

Wheelrights Routes Group

Notes of Rural Routes Workshop on 1st May 2018

in the Green room above the Café, in Swansea's Environment Centre.

Present: Don Ashman (DA), Nick Guy (NG), Mike Lewis (ML), David Naylor (DN), Hamish Osborn (HO), John Sayce (JS), Chris Walsh (CW).

Apologies: Alan Kreppel (AK).

A decision to hold this workshop was made at the last Routes Group meeting on 7 April. It would consider Capita's draft report "Swansea Rural Transport Strategy" and provide Capita with information to enable them to finalise it. Our particular brief was to review cycle routes on the Gower Peninsula.

DN chaired the meeting but handed over to HO to conduct it.

HO explained that Capita's report was commissioned by Swansea Council to explore how to improve rural transport in Gower and Mawr, and to facilitate sustainable transport by residents and tourists. £450k has been provided for this of which about half has already been committed. He (HO) chairs a steering group. While public transport is the key issue, cycling is included. The purpose of the steering group and of the present meeting is to follow up the workshop held by the 'Rural Development Partnership' on 9 November, 2017, in the Guildhall. That meeting was chaired by HO and the workshop led by Capita's Martin Nolan. HO is concerned that there is insufficient focus on cycling, but sees an opportunity for funds to be found for cycling infrastructure and to make cycling safer. Our remit is to make a detailed study of routes which would form the basis of an action plan which his steering group plans to produce.

A discussion followed this introduction. CW wondered if this was just about Active Travel. HO noted that Sustainable Travel involves cycling more than walking. Our focus should therefore be on cycling, not just utility cycling but also on provision for tourists.

JS asked how much of the £450k would be available for cycling. HO noted that of the approx. £200k yet to be allocated there would not be enough to construct routes. It would however go towards preliminary work, eg legal costs. The £450k is revenue rather than capital funding so is not intended to be spent on construction work. HO encouraged us to push the Council to provide additional funding.

Following this we sat round the table and marked potential Gower Peninsula routes on a 1:25,000 scale map. These ranged from those already in the pipeline (eg the GAP) to long term aspirational routes. DN was tasked with producing a map showing them. It would be on the lines of the 'Indexed Map' currently on the Infrastructure page of www.wheelrights.org.uk.

The meeting lasted as planned from 10.00 to 12.00.

Notes prepared by
David Naylor