

Consultation Response by Wheelrights. 1 August 2014

Active Travel Action Plan

David Judd

Wheelrights the Swansea Cycle Campaign Group

email david@djtranplan.wanadoo.co.uk 01792232649

12 Northway, Bishopston, Swansea SA3 3JN

Background

Wheelrights was founded in 1995 to campaign for better safety and provision for cycling in the Swansea area. We have seen volumes of policy, strategy and action plans written by the local authorities and the Assembly but precious little progress over the years. Many local authorities have been found wanting in cycle provision, particularly regarding major planning applications and infrastructure proposals. It is still difficult bordering on dangerous to get about on a bicycle unless very experienced. The issues of Safety and Better Provision for cyclists are paramount if the benefits to Transport, the Environment, Health and the Economy are to be realised. We and doubtless other campaign groups (as primary users), would be pleased to be included as consultees in future deliberations.

We are very pleased to support this Active Travel (AT) initiative for something is clearly needed to force progress on this matter. The downside is this work will put a large burden on local authorities, with little promise of anything concrete for years. Notwithstanding this, the attention and technical expertise that will result from this work will doubtless be of real benefit.

We are unhappy that your definition of Active Travel does not embrace the whole spectrum of cycling, which it clearly should. The Act includes only some trip purposes whereas it should cover all trip purposes, especially so in areas where tourist and recreational demand is high, such as Swansea. Recreational cycling especially by families will lead to the cycling culture we all seek. We hope that this definition will not preclude many routes from improvement. The Action Plan(consulted on separately) seems to cover this wider definition but confuses the Active Travel Act description.

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The layout, titles and referencing of the issued documents have caused me some confusion and there are many inconsistencies in the file references that appear on screen and documents that hopefully will be sorted.

An Executive Summary of each of the documents would be of real benefit.

Question 1: Do you agree with the main barriers to walking and cycling identified in the Draft Action Plan?

Yes

Please provide more details below:

The barriers are well explained. I think safety is the most important if more cycling is to be achieved

Question 2: Do you agree with the actions we have identified to address the barriers to walking and cycling?

Yes

Please provide more details below:

It is a most impressive list and should address the issues. It will need to if a target of 10% of cycling trips is to be achieved by 2020

Question 3: Are there other actions that you think should be included in the action plan? Please list them and indicate who should be responsible for undertaking them.

Yes

Please provide more details below:

More involvement of cycle campaign groups in the actions. They have much to offer in experience. Sustrans and CTC do not necessarily represent them on many issues

Question 4: We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please tell us below:

Better protection of cyclists in law. The emphasis should be on drivers' responsibilities in using such a lethal weapon, an important issue that must be addressed as part of the safety issue. It needs national action.

*Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. **OK.***