

# SHOP BY BIKE



2018-19 REPORT

# What is Shop By Bike Belfast?



**“Retailers and the business community have a significant role to play in facilitating and encouraging others to travel by bicycle - to make it possible for people to access local and town centre shops using the bicycle.”**

[Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland, Department for Infrastructure, 2015](#)



Shop by Bike Belfast is a unique independent survey of cycling parking at major grocery stores across our city. It's devised and coordinated by Bikefast and conducted by volunteer supermarket customers.

The survey aims to record and rate the current level and quality of provision for customers who take the option to cycle to their supermarket. It establishes a baseline, highlights areas for improvement and can guide supermarket management to direct the right investment into upgrading and enhancing their customers' shopping experience.

It builds upon a trial survey Bikefast conducted in 2015 which identified Tesco Newtownbreda as the city's top supermarket location for cycling and Sainsbury's as the top overall brand in the city. On the downside, the survey reported that there was just a paltry 100 bicycle racks outside the 40 stores we visited, and almost half of Belfast's supermarkets had no bicycle racks at all.

Making Belfast work as a city in which the bicycle is a viable and attractive everyday tool for transport relies on a lot of things. Safe infrastructure, direct routes, convenience, practicality being a few - and having somewhere safe and secure to park your bike is critical. Supermarkets might be perceived as a destination only for the weekly 'big shop' which needs motorised transport, but in Belfast more than a third of households have no access to a car.

Our city's supermarkets are very accessible by walking and cycling for a quick convenience shop. Just look how rapidly and extensively the "basket-only" and "self-scan" areas in Belfast's biggest stores have grown in recent years. Yet, as our 2015 survey showed, cycling customers are struggling to find places to lock their bicycles, putting up an unnecessary barrier to more regular passing trade as well as more cycling generally in Belfast. Shop By Bike Belfast aims to change that.



**“10% of 25-34 year olds cite ‘no secure facilities to park bike at destination’ as a barrier to short cycling journeys.”**

[Public awareness of Travelwise NI initiatives, Department for Infrastructure, 2014](#)



# Foreword: Chris Lyttle MLA



Cycling on the rise in Belfast due to protected infrastructure

**“Although cyclists may spend less than car-borne shoppers per trip, their total expenditure is on average greater as they tend to visit shops more often.”**

[Cycling and the economy, Cycling UK, 2016](#)

“Liveable cities and sustainable shops must move people in smart, accessible and healthy ways. Providing people with the infrastructure, facilities and confidence to cycle is central to achieving this aim.

“The active enquiry of the volunteers behind Shop By Bike Belfast provides an excellent assessment of the quality of bike parking facilities at shops across Belfast and the extent to which they are helping people to choose this healthy, cost effective and enjoyable mode of transport.

“As 1.8 million of the 6.7 million trips by bike in Belfast in the past year were made for shopping and other purposeful trips, it is not only socially responsible but sound business for shop owners to play their part in making it easier for people to access their shops and our city by bike.

“This inaugural report celebrates best practice and highlights simple ways for major grocery providers to invest in provision that will attract more people to shop at their stores.

“This and future Shop By Bike Belfast reports will be useful contributions towards Belfast becoming a liveable city and to realising the Bicycle Strategy vision of making cycling for everyday journeys more accessible and viable for all.”



**Chris Lyttle MLA**

Chairperson, All Party  
Assembly Group on Cycling  
[niassembly.gov.uk](http://niassembly.gov.uk)

**“Researchers for Transport for London, who surveyed shoppers in 22 town centres in the capital, found that those who arrived by car did not spend all that much more on average than those who arrived by cycle - £286 and £259 respectively per month (walkers spent £370).”**

[Town Centre Study, Transport for London, 2016](#)

# Survey ranking criteria

Shop By Bike Belfast rates supermarkets on the quantity and quality of bicycle parking. Our volunteers score each store against a set list of nine criteria allowing an objective ranking from **1 to 74**:



**Does the store cater for cycling customers?**  
Is there the bare minimum (one bicycle rack) available for use in the immediate vicinity?

**Is there clearly visible CCTV coverage?**  
Can cycling customers be confident of an active deterrent to theft while shopping?



**Bike racks in single figures**  
An additional point if the supermarket has more than one bicycle rack, but less than 10

**Proximity to supermarket entrance**  
How convenient and accessible is the store's customer bicycle parking area?



**Bike racks in double figures**  
Another extra point for stores who are planning for a glut of cycling customers

**Additional services for cycling customers**  
Has the store gone the extra mile for cycling customers, eg lock hire, repair station etc



**Are the bike racks of a good quality?**  
Sturdy and secure, not flimsy or wheel bending, just 0.5 if good but poorly installed

**Website listing (new for 2018-19)**  
Is there online information available on each supermarket's cycle parking facilities?



**Is the bicycle parking area sheltered?**  
If your trolleys live under a canopy while the rain lashes customers' bikes, try harder

Each location gets a score out of nine points, with tiebreakers being:

- the total number of bike racks (added as a decimal, eg a store with **6 points** and **5 racks** scores **(6.05)** overall) then real world capacity
- descending count back on the nine criteria, eg quality racks scores more than online info
- proximity to a dedicated cycle route counting negatively, eg if two stores have identical facilities but one is located on a greenway route and the other is three kilometres from the nearest cycling route, the closer store *should* be doing better for cycling

## Example: Tesco Castlereagh Road

A great high profile bicycle parking area with a sign visible from the main road. 12 good sturdy racks scores this store 4 points out of 9 (4.12).

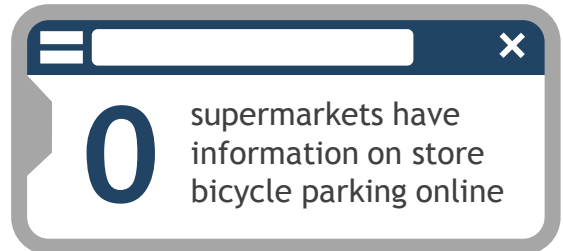
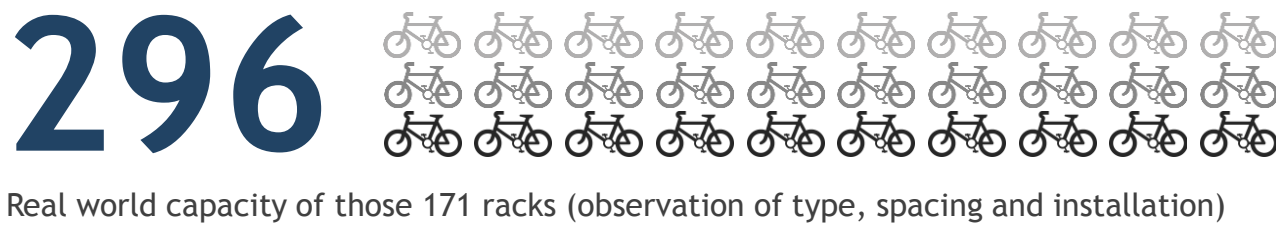
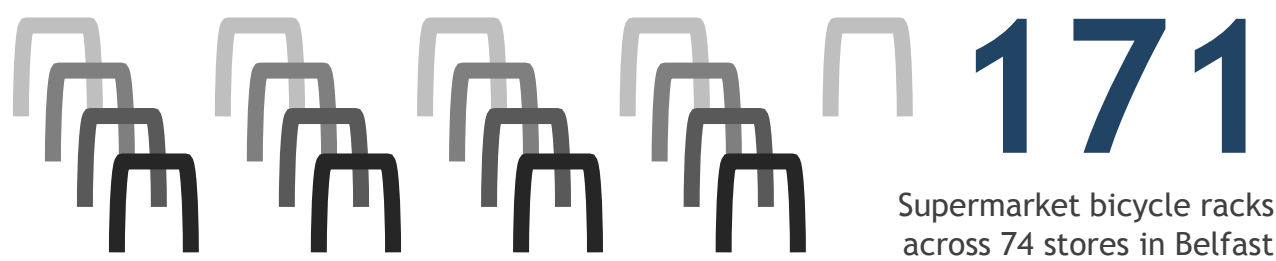
Lack of shelter and obvious CCTV holds it back, but a big issue is proximity - it's a full 85 metres from the store entrance. Customers, preferring security above all, tend to lock up where footfall is higher, creating knock-on problems for all.

**16**

**TESCO Castlereagh Road**  
12 racks, too far away from store (4.12)



# Headline results





# Best overall brand: LIDL



LIDL Connswater

LIDL has climbed from sixth place in 2015 to take the title of **BEST OVERALL BRAND** in 2018-19. We were delighted by a 275% increase in bike parking since 2015, and LIDL have ensured that their redeveloped stores (Andersonstown, Connswater) included great quality, well positioned bicycle parking at launch. All seven LIDL supermarkets now actively attract cycling customers, and the flagship Connswater store even has a Belfast Bikes station right by the front door. Impressive.



“As Northern Ireland’s fastest growing retailer we are always keen to ensure we not only offer customers the best prices in the market, but that we offer the best facilities also.

“With a growing number of shoppers who choose to shop with us availing of bike parking facilities, we have invested significantly since 2013 in this area.

“We’ve ensured all new property projects carry bike parking as standard and we have upgraded our portfolio right across Northern Ireland to meet this growing demand.

“We are delighted to have this commitment to excellent bike parking facilities recognised and we pledge to continue offering our growing customer base this high level of service.”



**Conor Boyle**

Regional Director for  
Lidl Northern Ireland  
[lidl-ni.co.uk](http://lidl-ni.co.uk)

# Overall supermarket brand rankings

1	<b>LIDL</b> 7 stores, 100% catering for cycling customers 30 racks (+22 on 2015), 4.3 per store, av score 4.7	▲
2	<b>SAINSBURY'S</b> 3 stores, 100% catering for cycling customers 14 racks (+0 on 2015), 4.7 per store, av score 5.7	▼
3	<b>TESCO</b> 22 stores, 64% catering for cycling customers 71 racks (+21 on 2015), 3.2 per store, av score 2.4	▼
4	<b>M&amp;S</b> 6 stores, 67% catering for cycling customers 16 racks (+6 on 2015) 2.7 per store, av score 2.7	▲
5	<b>DUNNES</b> 3 stores, 100% catering for cycling customers 10 racks (+2 on 2015), 3.3 per store, av score 3.0	▼
6	<b>ASDA</b> 3 stores, 33% catering for cycling customers 10 racks (+0 on 2015), 3.3 per store, av score 1.9	▼
7	<b>SUPERVALU</b> 2 stores, 50% catering for cycling customers 4 racks (N/A 2015), 2.0 per store, av score 1.5	★
8	<b>COOP</b> 14 stores, 29% catering for cycling customers 8 racks (N/A 2015), 0.6 per store, av score 0.8	★
9	<b>ICELAND</b> 14 stores, 29% catering for cycling customers 8 racks (+0 on 2015), 0.6 per store, av score 0.6	▼



Photo: Dominika Charvátová



The 2015 survey looked at 40 of Belfast's main grocery chain supermarkets. This time we expanded to smaller stores to widen to 74 locations (see map page 14). This brought COOP & SUPERVALU into scope and the big chain's smaller convenience store, eg TESCO Express. We have left out the small store convenience chains, franchises and independents such as CENTRA, MACE, SPAR for 2018-19. Brand rank based on: total & per store quantity, av quality score, number and % of stores w/parking, +/- on 2015.



# Best store location: TESCO Newtownbreda



TESCO Newtownbreda bicycle parking area

TESCO Newtownbreda retains its title as the **BEST STORE LOCATION** in Belfast for shopping by bicycle. Situated on the A55 outer ring road, serving the Belvoir and Newtownbreda settlements, the store boasts the joint highest number of bicycle racks of any store in Belfast. The high footfall with the cash machines and a position right beside one of the two stores entrances combine with a sheltered position to make cycling customers feel valued and welcomed.



“At all our stores we work hard to make sure that facilities meet the needs of our customers and give them the best possible experience.

“That’s why it’s so rewarding to receive this award.

“We’re incredibly proud and hope that the effort we make to accommodate cyclists encourages more people to get on their bikes and have a positive impact on the environment.”



**Nora Armour**  
Store Manager  
TESCO Newtownbreda  
[tesco.com](https://www.tesco.com)



# Belfast store location rankings 1 to 10

**1** **TESCO Newtownbreda**  
15 racks, sheltered, prime location (7.15)  
The city's best cycling store for a second time

**2** **SAINSBURY'S Forestside**  
7 racks, covered, well lit, lock hire\* & cafe (7.07)  
\*The only store with additional customer service

**3** **ASDA Shore Road**  
10 racks, CCTV cover, close to entrance (6.60)  
2 areas, one sheltered one not, close to greatness

**4** **M&S Abbey Centre**  
7 racks, sheltered with CCTV cover (6.07)  
A new entry straight into the top 4, oozing quality

**5** **TESCO Ballygomartin Road**  
3 racks, good quality, sheltered, CCTV (6.03)  
A few more racks away from a title challenge

**6** **SAINSBURY'S Hollywood Exchange**  
3 racks, CCTV cover and under shelter (6.03)  
Good facility if a little far away, needs to kick on

**7** **DUNNES Abbey Centre**  
6 racks, good quality with CCTV cover (5.06)  
A good recent investment, shelter would be great

**8** **LIDL Abbey Centre**  
4 racks, sheltered near the store entrance (5.04)  
New entry, doing Newtownabbey proud

**9** **LIDL Andersonstown Road**  
4 racks, sheltered by the front door (5.04)  
Good new racks, but merchandise often blocking

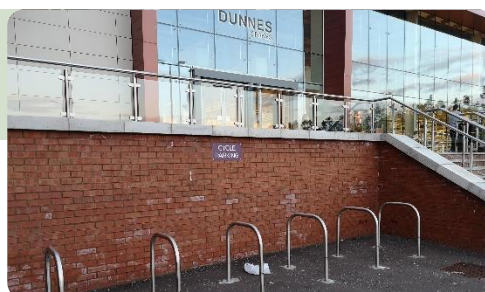
**10** **LIDL Connswater**  
4 racks, top quality + Belfast Bikes (5.04)  
Excellent access onto the Connswater Greenway

## CHANGE SINCE 2015 SURVEY

- ▲ RANKING INCREASED
- NO CHANGE
- ▼ RANKING DECREASED
- ★ NEW TO SURVEY

## COLOUR KEY

- ASDA
- COOP
- DUNNES
- ICELAND
- LIDL
- M&S
- SAINSBURYS
- SUPERVALU
- TESCO



As observed at various dates during second half of 2018-19  
Facilities may have changed before this report was published

# Belfast store location rankings 11 to 42

11	LIDL Castlereagh Road 3 racks, sheltered, often blocked (5.03)	▲	*	TESCO University Road 3 racks, tight to a wall (4.03)	27
12	COOP Ballysillan Road 3 racks, good quality, no shelter (5.03)	*	▲	LIDL High Street 3 wheel bending mounts (4.03)	28
13	TESCO Cityside 3 racks, right by the entrance (5.03)	▼	▼	M&S Boucher Road 2 racks, unsheltered (4.02)	29
14	LIDL Shore Road 8 racks, half good / half not (4.58)	▼	*	TESCO Rosetta Road 3 racks, unsheltered (3.53)	30
15	COOP Ormeau Road 3 racks, good quality, no shelter (4.53)	*	*	SUPERVALU Dairy Farm 4 wheel bending mounts (3.04)	31
16	TESCO Castlereagh Road 12 racks, too far away from store (4.12)	▼	*	TESCO Abbey Centre 3 racks, well away from entrance (3.03)	32
17	TESCO Doagh Road 8 racks, two areas, unsheltered (4.58)	*	*	TESCO Royal Avenue 2 racks, a little distance away (3.02)	33
18	TESCO Knocknagoney 6 racks, too far from entrance (4.06)	▼	▼	TESCO Antrim Road 5 racks, <i>actual</i> capacity 1 bicycle (3.01)	34
19	ICELAND Park Centre 5 racks, unsheltered by main door (4.05)	▼	▼	ICELAND Bridge Street 1 cyclehoop (1.01)	35
20	LIDL Stewartstown Road 4 racks, CCTV cover, unsheltered (4.04)	▲	*	COOP Lisburn Road 1 cyclehoop (1.01)	36
21	SAINSBURY'S Kennedy Centre 4 racks, quite the dander away (4.04)	▼	▼	ICELAND Newtownards Road 1 cyclehoop (1.01)	37
22	M&S Forestside 4 racks, no shelter, often blocked (4.04)	▼	▼	DUNNES Annadale Embankment 1 cyclehoop (1.01)	38
23	TESCO Castle Place 4 racks, out front, unsheltered (4.04)	▼	▼	ICELAND Cregagh Road 1 rack away on the street corner (1.01)	39
24	M&S Donegall Place 3 racks, prominent and well used (4.03)	▼	*	COOP Beersbridge Road 1 cyclehoop (1.01)	40
25	DUNNES Ann Street 3 racks, very popular location (4.03)	▼	*	TESCO Ormeau Road 1 cyclehoop (1.01)	41
26	TESCO Newtownards Road 3 racks, unsheltered (4.03)	*	▼	ICELAND Ballysillan Road (ZERO)	42

As observed at various dates during second half of 2018-19  
Facilities may have changed before this report was published



# Belfast store rankings 43 to 74

43	ICELAND Andersonstown Road (ZERO)	▼	*	TESCO Saintfield Road (ZERO)	59
44	COOP Old Park Road (ZERO)	*	*	ICELAND Doagh Road (ZERO)	60
45	COOP Upper Lisburn Road (ZERO)	*	*	TESCO Dublin Road (ZERO)	61
46	ASDA Kennedy Way (ZERO)	▼	▼	M&S Newtownards Road (ZERO)	62
47	ICELAND Finaghy Road (ZERO)	▼	*	COOP Cregagh Road (ZERO)	63
48	ICELAND Kennedy Centre (ZERO)	▼	*	COOP Rosetta Road (ZERO)	64
49	TESCO Kingsway (ZERO)	▼	*	COOP Connsbrook Avenue (ZERO)	65
50	ICELAND Antrim Road (ZERO)	▼	▼	TESCO Belmont Road (ZERO)	66
51	M&S Lisburn Road (ZERO)	▼	*	SUPERVALU King's Road (ZERO)	67
52	COOP Shankill Road (ZERO)	*	*	COOP King's Road (ZERO)	68
53	COOP Antrim Road (ZERO)	*	*	TESCO Great Victoria Street (ZERO)	69
54	ICELAND Shankill Road (ZERO)	▼	▼	ICELAND York Street (ZERO)	70
55	ICELAND Glengormley (ZERO)	▼	*	TESCO Hollywood (ZERO)	71
56	ASDA Dundonald (ZERO)	*	*	COOP Beverley Road (ZERO)	72
57	TESCO Lisburn Road (ZERO)	▼	▼	ICELAND Castle Street (ZERO)	73
58	COOP Upper Malone Road (ZERO)	*	*	TESCO Monkstown Road (ZERO)	74

As observed at various dates during second half of 2018-19  
Facilities may have changed before this report was published

# Best shopping centre: CASTLECOURT



CASTLECOURT car park mounts and racks on Royal Avenue



This year Shop By Bike Belfast has expanded to the city's multi store indoor retail centres, and CASTLECOURT is our first winner of **BEST SHOPPING CENTRE**. 19 racks are split between 5 sturdy Sheffield stands on Royal Avenue and 14 wall mounts in the car park. While these mounts aren't the gold standard, the sheltered location, good lighting and CCTV coverage - complemented by an always occupied security shelter - puts customers' minds at ease while they browse and relax inside.



"We actively encourage and promote our customers to use sustainable transport to visit the centre and for the fast-growing numbers of cyclists coming in to the city centre, we're acutely aware of the need to provide appropriate, safe and secure facilities to ensure that this continues.

"From the positive feedback we've received, we're delighted to be playing our part in encouraging more people to cycle which has benefits shared by everyone. A key part of a healthy lifestyle, pollution is reduced and there is less pressure on car parking. Our focus in this area simply makes sense.

"CastleCourt has been actively promoting green travel for more than a decade. We were one of the first to achieve zero waste to landfill and recently created one of the largest electric vehicle charging hubs in the British Isles. We intend to strengthen further in the years ahead with new investment planned."



**Paul McMahon**

CastleCourt  
Centre Manager  
[castlecourt-uk.com](http://castlecourt-uk.com)



# Belfast shopping centre rankings

NEW FOR  
2018-19

**1 CASTLECOURT**  
19 racks - 14 car park, 5 Royal Avenue (7.19)  
Secure indoor area, front door racks, Belfast Bikes



**2 ABBEY CENTRE**  
17 racks - 6 out front, 5 car park, 6 Dunnes (6.17)  
Three separate outdoor areas, mixed quality



**3 FORESTSIDE**  
11 racks - 7 Sainsbury's, 4 M&S (6.11)  
Good quality with on-demand locks for customers



**4 VICTORIA SQUARE**  
8 racks - 2 Ann St, 3 Victoria St, 3 Replay (6.08)  
Top quality, minimal provision in a cycling hotspot



**5 CONNSWATER**  
11 racks - 5 main door, 6 car park (5.61)  
Great main door racks, but car park racks unloved



**6 CITYSIDE**  
9 racks - 6 main door, 3 Tesco (5.59)  
Great positions, Tesco racks an awkward design



**7 KENNEDY CENTRE**  
9 racks - 5 Jobs&Benefits, 4 near Sainsburys (5.09)  
Good quality, front entrance lacks bike parking



**8 PARK CENTRE**  
5 racks - right beside the main door (4.05)  
Lots of space to improve on a solid start

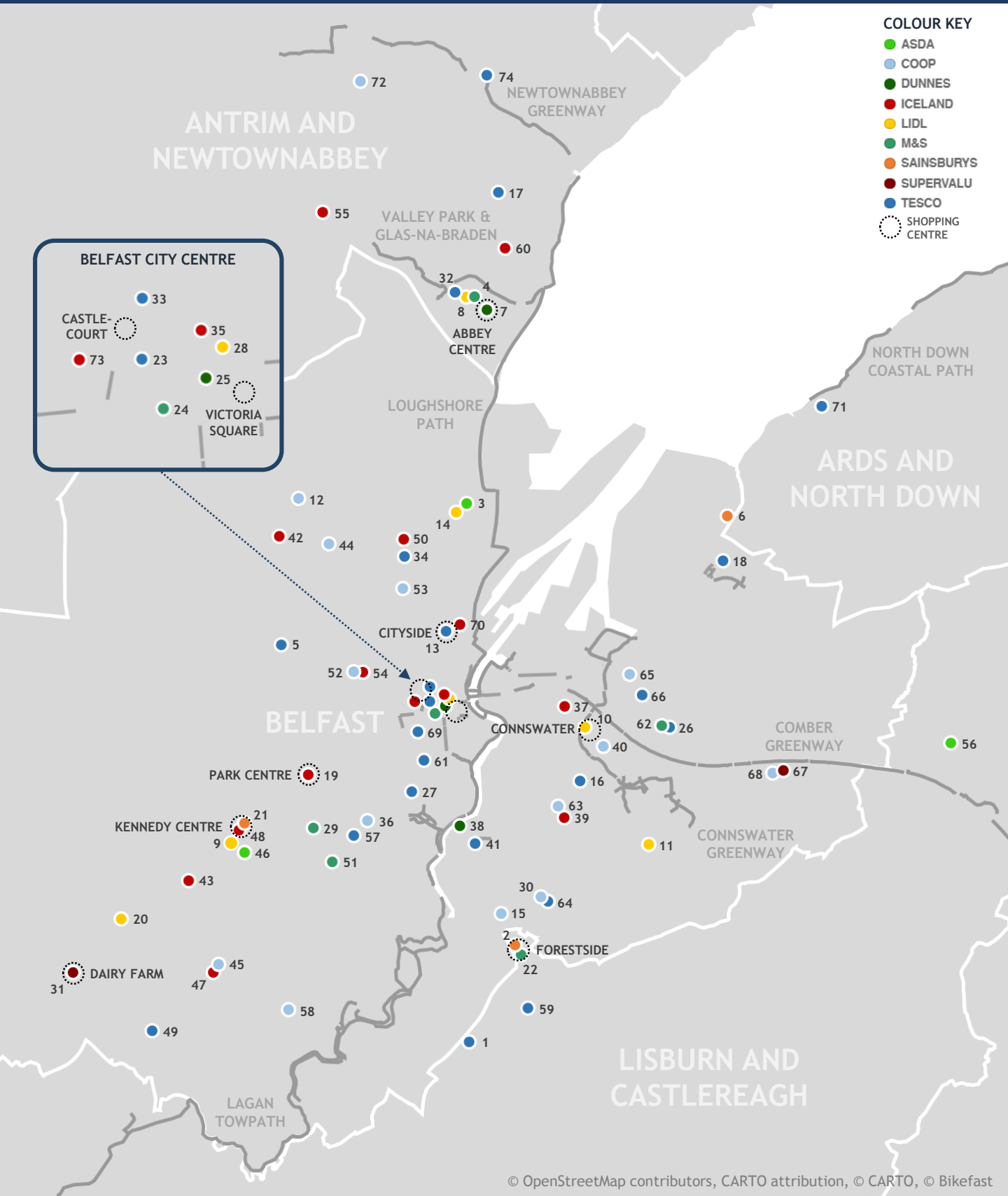


**9 DAIRY FARM**  
4 racks - on the main entrance concourse (3.04)  
Wheel bending wall mounts not up to scratch



This is a new aspect to the **Shop By Bike Belfast** survey for 2018-19. Many of the supermarkets in our survey are based within a larger shopping centre, and some of the bicycle parking in our supermarket list is actually provided by or shared with the shopping centre itself. For this separate list we counted any bicycle racks which surround the main shopping centre building (eg the TESCO racks in Cityside are added to the main door racks) but not those elsewhere in a wider retail park (eg the LIDL racks at Connswater).

# Survey store locations



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# Shop By Bike Belfast aims for 2020



City Quays Belfast, sheltered bicycle parking

**“By 2035, everyone will enjoy attractive, well-serviced, clean neighbourhoods and a thriving city centre. Belfast will be a city that encourages walking, cycling and the use of public transport.”**

[The Belfast Agenda, Belfast City Council, 2018](#)



Every customer attracted to your store is more revenue taken in. In the space of one car parking bay, a row of Sheffield bicycle stands can comfortably host 10 cycling customers. It's space efficient and sends a signal to customers that your store cares about their journey and their experience. Great cycle parking is a low cost, high impact investment for your business:

**“The cost of cycle storage varies between products, design and site conditions:**

- a basic Sheffield type stand .. will cost around £100 to supply and install
- a shelter starts at around £2,000 plus cost of stands”

[Sustrans Design Manual, Cycle Parking, Sustrans, 2014](#)

Shop By Bike Belfast has highlighted good practice in the local grocery retail sector and also areas for improvement. We're calling for major supermarket brands to commit to four simple actions by 2020:

1. Every supermarket in Belfast to have *at least* one good quality bike rack
2. Supermarkets to aim to invest in cycle parking levels at 10% of car parking
3. Supermarkets to provide secure bicycle storage areas for staff
4. The largest stores to review safe routes for cycling across their car parks

We will return next year when the Shop By Bike Belfast 2020 ranking list should be about brands and stores proudly competing on quality, not on whether customers can park their bicycles at all.

Bikefast wants to make Belfast the best city in these islands for cycling, and supermarkets can play a powerful role in supporting that change - and we're here to help you on that journey.



**“Customers going shopping by bike are an important source of turnover in retail, and could actually be a source of growth for the local retail sector.”**

[Shopping by bike: Best friend of your city centre, European Cyclists' Federation, 2016](#)

# SHOP BY BIKE



Many thanks to our volunteer supermarket customers who made Shop By Bike Belfast possible, including:

Gary Benson, Borghert Borghmans, Michal Bryxí, Adam Butler, Dan Callahan, Dominika Charvátová, Derek Clegg, Dave Dunn, Jonathan Francey, John Girvin, PJ Hart, Gary Kennedy, Terry Lawlor, Michael Martin, Gavan McAlinden, Chris Murphy, Steven Patterson, Brian Shannon and Conor Winchcombe.

Bikefast gives no guarantee that the information provided is current, accurate, complete or error-free.

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Devised and coordinated by



[www.bikefast.org](http://www.bikefast.org)