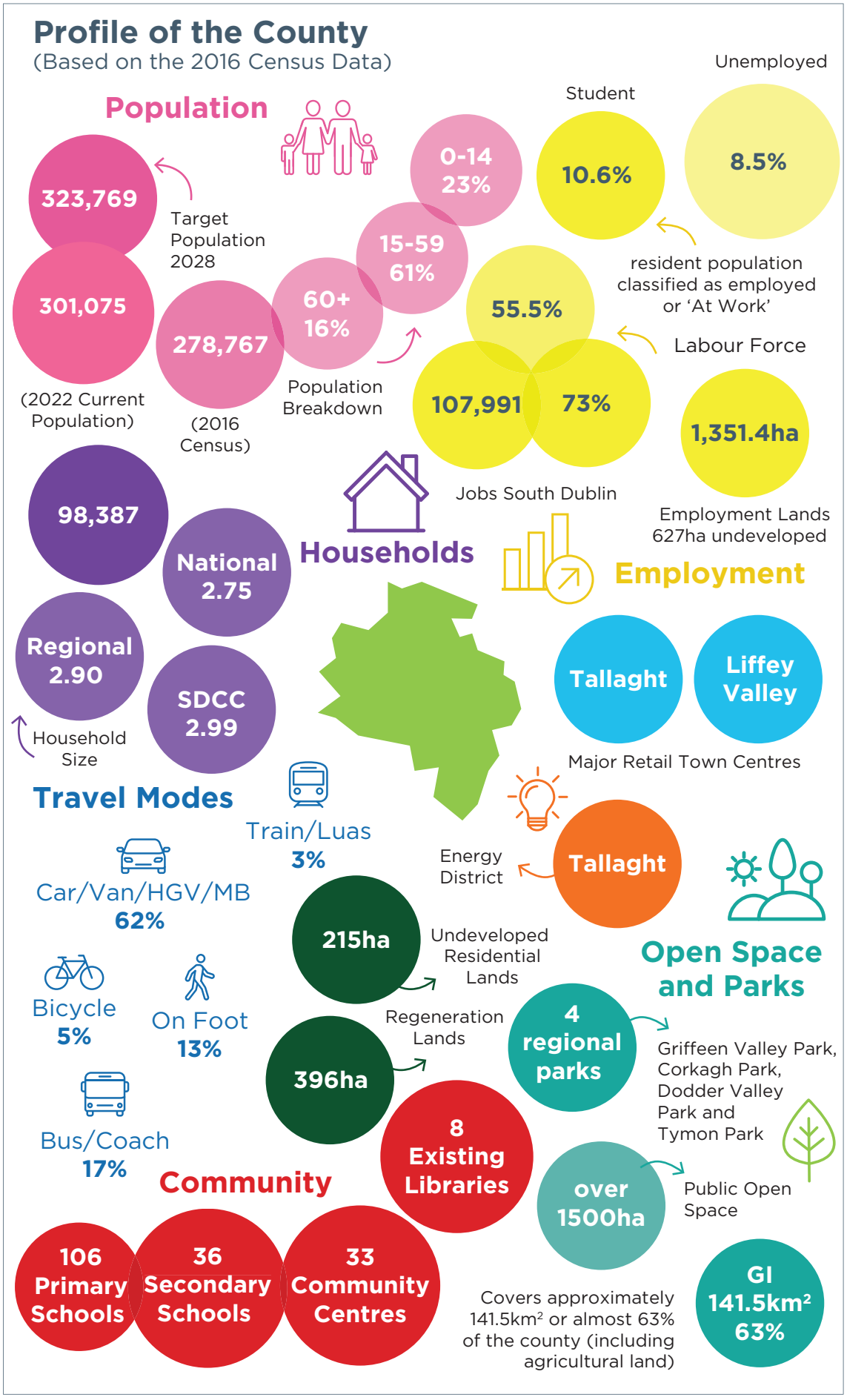


Introduction, Strategic Vision and Climate Action

Vision

In 2028 South Dublin will be a place that our communities are proud of, that our businesses can thrive in and that will help us to live greener and healthier lives.


Profile of the County
(Based on the 2016 Census Data)
Population
323,769
Target Population 2028
301,075
(2022 Current Population)
278,767
(2016 Census)
60+ 16%
15-59 61%
0-14 23%
Population Breakdown
Unemployed
Student
10.6%
8.5%
resident population classified as employed or 'At Work'
55.5%
Labour Force
107,991
73%
Jobs South Dublin
1,351.4ha
Employment Lands 627ha undeveloped
Employment
98,387
National 2.75
Regional 2.90
SDCC 2.99
Household Size
Households
Tallaght
Liffey Valley
Major Retail Town Centres
Travel Modes
Train/Luas 3%
Car/Van/HGV/MB 62%
Bicycle 5%
On Foot 13%
Bus/Coach 17%
Energy District
Tallaght
215ha
Undeveloped Residential Lands
Regeneration Lands
396ha
Open Space and Parks
4 regional parks
Griffeen Valley Park, Corkagh Park, Dodder Valley Park and Tymon Park
over 1500ha
Public Open Space
GI 141.5km² 63%
Covers approximately 141.5km² or almost 63% of the county (including agricultural land)
Community
8 Existing Libraries
106 Primary Schools
36 Secondary Schools
33 Community Centres

1.0 Introduction

The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out the land use framework to guide future development within the County with a focus on the places we live, the places we work, and how we interact and move between these places while protecting our environment.

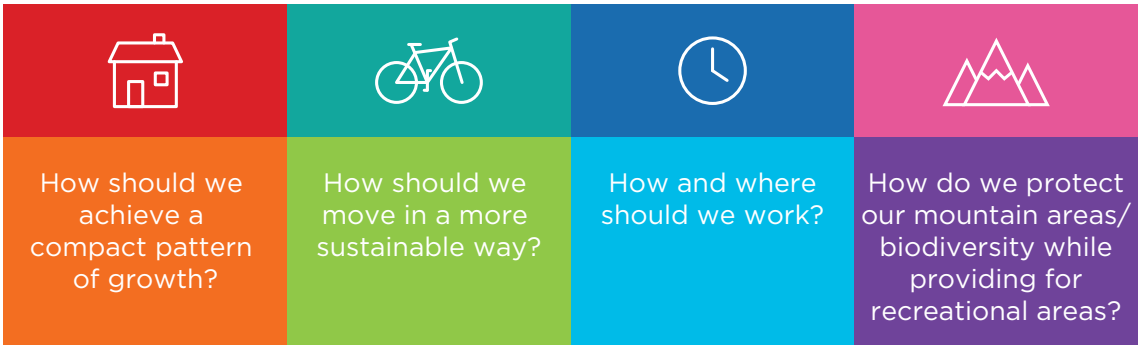
The plan includes a vision for the County's growing communities, places, housing, jobs, sustainable transport and the delivery of services in a manner which promotes climate action and efficient patterns of land use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, environmental and social identities that define areas within the County and support their ongoing evolution and integration with each other.

When adopted in 2022 the Plan set out the strategy to co-ordinate and prioritise areas of population growth capable of accommodating up to 45,000 people by 2028 as South Dublin moved towards an additional 80,000 people and 32,000 new homes by 2040 in line with the then provisions of National and Regional population targets.

Following the publication of the *National Planning Framework – First Revision* (April 2025) and the *NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (July 2025), the Plan has been updated to reflect revised housing growth requirements and the need to plan for c.47,000 new homes from 2025 to 2040.

1.1 Profile of the County

The Development Plan covers the administrative area of South Dublin County, which is 223 square kilometres in extent. The County extends from the River Liffey to the Dublin Mountains and borders the administrative areas of Dublin City, Fingal, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Wicklow and Kildare.



1.2 Statutory Context

Purpose and Scope of the Development Plan

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out the legislative requirements for the making of a Development Plan. The Development Plan must set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County and consist of a written statement and plans indicating the development objectives for the area. In making the Plan members are restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the Development Plan relates, the statutory obligations of any Local Authority in the area, and any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government. The Act sets out mandatory objectives that must be included in a Development Plan. The Development Plan "Must Haves" are shown in the infographic on the next page.

The plans / maps in the Development Plan give graphic representation to the policies and objectives in the written statement. Should any conflict arise between the written statement and the plans / maps, the content of the written statement shall take precedence.

The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 has been prepared within a new era for planning policy set out under the Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework (NPF) and National Development Plan, the Eastern Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and the Dublin Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP).

Core Strategy

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 places an obligation on the planning authority to prepare a core strategy. The core strategy must demonstrate that the development objectives in the Development Plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives (including housing targets) set out in the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region and with specific planning policy requirements in section 28 guidelines and Section 25 National Planning Statements. The core strategy and housing strategy inform the settlement strategy for the County.

The Plan "Must Haves"

In addition to compliance with National, Regional and Ministerial Guidelines the Plan must include a number of **mandatory requirements** as set out under Section 10 of the **Planning and Development Act, 2000** (as amended). Such Objectives include;



Sustainable settlement / transport strategies
Reduce **energy** demand
Reduce anthropogenic **greenhouse gas** emissions
Address **adaptation** to climate change



Conservation & Protection of the Environment



Infrastructure facilitation / provision



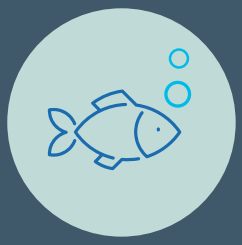
Zoning of Land



Recreational Amenities



Regeneration areas Development & Renewal



Compliance with objectives of river basin management plans



Services for communities Social, community, cultural integration with planning



Protection of Structures & preservation of character of ACAs



Preservation of Landscape Character



Core Strategy and Housing Strategy

Environmental Assessments

The County Development Plan is also required to be assessed under specific environmental legislation.

A formal process of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was carried out as part of the preparation of this Development Plan, pursuant to the requirements of the EU SEA Directive (2001 / 42 / EC) and the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (as amended). The SEA process is an integral part of the preparation and making of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028. The Development Plan has been systematically assessed and where necessary, amended. Environmental mitigation measures are included to address any potential significant environmental impacts that were identified. The SEA Environment Report and Statement are separate documents, to be read in parallel with the Plan, once adopted.

The SEA process is supported by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). As required by the *Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2009), a strategic flood risk assessment was undertaken at County level to inform policy and accompanies the Plan as a separate document. The flood risk areas are also included on the Development Plan Green Infrastructure and Flood Risk map.

In compliance with the EU Habitats Directive (92 / 43 / EEC) and EU Birds Directive (79 / 409 / EEC) and Section 177 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010, the impacts of the policies and objectives of all statutory land use plans on certain sites that are designated for the protection of nature under EU legislation, must be assessed as an integral part of the process of drafting the plan. This is to determine whether or not the implementation of the plan policies could have negative consequences for the habitats or plant and animal species for which these sites are designated. This process, known as Appropriate Assessment (AA), is to determine whether or not the implementation of the plan policies or objectives could have negative consequences for the habitats or species for which these sites, known as Natura 2000 sites, are designated. An Appropriate Assessment screening of the Plan was carried out and determined that a Stage 2 appropriate assessment was required. A Natura Impact Report accompanies the Plan as a separate document.

Section 28 Guidelines and Section 25 National Planning Statements

In accordance with Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the policies and objectives of the Minister contained in guidelines regarding planning authority functions under the planning acts were considered in the preparation and making of this Plan and have been implemented in the various chapters of the Plan. It is a requirement under the Planning Acts that the core strategy shows that the development objectives are consistent, as far as practicable, with specific planning policy requirements specified in section 28 guidelines (refer also to Appendix 1). In addition, the Plan is also informed by Section 25 National Planning Statements and associated National Planning Policies and Measures introduced under the Planning and Development Act 2024 (as amended), which are intended to give policy direction to planning authorities and ensure a consistent

national approach in setting out planning considerations.

Where policy objectives and supporting text refer to specific legislation, Planning Guidelines or Policy documents and in the event that new or updated versions of these are published it shall be taken as read that the most up to date versions shall apply where legislation dictates that they override existing policy objectives. In particular it should be noted that, where references are made to specific National Policy Objectives (NPOs) or National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), these should be taken to refer to NPOs or NSOs as numbered in the National Planning Framework as adopted in 2018, unless specifically stated as being an NPO or NSO of the 'NPF – First Revision' or 'Revised NPF' (2025).

1.3 Preparation of the South Dublin County Development Plan

Having regard to section 12(16), the prescribed process sets out a 99-week timeframe within which to make a Development Plan. As indicated above, the Plan was informed by the Strategic Environmental Assessment, the Appropriate Assessment and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The Act provides for three key periods of public consultation.

The Development Plan was subject to a consultation strategy which had particular regard to Covid restrictions. Consultation commenced with the Pre-Draft public consultation from 31st July to 28th September 2020. This included a Strategic Issues Papers booklet, the Mayor's launch, public webinars, a social media campaign, stakeholder meetings, public meetings by appointment, printed media, virtual public consultation and briefing sessions to the elected members. A dedicated website was developed to facilitate public engagement and a submissions portal provided for online submissions. A total of 227 submissions were received. Following the consideration of the Chief Executive's Report meetings were held in February 2021 where the Elected Members issued the strategic direction for the preparation of the draft plan. The Draft Plan went on public display for ten weeks in early July 2021 following a number of Development Plan meetings in June.

The Chief Executive's Report on the 302 submissions to the Draft Plan was submitted to members in December 2021 and following their consideration and meetings in March, Material Amendments went out on display in April 2022. The Plan was made on 22nd June 2022 following consideration of the 80 submissions received. The Plan came into effect on 3rd August 2022.

1.4 Plan Structure

The South Dublin County Development Plan written statement has been structured in a manner which provides for a layered approach to development within the County. The introductory section sets out the role of the County Development Plan, its statutory basis and the strategic vision for the County and how the cross-cutting theme of climate action has been integrated as a key component in all aspects of the Plan.

The Core Strategy sets the parameters within which the settlement strategy for the future growth of the County has been developed ensuring consistency with the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES).

Chapters on Natural, Cultural and Built Heritage and Green Infrastructure set the baseline environment for the County with policies and objectives for the preservation, protection and enhancement of the County's heritage contributing towards climate action, improved biodiversity and placemaking.

In order to deliver the strategic vision in a manner which recognises the baseline (receiving) environment within the County the plan places a strong emphasis on Quality Design and Healthy Placemaking and adopts a South Dublin specific 'Plan Approach' for the delivery of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods throughout the County.

The Plan Approach aims to ensure that all development within the County is designed and developed around eight key design principles which provide a holistic approach to the delivery of sustainable communities in the form of housing, connected neighbourhoods and sustainable transport modes, community and open space infrastructure, employment opportunities and the promotion of sustainable energy and environmental services.

An Implementation and Monitoring section sets out the development standards and safeguards that are required to secure the policies and objectives set out in the Plan. It also identifies monitoring mechanisms which will inform the 2-year review and next County Development Plan.

The maps accompanying the Plan provide graphic representation of the policies and objectives in the written statement. The entire County is covered with the relevant zoning objectives and other map-based objectives. Appendix 12: *Our Neighbourhoods* provides an overview and graphically illustrates objectives, demonstrating the plan approach towards the delivery of sustainable communities within each Neighbourhood Area, which in combination will contribute towards the achievement of the overall vision for the County.
The Plan is also supported by a number of accompanying documents which provide the background to the formulation of aspects of policy contained in the Development Plan. These documents, where relevant, will be made available alongside the Development Plan.

1.5 Vision Context

The Strategic Vision has been developed in line with International, National and Regional policy provisions. The vision also reflects the South Dublin County Council Corporate Plan mission to 'make our county a vibrant and inclusive place for the people who live, visit, work and do business here, now and in the future'.

National Planning Framework

National Development Plan

Ministerial Guidelines

United Nations Sustainable Development

EMRA RSES

Core Strategy

Housing Strategy

Climate Action Plan

Employment Strategy

GDA Transport Strategy

South Dublin Corporate Plan

1.6 Strategic Vision

In line with national and regional policy provisions the strategic vision is informed by the core strategy and population targets set for the County. In allocating and planning for future growth and development, the Development Plan aims to positively influence how people interact and move within and around the County and its Neighbourhood Areas through the types of environments and places created to deliver the overall vision;

In 2028 South Dublin will be a place that our communities are proud of, that our businesses can thrive in and that will help us to live greener and healthier lives.

1.7 Achieving the Vision

Both the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) establish the importance of addressing climate action. The National Planning Framework includes a number of National Strategic Outcomes relating to Compact Growth, Sustainable Mobility, A Strong Economy, the Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and Environmental Resources and a Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society. At a regional level, the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy outlines climate action as one of the three key principles underpinning the Strategy in line with national policy.

To achieve the overall plan vision a 'layered approach' has been applied to development with a focus on facilitating future growth in a manner which protects and enhances the County's natural, cultural and built heritage, maximises opportunities for the development of the Green Infrastructure network, promotes the highest quality in urban design with the overall aim of delivering healthy places in which to live, work, visit, socialise, and invest in. Central to the achievement of this layered approach is the integration of Climate Action as a key overarching theme for all aspects of the Plan.

The policies and objectives in this Plan support the strategic vision and South Dublin's leading role in sustainable urban development which;

	**Chapter 2** Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy	Maximises the potential of the County to deliver a compact settlement form in line with National and Regional population targets, with a strong focus on regeneration and the redevelopment of brownfield over green field lands;

	**Chapter 3** Natural, Cultural and Built Heritage	Protects and enhances the key natural, cultural and built heritage assets which have shaped South Dublin County and continue to create a sense of place and local distinctiveness, including our diverse landscapes, our varied flora and fauna, our historic buildings and streetscapes, and our rich archaeological history, for current and future generations to appreciate and enjoy.
	**Chapter 4** Green Infrastructure	Promotes the development of an integrated GI network for South Dublin working with and enhancing existing biodiversity and natural heritage, improving our resilience to climate change and enabling the role of GI in delivering sustainable communities to provide environmental, economic and social benefits.
	**Chapter 5** Quality Design and Healthy Placemaking	Promotes high quality urban design and healthy placemaking that delivers attractive, connected, vibrant and well-functioning places in which to live, work, visit, socialise and invest.
	**Chapter 6** Housing	Ensures the delivery of high quality and well-designed homes in sustainable communities to meet a diversity of housing needs within the County.
	**Chapter 7** Sustainable Movement	Increases the number of people walking, cycling and using public transport and reduces the need for car journeys, resulting in a more active and healthy community, a more attractive public realm, safer streets, less congestion, reduced carbon emissions, better air quality, and a positive climate impact.
	**Chapter 8** Community Infrastructure and Open Space	Creates healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities where all generations have local access to social, community and recreational facilities, and parks and green spaces, to suit their needs.

	**Chapter 9** Economic Development and Employment	Facilitates the creation of a strong and resilient economic base providing expanded opportunities for employment and facilitating a good quality of life within vibrant and attractive places to live, work, visit and invest.
	**Chapter 10** Energy	Delivers a green society and circular economy adaptable to new technologies, a home and place of employment for people and industries striving towards reducing their carbon footprint.
	**Chapter 11** Infrastructure and Environmental Services	Creates an environment characterised by high quality infrastructure networks and environmental services to ensure the health and wellbeing of those who live and work in the County, securing also the economic future of the County.
	**Chapter 12** Implementation and Monitoring	Sets out development standards and criteria that should be read alongside the policies and objectives contained within each of the chapters. It also includes a monitoring framework which categorises key policies in terms of their contribution towards the achievement of the Strategic Vision.

1.8 Climate Action

Climate Action is one of the most significant policy challenges facing governments today. The impacts of climate change are already having far-reaching economic, social and environmental consequences. International agreements have been developed to unify national governments in a commitment to reduce the human causes (anthropogenic) of climate change.

The Irish government has published the *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act* 2015, the *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act* 2021, and the *National Adaptation Framework* 2018.

In support of the Acts and the government's commitment to climate action, related national and regional strategic outcomes are set out in the *National Planning Framework* and *National Development Plan* 2018-2027 and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 sets out the actions for the achievement of a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. These actions and policy frameworks set out how Ireland will achieve its international and European commitments, and transition Ireland to a low-carbon, climate resilient society.

To provide local authorities with support in developing their Climate Change Action Plans (CCAPs), the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) has developed the *Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines* 2018. In addition, the government has established four Climate Action Regional Offices.

South Dublin County Council has produced its Climate Change Action Plan 2019-2024 (CCAP) in association with Codema (Dublin's Energy Agency) and the Dublin Metropolitan Climate Action Regional Office (CARO). The CCAP is recognised as a key enabler of on-going public sector leadership, in implementing and influencing climate action at the local level.

The CCAP identifies the main climate risks facing South Dublin County and includes the current levels of greenhouse gas emissions across the South Dublin County Council area. The Plan puts forward 130 actions that are either ongoing or planned, under five key areas - Energy and Buildings, Transport, Flood Resilience, Resource Management and Nature-Based Solutions.

Policy CA1: Climate Action (CA)
To support the implementation of International and National objectives on climate action including the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Acts (and any amending legislation), the 'Climate Action Plan 2021' (and any updated Plans) and ensure that South Dublin's Climate Change Action Plan and County Development Plan are aligned.
CA1 Objective 1: To collaborate with the Eastern Midland Regional Authority (EMRA), the Dublin Metropolitan Climate Action Regional Office (Dublin CARO), City of Dublin Energy Management Agency (Codema) and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to achieve the climate action policies and objectives set out in the Eastern and Midland Region Spatial and Economic Strategy (consistent with RPO 3.1, 36, 7.4, 7.30, 7.31, 7.32, 7.33, 7.35, 7.38, 7.40, 7.42, 7.43, 7.7 of the RSES).
CA1 Objective 2: To ensure spatial and infrastructure planning are consistent with climate mitigation and adaptation objectives.
CA1 Objective 3: To implement the South Dublin County Council Climate Change Action Plan 2019-2024 (SDCC CCAP) or superseding plans and to facilitate a just transition to a climate resilient low carbon County (consistent with SO8 of the NPF, RPO 7.32, 7.33 of the RSES).

1.9 Climate Action and the Role of the Development Plan

Climate Action is now a key responsibility of local government. Through its role in setting out the strategic spatial framework for the future development of the County, the County Development Plan supports wider local and central government actions in addressing maximum co-ordination between the County Development Plan, the South Dublin Climate Change Action Plan and other climate related policies and programmes.

The Development Plan has been assessed against its impact on the receiving environment through the SEA and AA processes. The plan has also been subject to a strategic flood risk assessment taking account of the most up to date flood risk information available.

The 'layered' format of the Plan aims to facilitate a holistic approach to ensuring Climate Action is at the forefront of all future development within the County, with policies and objectives in each chapter crafted in a manner which contributes significantly towards addressing climate change and reducing the County's carbon emissions in a meaningful and tangible way. These overarching climate action principles align closely with the key action areas of the South Dublin Climate Action Plan 2019-2024; namely Energy and Buildings, Transport, Flood Resilience, Resource Management and Nature-Based Solutions.

The policies and objectives set out in the Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy, Chapter 2 of this plan, have been framed in a manner to ensure consistency with the provisions of the NPF, and updated in line with the National Planning Framework – First Revision (April 2025) and the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities. This provides for a compact approach to growth with the aim of facilitating the delivery of climate resilient and sustainable communities throughout the County.

It is the aim of the plan to achieve an efficient use of land with a focus on key urban centres, and to achieve development densities that can support vibrant, compact, walkable places that prioritise pedestrian and cyclist movement.

The Core Strategy aims to maximise the potential of the County to deliver a compact settlement form in line with National and Regional population targets, where a strong focus has been placed on regeneration and the redevelopment of brownfield over greenfield lands. Almost half of the County's growth has been allocated to strategic development areas identified within the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan with an overall total of 93% of the unit growth being located within Dublin City and Suburbs. Such measures facilitate the delivery of a compact and connected settlement form where existing public transport infrastructure can be availed of thus reducing the need for car-based travel, contributing towards a reduction in carbon emissions and contributing positively towards addressing Climate Change within the County.

National/Regional Context

Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Acts
The National Adaptation Framework 2018
Project Ireland 2040 the National Planning Framework and National Development Plan 2018-2027
The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region
National Climate Action Plan

County Context

The South Dublin Climate Action Plan 2019-2024
(130 Actions ongoing or planned within the Council under five key areas)

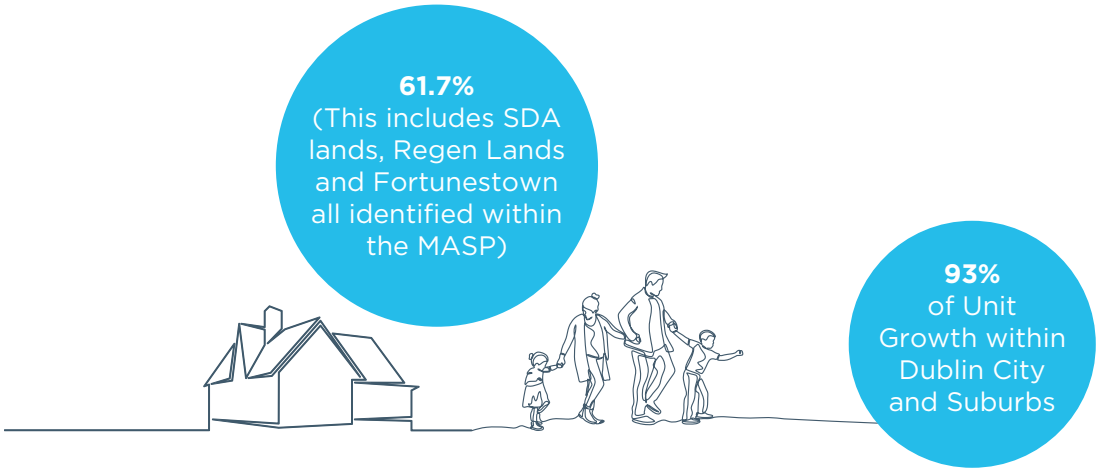
- Energy & Buildings
- Transport
- Nature Based Solutions
- Resource Management
- Flood Resilience

The County Development Plan

A 'Layered' Approach Facilitating a Holistic Integration to Climate Action

- Compact Growth
- Efficient Use of Land
- Environmental Protection
- Green Connections
- Quality Design Healthy Placemaking
- Active Travel
- Connected Neighbourhoods
- Energy Efficiencies

The focus of the Development Plan on brownfield over greenfield development, supports an ecosystems approach, protects natural areas while also seeking to enhance existing green networks both within the natural and urban environment through the promotion and enhancement of existing pathways and green connections within the County.



The potential for the delivery of energy efficient projects throughout the County is also facilitated through a more compact settlement form reducing costs and carbon emissions and guaranteeing energy resilience for the future of the County.

Creating a safe and climate resilient environment is essential in encouraging active modes of transport. Such environments can be created through a high-quality design and layout of buildings, appropriate mix of uses, densities, height and the sensitive integration of the natural and built environment. Creating a strong sense of place and enabling connections across the County can be enhanced through a robust and resilient Green Infrastructure network employing nature-based solutions and contributing directly to climate action measures through carbon sequestration, water quality improvements and other measures.

At the Neighbourhood level the plan aims to locate people in close proximity to their place of work, services, amenity and leisure facilities thereby reducing the need for car-based travel and cumulatively resulting in significant and measurable reductions in GHG emissions.

To ensure the above provisions have been implemented successfully throughout this plan, specific **'Climate Positive Objectives'** have been highlighted with the climate symbol . A Climate Action Audit is included at the end of each Chapter providing an overview of the potential sources of greenhouse gas emissions alongside measures implemented to address such potential climate impacts.

