

Sustrans Cymru's response to Cardiff Council's Draft Cycling Strategy

General comments

Sustrans Cymru welcomes the drafting of a new cycling strategy for Cardiff. Its preparation is timely given the Council's commitment to increase sustainable travel and the development of an active travel network plan for the city.

Vision

We strongly support a renewed approach to prioritising walking and cycling and welcome the commitment to double the number of cycle trips in the city by 2026. The ambition for Cardiff to be a city where cycling is a normal and practical choice for short trips is also welcomed. This vision is very much aligned with Sustrans' own vision for cities which is for most everyday journeys to be made on foot and by bike.

Active travel should not just be considered a transport issue. Implementation of active travel is Council-wide activity. It is therefore important that the Local Development Plan, Transport Strategy and other corporate plans (e.g. Cardiff's Liveability Report) are aligned to the policies and actions in the Cycling Strategy.

Infrastructure

Sustrans Cymru is pleased to see a commitment to segregate cycling from traffic, where traffic speeds are 30mph or above. This is in line with the guidance set out in Welsh Government Active Travel Design guidance and is an important step in helping to create cycle routes that people consider safe to use. The requirement for improved safety for cycling in Cardiff is evidenced in the 2015 Bike Life study, with 82% of residents wanting better safety for people riding bikes.

Sustrans Cymru would like to understand more about plans for the Council to develop cycling infrastructure design guidelines. Welsh Government's Active Travel Design Guidance provides a comprehensive series of infrastructure solutions with guidance on when and how to use the design specifications. Welsh Government is currently reviewing the design guidance, therefore Sustrans Cymru recommends that more work is done to raise awareness within the Council and with stakeholders and developers about the step change needed in designing for active travel. This has started with the section on delivering cycling with new developments in the cycling strategy which is welcomed. There is also an opportunity to work with other departments in the Council and external stakeholders to outline how and when to design for active travel. This could be an opportunity to ask Council Officers and stakeholders what support the need to adequately design for and promote active travel. This combined with a review of the Welsh Government Design Guidance, would provide a more informed context for developing local guidelines on designing for active travel.

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We warmly welcome plans for strategic cycle corridor across the city. We believe that further engagement is needed to determine the alignment of these routes and to learn what people expect from a strategic cycle corridor. For example asking people in Cardiff where they would like to see routes go, what facilities they need to travel to and what type of infrastructure would enable them to switch modes and take up active travel. As mentioned at the outset, Sustrans Cymru supports the proposal to segregate cycling where the road speed is 30mph or more. There is a conflict between aspirations for the East-West corridor described in the draft INM, where cycling is proposed in bus lanes with a current speed limit of 30mph. This is in direct conflict with the policy in the draft strategy to provide segregated infrastructure for routes with a speed limit of 30mph or more.

Key Partnerships

Schools

In reflecting on the Next Steps for Schools, Sustrans Cymru believes there is an opportunity to share more detail about the work that has been done with schools, including Safe Routes in Communities and how these schemes enable more cycling, but also walking and scooting. There is an opportunity to set out more detail on how children can take an active role in designing and deciding on how streets and routes to the school should be designed. Sustrans Cymru is currently developing an approach combining behaviour change and infrastructure measures that would comprise school-led approach to street design.

Workplaces

A collaborative approach, working with businesses is welcomed. Sustrans Cymru is planning the next Cymru Travel Challenge in July this year. Sustrans Cymru understands that Cardiff Council registered to take part in the challenges last year. To help boost promotion of the active travel to employees, Sustrans Cymru would encourage Council-wide support for employees and staff to take part. Over the last year, Sustrans Cymru has worked with at least 10 employers across Cardiff through the challenge, promoting active travel and helping to reduce congestion on local roads. If you would like further information about this year's challenge then please get in touch.

Retail

A focus on retail is strongly supported, both for the city centre and for encouraging local journeys on bike across neighbourhoods in Cardiff. Sustrans Cymru is really pleased to see the aspiration to permit cycling in Queen Street included in the draft INM. Sustrans Cymru believes there is an opportunity for a community-led, collaborative approach to re-introducing cycling in Queen Street. This would involve bringing a range of users together to increase understanding, raise awareness of the role of the street and how all users can be accommodated. We would be interested in discussing this concept with you further.

Missing Links

Following a review of the draft Integrated Network Map, Sustrans Cymru has identified a key missing link between the proposed East-West corridor on Cowbridge Road West and Culverhouse Cross. With the expansion of Culverhouse Cross, this destination is not a retail facility but is also a place of work and a growing residential community. The Vale of Glamorgan Council has recently secured funding to develop walking and cycling route

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linking new developments to Wenvoe and Barry. This presents a major opportunity to complete a missing link in Cardiff West, connecting a major destination for work and retail facilities and for onward journeys between two local authority areas. Completing this type of link would recognise Cardiff's role as a regional destination in South Wales. An early example of this is Pont Y Werin Bridge, that connects Cogan, Cardiff Bay and the wider Vale of Glamorgan via Cogan Station. Sustrans Cymru would like to see a similar approach taken to developing and joining up infrastructure to the north and east of the city working with Rhondda Cynon Taff, Caerphilly and Newport to facilitate everyday journeys being made across boundaries.

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