



# Polar Opposites

Will Andrews  
Cyclist.ie and Bicycle Nelson Bays NZ



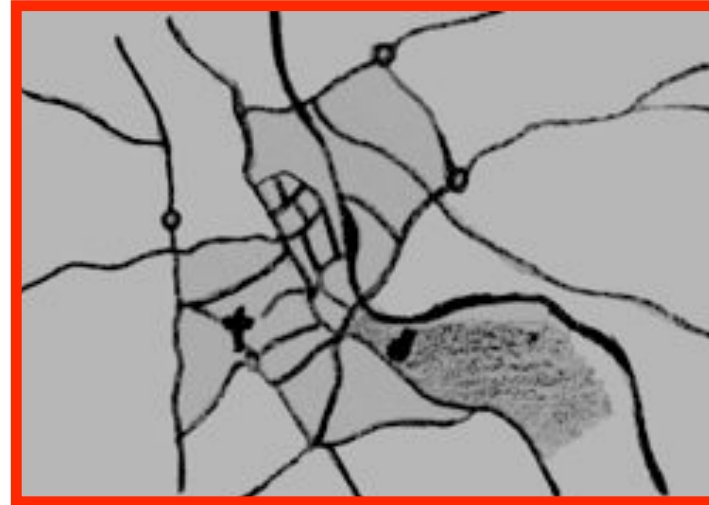
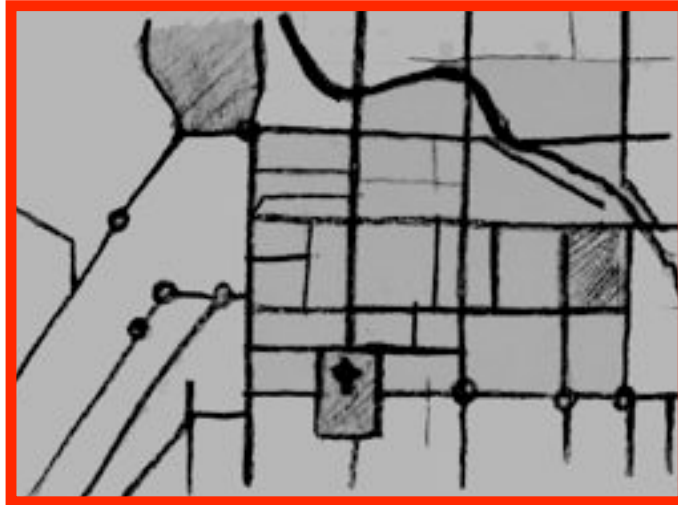
# Culture, Population, Geography



# Climate



**New Zealand and Ireland. Opposite sides of the globe, but incredibly similar in many ways-**  
-Strong links with the UK  
-Populations (above);  
-Traditional agriculture and tourism-based economies;  
-Moderate climate  
How do they compare when it comes to cycling?



1,806  $\uparrow$ /km<sup>2</sup>

1,736  $\uparrow$ /km<sup>2</sup>



86%

62%

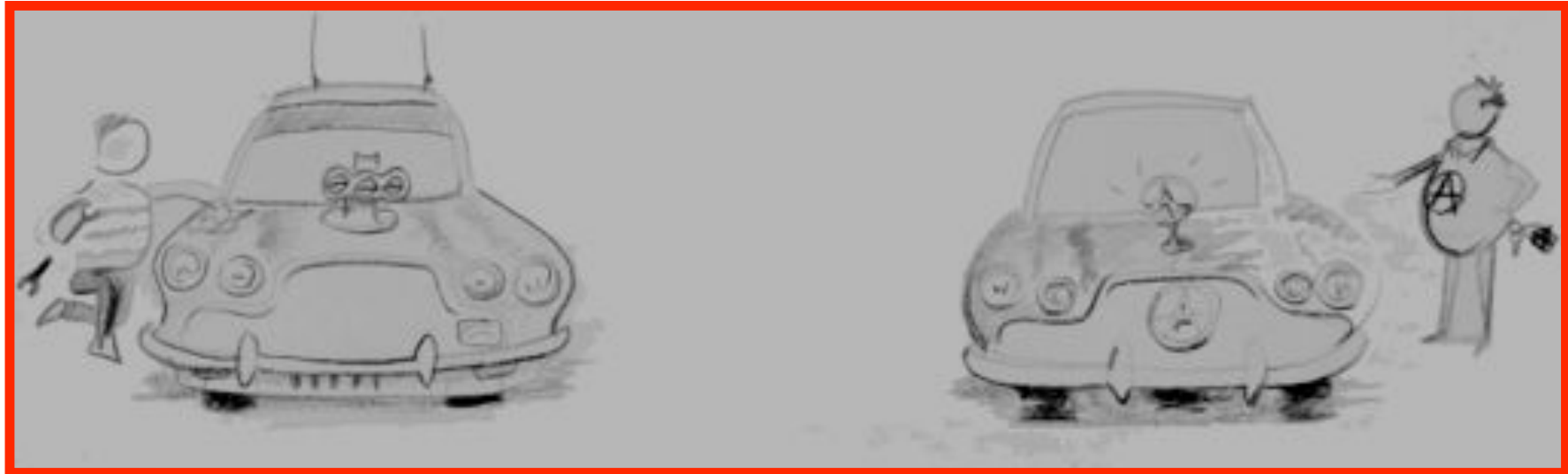
## Urbanisation

Firstly what is the context? New Zealand towns tend to have grid layouts; Irish towns developed organically pre-car. But low urban densities (persons per sq km shown centre), and the national proportion of urban dwellers (percentages, bottom), are surprisingly alike.



€ 14%

€ 14%



718 /  $\uparrow$  x 1,000  
454 in 1985

71% 

513 /  $\uparrow$  x 1,000  
204 in 1985

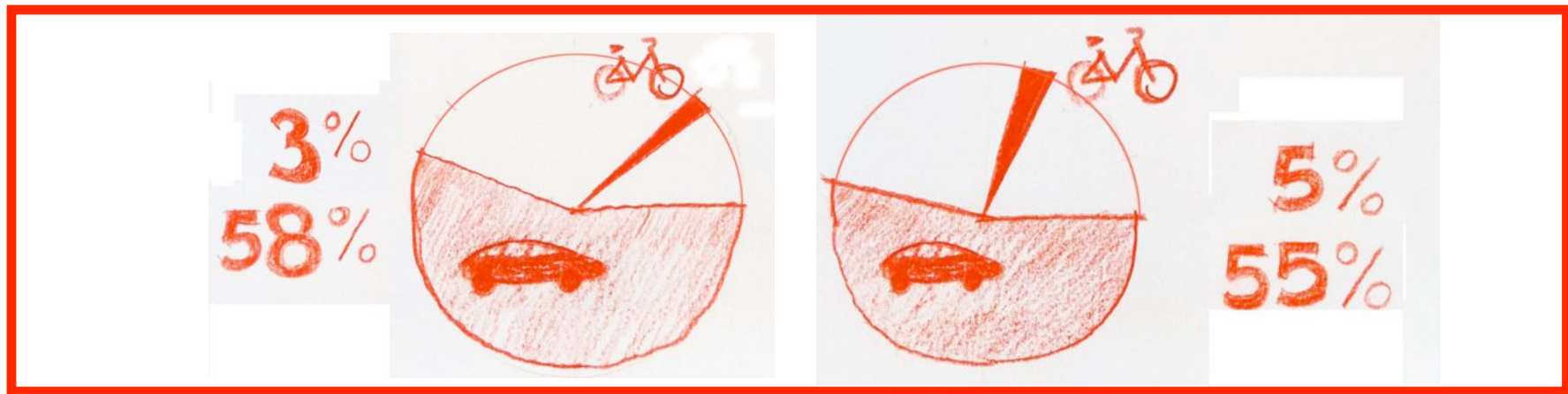
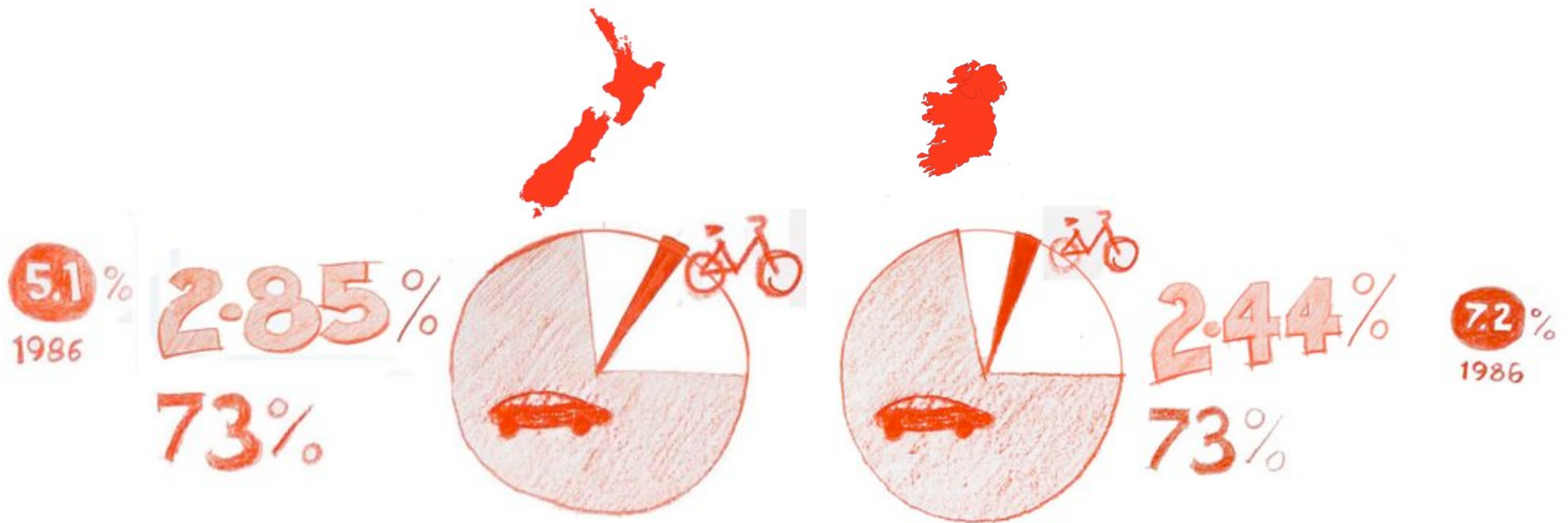
 73%



## Car Culture

Household spending on motoring is identical (percentage, top), but I think New Zealand has a more dominant car culture. Kiwis tend towards high-performance vehicles rather than well-known brands, and New Zealand has a higher figure for car ownership (vehicles per 1,000 population, centre). Driver license proportions (percentage, bottom) are very similar.





Wellington

Dublin

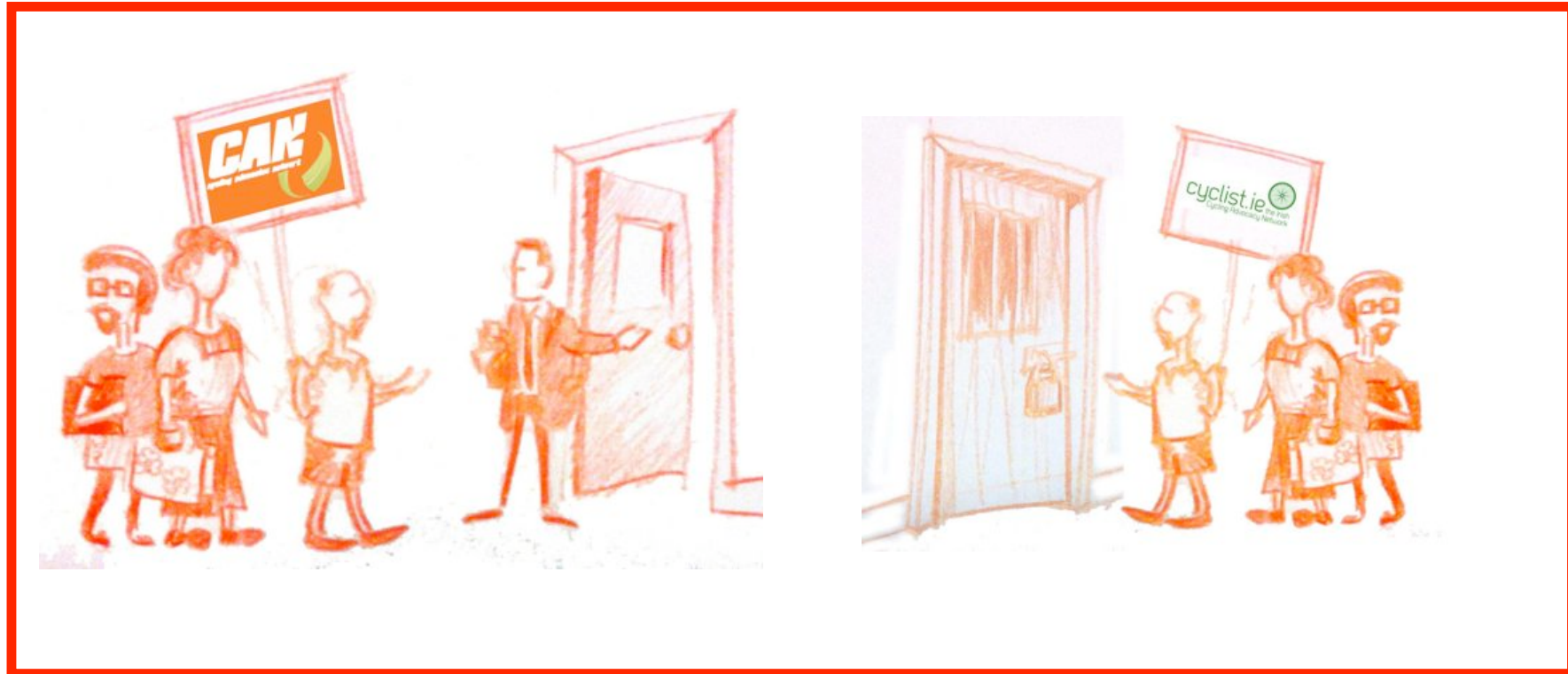
## Modal Share

OK so what's the status of cycling? Bike- and car- to-work share figures here -national at the top (1986 cycling share shown to the side) Below, commuting shares for capital cities Wellington and Dublin. Dublin noticeably higher.





## Nine Modules



## Partnership and User Needs

So, what is being done to promote cycling? How do we compare the two countries? The European quality-management system BYPAD suggests nine headings or modules.

Module 1 is user needs- Consultation with cyclists. In my experience New Zealand has a marginally more accepting attitude to cycling advocates.



## Leadership



## Policy



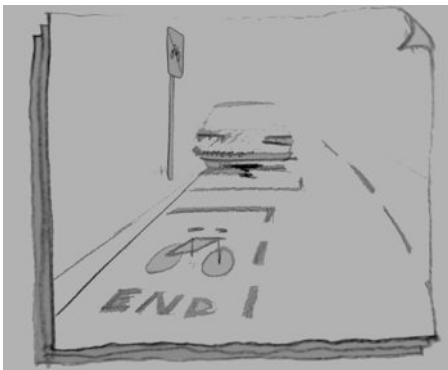
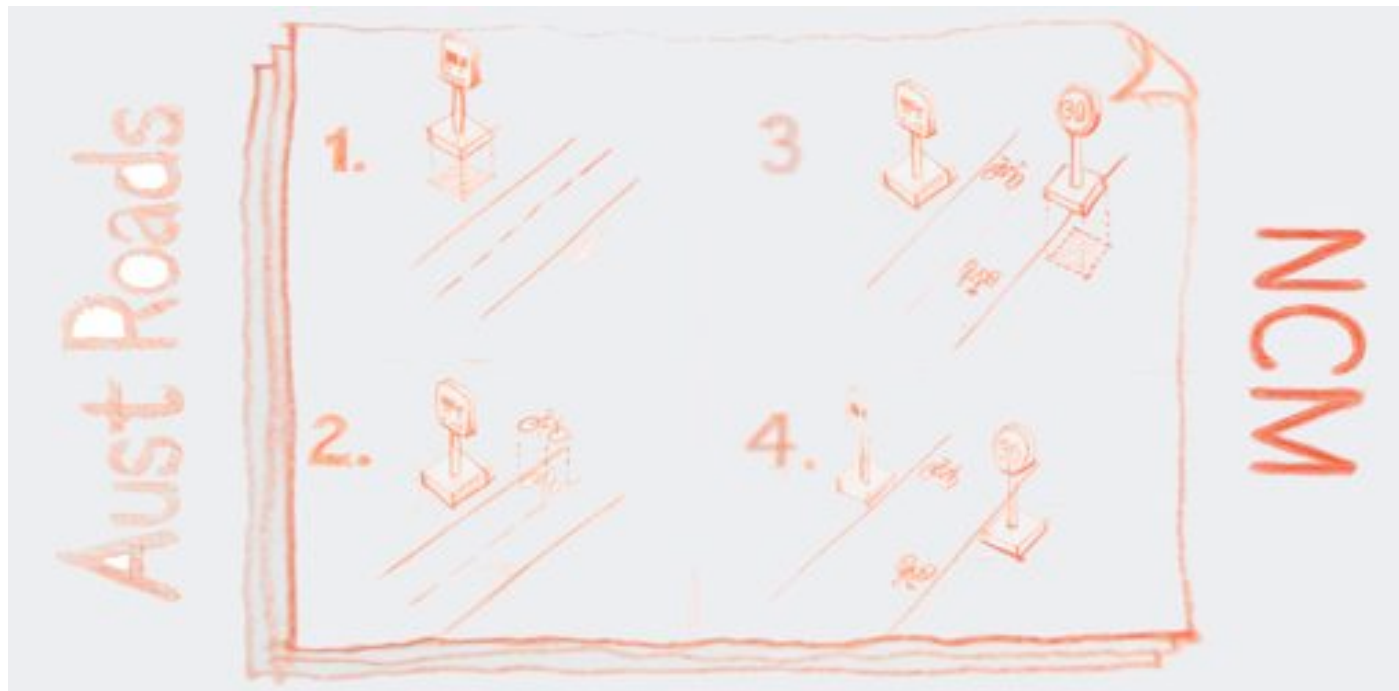
## Personnel



Module 2 of Bypad is Leadership (top). Neither government has taken a leadership stance on promoting cycling.

(Centre) the good news is that both countries have good written policies for how to grow cycling.

Module 4 - Neither country has created a strong central leadership office (bottom), or funding mechanism, and this is critical.



Since 2009!

## Infrastructure

Again, both have good written standards for infrastructure, but application on the ground is patchy- local engineers are not well trained or monitored, so we still end up with poor infrastructure.

Ireland boasts an excellent bike-share system in Dublin, which has been extremely successful and is being rapidly expanded.







## Communication. Education

Neither country makes strong systematic national public announcements advertising the benefits of cycling.

Ireland did produce a worthwhile TV safety ad for road users in 2012.

Both countries have embryonic school skills training regimes





## Target Groups

There are some particular measures aimed at target groups, like families. 'Bikeweek' in Ireland and the 'Bikewise' organisation in New Zealand promote family events. Ireland has the Bike to Work tax-rebate scheme which very successfully subsidises bike and equipment purchase for employees.



## Complementary Actions



## Evaluation

NZ has funded 'model walking and cycling communities' New Plymouth and Hastings, and Ireland has a similar 'Smarter Travel Towns' scheme. Both countries are gradually starting to do surveys and counts of cyclists in a systematic way.



**User Needs**



**Leadership**



**Policy**



**Means,  
Personnel**



**Infrastructure**



**Education**



**Target Groups**



**Complementary  
Measures**



**Evaluation**



## **BYPAD 'Score'**

So here are those nine Bypad modules again, with those that have been acted on in a significant way ticked. We see the very important modules: leadership and allocation of means or personnel to cycling are lacking.





**User Needs**



**Leadership**



**Policy**



**Means,  
Personnel**



**Infrastructure**



**Education**



**Target Groups**



**Complementary  
Measures**



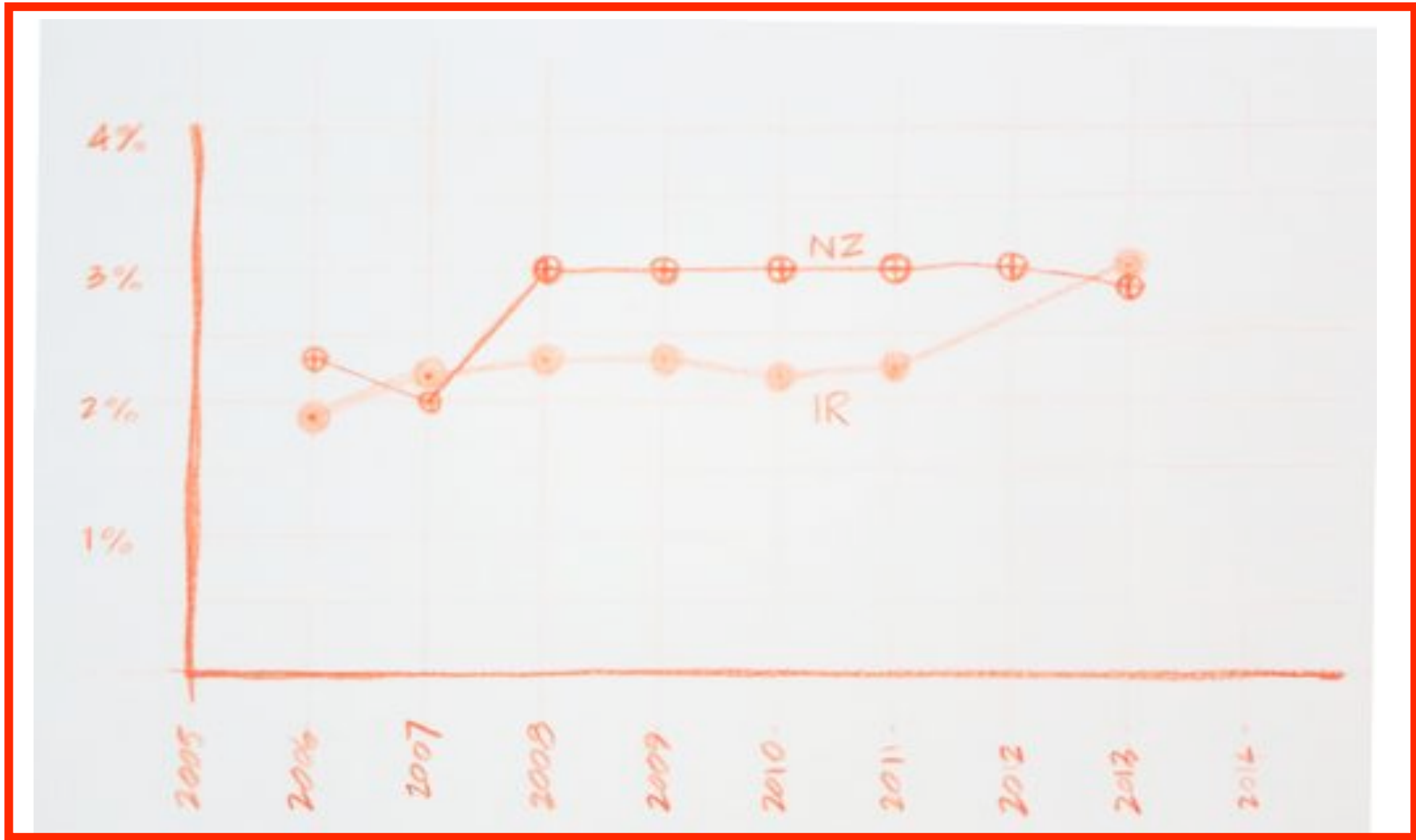
**Evaluation**



## **BYPAD Summary**

Despite that, Ireland's 'Bike to Work' tax relief system and the Dublin Bikes share scheme seem to have had real effects on modal share.





## Share - National - Trips to Work

So what does the overall picture look like? Here are the somewhat uninspiring figures for recent years. New Zealand showing a slight decline, despite definite strong growth in certain towns and suburbs. Whether Ireland's progress is due to its tax and bike share schemes and other local initiatives is not clear.



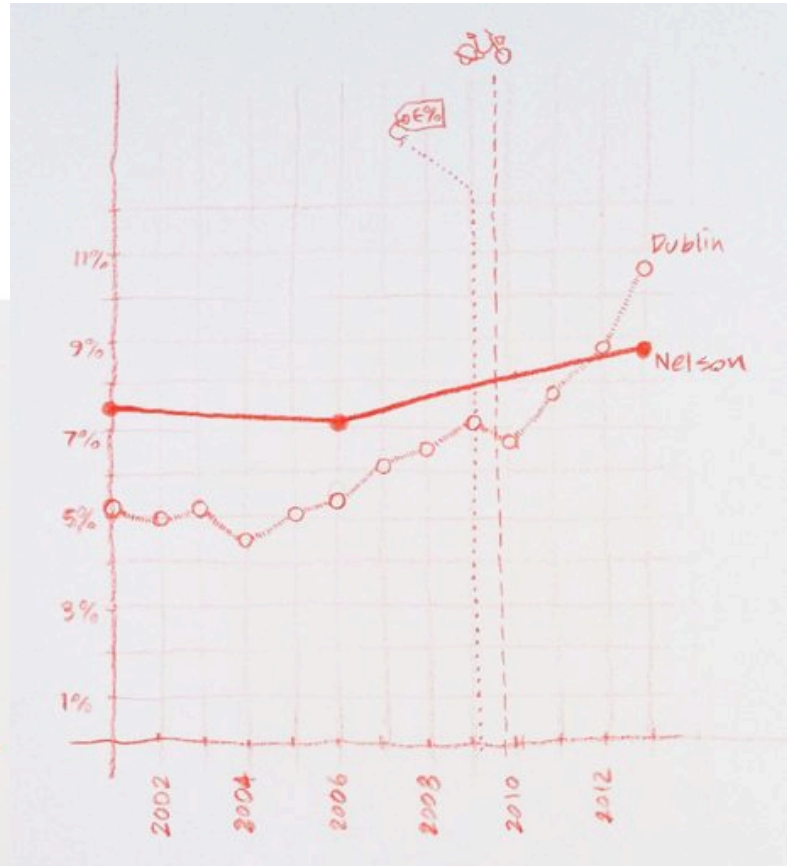
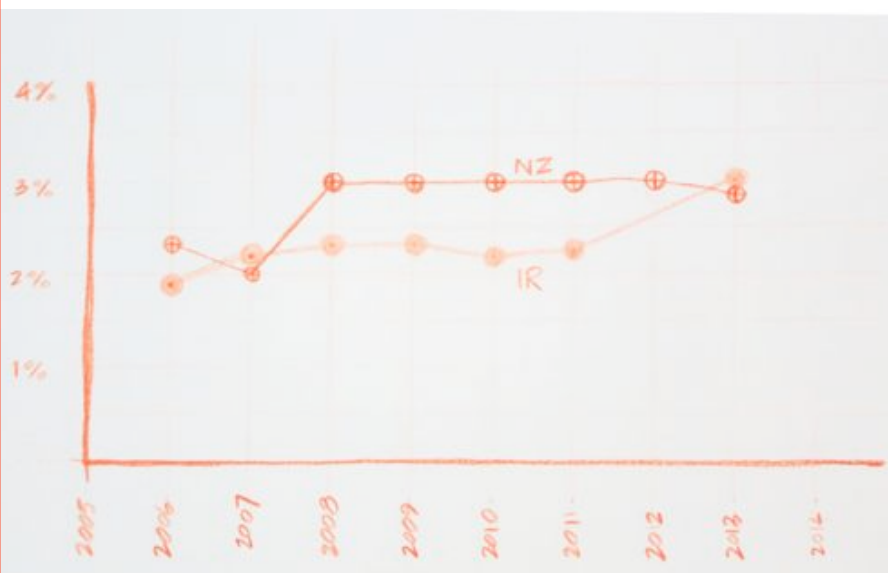


## Bright Spots

But there are areas of great progress and many strong local-authority initiatives.

Two cities exhibit impressive increases - Dublin's by 100% in approximately 7 years, and the two measures I've mentioned are shown here. Nelson has expanded its good off-road bike network in recent years. So local measures make a big difference.





## Action at national level - the lost opportunity

So, is there a correlation between the unco-ordinated measures in Ireland and the growth there, and does New Zealand's powerful car culture and lack of action hold growth back there? It seems national policies and political will CAN have an effect. What could be achieved with fully co-ordinated national actions can only be imagined.







# Polar Opposites

Will Andrews  
Cyclist.ie and Bicycle Nelson Bays NZ

