

HOD X DCC – BIKE WEEK SERIES 2026

Eilish



“I grew up in Rathfarnham, studied arts, history, and politics at UCD. My professional life was spent working as a PA across various sectors, including property and healthcare, but I was never truly defined by my work. Four years ago, I had a serious accident, where I broke my shoulder in four places after hitting a bollard on my bike which changed everything. That time off made me realise I wanted to retire early and embrace what I call Q4 of my life, which I intend to make my best one yet. Cycling has been my primary form of transport since I was seven years old, and I even preferred it during the years I owned a car, not to say I am a terrible driver (I am), but I didn't view cycling as a holiday activity until I was around 50. Since then, my partner and I have embraced long-distance adventures, including a 4,500km journey from Athens to Tallinn that took us 95 days. We've cycled through the Negev Desert, tackled the "Accursed Mountains" in Albania, and marvelled at the Habsburg architecture in Romania. One of my most cherished memories is the beautiful evening light while cycling a 40km-long downhill in the Troodos Mountains in Cyprus. In Dublin, I now rely on an electric bike for daily transport, which has been a lifesaver for managing the symptoms of menopause. The e-bike allows me to get around the city and meet friends without arriving as a "sweaty mess" from hot flushes. While I never had children, I have a broad circle of friends of all ages and a partner who shares my passion for the road. Looking forward, I want to have an adventure every year until I die, with our next two-month trip to Bosnia already in the works. Beyond the bike, I'm also pursuing a new passion for gardening and have applied for a full-time course here at the botanical gardens. For me, life on a bike is about the sense of joy and freedom it provides, offering serendipitous encounters that you just don't get in a gym or a car.”

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Clara



“I moved to Dublin from Copenhagen last September to study mathematics and economics at Trinity. I had spent fourteen years in the same town, riding the same two-kilometre route to school, and I was ready for a new adventure. Back in Denmark, cycling is just a way of life. Everyone has a bike, even if they don't use it very often, and people start young. I was only three when I learned to cycle on my tiny pedal bike, with my dad running behind me holding a large broom handle under the seat to help me balance. When I was nine, my parents divorced, and cycling became even more central to my independence. Thankfully, they handled the divorce incredibly well. They stayed best friends and always put my sister and me first. I lived on a "5-9" schedule, spending nine days with my mum and five with my dad. My dad lived two kilometres to the right and my mum two kilometres to the left of my school. By the time I was twelve, biking had become my primary mode of transport everywhere, rain or shine, because we Danes believe that "there's no such thing as bad weather, only bad equipment. To be honest, the cycling infrastructure was something I took for granted back home. Dublin, however, has been a different story. The quality of the roads and especially the bike lanes in the city centre clearly lack funding. Then there are the Luas tracks. I've fallen a few times after my wheels got caught in the tracks near Trinity. One fall in December broke my bike handle, and just yesterday I took another tumble that left me with some scratches. In Copenhagen, we don't even have open tracks like that in the city, so it has been a steep learning curve. I don't even particularly love riding a bike, but I've become a strong advocate for cycling because the benefits are simply unparalleled. Biking gives you the freedom to go anywhere you need, quickly and reliably. I've even started influencing my friends, slowly convincing them that cycling is a faster and better way to get around. Dublin might not be a cycling utopia, but I'd still rather be on my bike in the fresh air than stuck in traffic.”