

Ymgynghoriad: Bil Teithio Llesol (Cymru) / Consultation: Active Travel (Wales) Bill

Evidence of the Institution of Civil Engineers Wales Cymru: April 2013

1. Is there a need for a Bill aimed at enabling more people to walk and cycle and generally travel by non-motorised transport? Please explain your answer.

ICE Wales Cymru supports the introduction of this bill as a means to help further the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure and secure a positive step change in thinking about these forms of travel. Through formalisation in a Bill there is recognition and importance placed upon considering infrastructure needs and deficiencies consistently across Wales rather than piece meal and variation between each Authority.

The Bill is an additional means to aid in the delivery of a wide range of policy goals including addressing the need for Healthy Lifestyles and the ambitious carbon reduction targets set by the Welsh Government. Through its publication it reaffirms the Welsh Government's commitment established in the One Wales document and the sustainable development bill.

2. What are your views on the key provisions in the Bill, namely:

a. The requirement on local authorities to prepare and publish maps identifying current and potential future routes for the use of pedestrians and cyclists (known as "existing routes maps" and "integrated network maps") (Sections 3 – 5);

This is supported and will allow each authority, those within the development sector, businesses and residents to understand the opportunities that both exist and could enhance their local areas. It is agreed that the requirements for Plans for all towns and cities with a population above 2,000 will deliver significant scope for change, but that freedom exists for each Authority to prepare additional plans for areas below this threshold to be created if any Authority or community so desires.

b. The requirement on local authorities to have regard to integrated network maps in the local transport planning process (Section 6);

This is supported, but closer alignment with local land use planning policies and objectives should be brought out within any supporting guidance to ensure the Plans are fully integrated with other actions of each Authority.

c. The requirement on local authorities to continuously improve routes and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists (Section 7);

This is supported, but consideration of how these improvements sit alongside local land use planning policies and objectives, how funding mechanisms may be used to support the Plans deliveries, and how these improvements are prioritised amongst wider transport enhancements need to be made clear by each Authority, or through Guidance from the Welsh Government.

Community consultation to identify proposed improvements is important and needs support to further both the benefits of this process, but it must ensure that the enhanced network reflects local concerns.

d. The requirement on highway authorities to consider the needs of pedestrians and cyclists when creating and improving new roads (Section 8).

This is supported, and is felt to reaffirm what is standard practice by Authorities building upon the principles originally within PPG13, through to TAN 18, Wales Transport Strategy and the latest methods of economic appraisals used in bringing schemes forward to construction.

3. Have the provisions of the Bill taken account of any response you made to the Welsh Government's consultation on its White Paper? Please explain your answer.

N/A

4. To what extent are the key provisions the most appropriate way of delivering the aim of the Bill?

There is a balance to be struck with any such new legislation and it is felt that the Bill provides a kick start without being overly prescriptive or fixed in the manner of delivery. Stronger measures could be resisted and at this time and current economic climate, it is considered that the provisions proposed are appropriate.

5. What are the potential barriers to the implementation of the key provisions and does the Bill take account of them?

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he primary barrier could be funding in this era of austerity. Other aspects lie outside of the bill which includes:

- Officer support
- Intra Authority co-operation and working
- Cross boundary co-operation for routes and connections

All of these require Welsh Government support and Guidance and senior leadership within each Authority.

6. What are your views on the financial implications of the Bill (this could be for your organisation, or more generally)? In answering this question you may wish to consider Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum (the Impact Assessment), which estimates the costs and benefits of implementation of the Bill.

As with any additional requirement placed on a constrained budget, the preparation of the plans needs to be identified and costed by each Authority. The funding of improvements and

the prioritisation of competing schemes should be addressed through Welsh Government Guidance to maintain momentum generated through the Bill's passing.

7. *To what extent has the correct balance been achieved between the level of detail provided on the face of the Bill and that which will be contained in guidance given by the Welsh Ministers?*

The Bill should only establish an outline to allow flexibility to respond to any emerging best practice and adaptation into the future. It is proposed that the following considerations for inclusion within any guidance.

- Providing for a consistent template and approach to the production of the plans so that they can be read in a uniform manner no matter where in Wales.
- Allowing for the plans to be centrally collated to allow users to assess trips which could be cross boundary – this could be a central GIS system upon which data can be recorded.

8. *Are there any other comments you wish to make on the Bill that have not been covered in your response?*

It is felt that the Bill should seek to be more than plan making and seek to fully integrate with the planning system so that new developments address active travel as a primary consideration - both within the site and between the site and key social facilities such as schools, medical centres, community centres, shops and links to public transport stops/interchanges. This could follow in the review of the Planning System in Wales and an updated TAN 18 is felt to be best placed to address these issues to further the work Active Travel Bill will instigate.

**Keith Jones,
Director, ICE Wales Cymru
4 April 2013**

Notes:

- The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) was founded in 1818 to ensure professionalism in civil engineering.
- It represents 80,000 qualified and student civil engineers in the UK and across the globe and has over 3,600 members in Wales.
- ICE has long worked with the government of the day to help it to achieve its objectives, and has worked with industry to ensure that construction and civil engineering remain major contributors to the UK economy and UK exports.
- For further information visit: www.ice.org.uk and www.ice.org.uk/wales