

Acquire the land from Network Rail on which the ATR884 runs as a permissive path and arrange maintenance

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 13 Mehefin 2022
Petitions Committee | 13 June 2022

Reference: SR22/2716

Petition Number: P-06-1271

Petition title: Acquire the land from Network Rail on which the ATR884 runs as a permissive path and arrange maintenance

Text of petition: Locally known as the Garw Valley Community Route this path has not been maintained for the last 8 years. It is a vital link out of a cul de sac valley and representations to the Local Authority and other bodies remain undetermined. There is a Single A Road out of the valley and the Community Route is the only other form of access and egress.

1. Background

The ATR884 route forms part of the National Cycle Network (NCN) and was originally opened to form an active travel link between Blaengarw in the Garw Valley and Bryngarw near Brynmenyn.

In a 2018 press release Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) states that until 2014, Groundwork Bridgend maintained the route before going into



administration. The lease for the land subsequently passed to the Garw Valley Heritage Railway Society who began seeking potential partners to help look after and maintain the route.

At that time, the press release states that local and national organisations including BCBC, Natural Resources Wales, Sustrans, Keep Wales Tidy, Network Rail (NR), Groundwork Wales and the Garw Valley Heritage Railway Society had agreed to work together with residents of the Garw Valley to ensure the route remained open and suitable for use.

BCBC has confirmed to Senedd Research that it has long considered the 884 route as part of its active travel network and throughout that time has been working consistently with Sustrans to regularise investment in the route and maintain it. Currently, BCBC is negotiating with NR to secure the land on a long term lease for active travel purposes. A long term lease will afford BCBC the certainty of tenure and enable it to continually upgrade and maintain it at public expense.

BCBC's negotiations with NR are being handled by its legal department which is advising about the liabilities and responsibilities that a long term lease would entail.

2. Welsh Government action

Correspondence from the Welsh Government highlights how the route is shown as an existing active travel route on Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) draft active travel network map. It notes also that the accompanying statement highlights several issues with the route. The Minister for Climate Change has indicated that as the originator's main concern appears to be the maintenance of the route, Welsh Government officials have been tasked with discussing the maintenance arrangements and any plans for improvements with BCBC.

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