



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru The National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Menter a Busnes The Enterprise and Business Committee

**Dydd Iau, 18 Ebrill 2013
Thursday, 18 April 2013**

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cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.
In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol Committee members in attendance

Byron Davies	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Keith Davies	Llafur Labour

Yr Arglwydd/Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Alun Ffred Jones	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Eluned Parrott	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Gwyn R. Price	Llafur (yn dirprwyo ar ran Joyce Watson) Labour (substituting for Joyce Watson)
Nick Ramsay	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Welsh Conservatives (Committee Chair)
David Rees	Llafur Labour
Kenneth Skates	Llafur Labour

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Rhyan Berrigan	Swyddog Polisi, Mynediad a Thrafnidiaeth, Anabledd Cymru Policy Officer, Access and Transport, Disability Wales
Hugo Crombie	Dadansoddwr Iechyd y Cyhoedd, y Ganolfan ar gyfer Iechyd y Cyhoedd, y Sefydliad Cenedlaethol dros Iechyd a Rhagoriaeth Glinigol Public Health Analyst, Centre for Public Health, NICE
Rhian Davies	Prif Weithredwr, Anabledd Cymru Chief Executive, Disability Wales
Andrea Gordon	Rheolwr Ymgysylltu, Cŵn Tywys Cymru Engagement Manager, Guide Dogs Cymru
Matt Hemsley	Cynghorwr Polisi, Sustrans Cymru Policy Advisor, Sustrans Cymru
Peter Jones	Swyddog Polisi Cymru, Cŵn Tywys Cymru Wales Policy Officer, Guide Dogs Cymru
Rebecca Leeds	Dehonglwr Iaith Arwyddion Prydain British Sign Language Interpreter
Jane Lorimer	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr, Sustrans Cymru Deputy Director, Sustrans Cymru
Dr Nicki Pease	BMA Cymru Wales
Yr Athro/Professor Colin G. Pooley	Canolfan Amgylcheddol Caerhirfryn, Prifysgol Caerhirfryn Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University
Dr Mark Temple	BMA Cymru Wales
Lee Waters	Cyfarwyddwr Cenedlaethol, Sustrans Cymru National Director, Sustrans Cymru

Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance

Gwyn Griffiths	Uwch-gynghorydd Cyfreithiol Senior Legal Adviser
Andrew Minnis	Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service
Kath Thomas	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Liz Wilkinson	Clerc Clerk

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.32 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.32 a.m.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introductions, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Nick Ramsay:** Welcome to today's meeting of the Enterprise and Business Committee. This meeting is being held bilingually. Headphones can be used for simultaneous translation from Welsh to English on channel 1 or for amplification on channel 0. The meeting is being broadcast, and a transcript of the proceedings will be published. Members, please turn off mobile phones. There is no need to touch the mikes; they will operate automatically. In the event of a fire alarm, please follow directions from the ushers. We have received apologies today from Julie James, and I understand that Dafydd Elis-Thomas will be joining us a little later, for item 3. There are no substitutions.

9.33 a.m.

**Bil Teithio Llesol (Cymru): Cyfnod 1—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 4
Active Travel (Wales) Bill: Stage 1—Evidence Session 4**

[2] **Nick Ramsay:** I welcome our witness to this morning's meeting. Thank you for finding the time to be with us. Would you like to give your name and position for the Record of Proceedings?

[3] **Professor Pooley:** Thank you for inviting me. I am Colin Pooley, professor of social and historical geography in the Lancaster Environment Centre at Lancaster University.

[4] **Nick Ramsay:** Thank you for being here to help us with our inquiry. We have a large number of questions for you, so I propose that we go straight into those. The first question is from Alun Ffred Jones.

[5] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Good morning, Professor Pooley, and thank you for your evidence. Do you believe that this Bill, which focuses on mapping and developing an active travel infrastructure, is an effective way of developing active travel in Wales?

[6] **Professor Pooley:** My view is that it is an important first step but that, on its own, it will not necessarily make a fundamental change to active travel. The reason for that is that, although infrastructure is important, there are a number of other things that have to go with it at the same time. So, at the moment, the Bill does not really make explicit issues around the quality of the infrastructure, and there is a danger that you provide infrastructure, or map existing infrastructure, that walkers and cyclists still feel is inadequate and, therefore, do not use. Secondly, and more fundamentally, there is no necessary connection between the provision of infrastructure and people actually using it, because there are other barriers and reasons why people do not walk or cycle as much as they would like to, or you would like them to. So, my view is that the importance of the Bill is that it sets down a marker that the Welsh Government thinks that this is really important, that active travel is important and that it should be tackled nationally throughout Wales. However, you would then have to do other things to build on it and to develop it.

[7] **Alun Ffred Jones:** You have answered my next question, in part. To what extent do the provisions of the Bill tackle the main barriers that you noted in your evidence, namely safety, convenience and normality? I presume that you do not think that the Bill, as presently structured, does that. Am I right to say that?

[8] **Professor Pooley:** That is correct. On its own, it will not tackle the full range of barriers. There is a lot of evidence from our research, and from other research work, that there are many people who have an inclination to travel actively—in the sense that they have environmental views and they think that it is a good idea—but they find it really hard to do so. One of the key reasons is concerns about safety, particularly with cycling, but much less so around walking, although safety when walking in certain places and at certain times of day is also an issue for some people. However, there are also barriers around simple household constraints. There is the complexity: it is simply easier to put your kids in a car and to drive down the road than it is to get them organised to walk. Also, there is an issue, which came through to us surprisingly strongly in our research, that people who walk and cycle regularly are often perceived as being a bit odd, eccentric or, perhaps, a bit foolhardy in some cases. Until you reverse that and change it, you can provide as much infrastructure as you like, but people may not use it very much. So, it is a question of putting all of the different bits together, which I know is hard, because it requires a multi-agency approach and it involves lots of different people. It is outside the remit of a single committee, but it is that joined thinking that has to deliver, at the end of the day. However, to return to my original point, I do not think that that is a reason for not doing the Bill. The Bill is a first step, and it sets down a marker.

[9] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I think that you have answered my second question.

[10] **Byron Davies:** You say that measures to increase active travel rates are likely to have limited success unless there are also constraints on car use, especially for short journeys. Given that, and the statement that rail improvement and active travel are unlikely to take place unless motorised traffic is restricted in urban areas, how should that be addressed in the Bill?

[11] **Professor Pooley:** That is probably the single most difficult thing to do, because, obviously, you do not want this Bill portrayed as being anti-car. The car is here, it will stay and people will continue to use cars, particularly in rural areas in Wales where there is a dispersed population; car use will continue to be important. So, my views are not at all anti-car.

[12] My views are about more responsible car use, so that, when you are dealing with short trips in urban areas, people begin to move to a mindset of using the car as an exceptional or unusual thing, but of walking, cycling or using public transport as the normal thing. The way to do that is by providing good facilities for walking, cycling and using public transport. However, that has to be accompanied by restricting car use. There are multiple ways in which you can do that, some of which are already being done in many cities. How it is done has to vary from place to place and has to be tailored to suit local circumstances. However, it certainly involves reducing traffic speeds—having 20 mph speed limits, which are increasingly being implemented. Another important thing is to restrict car access, particularly in residential streets, by having one-way systems or resident-only access. Removing road space is another way of doing it. If we are to provide properly segregated cycleways, segregated from cars and pedestrians, and pedestrian footpaths that are wide enough for people to feel comfortable using them, it will mean reducing road space, which will almost certainly restrict traffic, and we would have to accept that that would be part and parcel of a plan.

[13] Also, something that could be done quite easily, which might make quite a significant difference to how motorists view their role and position in the road, is to adopt the system of strict liability of insurance, which exists in most continental European countries, and which does not change criminal responsibility but places the responsibility on the most powerful road user, in other words, the driver, in terms of fault. So, if there is an accident, there is an

assumption that the driver is at fault, which affects the way in which people drive. If you talk to people in the Netherlands or Denmark, where there are very high rates of cycling, you will hear that their understanding of the need to respect cyclists and pedestrians is really important. This probably cannot be done unilaterally by the Welsh Government, but it would certainly be worth lobbying Westminster about it, I would think. A combination of things can be done.

[14] However, at the end of the day, it is about changing the attitudes of motorists and changing the power balance in the way in which cities are planned. For the last half century, cities have primarily been planned for cars, and cyclists and walkers have been pushed to the margins. So, this is a question of gradually reversing that process, even by doing really simple things. For example, at pedestrian crossings on busy roads, how much time do people have to cross? What is the priority? How long do pedestrians have to wait? Changing things like that is very simple, but it could change the balance of power and make people feel that walking is comfortable and something that they want to do.

[15] **Byron Davies:** Is this not a case of reinforcing the highway code?

[16] **Professor Pooley:** Up to a point, yes. I think that you are right: a lot of what I am suggesting could be done already within existing legislation. However, that legislation needs to be properly enforced.

[17] **Byron Davies:** That is a good point. What key changes would you identify as being necessary to bring about significant improvements in the active travel Bill?

[18] **Professor Pooley:** In terms of what is missing from the Bill and what would need to be added in later legislation or related measures, the first thing is a very clear statement about what is meant by the provision of safe routes. These have to be routes that are of a high quality and that are, wherever possible, fully segregated. That is not specified at the moment. The requirement is to map routes. It does not state how you define precisely what those routes are. If all that you are doing is mapping existing inadequate cycleways, that is not going to change anything. So, there has to be something about the nature and quality of routes, and their level of segregation, particularly for cyclists. That is absolutely critical. That is one thing that should definitely be in the Bill.

[19] The second thing that should be in the Bill is a greater emphasis on measures to restrict car use. To go back to what I was saying previously, this is about changing the balance of power. Those are the two key things that could be legislated for within this Bill. Other changes are more complicated, in the sense that they probably go outside the remit of the Bill. These would include, for instance, a requirement that all new housing should be provided with adequate storage space for bicycles—and perhaps existing housing should also be back-fitted, if possible. This is a really simple issue. If you live in an apartment or a terraced house, where do you put your bike? If it is in a shed and you have to wheel it through your house to get it to a road, it is a disincentive. You need to have those sorts of facilities built into your urban infrastructure; it should be in the building regulations.

[20] A much larger issue, which can be tackled through the planning process to some degree, is the reconfiguration of cities and towns, so that the things that people need are within walking or cycling distance. This is the other factor: the more that things are distributed to out-of-town centres, and the further that people feel that they have to travel, the less likely it is that they will travel in a sustainable fashion. So, there is a whole range of factors, but the two key things that could be added easily to this Bill relate to quality and segregation, and restrictions on the use of cars.

[21] **Byron Davies:** On that point, and returning to the point that you made in your last

answer, is it not a fact that the Bill, as it is written at the moment, is inclined to favour road engineers and designers sticking to what they have at the moment rather than finding new ways through?

[22] **Professor Pooley:** Absolutely, and that then becomes a further issue, because finance will inevitably be limited. Anyone who implements the Bill will try to do it in the cheapest possible way, which will probably mean sticking to the status quo rather than providing the quality of infrastructure that is needed.

[23] **Nick Ramsay:** The next question is from Eluned Parrott.

[24] **Eluned Parrott:** I wish to ask some questions about the designation of active travel routes. The appropriateness of those routes is to be assessed on the basis of whether the route facilities non-recreational journeys specifically, as opposed to recreational journeys. What are your thoughts on the implications of that for developing a cycle network as a whole?

9.45 a.m.

[25] **Professor Pooley:** In some ways, the distinction between recreational and non-recreational travel is an arbitrary one. People may decide to commute to work on foot or by bike because they enjoy doing it and they think it is good for them, and those are the same reasons they might go for a walk or a cycle ride for recreational reasons. The two link together and, to my mind, there is not a clear distinction between them. What is important is that—particularly with walking, but less so with cycling—seeing walking as a utility form of transport is something that transport planning in recent years has failed to do. Going for a walk is seen primarily, by most people, as a leisure activity; it is not seen as a means of transport. One of the things that I think is important is that both walking and cycling are brought fully in to the process of transport planning and that cities are planned for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as for cars. In terms of the definition of whether it is recreational or utility, I do not think that it matters all that much, except that, to my mind, it requires the provision of routes to those locations that people use on an everyday basis. In other words, it is not necessarily about improving cycle routes or off-road footpaths to country parks and by canals—the nice scenic places where you might walk the dog or take the kids; it is about taking them to the city centre, to places where people walk, to railway stations and bus stations, where you can interchange to other forms of transport. In other words, it is about making sure that they exist in those places that people use and travel through every day, going about their everyday business.

[26] **Eluned Parrott:** You have said that there is not enough emphasis on the quality and the fitness of the routes being proposed. One of the appropriateness measures is the location, nature and condition of the route. How would you seek to see that beefed up if that is not an adequate measure?

[27] **Professor Pooley:** There should be an explicit requirement for segregation, from road traffic and from pedestrians. Although it can work, shared space for cyclists and pedestrians can cause conflict. Conflict between cyclists and pedestrians can occur just as easily as conflict between cyclists and motorists. So, there should be completely segregated space, wherever that is feasible. That should definitely be on all busy arterial roads. Clearly, back-fitting it to narrow residential streets is going to be difficult. There, you have to find other ways of removing road space, slowing down cars and creating a generally mixed-use space. However, the issue of segregation is crucial.

[28] The other key issue in there, which is implicit but not explicit, is one of maintenance. If you can provide a route, then it has to be a route that people feel is easy to use. I particularly point out the issue of maintenance of footpaths. Many people who walk are put

off because they are afraid of tripping on uneven footpaths, particularly in the autumn with leaves and in the winter with snow and ice. Roads may be cleared, but pavements are often not cleared, so moving around on foot becomes extremely difficult. There should be provisions to make sure that pedestrians can move around as easily in bad winter conditions as motorists can.

[29] **Eluned Parrott:** Obviously, the safety of the routes is a key factor in whether people are going to choose to use them. There has been some discussion in committee about how you would go about looking at safety within the Bill. There is not a direct reference to the need for these routes to be safe. What would you consider to be an appropriate way of phrasing that in a Bill such as this?

[30] **Professor Pooley:** Safety is an interesting issue. There is always a risk, if you are dealing with safety, particularly around walking and cycling, of being lulled into a false sense of security. If you look at the figures for the number of people killed or injured while walking or cycling, you will see that they are quite low. There have been some very high-profile cases of cyclists being killed, but actually the levels are quite low. There are two main reasons for that, particularly with cyclists. One is that not many people cycle, so, in that case, there will be relatively few casualties, and the other is that those people who cycle at the moment, primarily, are those who have learned how to negotiate busy and dangerous traffic systems and sometimes almost enjoy it and know how to survive. If you want to increase active travel, and if you want people who are non-cyclists to cycle, you have to change their perception of it. So, the key thing about safety is not looking at accident figures, but at what people think and what they perceive. It is clear from all the academic research that whether accident figures are high or low, people perceive that cycling is dangerous, and that stops them doing it. So, you have to change perception, and the only way you can change that is by creating totally segregated spaces that are relatively wide, well-lit and well-used. For pedestrians, footfall is really important: busy streets are safe streets. That then, hopefully, becomes a self-reinforcing process. The more people use the streets, the safer they appear and the more likely it is that other people will use them, and then it becomes a normal way of moving around.

[31] Going back to the original point of how to write it into the Bill, the general statement has to be one of creating an environment that people perceive to be safe and feel comfortable using, and that has to be done through a combination of segregation, good quality surfaces, maintenance, lighting and all those other things that go with it. However, it is the perception of safety that is crucial.

[32] **Eluned Parrott:** Looking more generally at the designation of active travel routes, the localities that are identified will be divided based on things such as the population density in that particular community and its proximity to more densely populated areas. How appropriate do you think that approach is? How practical is it in a country that has quite dispersed populations in some areas?

[33] **Nick Ramsay:** Please be brief and succinct in your answer, because we are halfway through and Members have lots of questions.

[34] **Professor Pooley:** I will be very succinct.

[35] It seems a practical starting point, in the sense that I guess that you have to start somewhere. The only point that I would make is that rural areas can pose just as many problems as urban areas, or in some cases worse problems, in terms of road safety. Country roads that are winding and narrow are difficult to cycle on. So, my advice would be not to exclude anywhere.

[36] **Keith Davies:** I do not know how often you go through the Valleys, but if you go

through the Valleys, you will find that most of the schools are on hills, and the Valleys are quite narrow. So, the problems you talk of that exist in rural areas exist in the south Wales Valleys, because they have a population of 2,000 in urban areas.

[37] **Professor Pooley:** Exactly, I agree. I think that it should be applied blanket-wide across the whole of Wales, but the way in which it will be implemented would vary from place to place, depending on local services.

[38] **Nick Ramsay:** Great. I will bring Ken Skates in now and then David Rees.

[39] **Kenneth Skates:** It strikes me that what you are suggesting is that there should be better planning guidance for new housing developments in particular, so that we have, if you like, tree-lined avenues where you have segregated pavements and cycle paths. That, for me, is very desirable, and the Americans do it in their planning systems. However, is it reasonable to expect developers to comply with that, because it will be more expensive for them?

[40] **Professor Pooley:** I think the answer that the developers would give is that if you force them to do it and if there is legislation, they will do it, because, then, their competitors will have to do it. If it is optional or voluntary, they will not, because they will see that they will be at a disadvantage.

[41] **Kenneth Skates:** To move on to local facilities, you said in your evidence that the availability of local facilities was not a factor determining levels of walking and cycling. Given that, how necessary do you think it is to include those within the mapping process?

[42] **Professor Pooley:** What do you mean by ‘facilities’?

[43] **Kenneth Skates:** I mean shelters, washing and showering facilities and so forth.

[44] **Professor Pooley:** The facilities that we were referring to in the research were things such as access to shops and so on. So, that was a different sort of facility. With things such as showering facilities, it is important that they are available at the destination they are going to. So, again, that is about placing responsibilities on employers. Therefore, workplace provision becomes absolutely crucial. It is about ensuring that you have adequate interchanges at public transport, with places to store bikes, and so on. In terms of access to shops, I think that that is important. What we were saying in the research was that simply making streets more permeable and better connected, and having local facilities, does not, on its own, increase walking and cycling; you have to do other things as well.

[45] **Kenneth Skates:** That is also true of trains and buses, presumably.

[46] **Professor Pooley:** Absolutely.

[47] **David Rees:** May I just go back to an earlier point? You talked about the planning side of things and the safety issues. Clearly, there is a question here as to what you consider to be a route. There are differences between routes in urban areas. Perhaps, in towns, they may consider pathways that are unlit—for example, in my area, old railway lines. Where do we stand on the safety aspects? The ones that are unlit can be very unsafe, particularly in the dark.

[48] **Professor Pooley:** That goes back to the point that I was making before. We should not be thinking about the routes on which people walk and cycle as being different from those on which people drive. We should be thinking about the routes on which people travel every day, going about their everyday business. It is not about providing a cycleway or a pedestrian route along an old railway line that is going through the countryside. That is fine if you want

to go for a walk on a Sunday morning; it is not fine if you are going to work or taking the kids to school. The routes are the routes that people use. We should make spaces on and beside existing roads where people can walk and cycle safely. The idea of trying to define a route is almost misleading. It is everywhere; it is the places that people go. It is about having some idea of where people go and what the busy routes are. It seems to me that the busier the routes, the more you should provide.

[49] **David Rees:** I would like to clarify something. You talk about changing the balance of power from cars. It is more about striking a balance, rather than one being dominant over the other. In today's society, people's work lives and needs have changed dramatically. Therefore, I would have thought that it is more about a better balance than a change in power in one way or the other.

[50] **Professor Pooley:** Rebalancing would be another good way of putting it. It is perhaps worth emphasising that one of the things that we did in our research was to try to do some analysis that looked at people's identity as travellers. We had a large amount of qualitative data and ran statistical analysis through it. That showed—perhaps not unsurprisingly—that there are some people who are committed walkers, some who are committed cyclist and some who are committed motorists, but what was most interesting was that that accounted for only about 40% of the variants in the data sets. Nearly two thirds were unaccounted for: in other words, people are willing to switch. People do not have strong preferences as to how they travel, so if it was made a little bit easier, they would walk or cycle. It is not as though you are dealing with a population that is absolutely committed to the car under all circumstances. There is no evidence of that at all.

[51] **David Rees:** Does the Bill start that process? It is a long-term process, but does the Bill start it?

[52] **Professor Pooley:** I think that it starts it. As I said at the beginning, it is a very good starting point. It could be improved by putting more things in it, but what you must not do is to stop. You have to go on and do other things beyond it, and you have to work with other agencies, both public and private, and with other sectors of government.

[53] **David Rees:** Part of the Bill is that local authorities are required to produce maps. In your evidence, you indicate that that is a good first step. Where do you see it going from there?

[54] **Professor Pooley:** The maps provide information. As I have already said, we have to make sure that that information lives up to people's expectations: in other words, that what is mapped is worth using and that people want to use it. You then have to begin to change the other things that stop people from walking and cycling. The routes are there, so they can be used, but people may still find it very difficult. It is a question of overcoming what is sometimes seen as the value-action gap. People have values and they want to do something, but they do not take action. It is those other barriers that are not covered in the Bill at the moment and that require the interaction with other agencies that I have talked about already.

[55] **David Rees:** In other words, it is a good idea, a good starting point and worth doing, but there are other issues, which is why it is a first step.

[56] **Professor Pooley:** I would also do the mapping more quickly. I think that you put three years in there. There is not a lot there at the moment; I do not think that it is going to take three years to do. I would let them get on with it.

[57] **David Rees:** As regards the period of time when you get it done initially and the recycling, do you have any experience of other countries that have a different timescale for

recycling? I think that the recycling is every three years, and the WLGA suggests resubmission every five years.

[58] **Professor Pooley:** I do not have direct experience of that, but the initial mapping should be done quickly and there should be rapid follow-up to see where to go from there. It should be a relatively rapid cycle if you are going to make change. Otherwise, it will fall into inertia and people will lose interest in it. Once you start, you have to keep the momentum going.

10.00 a.m.

[59] **David Rees:** I have one final question on the integrated network map. We held an inquiry on integrated public transport; how does this fit together with integrated public transport and the direction that we wish to take here?

[60] **Professor Pooley:** As I have hinted at already, it is really important that walking and cycling are fully integrated into transport planning. So, walking, cycling, public transport, and road users all need to be seen as a fully integrated system with all of their needs balanced equally. In terms of planning, you need to think about the way in which walking and cycling routes link into the public transport network of buses and trains. That is particularly important with a dispersed population for which many journeys will be multi-mode: you will walk or cycle, then you will travel by train to somewhere else. Linking those up effectively is absolutely crucial. So, yes, this is about integration of maps, but integration in the way in which you think about transport planning is also crucial.

[61] **David Rees:** As a rider on that, we often think of developing cycling and walking routes to meet bus routes and, obviously, trains, but bus routes in particular. Should we also be expecting our transport providers to look at how they can deliver and meet the proposals and plans that local authorities put together? In other words, should we put the emphasis back on the operators to meet the requirements?

[62] **Professor Pooley:** It has to be a combined effort. There should be a responsibility on the operators and on local authorities, and they should work together. The ability to carry more bikes on trains, for example, is an obvious issue and responsibility for which should be placed on the operator. There is also the ability to carry bikes on buses, which happens in other European countries, so it is possible.

[63] **Nick Ramsay:** We need to move things on now, as we are into the last 15 minutes of the meeting. Joyce Watson is next.

[64] **Joyce Watson:** You have more or less answered this, but there is a suggestion that the timetable for review and resubmission of maps should be extended from three to five years so that it is synchronised with local and regional transport plans. What are your views on that?

[65] **Professor Pooley:** I think that it is too long. The danger is that the local authority will do something and then forget about it for four years, then come back and do it again five years later. It should be an ongoing process. So, I would like to see something in there that requires local authorities to be continually moving forward. You might want to have a three-year or a five-year review, but there needs to be something else that keeps the process moving.

[66] **Keith Davies:** When we have spoken about the Bill and talked about continuous improvement, one of the criticisms has been that there have been no targets set within the Bill. What is your view on targets?

[67] **Professor Pooley:** It depends on what you are trying to achieve. The danger is that the Bill focuses on infrastructure. So, you have a target that says that every local authority must have x kilometres of cycleways, or whatever, and you can probably achieve that, but it does not necessarily mean that anybody will use them. So, if you are going to have targets, it would be good, rather than having a target of 2% of trips made on bikes, to have a target of 5% or 10% of trips made on bikes. That provides you with a much more sensible target. So, the target should be active travel and not the provision of the infrastructure. As I have said, to achieve that, you have to do more than just provide the infrastructure. The danger of setting targets in the Bill is that the target would be the infrastructure, when, actually, the target should be the end-point of increasing active travel.

[68] **Keith Davies:** The other criticism that we have had of what currently exists relates to the finance that is available. We had one response saying that the Welsh Government is only providing half of what is actually needed. What is your view on that?

[69] **Professor Pooley:** I do not have detailed knowledge of Welsh Government finances, but clearly, everywhere is short of money at the moment, therefore there will not be a large pot of money. There is a large transport budget, I am sure, so there is scope to shift that around. Therefore, rather than spending money on road improvements, why not spend it on cycleways? Cycleways are not cheap, particularly if you are going to do proper junctions, but they are a lot cheaper than building new roads and the benefits can be enormous. So, your starting point has to be to look at how you distribute the existing budget. You have an existing budget; how do you distribute it and spend it? There must be scope to redistribute some of it. If you can find additional funding, then you should do so. I am sure that you have thought about this already, but it might work quite well to try to set up two or three pilot projects by choosing two or three communities of different size in different parts of Wales to put some money into them and say, 'This is what you can do to increase walking and cycling in these communities of different sorts'. If you put in relatively modest sums of money and use those as demonstration projects, which can then be rolled out and developed elsewhere, that will convince people that it can be done.

[70] **Keith Davies:** So, should we be saying to local government, when it is after developers for section 106 agreements, that section 106 agreements could fit in here and provide extra finance?

[71] **Professor Pooley:** I am not sure that I know precisely what a section 106 agreement is, but, yes, there is definitely a need to work with developers.

[72] **Nick Ramsay:** Did you have another question, Alun Ffred Jones? Mine have been covered.

[73] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I am not aware that I have another question.

[74] **Nick Ramsay:** It has probably been covered in other comments. Professor Pooley, with regard to the requirement for highway authorities to

[75] 'have regard to the desirability of enhancing the provision made for walkers and cyclists'

[76] in highways schemes, is that sufficient, given your comment that road schemes must include active travel provision?

[77] **Professor Pooley:** I would say that it is a bit weak and that it provides an opportunity for developers to do very little. I would prefer to see a wording that requires them to provide

fully segregated, good-quality cycleways and pedestrian routes alongside new road schemes. There really is no excuse for not providing those with new road schemes.

[78] **Nick Ramsay:** We certainly have had difficulty understanding what exactly 'have regard to' meant—whether that was just a matter of looking at it occasionally or actually doing something.

[79] **Prof Pooley:** They can regard it and then do nothing. I think that it could be an awful lot stronger.

[80] **Nick Ramsay:** Did you have a supplementary question on that, David Rees?

[81] **David Rees:** Not on that. A lot of the evidence that you have given in relation to your research refers to a collection of activities that need to be undertaken to basically change societal approaches to travel—full stop. Is part of the problem the fact that it is a societal issue, rather than any specific point, and that people's lifestyle today means that, whereas you may have had a member of a family at home during the daytime and were therefore able to do a lot of things and have a bit more time to do things, everyone is rushing around because they have less time? More people are actually out of the house and in work. Is there a major focus that we have to look at in terms of society and societal changes, and is this a good way of starting that change? That, I think, is what we want to know.

[82] **Professor Pooley:** It is one piece of a very large jigsaw. However, you are right to suggest that there is a lot more to it than just providing the routes. It makes a statement that this is a direction that you want to move in, and that is important, but it needs to be done alongside other things. I would stress that historical evidence and evidence from our recent research suggest that people are willing to change how they travel. People are not fixed. There is a tendency to think, 'We can't do this because people will not change. They must have their cars, and they must travel in this way'. Most people are actually quite prepared to vary how they travel, and might actually look forward to the change if it was made a bit easier. That might mean not just providing routes or providing places to store bicycles, but encouraging firms to have more flexible working so that people can travel at different times of the day, when it is less busy and they feel a bit more relaxed. There is a whole range of factors like that, which are societal and economic. Together, they can begin to make a real difference. It then has a cumulative effect. If we go back to the issue of normality, which came out strongly in our research, the more people feel that walking and cycling is a normal and expected thing to do, the more they will do it. If your neighbours will do it, you will do it. One of the things that we show very clearly is that those people who walk and cycle at the moment do so mostly because they know other people who do it. They are part of a community that does similar sorts of things. People who do not do it do not know many people who walk and cycle, and think that those who do are a bit odd. It is a matter of creating that—

[83] **Nick Ramsay:** Byron Davies has a burning supplementary question on this, so I will just bring him in.

[84] **Byron Davies:** I am not sure that it is a burning question. There are big regional differences. I am just interested in where you did your research.

[85] **Professor Pooley:** The research was done in four English towns, I am afraid. There is absolutely no reason why Welsh towns should be different. The research was done in Leeds, Leicester, Worcester and Lancaster—four towns of different sizes, in different parts of the country, with different levels of existing intervention to try to promote walking and cycling. Somewhere like Lancaster has had quite a lot of input for improving cycling because it is a cycling demonstration town; Leeds, I would argue, is probably one of the worst places to cycle in the country. These provided quite a variety of different places. We deliberately

avoided London because it is a special case in terms of its transport provision and has been studied quite a lot already. However, I would say that what surprised us was that the findings from the four towns were remarkably similar, in the sense that there was no obvious difference in terms of size. I am sure that they will be transferrable to Welsh communities. What also came through quite strongly was that, when you focused on very small communities, there was quite a lot of local variation, so whatever is done has to be done very much in the context of a local environment and a local community. You cannot say, ‘You must put in this sort of segregated cycleway’, because what you put in will vary and depend on the nature of the local place. That place-specific aspect is also quite important.

[86] **David Rees:** May I follow up on that point?

[87] **Nick Ramsay:** I just want to ask something first. On that point, Professor Pooley, you said in previous evidence that you think it is important that there is a mechanism for making sure that the improvements are of a certain standard. You have mentioned standards a few times during your answers today. Do you think that, as the Bill stands, the design guidance is likely to be more effective than the existing guidance? Does it concern you, as it has concerned members of this committee, that we are leaving a lot to the regulations and afterwards, and the face of the Bill is actually quite vague in what those standards should be? Would you like to see that being more hard-hitting?

[88] **Professor Pooley:** Yes, I would. The Bill is too vague, and it would be good to have set down within the Bill much more specific and demanding criteria in relation to standards.

[89] **David Rees:** On the research question and the four towns, did they have similar geographies as well? Clearly, there are some differences in geography, and I am wondering how we can ensure that the Bill fits all the geographies within Wales.

[90] **Professor Pooley:** No, they were quite varied. Lancaster is quite hilly, Leicester is relatively flat, the north-west is wet and the east is relatively dry. What was quite interesting, not just from our research, but from research right across Europe, is that local topography and weather conditions are actually much less important than people think. High levels of cycling exist in Sweden and right across northern Europe—in Germany, Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands. These are places that are just like Britain, and are no different to Wales. Yes, Wales is hilly, and people will not cycle very much in the hilliest parts of Wales, but they may still cycle short distances to get to a bus stop or whatever. You should not assume that people are put off—

[91] **Nick Ramsay:** The downhill sections would be doable. [*Laughter.*]

[92] **Professor Pooley:** That is right. You would want an escalator to bring them back up again. [*Laughter.*]

[93] **Nick Ramsay:** When we took evidence from the Minister who formerly had responsibility for this, he said that a requirement to include active travel provision could potentially lead to its inclusion in schemes where it is not appropriate. I wondered if you had any comment on the Minister’s view there.

[94] **Professor Pooley:** I find it hard to conceive of any thinking where it would not be appropriate. On the assumption that we travel, to some degree, to do most activities, then it should be relevant to almost anything that one can think of. I find it hard to understand precisely the point that he is making.

[95] **Nick Ramsay:** Yes. [*Laughter.*] I would say, ‘Thank you for the clarification’, but—
[*Laughter.*]

[96] Finally on this, you mentioned segregation in response to an earlier question, and how, in terms of safety, if you segregate these routes from current routes, that could be safer. There have been instances in the past—and I can think of a few in the area where I grew up—where segregation was very well-meaning but actually ended up with routes being longer and not providing a short cut, to put it that way, with people then walking along roads, for instance. Clearly it would be important to avoid that happening.

[97] **Professor Pooley:** Absolutely, and this goes back to what I said right at the beginning about the quality and the siting. The routes that are provided should not be separate from roads and the routes that people take. You do not want cycleways and pedestrian routes that go off on a detour and go on the scenic route. They should be alongside roads. They should be the most direct routes that enable people to get from one place to another. They should not require you to go further or to go around a quiet, unlit area rather than going along a busy street where there are people, lights and shops, because those places are perceived as safe. So, it is important that they are the routes that people use in their everyday lives.

10.15 a.m.

[98] **Nick Ramsay:** We have finished on the dot. Thank you, Professor Pooley, for being with us today to provide us with those answers. It has been helpful. We had a large number of questions for you, and we rattled through them, so thank you for your succinctness.

[99] **Professor Pooley:** Thank you very much for your time, and good luck with the progress of the Bill.

[100] **Nick Ramsay:** We will feed your answers into the inquiry and we will let you know how we get on.

[101] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I am sorry, Chair, I missed my second lot of questions—it was my fault—but you picked them up, which was marvellous.

[102] **Nick Ramsay:** That is a Chair's role, sometimes, Alun Ffred.

10.16 a.m.

Bil Teithio Llesol (Cymru): Cyfnod 1—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 5 **Active Travel (Wales) Bill: Stage 1—Evidence Session 5**

[103] **Nick Ramsay:** I welcome our next set of witnesses to this morning's session of the committee. Thank you for agreeing to be with us today to help with the inquiry. Would you like to give your names and positions for the record?

[104] **Mr Waters:** Good morning. I am Lee Waters, the director of Sustrans Cymru. This is Jane Lorimer, who is a deputy director and, as of next week, the interim director or acting director of Sustrans Cymru, and this is Matt Hemsley, who is our policy adviser.

[105] **Nick Ramsay:** Congratulations on your appointment, Jane Lorimer. The first questions are from Eluned Parrott.

[106] **Eluned Parrott:** Thank you for your evidence. I wanted to ask you about the general approach taken in the Bill, with a focus on mapping the travel routes and on improvement and expansion in those routes. Do you think that that is the most effective way of achieving the policy aim of increasing the rate of active travel?

[107] **Mr Waters:** It is worth briefly remembering what the purpose of this Bill is, because I think that we can get into the detail, and Professor Pooley's evidence on that was fascinating. However, we all need to remember that this is a means to an end, not an end in itself and that one in three children under the age of 16 is overweight or obese. Out of the 35 countries that were surveyed, Wales has the fifth highest obesity rate. So, there is a serious societal problem that this is one means of addressing. This is not a Bill to increase cycling for the sake of increasing cycling, but to increase active travel as a means of attacking a whole range of other problems. We strongly support the Bill; as you know, we have been pushing for it for a long time, but the Bill, as Professor Pooley said, is an important start, but no more than that.

[108] Inevitably, when you frame legislation, you look at what the legislation is required to do, and this Bill focuses on mapping. It is a mapping Bill, rather than a Bill to promote active travel, and Carl Sargeant, when he was asked a question about that directly, was quite clear and gave quite a startling answer in that there was no duty to promote active travel; there was just a duty to produce maps. Maps are an important part of the process, because they throw up where the gaps are and also they provide information to people, and we know from our work on our personalised travel planning project, which is mentioned in our evidence and which Jane has been leading, that the provision of information is a key barrier and an incentive to changing travel behaviour. So, the provision of mapping is important, but there is a danger that it will get caught up in itself and we forget what this Bill is about and is trying to do.

[109] **Eluned Parrott:** There is the danger that the provision of a map is not the same as the promotion of its use among the individuals who are targeted by the policy. You talk in your evidence about the personalised travel planning programme, which you have been running in Cardiff and Penarth successfully, as far as I understand, in terms of increasing active travel rates. Do you think that there might be more appropriate ways of achieving the overall policy aim or do you think that the Bill is the most appropriate route?

[110] **Ms Lorimer:** We believe that a mixture of approaches is what is called for, and this is very much a good start in identifying where the existing provision is and then drawing a line in the sand and saying, 'Okay; this is where the intention is to develop new routes', and, obviously, it is the integrated network map that would do that. However, that very much needs to be accompanied by a whole programme of other interventions—what we call smarter choices projects. Actually, I can give an example. On Monday, we were with David Rees in the Afan valley, at Pontrhydyfen, where there is a good route, very close to a school. When Sustrans started working with that school, however, there were no pupils cycling. Now, four years later, that school has just won a UK-wide competition and, over three weeks, it had 100% of the pupils cycling, using that route. So, together, with a behaviour change programme, that is where changes come about, because the route was there but it was underused. That is the approach. Really, that is what we believe the vision set out in the White Paper was about: a culture of active travel. So, we very much believe that there needs to be a mixture of infrastructure and smart choices.

[111] **Eluned Parrott:** Do you think that there is a danger that the Bill will divert scarce resources away from those kinds of programmes towards mapping exercises, and do you think that, actually, there is the potential for not even leading a horse to water anymore, but just providing the water in the first place and not telling anybody that it is there?

[112] **Mr Waters:** It is worth remembering that there is a range of activities taking place at the moment of variable quality and effectiveness. What this Bill does—and if it does nothing else it will be a worthwhile activity—is to make sure that current activity is done more strategically and smartly, because we do see schemes largely brought in because of end-of-year underspends. At the end of November/December, there is a ring-around in local authorities: 'What can we build by the end of March?' They try to build something very

quickly, and the imperative is what can be built, rather than what will have the greatest effect on changing people's travel behaviour. Typically, we see routes just slapped down next to the side of roads, or red paint is put down, and until now, there has not been any strategic analysis of what would need to be put in to get people to change their behaviour.

[113] If done properly, what the mapping exercise will achieve is an analysis of where the trip generators, the schools, the hospitals, the large workplaces, the housing developments and the train stations are, and where the current routes and gaps are, and it will ask how you fill that to create a useful network for everyday journeys. That does not happen at the moment, and this Bill will go some way towards ensuring that that will happen. There is an almost exclusive focus on infrastructure and on routes—it is not even on networks, and in its evidence, Natural Resources Wales, which is coming in this afternoon, makes a very strong point that this should be about networks, whereas it is just about routes.

[114] There is not enough emphasis on the things that you need to do to get people to change their behaviour, such as cycle training, the provision of information and a whole range of what we call softer measures. We know from our experience, and from the evidence, that you can put routes in, as Jane mentioned, but they will not necessarily be used to their fullest extent, and I think that this Bill misses a trick in that.

[115] **Eluned Parrott:** In your response to the White Paper originally, and in your evidence to us, you are very detailed about the kind of things that you think will be effective in achieving change. You talk about best practice design guidance and things along those lines. None of that is on the face of the Bill at the moment. You say that you believe that there is a danger that the Bill's provisions will fall short of achieving the stated ambition. Had you hoped to see more detail included on the face of the Bill itself?

[116] **Mr Hemsley:** First, it is generally about going back to what is the aim of the Bill. If you look at the White Paper, you will see that it talks explicitly about culture change—about changing culture across Wales, to make walking and cycling the normal ways to get around for everyday travel. It sets that out very clearly. However, as it stands, and as the preamble states, the Bill is very much a mapping exercise and about routes, and I think we need to go back to the clarity of what this Bill is for and what it is seeking to achieve, as there has been a difference there between the White Paper and the legislation. Therefore, if the Bill is looking to achieve culture change across Wales, to make walking and cycling normal for everyday travel, then the provisions within it may not deliver that. Certainly, there are issues with what is going to be in the guidance on what is on the face of the Bill, but if you are looking to change a culture, the provisions as they are will fall short of the ambitions set out in the White Paper.

[117] **Miss Lorimer:** I have just one further point on the guidance. We have some concern that the guidance will not come under the same level of scrutiny as the Bill currently is, because it is being developed after this period has concluded.

[118] **Mr Waters:** The key point, in relation to the guidance, is the fact that Professor Pooley's evidence is powerful because it comes from a non-user perspective. You will notice in other evidence that his emphasis on segregation would be very different from the emphasis placed by cycling groups, because they will want to make the existing roads safe for people on bikes, rather than having them separate from the roads. That is just a cultural difference. Do you approach this from the perspective of someone who would never dream of getting on a bike and consider what it would take to get them on it, or do you take it from the perspective of somebody who already cycles and wants to do more, or wants to make it safer and more pleasant? That is where the design guidance really comes in. That is what strikes me as somebody who is not a 'cyclist'—I have come new to cycling.

[119] It is the small detail that really makes the difference, such as: is there a dropped kerb, is there a 'cyclists dismount' sign, is the route pleasant, is it direct, is it comfortable, and does it go where you want to go, rather than taking you around the houses? That, really, will ultimately decide whether this Bill is a success or not. You can spend an awful lot of money on infrastructure, and we have seen that happen. I can think of an example in Alun Ffred Jones's constituency, where a nice new path has been put in near the Vaynol estate. It is a huge improvement, but a great big barrier has been put at either end of it, which means that you have to get off your bike and struggle to get through. It is completely inappropriate and unnecessary. It is that fine grain detail of implementation that really lets down a lot of what is currently put in. That is why it is so important that the design guidance is both scrutinised and has weight behind it so that it is not an optional add-in that highway engineers, who are not trained to do this stuff, can disregard because that is not the way that they have ever done it before. So, it is really important that it is scrutinised, but also that it has some teeth to it.

[120] **Kenneth Skates:** I think that that pretty much answers the question that I was going to ask.

[121] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Gofynnaf fy nghwestiwn yn Gymraeg. A allwch ymhelaethu ar eich pryderon ynglŷn â'r diffiniad o 'lwybr teithio llesol' sy'n cael ei nodi yn adran 2? Yn benodol, pam ydych yn credu y dylid diwygio'r prawf addasrwydd a gynhwysir yn y diffiniad o 'lwybr teithio llesol' i gyfeirio at lwybrau sy'n barhaus, yn uniongyrchol, yn ddiogel ac yn gyfforddus i gerdded a beicio arnynt?

Alun Ffred Jones: I will ask my question in Welsh. Can you expand upon your concerns about the definition of 'active travel route' that is provided in section 2? In particular, why do you believe that the test of suitability included in the definition of an 'active travel route' should be amended to refer to routes that are continuous, direct, safe and comfortable for walking and cycling?

[122] **Mr Hemsley:** I will take the first part of that question. With regard to the mapping and having a sole definition of 'active travel route'—and you heard this in Professor Pooley's evidence earlier—we know that many of the routes that exist at the moment fall short of the quality that is required to have a continuous network and get people feeling safe while out on their bikes. So, if existing routes can be mapped in the initial map and are signed off as 'active travel routes', then you risk them being seen as being the appropriate level of infrastructure and up to the right standards. So, we would perhaps like to see, in the existing mapping, that what exists is mapped, but we would also like it to be made very clear that that will not then qualify as an 'active travel route' as we move on and get towards introducing what we would like to see in terms of mandatory standards, otherwise there is a risk that what is already there will be qualified as a route that is up to scratch and it will continue to exist. There is a risk that these will not be improved and that barriers will not be removed, for example, because it is mapped out in that way. So, that is a bit of a concern about a single definition and a definition being applied consistently throughout the Bill.

[123] **Mr Waters:** There is also a concern about local authorities following the path of least resistance, if you pardon the pun. What safeguards will be put in place to monitor these maps and to judge them as being fit for purpose and to scrutinise how they will be implemented? To give an example, there could be a major road that gets from A to B that is the only real alternative. It may well be decided that that is not a suitable route for active travel because it is too busy, or it would be too difficult or expensive to make it safe. So, a suitable active travel route could be one that goes around the houses, takes an indirect route and, in practice, is unlikely to be well used. To meet the objective set out in the White Paper, over time, we should be looking at how we can make the most desirable route, the most direct route, the route that is regarded as an active travel route.

[124] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Felly, a ydych **Alun Ffred Jones:** Therefore, do you want to

am newid y diffiniad yn y Bil? Ai dyna yw eich dymuniad fel corff? change the definition in the Bill? Is that your aspiration as an organisation?

10.30 a.m.

[125] **Mr Waters:** The definition is probably best left to guidance, as long as the guidance is properly scrutinised and can be challenged. I do not think that the face of the Bill is the place to be getting into defining a route. I think that there is a distinction between route design and path design—the size of the dropped kerbs, for example—versus network design. I know that the Welsh Government has set up a very good expert group, which we sit on and which is led by Phil Jones, the lead author of the ‘Manual for Streets’ approach, which is regarded as the best practice in street design.

[126] **Nick Ramsay:** You have just anticipated my next question.

[127] **Mr Waters:** I apologise. We have great confidence in that group—there are some very good people on it, and they are looking at path design and network design. It is important, as was said earlier, that what it comes out with is given weight. The parallel is that, when you build a road, you have to comply with something called the design manual for roads and bridges. You have to get an explicit opt-out if you are going to depart from that. That is the bible of road-building; all the engineers work from it. We want to see a parallel status for the standards that come out of this process; there needs to be a very good reason for not complying with best practice, rather than it being seen as optional guidance, because there is good guidance already in place, but it is just ignored. So it is really important for both the network design and the path design that the work that Phil Jones produces is adhered to.

[128] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Ar fater ychydig yn wahanol, mae'r Bil yn canolbwyntio ar lwybrau sydd wedi eu cyfyngu, mwy neu lai, i gymunedau o 2,000 o bobl. A ydych yn hapus gyda'r diffiniad hwnnw? **Alun Ffred Jones:** On a slightly different issue, the Bill concentrates on routes that are limited, more or less, to communities of 2,000 people. Are you content with that designation?

[129] **Mr Hemsley:** No, not really. It is a rather crude designation and it ignores the massive potential for shifting journeys to active travel across huge parts of Wales, where there are not many settlements with a population of over 2,000, within and between smaller settlements, where one may have facilities such as post offices, shops and schools and the other may not, but it is very nearby. Although it is still small, there is huge potential. So, in terms of population thresholds, that crude measure makes it very difficult to look at those kind of things. We recognise that there are some challenges, and there are some parts of Wales where this will be more difficult to apply or different to apply. We would prefer a system where the Minister was able to instruct the names of settlements that needed to be mapped, so that we could look at where settlements exist that are smaller but have the potential to shift journeys both within and between them, and that they were all part of the mapping, rather than having a crude measure based entirely on size, which does not take into account any of those issues.

[130] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A ydych yn hapus bod gan Gweinidogion Cymru y pŵer i bennu'r manau hynny sy'n cael eu nodi'n 'llwybrau teithio llesol'? A ydych yn hapus i'r Gweinidog gael y pŵer hwnnw? **Alun Ffred Jones:** Are you content that Welsh Ministers have the power to designate those localities that are designated 'active travel routes'? Are you happy for that power to sit with the Minister?

[131] **Mr Waters:** We would prefer a different approach. I think that this has come from the exercise that you go through, when you draw up a Bill, of undertaking a regulatory impact assessment. As a result, you have to apply population thresholds. I think it is an entirely

artificial approach, but that is where, I believe, this has come from. As Matt was saying, even in small rural hamlets, 50 or 60 years ago, people would walk and cycle around—that is how they travelled. We have changed that as a deliberate act, and it can be changed again; I do not accept that this cannot be done. It is an entirely economic consideration that it would be too expensive to do it everywhere, therefore you need to prioritise where it is done. If you accept that approach, fine, but I do not think that we necessarily should. The spirit of the active travel White Paper is sincere. We cannot afford to exclude communities because there is potential for active travel everywhere, and the health problems are everywhere—they are not just urban problems.

[132] So, you can accept that analysis or not. However, if you are to have some kind of cut-off, rather than having a crude threshold, it might be better to publish a list of settlements. For example, Tongwynlais on the outskirts of Cardiff, which is on the Taff Trail, has a population of less than 2,000. Had there been no network there and should this Bill goes through as it currently stands, Tongwynlais would not be served by an active travel route. We know, because the Taff trail exists and Tongwynlais is on it, that there is huge potential in Tongwynlais to travel actively, because it is within close travelling proximity to a larger settlement. So, I think that there does need to be a more sophisticated approach to this. Perhaps there should be a list of settlements, whereby you can then say, ‘Well, this is a settlement of less than 2,000, but it is near to a larger settlement, it forms a community and is part of a cluster of communities, and it should therefore be included.’ Maybe that is a pragmatic way forward.

[133] **Nick Ramsay:** Joyce Watson has the next set of questions.

[134] **Joyce Watson:** Do you think that it is appropriate that active travel routes have a non-recreational, urban focus?

[135] **Mr Hemsley:** All routes serve all purposes, and the distinction in the Bill between recreational and non-recreational routes is really unhelpful. The Taff trail is a perfect example. We produce a map for the Taff trail and we advertise it as a route that people can use for leisure purposes, for a day out and that kind of thing. However, if you look at the monitoring that we do at peak times of the day, six out of every 10 people who are using it are commuting, and they are using it for shorter journeys and for meaningful journeys that are considered to be non-recreational. So, all routes are there for a variety of purposes. I doubt very much that there is a route that has never had anyone using it to get from A to B and has just been a holiday route. So, I think the distinction on the face of the Bill is really unhelpful, in that all routes serve a variety of purposes.

[136] **Mr Waters:** I think, in fairness, that this is probably the law of unintended consequences. I think what was intended by this was that the Minister did not want local authorities doing just the easy stuff, which may well be a remote route between A and B, whereby they could say that they were complying with the Bill but it would not really make a difference. However, in practice, I think it is an unhelpful distinction.

[137] **Joyce Watson:** Okay, thank you. Do you think there is a need to define specific related facilities on the face of the Bill, and are the three currently specified appropriate, given the concerns of regional transport consortia that local authorities may give particular attention to just those?

[138] **Ms Lorimer:** We have picked up there is some concern around specifying particular facilities. We would agree that the risk of doing that is that it would be a narrow interpretation. We suspect that that does not need to be on the face of the Bill but should be dealt with in detail within the guidance. However, at the moment, that is probably the only reference in the Bill to non-route facilities, so it is important that there is recognition

elsewhere in the Bill of the importance of the Smarter Choices and behaviour change element, and not just network mapping.

[139] The main thing here, just to emphasise it again, is that the duty really should be around the promotion of active travel. I am not sure whether subsequent questions will address targets, but that should be in terms of usage. So, there should be a duty to promote and a duty to monitor usage, across leisure, commuting and journeys to school, so that we can understand the situation, have continuous improvement and increase active travel journeys for those different reasons.

[140] **Mr Waters:** I think there is a slightly inconsistent approach in the legislation. Most of the Bill is characterised by how little detail is on the face of it, and that detail is going to be sitting in guidance. Yet, in respect of related facilities, some specific facilities are mentioned but not others. For example, one is the provision of toilets—at a time when we know that local authorities are closing toilets. So, there are mixed signals being sent to local authorities. The principle is absolutely right: you need related facilities and you need supporting measures. Whether you need to enumerate them on the face of the Bill is a matter for you to decide; I am not convinced about that. However, if you are going to enumerate them, picking those three facilities rather than others is arbitrary, I would argue.

[141] **Nick Ramsay:** The Minister told us that those were examples of things that might be looked at, but that they were not priorities. I am sure that we will be revisiting that issue at an appropriate point. Have you finished your questions, Joyce? In that case, it is over to Byron Davies for the next questions.

[142] **Byron Davies:** Good morning. Guide Dogs Cymru, Disability Wales, Ramblers Cymru and Living Streets raise concerns about shared space. In your evidence, you say that:

[143] ‘Empirical evidence shows incidents of conflict on shared use paths are extremely low’.

[144] How do you respond to the suggestion from walking, cycling and disability organisations that the development of shared-space routes under the Bill should be limited?

[145] **Mr Waters:** One of the main aims of the White Paper was to effect a cultural change. We have developed a culture in which cycling and walking is rare. As Professor Colin Pooley said, it is seen as an odd thing to do. By definition, when only 2% of journeys are by bike, it is unusual. So, when you do come across a bike on a shared-use path, you may not always be expecting to see it there. So, you feel startled and uncomfortable. That is certainly true of older and vulnerable people. So, I think there is an element of cultural change that this Bill is trying to address, which simply saying, ‘We don’t want bikes here because we are used to walking here’ misses the point of.

[146] It is important that this is an evidence-based debate and we need to look at how real a problem there is. We know, for example, that shared-use, traffic-free paths such as the Taff trail are very popular and very well used. The traffic-free elements only make up one third of the national cycle network, yet the traffic-free sections account for 84% of all journeys on the network. So, they are much more popular than the on-road elements. That goes back to Colin Pooley’s point about people who would not currently consider cycling on the road because they find it a difficult or alienating environment. You would get them to start that process of behaviour change through the provision of good-quality shared-use paths.

[147] We commissioned an independent desktop evidence review of the existing studies, because part of the problem with this debate is that it is based on anecdotes, emotions and focus groups, in which bad incidences are over-reported. You tend to remember in your mind

when you have had a bad incident, when you have had a near miss or if you have been shaken up, but you would probably not remember something that happened without incident. The way in which the evidence is being presented tends to over-report incidences of conflict, but there is a lot of evidence from the UK and around the world. The conclusion of the report was that collisions are rare and that conflict on paths carrying up to 100 users per hour is extremely infrequent. In fact, conflict can be higher when you have segregation. For example, on the route on Swansea seafront, which is a badly-designed path, there is a white line down it and it is heavily used. The problem with having a white line is that it encourages cyclists to think one side is their bit and pedestrians to think that the other is their bit. There is strong evidence from London to show that, where you have a bit where cyclists think that it is their property, they will go faster. We also know, from video evidence of the way people walk, that people do not walk in a straight line. They meander, they zigzag, and so they should. The danger in having a white line, especially if you have children running around, is that you are potentially making it more dangerous. So, unless it is done properly, segregation can be more dangerous than sharing.

[148] This is not a simple question and I do not want to make broad-brush judgments. Further research has been done in Cardiff, where studies have been done on Queen Street. As you know, Queen Street is an extremely busy shopping centre. It is untypically busy; it is probably the busiest shopping centre in the whole of Wales. Cycling is currently not allowed there, but people still cycle down there, because it is the main artery through the centre of Cardiff. A series of analyses was done on that, involving both video cameras and people's monitoring. After a series of observations, it was found that there was a one in 4,165 chance of an interaction between a pedestrian and a cyclist—an interaction being a near miss or some kind of 'Ooh I didn't see you there'—

[149] **Nick Ramsay:** Is that a technical term?

[150] **Mr Waters:** It is, yes. It took six years of careful study to fully understand it. *[Laughter.]*

[151] **Nick Ramsay:** It is good to know that these studies are happening.

[152] **Mr Waters:** In terms of conflict on Queen Street, there is a one in 24,987 chance of conflict. The video showed that there are as many incidents involving mobility scooters and pedestrians colliding as there were bikes colliding. In fact, it was 0.04% of all movements. So, there is evidence. It is important that this debate is evidence-based and this is not simple. I think that there is a case for segregation when there are very high volumes of users, but work has not yet been done in the UK on defining what the cut-off would be for justifying a segregated path or a non-segregated path.

10.45 a.m.

[153] Finally, we also did our own bit of qualitative research, which we have circulated. Most of the other research is qualitative: it is about experiences, and not about hard evidence. It contains a series of case studies of people who have visual impairments and disabilities. They talk about the advantages to them of sharing, because they are able to go out with their families and access the countryside. Pedal Power in Cardiff opposes segregation, and it thinks that more should be done to encourage better behaviour and interaction between walkers and cyclists, and we fully support that. That is partly about education, a culture change and about people expecting to see each other there and about them having a set of expectations about how they behave. We certainly support a code of conduct as part of the guidance alongside the Bill, and we have started discussions with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association to see if we can agree a joint code of conduct to promote this and to tell people how they should be behaving. However, inevitably, as on the road, you get people behaving badly, but that does

not mean that in the majority of cases there are not overwhelming benefits to these paths. It is a good thing.

[154] **Byron Davies:** Do you think that there should be more provision in the Bill more generally to ensure that the interests of disabled people are protected?

[155] **Mr Waters:** I am pleased to see that several disabled people's groups are represented on the expert design group led by Phil Jones. Based on the minutes I have seen of those meetings, there is a good dialogue being had and great efforts are being made to make sure that their concerns are taken on board. I think that that is the most appropriate place for it to be, because it is about good design, rather than a matter of principle.

[156] **Kenneth Skates:** Would you suggest that there is a need to ban dogs on shared routes?

[157] **Mr Waters:** The national cycle network is called the NCN, and we often joke that it would be more appropriate to call it the national canine network, because traffic-free areas are popular with dog walkers, and so they should be as they are open spaces of good quality, and they are well-designed, traffic-free spaces that offer access to the countryside. We have a volunteer programme, for example, where we are developing biodiversity on the traffic-free sections. We know from the health evidence that access to good-quality public space has demonstrable impacts on mental wellbeing and physical activity. I have seen some evidence about the impact it has on the development of your genes. So, access to good-quality public space and the countryside is a good thing, and I do not think that dog walkers should be excluded from that. However, inevitably, there are sometimes conflicts between dog walkers and cyclists. Hailey park, on the Taff trail in Llandaff is a classic example where there is often conflict. You have cyclists going too fast and dog walkers not behaving appropriately either. So, I think that a code of conduct should address that. However, ultimately, you cannot legislate for human behaviour, and there will be people acting inappropriately, but that does not mean that the overwhelming majority of experiences are not positive ones.

[158] **Keith Davies:** A gaf i fynd yn ôl at *Queen Street* yn gyntaf? A ydych yn dweud y byddai'r heolydd lle mae pobl yn siopa ar y mapiau? A fyddech am eu gweld ar agor i bobl ar gefn beiciau i fynd drwy'r strydoedd hynny, ym mhob tref yng Nghymru?

Keith Davies: May I go back to Queen Street? Are you saying that streets where people shop would be on the maps? Would you like to see those streets open for people to ride bikes down them, in every town in Wales?

[159] **Mr Waters:** That issue goes back to the concept of networks. We believe that the Bill should look at a network of routes. So, you join up useful routes for people to get from A to B. That will include, sometimes, going through town centres. For example, we are building a scheme now in the Afan valley, and the final section of it goes through Port Talbot town centre to link up to the train station. There are many examples of routes that go through town centres, through shopping centres. There is an inconsistent approach in Cardiff, for example: it is perfectly legal and proper to cycle on High Street, St Mary Street and through the Hayes, but for some reason it is not appropriate to cycle through Queen Street, even though that is a key artery through the town. I often see traders, for example—and the police, similarly, sometimes—getting very exercised not wanting cyclists cycling through busy shopping centres. They do a disservice, and their attitudes are often based on a false understanding of who their customers are and how they get there. We have done a number of surveys where shopkeepers are asked how people get to their shops, and they think that far more of them come by car than actually do. They completely underestimate the number of customers who come on foot and by bus. So, they then tend to promote solutions to increase car parking, rather than increasing the pedestrian environment and making areas more cycling and walking friendly, which would benefit them. There will be cases where it will need to go through town

centres, and that is where the code of conduct will be very useful.

[160] **Keith Davies:** Mae'n bwysig i ni, Gadeirydd, oherwydd un o'r pethau yr ydym ni wedi bod yn edrych arnynt, fel pwyllgor, yw adnewyddu canol trefi. Un o'r pethau maen nhw'n dweud am adnewyddu canol trefi, os ydych chi eisiau'r lle i weithio, yw y dylech ddod â marchnad i mewn a nifer o wahanol bethau. Rwy'n ei gweld hi'n od, wedyn, bod pobl yn gallu mynd ar gefn beic drwy'r farchnad yng nghanol y dref. Wrth edrych ar y pethau hynny, byddwn i'n meddwl na fyddai'r cyhoedd eisiau i bobl fynd drwy farchnad yng nghanol y dref ar gefn beic.

Keith Davies: It is important to us, Chair, because one of the things that we have been looking at as a committee is town centre regeneration. One of the things that they say about town centre regeneration is that if you want the place to work, you should bring in a market and many different types of things. I then find it odd that people can ride a bike through a market in a town centre. In looking at those things, I would have thought that the public would not want people to go through a market in the town centre on bikes.

[161] **Mr Waters:** You used a key word there: you said that you find it odd, because it is not something that we have been using to do. When you go to the Netherlands, you see that the Netherlands has shared space. This is where the terms get conflated between shared-use paths and shared space more broadly, like in the centre of Caernarfon. In the Netherlands, there is a cafe culture, where you have cars, people, bikes and markets mixing happily. We have created a culture—in the urban centres, especially—where bikes, people and cars are kept separate, which has scarred the urban environment, has reduced levels of walking and cycling, has increased levels of car usage and has not revitalised town centres. We now have ghettos of shops on the outskirts of towns, which you cannot reach by foot or by bike. The Bill could have a huge impact in revitalising town centres, but it needs to be as part of a network and it needs to be a normal thing that people do, and for it not to be seen as odd to have your bike in a some places.

[162] **Nick Ramsay:** I will remind Members to get back to the Bill because we seem to be straying into all sorts of areas.

[163] **Keith Davies:** Mae'r hyn rwy'n mynd i ofyn nawr yn dilyn ymlaen o hynny, mewn ffordd. A yw'r broses o fapio yn ddigon clir a chadarn neu a oes angen mwy o fanylion yn y Bil, er enghraifft, dweud bod yn rhaid dod â *Queen Street* mewn fel rhan o'r map?

Keith Davies: What I am about to ask follows on from that, in a way. Is the mapping process clear and robust enough or is there a need for more details in the Bill, for example, saying that you have to bring *Queen Street* in as part of the map?

[164] **Mr Hemsley:** The issue of that kind of detail is part of having good consultation, strong design guidance and having a code of conduct. If we have strong consultation, we will find out where people want to go to and from, and we work with groups to promote those kinds of things. We need that detail in the process. That will help to flesh out where it is appropriate and how that should all work in practice. There will be some instances where, in the integrated network map—the second map—we will come onto what is desirable and where people want to go, and a lot of high streets are going to be on that. If the design guidance is strong—as mandatory design standards—we can make sure that those high streets work properly and safely, rather than as is the case at the moment, where some of the concerns are based on the fact that the areas are not designed as shared areas or have been designed in different ways, either predominantly for cars or for pedestrians. Therefore, they can be less than suitable at the moment. That is where the design standards and strong consultational mapping will work together.

[165] **Keith Davies:** Yn dilyn ymlaen o hynny, rydych yn sôn am y rhwydwaith integredig. Rydym wedi darllen yr hyn yr ydym wedi ei gael gennych chi a Chymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru, sy'n dweud y gallwch gael rhwydwaith integredig ond ni fydd yn rhaid inni gyflwyno'r holl gynlluniau sydd yn y rhwydwaith integredig. A ydych chi'n cytuno â hynny?

Keith Davies: Following on from that, you talk about an integrated network. We have read what we received from you and from the Welsh Local Government Association, which says that you can have an integrated network, but we will not have to introduce all the schemes that are in that integrated network. Do you agree with that?

[166] **Mr Hemsley:** The important thing here is that the integrated network map needs to be seen as a long-term project and that this change is not going to happen overnight. We think that the integrated network map needs to be a long-term document—one that is a plan for 15 years, which is not going to change all in one go and which is going to happen at different paces. Whether there is an arbitrary decision that everything on there has to be built, or whether it happens during the process of refreshing and looking at continuous improvement and updating the guidance that it contains as part of that, as long as it serves the purpose for which it is designed, I do not see there being a problem.

[167] **Ms Lovimer:** Some clarification around the purpose of the maps would also be helpful because we have learnt from our personalised travel planning project, for example, the importance of well-presented information to households around what facilities exist. A lack of information is one of the key barriers as to why people do not walk and cycle more. So, we would like to have clarification around whether the integrated transport map is supposed to be the public-facing document, and we would suggest that that is probably not appropriate and that it would be better if more user-friendly maps were produced at more regular intervals, as a promotion tool to highlight the new opportunities as routes are developed.

[168] **Keith Davies:** Dywedodd yr Athro Pooley yn gynharach—ac rwy'n credu eich bod yn cytuno—bod cymryd tair blynedd i gael y mapio yn rhy hir. Yr ydych chi'n sôn am Abertawe. Mae gennych enghreifftiau o Abertawe, rwy'n credu, lle gallant gael y mapio lawer yn gynharach nag aros tair blynedd. Pa sylwadau sydd gennych ar hynny?

Keith Davies: Professor Pooley said earlier—and I think that you agree—that taking three years to produce the maps is too long a period. You were talking about Swansea. You have examples, I think, where they can have these maps ready much quicker than having to wait three years. What comments do you have on that?

[169] **Mr Hemsley:** There has been a lot of ambiguity so far around the timescales related to the mapping process, the reading of the Bill, and the answers that the previous Minister responsible for the Bill gave to this committee. The understanding is that there is a lot of ambiguity. At the moment, on the face of the Bill, it talks about three years to produce the existing route map from when that section of the Bill comes into force; it then states that it will take three years to produce the integrated network map when that section comes into force. Our initial interpretation is that all sections of the Bill will come into force at the same time; therefore, it is just a three-year process. However, we have had issues where the Minister and the committee seem to think that this is a matter of three years followed by another three years, and so it is a six-year process before we get to the integrated network map. There are huge issues about what 'on the face of the Bill' actually means in the first place. It would be very good to get to the bottom of that and what the timescales in the Bill actually mean.

[170] Secondly, in terms of how long we think that it should take to produce the maps, the very first map, as Professor Pooley stated in his evidence, is something that can be done quickly. Swansea has done something similar within approximately a year. Another example

that we have looked at is from Scotland, the Scottish Core Paths Plan, which is slightly different to this because it maps a whole variety of routes. Councils were given around nine months to produce what existed. So, three years to produce what exists will just push this into the long grass.

[171] **Nick Ramsay:** I will just come in here, for information. We had concerns about the timescale and we wrote to the new Minister responsible. We have had a response back giving clarification that the existing maps and the integrated networks are to be prepared concurrently and are due to be in place three years afterwards. So, that is slightly different from what we were led to believe before.

[172] **Mr Hemsley:** It is helpful to have that clarification. I think that it goes back to our initial interpretation, but we would still then disagree in terms of the length of time for the existing route map, which we think could be produced rather than being kicked into the long grass and looked at again in a bit. It could be produced very quickly within a year and then inform future discussions.

[173] **Mr Waters:** I think that it makes even less sense than we thought before, to be honest. If one of the purposes of the first map is to raise awareness about the existing routes to get people to use them more, you need to do that soon. Also, one of the main purposes of the first map is to show up where the gaps are, so that you can then use that as a basis for developing your next—

[174] **Nick Ramsay:** So, what if both are being done at the same time?

[175] **Mr Waters:** It is harder to do that. One of the things that we really think is missing from this is consultation. We held a big conference, which some of you attended last summer, where we involved children quite a lot. One of the main conclusions from that—and this was not us putting words in people's mouths; this was people coming together—was that they needed, especially involving young people, genuine consultation with groups as to what the most useful routes would be. It is difficult to achieve that when you are concurrently producing two maps.

[176] **Nick Ramsay:** If they are being produced concurrently, it makes you wonder what the point of the existing routes is, if the new routes are already being planned. I am sure that we can get back to the Minister and that there will be an answer somewhere.

[177] Are you done with that, Keith?

[178] **Keith Davies:** Yes.

[179] **Nick Ramsay:** I now call on David Rees.

[180] **David Rees:** The Minister's guidance is quite clear. One of the questions that I was going to ask was about you putting standards in your paper—I do not think that I heard you mention standards in your earlier answers—and whether there should be standards in the Bill. The Minister actually identifies guidance from the group led by Phil Jones, but should there be some minimum standards set out in the Bill, or are you happy with just guidance?

[181] **Mr Waters:** There needs to be a mixture of guidance and standards, and there needs to be some flexibility. We largely answered this earlier about the parallel with the design manual for roads and bridges. Whatever comes out of this needs to be underpinned. I think that there needs to be reference on the face of the Bill that there will be a statutory set of processes to make sure that what is produced is of the best quality.

11.00 a.m.

[182] **David Rees:** Thank you for that. In your evidence, you talk about the implications of active travel routes on rights of way and the difference between rights of way and permissive ways. How do you think that the Bill can be modified to ensure that there is no loss of right of way because it is named as an active travel route? What are the implications of the permissive ways in this approach?

[183] **Mr Waters:** We were throwing up issues that we wanted the committee to try to get clarity on, because we do not have a clear view in our minds about what the Bill means in relation to this matter. It is a very complicated field. It has implications for maintenance, which has not featured much in the debate on the Bill thus far. The Bill, according to our reading of it, by implication, imposes on local authorities duties to maintain the networks; it regards them as part of their highways responsibilities and they have responsibilities to maintain highways. We fully support that, because the lack of maintenance has been a major barrier to the usage of current routes and to local authorities from producing more routes. The lack of availability of maintenance funds, in effect, creates a liability for them and then they are unwilling to proceed. So, maintenance is a key issue.

[184] From our selfish point of view, as landowners of many sections of the early national cycle network, such as the route that we own between Cross Hands and Llanelli town centre in the Llanelli constituency—the Swiss Valley route—we maintain these at our own expense. We own some of the Swiss Valley route and some of it is a permissive right of way, where landowners are happy for us, under licence, to operate the route. If that was to be adopted by Carmarthenshire as part of its integrated travel map, we are not clear about who would be responsible for maintaining that. Would we still be responsible? What are the implications for maintaining land that you do not own? For example, if it is land that belongs to another landowner, which we are leasing, who then maintains that? There is a thicket of complications around that, to which we do not have answers, but we have questions, into which we would be grateful if you would probe further.

[185] **David Rees:** I want to come back on that. We have had a response that you have not seen, on continuous improvement, but it talks about guidance all the time. Should there be more in the Bill, other than just pure guidance notes supporting it to clarify the position that you just raised regarding who is statutorily responsible for maintenance?

[186] **Mr Waters:** I do not have a view on that, to be honest. I think that there needs to be clarity, and whether that is on the face of the Bill, or through guidance, is something that needs to come from your discussions, in terms of how comfortable you feel with it, and whether you feel that it needs amending and that guidance is not the most appropriate form of dealing with rights of way. I am not an expert on rights of way; it may well be that lawyers think that that needs to be enshrined in legislation, rather than kept in guidance. I do not know, but there certainly needs to be clarity and the guidance needs to be scrutinised.

[187] **Byron Davies:** My question has been answered in your response to David Rees's question regarding the preparation of maps; you answered that quite comprehensively.

[188] **Nick Ramsay:** Okay, good. We are into the last 10 minutes now, so it is helpful if your questions have already been answered. Dafydd Elis-Thomas is next.

[189] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Hoffwn fynd ar ôl y cysylltiad rhwng y Bil hwn a chynllunio strategaethau trafndiaeth rhanbarthol, yn enwedig rôl y consortia. Un o fanteision y ffordd yr ydym yn gweithio **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I would like to pursue the issue of the link between this Bill and the planning of regional transport strategies, particularly the role of the consortia. One of the advantages of the way in which we work

ynndi yn y pedwerydd Cynulliad yw bod y pwyllgorau mawr hyn yn ymwneud ag astudiaethau o strwythur polisi a chyfrifoldebau Gweinidogion, yn ogystal â Biliau a deddfwriaeth. Rydym wedi bod yn ystyried llawer o faterion yn ymwneud â thrafnidiaeth integredig, ac mae'n rhaid imi ddweud bod y posibilrwydd o gael gwell trafndiaeth integredig yng Nghymru yn cael ei arwain gan y gorau o agweddau'r Bil hwn yn bwysig iawn. Os cawn ni bobl i ddefnyddio bysiau a threnau mewn ffordd integredig, mae'r cysylltiad rhwng teithio llesol—boed hynny ar droed, ar feic, trwy gerdded yn gyflym neu loncian—yn rhan hanfodol o'r bendithion y gallent ddod drwy'r Bil.

[190] Felly, yr hyn sy'n fy mhryderu i yw bod agweddau ychydig yn negyddol i'w cael yn nhystiolaeth y consortia. Cyfeirir yn benodol at yr hyn a ddywedodd SEWTA ynglŷn â'r flaenoriaeth y disgwylir i'r consortia ei rhoi yn eu cynlluniau trafndiaeth rhanbarthol a beth, mewn gwirionedd, yw'r grym sydd yn adran 6, lle mae cyfrifoldeb i ystyried y map integredig ochr yn ochr â'r cynlluniau trafndiaeth rhanbarthol. Carwn gael eich barn ar hynny. Ar yr un pryd, yng nghyswllt Taith—y consortiwm sy'n cynrychioli lle rwy'n digwydd byw yn y gogledd—nid oes unrhyw fath o awgrym wedi bod o ran pa flaenoriaeth y disgwylir i'r consortia ei rhoi i fuddsoddiad o'r natur hwn y tu mewn i gyllideb y cynlluniau trafndiaeth.

[191] **Nick Ramsay:** We are into the last five minutes now, so please be as succinct as you like.

[192] **Mr Waters:** The important point is that what matters is the delivery of this and the commitment on the ground from local authorities to make this happen. We have heard of conversations in which local authorities have said, 'We're not going to do anything until we're forced to do it.' In reality, the skill set, the experience and the cultural commitment to this agenda in local authorities and consortia is patchy, to put it politely. Some do it well, but most have not had to bother and, therefore, have not. Our other concern is the joining up of the agendas, which you have touched on, because this is a duty on local authorities, not just on transport departments. To maximise the benefit of this, we need to see leisure services departments, education departments and countryside departments thinking about how they can deliver aspects of this Bill. To be honest, the recent Cabinet reshuffle has not helped on this matter and has raised concerns in our minds about how this will work in practice. There is a commitment to make it work from Ministers, and we will follow that with close interest.

[193] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** What I am concerned about is that we get consistency of delivery of this legislation throughout Wales.

in this fourth Assembly is that these large committees deal with policy structure studies and Ministers' responsibilities, as well as Bills and legislation. We have been considering a number of issues relating to integrated transport, and I have to say that the possibility of having enhanced integrated transport in Wales being led by the best aspects of this Bill is very important. If we can get people to use buses and trains in an integrated manner, the link between active travel—be it on foot, on bikes, by speed walking or jogging—is an essential part of the benefits that could be gained as a result of the Bill.

So, what concerns me is that there are slightly negative aspects in the consortia's evidence. I refer specifically to what SEWTA said about the priority that the consortia is expected to give in their regional transport plans and what, in reality, is the power in section 6, where there is a responsibility to consider the integrated map alongside the regional transport plans. I would like your opinion on that. Simultaneously, in relation to Taith—the consortium that represents where I happen to live in north Wales—there is no suggestion whatsoever as to the priority that consortia are expected to give to an investment of this sort within the budget for the transport plans.

[194] **Mr Waters:** I share that concern.

[195] **Nick Ramsay:** Alun Ffred, do you want to come in briefly?

[196] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Are we coming on to compulsory purchase order powers?

[197] **Nick Ramsay:** We will come to that in a bit. Will you ask your questions, Ken?

[198] **Kenneth Skates:** I am conscious of time and that we need to address that particular matter. With regard to continuous improvement, is it likely to be achieved without additional funding?

[199] **Mr Waters:** What continuous improvement means is not properly defined. There is legitimate continuous improvement that would help enormously, for example in maintaining paths and removing barriers that should not be there. Those are small things that could help enormously to improve the reality on the ground and would fall under the continuous improvement banner. I took 'continuous improvement' to mean getting from the first map to the second map, but that is not properly defined. How will that happen in practice? For example, the regional consortia, as a result of this, will have a list of schemes that they want to implement to achieve map 2. Those schemes will have to be prioritised, based on a set of criteria. How do they then prioritise continuous improvements? I understand the principle, which is right, but I am not clear about how that will work in practice.

[200] **Kenneth Skates:** Following on from the question asked by Dafydd Elis-Thomas, do you have any suggestions on how to ensure that continuous improvement is delivered and enforced across Wales in a consistent manner?

[201] **Ms Lorimer:** Cardiff has produced a prioritised network scheme that has been prioritised on the basis of consultation and identifying the routes with the greatest potential for a shift to active travel modes. So, effectively, that is its delivery plan, and a similar approach could work across Wales.

[202] **Nick Ramsay:** On the issue of compulsory purchase orders, what do you think about the extent to which the CPO powers and procedures are barriers to the development of an integrated network?

[203] **Mr Hemsley:** This is another area in which there is quite a lot of confusion, and when the previous Minister responsible for the Bill gave evidence, there was confusion between what he and the official said at the time. I think that the Minister said that it was something that needed to be looked at, and the lawyer said something slightly different. In theory, existing CPO powers might be able to apply, but there are two key points on this. The first is that with CPOs, local authorities need to show that they have considered all alternative routes as part of the process. It would be useful to have some clarity over whether the production of integrated network maps would count, if the consultation was strong and proper, as having looked at all the alternatives so that local authorities would have confidence in that process.

[204] The second issue is planning inspectors not understanding active travel. For example, you could have a section of a route that is owned by a landowner that runs parallel to a road and we would know that the road would not be suitable for active travel and would not encourage more people to walk and cycle, yet under the current guidance, the planning inspector can say, 'Well, that is an alternative route, so we will not grant you a CPO'. That would undermine the Bill. So, there might be an issue regarding the need, alongside the Bill, for active travel guidance to be provided to the Planning Inspectorate in the context of the

need for active travel routes to work differently to traditional highways. Without that, I do not think that local authorities have confidence that the current CPO process will work. We see routes that are left incomplete because landowners block them.

[205] **Nick Ramsay:** Do you want to come in on that, Alun Ffred Jones?

[206] **Alun Ffred Jones:** No, that is fine.

[207] **Nick Ramsay:** Our time is pretty much up. Finally, section 8 talks about creating a duty to consider including active travel provision in highway schemes. Do you think that that is strong enough?

[208] **Mr Waters:** No, because, in practice, that could easily be disregarded. The way in which these decisions are made at the moment involves Welsh transport planning and appraisal guidance, which you have heard a lot about. Often, WelTAG would currently encourage highway planners to think about active travel or smarter choices, but, in practice, it is dismissed at a very early stage. I do not feel that that wording is sufficiently strong to change that.

[209] The other issue that I would like to highlight briefly—although we do not have time to go into it, I would like to flag it up to you—is that of targets as a driver of change. I noticed that the evidence that you have before you for this afternoon’s session with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence and the British Medical Association from a health perspective also talks about the value of having targets. In terms of the network maps, if you have targets that say ‘increase journey to work or school’, that influences the sort of network that a local authority will have to come up with. So, even though we have no time to talk about it now, we feel very strongly that targets have a place in making this Bill effective.

[210] **Nick Ramsay:** Great. Thank you for that, Lee Waters, Matt Hemsley and Jane Lorimer from Sustrans Cymru; that has been really helpful. A lot of information was gleaned from your answers. We had a large area of ground to cover. Thanks for your help. We will send you a copy of the transcript for you to check for accuracy. We will now break for eight minutes before our next evidence session.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 11.12 a.m. a 11.27 a.m.
The meeting adjourned between 11.12 a.m. and 11.27 a.m.*

Bil Teithio Llesol (Cymru): Cyfnod 1—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 6 Active Travel (Wales) Bill: Stage 1—Evidence Session 6

[211] **Nick Ramsay:** I welcome Members back and welcome our witnesses to this morning’s session of the Enterprise and Business Committee. We are continuing with our Stage 1 consideration of the Active Travel (Wales) Bill, and this is evidence session 6. I thank our witnesses for being with us. Would you like to give your names and positions for the Record of Proceedings, please?

[212] **Ms Berrigan:** I am Rhyan Berrigan, access and transport policy officer for Disability Wales.

[213] **Ms Davies:** I am Rhian Davies, chief executive of Disability Wales.

[214] **Mr Jones:** I am Peter Jones from Guide Dogs Cymru; I am the Wales policy officer.

[215] **Ms Gordon:** I am Andrea Gordon, engagement manager for Guide Dogs Cymru.

[216] **Nick Ramsay:** That is great. Thank you for being with us. We have a fair number of questions for you, so I propose that we go straight into them. The first question is from Byron Davies.

[217] **Byron Davies:** Good morning. My question is directed at Disability Wales to start, so either Rhian Davies or Rhyan Berrigan can answer it. You say that you welcome the Bill, as it promotes healthier lifestyles for all, and you also make it clear that these benefits will only be realised if routes are fully accessible. Could you tell us why you think there is a need for a Bill to promote active travel and about any specific benefits that this could bring to disabled people?

[218] **Ms Davies:** I will start. We very much recognise the benefits of the Active Travel (Wales) Bill. We would particularly like to see it in relation to the 'Framework for Action on Independent Living', which the Welsh Government published for consultation last year and will be made available this year; Disability Wales campaigned for that through our Independent Living NOW! campaign. That is about recognising the barriers that disabled people face on a daily basis, whether around housing, personal support, or access to transport, the built environment and employment. Potentially, if there are better routes for people, including disabled people, they will have a major benefit for disabled people's ability to access the built environment, such as town centres and workplaces, and provide clearer information about bus travel and other modes of transport. There are also complexities as far as disabled people are concerned, as many rely on cars—either their own cars, taxis, or those of family and friends. Those disabled people who, because of their impairment, or maybe medication, are unable to drive, for example, either have to use public transport or get about by walking. We know from the consultation on the framework how many barriers there are to that.

11.30 a.m.

[219] There are concerns as to what extent disabled people's needs, and barriers that disabled people face, will be addressed in the Bill as it is presented. We might find ourselves in yet another situation in which disabled people are excluded from either the Bill or the countryside environment.

[220] **Byron Davies:** So, what do you want to see? How could we address it to satisfy you?

[221] **Ms Davies:** I do not know whether Rhyan wants to come in here.

[222] **Ms Berrigan:** We want to see positive engagement with local disabled people. It is done on a local authority basis, and local authorities have access groups, and access officers, even, so if you listen to the local disabled people they have local knowledge about where they like to go for walks, where they cycle, and whether they feel safe to cycle and walk. That is a step in the right direction. That is how you start to remove barriers—by listening to disabled people. Then maybe they can conduct access audits and things like that. You have to do that and just involve them, really. You have to make sure that you do not exclude disabled people from any decisions that are made.

[223] **Byron Davies:** Okay, so you want to be included in the planning stages, and that sort of thing.

[224] **Ms Berrigan:** Definitely.

[225] **Ms Davies:** From what we know, there are at least two aspects to this. One is the technical aspect of how the active travel routes will be developed and made accessible, along

with the information provided about them, and how accessible that will be. Then there are the cultural issues, and they are about how people respect each other on travel routes. Our concerns—these are borne out by practical experience and what members have told us—are that, in each of those aspects, disabled people tend to face discrimination, exclusion, harassment and negative experiences. So, it is vital that those issues are at the forefront in the Bill, and also in the guidance and regulations that go with it.

[226] **Byron Davies:** Earlier, Sustrans was talking about the cultural differences, and about dog owners and cyclists not getting on together too well, and what have you. This is just an extension of that. It will be quite interesting as to how that is included in the Bill.

[227] Guide Dogs Cymru, why do you believe that the Bill is biased towards cyclists?

[228] **Ms Gordon:** If you read the content of the Bill, our concerns are around the fact that it seems to focus on infrastructure improvements that can make cycling easier and give less priority to pedestrians, and we would include all pedestrians, including vulnerable pedestrians, in that definition—so, people who are blind or partially sighted along with other disabled people. Some examples of that include the fact that the Bill specifically mentions shelter, storage and toilets; it is interesting that it mentions those, but of course we would hope that all those facilities would be fully accessible to pedestrians as well as cyclists. If you look at the balance of how local authorities will spend money on creating those facilities, we would hope that there would be an equal balance between, for example, accessible toilets or signage that would indicate that routes are shared, and which would require cyclists to slow down to respect vulnerable pedestrians on a shared route, rather than using all of the money available just to create cycle storage or shower facilities and so on. We have a worry that that will not be taken on in the Bill.

[229] **Byron Davies:** That is fine; thank you.

[230] **Eluned Parrott:** My first question is primarily for Guide Dogs Cymru. In your evidence you raise a concern that the Bill fails to provide a demonstrable commitment to the social model of disability, and you also say that you are concerned about it failing to provide a commitment to ensure that the interests and concerns of disabled people are taken into account. Could you explain why you believe that to be the case and how you would like to see it addressed?

[231] **Ms Gordon:** The social model works toward, and is underpinned by, an inclusive environment. The social model is about changing the world that we live in so that it is accessible to as many people as we can make it. It does not focus on the medical impairment of the individual; it is about what can be changed around them to accommodate them and to make it an inclusive world. That is what needs to happen. There is a reason why I specifically raised this point. To make this clearer, you need to look at a situation where cyclists would be allowed on pavements, for example, which would be a possibility in creating new routes. At the moment, pavements represent a safe place for pedestrians, and we would generally regard them as somewhere that people can walk and be safe from traffic. The moment that you introduce a cycle route onto a pavement, where the route is not separated and is not on the carriageway, the pavement ceases to be safe, and an environment that was previously as inclusive as it could be—because it was safe from traffic and everyone, or most people, could use it—becomes less inclusive and excludes a number of people who would be intimidated at having to share it with cyclists. These days, we all know that we have to put ramps where there are steps; we have known that for a long time. It is the twenty-first century and we are all accepting of the need to include people by putting in a ramp instead of, or as well as, steps. However, we are now possibly about to create pavements that cannot be used by everyone, because of the fear factor. We know that there is intimidation, even if there are not direct hits and accidents. Sustrans would say that there is very little evidence; well, that is true—there is

very little evidence—but that is because it is not easy to evidence intimidation. People will avoid a route, particularly a pavement, that is shared with cyclists, because they are afraid of using it, and that is not easy to measure.

[232] **Eluned Parrott:** Thank you, Andrea. I recognise the points that you make. My grandmother lost her sight towards the end of her life, and that fear and intimidation factor is certainly very pertinent to people's willingness to use these routes, which is, of course, what we want to encourage. Have you liaised with sight-loss groups in places like the Netherlands, where there are a lot of shared spaces currently in operation?

[233] **Ms Gordon:** We work quite closely with groups in the Netherlands, where it is true that cycling is far more part of the culture. I should say that we are not opposed to this Bill; we are not anti-cyclist. However, this is a situational thing. In the Netherlands, there is a far greater understanding of the needs of blind and partially sighted people and of vulnerable pedestrians. So, where shared space and shared routes exist, historically, they have been there for longer. The feedback that we receive from our visually impaired colleagues in those countries is that there is a greater understanding of their access requirements.

[234] **Eluned Parrott:** Do you, therefore, think that design guidance in the Bill is, in itself, enough to encourage positive space sharing, or do you believe that there are educational things that should be included in the Bill to ensure that users of these spaces do so appropriately?

[235] **Ms Gordon:** Absolutely. I am worried about guidance, because I think that it can be overlooked. We would want something on the face of the Bill that required the needs of all vulnerable pedestrians to be taken into account. That should be on the face of the Bill, and it should be a requirement rather than guidance.

[236] **Byron Davies:** That is only good if it is enforced, though.

[237] **Ms Gordon:** Absolutely.

[238] **Byron Davies:** That is the issue, is it not? It is a challenge.

[239] **Ms Gordon:** It is a challenge. However, what if I asked whether we all understand how controlled crossings work? Blind and partially sighted people know that, when you come to a controlled crossing, the box for the pelican crossing, if it has been correctly placed, which it mostly is, will be on the right hand side. Do we say to local authorities that we would never support the provision of a cycle route on a pavement and that it is an absolute last resort? That is the kind of thing that I mean.

[240] **Nick Ramsay:** Does Disability Wales want to add anything to that?

[241] **Ms Davies:** To broaden it out—you can read it in the consultation document on the framework for action—the experience of many of our members, access groups and other disability groups is that, when they are liaising over access and disability equality issues in terms of the built environment, they can often find that heritage or wildlife issues have a higher priority than the access issues. Our concern here might be that cycling—we understand the environmental and sustainability issues—will become higher on the agenda than the issue of disabled people being able to fully participate in society and enjoy the same freedom, without fear, as anybody else.

[242] **Eluned Parrott:** I will finish this little group of questions by asking a question to both organisations. You have expressed concerns about the fact that it is guidance, but there will be design guidance alongside the Bill and there will also be guidance on the practical

implementation of the Bill for local authorities. What steps would you like to see taken to make sure that the needs of disabled users are included in both those sets of guidance?

[243] **Ms Davies:** It is vital that disabled people and their representative groups are fully involved in the development of the guidance and regulations. That needs to be meaningful involvement, not just saying, ‘Here is a list of guidance; what do you think?’ People have to be starting from a blank page and working together and there needs to be mutual respect. What comes out very strongly from access groups and others is that professionals involved in planning focus on their professional and technical knowledge, but do not necessarily recognise other expertise on the lived experience of disabled people, what works in practice and what does not. They can be very dismissive of that. You might be aware that, at this very moment, the access and design statements are being reviewed by the Welsh Government because of those very issues. So, in terms of this going ahead, we really have to get this right from the beginning. Rhyan, did you want to add anything?

[244] **Ms Berrigan:** No, not really. It is just about active and meaningful engagement. Training for the planners, such as disability equality training and disability awareness training, is also important, so at least they can start to grasp some sort of element from the perspective of disabled people.

[245] **Ms Davies:** Disability Wales, with Welsh Government project funding, has run a successful programme called Way to Go: Planning for Inclusive Access in Wales, which provided training around Wales, both to planning officers and disabled people’s groups and organisations. There is a good model of practice there that could be replicated and built on.

[246] **Ms Gordon:** I have one quick point. I would like to give two examples. In Cardiff, we have a very good relationship with the local authority around the cycling strategy. We sit around a table as a group of blind and partially sighted people and other disabled people; people from a broad range of life situations are represented. Those discussions have been extremely productive. Where the cycling strategy has thrown up difficulties or where a route is clearly going to cause conflict with pedestrians, there is a discussion. We do not always agree, but we have never failed to come up with a solution. In contrast to the methods used in Cardiff—although it is not necessarily a bad contrast—in other local authorities, and I will cite Swansea here because that is where I live and I know what happens, we have those discussions in a different way. That dialogue still happens, but it requires the access group to be supported and recognised, and it requires the group to have a voice that local authority listens to.

11.45 a.m.

[247] **Eluned Parrott:** Thank you; that is very helpful.

[248] **Nick Ramsay:** I am mindful of the fact that there are supplementary questions, but we do perhaps have only 15 minutes left.

[249] I would just ask Disability Wales something. The Minister has told us about the group that is different to those that have been set up to help with advising on the guidance. Do you think that that is a helpful vehicle? Is there anything more that could be done to convey the views of Disability Wales better?

[250] **Ms Berrigan:** You could invite more disabled organisations to the group, as Rhian, Andrea and I are outnumbered—by at least 10 to one—even on the guidance group. You could invite impairment-specific organisations as well, because it is too easy to think that all disabled people are wheelchair users, but people with autism will be affected when they walk and cycle, and so will those with learning disabilities and difficulties, and older people, too—

a vast variety of disabled people will be affected. So, I think that you should not focus just on people with physical disabilities, as there are people with sensory impairments and psychological impairments who are being ignored—they have a valid point and view. It is something that the guidance group has to think about.

[251] **Nick Ramsay:** Thanks. Joyce Watson is next.

[252] **Joyce Watson:** Good morning, all. Are there any particular issues that you think we need to be aware of in identifying active travel routes that are appropriate for use by disabled people and the extent to which the Bill and explanatory memorandum take account of them?

[253] **Ms Gordon:** In terms of the routes themselves and how they will be chosen to be the active travel routes, it goes back to the point that Rhyon made about engagement with disabled people in deciding the routes and in looking at where the new routes are going to be. Of course, there is also the point that we have all made about routes needing to avoid conflict, because one of the unintended consequences of the Bill—I am sure that it is unintentional—is that it could exclude vulnerable pedestrians from using some areas. I am sure that that is not the intention, but it could happen almost by default. So, I think that it is about engaging with all disabled people, and local authorities will need to ensure that that happens. However, I do know that it is challenging for local authorities. Obviously, disability access groups are made up of volunteers, and many of those groups do not get a lot of support. So, I think that it is fraught with difficulty, but engagement is the key thing in choosing routes.

[254] Also, in developing existing routes, where they are transformed into shared routes, there are additional challenges, because these are routes that people will be accustomed to using and feeling safe on. If we change the nature of those routes without clear indication and consultation, then people will immediately be at risk, because they are used to being safe there.

[255] **Joyce Watson:** You have told us at length where you think it is inappropriate to share space. I would like to give you the opportunity to tell us where you think it is appropriate to share space—you have certainly ruled out pavements; we have heard that. Where would we be able to perhaps route-map an area that you feel can be shared?

[256] **Ms Gordon:** Shared space can work. The difficulty is that pedestrians need to know where within the shared space they can be safe, and I actually think that cyclists also need to know where they can be safe. I imagine that as a cyclist, if you are riding along and suddenly, you have to put your brakes on because somebody does not realise that you are there, as you have come up behind them, or they do not take you into account for some reason and do not get out of your way, it must be pretty scary.

[257] In terms of shared space, for us, the rules would be around clear demarcation of a shared route. If it was, say, in a generally accepted public space, such as a park, and on less commonly used urban routes, such as footpaths and public rights of way, of which many are rural and semi-rural, there has to be a degree of pragmatism. These routes have to be used by everybody and we accept that. Our main concerns are around the busier routes, particularly in towns and shopping areas where people are more likely to come into conflict. It is about looking at the nature of the route, what the footfall is, what the usage is, and whether conflict is likely to arise, and ensuring that shared use does not exclude people. So, it can work, but I think that there are design features that need to be included—such things as signage and not using white lines that are just painted on, which are no good to man or beast. So, they need to be raised, tactile indicators, and there is clear guidance about how those tactile indicators look and feel, and that is what we should be using to demarcate the safe space.

[258] **Keith Davies:** Does the mapping process raise any specific issues for disabled people

and to what extent does the Bill take account of these?

[259] **Ms Gordon:** I will just mention the very obvious, and then I will let Rhian pick up from there. Clearly, blind or partially sighted people cannot access print maps. There is no easy answer to that question. I referred to our Cardiff group that has some very good practice. We play about with bits of paper and plasticine, and make tactile models and describe things in that way. There is no value to us in print maps and tactile maps are incredibly expensive to create. So, if you are engaging with blind or partially sighted people, you would need to find another way.

[260] **Ms Davies:** Accessibility can be an issue for other people as well, for example people who have learning difficulties and literacy issues. It is also about access to the maps. I read in one document that perhaps they were going to be made available through libraries and other public buildings; how are people going to be able to access those? There needs to be some creative ways of helping people to understand the new routes, whether that is local authorities meeting with local groups of disabled people, talking them through the routes, being active and going out and walking or wheeling the routes and creating imaginative ways of encouraging their use and publicising them, so that everybody has the opportunity to learn about them and use them. Hopefully, through that, they can learn how people can respect each other on these routes as well.

[261] **Keith Davies:** The explanatory memorandum says that they will be produced in accessible formats. Are you satisfied with just that statement?

[262] **Ms Davies:** No. *[Laughter.]* Experience tells you—

[263] **Keith Davies:** Can you give us some examples of something that is very useful to you? Are there good examples around?

[264] **Ms Gordon:** I can think of only one example in the whole of Wales. That, in itself, is concerning, because we deal with the mobility needs of blind and partially sighted people daily. In Swansea, the Welsh Government funded tactile maps of the new rail station as a pilot project. Everybody thinks that the maps are great, but they were very expensive to create and that is the issue.

[265] **Keith Davies:** When you say that they were very expensive to create, do you have an idea of the figures involved?

[266] **Ms Gordon:** I can get them for the committee. The maps are very nice, and we can show them to you, but we are talking about a few hundred pounds. It is not a small amount of money.

[267] **Keith Davies:** Do you have any examples, Disability Wales?

[268] **Ms Berrigan:** We do not have anything specific, just to make sure that there are accessible ways to convey information, because the maps are complicated for laypeople, so you need to simplify that complicated information somehow. If it is education by one-to-one means, like you said, that is something that needs to be done.

[269] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** We have had some discussion this morning and on previous occasions of this concept of continuous improvement. It reminds me of discussions that we had years ago, before this building was built, about the importance of ramps and steps, and I learned a lot from you then, and I am learning some more today. Continuous improvement, if it means anything, must mean continuous improvement on accessibility issues and in meeting equality duties; it is meaningless otherwise. Is there something that you would like us to put

in our report on this Bill at this stage that emphasises a higher priority—I was struck by what you said about how other environmental priorities may appear higher on the scale than equality. To me, that is a very serious issue, because national parks and others have struggled over the years to provide greater access.

[270] **Ms Davies:** The worry is that a local authority creates an active travel route, there is relief, the Minister comes and opens it and cuts the ribbon and so on, but then a programme of improvement and also monitoring of use has not been built into it—how many people are using it, how they are using it, looking at the experiences of disabled people and others who might have particular issues. All that has to be built into the programme from the outset rather than there being an attitude of ‘Let’s get it out there’ and it being left and then, two or three years down the line, it has deteriorated, there have been accidents, people are not using it and people are afraid. Unfortunately, it will become a self-fulfilling prophecy of ‘Oh, well, this doesn’t work’.

[271] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Is that to be done through guidance or would you like something stronger on the face of the Bill?

[272] **Ms Davies:** I would say that it should be in the Bill, to be honest. Definitely.

[273] **Ms Gordon:** To give a specific example, we were talking the other day about the Taff trail with Cardiff Council and how routes intersect with it. So, if you cross a road, you take a step and, in the next few paces that you take forward, you are stepping into a shared route, whereas on the other side of the road, you were not sharing a route with cyclists. We were talking about how a warning could be included there to tell both cyclists and pedestrians that it is a shared route so, in terms of creating a new route or the continuous improvement of routes, it is about asking, every time that something is done, ‘Who does this impact upon? Who will this affect? How will people know what is going on here and how will they use that space safely?’ That includes cyclists, of course.

[274] **Nick Ramsay:** Finally, to all witnesses, would it be helpful if there was guidance on the application of the Bill specifically for people with disabilities who use mobility aids? Who wants to take that first?

[275] **Ms Davies:** From Disability Wales’s perspective, we would not like to see people singled out, because all different groups will have issues. There are particular issues around people with mobility aids and equipment. However, if you have autism or a mental health condition, your access needs are different; you perhaps have a greater sense of people encroaching on your space, which will not necessarily be recognised. So, we need to see inclusion across the experiences of people with impairments.

12.00 p.m.

[276] **Ms Gordon:** I completely support that. I would say, however, that mobility aids mean hugely different things to different people. My mobility aid has four legs, but other people’s mobility aid could be a cane, and others’ might be a wheelchair. It is a narrow definition, and we need to think about the whole ageing population in Wales. To me, it seems obvious. I would love to think that I will still be cycling when I am 90, but it is more likely that I might be walking. So, that needs to be taken on board.

[277] **Ms Davies:** As we have been talking about cultural change, we need to not perpetuate the stereotype that, if you are a disabled person, you come with bells on—you know, ‘Oh, they have a stick, so they’re disabled. They haven’t got a stick so I can whiz past them as fast as I like’, because it is just not like that.

[278] **Nick Ramsay:** That is very helpful, thank you. Your mobility aid, your four-legged friend, has been very good through this session. I thank our witnesses for coming to the committee today and allowing us to hear your views. It has been very helpful. We will be sending you a transcript of the meeting for you to check for factual accuracy. Thank you for helping us with our look at the Active Travel (Wales) Bill.

12.02 p.m.

Bil Teithio Llesol (Cymru): Cyfnod 1—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 7
Active Travel (Wales) Bill: Stage 1—Evidence Session 7

[279] **Nick Ramsay:** I welcome our witnesses to the committee to give us their evidence on the Active Travel (Wales) Bill, Stage 1. Would you like to give your name, position and organisation for the Record of Proceedings?

[280] **Mr Crombie:** I am Hugo Crombie. I am a public health analyst in the Centre for Public Health at the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

[281] **Dr Pease:** I am Dr Nicki Pease. I am a consultant in palliative medicine, and I am here to represent the British Medical Association as one of its members.

[282] **Dr Temple:** I am Dr Mark Temple. I am a consultant in public health medicine. I am a member representing BMA Wales Cymru, and I am a member of the public health medicine committee in Wales.

[283] **Nick Ramsay:** Thank you for being with us. We have a large number of questions from Members for you, so I propose that we go straight into those. The first is from Keith Davies.

[284] **Keith Davies:** Byddaf yn gofyn fy **Keith Davies:** I will ask my question in
 nghwestiwn yn Gymraeg. Bore da. Welsh. Good morning.

[285] A oes rhaid i ni gael Bil sydd wedi ei **Do we have to have a Bill that aims to**
 anelu at gynyddu cyfraddau teithio llesol, neu **increase active travel, or is there another way**
 a oes unrhyw ffordd arall o wneud hynny a **of doing this that would be better?**
 fyddai'n well?

[286] **Dr Temple:** Shall I start? My apologies for not speaking Welsh, although my daughters do.

[287] As far as I am concerned, it is a no-brainer. If we carry on the way we are doing, transport will virtually grind to a halt within a very short time, certainly by the middle of this century. If we are interested in transport, and we are interested in travel—and, traditionally, the Welsh have been—we need to ensure that it can continue in our grandchildren's era. That means that we need to develop a sustainable transport policy. As part of that we need to ensure that we have more active travel. On top of that, the undoubted economic, health and social benefits of active travel make this a win-win for the nation of Wales, and I see absolutely no reason for us not to do it. The evidence is overwhelming: when you want to change the attitudes of society, legislation is the most cost-effective way of doing it, and you are the people with the tools to do that, which is to help to make the laws different.

[288] **Keith Davies:** Beth yw'r manteision **Keith Davies:** What are the health benefits,
 iechyd, felly? Sut y bydd y Bil hwn yn **then? How will the Bill ensure that that**
 sicrhau y bydd hynny'n digwydd? **happens?**

[289] **Dr Temple:** I could list the health benefits, but, essentially, we reduce the risks of trauma from accidents to road users, and that is to car users and non-car users alike. We increase cardiovascular health and reduce the risk of stroke. If active travel takes place in a green environment, away from hard surfaces, then we reduce blood pressure and all the problems that that affects. We also improve mental wellbeing. So, in terms of health benefits, think of a health disbenefit and you will find that active travel is good for it. It is as simple as that. It is what human beings are designed to do. We are not designed to sit in cars. That is what our evolutionary history is about: we stroll, we walk, we get around on our own two feet. Some of us, like those in the previous group, need aid to do that, but even in primitive societies—what we laughably call primitive societies—those who are less able to get about have a function in society that enables them to get about and be part of society. So, it is part of our make-up.

[290] In terms of economic benefits, there is a lot of good evidence from other countries that, where active travel is promoted, economic activity rises. So, it is actually good for a country in recession, austerity, or whatever terminology you want to use, for us to promote active travel.

[291] **Keith Davies:** A yw'r gwasanaeth iechyd gwladol yn mynd i arbed arian, ac efallai grwpiau eraill, fel awdurdodau lleol a gwasanaethau cymdeithasol? **Keith Davies:** Will the national health service save money, and perhaps other groups, such as local authorities and social services?

[292] **Dr Temple:** The answer is that both will save money—or, rather, the demand on their services will go down. Currently in Wales, we have unmet need for all parts of the health and social care budget. So, at the moment, I cannot see that we will be able to reduce the budget, but this will mean that health will rise, and hence the effectiveness of the provision that the Assembly makes for health and social care across Wales; it will actually be better spent.

[293] **Nick Ramsay:** Before I bring Byron Davies in, would the representative from NICE like to comment?

[294] **Mr Crombie:** I would generally agree. Physical activity is an extremely effective way of reducing ill health and promoting wellbeing. A chief medical officer report from the four countries emphasises that. To get the benefits of physical activity, in terms of cardiovascular benefit, reductions in diabetes, cancers and so on, we are talking about 150 minutes of moderate activity a week—so, about half an hour five times a week—moderate activity being something like brisk walking or cycling, something that might raise your heart rate slightly and make you breathe slightly more heavily. However, it is well within the remit of the level of intensity of activity that you get with walking or cycling.

[295] To get the benefit, ideally, it should be spread out into segments across the week, and it should be carried on regularly and in perpetuity, as far as possible. The health benefits of physical activity are not something that we bank when we are young, with that then maintaining us in good health as we age; it has to be more or less now to get the benefits. So, activities such as walking or cycling are almost ideal from that point of view, because we are designed to walk and to carry on doing that as part of our daily life. We should be trying to encourage activities such as walking and cycling back into our daily life, because they are perfectly designed to give us those health benefits.

[296] Travel is something that we all do as part of our daily lives anyway, so if we can replace a sedentary activity, such as sitting in a train or car, with a physically active one, we are getting that benefit for no extra time cost. Frequently, the issues around this are how you fit this into the day, and you hear things like 'I haven't got time for the gym', 'I can't play

rugby' or whatever it might be. However, if you are doing that as part of the routine of your daily life and it becomes a normal part of your activities, those health benefits will accrue without having to be engineered into your life as something extra.

[297] **David Rees:** I have a brief supplementary question on this point. Previous witnesses have said that this is a good statement as a first step. Regarding the health benefits and savings that may come as a consequence, what timescale are you talking about? It depends on societal change as well, does it not?

[298] **Mr Crombie:** Yes. Ideally, we are after a major societal shift towards active travel modes and increased physical activity across the population. The benefits of being physically active can be seen very rapidly; it could be in a matter of weeks. As someone takes up an activity, there will be cardiovascular changes, potential changes in blood pressure and so on—all these types of things that are linked to many of the health disbenefits that we do not want to see—that could potentially happen relatively quickly. Aspects such as weight loss and so on, can also be linked; that is likely to take longer, but not spectacularly long periods of time. Cancer and such diseases frequently have a decades-long period of development, so in that regard we need to think about physical activity in earlier years. As I said, there are relatively rapid benefits from cardiovascular changes.

[299] One thing that is often overlooked is the impact of physical activity on mental wellbeing. Being active at the levels that we are talking about can often have a very positive impact on wellbeing. There is increasing evidence that that is particularly the case in an environment with natural features, so that we get what is sometimes described as a 'biophilic benefit', where we are connected more to a natural environment. Those benefits would be pretty much instantaneous.

[300] **Nick Ramsay:** Eluned Parrott is dying to come in with a question for you.

[301] **Eluned Parrott:** Following on from David Rees' point, the submission from NICE says that you strongly support the intentions of the Bill. Do you also support the detail of the Bill? Will the Bill be effective in addressing some of the recommendations in the guidance that you have published on walking and cycling, and your paper on physical activity and the environment?

[302] **Mr Crombie:** Yes. The Bill addresses a number of our recommendations in those pieces of guidance that we have published. In particular, the walking and cycling guidance—PH41—that was published at the end of last year, emphasises that we need a range of interventions. It is not just a case of 'Build it and they will come' type of approach. We need these things as facilities that will be used, and their construction and publicity through the publication of maps and so on will have an impact on its own. However, that will be much more effective if it is part of a much broader approach to encourage more activity and training and to reduce other barriers in general.

12.15 p.m.

[303] **Eluned Parrott:** I have a question for you and the BMA. There are two very specific strategic drivers in this Bill to focus on non-recreational active travel, namely on practical travel and on urbanised areas with populations of more than 2,000. Is that appropriate, given that the health benefits that you have identified would also be useful in other circumstances?

[304] **Dr Pease:** I see the ultimate aim of the Bill as being to rebalance the man/woman who is about to take a journey. As they step outside their door, it is about rebalancing or redressing them choosing to take active travel over their car. We have had lots of evidence as to why we should do it, and the status quo—a year-on-year growth in some of our major cities

in Wales—is not sustainable, plus energy levels are going up. There will be lots of different facets that we can look at, at how rebalancing can be taken forward and can be different for different cities and different areas. Some of the urban areas we can look at, where roads running in parallel can have priority to bicycles. I see bicycles as a carriage and, therefore, should be on the carriageway—I would not want to be in competition with pavement users, although I can see that, in some areas, that may be the best way forward. There are lots of different facets that need to come together to take forward different parts of the Bill, but it is ultimately about rebalancing the choice when I step outside my door: do I take my car or do I take something else? It is about redressing that. The Cardiff development programme looks at a 50:50 car mode versus non-car mode for the near future.

[305] **Nick Ramsay:** That pretty much echoes the comments of Professor Pooley earlier, in terms of the rebalancing of the car and other modes of transport.

[306] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Rydych yn amlwg yn credu bod hwn yn syniad da, er nad oes arian ychwanegol yn dod gyda'r Bil hwn. O gofio eich dadleuon bod manteision i ieuchyd cyffredinol pobl o'u hannog i gerdded a beicio mwy, a fyddai'n syniad da neilltuo rhywfaint o'r arian sy'n mynd i'r gwasanaeth ieuchyd ar hyn o bryd er mwyn hyrwyddo amcanion y Bil hwn?

Alun Ffred Jones: You clearly believe that this is a good idea, although no additional funding comes with this Bill. Bearing in mind your arguments that encouraging people to walk and cycle more has benefits for their general health, would it be a good idea to earmark some of the funding currently provided to the health service to promote this Bill's aims and objectives?

[307] **Nick Ramsay:** Who wants to take that?

[308] **Dr Temple:** I will volunteer—foolish behaviour. *[Laughter.]* My health improvement colleagues in Public Health Wales, where I work, take promoting active travel very seriously. So, NHS funds are already being invested in promoting active travel. I think that what I would say is that if you are going to take NHS funds away and give them to someone else, you will cut off the baby from the bathwater as well as clearing the bath out. So, perhaps we need to be a bit cleverer than saying that we are going to divert funds from healthcare into promoting active travel. As I indicated, the temptation to isolate one area from another is all part of a bigger picture. If you only concentrate on the seedling, you ignore the fact that the land around it is being washed away. We need to ensure that the whole consensus in Wales changes. It means that my colleagues in health promotion and health improvement are actively able to promote active travel. It means that they must have the facilities and permission to promote that.

[309] That may mean that where, for example, the Treasury has granted funds to spend on improving the M4, the Assembly might want to petition Parliament that, rather than making the great dual carriageway from London even bigger, so that it can consume more car miles, we invest some of that money into diverting traffic away from the M4 by encouraging active travel in south Wales. Then we may not need to spend more money on concrete in the Gwent area. It is a concept that has been tried elsewhere, in other cities. I am reminded of south Yorkshire in the 1970s, where there was a policy of heavily subsidising public transport; transit times went up, road use went down, and the investment that the local authority had to put in to road maintenance, and that the NHS had to put in to patching up the results of traffic accidents, went down. So, this may be one of those areas where, if we take care of the big picture, the detail takes care of itself, and you do not need to divert any funds.

[310] **Nick Ramsay:** Byron Davies is eager to pass comment on that.

[311] **Byron Davies:** I was just going to say, Dr Temple, that it is a great concept, but how do you address the freight transport people when they say that they cannot bring business in

and out of Wales?

[312] **Dr Temple:** The answer again is south Yorkshire. What they found in south Yorks was that, when they removed most of the private car use, the long-range heavy goods vehicles had less competition on the major trunk roads, so the transit time for hauliers shrank as well. Their costs went down, and because the road maintenance costs were less, the roads were maintained better. It was win-win for everybody. In south Yorkshire, there was access to canals as well, so much of the slow, very heavy bulk goods took to canals. That is history.

[313] **Nick Ramsay:** We need to make progress. Byron, do you have any further questions?

[314] **Byron Davies:** We are all agreed that an active travel Bill is a great idea. There is no doubt about that. However, how are you going to monitor this in the long and short term, and make sure that it actually is making progress?

[315] **Dr Temple:** As a public health specialist, the answer is that I would be monitoring the effectiveness of the effects on health. We currently collect an awful lot of health data routinely, so I do not think that we need any new, special data—we merely need to be guided and helped to look at them. One of the things that could be very usefully done is a direction that requires us to do that—simply because, if that direction comes, we get over the problem of the wrong use of the phrase ‘data protection Act’. I am very keen that individuals’ data should be protected, but they are sometimes used as a means of not enabling people to check whether actions that have been taken have had any effect. On road traffic accidents, the police already collect data, so we already have those; we just need access to them. Again, there is the issue of confidentiality, confidence and sharing data. There is an awful lot of data out there that we already have, and collect at vast expense, and we ought to just use them better. Wales is leading the way on that in the UK.

[316] **Nick Ramsay:** Does NICE want to add to that?

[317] **Mr Crombie:** I was just thinking that we have published guidance on preventing unintentional injuries as well, which I think did talk about a number of the issues about linking data from various sources—police data, hospital accident-and-emergency-type data—and the importance of making sure that they are compatible, and that we can make all the reasonable inferences from those data that are possible. In particular, in this kind of area, there are issues about whether a cycle casualty has happened on-road or off-road, and whether that is included in various data sets. There are some specific issues there, which, to be honest, I am not totally au fait with, but on which we might provide some more information.

[318] **Byron Davies:** How will you monitor how health improves?

[319] **Mr Crombie:** There is regular monitoring of health conditions and we would want to see that being done through the normal processes of establishing and considering the health of the local population, carried out through the processes that would happen routinely and, as part of that, to ensure that issues around measuring and monitoring physical activity are included, and ensure that the monitoring of transport statistics is the sort of thing that captures and gives due weight to active travel as well as motorised travel.

[320] **Dr Pease:** There are multiple tiers of data available from morbidity and mortality from road traffic accidents right down to local GPs who collect BMI and obesity data as part of their quality and outcomes framework points and data on sick leave. As my colleague has said, these are already being collected; there needs to be no further investment. Perhaps there should be a steer from the Bill to indicate that this information should be shared, so that not only should it be collated, but it should be shared among the relevant parties.

[321] **Byron Davies:** Okay; that is helpful.

[322] **Nick Ramsay:** We have around five minutes left, so could Members be succinct? Please feel free to be succinct in your answers as well. Dafydd Elis-Thomas, do you have a question?

[323] **Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas:** Hoffwn wybod faint o ymgynghori sydd wedi bod rhwng y Llywodraeth a chyrff meddygol, ac arbenigwyr meddygol yn arbennig, wrth baratoi ac ystyried y sefyllfa ar gyfer canllawiau. Un mater sy'n ein pryderu yw bod agweddau o'r Bil nad ydynt yn eglur fel y maen nhw'n ymddangos ar wyneb y Bil. Felly, mae llawer o'r gweithredu yn mynd i ddibynnu ar y modd y bydd llywodraeth leol yn gweithredu'r canllawiau. A ydych chi, fel cyrff iechyd Cymreig perthnasol, wedi cael eich ymgynghori, a'ch ymgynghori yn fanwl, ar y canllawiau?

Lord Elis-Thomas: I would like to know how much consultation there has been between the Government and medical bodies, and medical specialists in particular, in preparing and considering the situation for the guidance. One issue that concerns us is that elements of the Bill are not clear as they appear on the face of the Bill. Therefore, a lot of the implementation will depend on the way in which local government will implement the guidance. Have you, as the relevant Welsh health bodies, been consulted, and have you been consulted in detail, on this guidance?

[324] **Dr Temple:** I sincerely hope that we will be. To be honest, I am unaware that we have had any formal consultation, but we did give evidence when the original request came out as to whether this was a good idea. BMA policy has long established that we should promote active transport throughout the United Kingdom, and Wales is still a part of the United Kingdom, as far as I can recall.

[325] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I can confirm that. *[Laughter.]*

[326] **Dr Temple:** So, presumably, that is our starting point as the BMA. I would argue that BMA Cymru would like to participate in developing the guidance. As far as my personal view is concerned, what I would like to see on the face of the Bill are clear principles that the Welsh Government expects local government and the public to follow and, in the guidance, the detail, on the basis that the principles are unlikely to change in the next 20 to 25 years, but we all know that what will happen tomorrow is very difficult to predict.

[327] **Nick Ramsay:** It certainly is.

[328] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** That is very helpful; thank you.

[329] **Joyce Watson:** My question is for the BMA. You say in your evidence that you have concerns about the timescale for the preparation of maps. Would you tell us what you think is the right amount of time?

[330] **Dr Pease:** It is difficult to be exact. We were fortunate to sit in on the previous session and hear about the difficulties that those with disabilities would find with the provision of maps. It will be different for different areas, but I would look for there to be some guidance that it should happen as soon as possible, rather than to say, 'In five years' time, we would expect there to have been a mapping exercise'. Being exact about timings is difficult.

12.30 p.m.

[331] **Joyce Watson:** You also say that the timescale for the resubmission of maps is too long, given the suggestion from the WLGA that that should happen and be extended to five

years to coincide with the regional transport planning process. Do you want to offer an alternative view on that?

[332] **Dr Temple:** My own view, for what it is worth, is that since the maps will hopefully be a living document, I am quite happy for there to be a five-year definitive plan, but there should possibly be annual amendments. Rather than having something set down in stone that you have to follow, even if you know that it is going wrong, you need to have something that you are prepared to amend and keep amending as events go forward. I would personally like to see interim maps being produced on an annual basis that are open to consultation and feedback. One of the things that I would like to see in the Bill—again, this is a personal view rather than that of the BMA—is a requirement for the Welsh Government and local authorities to consider using third-sector organisations, such as the Cycle Touring Club and the Ramblers association, or their equivalents, to put some commentary in on how well the current approved routes are performing in their area. In other words, I would like to see users passing feedback on how the improved route is working, because that will help to drive things forward. If local authorities, when they report to council tax payers in their annual reports, had a comment on how they were doing on this, that would help to raise it up the political agenda, which might help the Bill to succeed.

[333] **Nick Ramsay:** Joyce, did you have any further questions?

[334] **Joyce Watson:** No, that was fine.

[335] **Nick Ramsay:** Ken Skates, I think that your area has been partially covered, but did you want to ask something on continuous improvement?

[336] **Kenneth Skates:** Yes; thank you, Chair. With regard to continuous improvement, you suggest that there should be minimum levels of improvement. Can you explain to us how these should be decided and by whom? Should they be monitored and enforced? How could they be financed?

[337] **Dr Temple:** Personally, I am professionally against targets because I find that they tend to drive things in the wrong direction. It is useful to have a target if it is like a bull's eye on a target at which you are shooting, because at least you have something to aim for. If a target gets translated into something that you must have done by a certain date, it can be counter-productive because what happens is that people train or aim to achieve exactly what you said—no more; no less. What we are trying to do is to organise a culture change. I would like to see a target like: by the middle of this century, 50% of all travel should be done by active means, and, perhaps by the end of the first quarter of the century, a quarter of travel. I think that those targets are sufficiently vague to be useful, but not overbearing. That is what I would like to see. In the health field, we had a target that by the early part of this century, we would have health equivalent to the best in the world. I do not think that we have got there, but at least it was a useful target. It helped us to concentrate our minds on what we were trying to achieve. That is the useful thing that we should do. On that, I would like to see some short-term targets and goals that we would like to achieve within five to 10 years; some long-term goals that we would like to achieve in about 10 to 20 years; and really long-term goals that we would like to achieve in 50 to 100 years.

[338] **Nick Ramsay:** Finally, I have a specific question for NICE. I know that you believe that there are particular benefits for disabled people in the Active Travel (Wales) Bill. Do you think that the Bill takes sufficient account of the needs of disabled people?

[339] **Mr Crombie:** As we were hearing in the last session, it is very important to take action that is going to help people with disabilities to be as physically active as possible. They are likely to experience greater restrictions than other members of society, so actions to

improve that will be beneficial. We heard a lot about the importance of adequate discussion and consultation with disabled groups, with which we absolutely agree. I think that it is important that the Bill does have statements in it that this kind of consultation is going to occur, and that the guidance sets out in more detail how that is going to happen. As a last word, I think that changes that support people with disability to be able to be active are also likely to be beneficial to the rest of the population as well. So, it is not just a small segment that is going to benefit from those changes.

[340] **Nick Ramsay:** I thank Hugo Crombie, Dr Nicki Pease and Dr Mark Temple for being with the committee today. That has been very helpful. We will send you a transcript for you to check for accuracy. Thank you. That brings this session to a close.

Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 12.36 p.m.
The meeting ended at 12.36 p.m.