

Report of the Director of Environment Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee

5th July 2019

Active Travel Update

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Active Travel Act

The Active Travel Act carries dual implications for authorities across Wales. Firstly it demands that all authorities produce two maps; an Existing Route Map (ERM) (Appendix 1) of current walking and cycling routes which meet Active Travel guidelines, and also an Integrated Network Map (INM) (Appendix 2) which demonstrates routes which the authority has identified for development in the future. Carmarthenshire was one of the only authorities in Wales to have its ERM and INM approved on the initial submission.

The Active Travel settlements that both maps focus on are prescribed by the Wales Government and listed in the delivery guidance as; Ammanford, Burry Port, Carmarthen, Cross Hands, Kidwelly, Llandovery, Llanelli, Pontarddulais and St Clears. The ERM and INM support Carmarthenshire's wider Cycling Strategy by showing existing and potential future cycling and shared use links. The ERM routes have been audited (Appendix 3) in order to check their compliance with the act.

ERM and INM Consultation

Part of the consultation process for the ERMs and INMs involved an in depth questionnaire which was circulated to all schools within the county with 4780 pupils responding. In total 12% of children would like to cycle to school and 9% would like to walk who currently do not. Over 40% of pupils said that lockers to store cycle equipment and coats it would increase the likelihood of them walking or cycling to school (Appendix 4). These results demonstrated that investment in covered, secure cycle parking would increase Active Travel levels and so funding has since been utilised to provide these facilities at several schools including Ysgol y Beddol, Ysgol Br Dinefwr and Tycroes School.

An online consultation with the wider general public was also undertaken. An online questionnaire helped to identify the existing demographics of Active Travel users throughout Carmarthenshire and gain an understanding as to the key Active Travel routes currently being utilised by the local community, also showing quick wins which could be easily achieved. Results also demonstrated current barriers to Active Travel and collected positive feedback for changes to support Active Travel engagement. The survey clearly identified that only around 20% of people cycled often, and those who did were mainly leisure cyclists (Appendix 5). As well as encouraging more people generally to walk and cycle, a challenge of Active Travel schemes would be to progress these leisure cyclists to become utility and commuter cyclists by providing the appropriate facilities and education. Leisure cyclists often use traffic free routes or quiet roads and so improving the quality of routes to major employment hubs may encourage more of these cyclists to cycle to work.

Integrating Active Travel Act into Practice

In addition to producing ERMs and INMs, the Active Travel (Wales) Act requires authorities to cement its design principles at the heart of all transport schemes and planning guidance. Both internal Design Services colleagues and external consultants adopt the Active Travel Act: Design Guidance as a means of informing their designs and ensuring that Active Travel modes are catered for. Major highways schemes such as Carmarthen West Link Road have the guidance taken fully into account and include facilities for pedestrians and cyclists alongside the carriageway. Highways Planning Liaison Officers also refer to the Active Travel Act and Highways Design Guide when advising applicants on the Highways requirements of their development. When responding to PACs and Planning Applications, Liaison Officers emphasise the requirements of the Active Travel Act, as outlined in the Highways Design Guide, and have the power to recommend development for refusal on the basis of not meeting these requirements. Sub-group meetings are held by the Officers which include appropriate representation from sections such as Public Transport, Transport Planning and Traffic Management. Reference is made to the Demand Library and INMs in order to determine where s106 monies could be harnessed from developers to help expand the Active Travel network.

Cycling Strategy

Carmarthenshire's Cycling Strategy was launched in 2018 and sets out the authority's ambition to establish itself as the 'Cycling Hub of Wales'. The Strategy outlines the policy context around cycling, including the Active Travel (Wales) Act and Wales Transport Strategy before going on to detail the social, economic, environmental, health and tourism benefits of cycling, both as a sport and mode of transport.

Going forward the Strategy sets out its 5 Key Themes and Strategic Objectives and outlines in an Action Plan how these will be achieved (Appendix 6). The Strategy is supported by a Strategic Cycling Steering Group which has subsidiary groups focusing on each of the 5 Themes. While 'Infrastructure and Facilities' is the most directly relevant Theme to Active Travel, the other 4 each play a role in supporting the growth of cycling across Carmarthenshire. 'Education, Development and Training' is important in terms of encouraging children to cycle and ensuring that they have the necessary skill set to confidently use a bicycle. Educating adults to cycle safely and facilitating cycling as a feasible mode of transport is also a role of this Theme. Lastly, 'Events' and 'Tourism' are equally interlinked with improving Active Travel participation. Major events help to inspire wider cycling in the community and increasing cycle tourism levels can help to improve the economic feasibility of new facilities, justifying their construction which all cyclists will benefit from.

Carmarthenshire County Council hosted the Grand Depart of the men's Tour of Britain in 2018 in which world class cyclists such as Geraint Thomas and Chris Froome competed. This year the final stage of the women's Tour will be hosted entirely by Carmarthenshire with the race circling the county and passing through both the Amman and Gwendraeth valleys. Following the success of the men's Tour and the impact which it had on the county, the women's Tour is anticipated to create equally positive impacts, inspiring the next generation to cycle and showcasing the county's world class cycling facilities in Carmarthen's velodrome and the closed-road circuit at Pembrey where the race will finish. The promotion of these facilities is also expected to benefit Carmarthenshire's cycle tourism economy, with benefits already being seen from the press that Pembrey was given during the men's Tour. The development of Active Travel infrastructure across the county will be essential to harnessing the full potential of this tourism economy and opening Carmarthenshire to all levels of cycling ability.

The Theme of 'Infrastructure and Facilities' focuses mainly on the Active Travel (Wales) Act and the obligation which it places on the authority to not only deliver safe and meaningful traffic-free cycling facilities, but also to consider cyclists and pedestrians in all highway development and planning applications. The Strategy outlines the key elements of the Act's Delivery and Design Guidance documents as well as highlighting the importance of cycle parking facilities and directional signage which can heavily influence uptake.

The Pembrey Closed Road Circuit and refurbished Carmarthen Velodrome referenced in the Action Plan have now been completed creating unique cycling facilities which set Carmarthenshire apart from the rest of Wales. Improving facilities for sport cycling will in turn encourage cycling for transport as the public have a safe, traffic-free facility to gain confidence and develop skills. Welsh Cycling's involvement with the Velodrome and Closed Road Circuit as well as their place on the Strategic Cycling Steering Group mean that their aspirations are incorporated into Carmarthenshire's work and replication of effort is avoided.

A Corporate Steering Group with senior internal and partner representation has been set up to oversee the effective delivery of the Cycling Strategy; this is supported by a number of sub groups based around the various themes set out within the Cycling Strategy.

Active Travel Schemes

Since the introduction of the Active Travel Act in 2013 many schemes have been delivered via Local Transport Fund (LTF) and Active Travel Fund (ATF) grants. In addition to these schemes which have involved the act directly there are also many other schemes which have been delivered over the past decade which now form Carmarthenshire's ERM. While the list below gives a comprehensive overview it is not entirely exhaustive:

- **Tywi Valley Path** - a proposed shared use path connecting Carmarthen with Llandeilo, the first phase of construction is now complete. The path will create a traffic-free alternative to the A40 for cyclists and connect communities which are within the top 10 most deprived in terms of access to services.
- **Pembrey Canal Path** - a shared use path along the disused railway line in Pembrey linking with the MCP at Burry Port. The path provides traffic-free cycling and walking opportunities for communities in the 30% most deprived in Wales.

- **Swiss Valley** - a shared use path linking Llanelli with Cross Hands, along a disused railway line. The route joins with the MCP at Pont D'Agen creating a traffic-free route from Cross Hands to Pembrey, capturing many of the 10% most deprived communities in Wales.
- **Amman Valley Cycleway** - a shared use path from Pantyffynnon to Brynamman, crossing the border with Neath Port Talbot. The route connects communities which are deprived largely in terms of health, employment and community safety, running through the catchment areas of 6 primary schools and 2 secondary schools.
- **Llangunnor Road** - On road advisory cycle lane linking Tregunnor to Dyfed Powys Police Headquarters, major employment site.
- **Morfa Farm SUP** - Upgraded PROW linking Morfa Roundabout, Carmarthen with NCN Route 4, Johnstown.
- **Carmarthen West Link Road SUP** - shared use paths running along either side of the new highways development linking the A40 with major employment sites in the West of Carmarthen and proposed housing developments.
- **Carmarthen Riverside Path** - Upgraded PROW following the River Towy from Johnstown upstream to Carmarthen and joining the NCN Route 4 at Morfa Lane.
- **Llethri Road SUP** - Shared use path linking key employment sites and industrial estate with A4138 shared use scheme.
- **Pont D'Agen Link** - Shared Use Bridge linking the MCP and Swiss Valley paths in Llanelli.
- **Cross Hands Subway** - Widening of approaches to the existing subway at Cross Hands roundabout linking Cross Hands Business Park with the new Cross Hands West Retail Park.
- **Cross Hands Retail Park SUP** - Shared use path throughout the new Cross Hands Retail Park scheme linking Cross Hands with Cefneithin.
- **Caersalem Terrace Contraflow** - Cycle contraflow system in Llanelli.
- **A484 Carmarthen SUP** - Shared use path along the A484 linking Pensarn Roundabout and Pirblwyd Roundabout (Coleg Sir Gar, Carmarthen Campus) and onto Cwmffrwd.
- **Botanic Gardens Cycleway** - Off-road cycle track from Porthyrhyd along the B4310, through the Botanic Gardens forming part of NCN Route 47.
- **St Clears Riverside Path** - shared use path linking lower St Clears with Upper St Clears, along the River Cynin and under the A40.
- **A4138 Dafen to Llangennech** - single direction shared use path along either side of the road from Dafen Roundabout to Trosserch Road Roundabout.

- **Cross Hands Square** - Improved cycle and pedestrian infrastructure at Cross Hands Square.
- **Ammanford to Cross Hands Masterplan** – provision of safe, continuous walking and cycling route.
- **Prince Phillip Hospital SUP** - Shared use path through the grounds of Prince Phillip Hospital, Llanelli.

Active Travel Monitoring

Carmarthenshire County Council has an existing network of 20 cycle and pedestrian counters spread across the authority, with the first phase being installed in 2013, the second in 2016 and the most recent in 2018. The counters combine a piezo-electric sensor and pyroelectric infra-red sensor to distinguish between pedestrians and cyclists and relay their data remotely to an online platform. The counters demonstrate where Active Travel interventions have been successful and how user make up varies in terms of cyclists and pedestrians (Appendix 7). This often reflects the nature of the schemes as utility links with more pedestrians or longer distance routes with increased cyclist figures.

Active Travel Funding has been utilised to procure an additional 10 counters which will expand the network to cover new and existing Active Travel schemes. Over time this data will help to create a map of Active Travel flows around the county and help to identify where schemes have been successful in generating new Active Travel journeys.

A Totem style counter has also been procured for the Millennium Coastal Path at North Dock, Llanelli which will relay daily and annual figures to path users. As the Millennium Coastal Path is currently the most used route in the county this will relay a positive message to users and reinforce the sincerity of Carmarthenshire's ambition to become the Cycling Hub of Wales.

Integrating Active Travel with Public Transport

Given the rural nature of Carmarthenshire as a county it is evident that Active Travel alone will not be sufficient to fulfil most peoples' everyday journeys. Rather than promote the private car and reserve Active Travel for more local journeys the authority are working to promote Active Travel as an element of multi-modal journeys, combining walking and cycling with Public Transport to reach further afield destinations.

In terms of rail travel, the county has train stations in all of its major towns, as well as many more rural halt stations. Bike Parking is currently available at a number of Carmarthenshire's train stations, and details can be found by the public via PlusBike. PlusBike is a tool for cyclists using rail services which provides information on bike parking, services which allow bikes, National Rail rules and bike hire facilities near destinations. Transport for Wales (TfW) have also produced a PDF leaflet advising the public on travelling with bikes, however prior booking (at least 24hrs) is recommended and it is made clear that bikes may be refused if guards deem trains too busy.

While Rail Travel provides a means of both national and international travel for Carmarthenshire's residents not all communities have access to a Railway Station via Active Travel. Bus Services serve the county more widely with most communities having at least one bus stop within walking distance.

Combining walking with bus travel as part of a multi-modal journey is a feasible option for most residents of Carmarthenshire, however incorporating bikes into bus journeys presents more challenges. Buses do not have the capacity to carry bikes in the same way that trains do, so travelling with your bike is not an option. Instead in the future it may be more feasible to include cycle parking as a feature of bus shelters where appropriate (see examples from Canberra, Australia and Euro-Shell). The X62 bus service in Scotland from Edinburgh to Peebles has 3 buses with the capacity to carry 2 bikes each. As Carmarthenshire's services are often not full to capacity it may be a solution to introduce bike parking spaces as a means of integrating Active Travel and Public Transport for multi-modal journeys.

Barriers to Multi-Modal Journeys

Despite progress being made to integrate Active Travel with Public Transport there are still evident challenges which will require cohesive working with third parties to remedy. The biggest of which is the ability to travel with bikes on trains and buses. While some trains do currently have capacity to carry bikes TfW services are limited to just two and prior booking is required. This does not facilitate the ease of movement which would be required for multi-modal journeys to become a practical means of transport, and in order to improve this Carmarthenshire will need to continue to positively liaise with TfW as well as bus operators on this matter.

School Travel Planning

In order to integrate with Active Travel infrastructure and maximise opportunities for pupils, new schools have a Travel Plan produced for them as part of the council's Modernising Education Programme (MEP). This is usually completed by external consultants working on the project. A template for existing schools wishing to produce a Travel Plan can be provided to them with pointers from Transport Planning Officers and examples. The template includes questionnaires which should be circulated to pupils of the school in order to create a well-informed Travel Plan. Once the school has completed a draft plan, this is returned to Transport Planning Officers who provide further feedback and suggestions. It is the responsibility of the school to formally adopt and implement the Travel Plan. A Travel Plan can be utilised as a tool to identify shortfalls in access to the school and help to inform potential bids from SRiC and Active Travel funding. Issues identified during travel planning which cannot be addressed by behavioural change are often included in SRiC and Active Travel bids.

The purpose of the Travel Plan is to assess the current situation and attempt to improve the numbers of children walking or cycling to school. Even in circumstances where many of the pupils live too far from the school to travel actively there are options such as remote drop off locations and one-off incentives which give children a taste of Active Travel and aim to alter their habits.

Limitations of Active Travel Funding

Barriers to Delivery:

- A lack of revenue investment means that it is difficult to support behavioural change in the long term and encourage Active Travel once the schemes are complete.
- The short term nature of LTF and ATF grant funding means that money is only guaranteed for a single year, making it difficult to deliver more ambitious schemes which require a longer design and construction period. The time constraints placed on grant funding also make it difficult to deliver schemes where land needs to be acquired from a third party.
- With Active Travel Funding restricted to the INM in built-up areas many schemes will need to be retrofitted into established urban environments. This presents challenges in terms of being ambitious and drives up the cost of schemes where land purchase is necessary.
- There is also a concern that large rural expanses of Carmarthenshire where a large proportion of the population live will miss out on this funding. In order to deliver Active Travel facilities to more rural communities the Authority will have to look to LTF and SRiC funding.

Active Travel Strategy Going Forward

Initial consultation undertaken suggests that the majority of people walking and cycling in Carmarthenshire were doing so for leisure purposes. In order to increase those participating in Active Travel for commuter and utility journeys one strategy may be to first target those who are already cycling for leisure, with others following suit once cycling appears to be more of the norm. TfL produced a report in 2012 outlining the psychology and practicalities behind turning leisure cyclists into utility and commuter cyclists which provides a starting point for future strategic direction.

Similarly many school children own a bike and cycle in their own time, however do not cycle to and from school. Giving these children the opportunity and confidence to cycle more often and more purposely will increase the likelihood of them choosing Active Travel modes. This will be achieved by a combination of infrastructural and educational programmes delivered through Active Travel and Road Safety schemes.

In terms of infrastructure there are still many schemes identified on Carmarthenshire's original INM which are still yet to be delivered. Active Travel Bids over the coming years will focus on the feasibility and delivery of these schemes, ensuring that development is integrated with the existing network, public transport and new development. Bids for grant funding will be carefully prepared to evidence how money will be best spent to create useable links on all scales which will benefit communities and improve quality of life. Counter information from locations such as Pontyberem where an entirely new shared use route has been implemented suggest that if infrastructure is created then people will use it, even if their previous preference had not been towards Active Travel

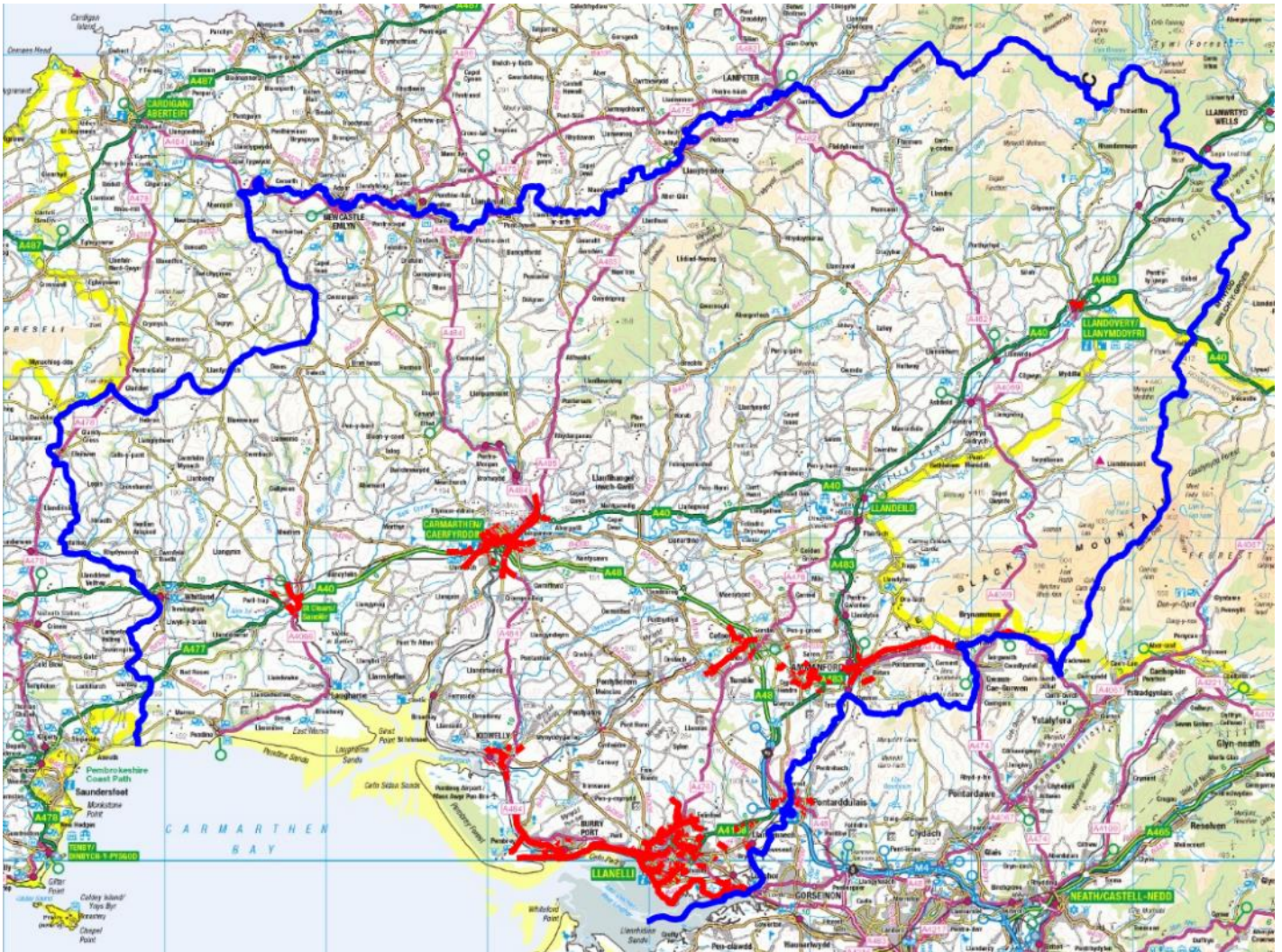
2019/20 Active Travel Fund Bid

- **Cwmann Footway Link** – Joint Scheme with Ceredigion.
- **Llanelli Masterplan Phase 2** – multiple schemes within Llanelli including 2 bridges.
- **Pinged Re-Routing** – taking the on-road section of Pembrey Canal Path off-road along the disused railway line.
- **Ammanford to Cross Hands Masterplan Phase 2** – upgrading of current facilities.
- **Upgrade NCN Linkages** – rerouting of the NCN to upgrade existing.
- **On Road Cycle Link between Carmarthen and Abergwili** – enhance cycling provision between the two settlements.
- **Twyi Valley Path** – Ambitious traffic free route connecting Carmarthen and Llandeilo.

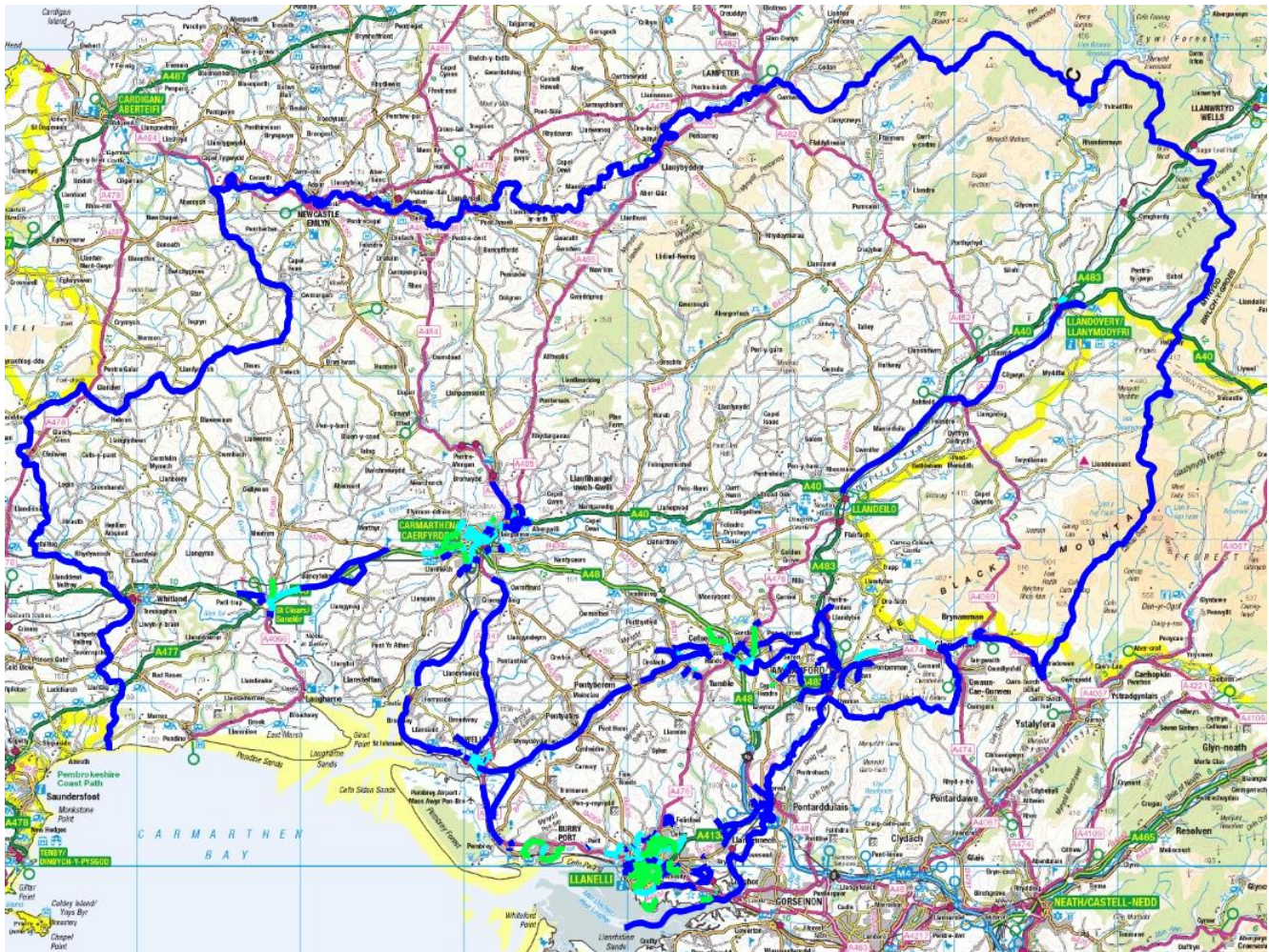
To date the Council has met all requirements set by the Wales Government to deliver the Act, Carmarthenshire was one of only six Local Authorities in Wales to have the INMs approved at submission. The Welsh Government has recently increased the level of capital funding available across Wales, however there is evidence of a significant shift to awarding funding to urban settlements. This has a negative impact on more rural authorities such as Carmarthenshire and will have a major impact on the Twyi Valley Path.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Existing Route Map (ERM)



Appendix 2 – Integrated Network Map (INM)



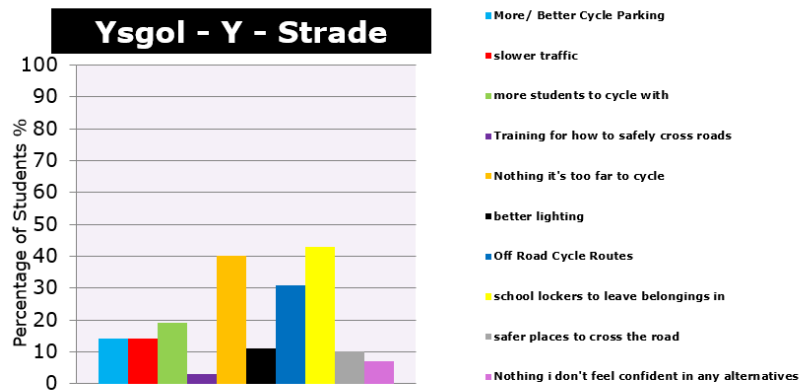
Appendix 3 – Example of ERM Audit

Active Travel Completed Audits					
Locality	Walking (W) or Cycling (C)	Route Ref.	Score	Pass or Fail	Comments
Kidwelly	C	A	40	Pass	Signing needed, lighting,
	C	B	33	Fail	Not linear, steep uphill section, narrow
	C	C	36	Pass	Cyclists need to cross grass verge, no cycle parking
	W	7.1	33	Pass	Route needs to be widened
	W	7.2	32	Pass	overgrown on section
	W	7.3	33	Pass	trip hazard on bridge
	W	7.4	32	Pass	Steep
	W	7.5	29	Pass	Path needs surfacing, needs better links, poor visibility
	W	7.6	30	Pass	narrow, no drop kerbs on crossing
	W	7.7	34	Pass	
	W	7.8	32	Pass	steps on path, no natural surveillance
	W	7.9	34	Pass	Narrow
	W	7.10	37	Pass	Narrow access
	W	7.11	23	Fail	route confusing, poor surface, poor access, narrow, no lighting, overgrown and isolated

Appendix 4 – Example of School Consultation Results

Consultation with Schools – Results from Survey

What changes would encourage you to **cycle** to school?



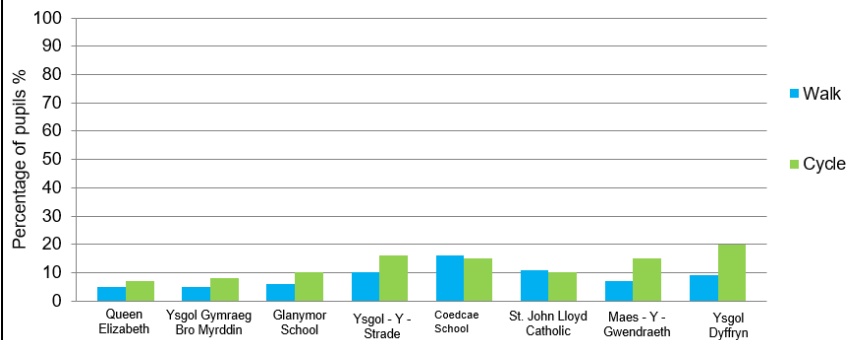
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Consultation with Schools – Results from Survey

What percentage of pupils would like to walk and cycle to school that currently don't?



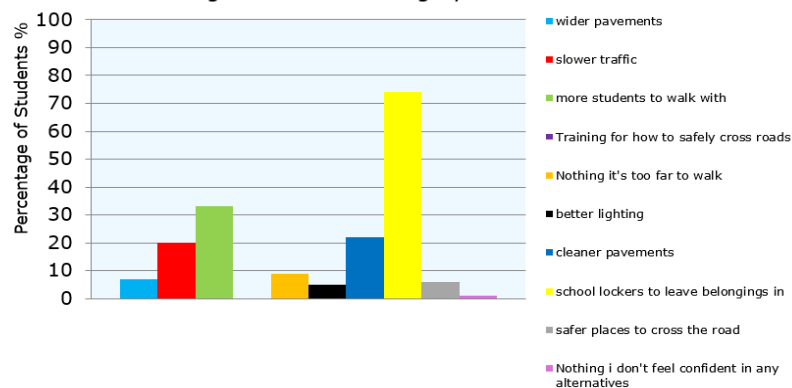
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Consultation with Schools – Results from Survey

What changes would encourage you to **walk** to school?



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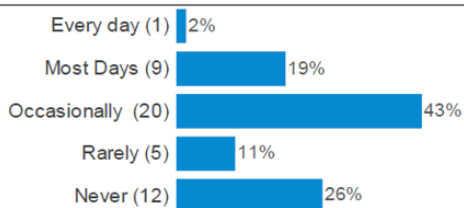


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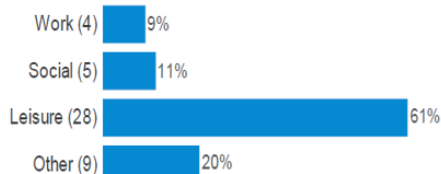
Appendix 5 – Example of Online Consultation Results

Examples of Online Survey Questions

How often do you cycle within your communities?



What are your reasons for walking and cycling?



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Appendix 6 – Carmarthenshire Cycling Strategy Action Plan

CARMARTHENSHERE'S STRATEGIC CYCLING STEERING GROUP				
INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES	EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING	EVENTS	TOURISM	MARKETING & BRANDING
THEMES	EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING	EVENTS	TOURISM	MARKETING & BRANDING
OBJECTIVES	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;
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 • Coaching • Leisure Rides 	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 Facilities • Committed Workforce • 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
HIGH LEVEL SUPPORTING ACTIONS				

Appendix 7 – Cycle and Pedestrian Counter Feedback

Counter Location	Average Daily Usage 2018	
	<i>CYC</i>	<i>PED</i>
Morfa Farm	32	156
Parc Hinds	16	210
Carmarthen Slipway	26	122
A484	6	265
Kidwelly Park	13	49
Pembrey Canal Pinged End	35	30
Pembrey Canal Waun Sidan	75	82
Pwll Pavillion	281	-
Heol Goffa	23	-
Pennygaer Fields	86	-
A4138 W	11	17
A4138 E	16	20
Pontamman	26	19
Glanamman	27	65
Garnant	34	24
Counter Location	Average Daily Usage	
	<i>CYC</i>	<i>PED</i>
Tywi Valley Path	8	46
Pontyberem	6	185
A4138 Dafen	16	26
Llethri Road	14	28
Brynamman	4	36