

Cross Party Group on the Active Travel Act

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday November 16th, 2022

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, which was the first held in a hybrid format.

Panel Discussion on the Safety and Security of Active Travellers

The Chair introduced the panel and invited each of them to give a short opening presentation:

Teresa Ciano, Partnership Manager of GoSafe Wales outlined the aims of GoSafe, which were to 'Make Welsh Roads Safer through Engineering, Education and Enforcement' Achieved by: 'A continued reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads, with the ultimate goal of no fatalities in the future'. The organisation is a partnership made up of the Welsh Government, the four Welsh police forces and the 22 local authorities. They operated fixed and mobile speed check devices throughout Wales. They also managed Operation Snap which allowed members of the public to submit video or photographic evidence of inconsiderate road use. There had been 5,400 submissions to the scheme in Wales in 2021 resulting in over 1500 warnings and 2500 referrals to driver educational courses or prosecutions.

Superintendent Mark Cleland, British Transport Police, spoke of his work combating cycle theft and of the Bike Crime Reduction Partnership in Cardiff and Newport. He explained the significant impact the crime had on active travel rates with 25% of victims never cycling again and 66% being likely to cycle less often. Bike theft accounted for 2% of all crime with only 3% of stolen bikes recovered. Key issues were the quality of bike locks – often inadequate – and the ability of thieves to sell the bikes through online platforms. The National Cycle Crime Campaign is working with these platforms to identify and stop criminal activity. However, even when bikes are identified as the proceeds of crime, action cannot be taken against the seller unless the owner can be identified, which requires the bike to be registered. He is keen to see a system of registration at point of sale.

Josh James, Public Affairs Manager of Living Streets Cymru, spoke of the significant 'equalities' issues surrounding the personal safety of active travellers, highlighting the distressingly high level of misogynist, racist and homophobic attacks. There should be a right to be safe on our streets, the lack of a feeling of personal safety was a major deterrent to getting more people walking and wheeling. He called for greater diversity amongst the people making policy. He highlighted Wales' frequently narrow pavements and contrasted them with Barcelona's wide walkways and priority for pedestrians at road crossings. He expressed concern at the negative impact shared spaces could have on the visually handicapped. He called for a bolder approach to pedestrian infrastructure and praised the trial of non-prescribed (or simple) zebra crossings on road junctions currently taking place in

Cardiff. He welcomed the revision of the Highway Code but lamented the poor communication of the changes.

Phil Jones, Chair of the Welsh Government 20 mph Taskforce, spoke of the fundamental importance of traffic rules for active travel. There was a strong relationship between rules and what happened in practice on the roads. He spoke of his pride in Wales' 20mph and pavement parking proposals and highlighted the importance of effective marketing of the changes. He cited examples of innovative approaches in other countries, such as Denmark where there was a universal duty on drivers to give way when turning at a junction. He proposed a number of suggestions that he believed Wales should consider:

- Parallel crossings (i.e. adjacent crossings for walkers and cyclists) at side roads.
- 'Elephant feet' markings at side roads to give cyclists priority over side road traffic.
- Giving powers to local authorities to enforce 20mph limits
- Automatic, two way cycling on all one way streets limited to 20mph.
- Simplify the process needed for a Traffic Regulation Order

In the discussion that followed the following key points were raised:

Presumed liability – in many countries drivers of motor vehicles were presumed to be liable in any collision with a vulnerable road user, could not this be introduced into the UK? It was felt that the new hierarchy of users in the Highway Code was a step in this direction. Josh supported presumed liability and spoke of the importance to active travel of overcoming 'power imbalances'.

Active Travel routes were essential infrastructure for disabled people using scooters, but to be usable, they had to be well-surfaced, well-lit and free of bollards. Bringing this about required more disabled people to be involved in planning routes.

The importance of political leadership in reducing car dependency. Swansea was the 34th, and Newport the 36th, most car dependent city in the UK.

The 20mph trial in Abergavenny was proving effective, as adherents to the limit effectively became 'pace cars' for other traffic. However, enforcement was needed. Teresa explained that enforcement of 20mph limits did take place but perhaps not enough had been done to make people aware of this.

The importance of making 'close pass' data available to local authorities to help them identify areas where near misses, rather than actual accidents, were occurring.

Many of the problems that inconsiderate drivers caused for active travellers were also suffered by equestrians, including misogynistic abuse. Horse riders were also using Operation Snap to report incidents.

Personal security at unstaffed railway stations is a particular concern, which better lighting and video recording could help tackle. Mark urged people to report concerns to British Transport Police, texting 61066. He also urged people who saw a cycle theft in progress to call 999 and to report suspected criminal activity on online marketplaces.

There was a need for more evidence on the potential for active travel in rural areas.

Consideration should be given to the development of 'quiet lanes'.

Measures aimed at protecting children from vehicles, such as school streets, could provide a gateway to wider schemes such as low traffic neighbourhoods.

The Chair thanked the panel for their excellent presentations.

Update on the Review of the Active Travel Act

Before embarking on the agenda item, the Chair drew the meeting's attention to two important recent developments. Firstly, arising from the report of Welsh Government's Unadopted Roads Taskforce, a new set of design standards for new housing and commercial developments, known as the Common Standards, had been published some two years previously. Unfortunately, the standards had failed to take proper account of Wales' active travel legislation and guidance. The officers of the group had pressed for major changes to the document, and, with the support of the Deputy Minister, a new version had just been produced which incorporated the proposed amendments. A link to the new Standards would be circulated once they appeared online. Secondly, in the gap between the Group's meetings, the Welsh Government had launched a consultation on their National Transport Delivery Plan. Given the significant crossovers between the Plan and the recommendations in the Group's review of the Active Travel Act the officers had felt it important that the Group respond, even though it was not possible to convene a full meeting. The officers had drafted a response and consulted with the MS members of this Group before submitting it. The thrust of the response, a copy of which had been circulated to attendees, was the need to implement the recommendations of the CPGATA review, but also expressing disappointment with the vagueness of much of the plan and, in particular, the very worrying alteration of the sustainable transport hierarchy to put maintaining current infrastructure above walking and cycling.

Richard Brunstrom informed the meeting that the altered definition had also appeared in the new draft of WelTAG. In addition, he expressed concern at the vague definition of 'maintaining' infrastructure, which would principally apply to roads, and could seriously detract from the Welsh Government's focus on modal shift. The Chair agreed to raise both these issues with the Deputy Minister.

The Chair outlined the background to the Group's review of the Active Travel Act and read out the response to the review from the Deputy Minister for Climate Change (the text of which is included at Annex 1). The Deputy Minister had welcomed the report of the review and undertaken to 'to accept as many of the points' as he could. He had also undertaken to continue to engage with the officers of the Group in developing the National Delivery Plan for Active Travel that had been a key recommendation of the report. The Chair expressed optimism at the positive response from the Minister and confirmed that the officers would continue to press for the full implementation of the 51 recommendations in the report. The Secretary then reported on a discussion with the Chair of the Active Travel Board, who had confirmed that the Board was being re-organised in accord with the recommendations in the Group's report, specifically: that the Board would have an independent secretariat, more independent members, a clear scrutiny function, and would publish an annual report.

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

Any Other Business: None notified or raised.

The meeting closed at 1.30pm

Annex 1: Letter from the Deputy Minister for Climate Change responding to the CPGATA Report on the Review of the Active Travel Act.

11 November 2022

Dear Huw,

I am really grateful for the hard work and professionalism of the Cross-Party Group in its review of the Active Travel Act. It is a very strong report and is forming the foundation of the Welsh Government's formal review. I strongly agree with the thrust of the recommendations and the analysis and will be seeking to accept as many of the points as I can. I have already agreed some changes to the Active Travel Board based on the challenge in the report.

Rather than seeking to respond formally to your report we will instead be building it into the National Delivery Plan for Active Travel that we will publish, as you recommended. To inform that, we are collating and analysing additional sources of evidence that can assist us in understanding the impact of the Active Travel Act so far. This work draws for example on the annual reports submitted by local authorities, the evolution of their network plans, the funding framework, as well as a survey commissioned to gain an understanding of the public's perceptions and behaviours.

I intend to finalise the review in early 2023 which will include the actions we are going to take.

I will keep in touch with your officers as we develop this work and I warmly welcome your ongoing challenge and support.

Yours sincerely,

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change

Attendance List

Attended in Person			
First Name	Surname	Job Title	Organisation
Ken	Barker		Cycling UK
Ioan	Bellin	SCA	Rhys Ab Owen AS
Rebecca	Brough	Policy and Advocacy Manager	Ramblers Cymru
Neil	Canham	Head of Delivery & Partnerships (Behaviour Change)	Sustrans Cymru
Mark	Cleland	Superintendent	British Transport Police
Dan	Coast	Secretary	Cycling Newport
Helen	Donnan	Access Field Officer, Wales	British Horse Society
Sian	Donovan	Director	Pedal Power
Richard	Evans	Chair	Cycle Training Wales
Kevin	Harry	Intern	Equal Power, Equal Voice
Huw	Irranca-Davies	Member of the Senedd	Senedd Cymru
Josh	James	Public Affairs Manager	Living Streets
Phil	Jones	Chairman	PJA
Hugh	Mackay		Cycling UK VofG
Hilary	May		ValeVeloWays
Sarah	Mitchell	Chief Executive	Cycling UK
David	Naylor		Wheelrights
Gwenda	Owen	Engagement Officer - Wales	Cycling UK
Gareth	Price	Clerk	Senedd Cymru
Chris	Roberts	Secretary	CPGATA
Kaarina	Ruta	Transport Assistant	WLGA
John	Sayce	Chair	Wheelrights
Phil	Snaith	Secretary	Carmarthenshire Cycle Forum
Attended via Teams			
First Name	Surname	Job Title	Organisation
Ruth	Billingham	Head of Campaigns & Public Affairs	Living Streets
Lindsey	Brown	Active Travel Officer (Schools)	Cardiff Council
Richard	Brunstrom		Cycling UK North Wales
Teresa	Ciano	Partnership Manager	GoSafe, Road Safety Wales
Duncan	Dollimore	Head of Advocacy and Campaigns	Cycling UK
Ryland	Doyle	Communications and Research Officer	Mike Hedges MS
David	Edwards		Casnewydd Community Cycling
Hazel	Evans	Councillor	Carmarthenshire County Council
Matthew	Gilbert	Active Travel Lead	Transport for Wales
Shelly	Godfrey-Coles	Communications and Community Liaison Officer	Lee Waters MS
Danny	Grehan	MSS	Heledd Fychan MS

Stephen	Hughes		
Kirsty	James	Campaign Officer	RNIB (Cymru)
Aled	Jones	National Cycling Lead	Welsh Cycling
Keith	Jones	Director	ICE Wales Cymru
Lyndon	Jones	Leader of the Conservative Group	City & County of Swansea
Ryland	Jones	Head of Connected Communities	Sustrans Cymru
Richard	Keatinge	Secretary	Beicio Bangor
Andrew	Minnis	Research Team Leader	Senedd Cymru
Hannah	Peeler	Policy and Public Affairs Coordinator	British Heart Foundation
Sarah	Philpott	Press and Research Officer	Rebecca Evans MS
Sean	Purse	Chair, Environment, Regeneration and Streetscene Services Scrutiny Committee	Neath Port Talbot Council
Dareyoush	Rassi	Secretary	Wheelrights
Brandon	Renard	Communications and Liasion Officer	Sarah Murphy MS
Paula	Renzel		Transport Action Network Cymru
Emma	Sandrey		
Gwyn	Smith	South Wales Network Development Manager	Sustrans
Luke	Stacey	Access Development and Public Rights of Way Officer	Newport Council
Paul	Streets	Secretary	Cardiff Cycle City
Paul	Sullivan	Youth, Sport and Active Travel Manager	MonLife, Monmouthshire County Council
Beth	Taylor	Group Researcher	Welsh Conservative Group
Will	Thomas	Councillor	City & County of Swansea
Jack	Thurston	Chair	Abergavenny Cycle Group
Tom	Wells		Active Travel West Wales
Mark	Weston	Director of Access	British Horse Society
Roisin	Willmott	Director	RTPI Cymru
Leah	Young	Active Travel Projects Officer	Newport Council

Apologies:

Rhun ap Iorwerth, Aelod Seneddol, Senedd Cymru
Joseph Carter, Head of Devolved Nations, British Lung Foundation
Christine Farr, Vale of Glamorgan Strategic Wellbeing Team
Janet Finch-Saunders, Member of the Senedd, Senedd Cymru
Heledd Fychan, Member of the Senedd, Senedd Cymru
Llyr Gruffydd, Member of the Senedd, Senedd Cymru
Delyth Jewell, Member of the Senedd, Senedd Cymru
John Mather, Cycling UK (N Wales)
Peredur Owen Griffiths, Member of the Senedd, Senedd Cymru
Gemma Roberts, Policy & Public Affairs Manager, British Heart Foundation
Alan Tapp, Professor of Social Marketing, UWE
Carolyn Thomas, Member of the Senedd, Senedd Cymru