

SWANSEA ACTIVE TRAVEL STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Meeting Notes

30 November 2022 (14:00-15:30)

Microsoft Teams

In Attendance

Chloe Lewis (CL)	Swansea Council
Jack Palmer (JP)	Swansea Council
Simon Jones (SJ)	Swansea Council
Stuart Davies (SD)	Swansea Council
Dareyoush Rassi (DR)	Wheelrights
Jenni Nellist (JN)	British Horseriding Society
Louisa Peck (LP)	YourVoiceAdvocacy
Richard William (RW)	YourVoiceAdvocacy
Carole Williams (CW)	YourVoiceAdvocacy
Jayne Cornelius (JC)	Swansea University
Nicola Jones (NJ)	Swansea Council - Education Directorate
Joanne Jones (JJ)	Swansea Bay UHB
Cari Jones (CJ)	Swansea Disability Liaison Group
Samara Powell (SP)	Carmarthenshire County Council

- **Welcome / Introductions**

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

- **Update: Swansea's Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) on the Welsh Government's 'Data Map Wales' platform**

JP provided an update on progress with Swansea Council's Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) which was approved in August 2022 has replaced the Council's older Integrated Network Map (INM). The Welsh Government has now hosted on their 'Data Map Wales' platform. Data Map Wales serves as a source for public sector data in Wales, providing a shared data platform to members of the public and public authorities. 12 ATNMs of Local Authorities have been approved (including Swansea) while 10 are not yet approved.

The interactive web map shows the existing walking and cycling network and potential future routes. It can also be used to show the active travel links between Swansea and other counties. 'Future Routes' are aspirational and subject to further investigation and consultation. A future route is defined as both 'walking and cycling', this does not necessarily indicate that the route is a planned shared use route. 'Walking and cycling' routes encompass a range of future options including either shared or separated foot and cycle paths, away from or alongside a road. As routes are developed, all options for pedestrian and cycle provision will be explored in line with the Active Travel Act Guidance, with the exact configuration to be determined closer to the proposed build date. JP further stated that the ATNM will be updated to reflect newly added 'existing' routes, and that roughly every three years there will be another consultation process to assess and add 'future routes' to the ATNM.

Swansea Council has created a PDF version of the ATNM which can be downloaded or printed, and is available via the following link: [Active Travel \(Wales\) Act 2013 - Swansea](#)

Swansea's ATNM can be viewed on Data Map Wales via the following link: [Active Travel Network Maps | DataMapWales](#) (gov.wales)

LP asked on behalf of RW whether there are Easy Read versions of the ATNMs available, and if they looked at the ATNM with their members, whether any amendments or alternative versions could be made available. CL responded that while Swansea Council is legally obliged to publish its ATNM on the Welsh Government's DataMapWales website, the PDF version created by the Council gives a slightly more accessible overview of the map. If Your Voice Advocacy could look over the ATNM document with its members, the Council would be happy to take on board any recommendations or provide additional information.

JC asked whether the ATNMs are able to reflect when new routes are delivered, so that 'future routes' become 'existing routes' so that the ATNM can be publicised with students and staff at Swansea University. JP responded that the current ATNM reflects the state of the network in winter of 2021, at the time it was submitted to Welsh Government. However, the Council recognises that the map needs to be regularly updated and is looking to do so with the agency which helped develop the ATNM. CL added that while there is always going to be a potential lag in updating the ATNM, the Council will try to keep information as current as can be, allowing for approvals and the annual cycle of funding and delivery of schemes. The PDFs created was provided in addition to our requirements to publish on DataMapWales

DR commented that the information on DataMapWales is a fantastic resource, noted Swansea's network of existing and future routes was thicker than those of other Local Authorities and hoped that Swansea will continue to grow its network in future years. CL thanked stakeholders for their input in identifying the routes which have contributed to the new ATNM and hoped that it was something stakeholders felt ownership of.

- **Update: Schemes for delivery in 2022-2023**

JP provided an overview of schemes with funding for delivery in 2022/23. This includes schemes in Pontarddulais, Penllergaer, Bishopston, Morriston and Ynysallen. He noted that at this time of year the Council is moving to beginning construction of routes, and works have begun for the Penllergaer to Gorseinon, Morriston South and Ynysallen schemes, with efforts being made to mitigate any disruption caused by construction. The Pontarddulais Link scheme was reported to have been completed at the previous meeting, with a small task remaining to adjust the parapet height of the bridge over the M4 motorway. Other progress included tendering for contractors to construct routes, negotiations with landowners and finalising detailed designs. The proposed route for Clyne Common is still due to begin construction in this financial year, although the start of works has been delayed by the need to reconsult on a small change agreed with landowners in the area.

- **Update: Schemes for development in 2022-2023**

JP 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. In particular a [public consultation](#) taking place to ask residents their views on proposals for improving walking and cycling between Loughor and Gowerton. To encourage feedback on proposals and inform final design, an online webpage outlining the proposals and hosting a survey has been created, and the Council has hosted in-person and online drop-ins to boost engagement with the proposals. The consultation closes on 02 December and will inform finalised proposals.

CL apologised as there was a factual inaccuracy with the overview map provided on the slides, in terms of where the 'Tawe Riverside Corridor' scheme is positioned. This will be corrected for the next meeting.

LP asked whether there was another way of describing a 'corridor' in active travel schemes as this language can be confusing for members of the public. JP replied that this was technical language used to describe pathways, which can be alongside main roads or offroad, but noted this was something which may not be understood clearly and will be taken into consideration in the future.

JN commented that horse riders have had issues crossing the Mumbles Road in the area of the proposed Blackpill Junction scheme, and that it would be beneficial for the needs of equestrians to be considered in developing proposals. SJ replied that the advantage of a bridge, if brought forward as an option, would have the benefit of reducing the volume of people using the crossing on the main road, which may make it more feasible to include facilities to help a wider variety of users, such as horse riders, to cross the road there. This is something which can be considered as different options are explored and proposals are developed.

- **Discussion: Physical barriers to active travel.**

JP introduced this item, which had been requested at the previous meeting to enable a focus and discussion around physical barriers (or 'access controls') on active travel routes. Access controls are sometimes placed on off-road routes to prevent access by unauthorised vehicles, particularly motorcycles. They have also been used to stop, or slow, cyclists at the end of a path for safety reasons – whether actual, or perceived. Access controls can cause difficulties to many legitimate users and can render routes inaccessible to people who rely on mobility aids.

Restrictive barriers or access controls can be unsightly, inconvenient, and can discriminate against some legitimate user groups. They extend journey time, which makes active travel routes less attractive for everyone. They add additional levels of cost to projects and require ongoing maintenance, and can be ineffective in preventing illegal access as they can be vandalised or bypassed.

JP then presented some case studies of where barriers had existed on the active travel network, and how recently delivered schemes had replaced or removed those barriers to enable people to enjoy the routes and maintain some access control. However, there are several other areas in Swansea where historical barriers (put in before the Active Travel Act) still exist and create issues for people getting around. Wheelrights kindly provided some photographs highlighting different places across Swansea. The Council is asking stakeholders to help identify barriers across the network, is compiling a list of locations and exploring options for improving access, and is continuing to have discussions with the Police and local Councillors about antisocial behaviour on pathways.

CL added that physical barriers include other issues such as a lack of dropped kerb crossings and cars parked on pavements, and the Council is keen to hear about different issues which could be addressed through our grant funding applications.

CJ thanked the Council for the information and highlighted that even the minimum widths designated by the Welsh Government may be restricting to some accessible forms of cycles and asked whether it would be possible for a radar key style system could be used for helping some users get through bollards. CL responded that any new schemes are delivered in accordance with Active Travel Act guidance, which was developed in partnership with disability groups. The Council are looking to bring any historic issues in the local authority in line with present standards.

If there are any examples of systems such as radar keys being used in this instance it would be good to see any examples CJ can provide.

LP noted that Your Voice Advocacy came up with a list of barriers to active travel in a recent meeting and suggested this could be shared with the Council to highlight different issues faced by people getting around their local area, both physical and for example, financial. JP said this would be very welcome and would help with responses where possible, or signposting to other services in the Council.

- **Discussion: Active Travel Fund priorities for 2023-24**

CL gave an overview of the process through which Swansea Council applied for grant funding to develop and deliver active travel schemes. Typically, in the autumn, Swansea Council assesses priorities, opportunities and potential schemes to include in a bid for the 2023/24 financial year, in December Welsh Government confirm the amount of grant funding available and publish guidance for applications, in January grant applications are submitted for the development or delivery of a range of projects and by the summer Welsh Government informs Local Authorities of the outcome of bids and successful schemes are given approval and funding to progress. The schemes which we choose to develop options for through our 'Core Allocation' funding through the Active Travel Fund can be influenced by the priorities and opportunities highlighted by stakeholders, so the Council would welcome any feedback on this subject which can help add weight to future bids.

LP commented that they were not aware of this cycle, and that their network would look to time their meetings gathering feedback so that they fit with this cycle.

- **Any Other Business (AOB)**

JP asked if any other stakeholders had any updates, news or matters to discuss with other members of the group.

JJ informed members of the group that Swansea Bay Health Board has commissioned a piece of work to develop a Sustainable Travel Strategy for patients, staff and visitors travelling to and from hospitals and health services. The company supporting this work (RSK) have been carrying out data gathering and the next stage will be to help develop a strategy, which is an exciting opportunity for stakeholders to have an input into this process. They will also be feeding into other for a in Swansea, such as the Swansea Bay Healthy Travel Charter, to identify key issues and opportunities. JJ asked stakeholders to give their input into this if they would be willing. Anyone interested in supporting with this strategy, can contact joanne.jones12@wales.nhs.uk

DR commented that members of Wheelrights would be keen to feed into this process. CL added that if there was anything Swansea Council could signpost the company to, they would be happy to help, and that the Active Travel Network Map may be an important document for this. JJ responded to say that links to the hospitals are a key focus, but that a lot of the Council's work and potential schemes are relevant to the places that staff members live and travel through to get to work.

DR requested an email address for the Loughor to Gowerton email address dedicated to that consultation, and informed stakeholders that Wheelrights' AGM was this evening (30 November) if anyone would be interested in attending.

LP commented that the advocacy group is always open for people to visit and discuss things with. CL responded to say the Council team would be happy to attend meetings and discuss issues with members.

JP reiterated that there is an open invitation for any stakeholder members to do a short presentation and Q&A about what their group does and any activities to active travel. Anyone interested can contact jack.palmer@swansea.gov.uk

- **Date of Next Meeting:**

Wednesday 03 March 2023 (09:30 – 11:00)