

RS2011745-1 Cycling in Wales

I'm responding to your enquiry asking for information on cycling in Wales. When I emailed you following your enquiry you confirmed that you were interested in cycling as a mode of transport (rather than for sport purposes). We agreed that I would send you information on rates of cycling, as well as Welsh Government policy on active travel (which includes cycling).

- **Active Travel Data**

The Welsh Government publishes an annual statistical bulletin on active travel. Active travel is defined as walking and cycling for a purpose, such as accessing work or services, rather than for leisure, sport or exercise.

The most recent bulletin, published in November 2019, covered the period April 2018 to March 2019. Some key points from this bulleting include:

- In 2018-19, 6% of people actively travelled by bicycle at least once a week. The bulletin states "this has changed relatively little in recent years";
- 1% of people cycled every day, 2% cycled several times a week and 2% cycled once or twice a week (Chart 1). 91% said they cycled less often than that or never;
- Men were significantly more likely to cycle, and to do so more frequently than women. 13% of men cycled at least once a month compared with 6% of women; and
- Older people were less likely to cycle than younger people. 14% of those aged 16-24 cycled at least once a month, compared with 4% of those aged 60+.

- **Welsh Government Active Travel Policy**

The Welsh Government does not have a specific policy on "cycling" as such, rather its support for cycling sits within wider policy on active travel.

This section therefore refers to active travel rather than cycling specifically.

The *Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013* entered into force in September 2014. It requires local authorities to map and continuously improve routes and facilities for active travel.

The Act requires local authorities to produce two maps: an "Existing Routes Map" (ERM) comprising current walking and cycling infrastructure; and an "Integrated Network Map" (INM) which should set out the infrastructure needed to create an integrated active travel network and which is essentially

a rolling 15 year plan. All INMs were completed by December 2018.

Details of Swansea Council's active travel maps [can be found on the Council's website](#). The Welsh Government has also made available a webpage, [active travel: your local authority's progress](#), to allow the public to "view your local walking and cycling maps and find out more about your local authority's work".

The Act places a duty on both Welsh Ministers and local authorities to promote active travel. Both – in their capacity as highway authorities – are also required to consider enhancing provision for active travellers when carrying out certain functions like building or maintaining highways.

Statutory guidance on both the [design of active travel routes](#), and also on [delivery of the Act more generally](#) has also been produced and published.

The current guidance was published in 2014. The Welsh Government has updated both sets of guidance and told the Economy Infrastructure and Skills Committee in January, [during scrutiny of the 2020-21 draft budget](#), that it would publish the new guidance for consultation "this winter". However, the consultation has not yet opened.

The Welsh Government has also established an [Active Travel Board](#) to support delivery of the Act, and published a non-statutory [Active Travel Action Plan in 2016](#).

Welsh Government funding for active travel

The Welsh Government provides funding to local authorities for active travel through a range of funding sources, including the Active Travel Fund, Local Transport Fund, Road Safety Fund and Safe Routes in Communities Fund. In recent years the Welsh Government has increasingly focused these grant schemes on support for active travel infrastructure and, particularly in the case of road safety, revenue schemes.

You will find details of the guidance for these schemes [on the Welsh Government's website](#).

You will also find information on individual allocations for each local authority for the following grants through the links provided:

- [Local Transport Fund, Road Safety and Safe Route in Communities \(2017-18 and 2018-19\)](#);
- [Active Travel: additional grants awarded \(2017-18\)](#);
- [Active Travel Fund \(2018-19\)](#);
- [Local Transport Fund, Road Safety and Safe Route in Communities](#)

- Local Transport Fund, Road Safety and Safe Route in Communities (2019–20); and
- Active Travel: additional grants awarded (2019–20).

The Economy Infrastructure and Skills Committee conducted post legislative scrutiny of the *Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013*, reporting in September 2018. Amongst other recommendations, the Committee’s report recommended that “capital and resource funding combined should be set at £17–£20 per head per annum”.

The paper for draft budget scrutiny from the Minister and Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport summarised funding for active travel in 2020–21, and highlighted progress towards achievement of the target recommended by the Committee:

The establishment in 2018 of the £60m Active Travel Fund, initially for three years, signalled the Government’s intent to make these networks a reality, with over £40m available for active travel improvements this year.

In 2020–21, the £30m Active Travel Fund, the £5m for Safe Routes and the new funding available of £25m for Roads Resilience together demonstrate our commitment to the Low Carbon Plan. In addition c£2m budget is available to support active travel. With improvements as part of our own highway function, this will bring us close to the £17–£20 funding per head per year, as recommended by this committee when it scrutinised the implementation of the Act in 2018.

In addition to investment in infrastructure, the Welsh Government also supports behavioural change programmes aimed at promoting active travel, including cycling. The Minister’s draft budget paper summarised current activities and plans in this area:

Complementing capital investments are a suite of activities aimed at active travel promotion, training and awareness raising which are funded through transport budgets. We are retendering and boosting the budget by over 50% for active travel promotion in Schools. We are funding National Standard Cycle Training and Child pedestrian training across Wales, at a cost of approximately £1.5m per year. We will work with partners to develop a framework for improved, consistent delivery during 2020. Early years, mental health and decarbonisation are cross cutting priorities in transport developments and we are working closely with partners and colleagues in other sectors, in particular Planning, Health, Environment and Education to ensure that our efforts to achieve joint objectives are effectively aligned.