



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)
Kenneth Skates	Llafur Labour
Joyce Watson	Llafur Labour

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Jont Bulbeck	Arweinydd y Tîm Mynediad, Hamdden a Thwristiaeth, Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru Team Leader, Recreation Access and Tourism, Natural Resources Wales
Ceri Davies	Cyfarwyddwr Gweithredol, Gwybodaeth, Strategaeth a Chynllunio, Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru Executive Director, Knowledge, Strategy and Planning, Natural Resources Wales
Dr Kevin Golding-Williams	Rheolwr Polisi a Materion Cyhoeddus, Living Streets Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Living Streets
Dr Hugh Mackay	Aelod o Dîm Gweithredol, Clwb Teithio Beicwyr Cymru Senior Lecturer and Staff Tutor, The Open University Wales, CTC Cymru
Gwenda Owen	Swyddog Ymgysylltu Cymunedol, y Cerddwyr Community Engagement Officer, Ramblers Cymru

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

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

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 1.33 p.m.
The meeting began at 1.33 p.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon Introductions, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Nick Ramsay:** Welcome, everyone, to this afternoon's meeting of the Enterprise and Business Committee. I extend a warm welcome to our witnesses in particular. This meeting is bilingual, and headsets can be used to access the simultaneous translation from Welsh to English on channel 1, or amplification on channel 0. The meeting is being broadcast, and a transcript of it will be published. I ask Members to please turn off their mobile phones. There is no need to touch the microphones; they will operate automatically. In the event of the fire alarm sounding, I ask people to please follow directions from the ushers. We have received apologies from Julie James and David Rees; there are no substitutions for this afternoon's meeting.

1.34 p.m.

Bil Teithio Llesol (Cymru): Cyfnod 1—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 8 **Active Travel (Wales) Bill: Stage 1—Evidence Session 8**

[2] **Nick Ramsay:** Welcome to our witnesses: thank you for being with us today to help us with our deliberations. Would you like to give your names and positions for the record?

[3] **Ms Owen:** I am Gwenda Owen, and I am the community engagement officer with Ramblers Cymru—y Cerddwyr.

[4] **Dr Golding-Williams:** I am Kevin Golding-Williams, public affairs and policy manager at Living Streets.

[5] **Nick Ramsay:** We have a fair number of questions for you and a relatively short time, so I propose that we go straight into the questions. The first is from Alun Ffred Jones.

[6] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Gwnaf ofyn fy nghwestiynau yn Gymraeg. **Alun Ffred Jones:** I shall ask my question in Welsh.

[7] **Dau gwestiwn wedi eu clymu'n un sydd gennyf.** A yw'r Bil, sy'n canolbwyntio ar fapio a seilwaith yn unig, gan adael y materion ehangach i gynllun teithio llesol nad yw'n statudol, yn debygol o fod yn effeithiol? Dyna'r cwestiwn cyntaf. Yr ail gwestiwn yw: os ydych yn teimlo na fydd yn effeithiol, pa gamau eraill sydd eu hangen i hyrwyddo teithio llesol yn effeithiol o fewn cwmrawd y Bil hwn?

I have two questions that are tied together. Does the Bill, which focuses on mapping and infrastructure only, leaving the wider issues to an active travel plan that is not statutory, likely to be effective? That is the first question. The second question is: if you feel that that will not be effective, what further steps need to be taken to promote active travel in an effective way within the scope of this Bill?

[8] **Ms Owen:** The Bill is a good first step, but we do not feel that the Bill and concentrating on mapping alone will be sufficient. Again, it is important to look at the intention of the mapping. If it is purely a mapping exercise to say what is there, then it is of limited use. However, if it forms part of a wider strategy and then is developed in line with other measures—and I think that we will go on to say that some of those measures should be incorporated within the Bill—then it could have a good effect.

[9] **Dr Golding-Williams:** Certainly, our concern is that this is primarily focused on infrastructure and that it is missing a trick with regard to behaviour change, which is going to be crucial in terms of winning hearts and minds. There is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity

with this piece of legislation. I am most reminded of the climate change legislation that came through the Assembly previously, which really was a landmark case. For us, it is about inserting behaviour change interventions within this. One of the ways in which the Bill could be enhanced is by inserting an amendment that would require the Minister to produce an active travel action plan and to provide an update on its implementation to the Assembly on a regular basis. It is only by having that high-level agenda set in the Bill itself that this Bill will achieve its aims.

[10] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. Mae Ramblers Cymru wedi codi pryderon ynglŷn â'r dulliau presennol o ddylunio llwybrau. A ydych yn credu bod y canllawiau dylunio sydd yn y Bil yn ddigonol? Os nad ydynt, sut y byddech yn eu cryfhau?

Alun Ffred Jones: Thank you very much. Ramblers Cymru has raised concerns about current approaches to route design. Do you believe that the design guidance contained in the Bill is sufficient? If not, how would you strengthen it?

[11] **Ms Owen:** One of the issues, when we are looking at guidance, is that the guidance has not yet been created. There is fantastic guidance out there already. Very often, the problem is when it comes to the implementation of that guidance, and it is about the authority that is behind that. If it is guidance and there is no incentive or obligation to deliver to the highest standard, then we will be in danger of wasting money, as, at times, we do, by creating an infrastructure that does not suit anyone. It is compromised, and I think some examples of that have been given.

[12] The Taff trail is a really interesting example, if we are looking at Wales. It is a fantastic route in lots of ways, but it was designed some time ago. Use of the route has increased, and it was not designed as a commuter route. It happens to be a path through a park, in places. In places, it is totally inappropriate for what we are looking to do. We are looking to effect massive behaviour change. For people in the north of Cardiff cycling into work, it is brilliant. However, parts of the Taff trail would not meet the design guidance that we would like to see, because the experience of walkers, in that environment, is significantly compromised. I think that Andrea and other colleagues spoke earlier about vulnerable users. At times, all walkers can be vulnerable users. We need to ensure that we have robust guidance and that that guidance is implemented. It is also about education of all users. Going back to what we want from the Bill, do we just want a Bill that is about mapping, or do we want a Bill that will effect change and can make Wales a nation that travels actively?

[13] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A ydych chi felly yn awgrymu y dylai fod rhywbeth ar wyneb y Bil sy'n ymwneud â dylunio, neu ydych chi'n hapus iddo fod yn y canllawiau?

Alun Ffred Jones: Are you therefore suggesting that there should be something on the face of the Bill that relates to design, or are you happy for it to be set out in the guidance?

[14] **Ms Owen:** I think it is probably outside my level of experience to say. I think that there needs to be a strong wording within the Bill about the standard of the guidance and how that should be adhered to. I do not feel qualified to comment on whether that should form part of the Bill.

[15] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Cyfeiriaf y cwestiwn nesaf at Living Streets. A yw'r Bil a'r memorandwm esboniadol yn rhoi digon o ystyriaeth i faterion yn ymwneud â cherddwyr, o gofio'r awgrym nad yw'r dystiolaeth o fanteision cerdded wedi cael ei gynnwys ynddynt?

Alun Ffred Jones: I refer the next question to Living Streets. Do you believe that the Bill and explanatory memorandum give sufficient consideration to pedestrian issues, given the suggestion that evidence of the benefits of walking has been omitted?

[16] **Dr Golding-Williams:** ‘Partly’, I suppose, is my answer to that question. In terms of full pedestrian routes, particularly in urban centres, a lot of them are in place already, to varying degrees of standard. One of our concerns is about maintenance, which I know has already been flagged up as an issue. For us, and certainly with our experience in terms of running our ‘Walk to School’ and ‘Walking to Work’ programmes, it is about winning hearts and minds and showing people what opportunities are out there to really make a difference. There are significant benefits in terms of health that have been mentioned already by other people. There are benefits that were omitted from the impact assessment with regard to the significant economic benefits that improvements to the public realm and improvements to the pedestrian environment can bring to high streets, which, at this time, is crucial. We are doing some research into that at the moment. So, across a number of policy areas, there are benefits from this Bill.

[17] One of the key issues for us is that the obligation does not just sit with local authorities. There is a role for the police in this and for Public Health Wales, and we have suggested that a duty be enacted within the Bill to require these different public bodies to work together. It is only by working together that we will achieve the objectives of this Bill.

[18] **Byron Davies:** I think you have probably touched quite a bit on my question already, but I will put it to you anyway. It is fair to say that Ramblers Cymru and Living Streets believe that guidance, as well as support for local authorities, will be crucial to the success of the Bill? Are there any matters currently to be addressed through guidance that should be included on the face of the Bill or in regulation? What is your belief?

[19] **Nick Ramsay:** Who wants to lead on that?

[20] **Dr Golding-Williams:** For us, as I have just mentioned in relation to the active travel action plan, that is something that needs to be at the forefront of this Bill, within the first section of it. That is the only way that we are going to achieve change. To give you an example of the benefits, if you like, or the impact that those sorts of behavioural change interventions can have, we carried out a piece of work for the Department of Health in England, and, over the course of the three-year project, we increased the number of children walking to school by 25%. When you look at other potential interventions, there is no way that you will achieve that sort of increase, and, indeed, if you look at the impact assessment that accompanies this Bill, it notes that, in the last action plan, there was a 0.7% increase in the number of people walking to work over a four-year period. I do not think that a 0.7% increase represents progress over a four-year period.

[21] **Ms Owen:** With regard to the action plan and what should be on the face of the Bill, as we were saying previously, it is about having a buy-in and somehow joining up the different pieces. We have the regional transport consortia, the local authorities and Welsh Government, and where the Welsh Government and the Assembly leads on that, and pulls it all together, I think that needs to be part of it.

[22] **Nick Ramsay:** The next question is from Keith Davies.

[23] **Keith Davies:** Byddaf yn gofyn fy nghwestiwn yn y Gymraeg, hefyd. Bydd y manau lle bydd y llwybrau hyn yn cael eu dewis yn ôl poblogaeth. A ydych yn derbyn hynny, ynteu a ydych yn credu bod ffactorau eraill y dylent fod yn meddwl amdanynt? **Keith Davies:** I shall also ask my question in Welsh. The locality of these routes will be selected according to population. Do you accept that, or do you think that there are other factors that should be taken into account?

[24] **Ms Owen:** I think that there will be missed opportunities if the selection is made on a population basis alone. There is a danger that we will have pockets of isolation if we do not

look at how the whole network integrates. We are talking about people travelling from the Valleys to Cardiff, with parts of those journeys being by bus, and parts being by public transport. It is about looking at what people need. It is easy to concentrate on an area like Cardiff, because it is potentially an easy area to work with, but we need to ask whether that will affect the behaviour change that we want in Wales as a whole. I believe that there is a danger that the people of Wales will not benefit, and that we will not be establishing an environment of walking and cycling. So, that needs to be looked at.

1.45 p.m.

[25] **Dr Golding-Williams:** While I can understand setting a population threshold—and various options are put forward in the impact assessment; that is a nice, neat policy analysis to undertake—as Professor Colin Pooley mentioned earlier, life is not like that. Life is a little bit more complicated. While we understand where the 2,000 figure is coming from, I think that it is one of a number of factors. There are many small settlements across Wales where there are real issues, where you have pretty fast rural roads going into conurbations at speed, and there are no footpaths—this is basic stuff: there simply is no footpath. So, some of the work that we have been doing with Walk to School has been trying to identify how you overcome simple barriers, such as there being no footpath in the first place. My concern is that, by implementing a strict 2,000 threshold, you could potentially restrict how this Bill applies to a number of communities that may be really keen to introduce an intervention, or to challenge a barrier to walking—or to cycling, for that matter—in their local area.

[26] **Keith Davies:** Yn dilyn hynny, a yw'r ffocws trefol anhamddenol a ddynodir yn y memorandwm yn briodol? **Keith Davies:** Following on from that, is the non-recreational urban focus that is identified in the memorandum appropriate?

[27] **Ms Owen:** Again, this is one where you need to look at the whole picture around what we are trying to do. Often, there are overlaps; we will cycle or walk to work on routes that we would also choose for leisure activities. However, we also need to look at what type of journeys we want to do. When we are travelling to work or to school, we probably want a more direct route—a fast route—and we are not as prepared to take the circuitous route through the park. However, that sort of differentiation can take place in the guidance. When you are looking at the design guidance, and what sort of facilities should be provided, I believe that it would be more appropriate. We have a rights-of-way network that is suitable for walking. Our right-of-way network was created because people were walking to work and to school; it is very much part of how we move. Often, those paths are along desire lines, and if we do not acknowledge that, and recognise the way that people walk, and why they walk, we are missing something. We need to be careful that we do not just separate the two; there needs to be that recognition.

[28] **Dr Golding-Williams:** There are certainly cross-links between both. I walked here today from Cardiff railway station. I am here for work, but it is a nice, pleasant day, so is that leisure? When does working become leisure? I am unsure. So, that is where guidance is quite useful. We are launching our national walking month in May, which we do every year. One aspect that we push is the benefits of walking to work, but it is also about the leisure aspects of it—walking home from work, and having the time, and the ability, to just think. It is very much linked.

[29] **Keith Davies:** Mae Taith Taf yn gwneud y ddau beth, onid yw? Mae'n llwybr hamdden ac yn anhamddenol. **Keith Davies:** The Taff trail is both, is it not? It is recreational and non-recreational.

[30] **Ms Owen:** It is too narrow. *[Laughter.]*

[31] **Keith Davies:** Lleoliad, natur a chyflwr yw'r meini prawf i'w defnyddio i ddiffinio pa mor addas yw llwybr fel llwybr teithio llesol. A ydych yn cytuno â hynny?

Keith Davies: Location, nature and condition are the criteria to be used to define the suitability of a route as an active travel route. Do you agree with that?

[32] **Ms Owen:** Again, the devil is in the detail. On the location, yes, it has to be where people want to go. The mistake that we often make is that we put people where it is convenient. There has been a lot of talk about this not being an anti-car Bill, but to affect behaviour change, many people have said that we need to make it slightly easier and slightly more inviting for people to go for a walk or a bike ride. The nature and the condition of the path are crucial and they have an impact. It is one of the barriers that people face. They will look at their route to work and decide, 'I do not really want to do that'. A lot of it is about perception, but when they are there, it is another barrier that you have to break through with people. So, I think that these do go some way to—

[33] **Dr Golding-Williams:** I echo what Gwenda has said. Also, it is important to place this in a wider context, and that has been picked up by others who have given evidence today, with regard to road safety and wider measures, such as the introduction of 20 mph limits, which we advocate. So, in terms of the routes, that is the concrete or the asphalt on the ground, if you like, but it is about all of these other things: do you feel safe walking along the route, and what is the impact of high-speed, high-volume traffic? There are a lot of other things that need to be considered that will help this Bill to achieve its aims.

[34] **Keith Davies:** Rydym wedi clywed y bore yma am lwybrau teithio sy'n cael eu rhannu. A ydych yn credu y dylai'r materion a fydd yn codi o rannu llwybrau fod yn y Bil?

Keith Davies: We have heard this morning about shared paths. Do you think that the issues that arise when you do that should be covered in the Bill?

[35] **Ms Owen:** It is good to separate shared space and paths. We hope that the guidance will be robust, because, in our experience, we are doing no-one any favours by putting pedestrians with cyclists. That would be putting two vulnerable groups together, creating a worse environment for both and not addressing the issue: the issue is that we are not creating a safe environment. By taking all users off roads and placing them in a very narrow space, we will not affect behaviour change. It is not pleasant. For example, in Cardiff, there is a particularly tricky junction, so they have put a cycle sign on the pavement. That is a junction that people are using to walk to and from work. It does not serve a purpose, and that will not encourage either party. We are compromising enjoyment, and walking and cycling should be enjoyable activities. There is a lack of consideration in the Bill and the evidence so far about what we need to do to make walking enjoyable. There is an assumption that if we tarmac a path and call it a cycle route, it is good for walkers as well, but they have different needs a lot of the time, especially in urban environments. We are looking to increase the volume, and if we are looking to increase the volume of walkers and cyclists in a narrow space, we are not doing anyone a service. If you are clearing space for cars, there is no disincentive.

[36] **Keith Davies:** Beth ydych chi'n ei feddwl am ein trafodaeth â Sustrans yn gynharach y bore yma am Queen Street, Caerdydd, a'r syniad y gallai pobl ar gefn beiciau a cherddwyr fynd gyda'i gilydd yn ddiogel yno?

Keith Davies: What is your view of the discussion that we had with Sustrans a little earlier, when we were talking about Queen Street, Cardiff, and the idea that both pedestrians and cyclists could use the street safely?

[37] **Ms Owen:** Queen Street is a shared space. Shared spaces are different. *[Interruption.]* Sorry, it is not a shared space—we do not have cars. *[Laughter.]* I would question the logic of Queen Street being pedestrian only, because it is a direct passage through and very busy. It is about looking at behaviour, and that is where education comes in. Often, we are talking about

the network and about creating the routes. We are not talking about those big, wide spaces; we are talking about pavements and about a local authority saying, politically, ‘We cannot take space away from cars, so we will put cyclists on the pavements’. When it comes down to it, those are the bigger problems that we need to look at. The issue of Queen Street, with some good education and working with all user groups, could be solved, as Sustrans indicated. People cycle on the Hayes; they turn the corner and they cannot cycle. That is a different issue from shared paths where we are being forced together.

[38] **Dr Golding-Williams:** There is more that unites cyclists and pedestrians than divides them. I take the point about ‘shared use’ as being distinct to ‘shared space’, which is a slightly different concept. For us, it is a do-no-harm principle. It does not help anyone if one group of active travellers is dissuaded from, or feels intimidated in, undertaking its activity by another group. What we are looking at is the road space. How do we allocate the road space and make it safer for cyclists, so that they feel safe to use the road, be it on the road itself, or through some adaptation to it? It has been really interesting to see the experience in London over the last few years, with the introduction of the Barclays/Boris bikes. We have seen an unintended consequence, because the infrastructure in London is not up to scratch for the vast majority of people who tend to use bikes. You will see tourists in London merrily cycling along the pavement, because they do not feel that they can use that space, so there is a real risk of unintended consequences.

[39] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A ydych yn dweud na ddylai cerddwyr a beicwyr fyth rannu llwybr, ynteu a ydych yn dweud, mewn trefi—yn enwedig trefi poblog—na allwch roi beicwyr ar y palmant? Yn fy mhrofiad i, mae Lôn Las Menai, sy’n cysylltu llawer o bentrefi o gwmpas Caernarfon a Bangor, yn cael ei defnyddio gan feicwyr a cherddwyr; derbyniaf mai defnydd hamdden yw llawer ohono, ond nid yn gyfan gwbl. Hyd y gwelaf, mae pawb yn gallu byw yn gytûn ar y llwybr hwnnw. Beth yn union yw eich neges: na allant rannu, neu eu bod yn gallu rhannu weithiau?

Alun Ffred Jones: Are you saying that walkers and cyclists should never share a path, or are you saying that, in towns—particularly highly populated towns—that cyclists should not be put on the pavement? In my experience, Lôn Las Menai, which links many villages around Caernarfon and Bangor, is used by cyclists and walkers; I accept that a lot of it is leisure use, but that is not always the case. As far as I can see, everyone lives harmoniously on that path. What exactly is your message: that they cannot share, or that they can do so, occasionally?

[40] **Ms Owen:** I know the paths there; my dad lives in Bangor, so I cycle and walk those paths. We acknowledge that shared paths are sometimes inevitable, but you have to look at the situation and the usage. A lot of the Lôn Las Menai path is not heavily used, so you are not getting the same level of conflict, because of high volume, and much of it is very wide. Some of the paths that we are talking about have a very narrow pavement-type space. So, it is about looking at all the considerations; the level of use and whether there is a viable alternative. We would not say that paths should never be shared; we recognise that there are some very good examples of where shared paths will and do work. However, it should not be a compromise. There are some examples in north Wales and in south Wales—around the Llanelli coast path—of very good design, which takes the needs of all users into account.

[41] **Dr Golding-Williams:** Your starting point is that paths should not be shared, but then locality and context come into it, and it depends on that place. In one place, it might be entirely appropriate, where the local community and users are confident and comfortable with that. The Department for Transport in England produced a useful local transport note last September or October; I believe that the recommendation in it was that a path is at least 3m before it is considered. So, the starting point is, no—paths should not be shared—but you should always consider the local circumstances, because it might be appropriate.

[42] **Nick Ramsay:** We have 15 minutes left and we are not quite halfway through the questions yet; we have a limited time frame. Joyce Watson, do you want to ask your questions now?

[43] **Joyce Watson:** Yes. I want to ask about maps and the importance of consultation in developing maps. What factors should be considered when consulting on maps, and how should they be reflected in the Bill and in the guidance? What are your views?

[44] **Dr Golding-Williams:** For us, it is about community engagement and making sure that the community understands where routes will go in the future, particularly with regard to the integrated network plans. We do community street audits, working with local communities and members of local councils et cetera, and we walk around localities to identify barriers to walking. As I have mentioned, those might be the lack of a path or a crossing, or a concern about the speed of the traffic. We want to see that embedded in the guidance.

2.00 p.m.

[45] However, we think that there is an opportunity for this Bill to make a real statement about transparency, and also engagement with local communities by inserting what we are proposing, which is a kind of right to request for local communities. So, if, at the end of the consultation process, a local community feels that its voice has not been heard—for example, perhaps parents and children would like a crossing outside of a school, but the road engineer says, ‘That’s not going to happen’, although there is a real desire for that—there is a legislative opportunity for the community to ask for a review of that decision.

[46] **Joyce Watson:** Do you think that the status and purpose of the integrated network map is sufficiently clear, and do you think that there should be a greater emphasis on delivering the schemes?

[47] **Nick Ramsay:** Gwenda?

[48] **Ms Owen:** I have to confess that I do not have an answer to that question. It is too specific a question for me; so, this may be a question for you, Kevin.

[49] **Dr Golding-Williams:** In terms of the network maps, it is about identifying those opportunities for continuous development, if you like. However, I think that there are issues around long-term maintenance within the supporting guidance for the Bill. Reference is made that no additional revenue funding will be made available, and we have concerns about that. In our experience, that is something that really affects how people feel about the area and the ability and the idea of walking.

[50] **Joyce Watson:** Following on from that, do you think that, without sufficient funding and an obligation to deliver, you could be raising expectations and creating disappointment?

[51] **Ms Owen:** In Wales, we have been looking at what happened with the rights of way. There was a very good model with the rights of way improvement plans. Local authorities, again, had a duty to create a plan, and the evidence that I have had from local authorities recently has shown that that was a very useful exercise. If the mapping exercise can be seen in a similar way, I think that it would be very powerful. However, that also had money attached to it afterwards. Some local authorities, such as Monmouthshire County Council, have used its rights of way improvement plan fantastically and innovatively. It has joined things together and it has used it to draw down money from health budgets. I think that there is potential to use this.

[52] **Dr Golding-Williams:** To follow on from that, I think that there are two elements to this: one is around revenue funding to keep existing routes and new routes up to a high standard, which we know is important; the second, on the other side, as I have mentioned, is around the behaviour change interventions. I know that there is reference in the impact assessment to a figure of £14.3 million per annum for active travel across various budgets. I think that the Welsh Government needs to look long and hard at what has happened in England, with the Department for Transport, which has brought in the local sustainable transport fund. That fund has really helped a whole variety of innovative projects regarding active travel, particularly our own Walk to School campaign, to start actually making a difference. I think that that needs to be seriously looked at.

[53] **Nick Ramsay:** I always like it when someone else plugs my local area, so that I do not have to do so. I call on Eluned Parrott.

[54] **Eluned Parrott:** Obviously, there is a big difference between publishing a map and making it available and publishing a map and people using it. What are the key factors in making sure that they are usable, living documents?

[55] **Ms Owen:** What is the purpose of the map? That is the first question. Is it to map what we have? If it is to map what we have, we will have a map of some pretty inadequate provision. Again, the intention, following the consultation, is to map walking and cycling routes separately. I hope that that intention remains, because I think that they need to be separately recognised. However, we need to be clear about what we want this map to do and what its purpose is.

[56] **Nick Ramsay:** I think that the Minister previously—[*Inaudible.*—]—so that we know where the inadequacies are. I think—

[57] **Ms Owen:** Yes, and that is fine, but that will not then encourage people. For the public, that is a very good tool. It is also a very good tool for the local authorities and for the highway authorities. However, do we use that as a form of engagement to consult with people? So, again, I think that we need to be clear about why we are carrying out this mapping process. Is it so that we can then set improvement targets? That is something that needs to be—

[58] **Dr Golding-Williams:** This is a major concern. We are just talking about publishing maps. Maps do not make people walk; they tell people where there are routes or perhaps they identify gaps in routes, and that will not encourage people to walk. I was thinking on the train as I was coming here about the sunny days last year when we had the Olympics and, across the venues, one of the key implementations were the purple-clad volunteers. When you arrived at your transport destination, they could point you in the direction of the best place to walk. I saw that in London alone the bridge count figures suggested that walking increased by about 22%. There are always maps there, which is fine, but—

[59] **Nick Ramsay:** You are not saying that we should have purple-clad volunteers standing on cycle routes. We might struggle to get that line into the Bill. [*Laughter.*]

[60] **Ms Owen:** We have community ambassadors in the Valleys Regional Park. There are people out there who are doing this.

[61] **Nick Ramsay:** This is purely about infrastructures. There is nothing in it about education.

[62] **Ms Owen:** No.

[63] **Eluned Parrott:** Thank you.

[64] **Nick Ramsay:** Over to me, then. Do you think that the meaning of ‘continuous improvement’ as specified in the Bill is sufficiently clear? How would you measure or monitor it?

[65] **Ms Owen:** What is our baseline? Are we improving what we have? Is it about maintenance? Will we seek to get all the existing network, as mapped, to a certain standard? So, again, the phrase is quite difficult to work with.

[66] **Dr Golding-Williams:** Continuous improvement is a nice concept in principle, but it is about how that works in practice, as I have mentioned. Part of the issue is already around maintenance budgets. These are hard times and budgets are pressed, so how do we make sure that they work? One suggestion may be to find other ways to fund some of these works. As was mentioned earlier, there are benefits for health and economic regeneration, so looking at pooling budgets and working across some of the traditional silos has real merit. Some interesting work has been carried out in the north of England with regard to the gritting of pavements, which was quite controversial in some ways. However, gritting pavements reduced the number of falls, which saved on hospital admissions and the cost for accident and emergency departments and of long-term treatment. So, some of our radical thinking around how budgets are allocated, and thinking across different budget streams, could provide some quite interesting opportunities for us.

[67] **Nick Ramsay:** Gwenda, your organisation has already said that there are problems with local authorities meeting their current statutory obligations. Does it concern you that this comes with no promise of funding?

[68] **Ms Owen:** It is of great concern, and I do not know whether there are implications that we need to consider around the change of portfolio in which this Bill sits. There is talk about this costing a lot, but—I think that this was raised this morning—do we see active travel as part of our transport strategy, or is it something additional? Recently, active travel has been seen as part of transport and you thought, ‘Okay, this is going to get greater recognition and we’re going to have access to more money’. However, it may now be seen as belonging to the departments that are funding the rights-of-way network, and our rights of way network is struggling. In some local authorities, we do not have 50% of our rights of way open, and rights of way are probably a lot cheaper to open and maintain than tarmacked cycle tracks. We are seriously concerned that this will detract from that, and I think that local authorities are as well—

[69] **Nick Ramsay:** So, there is a danger that in some areas it can make it worse.

[70] **Ms Owen:** Yes. Local authorities have to prioritise; we acknowledge that that is a reality. They do it with their rights of way. If we are then imposing another duty on local authorities to maintain these key rights of way networks, I would guess that there is a danger that it will go lower down the priority list. That is of real significance to this. Recently, there have been studies showing how much walking is worth to this country; Wales needs walking as a tourism activity. It is one of the main things that brings in money. People do not come to walk on bits of tarmac. I am sorry, but they do not. They go to walk in our beautiful countryside, on the unspoilt paths. They join up, and they will cycle, and I am not knocking that, but we need to recognise that we have an infrastructure that is part of our highways. Our rights of way network is part of our highways, and we cannot maintain those. We are introducing this duty and, without attracting extra funding, or diverting funding from transport, given that we were talking about this as a means of transport, so why are we not looking at maybe being a bit braver about asking for more money to go with it?

[71] **Keith Davies:** Ken has had to go, but he left me this question to ask you: if the Bill succeeds in increasing active travel, it could ultimately lead to cyclists and pedestrians abandoning shared routes where traffic is causing hazardous conditions, thereby defeating the Bill's objectives. Is this fair, and if so, what needs to be placed into guidance to ensure that shared routes remain safe and operating smoothly?

[72] **Ms Owen:** Does he mean that they would be too busy?

[73] **Keith Davies:** Given that they are busy, they would become more hazardous and people would start abandoning them, so what needs to be put in place?

[74] **Ms Owen:** Do you mean that they will cycle on the road?

[75] **Keith Davies:** You mentioned this earlier, and that is what Ken and I were talking about. You mentioned paths that are about 3m wide. When I look at the Taff trail, I am not sure any of it—or there are bits of it—

[76] **Ms Owen:** This is where the design guidance comes in. You have to look at what you are looking to achieve. If you are looking to achieve some real, effective behaviour change then you need to design according to that predicted usage. So, historically, when the Taff trail was created, people did not realise that it would be so popular. So, we need to make sure that we take into account that usage.

[77] **Nick Ramsay:** I will just move things on, because we only have a few minutes left. I will just ask Kevin Golding-Williams: how do you think that this Bill could be a catalyst for innovative funding mechanisms to enhance walking and cycling provision?

[78] **Dr Golding-Williams:** It is all about looking at the cross-cutting nature of this Bill, and looking at various Government departments and also local authorities—various departments there have a role to play. It is about looking at health, local government and transport, in addition to looking at other public bodies with responsibilities for public health, and also the police. In terms of local government, and the pooling of budgets, there is real scope there. One of the things that we suggest is that, actually, there is a duty on local authorities to appoint a kind of walking or active travel champion who can cut across those silos of departmental budgets. When you think of it, you have the transport, design and active travel on one side, but even things such as street cleansing, litter and dog fouling can really affect how people feel about their local environment. That will be quite key to this Bill. You would not necessarily think of it as being part of the funding within this Bill. There are a lot of opportunities there.

[79] **Nick Ramsay:** As Assembly Members, we are well versed in the issues of dog fouling. *[Laughter.]* There is not a single AM since devolution who has not had a query about that at some point. You are quite right. Byron Davies, did you have a final question?

[80] **Byron Davies:** It is a question for Ramblers Cymru. You suggest that the current requirement to have regard to the desirability of enhancing the provision made for walkers and cyclists in highway schemes is not strong enough, and that there should be a presumption in favour of providing facilities for walking and cycling. Could you expand on that, please—the benefits of amending section 8 to include a presumption in favour?

[81] **Ms Owen:** It has been said by others that it is all very well for people to have regard to a lot of things, but it is very easy to say, 'Well, we have had regard, but we have decided that we don't need to do it, and we can't afford to do it'. If we are looking at effecting real change, everyone needs to be thinking—whether it is people involved in planning, building roads, or whatever—'We want people who are using this to be able to walk and cycle'. It

gives the right message to whoever is doing this, such as highway engineers, so that they think, 'This is something that we have to plan in'. It might be that there is just not the space, or whatever, but the messaging is important for that reason as much as anything.

2.15 p.m.

[82] **Dr Golding-Williams:** I would echo those comments. I was fortunate to hear Professor Pooley's comments earlier with regard to the notion of 'regard', in that it is a very interesting phrase in terms of policy. However, this should be something that is considered automatically for any new scheme; it should not be 'to have regard', because you can regard something without doing anything about it.

[83] **Byron Davies:** Finally, in these great days of austerity, is funding active travel routes on a pro rata basis against road funding realistic given the limitations on the Welsh Government's capital budget?

[84] **Dr Golding-Williams:** It is all about ambition, basically. When you look at the figures for walking, it represents around 22% of trips in Wales. For journeys under 2 miles, walking rates vary from about 30% to 80%, and for journeys under a mile as well. If you look at the balance in terms of how many people walk those short distances against car journeys, there is an argument to consider some of the realignment. I know that Professor Pooley made similar comments to those. It is about having an aspiration for this Bill and making a real sea change with it.

[85] **Nick Ramsay:** I thank Gwenda Owen and Kevin Golding-Williams. This has been a really helpful session. Thank you very much for taking the time to help the committee with our work.

2.17 p.m.

Bil Teithio Llesol (Cymru): Cyfnod 1—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 9 **Active Travel (Wales) Bill: Stage 1—Evidence Session 9**

[86] **Nick Ramsay:** I welcome our witness to the committee. Thank you for being with us today. Would you like to give your name, position and organisation for the Record of Proceedings?

[87] **Dr Mackay:** Thank you for inviting me. My name is Hugh Mackay, and I am a member of the executive committee of Cyclists' Touring Club Cymru, a charity representing some 2,400 cyclists in Wales and 70,000 cyclists in the UK.

[88] **Nick Ramsay:** We have a large number of questions for you, so I propose that we get straight into those. The first is from Byron Davies.

[89] **Byron Davies:** Good afternoon, Dr Mackay. There is huge enthusiasm in your submission for this Bill. Why does CTC Cymru believe that insufficient support has been provided for active travel infrastructure to date, and is legislation really required to address this?

[90] **Dr Mackay:** I suppose that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. There is not much in the way of an infrastructure on the ground, whatever efforts have been made over the years. So, we fully support the Bill and we see a mapping exercise to encourage active travel as an important building block towards achieving a broader cultural change. The key issue for us is how it is implemented. There seem to be various possibilities, but the Bill will only achieve its intended outcome if it is linked to a broader transformation of land use and

transport planning. We are very enthusiastic about it because of the failure of policies hitherto, particularly in Wales, but also across the UK generally.

[91] **Byron Davies:** One of the things that has come up a great deal in our discussions is the importance of behaviour change measures in promoting active travel, and whether it is sufficient for these to be addressed through a revised non-statutory active travel plan alongside the delivery of the duties contained in the Bill. Do you have a view on that?

[92] **Dr Mackay:** Is your question about the significance of non-statutory duties?

[93] **Byron Davies:** Yes.

[94] **Dr Mackay:** I support this as a step in the right direction. We need a combination of infrastructure, cultural change—sticks and carrots. This seems to me to strike something of a balance on several of those fronts, though there are details with which I would certainly quibble and maybe offer some suggestions. One of them is that it is about building routes, which is very much in the Sustrans tradition, and that could be a bit of a diversion in as much as one could also think about streets for living or making cities or towns liveable. In other words, you could have a slightly different approach to accommodating walking and cycling from routes. So, what one is compelling people to do is only a part of the broader picture that we could be working with.

[95] **Keith Davies:** Rwyf am barhau yn Gymraeg. Yn dilyn yr hyn a ddywedodd Byron Davies, chi yw'r cyntaf i ddod o'n blaen a dweud bod y cydbwysedd cywir rhwng canllawiau a darpariaethau'r Bil. A ydych yn credu ei bod yn bosibl deall effaith y Bil heb gynnwys manylion ychwanegol ar wyneb y Bil neu mewn canllawiau drafft? Mae pobl eraill yn credu bod eisiau hynny, ond nid ydych chi. Pam?

Keith Davies: I will continue in Welsh. Following on from Byron Davies's comments, you are the first witness to appear before us and say that there is the correct balance between guidance and the Bill's provisions. Do you think that it is possible to understand the effect of the Bill without providing additional detail on the face of the Bill or in draft guidance? Other people believe that that is required, but you do not. Why is that?

[96] **Dr Mackay:** I am not a constitutional lawyer and I am not entirely sure about the relationship between a Bill and guidance. It is slightly strange legislation, because it is putting a duty on local authorities, which might normally be accompanied by regulations, rather than guidance.

[97] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** You are a constitutional lawyer. [*Laughter.*]

[98] **Dr Mackay:** Thank you very much; maybe I could have been. The issue for me is how the Government will agree, or otherwise, to plans put forward by local authorities. The Minister has to agree to the plans; how will that work? It will be good if they can be challenged in some sense; otherwise we will have the sort of situation we had on Llandudno prom. I do not know whether you are familiar with that issue. I could give you examples from the Vale of Glamorgan where local authorities are quite happy to ignore local cyclists and put through ostensible plans for cycling, which are actually intended to achieve something of the opposite. I could unpack that a little bit if you like. I do not think that we can depend on all of our local authorities—clearly, there are variations across them—to be working particularly actively with us on this front. So, it would be good to allow participation of stakeholder groups. We are one that would be very pleased to be involved in that and to comment on proposals. This would obviously require some kind of resource within the Welsh Government to investigate and evaluate concerns that were raised about proposals.

[99] **Keith Davies:** I fynd yn bellach, a yw ymrwymiad anffurfiol Llywodraeth bresennol Cymru i ymgynghori wrth baratoi canllawiau yn ddigonol? Os nad ydyw, pa ddarpariaeth ar gyfer ymgynghori y dylid ei chynnwys yn y Bil?

Keith Davies: To take that a little further, is the informal commitment by the current Welsh Government to consult in the preparation of guidance sufficient? If it is not, what provision for consultation should be included in the Bill?

[100] **Dr Mackay:** There are two slightly separate things there. One is the consultation and the other is the role of the Government and how the Government is going to respond to the proposals that are coming in. If the process is to have any meaning at all, then there needs to be a mechanism and resource within the Government to handle this. I would guess that some kind of consultative process and a means for the Government to reward, censure, praise and support the kinds of proposals that are coming in would be the only way of achieving a standard, as well as setting a tone.

[101] **Keith Davies:** Rydych yn sôn nad yw adrannau priffyrdd yn yr awdurdodau yn dilyn canllawiau dylunio presennol. Beth ddylai'r Llywodraeth ei wneud i sicrhau bod canllawiau dylunio yn cael eu dilyn?

Keith Davies: You mention that the highways departments in the authorities do not follow current design guidelines. What steps should the Government take to ensure that design guidelines are followed?

[102] **Dr Mackay:** I think that Welsh design standards are a really good idea and I will explain why in a couple of minutes. I do not think that guidance is enough. For example, one thing that I cope with daily is the cycleway on Penarth Road over the river Taff, where there is a narrow cycleway—it is not quite as wide as my handlebars, actually. There are two lanes for traffic, but there is no room for them without using this bit of road. An on-road cycleway should be 1.5m wide; we say that it should be 2m wide, ideally, but certainly 1.5m is acceptable. That clearly does not happen, so we need standards. Very often, local authorities do not follow this, and there are numerous examples of that around here.

[103] There is also another situation where we often cannot develop high-standard routes because of Westminster regulations. The Department for Transport is very slow, inflexible and fairly tedious about updating its regulations with regard to what it requires to be done. For example, it will not allow what I have seen in Berlin, which is little advanced stop lights for cyclists; these are not allowed. With these, there is less clutter around the place; they make it more straightforward by giving you two seconds to go ahead, or whatever it is. They are cheaper to put in than all the other paraphernalia that you have otherwise. Here, the priority is given to a cycleway beside a road and, every time it crosses another road, you get these give way signs. So, if you are interested in doing any speed or going any distance, you go on the road, but you have to give way every time there is a turning, which is extremely cumbersome and quite dangerous sometimes. The only way that you are allowed to do that, according to the regulations, is to have a raised hump, then you can keep the cycleway going straight on. You get these dog legs in the middle of dual carriageways, which are good for pedestrians in one sense, but very difficult for cyclists. I use the one at the bottom of St Mary's Street quite a lot around the monument. A few pedestrians and a bike do not really fit and you have to go around, which is designed to make you more convenient for the traffic.

[104] There are a whole load of examples, and it gets into quite techy stuff with regard to how the facilities that we have to provide are regulated in a way that acts as a barrier to making provision. In fact, only yesterday, the Department for Transport announced that it is going to overhaul radically its road markings, starting in 2014. There is a real opportunity here for Wales to lead the way on this, to try to get the ball rolling and to keep slightly ahead of what is going on.

[105] **Keith Davies:** Felly, nid ydych chi

Keith Davies: Therefore, you do not want

eisiau canllawiau, ond rydych chi eisiau guidelines, but you want regulation. rheoleiddio.

[106] **Dr Mackay:** One has to be flexible about guidelines. You need both. There is a danger of demanding gold-plated provision in all contexts. As a general rule, you do not want substandard provision, but you can spend an awful lot of money in order to meet standards when it would be far better to have something that is not up to the standard. You need a standard, but there needs to be an element of flexibility.

[107] **Joyce Watson:** Good afternoon. Many witnesses this morning have raised the issue of shared-space provision. I am not sure if you were there listening to them. Can you see circumstances where it might be appropriate to have a shared space? If that is the case, does the Bill adequately address that?

[108] **Dr Mackay:** First, the issue of shared space arouses huge emotions, as you will all be aware. It is important that we all recognise the concerns of visually impaired people and those who are less mobile, the elderly and so on, but perception is very different from risk or the reality. There has been some interesting work by John Adams at University College London on this generally, but also in relation to cycling on pavements and shared-use routes. There is incredibly little danger to pedestrians from cyclists. In terms of transport safety, it is off the bottom of any scale. If you are concerned about travel, this is not a particularly big issue. It is important to keep the matter in perspective, I think, although there are people who argue very vociferously on one side of the debate.

2.30 p.m.

[109] There is undoubtedly very anti-social cycling. People cycle too fast and too near to people. However, there is also very good use of shared facilities and very co-operative cycling. I go to Berlin quite a lot, where people everywhere cycle all over the pavements. I am a dreadful cyclist when I come back here after being there. However, it works perfectly well. There is no aggression and there are certainly no accidents. People manoeuvre around each other. There are infrastructural things in the way of widths and markings that can help, which it is important to flag up. They are not always there and they are also very inconsistent, for example, left and right symbols so that people wonder, 'Am I meant to be on this side or that side?' There is a lack of standardisation in that regard, which could be improved. The Taff trail is awkward and is a particular issue because it is the only place where you can safely take a child to ride a bike. So, on a nice weekend, it is absolutely packed. Therefore, it is very difficult for anybody to use it, quite frankly, and it is hard to avoid some kind of conflict of use.

[110] Some things really appeal to me about this Bill as I am really committed to developing a different cycling culture in Wales and the UK from that which prevails. It is very distinctive and it is not like the culture that we find in mainland Europe, where shared space is perfectly normal, people cycle in ordinary clothes, going about ordinary jobs. Here, we have a culture that is about high-visibility jackets, helmets, young men going very fast and fairly aggressive road warriors. The reason for that is that it is only those people who have the nerve to cycle on the roads that we have; other people are too intimidated to be doing it. So, we have a very particular sub-set of people who are engaged in cycling, which is very counter-productive for getting very large numbers of people—and one could name all sorts of groups here—on to their bikes. That is what we should be aiming for: the normalisation of cycling. I hate to say that it is exactly what Boris Johnson was calling for the other day, when he said that his ambition is not to serve the lycra warriors in north London, but to get ordinary, normal people in ordinary, normal clothes—

[111] **Nick Ramsay:** Lycra warriors?

[112] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Left-wing lycra warriors. *[Laughter.]*

[113] **Dr Mackay:** I think that he thought that in the back of his mind. *[Laughter.]*

[114] I think that that would be really helpful. I see in this Bill some of the makings of that, and I am very committed to that approach.

[115] **Nick Ramsay:** We are running short of time, so if Members could be quick with their questions, that would be appreciated.

[116] **Joyce Watson:** My question will be quick. Do you think that the Bill should focus on urban areas, given the comments that we have had that many rural routes are used for commuting?

[117] **Dr Mackay:** I will keep my answer brief. Generally, four miles for cycling and 20 minutes for walking are the rules of thumb. So, clearly, there are rural villages outside towns that people could quite happily commute in from, and one does not want to ignore those. In terms of prioritisation and being pragmatic, reaching 77% of the population is a good place to start. However, it does raise some questions about how this whole process will work, who it will apply to, and so forth.

[118] **Joyce Watson:** Do you think that the criteria that will be applied by local authorities in identifying whether routes are appropriate to be active travel routes, for example, the focus on non-recreational routes, are correct? Do you think that location, nature and condition are the correct criteria to be used to define suitability?

[119] **Dr Mackay:** Non-recreational use is good, but it is rather vague to talk about whether a route facilitates the making by walkers or cyclists, or both, of journeys other than for wholly recreational purposes. I wonder whether it begs some measure of scale, significance or priority, in that one could waste a lot of time dealing with routes that are used, but scarcely used. So, I guess that I might want a bit of a qualifier about that level of usage there.

[120] The other thing that I would say here is that it is worth looking at the trip generators, that is, the places that people go to, such as hospitals, train stations, work and so forth, but it is also worth looking at the barriers, which is something that Cardiff Council could do. So, in Cardiff, we have these roundabouts at the bottom of Rumney hill, at Gabalfa and at Culverhouse Cross that are really serious barriers to anybody cycling to the other side of them. So, it is not just about looking at routes; it is also about looking at barriers, perhaps.

[121] **Joyce Watson:** What about location, nature and condition? Do you think that they are the right criteria to define suitability?

[122] **Dr Mackay:** Sorry; did you say 'location, nature and condition'?

[123] **Joyce Watson:** The location, nature and condition are the criteria that will be used to define the suitability of a route. Do you think that they are correct?

[124] **Dr Mackay:** Yes, I suppose so, but one would want to put in the question of routes that generate trips—routes that, in other words, link residential areas to facilities, for example.

[125] **Joyce Watson:** Okay. As you have those three related facilities identified in the Bill, do you think that importance will be attached to them, as SEWTA and SWWITCH have said, to the exclusion of anything else?

[126] **Dr Mackay:** Well, I thought that this was slightly funny, to be honest. I cannot see what could be remotely similar to a crossing, a toilet and a shelter—the idea of ‘similar’ being applied to things that are very different was a hard one for me to grasp. *[Laughter.]* Normally, rather than toilets or washing facilities, we talk about showering in cycling terms. They are nice, but not essential, I would say. Crossings are what I have the most to say about, because a crossing is not simply a related facility, but a fundamental part of the exercise. Crossings are a barrier and a serious challenge to the effectiveness of any route. So, I would not see a crossing as a related facility. A great cycleway with hopeless crossings is not going to be a successful route.

[127] **Joyce Watson:** Thank you.

[128] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Rwy’n mynd i ofyn tri chwestiwn ynglŷn â mapiau. Y cyntaf yw: a yw’r amserlen o dair blynedd ar gyfer yr ymarfer mapio cychwynnol yn rhesymol?

Alun Ffred Jones: I am going to ask three questions regarding mapping. The first is: would you say that the timetable of three years for the initial mapping process is sufficient?

[129] **Dr Mackay:** Well, at my age, I think that three years is a long time; I would go for two years. We need to get on with the job while we can, so I would support Sustrans on that, and not the WLGA.

[130] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. Mae Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru wedi dweud y dylai mapiau gael eu hailgyflwyno bob pum mlynedd er mwyn cyd-fynd â’r broses cynllunio trafndiaeth ranbarthol yn hytrach na phob tair blynedd, fel y mae’r Bil yn ei nodi. Beth yw eich barn chi?

Alun Ffred Jones: Thank you. The WLGA has said that mapping should be reintroduced every five years to be in line with the regional transport planning process, rather than every three years, as set out in the Bill. What is your opinion on that?

[131] **Dr Mackay:** As I said, I think that we need to get on with it. I have been lobbying for cycling for probably 30 to 40 years, to very little effect. I see this Bill as offering some great opportunities, and I am really eager to work with the Government and people in Cardiff bay to see what can be done.

[132] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mae’n ddrwg iawn gennyf glywed bod eich bywyd wedi bod mor aneffeithiol, ond symudwn i’r cwestiwn nesaf. A ydych yn credu bod statws a diben y map rhwydwaith integredig yn glir yn y Bil, ynteu a oes angen rhyw eglurhad pellach arno?

Alun Ffred Jones: I am sorry to hear that your work has been so ineffective, but let us move on to the next question. Would you say that the status and purpose of the integrated network map is clear in the Bill, or is further clarification needed?

[133] **Dr Mackay:** On integrated mapping, well—sorry, could you just clarify a bit? Are you talking about routes being integrated, or are you talking about how the Bill handles the process of dealing with integrated routes?

[134] **Alun Ffred Jones:** There is mention in the Bill of an integrated network map. I am just asking whether the status and purpose of that are clear within the Bill. I would suggest from your answer that it is not.

[135] **Dr Mackay:** Right. I do not think that it is, and I think that one of the issues is about maps. There is an uneasy dual emphasis in the Bill. One is on producing something like a bit of paper on which a route is drawn, which you could give or sell to somebody and which

could be used for something. The other is an exercise in which we map where people go and we then consider that. To my mind, producing a map of routes is not that central; what is important is for us to produce the routes. Cyclists and people generally will find their way around; they learn about things and talk to one another. If facilities are made available and routes are made safe, people will start to use them without a great deal being made of giving people maps. So, to my mind, the maps are less important than the routes.

[136] **Eluned Parrott:** Following on from that, in the development of route maps, and assuming a local authority were to use it as a tool to monitor its progress and improvement, do you think that it is adequate to ask those authorities to have regard to the integrated network map, or do you feel that, essentially, 'to have regard' is a throw-away term?

[137] **Dr Mackay:** That is what we said in our written evidence. I say that in the light of having dealt with highway engineers and highways departments for a long time. It is unlikely to make any difference, quite frankly. I think that that is a really serious point. It does not make clear what that might mean in practice, and we need to unpack it. Cycling, in recent years, has been seen predominantly as a leisure activity. To be honest, my colleagues in Sustrans are a little bit to blame for this. It is not integrated or accommodated by transport policy. There needs to be a much tighter connection between active travel, transport plans and local plans. So, I do not think that that is sufficient. I say that having very extensive experience in a number of authorities in Wales of working with highway engineers for whom the notion of vehicle flow is in their DNA; that is their job and anything else is subordinate to that.

[138] **Eluned Parrott:** On the mixture of different modes of transport, my husband commutes by bike and train every day, with difficulty. What can we do to actively change this, so that 'to have regard' means something purposeful?

[139] **Dr Mackay:** I suppose that, again, this is down to standards and regulations and the way in which the mapping exercise is handled. Does that make sense? In other words, it is what the Government is requiring local authorities to do. There are financial elements that we have not talked about at all yet, there are infrastructural ones, which are sort of the same things, and there are also cultural ones, and I see this Bill potentially playing a very significant role on that account.

[140] **Nick Ramsay:** Keith Davies, do you have any further questions? No? Okay. May I ask you, in terms of the provision for walkers and cyclists in highway construction improvement, do you think that a presumption of inclusion, which could be rebutted where it was inappropriate, would be sufficient?

[141] **Dr Mackay:** Sorry; could you repeat that?

[142] **Nick Ramsay:** Looking at the provision for walkers and cyclists in highway construction, section 8 of the Bill requires—

[143] **Dr Mackay:** Section 8? Right; okay.

[144] **Nick Ramsay:** It follows on from the issue of having regard and what that actually means.

[145] **Dr Mackay:** I suppose that it depends on how the procedure works, but I think that it is far from ideal. I wonder why the WLGA said this. The problem with major roads is not the use of them, but how they disturb the use of existing roads that they bisect. Its argument is that it does not change anything; you put a new road in and people can carry on doing what they did before. Is this what you are talking about?

[146] **Nick Ramsay:** You said that new road schemes should always include active travel provision, and there is a question about whether that represents value for money.

2.45 p.m.

[147] **Dr Mackay:** Right. There are two kinds of new road schemes and one is when you whack a new bypass across virgin country, shall we say? In one sense, no cyclist wants to use that, but they want to continue to be able to cross it. Very often, the junctions on that are what have made that development detrimental to cycling. In relation to those junctions, there needs to be the requirement on the development to accommodate cycling. It disrupts it in all sorts of ways. The problem is severance of existing usage rather than the use of the new facility. There is a slightly different danger when you upgrade an existing route, where you are putting a big new road on top of a bendy, older one, where that bendy, older one was used by cyclists anyway. Then, it absolutely needs to accommodate it because it will be a through route for cyclists, as for any other users. There are two categories of highway construction and improvement that we are talking about there, but both of them have important implications for cyclists, not just the latter kind that I was talking about.

[148] **Nick Ramsay:** Finally, continuous improvement is obviously key within the Bill. Is the meaning of it as clear as it could be?

[149] **Dr Mackay:** I think that what is needed is a plan with priorities and a timetable and there needs to be reporting and approval. So, the mechanism of how you deal with the plan is the issue. There need to be targets in relation to trips or modal split and these need to be linked to traffic reduction. So, there are a whole variety of ways in which the maps need to be connected with targets, for which you need a national support team, I think. That national support team is also needed to co-ordinate differences between local authorities, because you need routes to join up and standards across the whole of Wales.

[150] **Nick Ramsay:** You have previously made points about the national support team, so it is helpful to hear that again. Thank you, Dr Hugh Mackay, for being with us today; that has been very helpful. We will send you a transcript for you to check for accuracy, but thank you for helping us with our work today.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 2.47 p.m. a 3.03 p.m.
The meeting adjourned between 2.47 p.m. and 3.03 p.m.*

Bil Teithio Llesol (Cymru): Cyfnod 1—Sesiwn Dystiolaeth 10 Active Travel (Wales) Bill: Stage 1—Evidence Session 10

[151] **Nick Ramsay:** I welcome Members back to this meeting of the Enterprise and Business Committee and welcome our witnesses. We have a large number of questions for our witnesses, so I propose that we get straight into those. First, would you like to give your name and position for the Record of Proceedings?

[152] **Ms Davies:** Hi, I am Ceri Davies. I am the executive director for knowledge, strategy and planning for Natural Resources Wales.

[153] **Mr Bulbeck:** I am Jont Bulbeck. I am the team leader for recreation, access and tourism at Natural Resources Wales.

[154] **Nick Ramsay:** As I said, we have many questions, and time is limited, so I will move things on. It is not that I am not interested in what you have to say, it is just that I will want to make progress. The first question is from Dafydd Elis-Thomas.

[155] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Diolch, Gadeirydd. Hoffwn ddweud yn gyntaf gymaint o bleser yw hi i mi gael gofyn cwestiwn am y tro cyntaf i gynrychiolwyr o Gyfoeth Naturiol Cymru, a hynny mewn cyfarfod ble yr ydych yn cyflwyno tystiolaeth lafar i un o bwyllgorau'r Cynulliad. Hir y parhao.

Lord Elis-Thomas: Thank you, Chair. I would like to say at the outset what a pleasure it is for me to ask a question for the first time to representatives of Natural Resources Wales, in a meeting where you are providing oral evidence to an Assembly committee. Long may that continue.

[156] Nid wyf am ail-adrodd y dadleuon ynglŷn â'r agwedd tuag at y Bil, a'r angen amdano, oherwydd mae'r cyrff sydd bellach wedi eu huno yn Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru wedi cyflwyno'r dystiolaeth honno eisoes. Ond, rwyf eisiau dechrau drwy godi'r pwynt yr ydych yn rhoi pwyslais ar integreiddio'r cynlluniau ynglŷn â cherdded a beicio yn y cynlluniau trafnidiaeth lleol. Gofynnwch am gryfhau y Bil i sicrhau bod yn rhaid i lywodraeth leol gymryd mwy o sylw, nid ond sylwi ar, neu gymryd ystyriaeth o'r mapiau hyn, ond eu bod yn rhan o'r broses ar gyfer y ddyletswydd o baratoi cynllun trafnidiaeth lleol. Hoffech chi ddweud rhywbeth mwy am hynny? Beth fydddech chi'n hoffi i ni argymhell yn ein hystyriaeth wrth graffu ar y Bil hwn?

I will not go over old ground regarding the attitude towards the Bill, and the need for it, because the bodies that have now been joined within Natural Resources Wales have already presented that evidence. However, I want to start by raising the point that you place an emphasis on integrating schemes in terms of walking and cycling into the local transport plans. You ask for the Bill to be made more robust to ensure that local government has to pay more attention, and not just to note, or to take account of these maps, but that they become part of the process in terms of the duty to prepare a local transport plan. Would you like to expand on that? What would you like us to recommend as we scrutinise this Bill?

[157] **Mr Bulbeck:** One of the things, when you look at the various duties that exist for walking and cycling, in addition to what will be brought forward with the Bill, is that duties will exist within local transport plans currently, as expressed in regional transport plans. There are already rights-of-way improvement plans, which local authorities have a duty to produce. This will introduce a third area, and I guess that what we were particularly getting at is that it would be preferable to see a holistic approach to the way in which walking and cycling is managed that is not entirely based on the purpose for which people undertake those journeys, but more around the fact that they are undertaking those journeys, and that those things should be looked at in the round, and that that would be perhaps more effective in terms of the consideration of walking and cycling and the measures that are brought forward, and, perhaps, more efficient in terms of how resources are used and utilised. As well as seeing those things better integrated, it would be good if the divisions we see in terms of how recreational and more utilitarian use, if you can call it that, are looked at were reduced as far as possible.

[158] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I am very glad to see that emphasis, because it struck me, in my first consideration of this Bill, that the issue is not about the motive of the user, but about the extent to which there was a change in the travel mode, and that we should focus on that and encourage people to either run, walk, cycle or whatever, in terms of active movement, and that that should be part of integrated transport. I am not sure whether we have got there in the form that the Bill is in now. Is that your point?

[159] **Ms Davies:** Yes. Thank you for that. Also, I think it brings more organisations together in that integrating step, if you like. So, if it is extended to recreational travel, as well as utilitarian travel, then organisations such as ours would bring to the table the steps that we are taking to improve access to the environment and to link those things up into the transport

plan so that you have a much more integrated network of opportunity for people to take advantage of and to use those alternative mechanisms to move around.

[160] **Mr Bulbeck:** The other aspect we were conscious of was that the intention is to withdraw the duty for rights of way and improvement plans from 2017, which would leave a gap for strategic planning around recreational use of rights of way, and that would affect walking and cycling, which is the aim around this Bill.

[161] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** The emphasis on route networks and that the terminology should consistently refer to networks of routes was one that I also took particular interest in. Could you explain a bit more about the importance of having this on the face of the Bill and what effect this change of terminology would have on the connectivity of transport modes and the consistency you would see followed through in the guidance if you had this change in the Bill?

[162] **Mr Bulbeck:** What we were getting at was that, for one thing, there is a little bit of inconsistency within the phrasing that is used in the legislation as currently introduced. The other aspect of it was that there is clear evidence around the importance of the connections between routes. What people are looking for is to move through an area in the easiest possible way, and therefore looking at networks as connected-up routes, rather than simply looking at routes as individual routes, is important to people when they are walking and cycling. If the provision and the connections are better, you are more likely to provide what people need for walking and cycling. That was, really, the kind of emphasis on that. We think that the legislation and the guidance should be clear on that point: that people should plan and look strategically at networks, not simply at a series of individual routes.

[163] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** The other issue that I wish to address, finally in this first series—I may come back, but I will try not to—is the question of consistency throughout Wales. What we have heard from the regional transport consortia seems to suggest that they have some uncertainty about the spending priorities to give to this activity, as compared with other parts of their local transport plan and their local strategies. Do you think that there is a danger that we might have more development in certain consortia areas than others? Should we not be looking for consistent provision throughout Wales for this activity?

[164] **Ms Davies:** Yes. We have been pushing, through our evidence, for consistency across Wales, and also to try to improve that integration between the urban areas, the countryside and the coast, where there are different opportunities. Again, if people's experience is enhanced by being able to look at what is available and having that consistently set out across Wales, they are more likely to make use of it and to sustain making use of it.

[165] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I have just one very quick question. In your new capacity as Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru, presumably you will be a major consultee on the guidance.

[166] **Ms Davies:** We would certainly like to be very much involved in developing the guidance on this, because, as you know, we have a new purpose as a new organisation to enhance, maintain and use the natural resources of Wales. This is where we can get together with local authorities to link up the work that we do on access and recreation with the work that they do on moving people around from A to B.

[167] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Perhaps you should offer to write the guidance.

[168] **Nick Ramsay:** Are you done, until you return with more questions?

[169] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** No; that was only—[Inaudible.]

[170] **Nick Ramsay:** Joyce Watson has a question for you.

[171] **Joyce Watson:** Good afternoon. We have heard evidence that suggests that, because there is no additional funding with the Bill, other than what is already committed to the walking and cycling policy, progress might not be achieved in the way that the Bill aims for. Do you agree with that?

[172] **Ms Davies:** As we have suggested in our evidence, without further funding, we would assume that progress might be slower than if further funding were provided for implementation of the requirements of the Bill. However, the important first step is about the integrated planning for moving this forward. So, we would be keen to look for the local authorities to undertake this planning function first. Again, it links back to organisations like ours. If you have a strategic plan set out of how to move forward in encouraging cycling and walking, there is an opportunity to work with other organisations, such as ours, to see what we are doing in that topic area and to see whether or not there are ways in which we could bend our programme, for example, to help to deliver some of this work. However, to start, you do need a plan. For example, on some of our flood risk schemes, we will develop them with routes for walking or cycling. It is a small cost in the overall scheme, but if we can build that in from the outset, because it is part of an integrated plan, it means that we can then build that into the cost of building that scheme, potentially. It is those sorts of opportunities that we think need to be planned for at the outset, to look to see whether that, in itself, will draw in either the private or the public sector to bend their programmes to help deliver it.

3.15 p.m.

[173] **Joyce Watson:** Ramblers Cymru told us that local authorities are already unable to meet their statutory duty to maintain the rights-of-way network, and they cite financial constraints as one of the issues. It went on to say that, that being the case, it could not see how local authorities would be able to deliver this Bill. Do you agree with that?

[174] **Mr Bulback:** Resources are a limiting factor, and it is true to say that local authorities do not all deliver their rights-of-way duties, but what is not entirely clear on the face of the legislation is what exactly the scope of the nominated active travel routes will be, to what extent they will overlap with the rights-of-way network and, therefore, what the impact will be, in terms of limited resources, for right of way. However, as Ceri has stated, there are improvements that will be made by applying the statutory duty in this way, such as increased consistency across all local authorities. At the moment, practice varies significantly, but it will bring forward guidance to help authorities in the way that they approach it. As Ceri has said, developed plans will allow opportunities to be taken when funding arises. We know from rights-of-way improvement plan work that some local authorities were sceptical about the ways in which the plans were developed and the introduction of legislation around producing plans, but they have found that there has been a benefit to them from doing so. That includes things like having opportunities to bid, both internally and externally, for funding and to secure those sorts of benefits. So, we think that funding is crucial to the way that it will be implemented, but there are other benefits to the legislation, not simply that it requires funding to implement.

[175] **Nick Ramsay:** Ken Skates, some of your questions might have been covered, but I think that you have some others.

[176] **Kenneth Skates:** I am going to ask about numbers. There is a proposal to focus on urban areas with a population greater than 2,000. Do you think that that is appropriate?

[177] **Mr Bulback:** Appropriate in what way?

[178] **Kenneth Skates:** Should the Bill target those urban areas with a population of 2,000? Are you satisfied with that population base?

[179] **Mr Bulbeck:** We said in our evidence that we think that the scope of the Bill should be wider. We think that it should apply to rights-of-way networks more generally and that it should apply across Wales. We think that it should be integrated, and not just for utilitarian use, but also for recreational use. So, we would like to see it drawn more widely than it is. We are not entirely clear what exactly the reason was for drawing it in that way. If it is simply to address utilitarian purposes, that is likely to draw in most of the population, and is likely to relate primarily to utilitarian-type journeys. If that is the aim that the Government seeks, that approach is likely to have that effect. We take a slightly different view as to whether the scope should be drawn that narrowly.

[180] **Kenneth Skates:** Are you content with how clearly related facilities have been defined?

[181] **Ms Davies:** We have suggested that there should be more explanation around the definitions and that that should be set out, at least in the guidance, if not in the legislation, so that it is clear what facilities are provided, particularly for walkers and cyclists. There is some key information that they need before embarking on a journey, and that needs to be set out. Our position would be that that needs to be consistent across Wales, so that the experience that people get used to is of the same information wherever they go.

[182] **Nick Ramsay:** Dafydd Elis-Thomas, are you prepared to return?

[183] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** I am particularly interested in pursuing a bit further the relationship between the duty that emerges in this legislation with the duty of the rights-of-way improvement plans and how successful you think that those have been, going back to the—I had better not say the great—days of the Countryside Council for Wales. The greater days are still yet to come. How effective have those been, and how do you think you have comparative potential with the structure offered in this Bill—the combination of a duty and a scheme of rolling out rights?

[184] **Mr Bulbeck:** If you just take the process and the production of plans, we know that, before rights-of-way improvement plan legislation was introduced, there were just two strategic plans published in Wales. Now every unitary authority has one, plus Brecon Beacons National Park Authority. That is a transformative change. Even though the plans before that time represented what was perhaps accepted as good practice in many cases, they were not taken forward in practice. That has been a very significant change. From that has flowed a number of aspects in which there has been a change in the way in which authorities looked at and managed their network. Part of the requirement of the plans includes things like assessments of both the network and the needs of people for that network. That has been a change of focus in the way in which people have gone about managing the rights-of-way network. They have also then had to engage with people and consult them, so that has been an important element of that process. They also have in place long-term plans and—as you mentioned in terms of resources—they are able to look at the opportunities as and when they arise. While we have done no detailed research on that, we certainly hear a good deal in the reports from officers around that aspect—that they are able to take forward improvements to their network, based on the opportunities. One of the features of the rights-of-way improvement plans, which has been a significant help, is the additional funding that the Welsh Government has provided on an annual basis for the last five years, allowing authorities to carry out work additional to the basic duties that they typically have. We have mentioned the restricted resources that right of way have had elsewhere. There are a number of factors, and many of those are lessons that could be taken into this legislation.

[185] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** Many of us in this committee have been a bit concerned about how the concept of continuous improvement works, and what is the basis for monitoring its effectiveness. It is a meaningful way of writing legislation, but you think that there is an analogy here from the rights-of-way implementation, which could be a comparator.

[186] **Ms Davies:** The thing that I would add is that, as we said earlier, the guidance is key on this in terms of setting out what these terms mean, and being really clear about that. There are lessons and, picking up on the monitoring point, we would suggest that there needs to be some monitoring of the performance to meet the requirements of the legislation so that there is a real assessment of how local authorities are improving the delivery of the network as well in terms of both existing improvements, continuous improvements and identification of new facilities moving forward.

[187] **Mr Bulbeck:** Just to add a little to that, an area that was not covered well by the rights-of-way improvement plan legislation and guidance was the monitoring of implementation and improvement. CCW and now Natural Resources Wales have done so in the rights-of-way funding programme, which we manage on behalf of the Welsh Government. We have quite a lot of information through that, but that is through the lever of a funding programme. It was actually not set out very well, and was not required on the face of the legislation or in the guidance. It is a weakness that should be addressed for the reasons that you are getting at.

[188] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** A bit of concern was expressed earlier from Disability Wales and others in evidence that the priority given to environmental issues and equality issues could sometimes be seen to be in conflict. I tried to argue that—obviously I am aware of a lot of the work that is being done, especially in national parks, to improve access of all kinds for people with disabilities to a very distinctive environment. Therefore, I hope that this would also be a driver here, but are you concerned at all that the emphasis on active travel may lead to insufficient notice being taken over time of the needs of citizens who have a disability and therefore would require to be cared for within that context?

[189] **Ms Davies:** Certainly, in terms of the definitions, the current proposed legislation includes disability. From our experience of the sorts of developments that we have been involved with in predecessor organisations, once those strategic opportunities have been identified, it is about making sure that you are looking to ensure that you are providing for the population in its widest sense and the requirements that it might have. We have been tasked in this new organisation, for example, with having a particular priority from the Minister around looking at underprivileged communities and how we can engage them more in the environment and get them out to access the environment. It is about organisations like ours working together with disability organisations to ensure that we are looking in that fullest sense to see if we can make provision for everyone to gain access to the environment to a good level.

[190] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** You did start off pretty well at the top of the Rhondda Fawr the other day.

[191] **Keith Davies:** I fynd yn ôl i welliant parhaus, roedd y cyn-Weinidog yn erbyn targedau. Rydych yn sôn am dargedau nawr efallai. Pa feini prawf y byddech yn edrych arnynt o ran cyfraddau cerdded a beicio? A fyddech yn cynnwys meini prawf yn hynny o beth?

Keith Davies: Going back to continuous improvement, the former Minister was against targets. You are now talking about targets. What criteria would you look at in terms of walking and cycling rates? Would you include criteria in that regard?

[192] **Ms Davies:** We have suggested that there are probably a number of measures that

you could look for in terms of the numbers of people using the facilities increasing over a period of time. You could look at how much the availability of the facilities was being promoted by local authorities and how many improvements were being undertaken at the facilities provided. So, there are a number of things that you could look at as measures of how they are implementing the requirements of the legislation.

[193] **Eluned Parrott:** I want to ask about mapping and the requirement for local authorities to have regard for the integrated network map when developing their transport plans and so on. You suggest in your paper a change to the wording from ‘to have regard to’ to ‘required to take account of such maps’. Can you explain why you think that change of wording will strengthen the position and what impact it will have?

[194] **Mr Bulbeck:** We consulted lawyers on that matter. We had a general principle where we thought it should be strengthened. The lawyers gave us a form of wording that we can share with the committee, although I do not have it with me at the moment, that they thought would strengthen that requirement, so that it would be taken forward and require their attention more than the current wording.

[195] **Eluned Parrott:** You also suggest that the provision should be extended to require authorities to take account of the existing route network. How might this be expected to shape the development of local and regional transport plans?

[196] **Mr Bulbeck:** What we were getting at in relation to existing routes was the result of experience with the rights of way improvement plans, where the balance between looking after routes that are in existence, their maintenance and so on, and improvement, if you like, if you differentiate between those two things, should not be lost. Some rather basic kinds of work can make a significant difference to the ways in which people can use routes, and to making them available and attractive to use. Therefore, we were keen to see that principle and the implementation of existing network routes being looked after as much as the identification of more substantive improvements and so on. I am sorry; what was the second part of your question?

3.30 p.m.

[197] **Eluned Parrott:** I was wondering whether you feel that there is a danger that the concept of continuous improvement might be seen as a volume measure as opposed to a quality measure for some of the existing routes, and whether that could be clearer, and where the balance is there.

[198] **Mr Bulbeck:** One way in which, for example, the rights of way network is considered is that there are measures to look at the quality of the network. Infrastructure is one of the key aspects considered in the Bill. Those sorts of measures could be introduced as part of the Bill and that would be one measure that we should consider. The other aspect, as Ceri has mentioned, is things such as the levels of use, and so on; those could also be looked at. So, if you look at the Bill in terms of the areas in which they seek to make improvements, such as infrastructure, promotion, levels of walking, and so on, you would wish to see monitoring that looked at each of those measures.

[199] **Eluned Parrott:** Thank you.

[200] **Nick Ramsay:** As I understand it, ‘to have regard for’ may have more weighting than we have sometimes given it credit for. Therefore, the committee will take a look at that, and we will discuss it afterwards. We will take a look at exactly—

[201] **Lord Elis-Thomas:** It might be interesting to have—[Inaudible.] [Laughter.]

[202] **Nick Ramsay:** The last thing that we want to do as a committee is to make things worse. *[Laughter.]*

[203] **Mr Bulbeck:** Imagine—*[Inaudible.]*

[204] **Nick Ramsay:** Yes, indeed. Keith Davies, do you have any further questions?

[205] **Keith Davies:** No, thank you.

[206] **Nick Ramsay:** Okay. I will ask one final question. Why does Natural Resources Wales believe that the duty to include active travel provision in highway schemes should be strengthened?

[207] **Ms Davies:** It is about integrating what is there currently and what the opportunities are for the future, as well as looking in that wider sense to try to link up the opportunity to improve the overall experience, in terms of encouraging people to use the network—people have to enjoy it, and there has to be a lot there for them to continue to use it—and then to perhaps increase their use and to get more involved in active travel. Therefore, looking at these things, integrating the network better would facilitate that.

[208] **Mr Bulbeck:** It is also a question of opportunities arising as and when they do. Schemes come around infrequently on many roads, and those opportunities should be taken. If you take a long view of this legislation, which the Government has set out to do, then, over time, those will build up and they will hopefully then join up and start to have a large effect. We have seen that in other areas of work. If you look at drop curbs, for example, when they first went in, they were rather incidental, but now they provide access through most of the pavement networks. Therefore, it is that kind of change that we believe will occur over time, with looking at that sort of measure.

[209] **Ms Davies:** To add to that, as an organisation we build and develop things in the field of the environment, and if those things are considered at the outset, you can often build them in more cost effectively than by trying to retrofit them later. Therefore, again, it is about looking for all the opportunities to be built in at the outset, rather than trying to force fit them later.

[210] **Nick Ramsay:** Thank you, Ceri Davies and Jont Bulbeck, for your evidence today—it has been very helpful; thanks for finding the time to come to speak to the committee. We will send you a transcript of today's meeting.

[211] I remind Members that the next meeting of the Enterprise and Business Committee will take place on Wednesday, 24 April, when we will be taking further evidence from the new Member in charge of the Bill, John Griffiths, the Minister for Culture and Sport. I now close the public section of the meeting.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 3.35 p.m.
The meeting ended at 3.35 p.m.*