



## The Year ahead



Phil Brophy encountered this peloton of geese on his commute. Would cars be so considerate of cyclists?

It takes necessity or determination to get out on your bike at this time of year, at least when it rains almost daily as it has done this November. So maybe it's a good time to look ahead and see what can be or is being done to make 2024 a better year for cyclists.

Some useful provision has been made this year: a start on the GAP across Clyne Common; work on SUPs in North Swansea from Gorseinon in the west to Ynysallan Road in the east; and lighting on the foreshore. (See p.3.)

High on the agenda for next year is to get the GAP planning application rejection reversed. (See p.3) Also high is to make progress on the 'Missing Link' in North Gower. Thanks to *Wheelrights* member, Joe Muldoon, things are again moving after a 20 year hiatus. Also on the agenda are to extend cycle provision west from Clyne Common to Pennard; a link from the city centre to the north via Cwm and Eaton Roads; and a south of Fabian Way route between the two university campuses.

## This issue

Our chair kicks off with some thoughts on the 20mph default. Then Patrick Tribe on what's to be done to get the GAP planning application rejection reversed. This is followed by an update on the foreshore lighting. Mike O'Driscoll then tells us about the successful revival of the GCF, now the "Swansea" GCF.

Next, on p.5, Joe Muldoon tells us about a key North Gower event; then Bill Gannon gives numbers which support the 20mph default.

Finally our President tells us about the Shepton Mallet work camp, a key link in the Greenway known as the "Somerset Circle".

**David Naylor**

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### Copy deadline

Copy for the next issue should be sent to me, David Naylor, by mid February.  
(Email: [david@davidjnaylor.plus.com](mailto:david@davidjnaylor.plus.com))

**Chairman:** John Sayce

**Secretary:** Dareyoush Rassi

**Treasurer:** Chris Walsh

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[www.wheelrights.org.uk/aboutus](http://www.wheelrights.org.uk/aboutus)

## If twenty's plenty, does thirty make you shirty?

It's now about two months since Wales embarked on its lower speed limit in built-up areas – for all the right reasons: lower accident rates; less toxic pollution and creating a better environment for us all. This policy has been years in the making and is based on good scientific evidence; but listen to the opponents who want to damn its planning and execution. No mention, I notice, about an increase in deaths and asthma attacks caused by a return to 30 mph. Their appeal has been based on emotion and getting support from Rishi Sunak who now has the pantomime role of climate change denier.



So what was Swansea's approach to this issue? It made a record number of exceptions in the urban areas on the grounds that these were roads where traffic must not be delayed. They ignored the fact that their statement was not valid because they marked their own homework and dismissed each and every appeal made by *Wheelrights* or others. Trouble is the unintended consequence of these exceptions is that it will confuse motorists who will be driving in and out of 20 and 30 mph zones all the time. Seems like the traffic cameras in Swansea are going to be very busy!

It would be nice to report that there is a benefit for cyclists as a result of this measure. So is cycling easier in the new era?

We'll be taking a snapshot poll at our AGM on December 12<sup>th</sup>. Do come and join us for a lively discussion and curry afterwards.

**John Sayce**

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### **Sub.s for 2024 now due.** (Price unchanged: £5.00.)

If you have recently paid many thanks for your continued support.

If you do not intend rejoining, many thanks for your support and please confirm by email so you can be removed from future mailings.

Instructions for joining or renewing can be found on our website using this link <https://www.wheelrights.org.uk/joinus.htm>

Those not paying by Standing Order will be reminded by email in early January. More than half our members have now set up a SO and we are encouraging the remainder to do the same as it simplifies the process and saves us sending you 'nag-mails'.

We confirm receipt of all payments.

**Chris Walsh**  
Treasurer/Membership Secretary

## GAP turned down

On Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October we were made aware that the Welsh Government's appointed inspector had refused the Council's scheme to create a SUP (The Gower Access Path) offset from the south side of the B4436 across the southern portion of Clyne Common, between Bishopston and Mayals.

The scheme has been rejected based on its perceived adverse impacts to the rights of Commoners, nature conservation and the landscape.

While this setback to this long awaited and extremely well supported scheme is disappointing the report implied encouragement for the submission of an amended proposal including measures to reduce detrimental aspects of the existing proposal.

The GAP team have been in regular contact with Lyndon Jones, the local councillor for Bishopston, who has recently held meetings with council officers to agree how to move the project forward.

It is believed that a redesigned scheme may be looked on more favourably and have a greater chance of approval, in particular if it receives support from the Commoners Association prior to resubmission to the Welsh Government.



Looking west from the top of Mayals hill.  
The path would be to the left of the road.

**Patrick Tribe**

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## Campaigning pays off!



Looking towards Mumbles from  
near the lido.

In 2020 we ran a campaign to make the seafront safer, collecting signatures for a petition to improve lighting and increase the sweeping of sand from the path. [Ed: See *Allyson Evans's article on p.5 of the Spring 2021 Newsletter.*] Members have also worked with local councillors to raise the importance of this issue.

This continues to pay off with further lighting being installed along the front between Mumbles and the Secret Café (St Helens). Also the sea front sand is being swept more frequently, which with the recent storms is so important. These improvements will make it safer for cyclists and other active travellers and hopefully we will see more people using the path.

**Phil Brophy**

## Swansea Gower Cycling Festival

In late 2022, a few members of CTC Swansea discussed the possibility of resurrecting the Gower Cycling Festival. The original festival, organised by *Wheelrights*, ran from 2010 to 2018. As well as proving a great success with visitors to the area it served as a gateway for local cyclists to become actively involved with the CTC. It made sense then, for us to bring it back.

After 8 months of planning and preparation, the festival, under its new more representative name, took place from 24 to 28 August. The programme featured 13 different rides, all of which went ahead, led and supported entirely by volunteers from CTC Swansea. There were three rides on the opening, middle and final days, and two rides on both the Friday and Sunday. Rides were graded as leisure, suitable for newer cyclists and families with children; intermediate, for more experienced cyclists; and challenging, for riders up for longer rides and some of the stiffer climbs in the area. Four of the rides took advantage of the wonderful scenery and routes around Gower, including a fantastic ride to the cliffs above Pobbles with 22 riders, and two separate rides to Rhossili with a total of 32 cyclists.

The destinations for the leisure rides were Mumbles, Pembrey Park and up the river to Clydach, and all proved popular, with one of our volunteers delighting the young riders in attendance with his impromptu talk on the history of Swansea's maritime quarter. As anticipated, the intermediate rides proved the most popular, with the rides to Kidwelly, Henrhyd Falls and the Upper Lliw Reservoir all having 24 or more riders participating. In fact Henrhyd Falls proved the most popular destination with the total for both the intermediate and challenging rides exceeding 46 riders.

The challenging ride to the Falls proved to be the most popular in this category. This is probably a reflection of the fact that it was, along with the ride to Rhossili, that much easier than the other destinations, involving significantly less climbing. The rides to Gower's high point at Penlle'r Castel, to Cross Hands via Sylen, and to Betws Mountain, though less well attended, were thoroughly enjoyed by participants, who took advantage of the climbs to take in the fabulous views.



The Rhossili ride

Across all rides a total of 228 riders took part, with 45 of these coming from the wider Swansea area. The majority participated in two or more rides, with 6 individuals joining a ride every day. Given the success of the festival, CTC Swansea have decided to stage it again in summer 2024. Further details will be announced in the New Year

**Mike O'Driscoll**

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## Missing Link walk/ride

On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November we followed in the footsteps of our forebears by both walking and cycling from Gowerton to Penclawdd to support the local rugby derby between the two villages. This historic annual event gave us the perfect opportunity to piggy-back on a local event to draw further support for our campaign to petition Swansea Council to upgrade the “missing link”, namely the 1.1 km footway between the villages to a shared use path.



The weather was perfect as the walking group set off in plenty of time to reach Penclawdd for the 2.30pm kick-off. With local residents, community councillors and some pre-historic celebrities in tow, the group drew many amused waves and supportive car honking. The 3.4 mile journey was expected to take over an hour, giving a good opportunity to highlight the narrow, and in places overgrown, path and to stimulate supportive conversations with the political attendees. Much of the footway had to be negotiated in single file and, on the odd occasion when presented with oncoming pedestrians and cyclists, it prompted a decisional dance of who had to give-way!

The cycling group set-off a little later on the SUP between Gowerton and Penclawdd, hopping onto the carriageway adjacent to the missing link to avoid the footway. The congestion caused by this larger gathering which resulted in the holding up of following motor vehicles, highlighted the need for safer links between the two villages and for better active travel infrastructure in North Gower.

The whole event was a successful collaboration which we hope to re-enact in the spring of 2024, when Penclawdd come to Gowerton to try and overcome their defeat. Additionally, we hope to take part in future community events to continue to raise awareness of our campaign where, given enough vocal local support, we hope to ensure that Swansea Council have no option but to make up for their past failure by following through with this necessary improvement to the infrastructure.

**Joe Muldoon**



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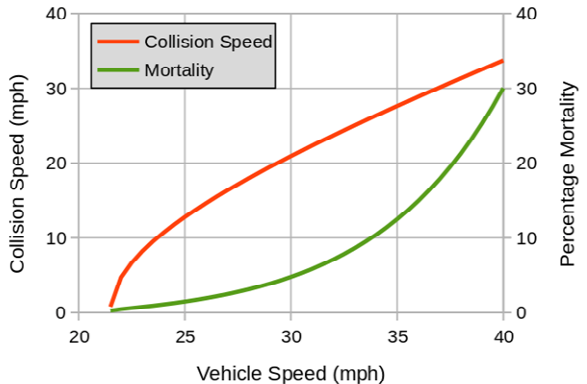
# Stopping Distances

## Test your knowledge:

The stopping distance at 50mph for a particular vehicle is 55m. This means that if the driver is travelling at 50mph and sees a queue of cars 55m ahead and performs an emergency stop, the vehicle will come to a stop just in time to avoid a collision. If travelling at 70mph instead of 50mph, at what speed will the vehicle hit the queue of cars: a) 20 mph b); 30 mph; c) 40 mph; d) 50mph? Hint: stopping distance is proportional to the square of the speed. [Answer on p.8].

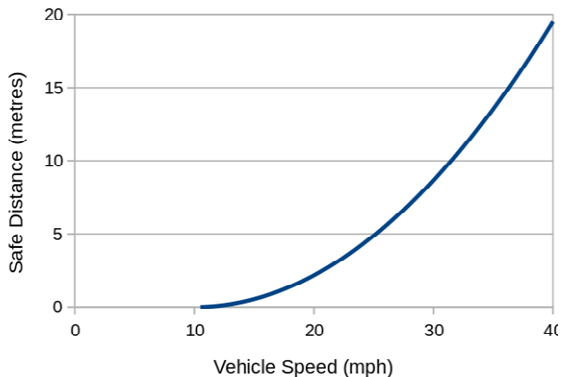
## Default 20 Limit

One of the great things about the new 20mph limit default is that it gives us engineers the opportunity to do some proper vehicle collision modelling. Pay attention now. The orange line shows the Collision Speed for a vehicle hitting a pedestrian who suddenly appears 10m in front of the bonnet. This is with zero reaction time, good tyres, dry road, and a constant deceleration rate of 0.47g (a common figure used by many safety experts). It shows that at 20mph, the pedestrian isn't hit at all. At 30mph, the pedestrian is hit at 21mph. At 40mph, the pedestrian is hit at 34mph!



The green line shows what happens when this is converted into Pedestrian Mortality. A driver travelling at 40mph stands a 30% chance of killing the pedestrian. I've been involved in two collisions (with animals) whilst driving, and on both occasions I didn't manage to brake at all. This is the real reason for the Default 20. Whether we succeed in braking or not, we will always remain within the bottom left quadrant of the graph.

For cyclists things are different because we are moving. The blue line shows the distance required to avoid a collision for a motorist suddenly encountering a cyclist doing 10mph. Again, this is assuming they perform a perfect emergency stop with zero reaction time. At 40mph they need more than double the distance at 30mph.



Although to me Default 20 appears to benefit pedestrians more than cyclists, results from Spain show pedestrian fatalities reduced by 24% but by 34% for cyclists.

**Bill Gannon**

## Shepton Mallet September 2023 Work Camp

A second Greenways and Cycleroutes work camp was held at Shepton Mallet developing part of the Somerset Circle in the South Mendips. An inspiring week or so under the leadership of John Grimshaw ably assisted (restrained) by Caroline Levett. With a loyal band of his past associates and tremendous support from local volunteers we are moving towards a significant section being completed and, by applying pressure to finish the Somerset Circle, complete the remaining around 80 miles of off-road Greenway (including past sections such as Bristol-Bath and the Twin Tunnels). Two spectacular viaducts are being restored and new path constructed.

I was engaged in a small team constructing 50 moulds to make 50 concrete coping stones a day to replace the 250 missing on two viaducts. Other teams cleared and restored the walls in preparation for the new copings, and engaged in fencing, adding dry stone wall copings and path construction on the east side of town.



Laying the coping.  
Note the improvised hoist.



Visit <https://greenwaysandcycleroutes.org/> to learn about the Somerset Circle. Click "Eighth workcamp – what a week!", scroll to a viaduct photo for the U tube video "Progress with the Somerset Circle". This gives more detail and illustrates the work described here.



Me  
John Grimshaw

Those from away camped in the idyllic Rock Farm former quarry and excellent food and refreshment was provided by Chris and Claire Grimshaw. Farm owner Gavin Mayall was an incredible help providing back up with his plant and materials and site facilities. On site at the farm already is Grand Tor Cycles providing expert repair facilities. If you are cycle touring in the area and in need then I thoroughly recommend you to contact him.

I arrived home thoroughly knackered but elated at the tremendous progress made in such a short time.

**David Judd**

## Forthcoming events

*Wheelrights* AGM is on Tuesday, 12 December at 7.00pm in the Environment Centre.

Other events will as usual be listed on the Events page. (If you know of any which should be included please inform our webmaster, David Naylor.) These include the Routes Group meetings, normally early in each month and, during the winter, on-line.

### Cycling in the Countryside

In my spare time, I love to ride  
My bicycle out in the countryside.  
I love to leave the town far behind;  
Inner peace, I am hoping to find.

When I am cycling, I can take my time:  
Enjoy the fresh air and the warm sunshine.  
Time is my own: there's no need to rush,  
And I am able to savour the welcome hush.

Powering the pedals can make my legs ache,  
But the wind on my face makes me feel so awake.  
I love to freewheel down never-ending hills:  
A simple pleasure, but, oh, what a thrill!

I hear the village church bells joyfully ring,  
And, the call of the cuckoo, when it is spring.  
I see cattle grazing in the green fields;  
I see sparkling streams and rolling hills.

I pass cottage gardens looking all nice and neat;  
I pass people out walking and fields full of wheat.  
I notice so many details as I ride on my way;  
I find myself wishing that I could stay all day.

When riding my bike, I feel such exhilaration:  
To me, it is one of the very best sensations!  
For a taste of the country, my heart often yearns;  
Back to the bustling town, I really hate to return.

**Angela Wybrow**

**P.6 Question answer:** d): 50mph. It can be worked out as follows:

The distance (S) covered as a vehicle slows from V to U (with constant deceleration) is given by  $S = Cx(V^2 - U^2)$  where C is a constant. Given  $S = 55m$ ,  $V = 50mph$  and  $U = 0$   $S/C = (50)^2$ . Rearranging:  $U^2 = V^2 - S/C$ . With  $V = 70mph$  and  $S$  again 55m  $U$  is the sought after collision speed. Thus  $U^2 = (70)^2 - (50)^2$  or  $U = 49$ , ie  $\approx 50mph$ .

## Merry Christmas!