

# Active Travel Stakeholder Group – One-Page Meeting Summary

## Overall position

The meeting provided an update on Swansea Council's active travel programme, including the **Active Travel Network Map (ATNM)**, current construction schemes, future projects and the challenges around prioritisation, funding and land acquisition.

There was broad support from stakeholders for expanding the active travel network, but also concern that the current network map is **too large, difficult to navigate and contains many aspirational routes that may take years to deliver**.

## Active Travel Network Map

The current ATNM is undergoing its statutory review, with consultation continuing until **mid-October**. Following consultation, Swansea Council will review responses, update the map, undertake route prioritisation with Transport for Wales and then submit the revised map to Welsh Government.

Previous engagement generated **548 responses**, leading to:

- 34 new routes;
- 37 routes removed or sections removed; and
- 29 routes extended or realigned.

Feedback has shown strong public support for network expansion, but also demand for better maintenance, safer crossings, improved road safety, better connectivity, signage/wayfinding, accessibility, cycle parking and integration with public transport.

## Key stakeholder concerns

Stakeholders felt the ATNM is **overwhelming and difficult to interpret**, particularly because of the number of proposed routes. Swansea Council acknowledged this criticism, with officers agreeing that there are probably too many routes and that the current mapping platform is not particularly user-friendly. However, major changes cannot easily be made before the current submission deadline.

Accessibility was another major issue. RNIB highlighted that the online consultation and maps are difficult for blind and partially sighted people to use. A simpler **“plan on a page”** approach, clearer route descriptions and greater use of in-person engagement were suggested.

Swansea Ramblers similarly raised concerns about maps not clearly showing streets, footpaths and rights of way. Council clarified that inclusion of a footpath on the ATNM does **not automatically mean it will become a cycling route**, and that relevant rights-of-way and equestrian groups would be involved as schemes develop.

## How projects are prioritised

Transport for Wales will use a model considering factors such as access to schools and facilities, trip attractors, demographics and deprivation. However, this is **not a definitive ranking**. Swansea Council will also consider stakeholder and public interest and the Regional Transport Plan.

Delivery also depends on practical issues including network connectivity, land ownership, planning permissions, permissions over common land and the availability of funding.

## Gowerton–Penclawdd Missing Link

The **Missing Link** remains a significant priority for Swansea Council and has strong public support. The principal obstacle is **land acquisition**. The Council is continuing discussions with landowners and modifying the design where necessary to accommodate their requirements.

Joe Muldoon specifically asked for an update on progress and whether a public consultation could still take place before Christmas. Council said consultation will take place once landowner issues and the final design are settled, because it does not want to consult on a design that subsequently has to change.

The Council confirmed that the route **cannot realistically be funded for construction in the following year**, because land needs to be secured before funding can be applied for and funding decisions have to be made well in advance. Land negotiations and legal processes are therefore the immediate critical path.

Council nevertheless stressed that the Missing Link is a **political priority**, that resources are committed to its development and that relationships with the relevant landowners are positive. Officers believe the project is progressing, although they cannot provide a firm delivery timetable.

## Current and forthcoming schemes

The Council reported substantial activity elsewhere, including:

- completion of improvements between **Blackpill and Dunvant**;
- the next section between **Dunvant and Gowerton** due to commence later in the year;
- a new off-road facility between **Forthbeck and Island Bridge**, forming part of a future link from Gowerton;
- a new Riverside path being developed in three phases;
- junction and accessibility improvements in Sandfields and Brynmill;
- installation of residential cycle hangers and additional secure cycle parking; and
- continued development of Swansea's shared e-bike scheme.

## Transparency and engagement

Joe also raised a wider concern about **transparency**, saying that members of the public can find it difficult to understand where individual schemes stand and what their likely timelines are. He suggested that publishing meeting transcripts or summaries could help improve public engagement.

Council explained that firm dates are often impossible because delivery depends on landowners, legal processes and uncertain future funding. However, the suggestion of making meeting information more publicly available was acknowledged.

## Bottom line

The meeting demonstrated that Swansea has a **large and ambitious active travel programme**, with strong public and stakeholder demand for better walking, wheeling and cycling connections. The main challenge is moving projects from an aspirational network map into delivery.

For the **Gowerton–Penclawdd Missing Link**, the message was broadly positive: it remains a Council priority and is being actively worked on, but **land acquisition is the immediate constraint**, followed by public consultation and funding. No firm consultation date was given and construction in the following year was ruled out on the current timetable.

More broadly, stakeholders are asking for **clearer prioritisation, simpler and more accessible mapping, greater transparency and better communication about how and when projects move from the plan into construction**.