**Active Travel Act Existing Route Map and Integrated Network Map**

**Consultation Report**

**Background**

The Active Travel (Wales) Act which came into force in September 2014 places a duty on every local authority in Wales to map, plan, make continuous improvement to and promote walking and cycling within the 10 county settlements (Fishguard/Goodwick, Haverfordwest, Johnston, Milford Haven, Neyland, Pembroke Dock, Pembroke, Tenby, Saundersfoot, and Narberth) as stipulated in the Act over a 15 year programme.

The Act focuses on journeys to work, education, healthcare and leisure facilities rather than simply for walking and cycling journeys.

This is the first law in the world to ensure that planners consider the needs of walkers and cyclists and aims to make it easier for people to travel actively around the country.

The Local Authority last year submitted its existing route map which showed the then current walking and cycle network.

It is now developing the second phase of the Active Travel legislation which is to produce an Integrated Network Map. This looks at new and improved routes to be developed over a 15 year period. As part of the process various consultation exercises were undertaken to ascertain where the gaps in the existing network were and where sections of route did not meet the Design Guidelines and therefore needed improvements.

This document highlights the consultation responses and shows how they have influenced the development of the Integrated Network Map which has now been submitted to Welsh Government.

 **Consultation Survey – Phase 1**

The public consultation to establish what Active Travel proposals people wanted was live for 14 weeks from the 20th October 2016 to 27th January 2017 and included a Welsh and English questionnaire on cycling and walking. It was decided to produce a questionnaire exclusively for walking and for cycling rather than combining the two modes as the respondents were quite different and this was reflected in the responses received with very few respondents completing both questionnaires.

The questionnaires were made available to the general public, officers, partners/stakeholders and equalities groups. The consultation was advertised extensively in the press also via Facebook, Twitter and Radio Pembrokeshire. It was promoted to 120 individuals and organisations who were targeted via an e-mail link to a web page hosting the walking and cycling questionnaires. Paper copies of the consultation were made available on request and comments were invited via e-mail, letter or phone call. Details were made available on how to receive a paper copies or in any alternative formats of the questionnaire.

The consultation survey aimed to understand the respondents’ demographic and transportation habits and included quantitative (closed) and qualitative (open ended) questions regarding proposed Integrated Network Map (INM) routes. All respondents had the opportunity to remain anonymous and the survey questions were optional.

We also established the current levels of walking and cycling in the County, the reasons for respondents Active Travel journeys and what the barriers were to Active Travel. We went on to utilise this information in a Monitoring Report on Active Travel which has now been submitted to Welsh Government. We also asked about new routes or improvements to routes people wanted to see within the towns and what factors would encourage more walking and cycling.

The results to the online questionnaire consultation are shown in Appendix 1. The walking questionnaire results are shown in Appendix 1a and the cycling questionnaire results are shown in Appendix 1b.

**Consultation with Young People**

Maps of the built up areas of each of the ten active travel towns were distributed to 29 schools - Primary, Secondary and Special.

An explanatory note was produced for teachers at each school explaining what information we wanted recorded on the maps and how groups of pupils could effectively work together.

The maps were then collected from the schools and the results discussed. Information displayed on the maps showed new routes that would aid pupils’ walking and cycling within their community and improvements to routes that they currently use.

Sustrans ran Active Travel Workshops sessions working with Secondary School pupils which included a lesson in active travel and what was deemed a good active travel route. Pupils then worked in groups identifying proposed active travel routes within their communities and barriers to walking and cycling currently being experienced.

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority in partnership with Active Travel officers worked with primary school teachers on encouraging and instructing them on how to take groups of pupils on walks within the community where issues preventing active travel could be discussed.

Pembrokeshire College placed the INM consultation on their website, instructed staff through their website on the issue of active travel. Active Travel issues were also raised in Fresher’s week at an event hosted by the College.

**Consultation with ‘Hard to Reach’ Groups**

An active travel workshop was undertaken with a visually impaired group. A member of the group also accompanied an officer around their community looking at proposals for the INM.

The Local Access forum which represents disabled groups within the County were asked to study the Active Travel maps and then asked to identify new routes and improvements to routes.

 In order to obtain the views of people with health issues the consultation was flagged up on the Hywel Dda website.

In order to obtain the views of elderly members of the Community, Active Travel Consultations were directly undertaken with Coffee Morning Groups attended by the older residents in the towns. A computer club was also consulted which contained a mixed demographic

**Partnership Working with Stakeholders**

As explained above, the Local Authority worked on initiatives with the National Park, Health Authority and Pembrokeshire College. The Authority also worked with Dyfed Powys Police. The Police were briefed on Active Travel and asked to highlight any routes requiring improvement or introduction in the towns in which they were stationed. They informed Council Officers after being on the ‘beat’, of proposals suitable for the Integrated Network Map. Officers also accompanied community police officers whilst out in the community seeking views of the general public directly in the towns specifically included in the active travel built up areas. This work was used as an exemplar to other Welsh Authorities by Welsh Government.

The Authority contacted Sustrans members living in the County to assist in the publication of the “Go Active Travel” leaflet (of which 30,000 have been published) asking them for feedback on the draft publication and requesting an input into this INM consultation.

The consultation was also made available to the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum and also contacted those individuals who had expressed an interest in Active Travel.

Feedback was also received through telephone conversations with members of the public and informal meetings.

**Summary of the Results of the Consultation Survey - Phase 1**

The general observations related to the following: (Comments concerning specific towns can be seen in Appendix 2)

* General maintenance matters were highlighted as a real issue with respondents commenting that they would prefer to see monies spent on upgrading existing routes rather than building new ones.
* Concern were expressed about journey time delays on cycle routes that weren’t direct because of topographical or land issues making utility journeys less direct.
* Cycle facilities were requested alongside new routes
* Litter, dog mess and hanging vegetation on existing routes was a concern making them less attractive and requiring improvement.
* Traffic speeds, traffic volumes, poorly lit paths, insufficient crossing facilities and parked vehicles causing obstruction to pedestrians on some routes were felt to be problematic.
* Requests were received for routes from rural settlements outside the designated settlements to link to town centres and schools.
* Concern was expressed with regard to funding in these austere times and consultation responses suggested that additional funding needed to be secured in order to meet the expectation of significant worthwhile improvements.

**Audit of Potential INM Routes**

To supplement the information gleaned, from the consultation a number of other information sources were also considered.

* Missing links in the NCN routes
* Requests recorded on the minor works list of schemes
* Key routes identified by Council Officers
* Feedback from the Review of the Right of Way Improvement Plan.

All the potential routes underwent an initial inspection and those routes that were deemed appropriate with regard to topography, safety, land issues and directly linking to a destination on a desire line were mapped.

This allowed for the identification of ‘quick wins’ (short term 1-2 year schemes). These include such improvements as footpath maintenance, surface defects, dropped kerbs and crossing points. In all, 48 short term schemes were identified. 88 medium term schemes (2-5 years) in total were identified 30 long term schemes (5-15 years) were identified .In total 166 new routes have been identified.

**Consultation of ERM and INM Phase 2**

Once a list of schemes had been identified the Authority established a methodology to consult on the proposed new network of routes that had come to the fore.

PDFs utilising the GIS mapping system were completed for the ten towns giving a more user friendly, visually simplified map than those produced on the Welsh Government Active Travel platform. The maps produced showed all the routes that had been suggested and qualified for inclusion under the active travel guidelines.

A web page was developed which outlined the purpose of the consultation and the public were invited to complete an online survey. Links were provided to the maps showing proposed active travel interventions for each designated settlement alongside tables explaining what improvements were proposed to improve walking and cycling facilities. The tables were included rather than just a simple route map as defined in the legislation as this was felt to be more informative as it highlighted the type of improvement that had been requested on the specific route, gave information as to the type of work required and a categorisation of the route in question.

The methodology followed for the final phase was time consuming but the maps and tables were placed on the website on the 21st July 2017 with the consultation terminating after a 12 week period which was deemed as the minimal amount of time required to consult on in the legislation and the closing date was on the 20th October 2017.

The questionnaire gave respondents the opportunity to inform us as to whether they supported the INM shown. It also asked for information regarding any routes not shown asking for details on locations. The responses were detailed and included requests for routes lying outside the Active Travel towns which had been the case in the first phase of the consultation. The question as to which routes should be given priority was asked and additional comments regarding the INM in general were requested.

Existing routes were shown with the INM route map in order to illustrate a complete network New ERM routes that had been completed since the initial ERM had been published were also shown on separate maps***.*** These routes had been audited and had met the guidelines laid down by the Act.

These routes were:-

* Castle High Haverfordwest shared use path
* Howarth Close to Thornton Business Park footway, Milford Haven

The Annual Report appertaining to Active Travel initiatives undertaken in the period 2016/2017 financial year was also included for public perusal.

The consultation also contained notification of Ceredigion’s Active Travel consultation as St Dogmaels lies within the boundary of Pembrokeshire and had been included with Cardigan for the purpose of active travel it was felt important to provide a link to Ceredigion active travel website.

 Those on our initial consultation list and who had taken part in the first phase of the process were contacted along with partners and stakeholders who were sent a link to the consultation.

The schools in the Active travel areas were contacted and asked to study the plans and tables and for feedback on the suggested proposals. Schools in Neyland, Haverfordwest Tenby and Pembroke Dock all supported the proposals shown on the INM for their specific towns.

The consultation was placed on the Council’s internal intranet platform for council staff to respond. During the consultation period the human resources department carried out a promotional walking and cycling initiative with staff utilising active travel publications produced for the County.

A presentation was given to Planed (Partnership for local action and network for enterprise and development.) staff explaining the ethos behind Active Travel who then informed community groups that they worked with about the consultation taking place.

Consultation events were held north and south of the county which were open to members of the public to discuss issues within the towns. These were advertised on the Council website and in the Western Telegraph, the Herald, the County Echo, Tenby Observer, Pembroke & Pembroke Dock Observer, The Tivyside and Milford Mercury and on Radio Pembrokeshire but despite the publicity they were poorly attended with only 4 members of the public attending. Their thoughts and ideas were however helpful and feedback was such that they were happy that the routes and proposals suggested in the initial consultation that had been included on the INM maps.

A meeting was convened with Welsh Government Network Management and SWTRA Officers to discuss the Active Travel schemes on the Trunk Road Network. This was very positive with PCC being the first local authority to identify specific schemes that could be included in their forward programme.

The Welsh Government requested that where land ownership may be an issue with regard to a specific scheme contact with landowners should be established. Owing to schemes in the medium and long term being aspirational, the Local Authority is in the process of contacting landowners who own land required for short term schemes as those schemes are more likely to be included in a funding bid submission to Welsh Government in the near future.

**Consultation Phase 2 – Summary of Results**

The twelve week consultation resulted in 19 responses these are shown in Appendix 3. The main general observations related to the following. Comments concerning specific towns can be seen in Appendix 2

* There were numerous comments on walking and cycling issues outside the designated settlements and also queries regarding cycle routes feeding into and connecting to active travel towns
* Leisure routes were suggested within the designated settlements that did not connect to services listed as Active Travel designations and therefore could not be included in the INM.
* Pembrokeshire County Council’s Planning Department were in favour of the vast majority of schemes suggested pointing out that master plans were being developed for the larger towns, proposals from which could feed into the active travel programme. The Conservation Team has also reviewed the schemes and have identified some which may have ecological issues and require further assessment. These routes have been identified in the submission to Welsh Government.
* SUSTRANS officers commended the plans and the routes which were produced
* 166 routes have been identified from the process outlined above, a breakdown for each town can be seen overleaf.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Town*** | ***Number of routes to be improved***  | ***Short term schemes*** | ***Medium term schemes*** | ***Long term schemes*** | ***Land required*** | ***Land not required*** | ***Cost (short term schemes only)*** |
| ***Fishguard & Goodwick*** | ***21*** | ***3*** | ***13*** | ***5*** | ***8*** | ***13*** | ***£223k*** |
| ***Haverfordwest*** | ***24*** | ***5*** | ***14*** | ***5*** | ***15*** | ***9*** | ***£468k*** |
| ***Johnston*** | ***4*** | ***2*** | ***1*** | ***1*** | ***2*** | ***2*** | ***£40k*** |
| ***Milford Haven*** | ***16*** | ***4*** | ***8*** | ***4*** | ***7*** | ***9*** | ***£220k*** |
| ***Neyland*** | ***12*** | ***4*** | ***5*** | ***3*** | ***4*** | ***8*** | ***£27k*** |
| ***Pembroke*** | ***12*** | ***3*** | ***7*** | ***2*** | ***4*** | ***8*** | ***£57k*** |
| ***Pembroke Dock*** | ***26*** | ***9*** | ***16*** | ***1*** | ***2*** | ***24*** |  ***£151k*** |
| ***Tenby*** | ***17*** | ***6*** | ***9*** | ***2*** | ***4*** | ***13*** | ***£117k*** |
| ***Saundersfoot*** | ***16*** | ***7*** | ***7*** | ***2*** | ***6*** | ***10*** | ***£341k*** |
| ***Narberth*** | ***18*** | ***5*** | ***8*** | ***5*** | ***4*** | ***14*** | ***£81k*** |
| ***TOTAL*** | ***166*** | ***48*** | ***88*** | ***30*** | ***56*** | ***110*** | ***£1,725k*** |

**Concluding Summary**

The two phase consultation exercise will set the baseline for subsequent consultations and engagement in relation to Active Travel. Further comparative information will add value to the initial results obtained.

Comparing the demographic that responded to our consultation with the make-up of the resident population within the county, the response was not representative and there would seem to be a need to rectify this and tap into the latent potential responses.