



Carmarthenshire: The Cycling Hub of Wales

Cycling Strategy

January 2018

Background

This Cycling Strategy presents a vision designed to make Carmarthenshire 'The Cycling Hub of Wales'.

The aims and objectives of the Strategy have been developed following extensive consultation with a wide range of Stakeholders.

This Strategy strikes a balance between developing and promoting cycling for everyday local journeys and delivering infrastructure and events capable of attracting the world's top cyclists to Carmarthen.

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 provides the foundation upon which this Strategy is developed. The Act requires Local Authorities to promote and develop infrastructure to encourage increased walking and cycling in local communities.

At the beginning of the Active Travel process in 2103 Carmarthenshire had an Existing Route Network covering 100 kilometres across 9 Active Travel towns. In November 2017, as part of the Integrated Network Map submission, Carmarthenshire added an additional 25 kilometres to the Active Travel Network. The 2017 Active Travel submission to Welsh Government contained plans for continuous route and network improvement over a 15 year period.

Carmarthenshire already has a well-established cycling product. The development of the exciting Twyi Valley Cycle Path, the Millennium Coastal Path and the Amman Valley Cycle Path all combine to offer excellent off road cycling opportunities. When opened, the refurbished Velodrome will be one of only two in Wales. While in 2018, Carmarthenshire will host a Stage of Tour of Britain.

This Strategy plays a key role in supporting the delivery of not only Active Travel but of all aspects of cycling across the County. The Strategy is developed around the following 5 key themes, each of which are designed and tailored to maximise cycling opportunities and to boost participation across all ages and all levels of ability.

Infrastructure & Facilities
Education Training & Development
Events
Tourism
Marketing & Branding



Our Vision: Carmarthenshire; The Cycling Hub of Wales

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Section 1
INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Cycling is growing in popularity. Since 2007 the amount of vehicle miles travelled by bicycle in the UK has increased annually. 19% more vehicle miles were cycled in 2011 than in 2007. Cycle ownership in Wales has grown over the last 10 years. An estimated 46% of households in Wales now own a bike¹.

An example of this national trend is that Transport for London predicts that if current rates of growth continue there will be more bicycles entering the City Of London than cars in the next few years. The number of rush hour car drivers fell from 137,000 in 2000 to 64,000 in 2014, while the number of cyclists trebled from 12,000 to 36,000 over the same period².

In Wales, the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 means that Local Authorities are legally bound to plan and provide a comprehensive network of routes so that walking and cycling become the most desirable ways to get around for everyday journeys. This will inevitably lead to an increase in the number of journeys undertaken by foot and bicycle.

Cararthenshire County Council has been proactive in supporting and developing walking and cycling over recent years complying and promoting the principles of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013. However, a step change is required to achieve the aspiration of making Cararthenshire the number one destination for cycling in Wales.

This cycling strategy sets out an ambitious programme to achieve the vision of making:

'Cararthenshire: The Cycling Hub of Wales'



1.2 Cararthenshire

Located in West Wales, Cararthenshire is the third largest county in Wales, covering some 2,365 square kilometres. With a population of 183,800 and a density of 0.8 (2011 census), the county is listed as the 4th highest populated in Wales.

The county has 3,487 kilometres of road network and over 80 miles of coastline. In 2014 the County attracted over 3.1 million visitors, generating over £340 million for the local economy.

The county has good connectivity with regional and national links across Wales by road, rail and sea (Figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1 - Connectivity Map

1 Welsh Transport Statistics 2010
 2 Source: www.autoevolution.com/news/london-car-traffic-halved-over-the-course-of-the-last-15-years-bicycles-trebled-104340.html (Date Accessed: January 2016)

Opportunities

There are huge opportunities for local authorities who want to invest in and promote cycling.

Cycle event hosting could provide an opportunity to highlight Carmarthenshire on a national and international scale as well as assist in growing tourism. For example, for three days in July 2014, 4.8 million people turned out in Yorkshire to watch the Tour De France. It is estimated that 40% of spectators were visitors from outside the area, spending approximately £128 million. 3.5 billion people in 188 different countries watch the Tour every year³.

It has been reported that Cumbria received a £4.1m economic boost through holding Stage Two of The Tour of Britain cycle race in September 2013⁴, with Monmouthshire County Council reporting a 12:1 return on investment for every pound spent at the Tour of Britain and the National Road Race Championship⁵. The recent 2015 Welsh Velothon sold out, with 18,000 cyclists each paying £70 to enter.

Cycle tourism presents another opportunity, with many areas of the UK targeting the cycle market with niche products to attract visitors. There are already ten accommodation providers listed with 'Holidays by Cycle' in the county of Carmarthenshire⁷. However, there is room to grow and expand this greatly through investment and development of the necessary infrastructure to encourage new businesses to start up and offer a cycle tourism product.

Carmarthen has made significant investment in Active travel infrastructure. In recent years CCC has invested more through the Welsh Government Local Transport Fund than any other Welsh authority. This investment has been used to develop infrastructure that:

- Creates modal shift away from the private motor vehicle;
- Creates networks that link key origin and destination (trip attractors) in order to provide sustainable access to employment, healthcare and leisure activities, and;
- Promotes increased Active Travel

3. Impact of the UK stages of The Tour de France 2014. Three Inspirational Days, December 2014

4. Source: www.cumbria.gov.uk/news/2013/December/19_12_2013-131020.asp (Date Accessed: Jan 2016)

5. Cabinet Report, Monmouthshire CC, Monmouthshire 2014 Cycling Events ROI Evaluation, Economy & Development Select Committee, 29th July 2015

6. Source: www.holidaysbycycle.com (Date Accessed: May 2016)

One of the greatest opportunities in growing cycling exists amongst the young. Enabling every child in Carmarthenshire to learn to ride a bike will help develop active travel habits that will continue into adulthood and ensure future generations make more sustainable journey choices. This will also aid in addressing the issue of obesity which is often linked to inactivity, by entrenching positive active travel habits from an early age. Investment now in the tools needed to develop cycling amongst young people could reap benefits for the future within Carmarthenshire.





1.3 Policy Context

Promotion, development and support for walking and cycling is embedded in local, regional and national policy, namely:

National

- Wales Transport Strategy, 2008;
- The Wales Spatial Plan, 2008;
- A Walking and Cycling Action Plan for Wales, 2009-2013;
- Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013;
- Community Sport Strategy 2012-2020, Sports Wales;
- Child Poverty Strategy, 2012-2015, Sports Wales;
- Welsh Cycling Strategy, 2013-2020, Welsh Cycling;
- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and;
- National Transport Finance Plan 2015.

Regional

- Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales, 2015-2020.

Local

- Cycling Strategy for Cararthenshire, 2003;
- Rights of Way Improvements Plan, 2007-2017;
- Draft Rights of Way Improvements Plan, 2018 - 2028;
- Adopted Cararthenshire Local Development Plan, December 2014;
- Cararthenshire County Council Corporate Strategy, 2015-2020 (in particular addressing the corporate strategy key aims of making people in Cararthenshire healthier, through allowing people to be more physically and creatively active and assisting in creating communities and environments that are sustainable).



Section 2 BENEFITS OF CYCLING

2. Benefits of Cycling for Carmarthenshire

2.1 Health Benefits

According to the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) more than 60% of the UK adult population and 54% of Carmarthenshire's population is overweight or obese.

The rate of individuals in Carmarthenshire who rate their general state of health as good rests at 62.4% and falls below the national average of 65.1%. The number of individuals in Carmarthenshire with a long-term limiting illness is particularly elevated above the national average of 23.3% at a rate of 35.6%.

The NICE Public Health Guidance entitled 'Walking and Cycling: Local Measures to Promote Walking and Cycling as Forms of Travel or Recreation', November 2012, outlines that increasing an individual's walking or cycling levels may increase their overall level of physical activity. This leads to associated health benefits, such as:

- Reducing the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, obesity and type 2 diabetes;
- Keeping the musculoskeletal system healthy, and;
- Promoting mental wellbeing.

Increasing levels of physical activity can also help manage and relieve stress. This is beneficial to individuals and employers, who often see a much lower rate of sickness and absenteeism in those staff who regularly exercise.

Cycling for commuting purposes provides an excellent opportunity for individuals to incorporate exercise into their routine. Cycling is an exercise activity that can be undertaken by most people, appealing to a wide audience and a varied skill level. Cycling is a form of exercise that can serve a practical purpose and as such it is a multi-faceted activity.



2.2 Social Benefits

The NICE 2012 public health guidance also outlines that further benefits of walking and cycling can include:

- Increasing the number of people of all ages who are out on the streets, making public spaces seem more welcoming and providing opportunities for social interaction;
- Providing an opportunity for everyone, including people with an impairment, to participate in, and enjoy, the outdoor environment.

Fewer cars on the road would also help improve the safety for both road users and non-road users alike. Walking and cycling provides an excellent mode of transport for individuals without access to a private car, promoting access to job opportunities and helping address issues of social exclusion caused by a lack of transport options.

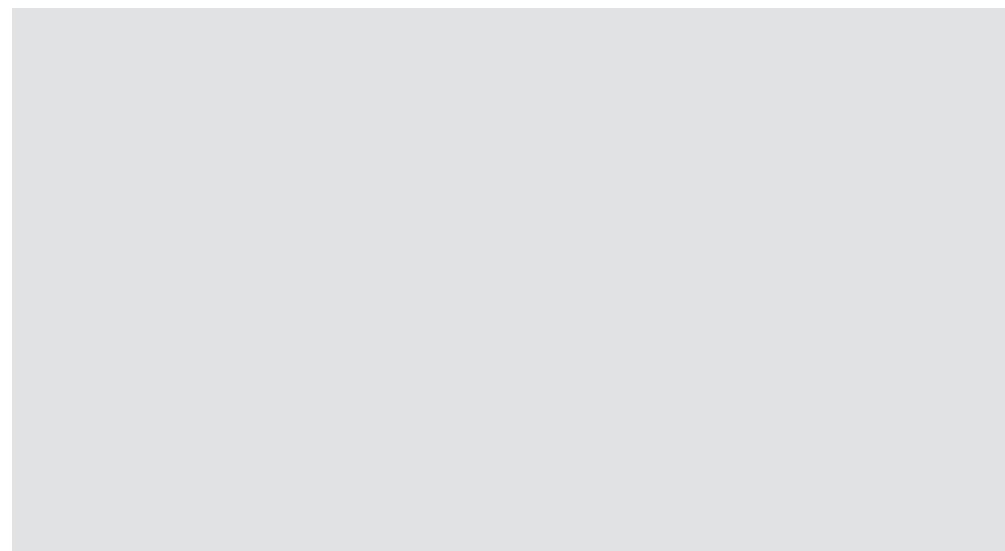
Cycling is an affordable accessible form of transport to access employment, education, health and leisure opportunities.

Halfords, who are responsible for one in three of all bike sales in the UK, saw sales increase 27% between 2014 and 2015, this followed growth of 30% in the previous year. The Office of National Statistics reports that sales of UK manufactured bicycles rose by 69% in 2014. In 2014, 183,423 employees registered for a Cycle to Work Scheme, an 11% increase on 2013. Reports suggest that 70% of registrations were from first time participants, or novice, occasional cyclist.

2.3 Environmental Benefits

Transport is considered a key contributor to carbon emissions and as such even a slight modal shift from personalised vehicles to cycling has the potential to reduce the impact of Climate Change.

Every cyclist that makes 160 4km trips by bike every year saves 112,00 grams of CO² displaced from a single occupancy car to cycle. That's also equivalent to 112 metric tonnes of CO² per 1,000 people⁷.



7. Valuing the Benefits of Cycling, a Report to Cycling England, 2007

2.4 Economic Benefits

The User

Cycling is a far cheaper form of transport than travelling by car or public transport. Those choosing to travel by bike for commuter journeys can save considerable amounts in comparison to those that travel in a single occupancy car (giving them more disposal income to invest back into the local economy). Furthermore, there is the knock on benefit that traveling by more sustainable modes reduces congestion improving network traffic flow and journey times, which can encourage inward investment to the area.

KEY ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- ESTIMATED THAT 11 JOBS ARE CREATED FOR EVERY £1 MILLION OF INVESTMENT IN WALKING AND CYCLING
- COED-Y-BRENIN MOUNTAIN BIKE CENTRE NEAR DOLGELLAU IS SAID TO GENERATE £5 MILLION PER YEAR INTO THE LOCAL ECONOMY
- LEISURE AND TOURISM CYCLING ON THE NATIONAL CYCLE NETWORK SUPPORTS OVER 15,000 JOBS AND DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTES £650M TO THE ECONOMY EACH YEAR

Continued investment in Active Travel routes will improve accessibility to key employment sites, making them more accessible to people without access to a private motor vehicle. Improved sustainable transport access will increase the number of people who can access employment opportunities.

The Local Economy

Employers and local businesses benefit. Evidence has shown that there are lower absenteeism rates amongst staff who partake in higher levels of physical activity. Economic analysts suggest that 70% of UK adults meeting recommendations for exercising 150 minutes/week would save the economy £487 million by preventing 2.7 million days of work absence⁸.

In February 2009, TNO, a Dutch contract research organisation, published research studying the relationship between commuting by bicycle, work performance and absenteeism. Regular bicycle commuters missed significantly fewer days a year than non-cyclists: on average 7.4 days a year (cyclists) compared to 8.7 days a year (non-cyclists). There was also a positive correlation between distance, commuter frequency and the degree of absenteeism: the more often and the greater the distance, the lower the absenteeism⁹.

Walking and cycling can benefit the economy as a whole, creating new employment opportunities. Sustrans estimate that 11 jobs are created for every £1 million of investment in walking and cycling¹⁰.

More sustainable travel leads to a reduction in traffic congestion, helping to improve journey times on the road network and encourage inward investment into the economy. This has the multiplier effect of creating new employment opportunities presented by this new inward investment.

8. Deloitte and TARP (2007), Health of the Nation, Deloitte, London

9. Cycling reduces absenteeism at the workplace, Adrian Davis 06/03/09, Bristol City Council

10. The benefits of investing in cycling and walking, Sustrans 2012

2.5 Tourism

Cycle tourism can also have major economic benefits. A 2013 report outlined that the total value of cycle tourism by residents and visitors, both touring and leisure cycling in Scotland is up to £239m per year¹¹.

An economic assessment undertaken for the Tywi Valley Cycle Path conservatively forecasts that the route will be used by 25,000 users per p.a. and it is predicted to realise £800k - £2m direct and indirect benefits creating between 14 – 42 new jobs p.a.

Cyclists are said to spend on average up to £35 a day¹². This is more than car-based tourists, who often bring food and drink with them on a day trip or outing. A study into the impacts on Cumbria of holding a stage of the Tour of Britain found that the event attracted 47,282 day only visitors and 22,718 overnight visitors in total, with day visitors spending £89.04 per group per day and overnight visitors spending £138.59 per group per day on accommodation, food and drink, entertainment, local travel, shopping and other activities¹³.

There is also a whole cycle tourism industry. From bespoke cycle holidays to day trips to mountain bike centres or countryside trails. There is direct employment generated from this tourism activity, along with indirect employment benefits in industries supplying this tourism sector.

Research undertaken by Sustrans shows that leisure and tourism cycling on the National Cycle Network supports over 15,000 jobs and directly contributes £650m to the economy each year. The Network was also found to directly support 15,262 full time equivalent jobs across the services industry, particularly in the food and drink sector where it supports over 10,000 jobs¹⁴.

2.6 Return on Investment

For those authorities wishing to invest in cycling, the economic return can be significant. Evidence exists which shows that investment in events at all levels can bring benefits. Table 2.1 overleaf summarises the economic evidence.

Investment in events does vary, from hosting or participating in local events (such as the Tour de Gwent or Velothon Wales) to hosting one of the Grand Tours. Finding the level of investment required to host a stage of a Grand Tour may be very challenging for a Local Authority, especially if no evidence of past cycling event success exists. Therefore, a staged approach to hosting cycling events is often adopted to maximise benefits and return.

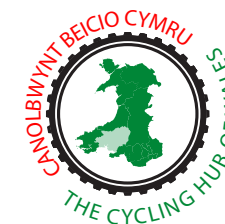


11. The value of cycle tourism, Opportunities for the Scottish Economy, Summary Report , Transform Scotland, June 2013

12. Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1121853.stm> (Date Accessed: April 2016)

13. Source: www.cumbria.gov.uk/news/2013/December/19_12_2013-131020.asp (Date Accessed: April 2016)

14. Source: www.sustrans.org.uk/our-services/what-we-do/boosting-local-economies/cycle-tourism-boosts-economy (Date Accessed: April 2016)





EVENT	EXAMPLE	EXAMPLE ESTIMATED COST TO HOST	EVIDENCE																																
Local Cycling Event/Tour	Velothon Wales/ Tour de Gwent 	Local Authority Staff time estimated at £5-£10k per event.	<p>Velothon Wales is a closed-road event held in May 2016, 18,000 cyclists paid £70 to participate. The 2015 Velothon Wales saw a total expenditure in Wales of £2.77m (£2.06m by participants and their supporters, £0.71m by the organisers). The total expenditure from outside of Wales was £1.03m, the sum of the spending in Wales by visitors (£0.96m) and organisers (£0.71m) minus the amount of event revenue that originated from Wales (£0.64m).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Location of Spending by Participants/Supporters</th> <th>Locals</th> <th>Visitors</th> <th>Overall</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Cardiff</td> <td>£0.85m</td> <td>£0.79m</td> <td>£1.65m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newport</td> <td>£0.04m</td> <td>£0.05m</td> <td>£0.09m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Caerphilly</td> <td>£0.04m</td> <td>£0.02m</td> <td>£0.06m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Monmouthshire</td> <td>£0.02m</td> <td>£0.02m</td> <td>£0.04m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Torfaen</td> <td>£0.01m</td> <td>£0.00m</td> <td>£0.01m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rest of Wales</td> <td>£0.14m</td> <td>£0.08m</td> <td>£0.22m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OVERALL</td> <td>£1.10M</td> <td>£0.96M</td> <td>£2.06M</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The average trip duration of visitors (day and overnight) was around 1.5 days/nights and their average trip spend was £113, each local resident spent on average £60. The expenditure estimates do not include any preparatory spending in Wales leading up to the event e.g. equipment, meaning the expenditure figure in reality could be even higher¹⁸.</p>	Location of Spending by Participants/Supporters	Locals	Visitors	Overall	Cardiff	£0.85m	£0.79m	£1.65m	Newport	£0.04m	£0.05m	£0.09m	Caerphilly	£0.04m	£0.02m	£0.06m	Monmouthshire	£0.02m	£0.02m	£0.04m	Torfaen	£0.01m	£0.00m	£0.01m	Rest of Wales	£0.14m	£0.08m	£0.22m	OVERALL	£1.10M	£0.96M	£2.06M
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Stage of British Tour	Tour of Britain 	£180,000 to Local Authority (based on Monmouthshire CC hosting a stage of Tour of Britain in 2014)	<p>Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) hosted a stage of the Tour of Britain and the national Road Cycling Championships in 2014. The cost to stage these events to Monmouthshire was £176,362. The ROI was estimated as £12 visitor expenditure in the country for every pound spent by the Council, with each FTE job created costing the Council £6,532. The ROI figures are in addition to the value of other identified benefits generated (e.g. the improved profile and reputation of the destination and the Council with 56% of spectators recognising MCC as a sponsor of Stage 3 of the Tour of Britain)¹⁹.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Estimated Economic Impact in Monmouthshire</th> <th>National Road Cycling Championships 2014</th> <th>Stage 3 Tour Of Britain 2014</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Cardiff</td> <td>£0.85m</td> <td>£0.79m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newport</td> <td>£0.04m</td> <td>£0.05m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rest of Wales</td> <td>£0.14m</td> <td>£0.08m</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Cumbria received a £4.1m economic boost though holding Stage Two of The Tour of Britain cycle race in September 2014. The £4.13m extra expenditure supported an estimated 51.4 full time equivalent jobs. An analysis of the value of the media coverage for Cumbria by sports marketing experts Repucom estimates that Cumbria and the Lakes received £1.7m worth of publicity. Eleven broadcasters aired the race to 166 countries around the world. The event was watched live by 1.56m people across Europe on Eurosport, and had an average reach of 435,000 British viewers live on ITV4. The ITV4 highlights programme later in the day was the most viewed of all the eight stages, with an average reach of 696,000 viewers²⁰.</p>	Estimated Economic Impact in Monmouthshire	National Road Cycling Championships 2014	Stage 3 Tour Of Britain 2014	Cardiff	£0.85m	£0.79m	Newport	£0.04m	£0.05m	Rest of Wales	£0.14m	£0.08m																				
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Stage of Grand Tour	Tour de France	Combined Event budget, for 2014 UK stages of Tour de France, approximately £27m (£4m fee to ASO for the right to host event) ²¹	<p>The direct economic impact of the 2014 Tour De France on the 'host regions' was £128m while for the UK overall (i.e. from overseas visitors, including the teams, overseas media and the ASO) the impact was £33m. The figures for the individual host regions were £102m for Yorkshire and £30.5m for the combined region of Cambridge, Essex and London, including £19.5m for London.</p> <p>58% of local business in Yorkshire strongly agreed that this is the type of event that Local Authorities should seek to host more of²².</p>																																

Table 2.1 - Return on Investment

15. 2015 Velothon Wales – Expenditure Estimates for Wales

16. Cabinet Report, Monmouthshire CC, Monmouthshire 2014 Cycling Events ROI Evaluation, Economy & Development Select Committee, 29th July 2015

17. Source: www.cumbria.gov.uk/news/2013/December/19_12_2013-131020.asp (Date Accessed: Jan 2016)

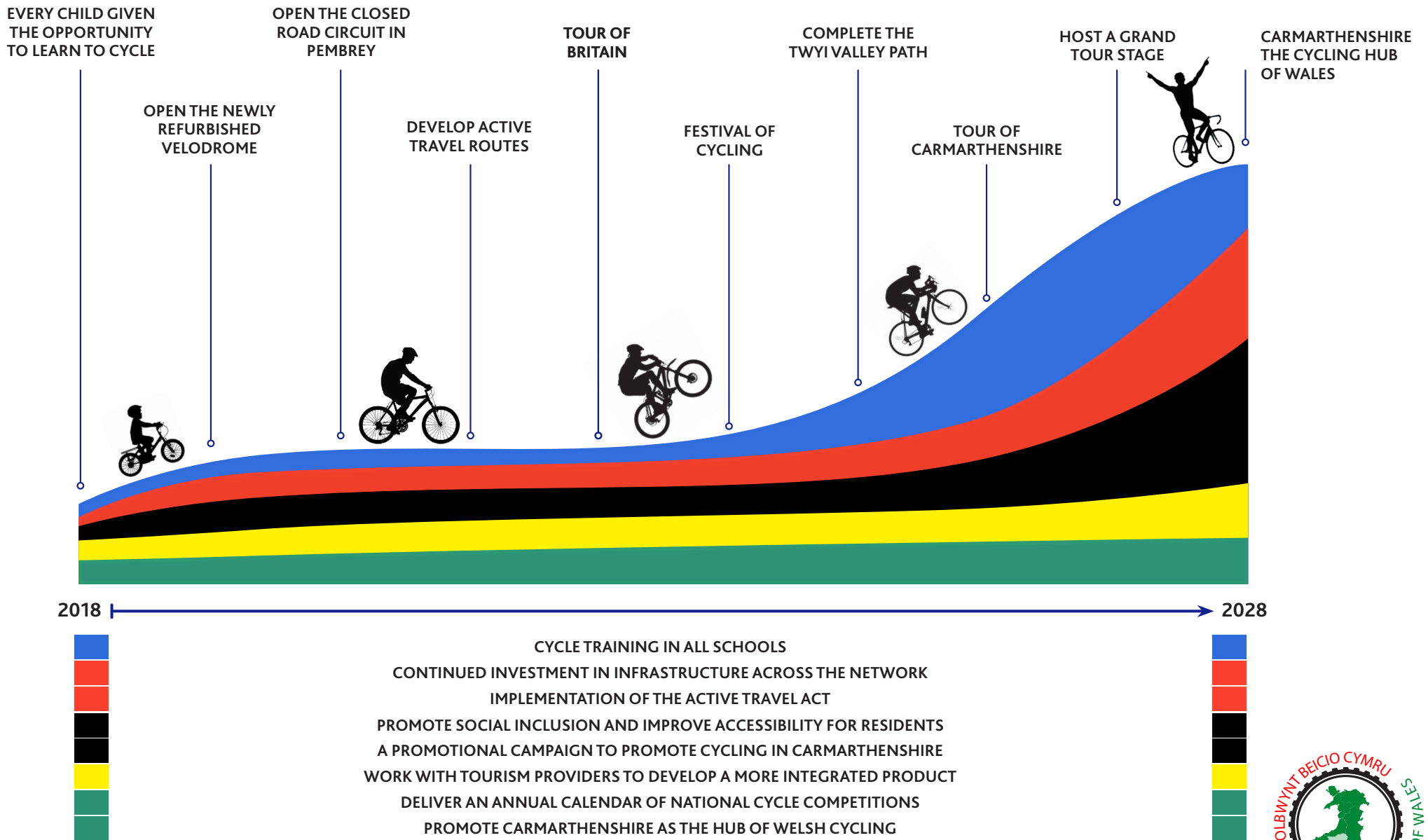
18. Impact of the UK Stage of the Tour de France 2014, Three Inspirational Days, p.40

19. Impact of the UK Stage of the Tour de France 2014, Three Inspirational Days

Section 3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Action Plan

THEMES	INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES	EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING	EVENTS	TOURISM	MARKETING & BRANDING
OBJECTIVES	INVEST £10M IN THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS OF KEY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE BY;	IMPROVE EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING BY;	CO-ORDINATE A VARIED RANGE OF CYCLE RELATED EVENTS ACROSS THE COUNTY;	WORK WITH TOURISM PROVIDERS TO;	IMPROVE MARKETING & BRANDING BY;
HIGH LEVEL SUPPORTING ACTIONS	Completing the Velodrome refurbishment	Giving every child the opportunity to learn to ride a bike by ensuring that Cycle Training is offered in all schools	Host Stage of the Tour of Britain	Develop a more co-ordinated product by working with Visit Wales to increase the profile of cycling in Carmarthen	Developing a promotional campaign centered on 'Making Carmarthenshire the Hub of Welsh Cycling'
	Delivering the best Closed Circuit Cycling facility in Wales, at Pembrey	Promoting social inclusion and access to employment through improved partnership working by developing an accessible network of routes	Work with Sport Wales and Welsh Cycling to develop an annual calendar of regional sportives and events	Work with accommodation providers to promote the development of cycling facilities for visitors	Developing a logo and a social media campaign to promote Carmarthenshire as the premier destination for Cycling in Wales
	Providing a traffic free route connecting Llandeilo and Carmarthen along the Dyffryn Tywi Path	Supporting Pathways from grassroots to elite level cycling by supporting the Pathways for Developing Leisure Cycling; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership • Leisure Rides • Coaching 	Host National Events across all cycling disciplines; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Road Race Championship • National Cyclo-Cross Championship • Welsh MTB Cross Country Championship 	Develop a cycle network to maximise the opportunities offered by the natural landscape in Carmarthenshire	Increasing the profile of cycling on www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk and www.discovercarmarthenshire.com and other appropriate websites and social media platforms
	Providing a programme of continuous improvement in-line with Active Travel Guidance to deliver safe, comfortable routes that connect people to key destinations	Collaborating with existing clubs, user forums and the general public to support the Pathways for Developing Cycling at Grassroots Level; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Decisions • Quality Education • Committed Workforce • Appropriate Facilities • Thriving Clubs 	Host of Festival of Cycling to include events for cyclists of all ages and abilities	Work with tourism providers to help deliver a series of cycling-based package holidays	Embracing technology to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve information distribution • Improve wayfinding & mapping • Distribute promotional campaigns • Engage users & increase awareness
	Providing appropriate levels of cycling parking and signage across the County	Working with Sports Wales and Welsh Cycling to develop and deliver their objectives for increasing activity levels through participation in cycling events	Host a Stage of a Grand Tour	Promote Carmarthenshire as the premier cycling destination in Wales	Developing a co-ordinated approach to information provision across different types of media



Carmarthenshire's Strategic Cycling Group will be established to deliver this strategy, and to develop and promote infrastructure to facilitate the growth of all types of cycling in the County, so that Carmarthenshire becomes the Cycling Hub of Wales:



Section 4 INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 - Active Travel Stages

4.1 Active Travel Stage 1: 2013 - 2015

Existing Routes Map (ERM)

The ERM created in Stage 1 of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 displayed the existing routes within Carmarthenshire that were suitable for making active travel journeys (see appendix A). Its purpose is to communicate to the public where routes are already suitable for active travel and to give them the information that they require in order to make decisions about how to travel.

The ERM also establishes a basis for existing infrastructure, the gaps in the existing provision and those routes or sections of route which do not currently conform to minimum standards of provision. Stage 1 was completed on the 22nd January 2015 and Carmarthenshire were one of only five Welsh Local Authorities to meet the standards outlined by the Welsh Government.

4.2 Active Travel Stage 2

Integrated Network Map

The second stage of the Active Travel Act required Local Authorities to develop integrated network maps which identify the proposed new INM routes and improved ERM routes. Routes were identified using trip attractors and origin and destination locations. Newly identified routes were audited and a schedule of works required to create networks of the required standard was created. If routes met the Active Travel standards and passed the audits, the ERM was modified to include them in line with the Active Travel guidance.

The maps set out the proposed route developments for each local authority over a 15 year period. The routes were prioritised into short, medium and long term routes. The prioritisation method was based on identifying strategic routes, prioritising routes where there is only a small amount of work required to bring the route up to standard, and through engagement with the public at consultation. The schedule represents those routes where improvements should be made to ensure that comply with Active Travel Guidance. The Integrated Network Maps will form part of strategic plans, providing evidence for bidding documents for resources and for developing work programmes.

This stage of the Active Travel Act was submitted to Welsh Government for approval in November 2017. The revised ERM and INM maps submitted for approval and Route List of identified works including audit scores are included in Appendix B.

The Active Travel Act Maps are required to be reviewed and resubmitted to Welsh Government in 2020.



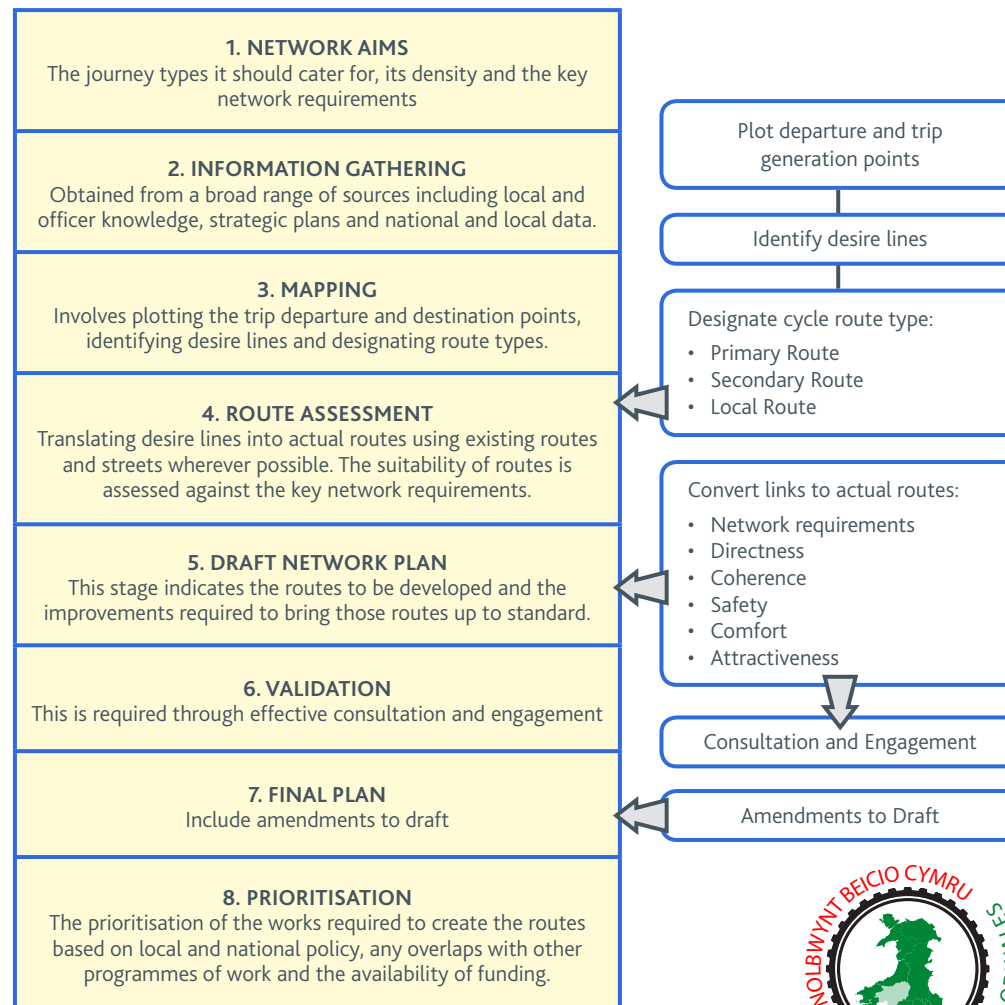
Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 - Active Travel Stages

4.3 Wider Network Links

In addition to the Active Travel Audit work undertaken, audit work was also completed in 2013/14. This looked specifically at gaps in the network and missing links in the overall network across Carmarthenshire (the Active Travel Audits only focused on those existing routes used for active travel journeys (access to employment, education etc.) in those towns defined by the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.

The missing links work looked at the wider network across the whole of the county identifying potential new future routes and links (for all purposes including leisure) that could be invested in to create a more complete walking and cycling network as well as improvements to existing routes). Appendix C lists the new routes that were identified for investment from the 2013 /14 audit.

Integrated Network Map Stages of Development



Active Travel Network: Best Practice - Signage, Parking and Access Control

4.4 Active Travel Design Guidance

Providing the facilities to support cycling is just as important as providing a well-connected cycling network to encourage increased levels of active travel. Facilities to support cycling include provision of clear and concise signage, safe and secure parking and ensuring that routes are only used by those who are the intended users.

This chapter provides a summary of best practice in terms of providing signage, along with consideration of best practice for cycle parking provision and access control. The chapter also considers a hierarchy of provision in terms of the walking and cycling network.

4.5 Signage



Photo 4.1 & Photo 4.2 - Walking and Cycling Signage in Carmarthen

Providing clear and concise signage at regular intervals along the cycling network is a key provision to encouraging increased use. The attractiveness and utility of any network to potential users will, in part, depend on the quality, coherence, consistency and frequency of the signs. Good signage provides the users with confidence in terms of the direction of their route, but can also convey other useful information.

There are examples of best practice signage within Carmarthenshire which demonstrate this. Photos 4.1 and 4.2 show examples of cycling and walking signage in Carmarthen town centre. As well as showing directional information they also inform users of the network, the time and distance to key locations. This assists users in estimating the length of their journey, so they can make informed decisions on the choice of mode.

Active Travel (Wales) 2013 Design Guidance suggests that the design of cycling and wayfinding should consider the following key principles:

- **Minimising signing:** The potential to improve the clarity and safety of a route through improved design rather than extra signs;
- **Minimising clutter:** The use of signing which minimises street clutter through appropriate scale, good location and integration with existing street furniture;
- **Signing coherence:** The importance of coherent and consistent signing over a whole network and along a particular route;
- **Maintenance:** Minimise the need and cost of future maintenance to ensure that safety and wayfinding remain of a high quality in the long term; and
- **Value of signing:** Good signing should enable cyclists to locate themselves and the intended destination through use of strategic and local destination signing to include key facilities.

Many signs are optional rather than mandatory. On the majority of on-street routes cyclists can be adequately catered for within the general traffic signing regime and exemption to restrictions. Cycle infrastructure can be quite sign intensive and if not carefully designed, can create unnecessary visual intrusion.

Cycle routes are distinguished by white on blue vertical signing with a cycle symbol. Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 Design Guidance states that cycle route signing and route confirmation should only be used where routes are direct and convenient and where the journey experience, under normal circumstances, is reasonably good.

In addition to marking the route itself, signs may be required to direct cyclists onto the route at intermediate locations. Signs may also be required to direct cyclists to destinations along the route or at the end/ to a specific locality e.g. a train station should be used even if the cycle route itself does not extend all the way there.

Within each area a consistent set of destinations should be used, these will typically be divided into primary, local and supplementary destinations.

Signage can also help to support health and safety by pointing out dangers along a route. Too many signs contribute to clutter, yet too few and cyclists get lost. Sign clutter is not only a particular problem for urban areas, but signs can also obstruct scenic views in the countryside.

4.6 Types of Direction Signs

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 Design Guidance outlines a variety of direction sign types, with factors depending on location and purpose. Detailed sign design requires specialist traffic engineer input, reference to the Traffic Signs Manual and normally the use of appropriate computer software.

- Finger posts are used at the actual junction. The sign itself points in the appropriate direction and includes a chevron type arrow.
- Advance signs are used prior to junctions to give warning of the junction and enable initial manoeuvring to take place.
- Stack signs are used where the different destinations are listed above each other in tabular form. They can be used as advance direction or prior to a junction.

Map type signs are where a pictorial representation, a map, is used on the sign to help clarify the direction of the destinations. Signs of this type are of value at complex junctions. Route confirmation signs should be provided at least every 1 mile, as well as after each decision point (normally at the far side of every junction).

- Along with signage, map information boards may be placed at key access points to traffic-free networks, to help people appreciate what opportunities are available and to familiarise themselves with the locality.



4.7 Cycle Parking

A lack of safe secure cycle parking at a destination will hamper growth and reduce cycle trips to that location. By indicating to the public that cyclists are welcome, cycle parking facilities act as a message to motorists to consider cycling in the future. Cycle parking should be prominent on the ground and clearly advertised²⁰.

Consideration should be given to cycle parking location and design. In terms of location, best practice states that:

- It must be located as close as possible to the main entrance of a destination;
- It must offer a real advantage over the location of the nearest car parking space;
- The location should be one that is constantly under surveillance by the general public (and CCTV if possible) and is well lit.

In terms of design:

- The design of the stand has to ensure peace of mind for the user;
- The device must be easy to access, facilitate the use of 'D' typelocks and conventional chains/cables, provide support for the whole bicycle and allow both frame and wheels to be secured in a way that suits the individual user;
- The most simple and reliable design (and therefore most common) is the 'Sheffield' type stand constructed from a single tube with two right-angle bends;
- Organisations which are providing cycle parking for employees and visitors should consider the provision of covered areas, either within the building itself or a shelter located very close to the main pedestrian entrance;
- Where cycles are left for a number of hours, for example by workers, students, commuters or in residential developments, more secure parking may be needed. Increased security can be provided by means of lockers, or where shelters or sheds have lockable doors.

4.8 Cycle Parking Layout and other Requirements

In accordance with the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 Design Guidance, parking should, as a minimum, be large enough to accommodate the dimensions of a typical adult size cycle as shown in Table 4.1.

Increased space provision may be required in location where large cycles or cycles with goods baskets or child seats are expected to park frequently. In all cases the location of cycle parking should ensure that parked cycles will not obstruct nearby walking and cycling routes.

SITUATION	DIMENSIONS	AREA PER CYCLE
Stands on Street	1.8 x 0.5m	1m ²
Within Building Minimum	1.8 x 0.5m spaces plus 1.8m aisle	1.35m ²
Within Building Generous	2.0m x 0.75m spaces plus 3 - 4m aisle	2 - 3m ²

Table 4.1 - Space allowances for cycle parking

20. Sustrans Cycle Parking Fact Sheet FF37

In accordance with Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 Design Guidance the following factors should be considered when designing cycle parking facilities:

- Security – Cycle parking must allow users to secure their cycle with a variety of lock types;
- Lighting – essential for personal security and parking after dark;
- Weather protection – can the cycle parking be covered? This is important for commuters and overnight parking;
- Obstruction – The needs and space requirements of other users, particularly blind and partially sighted pedestrians must be considered and parked cycles should not obstruct these routes. Visual aids such as high visibility markings on the first and last strand in a row or contrasting colour/ texture paving may be used to delineate cycle parking areas;
- Potential to integrate with existing street furniture, signing or planting;
- Located on level ground or, if this cannot be achieved, perpendicular to the slope to avoid cycles rolling down the slope; and
- Located in obvious, clean, maintained and overlooked areas to deter vandalism/ theft, and to make users feel safe and welcome.



Photo 4.3 & 4.4 - Example Cycle Parking: Sheffield Stand and Cycle Locker



Cycle parking must be installed appropriately. In addition to the correct layout, the physical installation must be correct to minimise the chance of damage through regular use or the risk of vandalism and theft. Construction details vary for different options.

In on-street locations where space for cycle parking is limited, for instance constrained or busy footways, consideration should be given to the placing of cycle parking stands on the carriageway. This may require the reallocation of existing kerbside car parking.

In a number of rural and urban locations, it may be advantageous to design specific cycle parking that match the surrounding area and other street furniture. This can be accommodated but it should be ensured that any specialist designed parking matches the requirements set out by best practice guidance.

Evidence from Active Travel consultations points to a strong requirement for increased and improved cycle parking provision within Schools. Improved cycle parking was consistently highlighted as one of the key drivers that would lead to increased cycling on the school run

The number of cycle parking stands provided at any specific location is determined through planning policy. Carmarthenshire cycle parking standards are outlined in the CSS Wales Parking Standards (2008).

4.9 Access Control

It is generally accepted that there should be barriers to control access to users that are not permitted on cycle tracks, such as motorcyclists or cars. However, they are also perceived by many cyclists as barriers to cycling. Although solo cyclists on conventional bikes with panniers can usually negotiate the most common type of control barrier, the needs of other users is often not taken into account. As well as solo cyclists, control barriers need to be negotiated by the following:

- Recumbent cycles (all types)
- Tricycles (adult)
- Tandems (all types)
- Bikes towing trailers
- Cargo bikes
- Mobility scooters
- Wheelchairs
- Child buggies/prams (different configurations)
- Horses (possibly)

Almost all cycle tracks are shared-use, meaning that they can be used by pedestrians (pedestrians may also include the disabled, who may be on mobility scooters or in wheelchairs). Some such routes allow equestrian use, although these are more likely to be found in rural areas rather than in towns.

Unless access control design and installation is appropriate for a particular location, facilities that are provided can be negotiated by the very vehicles that they are designed to stop – usually motorcycles and cars. In some cases, designs will exclude some other legitimate vehicles, such as aforementioned.



Ideally, access control to stop motorcycles and cars should not be provided, and this is the opinion of Sustrans for the National Cycle Network. Providing nothing is more likely to be relevant when a new facility is being provided, as there will not have been any history to call upon. Observations can then be made as to whether or not there is a need for access control. It is more likely that a cycle track will be used by motorcycles if legitimate usage is low, as high usage will deter others.

However, in situations where motorcyclists are known to use a facility, access control in the form of barriers are more likely to be justified. It should be noted that any barrier type will only be effective if the entire area surrounding it is secure as well.

Appendix D provides an outline of the different access control barriers that are available for walking or cycling routes.

4.10 Hierarchy of Provision

Provision of segregated or shared usage off-road routes is often the preferred form of network. This type of provision provides easy car free access often opening up walking and cycling as a mode of travel for those users who may not feel confident to cycle or walk on or near the highway. However, provision of off road sections of network can be expensive to provide and therefore providers often find themselves with the difficult choice of building shorter sections of off-road network versus longer sections of on road network, the latter often being far more cost effective to provide.

The topography and geography of an area or land availability can also cause a constraint to providing continuous sections of off road network.



Section 5
EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

5. Development

A major step in securing Carmarthenshire's reputation as 'The Cycling Hub of Wales' and the aim of 'every child in Carmarthenshire given the opportunity to learn to ride a bicycle' is to develop leisure cycling. This can be segregated into three sections; ownership, coaching and the end goal of taking part in leisure rides and events.

In order to take part an individual must have access to a bicycle, the first step is making bicycles as accessible and financially viable as possible. Then a coaching stage is required where individuals can receive training to improve their technique and fitness, their road awareness, general safety and the workings of a bicycle.

All with the end goal of getting Carmarthenshire's public involved in leisure rides and events, and to use cycling for wider journeys such as commuting to and from work and for other utility journeys.

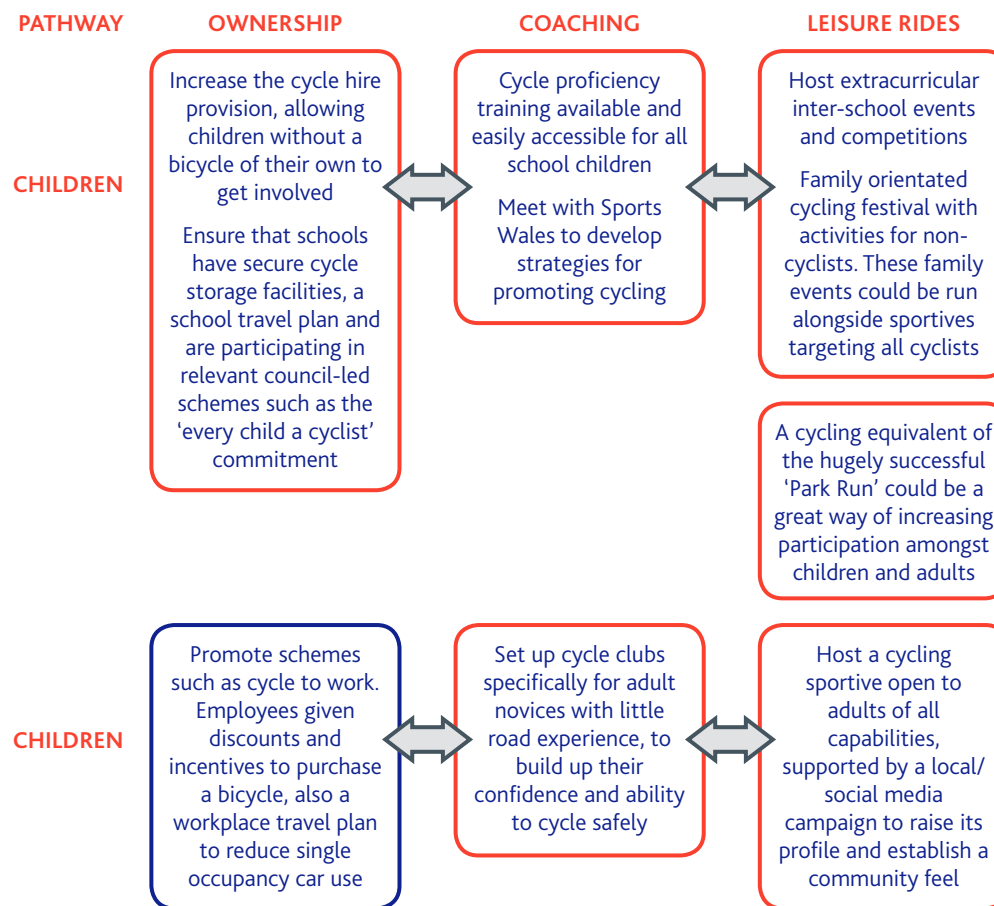


Figure 5.1 - Pathway to developing Leisure Cycling in Carmarthenshire

5.1 Participation and Education

Cycling facilities, events and tourism will follow a growing cycling base and as such developing participation in Active Travel and cycling events at a local level is a vital cog in the Cycling Strategy process.

Investing in Carmarthenshire's future and investing in the organisations that develop this will be key to a successful future cycling strategy.

Sosban Riders hold weekly free sessions aimed at 4-13 year olds at a local primary school. The sessions are designed to improve children's cycling skills and confidence through games, challenges and races including mountain bike enduros and cyclo-cross.

Helping such organisations to grow and become established and encouraging similar groups to



Sosban Riders

form will increase cycling participation levels in the future. Promotion is a key element in increasing participation. These charity organisations should be invited to local schools to carry out talks and workshops promoting cycling at grassroots levels through encouragement and active engagement²¹.

School trips to local cycling centres should be encouraged as an active extracurricular activity. Facilities such as the Brechfa Mountain Biking Facility and the velodrome (once regeneration is complete) could provide taster sessions for students and could prove as an invaluable recruiting method for local cycling clubs.

Providing cycling services, facilities and education for a youth generation will help to establish cycling and raise future participation levels. Promoting active travel to and from school will be a big contributor to this and organising community bike rides will allow school pupils to gain confidence of riding around their local area, with the hopes that they may develop an active travel routine to and from school.

Cycling is an activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. It can do much to improve accessibility for those with reduced mobility. For people with disabilities, cycling offers exercise, fun, mobility and independence. This Strategy will work with Disabled Groups in an attempt to offer improved facilities and infrastructure alongside training and awareness raising to increase provision of people with disabilities.

21. Source: www.sosbanriders.org.uk (Date Accessed: May 2016)

5.2 Education and Training Programmes

Education and training programmes can provide a strong, substantial foundation for new and young cyclists. Being able to navigate the highway network can be quite demanding for all cyclists, especially in urban areas, but given the right training and knowledge, cyclists can keep themselves safe and build confidence around moving vehicles.

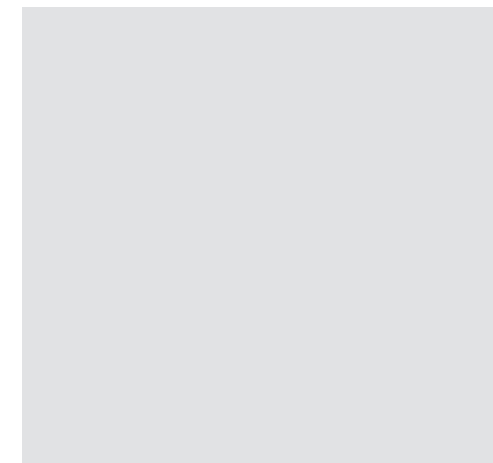
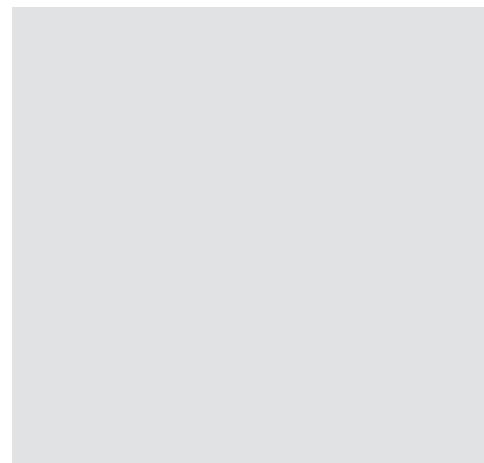
It is important that training programmes are in place for up-and-coming cyclists to ensure they are made aware of, and understand, the acceptable behaviour required of a cyclist on the public highway. Such programmes are often run at a Primary school level to educate the largest catchment of child cyclists, providing them with at least the basic road cycling skills. For those children who are more able, or for older beginner cyclists, higher level programmes are usually run at local cycle-groups operated independently of the system arranged by the local authority.

Carmarthenshire has a large number of primary and secondary schools within the County, with an approximate 28,000 young people in education²². Providing programmes and training at a school/college level will help establish a new influx of cyclists who are knowledgeable about all forms of cycling, the benefits provided, and are aware of the dangers faced when cycling on the road.

The County already has two substantial cycle groups in operation; Towy Riders Cycle Club, based at the outdoor velodrome at Carmarthen Park, and Bynea Cycling Club, based in Bynea, Llanelli.

Towy Riders Cycle Club is an accredited British 'Go-Ride' club meaning it is able to offer progressive cycle skills training for children of all ages and abilities, taught by a team of accredited British Cycling registered and qualified coaches. Additionally, there is an extension to the club for seniors (16+), providing guidance to the elder generations.

Bynea Cycling Club is a well-established club (est. 1937), providing similar training to all age and ability cyclists through its numerous club coaches. It would be advantageous for Carmarthenshire County Council to advertise and promote these clubs, and any other clubs operating within the County, through its social media sites to help promote cycling and encourage cyclists take the next step.



22. www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/english/education/schools/pages/home.aspx, date accessed 9th Dec 2013

Case Study: The Velodrome

The Carmarthen Velodrome, which dates back to 1900, provides a good opportunity for events and activities. It has recently secured an investment of £580,000 from Carmarthenshire County Council and Sport Wales to fund its regeneration, including bringing the track surface up to modern standards and installing new safety fencing.

The velodrome is home to the Towy Racing Cycle Club who regularly stage social and training rides for its members of all abilities, the events offered could be enhanced in terms of size and regularity once the regeneration is complete. Members of all abilities are very active in competitions and the club is frequently represented in road races, mountain biking and cyclo-cross²³.



Focus on - Mountain Biking

Carmarthenshire's cycling infrastructure has much to offer across all disciplines of the sport, but one area where budding thrill seekers are really spoilt for choice is mountain biking. There are three top-class centres in the county; Bike Brechfa, Cwm Rhaeadr and Crychan. All of which provide challenging and varied routes accompanied with stunning views of the Carmarthenshire countryside.

Of the three only Crychan is actively staging events, this year it is hosting Round 1 of the MTB Enduro as well as the Little Devil MTB event for younger riders. The utility of these excellent facilities should be maximised, with local and national events held regularly, building on the centres' reputation and promoting their growth²⁴.

23. Source: www.cyclingweekly.co.uk/news/latest-news/carmarthen-velodrome-to-be-saved-with-580000-revamp-202152 (Date Accessed: June 2016)

24. Source: www.crychanforest.org.uk/events-in-the-forest (Date Accessed: June 2016)

5.3 Developing Grassroots

The success of Welsh cyclists at major international sporting events has impacted positively on participation as they are viewed as role models and as a measure of what can be achieved with hard work and training. Over the past decade Welsh cyclists have won 3 Olympic gold medals, 23 World Championship medals, 24 European Championship medals and 4 Commonwealth Games medals. If these impressive achievements are to be maintained and built on, the stars of the future must be invested in by developing the sport at grassroots level²⁵.

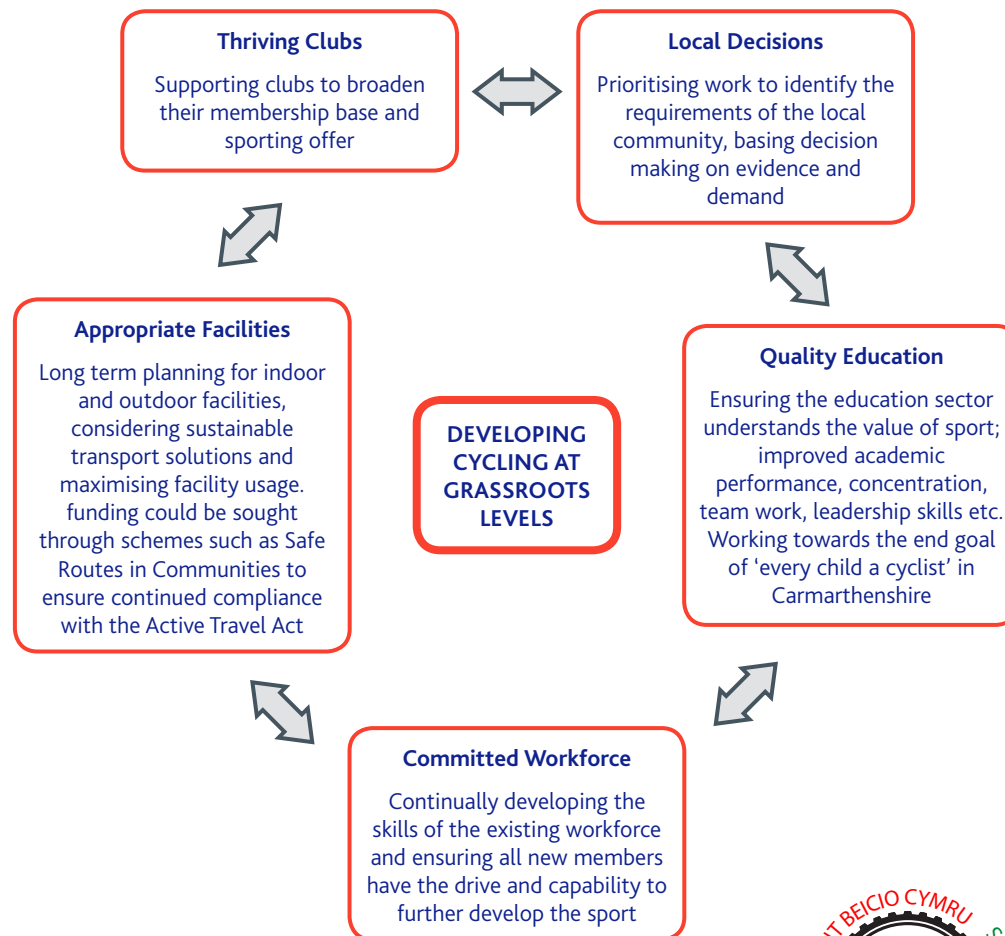
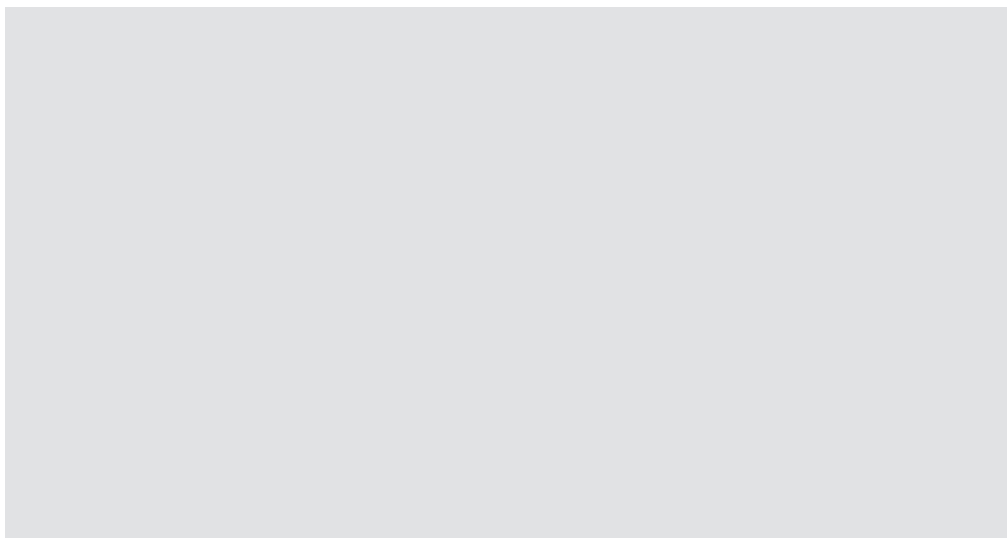


Figure 5.2 - Pathway for Developing Cycling at Grassroots Levels across all Disciplines of the Sport²⁶

25. Welsh Cycling Strategy 2013-2020

26. Sport Wales – Community Sports Strategy 2012-2020



Section 6 EVENTS

6. Events

There has been an influx of cycling events across Wales and the UK in recent years, varying from beginner events to national championships. The events cover all cycling disciplines, including road cycling, mountain biking, cyclo-cross and BMX etc

Table 6.1 shows some examples of the types of local and national events which Carmarthenshire could feasibly host in a bid to becoming 'The Cycling Hub of Wales'. A list of cycling events across all disciplines held in Wales can be seen in Appendix A.

EVENT TYPE	LOCAL	NATIONAL
ROAD CYCLING	VALE RIDE The Vale Ride offers two routes for riders, both the 50 mile and 90 mile routes provide stunning views of the Vale of Glamorgan's countryside and coast. Cyclists of all abilities are welcome and each year a local charity is supported. The cost of entry is £26.00 for the 50 mile route and £32 for the 90 mile route ²⁷ .	TOUR OF BRITAIN The UK's highest ranked cycle race attracts the world's best riders and covers the entire length of the UK, it is British Cycling's premier road event. This year's tour will see two stages held in Wales, Stage 4 from Denbigh to Builth Wells is the longest of the tour and Stage 5 from Aberdare to Bath which includes a gruelling 3,675m of climbing ²⁸ .
MOUNTAIN BIKING	BRECON BEAST 'The Beast' is an endurance mountain bike event set in the Brecon Beacons national park. The £35 entry cost is donated to local charities ²⁹ .	WELSH MTB CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS The championship attracts the best riders from across Wales and beyond. The four rounds of the 2016 competition will be held at locations across Wales including Llandegla and Builth Wells ³⁰ .
CYCLO-CROSS	WWCRT SUMMER GO-CROSS This West Wales Cycle Racing team series is specifically targeted at school children and novice adults. Held at the Blaendolau playing fields in Aberystwyth during June each year, the emphasis is on enjoyment and participation. Any type of bicycle is permitted providing it is in a safe working order ³¹ .	NATIONAL CYCLO-CROSS CHAMPIONSHIPS The 2016 championships were held at Shrewsbury Sports Village. Over two days of action-packed racing, 19 separate age and gender related national titles were decided. The course is based on a flat but technical 3km loop ^{32,33} .
BMX	GORIDEWALES - BMX This non-competitive event is aimed at beginners and is held between July and August at Maindy Leisure Centre, Cardiff. It gives novices the opportunity to experience riding on a pump track which is a crucial element of BMX tracks ³⁴ .	BRITISH BMX SERIES Riders earn points based on their finishing position at each round of the series. A rider's best seven results from a possible 12 rounds makes up their total. The rider collecting the most points in their respective category is crowned the series champion. There are up to 700 entrants across each weekend ³⁵ .

Table 6.1 – Example Local and National Cycle Events

27. Source: www.valeride.com (Date Accessed: May 2016)

28. Source: www.tourofbritain.co.uk/stages/index.php#VznCl00w-vE (Date Accessed: May 2016)

29. Source: www.breconbeast.co.uk (Date Accessed: May 2016)

30. Source: www.britishcycling.org.uk/wales/mtb/article/20160113-wc-mountainbike-Welsh-Mountain-Bike-Cross-country-Series-confirmed-for-2016-0 (Date Accessed: May 2016)

31. Source: www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/124195/WWCRT-Summer-Go-Cross-Round-2 (Date Accessed: May 2016)

32. Source: www.britishcycling.org.uk/britishcrosschampionships/article/20160104-Guide--2016-British-Cycling-National-Cyclo-cross-Championships-0 (Date Accessed: June 2016)

33. Source: www.cyclingnews.com/races/british-cyclo-cross-national-championships-2016 (Date Accessed: May 2016)

34. Source: www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/135230/GoRideWales---BMX (Date Accessed: May 2016)

35. Source: www.britishcycling.org.uk/britishbmxseries/article/20160510-British-BMX-Series-Guide--British-BMX-Series-back-in-Cumbernauld-for-rounds-five-and-six-0 (Date Accessed: May 2016)





The aim of hosting a stage of a grand tour is certainly ambitious and will require multiple stages of planned progression. Through a series of processes Carmarthenshire could develop from a host of local family events to welcoming the world's elite cyclists to its doors. Carmarthenshire County Council has a significant part to play in achieving this ultimate goal and must be pro-active in their approach. Please see figure 6.1 overleaf.

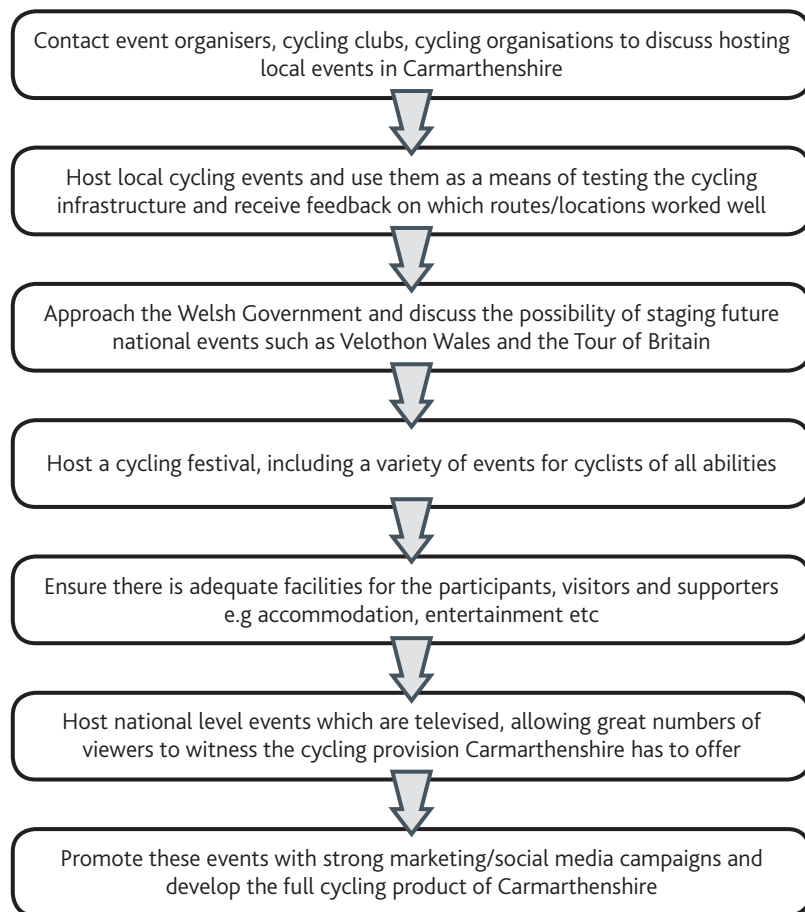


Figure 6.1 - Pathway outlining how to build up towards hosting a stage of a Grand Tour

There will be specific tasks the Local Authority must undertake in order to develop Carmarthenshire as a venue for cycling events which are outlined in Figure 6.2 opposite.

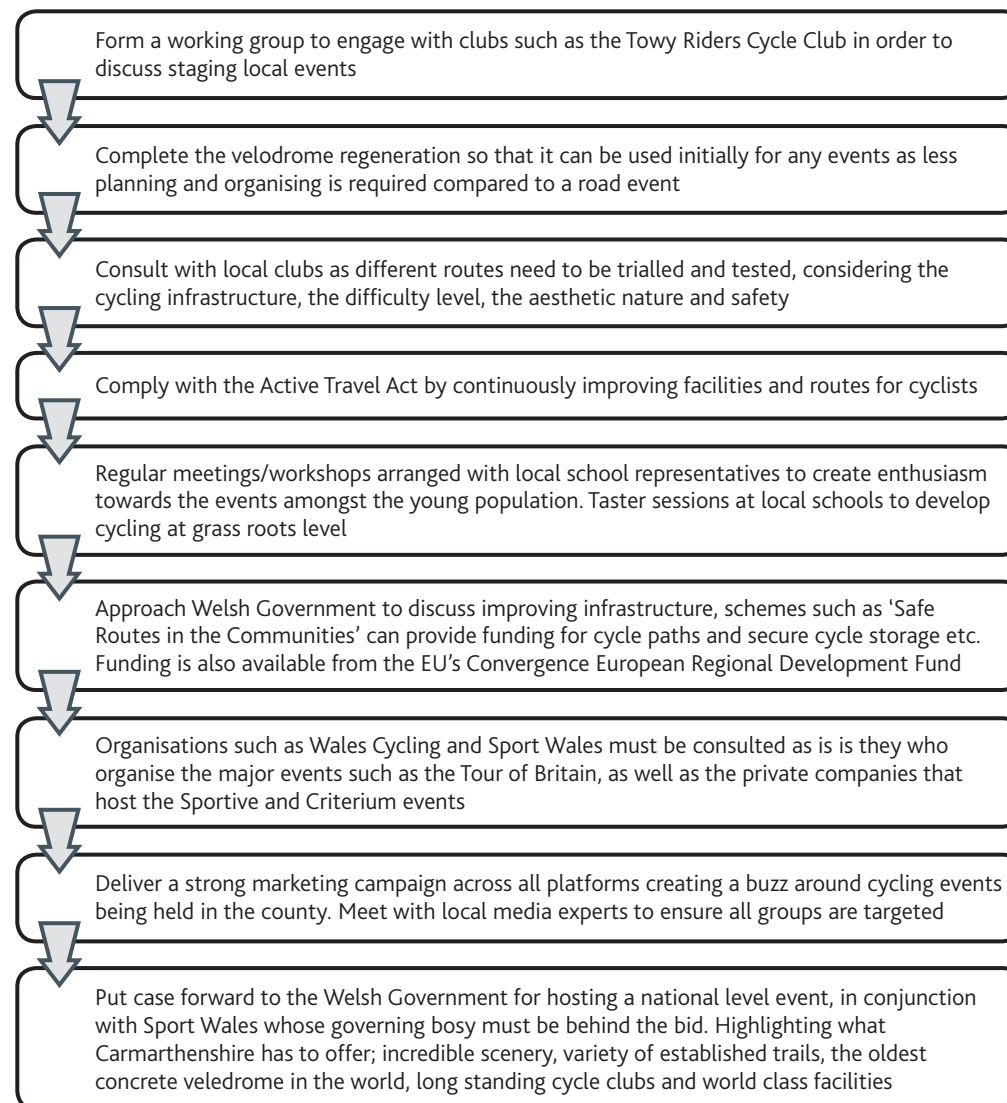


Figure 6.2 - Pathway for the Local Authority to develop Carmarthenshire as a cycling venue

Section 7 TOURISM

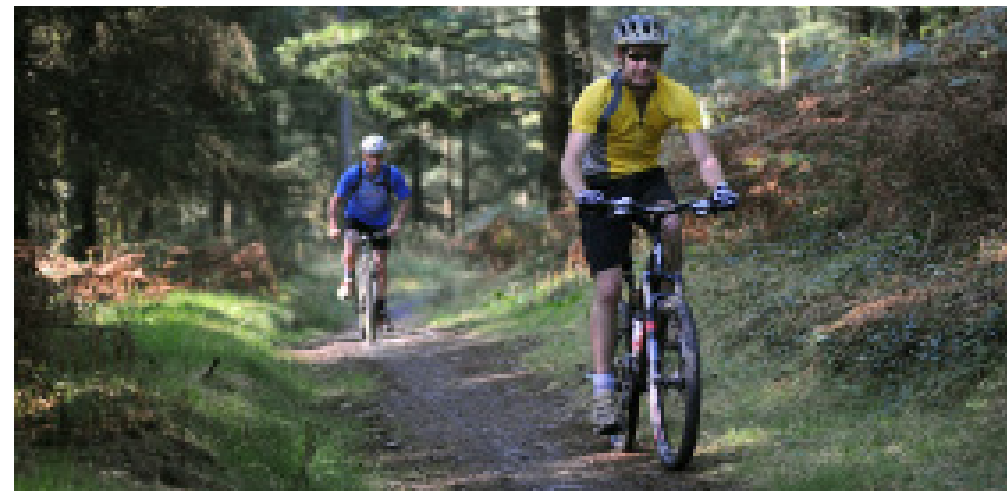
7. Cycle Tourism

Carmarthenshire already has a wide array of cycling infrastructure and resources available. This type of cycling infrastructure should appeal to a number of cyclists, with infrastructure ranging from easy and family leisure based trails to intense and strenuous professional cycling tracks.

7.1 Brechfa MTB Centre

One of Carmarthenshire's most intense and enjoyable cycling tourist attractions is the Brechfa MTB centre, with snaking mountain biking trails created around the Brechfa forest.

Currently there are four trails catering from a beginner blue and green level to a more intermediate and challenging black graded Mountain Bike trail. The most famous and challenging of the routes the 18.5Km Black Raven Trail is listed as one of the top MTB cycling tracks in Wales, complete with a number of stunt jumps and steep winding downhill descents.



Brechfa also caters to the newer and less experienced Mountain Bike goer. The 4.7Km Derwyn Blue and Derwyn Green Track provides an excellent introduction to Mountain Biking in Carmarthenshire as a way for less experienced Mountain Bikers to build their skills. It is also highly rated as a fantastic family day out.

As well as having well-established mountain biking facilities, Carmarthenshire also has a large number of well-maintained leisure routes.



7.2 Celtic Trail

The Celtic Trail provides a safe traffic free cycle journey across Carmarthenshire, highly suitable for family cycling trips, currently offering three different routes; the Challenge 143 miles trail, the weekend 42 mile trail and the family friendly 27 mile trail.

7.3 Millennium Coastal Path

The Millennium coastal path is a well renowned cycle link offering stunning views of the beautiful Carmarthenshire coast line with 13 miles of cycle way providing links between Llanelli and Pembrey Country Park.



7.4 Carmarthen Velodrome

Carmarthen Velodrome will undergo a £580,000 regeneration to create a regional centre for excellence for cycling. As part of the regeneration the track surface will be replaced and new safety fencing will be installed.

It is hoped that investment in the track will bring in cyclists from around the region for training and racing, boosting the local areas economy and jobs. The investment in the Carmarthen Velodrome will also allow for the future planning of Velodrome events within Carmarthenshire. Such as the British Cycle Speedway Championships, which already includes Newport within its elite league.

The investment in the Velodrome will help to promote enthusiasm towards the sport at a local level, allowing the people of Carmarthenshire to actively contribute and train within the Velodrome. The Carmarthen Velodrome facilities can also be the basis for youth cycling organisations, and the National Youth Omnium is just one example of an event that could be hosted at the Velodrome.

Maindy Flyers are a successful example of one such organisation set up at Maindy Cycle Track in Cardiff in 1995. They are responsible for encouraging Olympic Gold Medal winning athlete, Geraint Thomas to take his first steps as a professional race cyclist. Similar types of organisations and facilities will be essential to the grass roots development of cycling within Carmarthenshire. The Carmarthen Velodrome has the potential to encourage participation in cycling and the ability to allow Carmarthenshire to produce their own crop of youth cycling athletes.



7.5 Developing Cycle Tourism/Infrastructure

It would be easy to assume that the majority of cycling tourism can be associated with the hosting of small/ large scale cycling events. However the journey to acquiring these types of events is often off the back of successful small scale cycling tourism ventures. These types of ventures will play a valuable role in contributing to the desirable image of Carmarthenshire as the 'Cycling Hub of Wales', and providing the necessary infrastructure to host a large scale cycling event

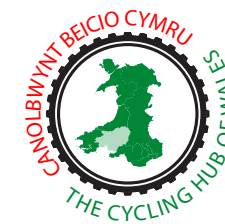
One way for Carmarthenshire to develop cycle tourism is to follow in the tried and tested, such as creating and promoting holiday package cycle deals. This is already done very successfully within prominent cycling regions throughout the UK, such as Yorkshire and Cambridge, as well as within the neighboring county of Powys. Often these package cycle holidays feature multiple routes and accommodation with couriers to deliver your luggage to each place as you arrive.

CYCLE HOLIDAY	COST	AREA
The easy cycle tour to Wales	Adult £195, Child £95	Prestaigne
The Welsh Border Cycling Tour	Adult £235, Child £120	Knighton, Prestaigne
Lon Las Cymru	Adult £685, Child £345	Preistaigne, Knighton, Elan Valley, Rhayader
Brecon Beacons Cycle Tour	Adult £680 Child £340	Brecon Beacons

Table 7.1 - Space allowances for cycle parking

These package holiday deals can no doubt contribute to the success of building a cycling tourism base as well as opening the door for private investment opportunities within Carmarthenshire, enabling the growth of cycling infrastructure.

Table 7.2 represents the available trail options that already exist within Carmarthenshire. These route options tied together with suitable accommodation as well as promotion would make ideal platforms to create package cycle holidays for prospective holiday makers.



CARMARTHENSHIRE CYCLE ROUTES	
NAME OF TRAIL	DISTANCE
Merlin Wizard Route	164km
Merlin Druid Route	75km
Merlin Cothi Route	112km
Carmarthen to Newcastle Emlyn	61km
Celtic Trail – The Challenge	230km
Celtic Trail – The Weekender	68km
Celtic Trail – For the Family	44km
Sosban festival of Cycling – Tin Route	121km
Sosban Festival of Cycling – Pewter Route	143km
Sosban Festival of Cycling – Copper Route	174km
Double Devil Sportive – Devil 82 mile	132km
Double Devil Sportive – Devil Sportive	154km
Double Devil Sportive – Double Devil Sportive	196km

Table 7.2 - Existing trails within Carmarthenshire



These routes, although currently established for racing and sporting events, may also be utilised as leisure routes. Accommodation providers within close vicinity of these routes may wish to promote the routes in order to establish a leisure tourism client base for their accommodation. As part of the cycling strategy it is suggested that Carmarthenshire work with accommodation providers to create an awareness and investment in package holidays including routes such as these.

As well as this, Carmarthenshire could seek to establish a leisure tourism cycling network involving these already well established cycling routes. Attributing success to small tourism ventures such as these, will go a long way to creating an increasing awareness and understanding of Carmarthenshire cycling facilities. As these facilities grow over time, e.g. with the construction of the Velodrome, the incentive to create and promote tourism within Carmarthenshire will undoubtedly increase.

These small tourism ventures can also be used as case studies to demonstrate the current visitor base for cycling in Carmarthenshire, helping to promote and present the wide range of cycling services and facilities available during bids for larger cycling events.

Case Study: MudTrek Mountain Bike Breaks, Brechfa Forest, Carmarthenshire

MudTrek is a defining example of how cycling holidays can be tied together with existing Carmarthenshire Cycling routes and resources. Small cycle tourism ventures such as MudTrek will help to grow and establish Carmarthenshire as a cycling hub, whilst advertising cycling facilities to prospective tourism.

It also creates investment in cycling and increases the opportunity for accommodation and other facilities to create profit by tailoring for cyclists needs. This will inevitably lead to a growth in cycling facilities and grow the available infrastructure in place for bigger cycling events.



THINK OF A SKI CHALET...FOR MOUNTAIN BIKERS...IN WALES!

**COSY, EXCLUSIVE ACCOMMODATION - SUPERB VIEWS - FABULOUS FOOD -
RIDE FROM THE DOOR (TO THE PUB!) - FREE "OFF PISTE" GUIDING - TRANSPORTATION**

Section 8 MARKETING AND BRANDING

8. Marketing and Branding

8.1 Introduction

Marketing and promotion will form a vital role in developing walking and cycling, ensuring use of infrastructure as well as attracting and hosting events. In this section different technologies available to promote walking and cycling are reviewed, along with recommendations for the implementation of education and training programmes which will support increased active travel

8.2 Technology

Like so many other things in our life, technology is starting to influence the way we use our bikes. Gone are the days when we would head off for a ride guided only by a memorised map and the forlorn hope that there would be sufficient signage to guide you in the right general direction.

Getting lost, needing twice as much time as expected and the joy of finding some previously unknown 'shortcut' were all parts of the experience. That was before the 'Strava Generation' started using Smart Phones to plot and map rides, distances and journey times. Mobile phones and their GPS technology are now an ever present accessory in the cyclist's tool kit.

Map Carmarthenshire

Glasgow City is a DfT cycle demonstrator town, and thanks to £24 million funding from Innovate UK, the Technology Strategy Board, they are introducing a number of measures to increase the number of people who walk and cycle to work and for leisure.

MapGlasgow is a website that enables walkers and cyclists to record their journeys via a free app on their Smart Phone. This builds up a picture of when and where people are walking and cycling. Analysis of the data reveals the routes most used by people, thereby allowing the Council to more effectively target resources and investment.

In a shift away from the traditional 'predict and provide' method of developing new infrastructure, Glasgow City Council has moved towards a 'demand lead' model for planning and implementing future schemes.

Carmarthenshire is a large rural County with a dispersed population. Local Authority cut backs will result in smaller budgets for walking and cycling schemes. As a result it is critical that all investment is targeted at schemes and projects that have the most potential for increasing walking and cycling levels.

As part of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, Local Authorities, planners and consultants are using their skills and expertise to identify potential routes that, if developed, might attract increased usage. Similarly, part of the requirement of the act is to understand and monitor current usage levels, and from this predictions can be made to estimate future demand.

However, by more closely engaging users and looking at their origins, destinations and routes, transport planners will be able to see what routes are popular and which are avoided. MapCarmarthenshire would build on the stakeholder engagement work as part of the Active Travel Act, and be able to reach a wider audience. Once existing walking and cycling behaviour is understood, resources and investment can be targeted at improving and upgrading routes and facilities that people actually use.

STRAVA Heat Maps also have a role to play in identifying routes that are regularly used by cyclists. Understanding this demand driven utilisation will help to inform maintenance investment to help ensure delivery of a high quality cycle network.



8.2 Carmarthenshire County Council's Website:

www.carmarthenshire.gov.co.uk

Carmarthenshire County Council's website (www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk) is a primary source of information for both residents and visitors. It provides a wide range of information on all services and facilities that are supported by the Local Authority.

The Leisure section on the website invites visitors to directly access more information on a range of activities including:

- Leisure centres
- Branded health and fitness
- Sports facilities
- Arts and entertainment
- Country Parks
- Coastal Park/beaches

Information on cycling opportunities is provided under the following sections:

- Country Park
- Coastal Park/Beaches
- Outdoor Adventure

Within the 'Transport and Streets' section there is no reference to any walking and cycling opportunities. Other transport related topics ranging from parking to road safety are all covered, however, walking and cycling are not addressed.

The Discover Carmarthenshire website (www.discovercarmarthenshire.com/index.html) is the main tourism website including information on events and accommodation, and is currently the main location for walking and cycling information. The website contains a large amount of information on different walking routes within the area, and contains links to different information sources.

Similarly, the cycling pages contain a vast array of route information for road and mountain biking trails, however, there is a lack of consistent branding on these websites, and currently the majority routes are mapped using google maps which enables easy access.

To improve promotion opportunities, walking and cycling should be given its own separate website and where relevant, the maps created for the Active Travel Act requirements should be provided for route information and to ensure consistent branding, and any future cycling maps should be branded the same. As the rebranding of six major walking and cycling routes are currently underway, this branding should be considered and rolled out across all walking and cycling routes so they are all visually linked.

Better by Bike (www.betterbybike.info) is a separate website which provides information on cycling routes, events and news within the Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire areas. There is consistent branding throughout and the website is straightforward to use. Each council website provides a link to the Better by Bike website, which ensures that all cycling information is easily accessible, consistent and kept in one place which is a good example of how Carmarthenshire's website could look.

It is recommended that the profile of cycling is increased through the provision of a separate website, so information is more easily accessible, more attractive and therefore encourages take up/participation. The majority of the information is already there, it is just a case of presenting it in a different way so that cycling information is more focussed and more prominently positioned. Maps and routes produced as part of the Active Travel Act will provide a consistent branding that can be utilised on the cycling website similar to the Better by Bike website. Additional information already included on the Discover Carmarthenshire website, such as route length, difficulty rating and journey times will further encourage usage.



8.4 QR Codes

QR codes are electronic bar codes, that when scanned by Smart Phone technology, present the user with information. Originally, QR codes were more closely associated with advertising campaigns, where a code would provide more information on a particular product or commodity.

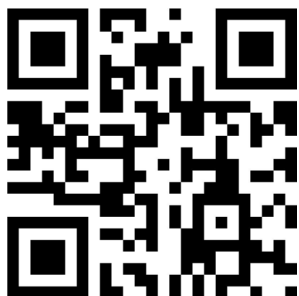
With the increase in mobile applications, the Smart Phone has become an important accessory in the cyclist's toolkit. They are much easier to store and transport than maps. If QR codes were attached to existing cycleway signposts, navigation for cyclists with Smartphones would be much easier.

Simply by scanning the code, cyclists would receive information on their location and the route they are using. Distances, timings, sights of interest and rest stops could all be communicated to the user. QR codes can tap into existing sources of information provided by

Sustrans, for example; www.sustrans.org.uk contains comprehensive mapping information on the National Cycle Network, making this information available via a bar code, attached to a way-marker having significant benefits to cyclists.

On the negative side the information supplied is only as good and as accurate as those who supply it. There are plenty of examples of inaccurate information that has been made available. Conversely, a local authority could spend thousands of pounds printing maps and guides only for them to become out of date following the next route modification, upgrade or closure.

It is recommended that Carmarthenshire County Council consider utilising QR Code technology as a tool for disseminating information to walkers and cyclists. The information is free to use, can be updated easily and made available in a very user friendly format.



Example of a QR Code



8.5 Social Media Websites

Social media websites are used to share information and experiences. Personal social media sites are used as a means of communicating with friends and family. In addition to this, special interest groups can be created so that like-minded individuals can communicate and share knowledge, expertise and opinion. They can provide great networking opportunities and can be used to help increase the profile of special interest groups.

Many local cycling groups and cycling clubs in Carmarthenshire have their own social media websites. These sites are generally run and maintained by a small group of enthusiasts and are used primarily to promote club activities amongst users. The benefit is that information is targeted at people who are interested in the services and activities offered by the Group.

Wider networks also have their own pages to provide updates on route improvements, openings and advertise events. For example Better by Bike (@BetterbyBike), Cycle Monmouthshire (@MonCycle) and on a larger scale, Santander Cycles (@SantanderCycles).

Carmarthenshire already has many great cycle routes. Some of these, such as the Millennium Coastal Path (NCN 4) are destinations in their own right. Such routes attract walkers and cyclists from all over the County and beyond.

Other destinations, such as the Discovery Centre, along the Millennium Coast Path, all have their own social media websites. These are used as promotional tools to inform visitors about forthcoming attractions and activities.

There is an opportunity for NCN 4 to have its own Social Media websites. Along the route there is a wealth of attractions and activities that could be promoted. Instead of being on the periphery of activities in the area, a route that has its own social media website could be

promoted as the 'spine' that connects a wide range of attractions and activities. In addition, the new cycling and walking website could have its own social media pages similar to Better by Bike, which are dedicated to providing information and news about the routes. Through interacting with other cycling and walking groups, this would raise national awareness of Carmarthenshire as a cycling and walking destination in its own right. These could be provided on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to cover a range of potential users.

As well as this, the provision of a map which shows the other attractions and accommodation along the route would encourage further use through raising awareness of the other opportunities to visit in the surrounding area.

A re-branding exercise, promoted via a social media website, could increase awareness of the routes through creating a separate identity for walking and cycling in the county. If users are better informed about the facilities, services and destinations that are accessible, they might be encouraged to use it on a more regular basis. The re-branding will also ensure that there is a consistent logo and brand that is noticeably walking and cycling in Carmarthenshire, raising the profile of the County.

Such a page could be linked to the QR codes and to the other destinations and attractions along the route. Carmarthenshire County Council already operate its own Facebook page, and so it would be advantageous if a link for NCN Route 4 and the walking and cycling page was made available from here.

Targeted engagement on social media with specific cycling and walking campaign groups, for example Cycle UK, Cardiff Cycling Campaign, Living Streets and Cycle Streets, will help promote cycling and events in Carmarthenshire to a wider, national audience.



8.6 Tourism Websites

Websites such as Visit Wales (www.visitwales.com) and Show Me Mid Wales (www.visitmidwales.co.uk) provide a good platform to advertise activities and accommodation in Wales. This website reaches a wide variety of potential visitors to Wales from both national and international origins.

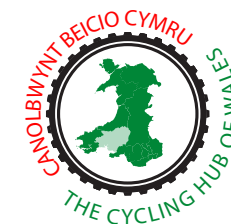
It is recommended that Carmarthenshire County Council engage further with Visit Wales ensure that any walking and cycling events are listed on the website and are up to date, and that links to the new walking and cycling website are provided, specifically under the Biking and Walking & Hiking sections. This will ensure that a people from further afield than the local area who are looking to come to Wales as tourists are made aware of the walking and cycling opportunities in Carmarthenshire, and raise the county's profile.

Other accommodation websites and smaller visitor websites should also be engaged with and kept up to date with the latest information so visitors have a wide range of information available to them from numerous platforms.

8.7 Active Travel (Wales) Act. 2013

A requirement of the Active Travel (Wales) Act, 2013 is for local authorities to map all Active Travel routes to make it easier for people to walk and cycle. These maps will create integrated networks of active travel routes and related facilities which will be easily accessible by the public. The maps will provide up to date information on existing routes and routes planned for the future, and be audited to ensure they meet the standards set by the Act. This provides the opportunity for consistent branding to be considered, making the routes easily recognisable. The Active Travel Act provides another opportunity for promotion of walking and cycling within Carmarthenshire and to increase the profile of the county.

As mentioned previously, it is suggested that Carmarthenshire County Council use the same branding on the Active Travel maps on all walking and cycling materials and on the website. This will ensure consistency and create a recognisable brand without unnecessary additional mapping. This can be rolled out across all routes, even those not included in Active Travel, such as mountain bike trails, and stored in one place on the separate walking and cycling website. It also ensures that all future planned routes will be of the same standard, increasing the walking and cycling opportunities in the county.



8.8 Promotional Campaigns

A focused and well organised promotional campaign is vital if Carmarthenshire is to develop cycling, increase the use of infrastructure and host events. The campaign would be a group of advertisements centralised around one message and different media resources must be utilised successfully including the internet, television, radio and newspapers. The message in this case could be the vision of 'Carmarthenshire: The Cycling Hub of Wales'.

Carmarthenshire is well catered for across all media platforms and there is potential for a very effective promotional campaign. The Carmarthenshire County Council and local cycling clubs' websites could be used to promote walking and cycling, as well as Carmarthenshire County Council's social media presence such as their twitter account. There is also potential for advertisements on BBC Wales and S4C as well as on Radio Carmarthenshire or in local newspapers such as the Carmarthen Journal.

8.9 Development of Logo and Standardised Branding

Having strong branding is crucial for a number of reasons, it needs to be professional and immediately recognisable as the branding communicates the value and quality of the product or service. Having a developed logo for example is a visual expression of identity and is one of the main things that makes a product or service memorable.

A good practice example of logo and branding is the Tour de Yorkshire. They have an instantly recognisable logo which cleverly incorporates a cyclist and the name is a play on the Tour de France as Yorkshire famously held a stage of the prestigious event in 2014. The branding, including the logo and colour scheme, is standardised across all platforms including their website and social media accounts.

It is recommended that Carmarthenshire County Council use a distinctive and eye-catching logo which represents the quality of the product or service, also that a brand identity including a colour and formatting scheme be implemented across all platforms and all publications.

