

Wheelrights Routes Group

Notes of meeting on 16th November 2024

Present: John Britton (JB), David Judd (DJ), Joe Muldoon (JM), David Naylor (DN), Dareyoush Rassi (DR). John Sayce (JS).

For part of meeting: Dennis Dwyer (DD), Kate McCabe (KM).

Apologies: Allyson Evans (AE), Nick Guy (NG).

JB chaired the meeting.

1. Review of actions from 12 October meeting.

- (a) Gower Access Path (GAP). (Item 2b.) Responding to our thinking that the Gower Society might be a source of support for projects like this DN had contacted Hamish Osborn. While not a member he has put DN in contact with Ruth Callaway and Gordon Howe who are. DN has emailed Ruth and [post meeting] has just had a reply. **[Action DN]**
- (b) Active Travel Stakeholders meeting. (Item 3.) A Teams meeting is scheduled for 10.00-11.00am on 26 November. JS noted that there would be a Teams Sustainable Travel meeting at 2.00pm on 28 November.
- (c) Wheelrights Panel Discussion. (Item 5e.) DR. said he had had acceptances from both Alan Tapp and Ian Walker for a public panel discussion in February. We agreed with his suggestion of booking a venue at the University. Also that we should ask others to attend once we have a title for the discussion ("Which way for Active Travel?" perhaps?) and a date that suits both Alan and Ian. **[Action DR]**
DR suggested this be held in February. We propose Rob Stewart, Julie James and Lee Waters as panel members. JS would invite them. **[Action JS]**
- (d) Local Access Forum. (Item 5h.) DJ is in the process of applying for membership. [Post meeting: he has now received the application form from Chris Dale.]

2. Project updates.

- (a) North Gower Access Path (NGAP). No further developments.
- (b) Walter Road. JS has met with the Council and learnt that the project is on hold. He had pressed for a first stage to be constructed using the 2024/5 funds. But this was not accepted; instead the funds will be used for the GAP.
- (c) Gower Access Path (GAP). It appears that there are some loose ends to tie up before the work can restart. One question, the answer to which we do not know, is whether or not a new inspection is needed. The work should start before the funding expires next spring.

3. Closure of routes for special events.

JS had previously raised with Jack Palmer the need for us to be consulted about this. He has had no response. See the appendix (p.3) for related email exchanges, summarised by JB.

4. Urban Foundry and Sandfields.

We welcomed KM of the Urban Foundry who have been involved in preparing detailed plans. She tabled drawings illustrating these. They confirm the arrangements described by NG at our 12 October meeting. (Item 5f of the meeting notes.) This work is to be funded from 2024/5 Active Travel money. We also discussed the plans for St Helen's Road to the north and Williams Street to the east. The carriageway on St Helen's Road is to be narrowed to 5.8m to provide space for an SUP on the north side. A sub-group to discuss the St Helen's Road plans was suggested. JS noted that the barrier at the south end of William Street did not meet Active Travel guidelines. (Previously it did but had been altered so that now there is insufficient clearance between the chicanes.)

5. AGM.

This is to be on 10 December. We decided it should start at 6.00pm so that we will not be too late for the ensuing Xmas Dinner at the Yacht Club. DR has had no response from our original proposed speaker, Tom Wharf, so we are suggesting Lee Waters to replace him. JS agreed to invite him. If Lee is not available we will do without a speaker and follow the election with a general discussion. **[Action: JS]**

6. Wheelrights Xmas ride.

This ride, in conjunction with BikeAbility (Wales), will take place on Saturday, 7 December. DJ in collaboration with BikeAbility has organised it. It will leave the Dunvant Rugby Club at 10.00 for the Environment Centre. An optional (free) boat trip on the *Swansea Jack* will then follow. (From 11.30-13.00). We approved a poster which DJ had prepared. DR agreed to get copies of the poster made and JB will put it on Facebook. **[Action JB, DR]**

7. AOB.

Ripples's Café

DD asked for our help by objecting to the Appeal which has been submitted to the Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) Dept to have the West Cross Garage and Ripples Café demolished and replaced by a housing development. We can do this by emailing PEDW.Casework@gov.wales or by writing to Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW), Crown Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ, preferably by 30 November. The objections should be based on the points made in the appeal and how we would be affected. The link to the appeal is: <https://planningcasework.service.gov.wales/searchresults?q=CAS-03814-C8W1V5>. We confirmed our support and indicated that we would do what we can to overturn the appeal. **[Action All]**

Next Routes Group meeting.

10.00am on Saturday, 11 January 2025, in Ripples Café.

Notes prepared by
David Naylor

APPENDIX

Summary of Email chain on Consultation and Accessibility of Route Closures

This chain highlights Wheelrights' ongoing challenges with event organisers and Swansea Council regarding route closures and accessible alternatives, particularly advocating for advance consultation and adjustments to meet the needs of all road users.

1. John Britton to Jamie Corteen Copied to Wheelrights members (31 October 2024)

John Britton wrote to Swansea Council's Jamie Corteen, raising long-standing concerns about event-related route closures. He emphasised the need for consultation, particularly under the Equality Act 2010, as closures restrict access for wheelchair and mobility scooter users as well as cyclists. Britton cited an example where barriers had prevented a cyclist from safely transporting children on a cargo bike during a previous event. He outlined legal duties for consultation and reasonable adjustments for affected groups, recommending early engagement, public notification, and well-signed alternative routes.

2. David Judd to Jamie Corteen. Copied to Wheelrights members (30 October 2024)

David Judd, President of Wheelrights, responded to Corteen's prior assurances of consultation on event closures. Judd noted that Wheelrights was not consulted about the World Para Triathlon closure in June, despite the Council claiming to have engaged stakeholders. He highlighted concerns over multi-day closures that lacked alternative routes and sought confirmation of Wheelrights' inclusion in future consultations.

3. Laura from World Triathlon Para Series to David Judd (18 June 2024)

Laura, representing the World Triathlon Para Series, responded to Judd's enquiry regarding the June event. She explained that the event used part of National Cycle Route 4, with approvals from Swansea Council and other stakeholders. She suggested an alternative path along Fabian Way for cyclists and apologised for any inconvenience caused by the closure.

4. David Judd to World Triathlon Para Series (16 June 2024)

Judd expressed frustration to the organisers over the lack of safe routes during the triathlon event, noting that closures had disrupted cyclists, including a charity rider on a 1600-mile journey. He asked for a map of safe alternative routes for affected cyclists.

5. Jamie Corteen to John Sayce, with copies to council staff (7 June 2024)

In a response to Wheelrights' queries about the Ironman event, Jamie Corteen informed Sayce that no alternative cycle routes could be arranged due to the event's scale. Corteen pointed to minimal diversions and directed him to online resources for further event details.

It included this sentence, making a rather silly false comparison:

"We hope that as one of the main components of the Ironman 70.3 was cycling, cyclists would understand on this occasion and plan their day accordingly."

John Britton (Chair of Wheelrights Routes Group)