

Wheelrights

Notes of AGM on 30th November 2022

Present: Dawn Aplin (DA), Dennis Dwyer (DD), James Dewitt (JD), Allyson Evans (AE), Rhian Evans (RE), Eifion Francis (EF), Nick Guy (NG), Bruce Hanlin (BH), Constanza Hanlin (CH), Joe Muldoon (JM), David Naylor (DN), Dareyoush Rassi (DR), Pat Rassi (PR), Alice Saville (AS), John Sayce (JS), Patrick Tribe (PT), Chris Walsh (CW).

Apologies: John Britton (JB), Phil Brophy (PM), Tim Bull (TB) John Cardy (JC), Caroline Carter (CC), Christopher Connick (CCo), David Judd (DJ), Brian Pawson (BP).

John Sayce chaired the meeting.

1. 2021 AGM

The notes of the last AGM on 9 Nov. 2021 were circulated and agreed as a correct record. Proposed by DN; seconded by BH.

2. Reports.

The Reports from the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer were presented and are provided as the appendices A, B and C respectively. They were approved as follows.

<u>Report</u>	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Seconder</u>
Secretary	DN	EF
Treasurer	NG	PT
Chair	AE	DD

3. Election.

John indicated his wish to stand down as chair (after five years service) and asked for expressions of interest, but agreed to continue if no one wished to take over.

DR reported that no nominations had been received for the Officers' positions. The current officers indicated that they were willing to continue and this had unanimous support. They are as follows:

Chair: John Sayce.
Vice Chair: Allyson Evans.
Secretary: Dareyoush Rassi
Treasurer: Chris Walsh

Motion: "Amend Wheelright`s constitution to create the role of Honorary President, which would be appointed by the management committee".

NG said that he and Rob Wachowski had nominated DJ as President several years ago in recognition of his founding of Wheelrights, his service as a previous officer, and as an inspirational personality and pioneer of cycle campaigning in Swansea and beyond.

Proposed by NG, seconded by DN.

This was passed unanimously.

4. AOB:

- DD outlined the threat to Ripples Café due a planning application (which would result in it's closure). He reported that there was a current social media campaign to reject the application with support from a local councillor. He asked Wheelrights members to send individual letters of objection to CCS, giving key reasons why the application should be rejected: loss of a community asset, etc. DR would circulate the link to the CCS Planning site for submitting objections. The deadline is 16th December. **[Action: DR]**
- Swansea Council's Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) which was approved in August 2022 has replaced the Council's older Integrated Network Map (INM). It can be downloaded from the Council's website where maps for other Counties are provided. DR would circulate the link. (For 10th Dec. Routes Group meeting agenda.). **[Action: DR]**
- Brian Pawson is asking WR members to support the Environment centre, by signing up to the Coop points scheme.

APPENDIX A

Chairs Report 2022

It is always instructive to go back to have a look at last year's comments from the AGM. 12 months ago, I was pulling my hair out with exasperation about the lack of consultation or engagement that they had had from the C&C Swansea. So much so, that I went to speak to my local A.M., who listened and promised to act on our behalf.

I am so pleased to report that she was true to her word and what followed has been very encouraging. First of all, there was a meeting with the Head of Service and his deputy where we committed again to working in partnership with the Council, whilst maintaining our role as a critical friend. A meeting with one of the Civil Engineers was very helpful to go over approved plans and possible future schemes. Then, the Local Authority appointed an Officer to facilitate better engagement and this appears to have started well.

In our role as a campaigning organisation, a year ago I said that we had to work with others to increase our effectiveness. This looks like it is starting to bear fruit and hopefully will continue to build on the excellent work by the Gower Access Path (GAP) to build a route across Clyne Common. Now members and locals in Pennard have come together to campaign for an extension of the Clyne Common path to Pennard. Hearing of the GAP's success has also spurred members and supporters in Gowerton and Penclawdd to call for improvements to a very scary main road between these 2 communities. Getting wider support than just the cycling fraternity really increases our effectiveness. My thought is that there should be no WR campaign without the support of at least one other body!

But of course, our relationship with the Local Authorities is just one arm of our work. We are a member led organisation and we need to continue to reach out to make sure that we are relevant. Our public meetings during the year have been interesting and mostly well attended. Special mention to Dareyoush for his skills in organising and successfully running our hybrid meetings. We have also undertaken two rides (Thanks David Judd.) as well as trying to support a new member from Neath Port Talbot. We should try and make sure that we are a Swansea Bay organisation! All of us are indebted to David Naylor for his quarterly newsletter and the maintenance of the website. We have for a number of years wished to improve our public facing communication as many local cyclists are completely unaware of us. Nick Guy has taken this in hand and hopefully will shortly come forward with a proposal for a new website design. In the meantime Phil Brophy has kindly hosted our Facebook page which was so instrumental in getting the improvements on the Promenade.

But is this enough to keep our members active and interested? How can we recruit and involve more members?

Not only do we engage with members and the Local authority, but we also have a role with Welsh Government which has provided ambition as well as cash to improve the active Travel network throughout the whole of Wales. Dareyoush and I have both attended meetings of the Cross Party Active Travel Group in the Senedd. Our secretary certainly has a good understanding of what the current issues are! These meetings allow us to speak to other campaigners and groups across Wales to find out what they are doing. We work particularly closely with Carmarthenshire Cycle forum and both groups have lobbied the AM and Deputy Minister with responsibility for Active Travel. We have lately submitted our response to the National Transport Delivery Plan, which all campaigners thought was unlikely to lead to the modal shift the Government is committed to. The Climate Minister was recently surprised to learn that Local Authorities do not have to write and deliver a Sustainable Transport Strategy. This is something we should focus on as it would compel our Councillors to plan for an increase in walking cycling and bus use.

What should our role be on the national stage? Should we do more or less campaigning? Is for example, our membership of the Swansea Environmental Forum a good use of our time?

It just remains for me to thank the other members of our committee. Allyson who is a real stalwart in seeking to improve our cycle network, Caroline for her monitoring work of the local planning applications and Chris for his steady hand on the accounts tiller.

Long may we all continue to sail in the same direction!

John Sayce

APPENDIX B

Secretary's Report 2022

As we emerge from the shadow of Covid, attentions turn to the serious challenges posed by climate change, the effects of which we are experiencing more and more in the form of unusual weather patterns. Active travel (including walking or cycling to work and replacing the car with the bicycle as far as possible in daily life) is recognised as an important part of the solution to this complex problem. This brings into focus our role as cyclists and campaigners for more cycling infrastructure needed to reduce car dependency currently experienced by a large proportion of the population simply because of the unavailability of safe alternatives.

The past twelve months have seen a good deal of Wheelrights activity. Since our last AGM (in November 2021) we held three public meetings (on 8th February, 31st May and 12th October) with invited external speakers. The Routes Group, chaired by David Naylor, held ten meetings in 2022 as well as a Gower Routes Workshop on 12th March to which external interested parties were invited. Four editions of the quarterly Wheelrights Newsletter (issues 59-62), containing an interesting variety of information and reports, were published in 2022. Our thanks go to David Naylor for his outstanding editorship. Copies of the newsletters, as well as the notes of all the meetings, can be found on Wheelrights website. Regular officers' meetings took place throughout the year and the officers also held several meetings with groups of local Councillors as well as with Council officials.

Two festive group rides were organised by David Judd: a Christmas ride (to the Llanelli Wetland Centre 12th December 2021) and an Easter Bunny Hop ride (to Clydach on 10th April 2022.) Both were well attended, including families with children, many in fancy dress, and enjoyed by all. The Cappuccino rides, led by Allyson Evans, went from strength to strength in 2022 thanks to the lovely dry, sunny weather. They were all well attended as everyone seemed to want to get out on their bikes in such lovely cycling weather. The rides were more frequent this year, sometimes two or three in a month (compared with monthly in the past) with none cancelled due to inclement weather! All the usual lovely destinations like Neath Canal, Aberdulais, Aberavon, Pontardawe and Clydach, Penclawdd and the Penclacwydd wetlands centre were covered. One of the last rides, in October, was on the new extension route to Pontardulais, where everyone enjoyed a lunch stop in the beautiful picnic area at Coed Bach Park. The Cappuccino rides will resume as usual next March or April, depending on the weather; keep an eye on the Wheelrights website for announcements.

Late in 2021 Wheelrights initiated a campaign for better maintenance of the foreshore shared use path. This included a petition for which signatures were collected by our members stopping pedestrians and cyclists using the path. The support was overwhelming and attracted media attention following which a noticeable improvement has occurred in the clearing of the sand and puddles which had been causing problems.

We were pleased to see the lights installed on the West Cross section of the foreshore path and we have been campaigning for extending the lights, especially in the very dark part of the path around the Sketty Park Road car park. I am happy to report that the Council have recently announced plans to undertake this work.

In collaboration with disability groups, we have been campaigning for the removal of various barriers which obstruct entry of tricycles, mobility scooters, cargo bikes etc. Several of these barriers have been recently removed or re-designed and we continue to collect evidence on the negative impact of the remaining ones.

Wheelrights is also supporting two new initiatives by local groups for cycling improvements. The first, led by Phil Brophy and David Naylor, is called Pennard Active Travel (PAT) and aims to promote active travel in the Pennard and Kittle area. The second, led by Joe Muldoon and David Judd, is a campaign for completing the 'missing link' between Gowerton and Penclawdd, the plans for which were drawn up some years ago but construction has been held up by land ownership issues. If anyone would like to get involved, or simply find out more, please get in touch.

There have been many positive developments for cycling and cyclists in Swansea over the last twelve months. Swansea Council received over £7m Active Travel funding from the Welsh Government (WG) in 2022-23, the second largest award in Wales (after Cardiff.) Several projects

from the previous funding round have been completed (Pontarddlais), under construction (Gorseinon to Penllergaer and Clyne Common) or at the consultation stage (Walter Road, Pont y Cob Road.)

Swansea Council has appointed an Active Travel Officer (Jack Palmer) who has been holding regular meetings with Wheelrights officers to exchange information and discuss cycling-related issues. The Council also has a 'Cycling Champion' (Cllr Joe Hale) who was very supportive of our aims when John Sayce and I met him recently.

The former Cycle Action Progress (CAP) meetings, hosted by Swansea Council, have been expanded to include a larger number of groups and organisations. They are now called Active Travel Stakeholder meetings with John or myself representing Wheelrights. We have also been contributing to the work of WG's Cross Party Active Travel Group, and the Swansea Environmental Forum.

I conclude by thanking all our members for their continued support. I also invite everyone, particularly our younger members, to join the committee and become more involved; the more hands and heads join forces, the more we can achieve. New ideas and suggestions are always welcome.

Dareyoush Rassi

APPENDIX C

Treasurer's Report

Year ending 31 October 2022.

Summary:-

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our membership for their continued support.

Expenditure exceeded income by just over £40 and we have a year end bank balance of £780.

Membership increase to 80, 6 of whom joined during 2022.

Subscriptions for 2022

We will accept cash at the forthcoming AGM, otherwise refer to our website link for current payment options:- <https://www.wheelrights.org.uk/joinus.htm>.

Many thanks to those currently paying by Standing Order (now just over half) as this simplifies things considerably and as usual I will confirm payments as they are received.

Wheelrights Financial Report

Year ending 31 Oct. 2022

Opening balance: £820.37.

Income	Amount £	Expenditure	Amount £
Membership subscriptions	315.00	Environment Centre meetings.	132.00
Donations	25.00	Subscription to Cycling UK	85.00
		Campaign leaflet design	74.40
		Mike Cherry leaving gift	50.00
		Mudguards for Adda	20.00
		Environment Centre sub.	20.00
Sub Total	340.00	Sub Total	381.40

Income less Expenditure -£41.00

Closing Balance: £778.97

Membership on 31 Oct. 2022: 80
New members joining this year: 6

Chris Walsh