by avoiding new parts production and transport. Over 2,700 components are repaired annually from small value (€25) up to larger value (€70,000-80,000). Parts harvesting is also utilised in the repair shop which minimises risk from global shortages, which is an issue even for minor components.

## Protecting and enhancing biodiversity



All human activity impacts on the environment – the challenge facing us as a society is to minimise negative impacts.

In Ireland, 85% of our protected habitats are in poor or inadequate condition, and over 50% are declining while 14% of species are considered to be endangered.

Iarnród Éireann manages over 4000 kilometres of boundary along our infrastructure throughout Ireland with 190 locations along the network interfacing or lying within designated sites of European and national biodiversity importance. We ensure that we take the opportunity to enhance our environment and its biodiversity, and have changed our operations to reduce negative impacts.

- ▶ Over one third of our stations now have pollinator plans, with our goal to introduce such plans to all stations on the network currently, and future new stations.
- ▶ With a programme to plant 12,000 trees already underway at the first Public Lands Native Planting Scheme site in the country, at Carrick-on-Shannon, we aim to plant a total of at least 100 acres at non-operational sites by 2030.
- ▶ Equip our Infrastructure teams with the resources and knowledge to protect biodiversity, with guidelines for employees produced, and vegetation management standards reviewed.
- ▶ Iarnród Éireann will continue to implement actions in support of Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (2023 -2030).





# Social sustainability

In fostering a diverse and inclusive society by ensuring access and opportunity for all, we commit to a customer-driven culture, prioritising safety for all, and ensuring our services are accessible to those who wish to use it.

We are an employer of choice offering equal opportunities, developing a diverse workforce, supporting their wellbeing and actively addressing the challenges of the future labour market.

We endeavor to be a good neighbour, both in our impacts on the communities we serve, and in fostering improvements in the social fabric of those communities, through engagement and partnerships which enhance quality of life. This includes initiatives in the spheres of mental health, arts and education, and protecting the heritage of which we are custodians.

We are open, accountable and transparent in our decision making, and in our engagement with stakeholders and customers.



## Case study: Station Art Programme Howth Jctn & Donaghmede



Six major artworks were created by a group of young people from the community of Donaghmede and have captivated customers as they pass through the station at Howth Junction and Donaghmede.

The artworks were a creative and educational collaboration between Trinity Youth Services, Iarnród Éireann, public art consultancy Fresco and Creative Connections and their network of artists. Workshops with young people from the local area were held to discuss their ideas and thoughts. A total of 15 young people, ranging in age from 10 to 16 years have worked on the project from first discussions, concept ideas and planning, to creation and site works.

Key themes identified by the group included the local community, Love of family, Local biodiversity and activities, the importance of positivity and belief in what you can achieve.

The project has received recognition with the Business to Arts Jim McNaughton Perpetual Award for Best Commissioning Practice.

## Customers at the heart of our business



Our customer-driven culture ensures the needs of all customers are prioritised, we have a clear mission to deliver a great journey every journey through:

- ▶ On-board Customer Service Officers across all Intercity services giving assistance to those that need it without requiring prior notice.
- ▶ Consultation with mobility impaired customers and representative bodies on all proposals which relate to their travel ensuring accessibility is prioritised in new fleets, stations, and systems.
- ▶ Dementia Awareness Training for our front-line team to support customers who travel that may have dementia.
- ▶ Access to Changing Places facilities, are now available in Dublin's Connolly and Heuston stations with plans in place to add to a further four main stations and ensure toilets are accessible in all stations where they are available.
- ▶ The completion of our lift renewal programme now allows more customers than ever access to our services unassisted.
- ▶ Achieving all punctuality and reliability targets agreed with the NTA under our Public Service Obligation target.
- ▶ Conveying timely and accurate information to customers as required throughout their journey in station, on board, and when planning travel.
- ▶ Providing a safe railway for everyone – customers, employees, and the public – through targeted safety investment including train control and protection systems
- ▶ Integrate Mobility as a Service principles into station development, ensuring active and sustainable modes are integrated and prioritised.
- ▶ Reduce year-on-year incidents of anti-social behaviour, working with communities and Gardai
- ▶ Deliver the technology that allows customers a seamless and connected experience including multi-modal next generation ticketing.





## Employer of choice

Iarnród Éireann is proud to be recognised in the Sunday Independent / Statista Ireland's 150 Best Employers research as Ireland's third best employer and best indigenous company amongst companies with more than 200 employees each.

We wish to sustain the company as a place where motivated workers chose to work and are given opportunities for career development and progression. Our leadership development programmes will ensure those opportunities are available to all.



Iarnród Éireann is a safe and supportive place to work, with a vision to foster a culture which empowers a physically and mentally thriving, engaged and dynamic workforce.

### We will continue to work to:

- ▶ Deliver a greater representation of women in the company, and increased diversity across our teams. We aim to double the number of female employees by 2030, and increase representation in leadership roles.
- ▶ Facilitate workplace participation for all, particularly amongst under-represented groups in our workplace and others, through education and industry partnerships, including Open Doors.
- ▶ Support those who are underrepresented through Employee Resource Groups. To date groups have been established for women, working parents, people with disabilities, and the neurodiverse.
- ▶ Increase career progression opportunities through our High Potential, Accelerating Leaders and Women in Leadership programmes.
- ▶ Attract the best talent to Iarnród Éireann through open recruitment and graduate programmes.
- ▶ Support a safe work environment with continuous reduction in workplace accidents
- ▶ Support staff who are caring for loved ones with additional needs through our partnership with Family Carer's Ireland.
- ▶ Deliver a Health & Wellbeing Programme.
- ▶ Give young people the opportunity to learn a craft and develop lifelong skills in a practical environment through our Apprentice Training Programme.
- ▶ Foster a culture of innovation through our Future Track programme with Dogpatch Labs

## SDG Champion working responsibly throughout our communities

We serve many communities across Ireland and have a presence across the entire landscape through which our railway lines pass.

Awarded SDG Champion in 2023, promoted to Ambassador in 2024, we commit to ensuring that we make a positive contribution to those communities providing a sustainable public transport service, engaging with them in a meaningful and transparent manner with proactive initiatives key to enhancing the quality of life, focusing on mental health, the arts, education, and the environment.



### We will:

- ▶ Incorporate the SDG's into our ways of working and report on our progress and contribution to the goals.
  - Ensure we retain the Business Working Responsibly Mark by continuing our advances in improved sustainability and community engagement.
  - Continue to grow the Station Art Programme building relationships in communities creating sustainable artworks for customer enjoyment and local pride
- ▶ Engage directly with communities to ensure awareness of:
  - major capital programmes, and how they will affect the community
  - maintenance works, reducing noise impacts
  - timetable changes or service alterations
- ▶ Continue to support mental health awareness nationally amongst communities and our customers and colleagues to help ensure mental health issues can be discussed without stigma
- ▶ Grow our engagement with young people offering pathway opportunities through P-Tech and our Apprentice Programme. We also support careers in STEM to young women
- ▶ Support environmental enhancement and biodiversity, particularly in station areas and adjacent to our network



# Economic sustainability



At the heart of our economic sustainability is the delivery of a network and services that allow more people and more goods to move by rail; that enhances connectivity to Europe and Britain for Irish industry as port authority for Rosslare Europort; and that facilitates strategic development goals through Transport Orientated Development at railway sites and adjacent properties.

Our passenger network at the heart of sustainable transport



Connecting communities ensuring sustainable mobility at regional and national levels is at the heart of Ireland's transport network. Supported by the National Transport Authority, the Department of Transport, and European Union, our investment programmes will ensure significant modal shift to public transport, tackling congestion whilst reducing transport emissions.

## FREQUENCY CHANGES



**We target 80 million journeys by 2030, up from the pre-COVID high of 50.1 million, through:**



- ▶ In the Greater Dublin Area, delivering DART+ elements funded under the National Development Plan, doubling the capacity of our services, and trebling the electrified network
- ▶ The DART+ fleet is the largest and the greenest fleet ever ordered in Irish public transport history. Consisting of up to 750 new electric/ battery electric carriages over a 10-year -period.
- ▶ Cascading Intercity trains to build capacity and frequency on our Intercity network, with Improved journey times, service frequencies and inter-regional connectivity
- ▶ Increasing Dublin to Belfast Enterprise services to an hourly frequency, funded through the Shared Island Fund initiative, and order a new Enterprise fleet.
- ▶ Developing the role of rail in regional cities, in line with local land-use and the role of rail in our regional cities, in line with local land-use and transport development strategies, including:
  - Delivering a Cork Area Commuter Rail network; that provides a high frequency north-east connection through the city with the capability of trains every 10 minutes, and improved access with new stations.
  - Deliver Oranmore and Ceannt Station Galway improvements to build frequency and demand, supported by URDF Exchequer funding
  - Relocation of Waterford Plunkett Station to the North Quays integrated transport hub.
  - Developing rail at the heart of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy
- ▶ Facilitating Transport Oriented Development, including at Heuston, and in partnership with the Land Development Agency, under the Housing for All Strategy
- ▶ Mobility as a Service: Develop interchange opportunities with other sustainable modes of transport





## Delivering Rail Freight 2040



Iarnród Éireann's Rail Freight 2040 strategy targets a transformation of the rail freight sector in Ireland, to add over 100 weekly rail freight services to our operations, a five-fold increase in frequency and volume.

**With the support of stakeholders, it will be delivered on a phased basis, in line with market conditions, through:**

- ▶ Enhancing connections with seaports, linking all Tier 1 Ports to the rail network. Foynes to Limerick will open Winter 2025/26, with Port of Cork to follow, and facilities to be improved at other ports.
- ▶ Investing in rolling stock, including a new climate-friendly locomotive fleet, and modern intermodal and bulk wagons for improved performance and capacity.
- ▶ Developing a network of intermodal terminals, offering logistics services options nationally.
- ▶ Network developments, including connections to industrial sites and new passing loops.
- ▶ Policy initiatives with the support of Government and other agencies, including the incentivisation of more sustainable freight movements including track access charges.



## Rosslare Europort – Delivering the masterplan



Rosslare Europort's status as Ireland's Gateway to Europe has been confirmed post-Brexit. Rosslare was the first Irish port to be named European Ferry Port of the year at the prestigious European Ferry Shipping Summit in Sweden in 2023. The port is in a period of exponential growth and transformation with services have increased from six to thirty-eight in three years. Rosslare Europort now connects with ports including Bilbao, Cherbourg, Dunkirk, Le Havre and Zeebrugge as well as continuing daily connections to Wales and the British market.

We will continue to build on Rosslare's critical role for Ireland's economy, ensuring efficiency and sustainability in our operations, through the port's Masterplan, investing over €40 million in port facilities, infrastructure, and systems.

Our vision is for Rosslare Europort to be Ireland's Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) hub servicing the emerging offshore wind industry and support the government's offshore wind target for 2030. Representing an estimated €200 million investment, the proposed plans have the potential to transform the economy of the South-East Region via new industry and job creation. We will work with local stakeholders to support the development of this sustainable energy source.



## Partnership



Our sustainability strategy cannot be delivered by Iarnród Éireann alone and is critically dependent on funding.

We work with a range of stakeholders who support us and who we consult on its development and delivery.

As part of the CIÉ Group Sustainability Strategy, we work in partnership with CIÉ, Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann through the CIÉ Sustainability Advisory Group to ensure a coordinated approach to sustainability issues. From funding and regulatory agencies such as the Department of Transport, New ERA, NTA and Commission for Railway Regulation, to local authorities and other planning agencies, to customer, industry and sectoral representative bodies and elected representatives, we will continue to work collaboratively to ensure we support each other on this journey.

## Transparency

We report annually on our progress to these goals, on new initiatives to strengthen further our sustainability journey, and to highlight how we intend to address areas where our targets are proving challenging.

As part of the CIÉ Group, we have achieved a B rating in our first year as participants in the Carbon Disclosure Project, a significant achievement in the Irish and international context, particularly in the transport sector.

From the reporting year 2025 onwards Iarnród Éireann will meet the EU sustainability reporting requirements as set out under CSRD and will be reporting to the Dept. of Finance as required in 2026.





Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



**SUSTAINABILITY**  
*IN MOTION*



**Iarnród Éireann**  
Irish Rail

