



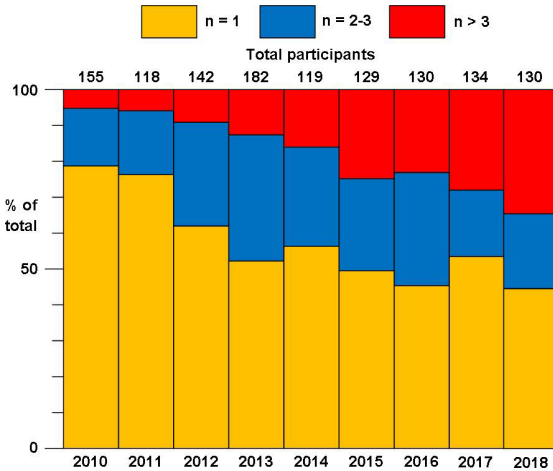
Wheelrights

the Swansea Bay cycle campaign group



Newsletter No. 62 Winter 2022/23

www.wheelrights.org.uk



Why a Cycling Festival?

Prompted by a request from a CTC Swansea member, who is thinking of organising a festival, I dug out this graphic from the records of the nine Gower Cycling Festivals between 2010 and 2018. It shows two statistics of particular interest: the number of participants and how many rides they joined.

One aim of the festivals was to get people from outside Swansea, in particular families with children, to stay for the full week. A measure of this is the number of rides (n) people

joined. The increasing red and reducing yellow columns in successive festivals indicates that we made progress with this. The jump in the red column in 2015 correlates with the provision of camping at the Duvant Rugby Club; used by several families with children.

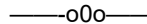
So what do festivals like this achieve? Quite a lot: they put the venue (in this case the Gower) on the map, benefit the tourist industry; and if, as in the GCFs they cater for a cross-section of cyclists, they show that cycling is for all, not just for lycra clad roadies.

This issue

Again a cross-section of articles covering: what's new; a disconcerting comparison; the problem of the increasing number of e-vehicles on our cycle routes, in particular e-scooters; active travel out west; and our President's summer work camp. This time they were stone walling, not path building.

At last I have a letter. More please! We need the feedback.

David Naylor



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Copy deadline

Copy for the next issue should be sent to me, David Naylor, by mid February.
(Email: david@davidjnaylor.plus.com)

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Letter to Editor

Dear Editor

David Naylor's idea about uphill bike lanes on hilly roads in Swansea (front page of the Autumn Newsletter) appears to be a simple solution.

However I believe these should be site specific, and their success depends on a number of factors. Firstly they need to be accompanied by bike provision that caters for a range of cycling abilities especially the less confident.

Also there needs an awareness of local political and psychological issues especially around the removal of on road car parking. We need to recognize the addiction to car use, and the necessity of taking people with us to effect behaviour change.

I suggest one road which could be a pilot scheme to test David's idea out is Carmarthen Road, which has an existing nearby bike route on Middle road, which could potentially cater for two way cycling for people with a range of abilities? Although Middle road can be a rat run at times, with its planned 20mph limit (and other mitigation measures), could it become a cycle (or quiet) street?

What do other readers think?

Nick Guy

[Ed: letters are welcome. E-mail them to me: david@davidjnaylor.plus.com.]

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Sub.s for 2023 now due. (Price unchanged: £5.00.)

If you have recently paid many thanks for your continued support.

If you do not intend rejoining, many thanks for your support and please confirm by email so you can be removed from future mailings.

Instructions for joining or renewing can be found on our website using this link <https://www.wheelrights.org.uk/joinus.htm>

Those not paying by Standing Order will be reminded by email in early January. More than half our members have now set up a SO and we are encouraging the remainder to do the same as it simplifies the process and saves us sending you 'nag-mails'.

We confirm receipt of all payments.

Chris Walsh
Treasurer/Membership Secretary

What's new in the Swansea area

Work has just started on or is expect to soon on the following.

Link to Pontarddulais from south.

This extension of the Lliw Valley cycle path from Station Road (near Grovesend) to Pontarddulais was completed this summer. The work was in two stages, the first early in the year from Pentre Bridge to Pontarddulais on the north side of the road, and the second from Station Road to the Pentre Bridge later. It was opened on 23 September. The photo shows the well attended opening. The new route heads off to the left



Gowerton Crossing.

This has now been opened. It is a Toucan and avoids the double crossing of Sterry Road and the B4295. The house behind the cyclist is the *Commercial* pub.

Clydach Barriers.

The offending A type barriers in Craig Cefn Park have been replaced by bollards.



Ynysallan Road.

Work has started on providing a shared use path (SUP) along Ynysallan Road. Vegetation on the south side, ie between the road and the motorway, has been cleared, presumably to make way for the path.

Gorseinon Road.

Work has just started on providing a shared use path between Gorseinon and Penllergaer. It starts on the north side at the Gorseinon end and switches to the south near Lids.

Pont-y-Cob Road.

A new SUP is planned. Its west end will be where the SUP to Loughor Bridge joins Culfor Road. From there it will follow the south side of Culfor Road to Pont-y-Cob Road, then along the east side of that road to the Caravan Club campsite, follow its south side to Ffordd Beck to join the existing NCR 4 on the Gowerton Bypass.

—o—o—

A tale of two cities: Swansea and Cardiff

	Cardiff	Swansea
Population (2021)	360,000	240,000
Commuting by car in UK (2011)	60 pc	75pc (35/36 UK cities)
Commuting by train and bus	13 pc	6 pc
No of E Buses	36	0
Bus Strategy	Yes (£1 bus fare)	No
Existing suburban rail stations	18	2
New rail stations proposed	8	5
Current cycle routes	91 Kms	120 Kms
Future new strategic Cycleways	5	0
Number of School home zones	16	0
Rental Bikes (Stations/Bikes)	107/260	6/70

They say that every picture tells a story, so what do these figures show for Swansea's ambition to be a net zero city by 2030?



Lee Waters (with microphone) and Gwenda Owen (in pink shirt) promote cycling at an event on 2 October 2018 in Cardiff.

John Sayce

—o0o—

E-vehicles, bike lanes and 20 mph

The growing number of electrically powered bikes, trikes, cargo bikes and scooters is a potential problem in the UK and is already one in the Netherlands. Here I summarise an article in the 21 August *Sunday Times* which Nick Guy has kindly passed to me. With the planned introduction of default 20 mph zones in Wales it is particularly relevant here.

The issue is: can our cycle lanes cope with this influx of e-powered vehicles? The concern is that although all will be restricted to 15 mph the power and acceleration of, in particular e-scooters, poses a threat to other path users.

The Dutch are addressing this in two ways: widening cycle lanes from 2.0 m to 2.3 m and considering the removal of cycle lanes from their 30 km/h (19 mph) roads. The idea is that with the speed thus restricted the whole road can safely be shared with users ranging from pedestrians to cars. The *hierarchy of provision* which requires that the faster and more powerful give way to the slower, and which has been incorporated in our revised Highway Code, is clearly needed here.

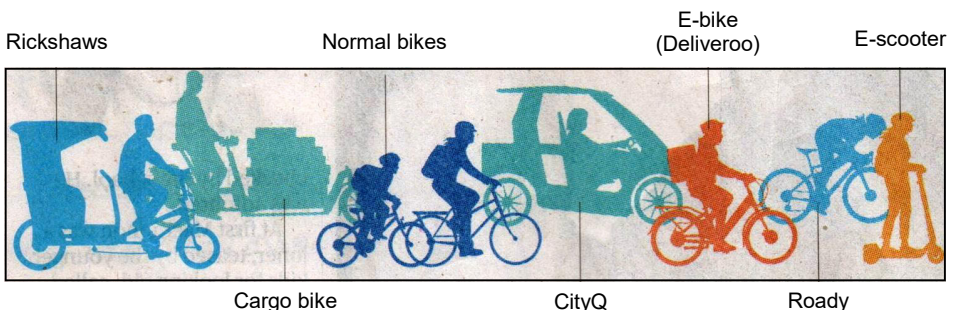
E-scooters are a particular problem. There are about a million of them in the UK. They cannot legally be ridden on roads, nor on cycle lanes. The UK government in a forthcoming Transport Bill is considering allowing them to be used on cycle lanes. It appears that they can now only be legally used off road or on private land. They are a hazard partly because they have twice the power of e-bikes, up to 500 W compared with 250 W for e-bikes (the maximum for them to be classed as ordinary bikes).

Other e-vehicles which may be allowed on cycle paths include the CityQ car ebike. It can carry two adults and weighs 70 kg. It is due to go on sale in the UK this year. Other variations on the e-bike are illustrated in the sketch below. (Taken from the Sunday Times article.)

The problem is the sheer number of powered vehicles expected to be allowed on cycle lanes. While they may be limited to 15 mph it is questionable whether, with their greater power, they can safely share space with ordinary cyclists, let alone pedestrians.

So, should we push for our proposed default 20 mph zones to be cycle lane free as is being considered in the Netherlands, thereby making them shared use for all modes of transport?

David Naylor



Pennard Active Travel

PAT is an informal group of Pennard and Kittle residents, whose aim is to promote and improve active travel to and from Pennard. This includes enabling children to walk or cycle to school, making it safer and more pleasant to cycle to work or to shop and improving provision for horse-riders. The group welcomes everyone and would be keen to recruit those with knowledge of planning, campaigning and attracting funding. If you can help email Cari on pennardactivetravel@gmail.com.

As well as promoting active travel the group also supports an enhanced bus service which would reduce road traffic and encourage sustainable travel between our communities.

We look forward to the opening of the Gower Access Path over Clyne common linking Bishopston to Mayals and Swansea. After this we would like to see the provision extended to Pennard. We know however that this will be challenging as there are difficult sections.

It would be sensible to first go for the 'low hanging fruit', ie projects which are relatively cheap and do not involve legal issues such as land acquisition. Three suggestions:

- Slow the traffic between Kittle and Southgate by extending the Kittle 30 mph zone from Kittle to the golf clubhouse, and making the speed limit 20 mph through Southgate. The existing speed limit, changing from 30 to 40 mph across relatively short sections, makes little sense. Also consider providing advisory cycle lanes between the church and Southgate. Because of the restricted width they would have to be on one side only and restricted to the approach to blind corners. They would serve the purpose of reminding drivers to expect cyclists. Being advisory (broken white line delineation) they can be driven on when not occupied by a cyclist.
- Make the footways on the uphill sides of the Northway and Kittle hills shared use. Slow, uphill cyclists are not a hazard to walkers, of whom there are few on these footways. Dropped kerb access near the start of each hill would be required and where possible the existing width of 1.5m increased. The photo, taken in Constance, South Germany, shows how this can be achieved. (Note that driving is on the right there.) This provision would benefit drivers as they would not be held up by slow moving cyclists and it would be more pleasant and safer for cyclists.
- Give parents the confidence to encourage their children to walk or cycle to Pennard school. This could be achieved by improving cycle access via Anderson Lane and the playing fields and making the footway on the south side of Pennard Road between Southgate and the school suitable for children to cycle on (and for adults accompanying children).



Phil Brophy and David Naylor

Volunteering Works Wonders

Another year another work camp (organised by Greenways and Cyclerroutes) this time for a week in Shepton Mallet, Somerset carrying out preliminary work on proposed routes in the town.

Mendip District Council has championed the Somerset Circle incorporating Bristol Bath, Two Tunnels Way, Colliers Way (part), Somerset and Dorset Line, Strawberry line and Festival Way plus a spur to Weston and Brean.



Around 79 volunteers worked over 260 days rebuilding walls (drystone and mortared) and erecting fencing and also clearing substantial tree roots on the amazing viaducts. Funding was provided by the very supportive Mendip District and Shepton Town Councils.

As usual most were camping, this time we were in an idyllic former quarry setting in Rock farm but had to endure portaloos and no direct water supply. However a novel gas powered shower arrived and wacky owner Gavin fetched and carried supplies in his Land Rover. It was brilliant!

All meals provided on site mostly prepared in advance but mostly served (with a little help) by John Grimshaw and Caroline Levett, who also doubled up as the charity's Engineer and Secretary, organising everything including supplies and hired plant for some heavy duty tasks ... amazing.

We had experienced instructors for the walling (pictured), which initially seemed mission impossible (especially the dry stone one) and our own experienced volunteers on the fencing. Some, from Frome and Westbury sub Mendip, were training for future work on their routes.

The weather was kind with only rain on one day; we were up early and tired out by the evenings, so after the meal and a fireside chat and drink heads were nodding and we were mostly ready for bed before 10pm.

We look forward to returning next year to engage in path construction and structural work on the fantastic viaducts.

David Judd



Forthcoming events

Wheelrights AGM is on Wednesday, 30 November at 7.00pm in the Environment Centre.

It is hoped to arrange a public meeting with a talk by Ian Walker in the New Year. It was he who carried out the research which showed how the clearance cyclists were given by passing cars depended on their perceived sex and whether or not they were wearing a helmet.

Other events will as usual be listed on the Events page. (If you know of any which should be included please inform our webmaster, David Naylor.) These include the Routes Group meetings, normally early in each month on a Saturday.

The following is the first verse of a poem by a Brian Faulkner. It is set in Ireland. The final two verses will follow in the Spring Newsletter.

Mulga Bill's Bicycle

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that caught the cycling craze;
He turned away the good old horse that served him many days;
He dressed himself in cycling clothes, resplendent to be seen;
He hurried off to town and bought a shiny new machine;
And as he wheeled it through the door, with air of lordly pride,
The grinning shop assistant said, "Excuse me, can you ride?"
"See here, young man," said Mulga Bill, "from Walgett to the sea,
From Conroy's Gap to Castlereagh, there's none can ride like me."

"I'm good all round at everything, as everybody knows,
Although I'm not the one to talk - I hate a man that blows."

"But riding is my special gift, my chiefest, sole delight;
Just ask a wild duck can it swim, a wildcat can it fight."

"There's nothing clothed in hair or hide, or built of flesh or steel,
There's nothing walks or jumps, or runs, on axle, hoof, or wheel,
But what I'll sit, while hide will hold and girths and straps are tight:
I'll ride this here two-wheeled concern right straight away at sight."

...

Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that ...

To be continued.

Merry Christmas!