

Cross Party Group on the Active Travel Act
Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, June 27th, 2024
2.00pm to 3.00pm via Microsoft Teams

Present & Apologies: see attached lists.

Welcome and Introductions: John Griffiths MS (Acting Chair) welcomed participants to the meeting. He paid tribute to the work of the outgoing Chair, Huw Irranca-Davies MS, who had resigned following his appointment as a Welsh Minister. John spoke of his commitment to active travel and his role as the minister who took the Active Travel Act through the Senedd. He committed to endeavouring to hold future meetings in a hybrid format.

Annual Meeting Business

Chair's Report

The highlight of the year had been the marking of the 10th Anniversary of the Active Travel Act on October 4th, with hundreds of walkers and cyclists demonstrating their determination to make Wales an active travel nation, and MSs from all four parties, including two party leaders, taking part in the day's activities to reaffirm their support for the Act.

The Group had started work on two major projects, the first examining why, despite the improvements in Planning Policy Wales, active travel was still not being prioritised in the planning system and a second looking at how to better integrate bikes and buses. The Group would organise a stakeholder event on active travel and the planning system in the autumn. Discussions were taking place with academics in Aberystwyth University on a project to research the potential for improving bike bus integration in rural Wales.

The Group had secured an amendment to the Active Travel Act as part of the Clean Air Bill that significantly strengthened the duty to promote and required the Welsh Government to produce new statutory guidance. The Group would be monitoring the development of the guidance.

The Chair paid tribute to Lee Waters MS, the former Deputy Minister for Climate Change, and thanked him for his outstanding support for active travel in Wales. The Chair was looking forward to developing an excellent relationship with Ken Skates, the new Minister, and would be inviting him to a future meeting of the Group.

The Chair thanked all the members for their support for the Group's work.

Financial Report

The Chair reported that all the Group's activities had been carried out on a voluntary basis, consequently the Group had no expenditure and had not needed, or received, any income.

Election of Chair

The Chair passed control of the meeting to the Secretary, who invited nominations for the post of Chair. John Griffiths MS was proposed by Lee Waters and seconded by Dan Coast. There being no further nominations, John was declared elected as Chair for the coming year. He thanked the meeting for their support and resumed the Chair.

Election of Secretary

Chris Roberts was proposed by the Chair. There were no further nominations, so Chris was duly elected.

Ordinary Meeting Business

Active Travel at Transport for Wales – Presentation by Matthew Gilbert and Tom Wharf

The Chair introduced Matthew Gilbert, Head of Active Travel and Placemaking, and Tom Wharf, Head of Design (Active Travel), of Transport for Wales.

Matthew and Tom gave a wide-ranging presentation providing an overview of the background, current remit, and active travel commitments of Transport for Wales (TfW).

TfW's Active Travel Team: The team had grown from just Matthew to eleven, with a further two posts pending.

Active Travel Delivery Plan: The plan was published in March. It sets out how the Welsh Government and its partners, including TfW, will deliver the necessary changes to meet their target of 45% of all journeys by active travel or public transport by 2040. TfW is leading or supporting 38 out of the 65 actions outlined in the plan.

TfW Active Travel Hub - Design Office: In response to the TfW 2.0 remit, a new design office was launched in 2024. The office focuses on raising standards, integration, and design related to active travel. It serves Wales' 22 Local Authorities and the four regional Corporate Joint Committees.

Academi Teithio Llesol (ATL): ATL is a leadership, training, and professional development program aimed at increasing the scale, pace, and ambition of active travel delivery. The program provides skills, knowledge, and resources to practitioners and decision-makers. Training sessions have been conducted, and future plans include focusing on areas such as equality, diversity, and inclusion, project delivery guidance, and monitoring and evaluation.

Political and reputational risk – political backlash: TfW is mitigating the risk of political backlash against projects by providing convincing data and encouraging effective early engagement with local communities.

Active Travel Evidence Base: TfW is working on a monitoring framework and plans to publish the first data on their website in 2024. An evaluation of the Active Travel Fund (ATF) Program is also planned to demonstrate its impact. TfW is exploring opportunities to support monitoring and evaluation, including collating and presenting scheme-level monitoring information.

In the discussion that followed the presentation the following key points were made:

- The importance of TfW working closely with local authorities, understanding their needs, and engaging effectively with them. TfW are also endeavouring to forge links with senior decision-makers in local government.
- Ensuring the benefits of active travel are made available to people in deprived areas and ensuring that engagement exercises encompass all elements of society.

- Active travel in rural areas – one of each local authority’s permitted four annual AT funding applications can be for a rural scheme.
- The environmental impact of utilising green space rather than road space for active travel infrastructure.
- RNIB and Guide Dogs offered to engage with TfW on the issue of bus boarders.
- It was vital that local authorities ensured a dedicated focus for their active travel function, rather than trying to bolt it on to other roles. Active travel also needed to operate beyond the highways function, working with all departments.
- TfW would be improving data collection to better demonstrate the progress being made in increasing active travel.

The slides used in the presentation will be shared with members of the Group.

The Chair thanked Matthew and Tom for their informative presentation.

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

Matters Arising: The Active Travel Delivery plan referred to at the last meeting had been published. It was agreed that the Group would hold a discussion on the plan at a future meeting.

Any Other Business: None.

The meeting closed at 3:10pm

Attendance List

First Name	Surname	Job Title	Organisation
Ken	Barker		Cycling UK
Ruth	Billingham	Head of Campaigns & Public Affairs	Living Streets
Rebecca	Brough	Policy and Advocacy Manager	Ramblers Cymru
Richard	Brunstrom		Cycling UK North Wales
Miles	Ching Fung Yan	Intern	Sustrans Cymru
Dan	Coast	Secretary	Cycling Newport
Stephen	Cunnah	Policy and External Affairs Manager	Sustrans Cymru
Helen	Donnan	Access Field Officer, Wales	British Horse Society
Matthew	Gilbert	Active Travel Lead	Transport for Wales
Danny	Grehan	MSS	Heledd Fychan MS
John	Griffiths	Member of the Senedd	Senedd Cymru
Natalie	Grohmann	Transport - Policy, Planning and Partnerships Officer	Welsh Government
Kirsty	James	Campaign Officer	RNIB (Cymru)
Keith	Jones	Director	ICE Wales Cymru
Gwyn	Lewis	Senior Policy Implementation and Evidence Lead	Welsh Government
Hilary	May		ValeVeloWays
David	Naylor		Wheelrights
Samuel	Newington	Engagement Officer	Momentwm Newport
Gwenda	Owen	Engagement Officer - Wales	Cycling UK
Huw	Percy	Head of Service Highways Waste and Property	Ynys Mon Council
Paul	Pilkington	Consultant in Public Health	Public Health Wales
Louis	Preece	Active Travel Projects Officer	Newport City Council
Matt	Price	Team Leader, Transport Vision, Policy and Strategy	Cardiff Council
Catherine	Purcell	Reader, School of Healthcare Sciences	Cardiff University
Jenny	Rathbone	Member of the Senedd	Senedd Cymru
Chris	Roberts	Secretary	CPGATA
Kaarina	Ruta	Transport Assistant	WLGA
Ian	Saunders	Chief Operating Officer	MonLife, Monmouthshire County Council
Paul	Streets	Secretary	Cardiff Cycle City
Paul	Sullivan	Youth, Sport and Active Travel Manager	MonLife, Monmouthshire County Council
Greg	Tasker	Active Travel Manager	Newport City Council
Dafydd Rhys	Thomas	Portfolio Holder - Highways, Waste and Property	Isle of Anglesey County Council

Will	Thomas	Councillor	City & County of Swansea
Lee	Waters	Member of the Senedd	Senedd Cymru
Tom	Wharf	Head of Design	Transport for Wales
Andrew	Bettridge	Office and Communications Manager	John Griffiths MS

Apologies:

Joseph Carter, Head of Devolved Nations, British Lung Foundation

Llyr Gruffydd MS

Hugh Mackay, Cycling UK VofG

John Mather, Cycling UK (N Wales)

Christopher White, Lecturer in Health, Mental Health and Well-Being, Wrexham University