

Cross Party Group on the Active Travel Act

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday February 16th, 2023

12.00 to 1:30pm in Conference Rooms C&D, Ty Hywel & via Microsoft Teams

Present & Apologies: see attached lists.

Welcome and Introductions: Huw Irranca-Davies MS (Chair) welcomed participants to the meeting.

Chair's Updates: The Chair reported on progress with the Group's review of the Active Travel Act, which continued to be lauded by the Welsh Government, featuring in the new National Transport Delivery Plan and being praised by the Deputy Minister in his appearance before the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee. There had also been some positive action with work starting on a new Active Travel Delivery Plan, which was a central recommendation of the review, with a draft expected in early April and the recruitment of independent members to the reformed active travel board, all based on our recommendations, underway. However, that only accounted for a fraction of the review's proposals, consequently a meeting had been sought with officials to press the other points, including the important issue of legislative reform. The Chair would keep members informed of progress.

Following the strong support for the regulatory changes which Phil Jones had proposed at the previous meeting, the Group's officers had raised them with the Deputy Minister, who had agreed that his officials would take part in an initial discussion to explore the possibilities. A meeting had consequently been convened for early March involving Cycling UK, Living Streets, Phil Jones, Sustrans, Transport for Wales, the Welsh Government and the WLGA.

The Chair informed the meeting that the revised, active travel friendly, version of the Common Standards for housebuilders, had still not been published. The Group officers would continue to press for urgent action.

October would see the tenth Anniversary of the passing of Active Travel Act. The Chair proposed that the Group should mark the event with a bike ride to the Senedd led by as many MSs as possible. Members interested in helping with the organisation of the event were asked to contact the secretary.

Active Travel & the Cost of Living: The Chair introduced this item by speaking of the importance of raising public awareness of all the benefits of active travel, which must include its capacity to save people money. He then introduced the first speakers: Gwenda Owen of Cycling UK and Dr Isaac Tabner, Stirling University. Gwenda set out three scenarios and examined how much could be saved in each case by switching journeys from the car to active travel. Scenario 1 was a young couple who could save £3,300 over three years by using bikes instead of a car, just for the school run and one of the couple's short commute to work. Scenario 2 was a self-employed itinerant cleaner who, by cancelling a car loan and

replacing the vehicle with a bike could save £3,335 in 12 months. Scenario 3 was a person who sold their car, still having access to their partner's car for occasional journeys, and bought an electric bike for their daily ten mile journey to work, saving them £25,000 over 5 years. Gwenda also emphasised the health and other benefits that would accompany the financial savings. Cycling UK, with input from Dr Isaac Tabner had produced a detailed briefing note, including the scenarios, which was subsequently distributed to all attendees.

Isaac spoke of his work on developing accurate calculations of the financial benefits of switching from the car to active travel. There was often a lack of understanding of how much more valuable a saving could be when compared to an increase in earnings – all of the benefit of a savings is retained whereas increased earnings are subject to deductions. It was also important to consider how the benefit of a saving could be maximised, for example by investing it in a pension. He was in the process of preparing an academic paper that he undertook to share with the Group.

The Chair thanked Gwenda and Isaac for their stimulating contributions and introduced the next two speakers: Prof Alan Tapp of the University of the West of England and Jonathan West, Head of Behavioural Science, Public Health Wales who would be speaking on the effective use of financial benefits to encourage active travel and whether financial incentives could be used to produce behaviour change.

Alan argued that whilst raising the awareness of the financial savings of active travel could be beneficial in bringing about behaviour change it was not as impactful as measures such as the provision of safe infrastructure and disincentives for car use. It would be most effective if used as part of a package with other, stronger measures. There is clear evidence that the provision of free bikes is an effective incentive, but still not as effective as financial penalties on driving such as congestion charging and road pricing. Nudges towards behaviour change are politically easier to put in place than regulatory measures but are less powerful.

Jon took the meeting through the available evidence of what constituted effective behaviour change measures. He spoke of the Intervention Ladder which had at its foot simply informing people and at its apex regulating to eliminate choice. Within that ladder, financial disincentives were considered to be stronger than incentives. He emphasised that any incentive needed to be perceived to be “big enough” to overcome any disadvantages. He outlined the COM-B model of behaviour change in which Capability, Opportunity and Motivation are the main determinants of Behaviour. He also stated that incentives providing immediate gratification were more effective than those where the benefit was in the future.

The Chair thanked Alan and Jon for their insightful presentations. In the general discussion the following key points were made: walking is always the cheapest way to travel; the biggest savings come when gives up the ownership of a car – facilities such as car clubs can help make this a more attractive option; for people to engage with this message savings from active travel need to be promoted by the likes of Martin Lewis; it is important that the needs of disabled people are taken into account when promoting any aspect of active travel.

Helping the financially challenged gain access to active travel: The Chair introduced Beth Ward of Drosi Bikes of Llangollen who spoke of how her social enterprise renovated old bicycles and sold them on at affordable prices. They also converted conventional bikes to ebikes, making cycling a more viable form of economical transport in rural and hilly areas. They donated bikes to refugees and asylum seekers. She emphasised the importance of being able to keep bikes in running order and spoke of their DIY workshop, where they would teach maintenance skills and their pop-up Dr Bike sessions, where people could have simple repairs done to their bikes.

The Chair then introduced Andrew Burns of Cardiff Cycle Workshop, Social Enterprise Team of the year in the Social Business Wales Awards. Andrew also spoke of the importance of the availability of affordable bike maintenance; bike ownership was high but many of the machines were not rideable because of simple mechanical defects or even punctures. Large chains such as Halfords focussed on selling new bikes and had little interest in repairing older bikes. He also spoke of the catastrophic impact bike theft was having on people's willingness to use cycles as a means of transport, highlighting the difference in the police's attitude toward car theft. He lamented the poor quality of many bikes that were being sold to the public, resulting in many people abandoning cycling when the bikes, unsurprisingly, malfunctioned. He believed that the way we designed our communities through the planning system was more important in determining people's choice of transport mode than any financial incentive. The Chair congratulated Beth and Andrew for the excellent work carried out by their organisation, describing them as prime examples of best practice for the sector.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting: The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Any Other Business: Phil Snaith raised the issue of rail replacement bus services and the problem of bikes often not being allowed on them. Whilst some bus drivers would accept bikes, there could be no certainty of carriage. It was agreed to write to Transport for Wales expressing our concern and calling for a change in approach as part of TfW's commitment to better integrating trains with active travel.

The meeting closed at 1.30pm

Attendance List

Attended in Person			
First Name	Surname	Job Title	Organisation
Ken	Barker		Cycling UK
Rebecca	Brough	Policy and Advocacy Manager	Ramblers Cymru
Dan	Coast	Secretary	Cycling Newport
Helen	Donnan	Access Field Officer, Wales	British Horse Society
Natalie	Grohmann	Transport - Policy, Planning and Partnerships Officer	Welsh Government
Hilary	May		ValeVeloWays
Gwenda	Owen	Engagement Officer - Wales	Cycling UK
Chris	Roberts	Secretary	CPGATA
Kaarina	Ruta	Transport Assistant	WLGA
Phil	Snaith	Secretary	Carmarthenshire Cycle Forum
Caroline	Spanton	Chief Executive Officer	Welsh Cycling
Alan	Tapp	Professor of Social Marketing	UWE
Joe	Thomas	Policy Support Assistant	Sustrans Cymru
Rob	Webber		Welsh Cycling
Attended via Teams			
First Name	Surname	Job Title	Organisation
Cherry	Allan	Campaigns Information Officer	Cycling UK
Madeleine	Boase	Apprentice – Active Travel Support	Newport City Council
Andrew	Burns		Cardiff Cycle Workshop
Joseph	Carter	Head of Devolved Nations	British Lung Foundation
Teresa	Ciano	Partnership Manager	GoSafe, Road Safety Wales
Richard	Dale	Head of Business Development	Newport Live
Duncan	Dollimore	Head of Advocacy and Campaigns	Cycling UK
Sian	Donovan	Director	Pedal Power
Ryland	Doyle	Communications and Research Officer	Mike Hedges MS
Amy	Foster	Local Engagement Coordinator- Walking Connects	Living Streets
O'Brien	Francesca	Councillor	City & County of Swansea
Heledd	Fychan	Member of the Senedd	Senedd Cymru
Nathan	Goldup- John	Councillor	Neath Port Talbot Council
Llyr	Gruffydd	Member of the Senedd	Senedd Cymru
Kevin	Harry		Office of Rhys Ab Owen
Francesca	Howorth	Higher Research Officer	Senedd Cymru
Huw	Irranca-Davies	Member of the Senedd	Senedd Cymru
Josh	James	Public Affairs Manager	Living Streets
Kirsty	James	Campaign Officer	RNIB (Cymru)
Lynda	James	Councillor	City & County of Swansea
Keith	Jones	Director	ICE Wales Cymru

Phil	Jones	Chair	PJA
Hannah	Little		Mott MacDonald
John	Mather		Cycling UK (N Wales)
Andrew	Minnis	Research Team Leader	Senedd Cymru
Gareth	Price	Clerk	Senedd Cymru
Matt	Price	Team Leader, Transport Vision, Policy and Strategy	Cardiff Council
Sean	Purse	Chair, Environment, Regeneration and Streetscene Services Scrutiny Committee	Neath Port Talbot Council
Paul	Streets	Secretary	Cardiff Cycle City
Isaac	Tabner		Stirling University
Beth	Taylor	Group Researcher	Welsh Conservative Group
Dafydd Rhys	Thomas	Portfolio Holder - Highways, Waste and Property	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Will	Thomas	Councillor	City & County of Swansea
Jack	Thurston	Chair	Abergavenny Cycle Group
Nick	Tulp	Active Travel Officer	MonLife, Monmouthshire County Council
Beth	Ward	Director	Drosi Bikes
Tom	Wells		Active Travel West Wales
Helen	West	Senior Advisor	Julie Morgan MS
Jonathan	West	Head of Behavioural Science	Public Health Wales
Mark	Weston	Director of Access	British Horse Society
Alex	Wood	Senior Health Promotion Specialist	Public Health Wales

Apologies:

Natasha Ashgar, Member of the Senedd, Senedd Cymru

Julie Blaisdale, Chair, Active Travel West Wales

Christine Farr, Vale of Glamorgan Strategic Wellbeing Team, Vale of Glamorgan Council

Stephen Hughes, Mott MacDonald

Hugh Mackay, Cycling UK VofG

David Naylor, Wheelrights

John Sayce, Chair, Wheelrights