

Wheelrights

Notes of AGM on 2nd December 2019 in the Environment Centre, SA1 1RY

Present: Nick Guy (NG), Mike Lewis (ML), David Naylor (DN), Chris Walsh (CW), John Sayce (JS), Allyson Evans (AE), Ian Davies (ID), David Judd (DJ), Chris Connick (CC), Dawn Aplin (DA), Bill Gannon (BG), Eifion Frances (EF), Colin Fielder (CF), Pat Hansard (PH), Nick Bacon (NB), John Cardy (JC), James Doel (JD).

plus others: Eddie Hall (Mumbles Transport Group), Jeff Green, Alun Burge, Andrew Green, Barry Norris, Ann Goold, Victoria Williams, Sara Barrento, Andre Pires

Some only attended the Speaker Session: Cllr Nick Davies, Stuart Harper, Mike Diver, Bob Denley (Ramblers assn).

Apologies: Alan Kreppel, Mike Cherry, Fes Simmons, Kevin Carey, Jane Tonks

Speaker: Rhiannon Hardiman (Manager of Living Streets Cymru) spoke about “Living Streets” history and their core goal of encouraging more people to walk.

She described some major issues of: car dominated streets, air quality, congestion, obesity levels, and disconnected communities. In Wales only 44% children walk to school, and only 2% cycle.

Living Streets current campaigns include:

National level – focus on pavement parking and traffic speeds eg getting 20 mph limits in all residential areas.

Local Campaigns

- School streets – closed to through traffic.
- Low Traffic Neighbourhoods – stopping rat runs, re-allocating road space, Parklets etc.
- Priority for People.
- Placemaking – eg a huge project in Walthamstow, London (traffic reduction etc) – for details visit [EnjoyWalthamForest](#).

Offer to Local Groups

- Community Engagement.
- Living Streets gives: tools, support, letter templates, social media, etc.
- They have local groups in Cardiff Riverside, and Neath.

The Q & A focussed on:

- 20 mph zones – costs of signage?
- School Streets – Cllr Nick Davies asked about enforceability?
- Culture shift – eg pacers (cars travelling at 20 mph).

After the meeting a couple of people told Rhiannon about local projects which could benefit from her input incl Uplands and Mumbles groups.

AGM Formal Business (followed tea break):

Minutes of 2018 AGM were accepted as correct. Proposed DN, Seconded EH.

Officers` Reports: Provided by JS, NG, CW and DN. (Attached as appendices A, B, C and D.)

Elections: CW, NG, JS and AE all re-elected as treasurer, secretary, chair and vice-chair, respectively. DN would continue to chair the Routes Group.

Motion: Chris Connick proposed a motion “ that the name of Wheelrights change to Swansea Cycling Campaign” Chris talked about his recent experience on Wheelrights stall at the Green Fayre where many people interested in cycling hadn’t heard of Wheelrights. He proposed we have a new name that easily reflects what we do and our core values.

As there was little time for discussion John Sayce advised that Chris should withdraw his motion and we set up a sub-group to discuss this further and allied issues of having a re-launch, expanding our low social media presence. Chris agreed to withdraw his motion.

It was agreed that we should have a further meeting – invite someone from a similar group who have set up (eg Cardiff Cycle City) – followed by a longer discussion

AOB

Dawn Aplin has organised Xmas Dinner at Mumbai on 5th December.

Organise a ride during Bike week 2020 (Wheelrights 25th anniversary).

Nick Guy (*Wheelrights* secretary)

Appendix A Chairman's report 2019

As Chair it is my role to muse on what activities we focus on in 2020. Our recent survey of members tells us that our journey, so far, has been broadly on the right lines/lanes! You rated the top activities in order of priority to be

1. Lobbying local decision makers. There can be little doubt that the officers of Wheelrights have built a constructive relationship with both Councillors and officials in the Council and also at national level. This hasn't stopped us from being critical when necessary e.g. Over the plans for the Broadway traffic lights scheme.
2. Engaging with local cycle clubs – This is an activity that we have not engaged in since the local Swansea Cycle Forum folded through lack of interest. If someone would like to undertake this role, please step forward!
3. Organising action events – This is a matter for the campaigning group to take up and we would welcome more participation in our meetings. One possible event could be around the provision of Cycle lanes on Walter Rd ???
4. Sending E-mails/letters to the media- This item was last by some way, so I think it is probably best left to individuals to do rather than Wheelrights.

This summer, most of us remember the activity of Extinction rebellion in London asking for public bodies to declare a climate emergency. That was the easy bit, as I doubt that there is a Parliament, Assembly or Council that hasn't done this. The hard bit is taking action and all too often, our public bodies lack the foresight or inclination to take actions that may be left field to many. So, in the summer, we pitched three ideas to Lee Waters, the deputy minister in charge of Active Travel at the Senedd. All of them concerned behaviour change rather than infrastructure work, as Lee is focussed on increasing our dreadfully low level of cycling and walking.

The first idea was the first Welsh park and pedal park to be situated on the Enterprise Zone, as the junction of NCN 43 and the cross valley link path. Drivers coming off the motorway could complete part of their journey by using their bike to ride to work. The Leader of the Council, Rob Stewart, sounded interested as did a local councillor Mo Sykes, maybe as this is a low cost capital project. However, to date, progress is stalled.

Is this something we should take forward?

The second idea was an E-Bike scheme allowing residents in Townhill to purchase E-Bikes at a large discount, through the involvement of the Welsh Government as a buying agent in place of a shop. This scheme now has the tentative support of the 3 local councillors and the Swansea West AM as well as the manager of the Phoenix Centre. This could be a gamechanger for hilly areas in Wales. We will report back in the middle of next year as we await an initial response from the Government.

The third idea was about a car park levy for employees using works' car parks. This has been successfully tried in Nottingham where it has raised cycling levels as well as funded more cycle paths there. A win win situation!. We will be invited to talk to an employers' group called Low Carbon Swansea.

However, we still need a member who would be interested in doing this piece of work, or should we drop this?

Of course, our existing work to find new routes for cyclists will continue with our extremely active Routes Group ably led by David Naylor. All of this work is fed back to the Council on a day to day basis (e.g. closure of routes without signed alternatives) and proposals made in the quarterly Cycle Action Progress meeting. There is encouraging that our opinions are now being sought. Nick has already mentioned the work that he has led with improving signage on routes. His pressure and persistence will surely result in a mushrooming of signs everywhere to coincide with the first blooms of spring!

Lastly, I think one of our biggest challenges will be around our social media profile. At the moment, we have a nominal facebook page, no whats app group and a website that needs the input of more than just one member. All of this is to extend our reach and public image, so we can better put the case for everyday cycling in the Swansea area.

Members, it's over to you for your thoughts!

John Sayce, Nov. 2019

Appendix B

Secretary's report 2019

NEW MONEY, NEW ROUTES and NEW INITIATIVES coming!

2019 was another extremely positive year for Wheelrights.

Swansea Council was extremely successful in obtaining over £4m for Active Travel. This equates to approx. £20 per person per year, the equivalent spend of Netherlands levels!

As well as new routes Swansea Council is tendering for exciting projects to market bike routes and carry out a Signage Audit. Wheelrights is helping with one of these bids.

Our two sub groups have continued to work well:

- The Routes Group has explored new routes, audited them and given the Council a Quality Network tube map. (Routes Group report: Appendix D).
- The Campaign Group has made more links with a range of councillors, discussing potential routes in their wards. In particular we have continued our campaign for new cycle lanes along Walter Rd; obtained improvements to the Pobl Townhill development and contributed to consultations on the Council's Broadway plans. We have also continued local campaigns eg the GAP and Pontarddulais campaigns.

Appendix D

Wheelrights Routes Group report 2019

General

This report covers the year since the 28 Nov. 2018 AGM. The Routes Group have met each month (Most on the first Saturday.) between January and October. A ride followed the meeting at most of them, several of which were to check progress on the new routes being constructed in N and NE Swansea. The venue has alternated between the Environment Centre and Ripple's Café (Foreshore between Mumbles and West Cross.) Notes of these meetings/rides are provided on the 'Newsletters and Notes' page of our website.

An initiative this year, thanks to Chris Walsh in collaboration with Patrick Tribe, has been the production of a *Swansea Cycle Network Quality Map*. It has the form of a tube map and identifies the quality of routes in and around the city. It is on the 'Infrastructure' page of our website.

The long established 'Indexed map' on the 'Infrastructure' page has been supplemented by four maps in the 'New cycle routes in Swansea' section. These show which routes are completed (green), in progress (amber) and yet to be constructed (blue).

I describe below the new routes constructed or under construction in the past year. In addition we have been working with the Campaign Group in identifying potential routes and vetting the Council's plans. I have attended the quarterly CAP meetings together with other *Wheelrights* officers and some other meetings as well.

Routes

During the past year Swansea Council have been pro-active spending the £2.1 m they were awarded last year to create Active Travel routes in Swansea. The work done is as follows. Except where noted all the routes are asphalted approx 3m wide two-way shared-use paths.

- NCR 4: Blackpill to Sketty Lane. The existing path has been widened and resurfaced
- Singleton Park. Existing paths widened and resurfaced to form N-S and E-W routes across the park.
- Trallwyn. A new path runs NE from the north end of the N. Bank path to near Llansamlet Railway Station. It branches, with the northerly branch leading to Bethel Rd and the southerly ending on Trallwyn Rd. Total length: 1.8 km.
- Swansea Vale. This is a 3.8 km E-W route from Frederick Place (above Llansamlet Station) to the A4067 Tircanol roundabout. A short section on the traffic free Gwernllwynchwyth Rd leads to widened footways on first the south and then the north side of Blawd Rd.
- Tircanol to Morrision Hospital. A new path links the Swansea Vale route to the Heol Maes Eglwys bridge over the M4, near the hospital. It crosses the Cwm-felin-Fach playing fields and the railway (on a narrow footbridge) to Llanllienwen Rd from where it will follow Llanllienwen Close. This on-road section has yet to be completed. Length: 1.4 km.
- Ynystawe to Clydach. A new path on the west side of the Tawe from the Ynystawe Bridge, where it connects with NCR 43, to Players Estate, S. of Clydach. Length: 1.0 km.

Gower Access Path.

I have not included this in the above list as it is funded from a separate (safe routes) grant.

While there has been no work on the ground in the past year a preliminary design has been prepared and the legal process of acquiring land is underway. A public consultation was held on 1 July in the Murton Community Centre. At this it came to light that the preliminary plans did not provide a verge between the path and the road. Several consultees (including me) were unhappy with this and we have asked the council to provide a verge. We await the revised plans.

A link from this path to the foreshore via Mumbles Rd and through Clyne Gardens is currently being considered.

David Naylor (Routes Group Chair.)