

Wheelrights

Notes of meeting on 3rd March 2011 in the Environment Centre, Swansea

Present: Paul Elliott (PS), Eifion Francis (EF), David Naylor (DN), John Sayce (JS), Alice Saville (AS)

Apologies: Don Ashman (DA), Judith Cole (JC), Colin Fielder (CF), Nick Guy (NG), Mike Lewis (ML), Kerry Rogers (KR), Rob Wachowski (RW) . Geoff Wood (GW) , Veronica Wood (VW)

The meeting was chaired by EF

1. Matters arising (from 17 Jan. 2011 and not on agenda).

Item 4. Adult Beginners Classes. DN advised that Instructor training is to be provided, courtesy of the Council, for six on 31 March and 1 April.

2. Boulevard

DN, aware that disabled people had similar requirements to cyclists for off road provision, had made contact with representatives of the relevant disability groups: namely Andrea Gordon (who is blind) and Pablo Rees (who is wheelchair bound) to explore common ground. This resulted in a joint proposal (See the Appendix. The affiliations of Andrea and Pablo are given in the Proposal) and DN sought the approval of the meeting to submit this to the Council. A key part of the proposal is that we are asking for a separate cycleway between the Civic Centre and the LC2. He had sounded out some *Wheelrights* members prior to the meeting all of whom supported the initiative. Subsequently NG expressed his reservations but would go along with the wishes of the membership. Our President was against it.

Following discussion, in which it was noted that a large increase in cycle commuters could be expected when the new Fabian Way University Campus is in operation, those present gave the proposal their full support and authorised DN to email it to Ben George without further delay (which he did on 4 March).

3. Loughor Link

DN advised that work was currently in process to complete the new section of NCR 4 between the Loughor Bridge and Culfor Road. He explained how this work had been held up for three years due to delay in the transfer of land ownership and that thanks to a December letter from *Wheelrights* to Elan Homes the necessary transfer took place, thus enabling the work to proceed. PE suggested an opening Ceremony. DN noted that this would be up to Sustrans. JS suggested Elan Homes be invited to the opening and to provide sponsorship.

4. Fabian Way

DN passed round a letter he had written on behalf of *Wheelrights* to John Flower (NPT Director of Environment) advocating a cycle route entirely south of Fabian Way to connect the new University Campus to Swansea and Briton Ferry. He had emailed it to cllr Rob Speht and various NPT Council officers. JS suggested that it should also go to Raymond Ciborowski of Swansea University Registry as he is in a position to promote the plan. [**Action DN**]

5. Bike Week

- (a) Commuter Challenge. The decision to hold one having been made we reviewed the options but decided that this could be progressed at a later meeting
- (b) Bike Ride. To hold one had also been decided previously. The merits of routing a ride along a proposed cycle route or along a main road such as the Mumbles Road were compared. JS highlighted the need for a Hafod – Liberty Stadium link for the former and DN noted that we had previously had successful rides from Blackpill to Castle Square along Mumbles and Oystermouth roads. He proposed a ride similar to this but going through the Sandfields following a route which NG had identified as a preferred cycle route.

6. Events

DN advised Sustrans are planning an opening ceremony for the NCR 43 extension from Penrhos to Coelbren in April; date tba. Other events can be found on the website.

7. AOB

JS noted that CCS's plan to cut back on street lights would endanger cyclists and suggested a *Wheelrights* letter to the Head of Highways. He drafted one for DN to send [**Action DN**].

8. Date of next meeting

7.00 pm in the Environment Centre on Monday, 28 March.

APPENDIX

Swansea Boulevard shared walking and cycling route (Between the Civic Centre and LC2)

The following proposal has been developed from discussions between

David Naylor	Secretary of Wheelwrights, Swansea,
Pablo Rees	Co-opted, Assistant Secretary of SAFE/Swansea Disability Forum
Andrea Gordon	Public Policy Manager, The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and Chair of Vision Impaired West Glamorgan, (VIWG).

We are aware that cyclists, people with mobility impairments, and blind and partially sighted people have some common concerns with regard to shared walking and cycling routes. Therefore, we agreed to meet and draft a proposal and wish to submit this jointly for your consideration, in line with the Council's Equality Duty and to promote good community relations.

The plans provided by the Council show a 5 metre wide pavement alongside the road with a cross section indicating a 2m strip containing trees and a 3m wide shared use path. Whilst Wheelwrights support shared use where it is appropriate, as it can be in rural areas, they accept that in some urban situations it is not.

They agree with SAFE, VIWG and Guide Dogs that on this particular section cyclists are better separated from other path users.

The reason for this is that this is a "linear" route, i.e. mainly used by people as a means of getting somewhere, rather than as a destination in itself.

More people are cycling in Swansea, whether as commuters, for shopping, other utilitarian purposes or for leisure. We foresee that the Boulevard will become an important east west line in addition to its key role of linking the city centre with the foreshore. With employment prospects in SA1 (and the possibility of a new university campus south of Fabian Way), we anticipate that there will be an increase in cycling commuters as well as other bicycle users, on the Boulevard. As it is the Welsh Assembly Government's policy to encourage cycling and walking, it is important that the infrastructure is in place to enable future development. We therefore feel that the figure of 7 cyclists per hour is a gross under estimate and should not be a basis for planning. We understand that this count was done in the Winter, and it is our shared view that the number of both cyclists and pedestrians is much greater in the Summer. We recommend that the count is conducted at a time and in a season where a more realistic estimate could be taken and suggest that basing it on Winter use and probably out of peak travel times is inaccurate and therefore misleading.

Specifically, we propose that the full 5m would be available to pedestrians and cyclists, but that this is divided in accordance with the Department For Transport (DfT) guidelines on shared walking and cycling routes. You will note that this requires a colour contrasted and tactile strip to ensure that blind and partially sighted pedestrians, in particular, are aware of the delineation.

At the LC2 end there is a narrow section of path at the bus stop. We feel that to squeeze all path users through this space invites conflict. We recommend that cyclists use the 5m approx wide access lane at the rear of LC2, currently used for loading and unloading. We suggest that this is a practical solution which, if signage was used appropriately, would direct cyclists away from the bus stop and allow pedestrians safe access. Cyclists can dismount in the loading area, if necessary.

We look forward to hearing your response to the proposal, and ask that you acknowledge receipt as soon as possible as we are aware of the need to begin work on the Boulevard.

David Naylor
Pablo Rees
Andrea Gordon
1 March 2011