

Wheelrights

Notes of AGM on 22 October 2012 in Environment Centre, Swansea

Present: Sarah Bennett, Val. Bruck, Mike Cherry, Claudine Conway, Alice Cowell, R. Davies, Alun Evans, Colin Fielder, Eifion Francis, Gordon Gibson, Nick Guy, David Judd, David Naylor, Hamish Osborn, Chris Palmer, Kerry Rogers, Fran Rolfe, Alice Saville, John Stevens, Rob Wachowski, Geoff Wood, Veronica Wood.

Apologies: Don Ashman, John Cardy, Alan Cram, Allyson Evans, Phil Jones, Mike Lewis, Paul Meara, Brian Pawson, John Roach.

The meeting was chaired by Nick Guy.

Minutes of last agm (on 5 October 2011)

Acceptance of these was proposed by Eifion Francis and seconded by Gordon Gibson. Matters arising were covered by the Secretary and Chairman's reports.

Secretary's Report

David Naylor summarised key points in his report which is included as Appendix A. In response to a question from Alice Saville he clarified that the "poor attendance" on the evening rides referred to the lack of returning or new cyclists on the monthly rides before the Festival. By contrast The Gower Cycling Festival evening rides were very successful.

Chairman's Report

Nick Guy added to his report, which is included as Appendix B, that *Wheelrights* had won the fancy dress competition on the *Festival of the Tides* ride on 18 August. He displayed the cup at the meeting. He attributed the success of the *Swansea Cycle Campaign* to the perceived fun, fitness and other benefits of cycling and to the efforts of all involved. He drew attention to the Clydach Connect2 launch on 9 Nov. (A ride will leave the Sail Bridge at 12.45 for the ceremony at 14.00 on the new Avon Tawe Bridge.) He also commented on the *Manifesto*, noting the support from cllrs Mark Childs, Nick Davies and Paul Meara. He ended on an upbeat note indicating that the increase in cycling provided a challenge to which *Wheelrights* could rise.

Treasurer and Membership Secretary Report

Colin Fielder spoke to his report which is included as Appendix C. He noted the healthy state of our accounts with a current bank balance of £912. A major expense in the past year had been the purchase of three new bikes to use up most of what was left from the 2011 Co-op grant. The *Gower Cycling Festival* had made a profit of £290. The onus is now on the group to make proper use of this surplus.

Acceptance of the three officers' reports was proposed by Gordon Gibson and seconded by Claudine Conway.

Election of Officers

There being no other nominations, the existing officers were confirmed as follows:

	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Seconder</u>
Chairman	Nick Guy	Alice Saville	Claudine Conway
Secretary	David Naylor	Eifion Francis	Alice Saville
Treasurer & Member. Sec.	Colin Fielder	Veronica Wood	Gordon Gibson

AOB

Wheelrights Christmas evening meal. Claudine advised that this was planned for Thur. 13 Dec.

Brynmill. Eifion told us about *Operation Pressure*: a police clamp down on pavement riders and cyclists without lights in this area. Several arrests have been made.

Following a tea break Gordon Gibson gave his presentation:

People Street Projects for Swansea.

He started by posing the question: “Who decides the strategy [for Swansea’s City Centre]?” The answer (supplied by David Judd) was “Highways”.

He went on to explain how this resulted in the car-centric layout of our city when it was reconstructed after the war. He contrasted this with New York where, thanks to a lady called Jane Jacobs, the construction of expressways through the city some 60 years ago was avoided. Today enlightened planners have produced a cycle and pedestrian friendly city. Gordon focussed on Brooklyn and Manhattan Island using pictures of the riverside paths to illustrate what had been achieved.

Turning to Europe he noted how in Amsterdam cyclists can go anywhere. In Germany they have *home zones*. In these there is a minimum of signing and pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles are not segregated; incidents are avoided by eye contact.

He gave examples of good practice in the UK: Buchanan Street in Glasgow, The Hayes in Cardiff and Kensington High Street in London. These resemble *home zones* in that they remove barriers between the different modes. He was however cautious about *play zones*.

Apart from rural or semi-rural cycle paths such as the Clyne path, which he thought excellent, Swansea was lacking in examples of good practice. He did however show how Swansea could be transformed into a much more attractive city. To achieve this the starting point has to be pedestrians followed by cyclists. If their needs are met those of motorists will be also. He illustrated a layout for our city centre which could result from such an approach.

The Kingsway would be a hub. The area around the erstwhile roundabout at the east end would be developed to make it attractive for pedestrians. Boulevards such as Las Ramblas in Barcelona provide precedents.

He gave an example of good practice which is lacking in Swansea. This is to integrate architecture with cycle routes. Some paths here run past the back of houses rather than the front, thus making them places where drunks and drug addicts can congregate.

David Judd proposed a vote of thanks which was passed with acclaim. There followed a focussed discussion which included the suggestion that Gordon give a talk such as this to appropriate people in the Council. He indicated his willingness to do this.

Notes prepared by David Naylor (Secretary)

APPENDIX A

Secretary's report for *Wheelrights* 2012 agm

This report covers the period from the previous agm on 5 October 2011.

The main events involving the Group this year were the *Swansea Cycle Challenge* (SCC) in July and our third *Gower Cycling Festival* (GCF) from 15 to 22 September. The former was a first for Swansea. Its chief aim was to get people on bikes, which it achieved. Details can be found on www.swanseacyclechallenge.org.uk which will be retained until next summer. The Festival was again a success with the numbers up on last year but marginally less than in 2010. Apart from some localised rain the weather was good, better than last year. A pictorial record is provided on the Festival page of our website: www.wheelrights.org.uk.

Another key event was the launching of *Wheelrights* Manifesto on 15 March. This was attended by candidates (for the subsequent local elections) from all five political parties, all of whom pledged their support. Since then we have had support from a number of councillors.

The quarterly Cycle Action Progress (CAP) meetings with Chris Vinestock, Head of the City and Council of Swansea's (CCS) Transportation Dept have continued. Consultation about the Tawe Bridges and the Cycling Action Plan (now finalised) continued and most recently have included discussions about proposed development between the Tawe and the Hafod. See *Infrastructure* below

A programme of evening rides which targeted 'returning' cyclists was reinstated after a lapse of two years. We only saw any on one ride. Also the turn out was poor. See *Evening rides* below. Our other activities are summarised under the headings below.

Evening meetings

These took place in the Environment Centre on the following evenings (attendees in []): 1st December [15], 23rd January [23], 27th February [16], 26th March [9], 14th May [11], 16th June [11], and 3rd September [12]. See the *Newsletters & Notes* website page for notes of these meetings. In addition there was a special meeting to consider the SCC on 22 February [8].

Meetings to organise the GCF were held in the Railway Inn on 31st October, 13th February, 16th July, 13th August, 10th September and after the Festival on 8th October.

Adult Beginners classes

Four took place from 9.30 to 11.30 in the Civic Centre East car park on the following Saturdays: 14th April, 12th May, 14th July and 1st September. A class planned for 16th June was cancelled because of the weather. Only 6 attended the first, 5 the second and 4 were booked for the cancelled June class; more attended the last two. We attribute this poor attendance to the failure of the *Evening Post* to include a contact phone number, if indeed we got a mention at all.

Three new Trek bikes were purchased to complement the three folding bikes bought in 2011. They were a good buy. All the bikes were used on the SCC as well as for the classes.

Evening rides

These were scheduled for the fourth Thursday of the month from April to September. They took place as follows. (Number participating in [].) 26th April [8], 24 May [6?], 28 June [3], 26 July [10], There was no August ride. In addition *Wheelrights* traditional mid-summer ride took place on 21 June. It was the height of the "monsoon" and the leader plus one or two made it down the cycle path for refreshments in Mumbles instead of the usual North Gower Circuit. There being three GCF evening rides in September we didn't provide an additional one.

With the exception of the 26 July ride, held during the SCC when two "returning cyclists" came along, only experienced riders joined the rides.

Infrastructure

Gowerton - Kingsbridge Link

Learning that Network Rail are doubling the track at Gowerton Station and will be building a bridge to take passengers across the line we wrote to them on 26 July to enquire if this bridge could incorporate the proposed cycle link. The answer was "No". The ideal solution would be to take the route on a new bridge using the abutments of the original railway bridge which crossed the existing line here. (This is west of the proposed Network Rail bridge.) There are however problems with this – legal and access rather than engineering.

We are continuing to work with the CCS on both the railway crossing and the land acquisition issue, the ball for which is at their feet.

North Gower Path

Progress in CCS's negotiations with the landowners to get the go-ahead to construct the missing link west from Pont-y-Cob Road continues to be slow. To try and accelerate matters our Chairman wrote to Chris Vinestock about this on 1 October.

Tawe Bridges to Morfa.

Two significant developments here: agreement to provide a shared-use link across the north bridge to link NCR 43 with the west bank and the accommodation of cycling in the plans for the proposed *Morfa Distributor Road*.

The former link was confirmed at the 20th March CAP meeting. Its construction is pending the removal of a spoil tip on the east side.

The latter was discussed at a CAP meeting on 9th October. A west-of-Tawe shared use route is firmly on the agenda. The Distributor Road will take traffic off the Neath Road through the Hafod thus making the latter more cycle friendly. However the eastern end of Maliphant Street will be closed due to a plan to revive the derelict sidings which it crosses. Thus the existing link to Morfa Road (which will be replaced by the Distributor Road) will be lost. An alternative W-E link is being sought but a link suitable for cyclists has not yet been agreed.

Fabian Way Corridor

In the spring the writer was in contact with Geoff Marquis and Laura Dowsett of NPT Council about the provision of cycle routes on both the north and south side of Fabian Way and to Coed Darcy. This culminated in a meeting in NPT's offices on 23 April at which we were made aware of their plans. These include a cycle link from Swansea to Coed Darcy alongside a new road. Plans for a cycle route south of Fabian Way, for which we have been pushing, are however, not yet on the agenda. Our involvement with NP`T continues.

Newsletter.

These have continued to appear quarterly. An innovation has been to have a guest editor. Nick Guy filled this role for the Autumn edition. The writer thinks it would be healthy to have one a year with a different guest editor each time and hopes that a volunteer for 2013 will come forward.

Website.

The number of hits has been marginally less than last year, in both years averaging close to 6 a day, more in the summer and less in the winter.

A challenge to be addressed in the coming year is to complete the provision for both GCF registration and paying *Wheelrights* membership fees using PayPal. This involves writing software to enable the automatic return of data from an on-line form by email. The writer had attempted this and thought he had succeeded as tests indicated that the code was 100%. However, because it was coded in *javascript*, it only worked on the writer's browser. He has since learnt that the code needs to be written in *php* and executed on the website server.

David Naylor (*Wheelrights* Secretary)

APPENDIX B

Chairman's report for *Wheelrights* 2012 agm

2012 A SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR WHEELRIGHTS: The Tide is Turning

Following persistent efforts over the last few years, 2012 saw several positive results of our campaigning work:

1. SWANSEA BOULEVARD

After years of consultations CCS have finally agreed to WR demands for a continuous cycle path from Route 4 (Foreshore, west of Civic Centre), along Oystermouth Rd, to Route 43 at Tawe Bridges!

This promises to become a valuable quality link connecting NCN Routes 4 and 43 directly with the City Centre.

Work will be starting over next few months, and WR will be monitoring implementation carefully.

2. SWANSEA CYCLE CHALLENGE.

This campaign succeeded in getting 292 new cyclists (and more occasional cyclists) to cycle more. The main partners of Welsh Govt and CTC praised WR support, and told us we beat Cardiff and Gwynedd in such positive results.

There were problems with this first foray into the world of Behaviour Change, but several lessons can be learnt.

Main successes were getting us talking more to new cyclists, and it has given us and CCS a head start in implementation of a key aspect of the Welsh Govt's new *Active Travel* Bill (which talks of a culture change).

3. GOWER CYCLING FESTIVAL

This third Festival was our most successful to date. Numbers were higher than last year, and we made a profit for first time, which I propose we use for our campaigning work.

4. CCS CYCLING ACTION PLAN

After years of nudging by WR, the CCS have published their Cycling Action Plan 2012 –2014, which includes almost all items on the WR Wishlist.

There are specific commitments with timescales. Our Cycling Manifesto has been accepted by the CCS administration, and we now have more councillors supporting key WR aims.

At a time of severe cutbacks there will be discussions about priorities, and we need more feedback from members to inform our WR negotiators.

ISSUES FOR 2013

WR is united, active with a greater credibility among local cyclists, businesses, CCS and Welsh Govt. We have a strong membership base with a rich variety of opinions on key aspects of cycling.

There are several burning topics currently under discussion, and there is a need to come to a majority consensus on some topics, for example:

- A. Campaigns, and how we connect to new cyclists?
- B. Balance between on road improvements, and traffic free routes?
- C. Details of specific routes eg: new Morfa Road proposals,
- D. 20 mph zones,
- E. Future development of Gower Cycling Festival?
- F. WR public image, and how we promote ourselves?
- G. Behaviour Change campaigns eg poss launch of 1:10 campaign?
- H. On road Cycle Training (with CCS and Bikeability)

2013 PROPOSALS:

JANUARY – MARCH

Monthly meetings to discuss above issues, leaving Spring, Summer for rides and active campaigning.

Consideration of forming a WR POLICY FORUM?

This could meet quarterly and involve a group of WR Activists in discussing the details of the above issues.

The Forum would make recommendations to the wider membership, which would continue to take major decisions.

This could free up WR Meetings to have more discussion, guest speakers etc.

Nick Guy (*Wheelrights* Chair)

14 October 2012

APPENDIX C

Treasurer and Membership Secretary's report for *Wheelrights* 2012 agm

Wheelrights Accounts 2011/2012 Summary

Income	Amount	Expenses	Amount	Balance
Bank balance on 13/10/11	£1373.26	2011 GCF party tickets to GHC	£45.00	
Membership 2012	£272.00	Cyclenation sub 2011/2012	£20.00 (not cashed)	
Donations	£43.60	CTC affiliation subscription	£50.00	
CTC affiliate members fees	£45.00	CTC affiliate members fees	£45.00	
Adult bike classes	£140.00	Purchase of new adult bikes	£672.00	
Paypal setup check payments	£0.21	Environment centre subs	£20.00	
Gower cycling festival income	£1283.55	Environment centre room hire	£196.00	
		Gower cycling festival expenses	£994.00	
		Secretary's expenses	£161.13	
		Chairman's expenses	£42.80	
		Cyclenation sub 2012/13	£20.00	
Total	£3157.62	Total	£2265.93	
				£891.69

Bank balance on 19/10/12 £936.69 as three cheques not yet cashed (£20.00, £20.00, £16.00) and one cheque not yet paid in (£11.00).

Wheelrights Membership on 19/10/12 - 115

87 ordinary members on list of whom 64 have paid for 2012 (13 last paid 2011, 10 in 2010).

(9 of the 87 joined in July/August 2012 and have membership for 2013).

28 adult learners also receive membership for one year.

Colin Fielder (*Wheelrights* Treasurer and Membership Secretary)
19 October 2012