



CYCLING ACTION PROGRESS MEETING

8TH JANUARY 2013

Present: Chris Vinestock (CCS – Transportation, Head of Service)
Cllr Nick Davies (CCS – Cycle Forum Designate)
Ben George (CCS – Transport Strategy)
Rob Wachowski (CCS – Walking & Cycling Officer)
Fraser Arnot (Sustrans)
Mike Cherry (BikeAbility Wales)
Colin Fielder (Wheelrights)
Nick Guy (Wheelrights)
David Naylor (Wheelrights)

Apologies: Mark Thomas (CCS – Traffic)

1. Actions from the Last Meeting

1.1 A number of actions had been assigned following the last meeting. These are summarised along with associated progress below, although some actions are referenced in the items below as appropriate. A number of the actions relate to items on the meeting agenda and are therefore dealt with in the relevant sections.

1.2 With regards to the proposed minor improvements at Tawe Bridges, RW has received proposed plans for the ramp down to NCN43 from the northern Tawe Bridge; a cost is expected to follow imminently. Concerns remain that the provision of a ramp in this location may facilitate or even be seen to condone cycling across the northern bridge, which is at present solely a footpath, in part because the parapet heights are lower than the recommended height to accommodate cyclists. The members of the CAP agreed that present design standards and guidance did not prohibit advocating cycling across the bridge and FA agreed to circulate evidence to establish this. CV agreed that he would pursue the implementation of the ramp.

**FA
CV**

1.3 It was reported that some improvements have been made to the route on the west bank at the Tawe Bridges, with some resurfacing and a new dropped kerb being installed. It was concluded that the ramp could be extended to remove a significant change in levels, but it was concluded that the construction of a retaining wall is beyond present means. NG and CF noted that there were a number of bricks missing in this location which were in need of attention to ensure that safety of pedestrians and cyclists was not put at risk. RW will report these to the Highway Faults team.

RW

1.4 BG reported with regards to the decision to publicise the change to near-side indicators at pedestrian crossings. The Council's regeneration department had recently undertaken a programme of promotion with regards to near-side indicators including the placement of posters to advise the public on the difference. The campaign was largely received with apathy. The group agreed that BG should liaise with the Council's Communications Team to publish an article in the Council's newspaper, The Leader, to promote the benefits of near-side indicators in order to counter some of the feelings of discontent that the public had expressed, a view not only of the Swansea public, but nationally since the Department for Transport changed its requirements to mandate the use of near-side indicators.

BG

1.5 It was agreed that an article for The Leader would also included a number of elements to promote cycling within the City & County of Swansea. The article is to include information

BG

regarding:

- Commuter Routes Article
- Cycle Map
- Wheelrights 'Cycle Buddy' initiative
- Recent route enhancements
- Cycle training opportunities

2. Active Travel Bill

2.1 BG reported to the group that the Active Travel Bill was currently being taken through the necessary process within the National Assembly for Wales to bring it into Law by the end of the calendar year. Principally the Bill is expected to place three specific requirements upon Local Authorities, although the Bill will be accompanied by a general change in transport policy whereby the Welsh Government will require a greater proportion of its grant funding to be spent on Active Travel schemes. The requirements are:

- To map all of the settlement's walking and cycling routes and for the map to be made publically available.
- To produce a second map which shows the Council's proposed walking and cycling network to a fifteen year horizon?
- To make continuous improvements to the walking and cycling network each year.

3. Morfa Distributor Road

3.1 BG reported that he had experienced difficulties in contacting Indigo Planning Consultancy who are responsible for the Network Rail planning application for the Maliphant Sidings Maintenance Depot. BG has not therefore been able to establish whether or not cycling will be permitted over the new footbridge. BG will continue to pursue a response and request the provision of wheeling ramps on the stepped section of the structure.

3.2 BG also agreed to circulate the formal response to consultation on the Morfa Distributor Road cycle route proposals, which having been completed in late October 2012 had not been circulated because of an oversight. **BG**

3.3 BG also explained that it was now anticipated that a 3 metre wide shared use path could be delivered along the length of the proposed road.

4. Clydach Connect2

4.1 BG confirmed that the scheme was now largely in a phase where its finances and grant claims were being finalised.

4.2 The license for the Depot has now been completed and Sustrans now have the necessary permissions to open the through route and complete this section of the Phase 1 route.

4.3 The preliminary design for the Mond pedestrian and cycle crossing has been finalised and it is expected to be forwarded to Sustrans within 7 days for their approval. BG voiced concern that it would be difficult to have the work completed by the end of the financial year to comply with the terms and conditions of the Sustrans funding pots. This will therefore be pursued as a matter of urgency. **BG**

5. Kingsbridge Cycle Link

5.1 CV had written to Network Rail to request passage for pedestrians and cyclists to cross from the proposed Kingsbridge Link to the NCN4 at Gowerton by means of the pedestrian bridge at Gowerton railway station. The Senior Scheme Sponsor for the redoubling of the railway line, which is currently being undertaken, replied in writing to state that this would not be an acceptable proposal because of fears of increased risk to railway safety. CV has written again to restate the request to use the railway station as a means of crossing the line and a response is awaited. BG has also contacted a senior Officer from the Welsh Government Rail Team in an effort to increase the pressure on Network Rail, but this has not yet met with a productive response. The members of CAP

- expressed their disappointment at the lack of progress and agreed to lend their support to place pressure on Network Rail to review their position. FA will therefore seek to use Sustrans' contacts and ND will seek to use pressure from Cllr Sybil Crouch (Cabinet Member for Sustainability) to place additional pressure on Network Rail to respond more favourably to the proposal. **FA ND**
- 5.2 In order to ensure progress is made on the section of the route which is proposed to cross Stafford Common an allocation from the Regional Transport Consortia Grant is expected in 2013/14 to fund land queries and design.
- 5.3 BG will also continue to pursue advice from the Legal section with regards to the due process and feasibility of purchasing land from the Commoners for use as a shared use path. **BG**
- 6. North Gower Trail**
- 6.1 BG and a member of the Improvements Team met with the Evans family on the 12th December 2012 and had a positive meeting where some tangible progress was made. It was agreed in principle that the route can be constructed on the Evans' land from Gowerton, where the route presently terminates, to the land owned by the next landowner, who incidentally although being contacted has said she is unwilling to commence negotiations until the Evans' agreement is secured.
- 6.2 The Improvements Team are now working to identify a solution to overcome a number of concerns expressed by the Evans'. It is expected that the Council will meet again with the Evans' by March 2013 with a view to commencing land negotiations.
- 7. Seminar**
- 7.1 Following the last Cycle Action Progress Meeting SWWITCH made an offer to fund a Swansea seminar as the first of a series of regional cycle seminars. BG and FA have been making arrangements for the seminar, with a proposed date of the end of April 2013. It is proposed that the seminar topic will be 'Manual for Streets' and it is hoped that Phil Jones (Phil Jones Associates), one of the authors of Manual for Streets, will be able to attend and lead this event. It is anticipated that staff from the City & County of Swansea will attend the first half of the day only, while a wider list of SWWITCH invitees will attend the whole day.
- 7.2 The group discussed the possibility for a separate event for Councillors and it was suggested that the topic could be the 'Active Travel Bill' to ensure that the Councillors were fully aware of the implications of this emerging legislation. It was agreed that ND would contact BG to discuss this proposal further and FA suggested that Lee Waters (Sustrans) may be able to attend to lead this seminar. **ND FA BG**
- 8. AOB**
- 8.1 **Cycle Forum:** The group discussed the potential to re-launch the Cycle Forum in the coming months having had a period where the group was not suspended and largely replaced by the CAP. It was proposed that while CAP would still meet to discuss the infrastructure provisions, the Cycle Forum could have a greater emphasis on the 'softer measures' such as training and promotion of cycling. It was proposed that ND could Chair the Forum and that it would be held biannually, ND agreed to give some thought to this proposal. RW will prepare a list of potential invitees from departments across the Council. **ND RW**
- 8.2 **Gower Cycle Festival:** NG announced that the festival will be held between the 10th and 18th August 2013. It was requested that the City & County of Swansea make a contribution of £150 as it had done in previous years; CV agreed to this. BG will make the arrangements for the payment. **BG**
- 8.3 **Signage:** NG requested that signage be discussed as an item at the next CAP meeting. NG would like to look at signage proposals under three headings and also to post maps

around the routes to better inform cyclists venturing out for the first time:

- NCN Routes outside of the City Centre
- Boulevard
- Non-Sustrans routes outside the City Centre

8.4 **Fabian Way:** FA asked whether the proposals for Fabian Way cycle provision could be discussed at the next CAP meeting. This was agreed.

9. Date of Next Meeting

9.1 The next Cycle Action Progress Meeting will be held on 9th April 2013.