



**CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE**

SWANSEA CYCLE FORUM

**Minutes of Meeting – Wednesday 24 November 2010 at 10:00
Meeting Room 3 (3.2.7), Civic Centre**

Present:

Councillor Rob Speht	RS	Member for Landore Ward
Rob Wachowski (Chair)	RW	CCS Environment Transportation Group
Eifion Francis	EF	Wheelrights (WR)
Fraser Arnot	FA	Sustrans (Sust)
Mike Cherry	MC	BikeAbility Wales (BAW)
Colin Fielder	CF	Wheelrights (WR)
David Naylor	DN	UK Cyclists Organisation (CTC)

Apologies:

Nerys Lewis	CCS Culture & Tourism
Ben George	CCS Environment Transportation Group

Item		Action
1.0	Apologies	
1.1	Apologies as above.	
2.0	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	None.	
3.0	Minutes of the Last Meeting	
3.1	Agreed.	
4.0	Matters Arising	
4.1	DN 4.1 Gowerton / Kingsbridge Link – WR wrote to Councillor William Evans on 3 rd October but had not received a reply. It was suggested that a further letter be sent and RW will contact the Gorseinon Regeneration Trust on behalf of the Cycle Forum as well. There was a general discussion during which RW gave the background to this link. He also talked about the aspirations to redouble the railway line between Gowerton and Llanelli that could provide a spur to move this scheme forward because a bridge would be required for passengers to cross to the second platform. RS would like a definitive answer to the legal position regarding the exchange of common land and RW will contact the Legal department.	DN RW
5.0	Boulevard	
5.1	DN – Nick Guy, Colin Fielder and DN representing WR met with Chris Vinestock (CV), Head of Service for Transportation and Engineering, to express their concerns about the consultation process for the Boulevard cycling infrastructure. In particular they did not want cyclists to be only limited to the bus lanes but needed an off road shared use facility.	RW

Item		Action
5.2	<p>Drawings were tabled and there was a general discussion during which RS reiterated the importance of the links across the Boulevard between the city centre and the maritime quarter. RW talked about a recent site visit with CV and Ben George (BG) to look at possible options for a cycle route. The discussion also included making bus lanes safe for experienced riders and whether bikes actually initiate a sequence change when riding over the vehicle detector loops. FA brought up the timing of the lights and whether the at grade crossing points are going to be two stage or the preferred single stage for cyclists and what traffic modelling had been used in the design process.</p> <p>In conclusion RW said that most of these points had previously been submitted to the design team and it would be more appropriate to get the latest drawings and modelling data for the next consultation stage.</p>	RW
6.0	Cycling Action Plan	
6.1	RW – Outlined the history of the work carried out by council officers in conjunction with consultees and the CCS Overview Board to produce an initial strategic cycling action plan report. A more detailed action plan is to be drawn up to identify individual points that would also reflect the aspirations of the Welsh Cycling Action Plan.	
6.2	RS – As with many plans the fundamental issue of funding will always be problematic and Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and Local Authority (LA) budget cuts will inevitably impact on all funding opportunities. However gains should still be sought from either public or private development schemes at the early design and planning stages. RW pointed out that he is based with Transport Development Control (TDC) and colleagues there are now well aware of his aspirations in this context and consultation is very good with them. FA asked about the influence of Transport Consultants during the planning brief and RW said that TDC would involve him in any cycling issues that evolve from this process. RS reiterated the importance of being involved in the planning process at an early stage to influence outcomes.	
6.3	<p>MC – Asked if there are any funding opportunities through health initiatives and the like that seem to be high on the agenda at the moment. RS pointed out that this would be revenue funding and not capital.</p> <p>CF – Health sector bodies talk about the need for health being considered in developments and pointed to the Marmot Report which is a review into health inequalities and proposes effective strategies for reducing health inequalities. He asked if Swansea’s public health board is in on this and RS said this should be built into National Health policy and is not a planning requirement. He added that the Town & Country Planning Act is about minimising the impact of developments and there was a general discussion about this.</p>	
6.4	<p>DN – Would like to see the Wheelrights (WR) wish list of proposed cycling improvements around Swansea incorporated into the Action Plan. RW noted this and said that a draft will be produced for consultation in the first instance.</p> <p>RS – Is anyone looking at a budget for cycling in the next financial year? RW said that this has been discussed during the current year but would look into it.</p>	RW
6.5	<p>There followed a general discussion raising the following points:</p> <p>RW – the need for better links between WAG and LAs.</p> <p>EF – need for good infrastructure.</p> <p>MC – cycle training. RS – training for adults.</p> <p>DN – list of action points with a timescale.</p> <p>MC – cycling for disabled of all ages and abilities.</p> <p>RW – CCS schools cycle training. The WAG Cycling Action Plan Annual Report.</p>	

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7.0	Route Signage	
7.1	<p>DN – Explained that partly due to pressure from Sustrans to improve the signing on the National Cycle Network (NCN) in Swansea county and also because this was on the agenda of both Wheelrights and the Council the local Sustrans Rangers carried out a signing audit this autumn (2010). The purpose of this audit is to identify locations for permanent signs and suggest what form they should take. This resulted in 3 reports being produced and these are available on the WR website; www.wheelrights.org.uk/various.htm</p> <p>These will be open for consultation and comment until the end of December.</p>	
7.2	RW – Recommended that the various proposals should be prioritised in order of importance. FA suggested a separate meeting to carry this out. RW to arrange.	RW
7.3	<p>DN – Where routes were not clear the Sustrans Rangers have used approved stickers and these are proven to be effective. AF pointed out that Sustrans say these should only be regarded as a temporary measure and not considered as an alternative. EF thought they did a good job and should be considered as more than just temporary where appropriate.</p> <p>After a general discussion it was agreed that overall the NCN signing in Swansea was of a good standard.</p>	
7.4	RS – The audit only applied to the NCN so what about things like the lack of cycle symbols in the city centre bus lanes. RW said that WR have produced a separate city centre signing audit that was being looked at by the council with a view to using maintenance budget to implement some of the suggestions. He added that bus drivers have previously been made aware that cyclists can use the lanes but perhaps this should be raised again.	RW
8.0	Connect 2 – Clydach and Penclawdd	
8.1	Clydach. RW – Reported that there were ongoing discussions between British Waterways (BW), CCS Highways and Rights of Way (RoW) and Sustrans about the type of surfacing that would be agreeable to all parties in terms of environment and the adoption of the paths for future maintenance. Agreement was needed on this to enable the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to be signed off and the project built.	
8.2	Penclawdd. RW – Designs for the scheme were being drawn up so that the future maintenance can be agreed again to enable a MoU to be signed. This would mean that the project could then be considered for upgrading from a reserve scheme by the Sustrans Connect2 board. When this is achieved it will pave the way for negotiations to take place for the final parcels of land required.	
9.0	Swansea Cycle Map Launch	
9.1	<p>RW – This had taken part during the official opening of the Gower Cycling Festival by the WAG Environment Minister Jane Davidson, as detailed in the next item. This was attended by Alison Smith who was responsible for managing the funding on behalf of WAG there were no adverse comments.</p> <p>The next stage is to pursue getting the map onto the council website.</p>	RW
10.0	Gower Cycling Festival	
10.1	DN – This took place from 18-25 Sept. 2010. There were 18 rides, two of them for mountain bikes. 154 people took part. Of these about 90% were local and most joined just one ride. The ride was jointly opened by Reena Owen (CCS's Director of Environment) and Jane Davidson (WAG Minister of Environment). Judging by the very positive feedback it was a success, although we had hoped to attract more people from outside the County. It was also helped by the excellent weather.	

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10.2	RW – The mountain bike rides that ran from the Gower Heritage Centre were a great success, being well attended and enjoyed by participants. Also the input and help from the CCS Tourism section in promoting the event was very good. A lot of lessons were learnt that will be very useful when organising the next festival.	
10.3	RS – Asked if any use was made of Facebook and DN said that a CTC Wheelrights member used Facebook to inform 2000 recipients of the Festival and that over 70 had expressed interest. DN could not however say how many of these actually turned up – probably not many. He added that they had a 10% response to the feedback forms that were given to ride participants. DN has prepared some evaluation notes that could be viewed on the WR website; http://www.wheelrights.org.uk/GCF10eval.pdf	
11.0	A.O.B.	
11.1	RW – Gave an update about the CCS corporate pool bike scheme and the difficulty in obtaining central funding to implement it. He had written a committee report but it was decided that the cycle maintenance budget should be used instead. RS would like to receive a copy of the report and wanted to know if there is a comparison available between the cost of pool cars and pool bikes. RW to follow up.	RW
11.2	RW – Had been on a site visit to the new promenade route between the Observatory and Trafalgar Bridge and reported that this looked to be almost complete and likely to be open soon. A new swing bridge across the riverside entrance to the marina is also proposed as part of the Swansea Point development planning consent and he would find out when this was likely to be constructed. There would also then be a need to look at what should be the most appropriate alignment of NCN Route 4 and agreed with Sustrans and other parties.	RW
11.3	RW – The Clyne Valley project to construct mountain bike trails was on hold because of the need for planning consent and to comply with Environment Agency requirements. There were also issues about the level of funding from the Forestry Commission through the Better Woodlands initiative.	
11.4	MC – BikeAbility Wales is still managing to provide a 6 day service of cycling opportunities for disabled people of all ages and abilities despite the economic recession and pressures on funding.	
12.0	Date of Next Meeting	
12.1	Wednesday 19 th January 2011 at 10:00 Meeting Room 5 - 2.3.27 Civic Centre, Swansea	