Community Slí na Sláinte

Walking Route Set up Guide

Irish Heart Foundation

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An Introduction to Slí na Sláinte

Slí na Sláinte is an innovative scheme developed by the Irish Heart Foundation and supported by the HSE to encourage people of all ages and abilities to walk for leisure and good health. Slí routes use attractive signage at kilometre intervals to encourage people to walk more frequently and to enjoy the benefits of a healthier lifestyle. To date there are over 220 community routes around the country with over 150 in workplaces, 3rd level institutes and schools.

Slí na Sláinte community routes are implemented in your locality by the Local Authority in partnership with the community and other appropriate commercial organisations and becomes part of the approved list of Slí routes. **A community route must remain at all times the responsibility of the Local Authority.**

Why Slí na Sláinte?

Slí na Sláinte is an important and valuable facility for every community. The widespread appeal of Slí na Sláinte is due to the fact that it provides an easily accessible and inexpensive environment for regular exercise. Health messages are often negative and frightening which is why Slí na Sláinte was developed as a positive and fun incentive to improve people’s health. International research has confirmed that the development of community walking trails can boost exercise and improve health at a low cost.
How to develop a community Slí na Sláinte route

1. Form a Slí na Sláinte development committee

A committee is essential for the smooth development of the Slí na Sláinte route. It is recommended that you form a Slí Development Team made up of at least one representative of the Local Authority. Other organisations who may wish to be involved are:

- Local Sports Partnerships
- Office of Public Works, or Coillte Teoranta (should the proposed route traverse their properties)
- HSE Health Promotion
- Tidy Towns Committee
- Local development group

2. Funding the Slí na Sláinte

Typically Slí routes are funded by the local authority, local area grants or by a local corporate sponsor. In cases where the Local Authority is not the route sponsor, the Local Authority must still give their approval regarding location and safety of signage as well as agree to install the signage for insurance purposes.

3. Safety and accessibility

The route must be maintained to the highest standards of safety and be accessible to the general public at all times. The local authority must approve the route and it should be approved before you start development.

4. Insurance

The Local Authority have Public liability insurance cover is to provide indemnity as a result of accidental bodily injury arising as a result of their liabilities in connection with the Slí na Sláinte route.
5. Maintenance

The Local Authority are responsible for repair, maintenance and upkeep of the route and signage. Should a route audit identify signage as missing or damaged it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure the signage is replaced or repaired. The National Coordinator can assist with the ordering of replacement signage but it is the sole responsibility of the Local Authority to organise payment and installation of signage.

6. Make contact with the Irish Heart Foundation

If you decide that a Slí na Sláinte route would be a good fit for your community or would just like some more information please contact the Irish Heart Foundation on 01 668 5001 or email tcurran@irishheart.ie.
What makes a great Slí na Sláinte route?

**Length** - Ideally 2km-8km

**Shape of Route** - Routes should be circular or linear – no figures of eights!

**Go with what you know!** – Ideally a route should be developed where people walk, look for a route in your area which is already popular with local walkers.

**Lighting** - Not essential to route development, as we can mark the route as ‘suitable as daytime route only’

**Safety** – Your proposed route should above all be pedestrian safe. Please discuss your proposed Slí route with your town or area engineer to ensure he/she has no safety concerns.

Note: All routes must be on Local Authority land or Coillte property, you will need agreement from your local authority or Coillte that Public Liability insurance is in place for the routes. Community Slí routes will not be permitted on private land.
Cost of developing a Slí na Sláinte route

Urban route

Artwork and Design of map board and brochure: €500.00

Irish Heart Foundation Consultation Fee: €150.00

Example of urban signage costs

450mm x 450mm map €92.13*

Start/End sign + 4 meter pole €214.00*

Kilometre Sign + 4 meter pole €214.00*

Left/right/straight signs for junction €28.00*

Signage costs will depend on the length and nature of route i.e. how many Km points and directional arrow signs required.

Urban Km Sign: Located at the start of each route and for every Km thereafter. Same style of sign used for the Start/End sign. Mapboard is then placed below the Start/End sign.

Urban Directional Signs: Located at junctions in urban areas. Normally attached onto existing posts with banding but can be attached onto new 2.4mtr posts.
Rural Route

Artwork and Design of map board and brochure: €500.00

Irish Heart Foundation Consultation Fee: €150.00*

450mmx 450mm map board €197.13*

Woodland post with kilometre plates €41.41*

Woodland post with directional plates €33.81*

Signage costs will depend on the length and nature of route i.e. how many Km points and directional arrow signs required.*

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Rural Km Markers: Located at the start of each route and for every Km thereafter.

Rural Directional Makers: Located at junctions to direct walkers along route.
Walking Leader Training

Included in the cost of the route development is one place on one of our national Walking Leader Training courses. The aim of the course is to train participants to a) motivate people in their locality to take-up walking as a form of health enhancing physical activity and b) plan and lead safe, enjoyable, health-enhancing walking sessions for small groups.

The course covers a wide range of issues such as:

- Current recommendations for health-enhancing physical activity for adults, and how they relate to walking.
- The main elements of a health enhancing walking session.
- Prescribing walking programmes suitable for people of different fitness levels.
- Advice on issues such as posture, technique, stretching, intensity, clothing etc.
- Practical management of a walking group.
- Safety issues
- Planning walking sessions and programmes.
- Motivations and tips
- Developing a Slí na Sláinte route
- How to start your own walking group.

This course is subsidised by the Irish Heart Foundation and the HSE.
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