

SWANSEA ACTIVE TRAVEL STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Meeting Notes 14th July 2022 (9:30-11:00) Microsoft Teams

In Attendance

Chloe Lewis	(CL)	Swansea Council
Jack Palmer	(JP)	Swansea Council
Simon Jones	(SJ)	Swansea Council
Stuart Davies	(SD)	Swansea Council
John Sayce	(JS)	Wheelrights
David Naylor	(DN)	Cycling UK
Cllr Ryland Doyle	(RD)	Swansea Council - Champion for Walking
Jenni Nellist	(JN)	British Horseriding Society
Neil Williams	(NW)	YourVoiceAdvocacy
Andrea Gordon	(AG)	Guide Dogs Cymru
Jayne Cornelius	(JC)	Swansea University
Nicola Jones	(NJ)	Swansea Council - Education Directorate
Joanne Jones	(JJ)	Swansea Bay UHB
Cari Jones	(CJ)	Disability Liaison Group
John France	(JF)	Swansea Ramblers

1. Welcome / Introductions

JP welcomed stakeholders to the meeting and for the sake of new attendees to the meeting, CL facilitated a round of introductions for names, roles and organisations.

2. Update on Swansea's Active Travel Network Map (ATNM)

JP provided an update on progress with Swansea Council's Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) which will replace the Council's older Integrated Network Map (INM). The Welsh Government requires Local Authorities to produce and promote maps of the 'existing' and 'future' walking and cycling networks; this is to help residents understand where the current network is, and to act as a strategy document from which the Council applies for grant

funding to develop and deliver the identified future routes. Swansea Council's ATNM was approved in August 2022, and is now awaiting guidance from the Welsh Government on how to promote the ATNM, as there is the possibility that the Welsh Government's online platform 'Data Map Wales' may be used.

CL thanked all stakeholders who fed into the public consultations across 2021 which helped develop the draft ATNM which was sent for approval.

AG raised concerns regarding the accessibility of 'CommonPlace' – the online consultation website used by the Council for this consultation. CL responded that the platform was procured by the Welsh Government for all Local Authorities to use for free, but agreed that everyone should have equal opportunity to give feedback and mentioned how bespoke workshops with special interest groups, including people with disabilities, helped this aim.

JS praised the consultation which went into the development of the ATNM, and requested that this same level of consultation goes into the development of scheme bids. CL fed back that although there were significant time restraints on the development of grant fund bids in comparison, consultation is something the Council wants to prioritise and where possible engagement with stakeholders will take place for the development of bids.

JF asked whether Rights of Way were included in the ATNM. CL responded that where there was overlap (for example, an active travel route also being a bridleway) this would appear on the ATNM, but that not all rights of way were 'active travel' routes in the standards and aims of the active travel act, but that an interactive Public Rights of Way map is available in the Council's website and administered by the Countryside Access team.

3. Update on schemes for delivery in 2022-2023

SJ provided an overview of schemes with funding for delivery in 2022/23. This includes schemes in Pontarddulais, Penllergaer, Bishopston, Morriston and Ynysallen. Progress included tendering for contractors to construct routes, negotiations with landowners and consultations on including parking restrictions on roads to enable new walking and cycling infrastructure to be installed. JP also shared some images from the launch event of a new route between Grovesend and Pentre Road bridge on 23.09.22 which is part of the strategic link moving north towards Pontarddulais.

JS asked whether there are plans to improve connection between routes across the A483 – SJ fed back that options were being considered for this area, and that other schemes being delivered, such as a link from Penllergaer down to Fforest Fach would help provide other connections.

CJ raised the issue that some barriers placed on walking and/or cycling routes to prevent antisocial behaviour by motorbikes, has a negative effect on legitimate path users who may not be able to pass through the barrier themselves. This could be because of the type of cycle they are using do not fit through, or that they are using a mobility aid such as a wheelchair or motorised scooter. SJ replied that the Council has been working closely with cycle groups such as Wheelrights to identify and remove barriers where possible.

JN added that this is an issue for equestrians particularly around Swansea and recommended contacting an organisation called 'Communities for Horses' which could help with the identification of barriers.

JF gave an example of how illegal activity from people on scramblers on tracks around Pontardawe have been reduced without needing to resort to barriers being installed, and RD fed back that in his experience working with communities at the top of Swansea Valley it has been very proactive policing which has helped prevent offroad motorbiking on walking and cycling routes. Swansea Council have requested a meeting with Southwest Wales Police to discuss issues of antisocial behaviour on active travel routes.

NW raised an issue of the time allocated for people to cross Oystermouth Road between Morgans Hotel and Wind Street. Simon fed back that this had been looked into by colleagues in Telematics, and that an adequate time is provided for people to cross the road, but that they may need to wait in the central reservation and activate the second set of lights to finish crossing this busy road. CL added that the Council would check this area again, to ensure that people with disabilities, who may move more slowly, also have enough time to cross. Post meeting officers further checked with Telematics, and timings are compliant with standards. The traffic signals also have an on-crossing detector which should further extend the time allocated for crossing for people moving more slowly.

4. Update on schemes for development in 2022-2023

SJ gave an overview of schemes which were funded for development in 2022/23. There are a range of potential schemes across the Swansea area which feed into, or extend the existing active travel network, and these schemes are at different stages of development. Works include options appraisals, survey work, land acquisition, design development and stakeholder engagement. He highlighted that there are constraints on capacity within the Council's engineering team, who are also working to deliver schemes at the same time, so the Council has commissioned the support of consultants who can assist with design development. CL also pointed out that the proposals for schemes may change as options are evaluated and proposed, but that engagement will take place once there are preferred options.

5. Focus on: Other works funded by the Active Travel Fund

CL have an overview of the other works which are funded through the 'Active Travel Fund' grant. Alongside funding for development and delivery of routes, there is also grant funding provided for 'minor works' such as dropped kerbs, signage and wayfinding, and cycle counters. Cycle counters in particular are important for monitoring uptake of active travel in Swansea, and for providing data for use in reporting and funding bids.

6. Active travel updates from stakeholder organisations

Presentations were made by three stakeholders to share information relevant to active travel with the rest of the group.

JC presented on the activity of Swansea University in promoting walking, cycling and public transport. This included an overview of the Santander Cycle Hire scheme, promotional activities and incentives for students, staff and members of the public to travel by more sustainable means. Swansea University was Wales' first Gold Standard Cycle Friendly Employer and has recently been re-accredited Gold standard for this. JC made it clear that anyone is welcome to get in touch to discuss the University's activity in this area.

JS gave a presentation on behalf of Wheelrights on the Welsh Government's transport strategy. The Government has been working to promote sustainable methods of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport but journeys by car have continued to rise. A National Transport Delivery Plan is currently out for consultation until 11th October 2022, which aims to significantly increase numbers travelling by walking, cycling, and public transport such as bus and rail from 2022-27. All members of the group were encouraged to take part in this important consultation.

JF fed back that the Welsh Government may be overlooking the need people have for cars in getting around and visiting rural places, and JP responded that while many people do rely on car ownership, the purpose of active travel improvements is to make walking and cycling safer, easier and more attractive for people and provide opportunities for them to choose to leave the car at home if they can, and CL added that improving links to and from public transport is a key aim for active travel improvements, so that people can achieve longer journeys by more sustainable means of transport.

DN gave a presentation on behalf of Cycling UK on cycle provision on long hills, which discussed the pros and cons of different cycling interventions on a typical stretch of road on a hill such as painted cycle lanes, bus lanes, 'Shared Use Paths' (SUPs), stepped cycle tracks and separate cycle tracks. He highlighted his concerns with the risk that cyclists moving quickly downhill may pose to pedestrians, and that separated paths are ideal if space is available. SJ responded that all active travel routes in Swansea are designed in compliance with the Welsh Government's design requirements, and that the unique context of every scheme location means that careful design and compromises are needed to deliver schemes which meet those requirements.

7. Any Other Business (AOB)

JP thanked the attendees who had given presentations and everyone for joining the meeting.

DN asked whether the next meeting may be in in-person event – JP replied that this would continue to be monitored, but that for now seeing as there are multiple members of the groups, many of whom are joining meetings digitally from their places of work, meetings may continue to be online for some time, but that this would be put to group members at the next meeting.

8. Date of Next Meeting:

- Wednesday 30th November (14:00 – 15:30)