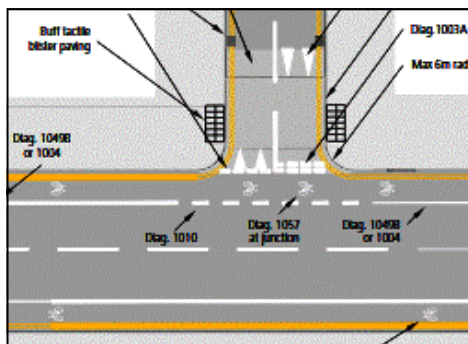




## A Question about Priority



The recently revised Highway Code makes it clear that path users, whether pedestrians or cyclists, have priority across side roads on paths alongside highways. The diagram, taken from the Welsh Active Travel Guidance (It is DE 604.) illustrates good practice. (Although it shows cycle lanes on the road it could equally well apply if the footpath were shared use.) Its key features are continuity and tight bell-mouth curvatures; the radii of that shown appear to be nearer the minimum of 2m than the 6m maximum, .

A design like this helps slow traffic entering the side road and makes drivers aware that path users have priority. The Guidance also allows bent back paths – eg by 5m – with larger radius bell-mouths. A reason for this appears to be to allow space for a car to pull off the highway before crossing the path. This poses the question: how far back from the highway must a path be for its users not to have priority? The Guidance was issued (in 2021) before the revised Highway Code came out. So does the Guidance need updating to answer this question? Readers comments welcomed.

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Better transport in Swansea.

### Copy deadline

Please send copy for the next issue to David by mid November. (Email: [david@davidjnaylor.plus.com](mailto:david@davidjnaylor.plus.com)).

### This issue

First a letter, then an article on an epic ride, followed by an update on the Cappuccino rides.

On p.5 you can read about a family ride in sunny Pembrokeshire; then, how I solved a problem.

Next, our President tells us about how he was hit by a car (but fortunately not badly hurt).

Finally, on p.8 a note about improving public transport and how you can help.

Note the forthcoming train/bike ride on 8 Sept., highlighted on p.2.

**David Naylor**

**Chairman:** John Sayce

**Secretary:** Dareyoush Rassi

**Treasurer:** Chris Walsh

**Webmaster & Newsletter:** David Naylor

For their contact details visit:

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

# A letter to the Editor

## Review of Active Travel routes

I write to draw members attention to the forthcoming review of the Active Travel network planned for the end of 2025. This is a three yearly exercise, and an opportunity for *Wheelrights* to try to shape the future development of bike routes in Swansea. Members need to send their ideas and suggestions to our officers and Routes Group, who will submit recommendations to Swansea Council.

To reduce conflict between cyclists and walkers there has recently been discussion about a move away from shared use paths to more segregated routes including bespoke bike routes. To stimulate discussion I would like to highlight three types of bike path: SUPs, dedicated cycle tracks and Cycle Streets.

SUPs I believe there continues to be a role for them especially in quieter semi rural settings where usage is low. For example the Council's plan to convert the existing footpath between Dunvant and Three Crosses into a bike path. This would connect the village of Three Crosses to NCR 4 via Dunvant thereby enabling local school children to cycle to the two comprehensive schools in Gowerton.

Dedicated cycle tracks should be an important part of the Active Travel network. It's interesting that the Highways' designers seemed to support the plans for them on Walter Rd, while it was councillors who decided to postpone them! I understand that Highways plan a feasibility study of Carmarthen Road, which seems to present another opportunity for well designed bike routes. My belief is that cycle tracks would suit wide roads which are desire lines, like on Carmarthen and Walter Roads. Members might nominate other such roads for this treatment.

Cycle Streets These would make quiet residential streets safer for cyclists. The new Rain Garden on Vincent Street in Sandfields as it passes a junior school would be a good candidate. It would be part of a link between the Guildhall and the city centre. I believe there are many such quiet streets in Swansea which are ripe to be so designated. For the Council these would be a cheap option as the main cost would be signage.

I believe we shouldn't be dogmatic but approach these on a case by case basis.

We must not forget that the Active Travel Review also invites users views about current bike routes and which ones have room for improvement.

I look forward to the forthcoming discussions, and encourage any members with views and suggestions to pass them to our officers and/or send ideas to this newsletter.

**Nick Guy**

### A train/bike ride

On 8 September *Wheelrights* are planning an event which will give us the opportunity to check out the new carriage on the *Heart of Wales* line with its space for 10 bikes. We will travel on this train from Swansea (with the option of joining it at Gowerton) to Pontarddulais and cycle back to Swansea. Details on [www.wheelrights.org.uk](http://www.wheelrights.org.uk).

## The Brompton 100 miler

When my dad, Barry, died of lymphoma in March 2024, I inherited his beloved Brompton. Dad had been a keen cyclist; a *Wheelrights* member, and was besotted with his Brompton. So I had this idea that I could do something on it in his memory: namely to raise money for the stem cell charity, *Anthony Nolan*. Maybe a ride to Barry and back? I then made the mistake of idly mentioning this to Joe Muldoon. His eyes lit up with the idea of such a ridiculous challenge: a hundred miles to Barry and back; on Bromptons! Soon we'd roped in several friends – including Mark and Liz who had also lost their son Nick to lymphoma.

On the 12th July Joe, Chris, Patrick, Mark, Liz, James at 17 his first ride on a Brompton, and I set off from Blackpill at 7am (despite chief Route Planner Chris's advice for a 5am start, which in retrospect we should have taken). The first ten miles out of Swansea felt deceptively easy in the cool of the morning. We were in good spirits when we rolled into the first rendezvous with the support crew (my mum and kids, equipped with bottles of water and many, many snacks).

The first proper hill, a 10-12% beast, came after some 20 miles. Chief Route Planner described it as the day's "Signature Climb." Strava referred to the segment as "Suffering Hill." I think that was probably the point where we all realised that Bromptons are not made for climbing. Even those of us who had the luxury of six gears (poor Joe only had three) still found that even the bottom gear was not comfortable to climb in.

We soldiered on, arriving after forty miles at St Nicholas. St Nicholas was on the route as a tribute to our riders Mark and Liz's son Nick Clayton, who had himself been a mad cyclist and had died of lymphoma, aged just 23. In the short months between his diagnosis and his death, Nick too had raised money for *Anthony Nolan*.

We approached Barry on a sunny Saturday – the hottest day of the year. A lunch stop and we were on our way again, joined for part of the return journey by my 11-year-old, Adda, who was riding his normal bike, not a Brompton.

Having ridden down a big hill to get into Barry we nervously asked Chief Route Planner "Are we riding up that hill?" "No, no," he responded. "A different way. Less of a hill; you'll barely notice it". Reader: we did notice it! Worse still, it was now 34 degrees and we were barely halfway into the ride.

The return journey took in a variety of busy roads, undulating hills and extremely busy seaside towns making this the most stressful part of journey. By 80 miles, near Kenfig, we were all flagging. Finally, after a rest stop in Aberavon, around 8pm we rolled into the park by the Arena to be greeted by support crew and a celebratory bottle of prosecco.

It was a day that my dad would have been incredibly proud of – and something that he would have wanted to have joined in. I'm hugely grateful to my lovely friends – most of them *Wheelrights* members – for riding with me and especially to Joe and Chris for help with the planning. Between us we raised over £6000 for *Anthony Nolan* in memory of dad and Nick.

The link to our Just Giving page is still open, at: <https://tinyurl.com/28y8s4oj>.

Isobel Norris



## Cappuccino rides

We have had lots of rides this year to all four corners of the surrounding area, meeting alternately at Blackpill and the Environment centre, for a ride to the west or east.

However as with most group events, picking a day that suits all is almost impossible.

Retirees are so busy these days, with different interesting events taking place on almost all weekdays. Plus of course people are away during the summer months when our rides take place. The ones who have attended though, have really enjoyed and look forward to a cycle off!

Yvonne is always on hand to step in when I've been away, so thanks go to her.

There is always a café on route and we have ventured to Penclawdd, visiting GG's café; a ride to Clydach and Pontardawe saw us stop at the lovely Coed Gwilym park, where we were lucky to turn up on a day when they were serving free food! A Gorseinon ride saw us cycle back down to the Junction for refreshments, and one to Aberdulais was twinned with a visit to the new Booths café nearby, where we sat in the large garden in the sun enjoying coffee and cake.

The latest ride was a repeat ride to Pontardawe, always a lovely route, and where the outside seating at The Pontardawe Inn beckoned.

This summer's weather has been exceptional, so there are lots more lovely rides to come.

We are thinking of meeting further afield, for example at Bynea for a ride to Burry Port.

Louise's photographic skills, producing some lovely collages (featured below), really capture the enjoyment of these rides and show the beautiful weather we've had and of course the coffees we've consumed!!

Thanks go to her and to the ones who have joined us, for their good company.

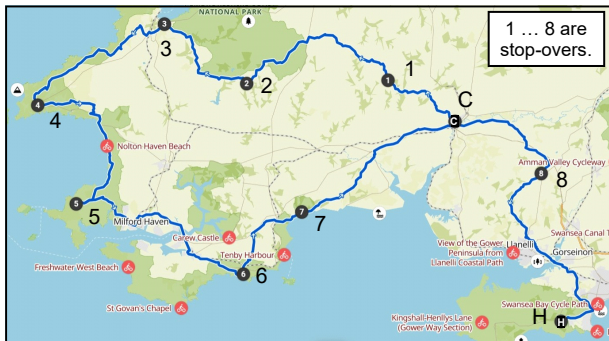
**Allyson Evans**





## A Ride around Pembrokeshire

West Wales has a fantastic network of cycle routes with NCN Routes 4 and 47 forming a lopsided figure of 8 centred on Carmarthen. The idea of our family cycle tour was that three generations of the Naylor family would set off from Donald's parents' (Isla and David) home (H). Donald, their daughter-in-law, Ruth, and granddaughter, Jess would complete a lap of Pembrokeshire, returning in time for their (D & I's) Diamond Wedding anniversary.



Grandad led the way across Fairwood common and showed us the first off-road section down to Dunvant where we parted ways. At Gowerton it was no problem getting our three bikes on the train to Carmarthen (C). That's where the hills started! We only had about 14 miles to get to our first glamping site (1), but in sweltering conditions with loaded bikes it took all afternoon.

The following day we rode through the Preseli Hills and the highest point of our tour. That evening a light drizzle was the first and only rain on our trip (2). The next morning the sun came out as we headed northwest to Fishguard (3) where we joined NCR4. This wiggled up and down along the coast on quiet lanes. We had our first swim at Abercastle; cautiously dodging jellyfish that had congregated in the narrow cove.

Just outside St. Davids we stayed at Rhos Gadw farm campsite (4). Donald had to set off early the next morning to join his father for his aunt's funeral in Yorkshire, so Ruth and Jess had a day off cycling, and went exploring beaches, discovering hidden coves and caves along the coastal path around St. David's head.

The next day involved cycling around St Brides bay to Martin's Haven (5). At Broad Haven we were sand blasted by the strong westerly wind. It did not bode well for the last few miles out to Marloes, especially as with Donald away we had to carry all the camping gear. But the high banks and hedges offered good shelter from the wind. The following day we enjoyed exploring Marloes Sands and Donald rejoined us in the evening.

Heading east we picked up NCR4 south of Haverfordwest and enjoyed some quiet off-road miles before the busier roads of Pembroke Dock. That night we stayed at Manorbier youth hostel (6) and had another day off cycling to explore the exciting coastline. Our favourite cove was Skrinkle Haven (pictured) which could only be reached by a secret tunnel at low tide. The weather was getting decidedly hot and we were glad to have the sea alongside us so that we could cool off from time to time.



Continued →



Ruth and Jess on NCR4

Our penultimate day was the biggest challenge: the distance wasn't too far; less than 40 miles, but it included 900m of steep climbs and temperatures approaching 30 degrees. Fittingly enough our final campsite (8) was at the top of one of the biggest hills on the tour. But that effort at least made the following day straightforward. Joining NCR47 at Tumble we practically freewheeled down to Llanelli and soon were on familiar routes passing through Gowerton and back home (H). We arrived in time for a wedding anniversary tea which David and Isla celebrated with a congratulatory letter from the King and Queen!

**Jess, Ruth and Donald Naylor**

—oOo—

## A dropper Seat solution

I had not heard of dropper seat posts until a friend suggested that one might be just what I needed. They are more commonly used by mountain bikers who use them to lower the saddle while descending. In my case it would enable me to lower the saddle to make it easier to get on and off.

Ever since I first rode a bike some 80 years ago I had mounted and dismounted cowboy style. Occasionally I would fall off, but I just got up and carried on cycling. A year ago I fell off when dismounting – my clothing had caught in the saddle. This time I could not get up and carry on – I had broken my pelvis! I then decided that in future I would get on and off from a stationary bike. Earlier this summer I had a dropper seat installed. The picture shows it; the seat is in its normal position in the main picture and is lowered in the insert.

How does it work? The seat post is telescopic; a lever on the handlebars (arrowed) is used to lower or raise the seat. Prior to dismounting you press the lever and use your weight to lower it, either as far as it will go or part way. Releasing the lever locks the post. To raise the seat you press the lever to unlock it. A spring then pushes it back up. It's as simple as that!

It is working as intended and now I can get on and off without falling off!



**David Naylor**

—oOo—

## **It was ever thus: Pedestrians and cyclists are not seen as traffic!**



The revised Highway Code now makes it clear that pedestrians and cyclists on paths alongside carriageways are main road traffic and have priority over traffic exiting or turning off a side road that crosses the path. We always thought it so but most motorists and highway engineers do not. That is why side road junctions mostly have give way markings not set back to facilitate the priority crossing of the junction and the large kerb radii make it a much longer crossing for these vulnerable users. *[Ed: see my editorial on p.1.]* A raised table would make the priority of path users more evident still but is rarely used despite our requests.

A long term everyday cyclist, I am fully aware of the dangers out and about, and with over 80 years on two wheels having avoided being hit by a car, I recently came a cropper on the new shared use path on the B4436 at Northway in Bishopston.

While slowly crossing the Northway Court junction eastbound at morning school time, after a car pulled out of Northway Court I rode across behind it. The following car drove into the rear of my bike, the driver looking right not forward spun my bike around. Fortunately I put my left foot down so I didn't fall over but the car continued to push against the bike frame which hit my left leg just below the knee causing severe bruising. The car passengers were horrified, the driver apologised and fortunately it was not that serious. It would have been if it were an infant in a push chair that had been hit.

As vulnerable road users we have to take great care that we are seen and our intentions are clear, but there is also a requirement on those driving vehicles to heed the Highway Code and be especially careful and considerate at these conflict points. Unfortunately even on new paths constructed like this one scant attention is given by the engineers to this danger, and this is evident on most new work. The proposed extension of this path across Clyne Common gives no priority to the path users at junctions.

We can only protest at the dangers needlessly created by these design shortcomings and hope that in future the design will be specified instead of just relying on guidelines that can be ignored, as they were on Mayals Road.

**David Judd**

—o0o—

## Forthcoming events

(This information and more is provided on the 'Events' page of [www.wheelrights.org.uk](http://www.wheelrights.org.uk).)

### **Wheelrights Routes Group meetings.**

These are usually at 10.00am monthly and take place in Ripples Café. The next is scheduled for 13 September.

### **Cappuccino Rides.**

Details on the Events page. These will continue into the autumn until we decide it's getting too wet and cold.

### **Train/cycle ride to Pontarddulais.**

8 September. See note on p.2; details on the Events page.

—o0o—

## Better Transport in Swansea

Several months ago a few *Wheelrights* members decided to form a new campaigning group to promote more sustainable travel including buses and trains as well as cycling and walking.

As *Wheelrights* is such an effective cycle campaign group, and we met Rail Future Wales (who campaign for better trains), we decided to focus on buses and pedestrians.

As well as *Wheelrights*, we have started working together with other like minded groups such as the Environment Centre, 4theRegion, and Uplands Living Streets.

As bus reform is high on the agenda of the Welsh Senedd and UK Government, we plan to prioritise the improvement of bus services in Swansea.

We are participating in the Bus Reform survey organised by Transport for Wales, and urge Wheelright members to have your say, either:

Attend a drop-in on the following dates:

- 10.00 - 16.00 on 4<sup>th</sup> September: Swansea train station ;
- 12.30 - 17.30 on 8<sup>th</sup> Morriston Library;
- 9.00 -12.00 on 8<sup>th</sup> September: Townhill Library;

or visit their online survey: [haveyoursay.tfw.wales/bus-reform](http://haveyoursay.tfw.wales/bus-reform)

If you wish to join our fledging group, we meet every 8 weeks in the foyer of the Environment Centre, usually 10.00 - 12.00 on a Thursday.

For more information please contact:

Caroline via [carter.carolineann@gmail.com](mailto:carter.carolineann@gmail.com)

Nick via [nick.guy1951@gmail.com](mailto:nick.guy1951@gmail.com)

**Caroline Carter and Nick Guy**