

To the Welsh Ministers,

Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 Reporting Duties

In accordance with the duties under sections 7 (3) and 10 (2) of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, please find **Neath Port Talbot's** annual report for the year 2023-24.

1. The actions taken to promote active travel journeys

Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) Development

Routes identified on NPT's ATNM were audited against a set of Welsh Government-specified criteria to determine if they are suitable for walking, cycling or both. An exercise has been undertaken to update the data held on DataMapWales to reflect the scores of the routes that have been audited in 2021-23.

The council also commenced an exercise to audit and map our important publicly accessible related facilities on existing route. Related facilities are important as they support and enable active travel, related facilities include seating, cycle storage, toilets. This will enable the data held on DataMapWales to be updated.

Active Travel Consultations

Tonna: Between May 31, 2023, and June 30, 2023, a consultation was conducted regarding the proposed improvements to the active travel route between Tonna Hospital and Tonna village. The consultation involved a letter drop to approximately 325 households, emails to 261 stakeholders, and online engagement through the council's webpage and social media platforms. A total of 57 responses were received. A consultation report can be viewed on the council website at www.npt.gov.uk/activetravel

Sandfields: In early 2024, a public consultation for the Sandfields Active Travel Masterplan was undertaken. The consultation, which ran from January 18th to February 16th, 2024, was promoted through the council's website, social media, press releases, and direct communication with stakeholders, including emails sent to over 1,000 stakeholders. A leaflet drop was carried out across the Sandfields area, and local schools were sent information and asked to complete a homework exercise. A face-to-face event was held on February 7th, 2024, at Aberavon Leisure Centre, allowing residents to engage directly with the project team. In total, 80 respondents participated in the consultation. A consultation report can be viewed on the council website at www.npt.gov.uk/activetravel. Feedback will help guide the ongoing development of the active travel network in Sandfields.



Figure 1: Photo of the face-to-face event on the 7th February at Aberavon Leisure Centre

Roundabout Sponsorship Signs

During 2023/2024 the Active Travel Team in Neath Port Talbot sponsored two roundabouts, one in Neath and one in Port Talbot. The aim of this promotion was predominantly to encourage people using cars walk or cycle to work, school or the shops and also to encourage visits to our active travel pages on our website.



Figure 2: Designs of the roundabout signs.

Stalls at NPT's Family Fun Day

To celebrate National Play Day, NPT organises a Family Fun Day each year. This year, the Active Travel Team participated with an Active Travel Stall where officers raised awareness of walking and cycling routes in the area and asked people attending to fill out a questionnaire about their perceptions of walking and cycling in their local area. The event was well attended and a total of 48 people filled out the active travel questionnaire, providing their views on active travel in the area and identifying areas that they felt could be improved.



Figure 3: Picture of the Active Travel Stall at the NPT Family Fun Day.

Council Website

During 2022-23 NPT's website has been updated to promote Active Travel and publicise the revised ATNM.

There was no information on the site about the routes that have been created in recent years. An area has now been created on NPT's website to promote the good work that has been undertaken to enhance the network to both raise awareness and give users the confidence to utilise the routes for commuting.

Promotion in Schools

The Road Safety Team undertook a number of activities to promote Active Travel including:

- Cyclecraft (On road cycle training): 10 schools, 286 pupils
- Primary Classroom Education: 13 schools 598 pupils
- Cycle Awareness (Years 3-Year 6): 20 schools, 506 pupils
- Scooter Training (all ages): 13 schools, 246 pupils
- Balance Bike Training (Nursery & Reception): 6 schools 88 pupils
- Foundation Stage Cycling (Year 1 & 2): 30 schools 736 pupils
- Road Safety Walks (all ages): 5 schools, 192 pupils
- Kerbcraft (Child Pedestrian Training Year 2): 47 schools 1198 pupils
- The Big Pedal (which NPT supports Sustrans): 2 schools, 991 journeys
- Crucial Crew: 48 schools, 1427 pupils

NB Some figures are lower than previous years due to absence of NPT's officer who normally delivers training to the Primary Schools.

Neath Port Talbot Council Employee Cycle to Work Scheme

Between September 2020 and March 2024 there have been 685 applications from Neath Port Talbot Staff amounting to a total of £849,974.

Swansea Bay Healthy Travel Charter

Neath Port Talbot Council became a signatory of The Swansea Bay Healthy Travel Charter in February 2023. Charter signatories are committed to 17 actions to be completed over 2 years. The actions include establishing a network of sustainable travel champions within each organisation, developing targeted communications campaigns for staff, offering, and promoting the cycle to work scheme, EV car adoption and promoting public transport discounts. By working together, the signatories aim to increase the proportion of journeys made to and from workplaces which are sustainable.

Internal Liaison

There is ongoing liaison with colleagues from Planning, Highways, Road Safety, Streetcare (maintenance of routes) and Communications departments to encourage promotion of and provision for active travel as part of new developments.

External Liaison

In Neath Port Talbot, a new cycling community group called "NPT Links" has been established. Meetings have been held between the active travel team at NPT council and representatives from the group to help enhance active travel routes and promote community engagement.

NPT Active Travel Team

In previous years, the responsibilities for active travel have been divided between the planning department and the highways section in NPT. Historically, the planning department was in charge of producing the Active Travel Network Map (ATNM), responding to planning applications, and dealing with enquiries. The highways section dealt with the feasibility, design, and construction of proposals, as well as submitting funding applications and managing the associated funds.

Now, all duties related to active travel come under the highways section, additionally, there is a dedicated resource to manage these responsibilities.

2. The actions taken to secure new active travel routes and related facilities and improvements

Comments on Planning Applications

All new development schemes within Neath Port Talbot are required to provide infrastructure that meets Active Travel standards. Officers review all large-scale developments and provide feedback. When necessary, meetings are held to discuss proposed large-scale projects. Every development is expected to incorporate Active Travel infrastructure either on-site or off-site, utilising funding from Section 106.

Tonna Active Travel route

This project, which was completed in 2023/2024, aimed to enhance the pedestrian pathway connecting Tonna hospital and Tonna. This proposal intended to link the village with the hospital and connect a residential area to local shops.

The project consisted of an existing route shown as NPT-TON-P003 and a future route labelled FR-TON-SU001 on the Active Travel Network map for Neath Port Talbot.

NPT-TON-P003 was previously listed as an existing pedestrian route, but it had failed the audit with a score of 64. This route was crucial as it connected a residential area, Tonna hospital, and the centre of Tonna. Therefore, the route was approved despite critically failing due to the lack of suitable pedestrian crossing points. The proposed project aimed to address these issues and bring the route up to the standards outlined in the ATAG.

The project included:

- Widening the existing footway to meet ATAG standards
- Installing raised crossings at junctions to prioritise pedestrians, with dropped crossings and tactiles at the hospital entrance
- Improving the roundabout crossing with a raised roundabout
- Reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph and introducing a transition zone between the 20mph and 60mph sections
- Installing an uncontrolled crossing point to link the residential area and hospital
- Relocating the bus stop to improve the side road junction and align the crossing point with the desire line
- Installing seating along the route
- Constructing a green wall to enhance biodiversity and the local environment



Figure 4: Example before and after photos of the Tonna scheme

Additional work was included in the contract to install dropped crossings in side roads around the Tonna estate, resulting in several new pedestrian routes being added to the existing route map in Tonna and improving accessibility for walkers.

Bryn to Goytre (and links to Port Talbot):

The scheme, when complete, will see the creation of a suitable off-road active travel route suitable for cyclists and pedestrians linking the communities of Goytre and Bryn. The route will enable the residents of Bryn to commute to Goytre and Port Talbot to access the everyday facilities they rely on.

Funding was allocated to undertake a feasibility study on providing suitable active travel links between Port Talbot and Goytre. Several routes that could be improved for walking and cycling were identified.

Core Allocation

In **2023/24** Neath Port Talbot was awarded £716K core funding for further design work, minor improvement works, land negotiations and promotion of schemes. The following core allocation work has been approved by WG and Tfw:

Neath to Cimla: Funding was awarded to progress the detailed design, undertake negotiations with CADW in relation to the listed structures affected by the scheme and commence the legal process to revoke the prohibition of cycling order.

Dwr-y-Felin: Funding was awarded to further develop the design to improving the walking route to a shared use facility.

Newbridge Road Link: Funding was awarded to further progress the design of the scheme. Ground investigation was undertaken on Docks road along with testing of the bridge to determine if it can be repaired or if sections would need to be replaced.

Sandfields Master Plan: Building on the feasibility work that has been undertaken in 2022/23 the outline design of the highest prioritised routes was taken forward. The routes when complete will see a link from Bae Baglan School along Princess Margaret Way and onto Victoria road linking the seafront to the National Cycle Network while providing access to key destinations.

Village road crossing: The scheme delivered a new toucan crossing point on Village Road to allow residents of the Village Gardens estate to safely cross the carriageway. In addition to the formal crossing point, raised plateaus were installed on Village Road to slow the speeding traffic, traffic orders have been implemented to remove indiscriminate parking making it safer for users to cross and dropped kerbs and tactile paving was installed on adjoining streets to enable access for all users. The crossing point links the estate with the National Cycle Network 4 and the existing footbridge, which crosses the A4241 Afan Way. The works improved the designated safe route for pupils of Ysgol Bae Baglan and Bro Dur.



Figure 5: Before and after photos of the Village Road Crossing.

In addition to providing the safe road crossing improvements were made to adjoining streets where informal crossing points were constructed (in the form of dropped kerbs and tactile paving). These routes have been audited and added as existing routes on DataMapWales.



Figure 6: Example of a new dropped kerb and tactiles installed near to Village Road.

Monitoring: Traffic data to record the speed and volume of traffic, along with cycle and pedestrian counts, was captured on routes. Data is captured to record baseline data and capture evidence (for 3 years post construction) to demonstrate the benefits that improving active travel routes creates.

Additional cameras were purchased to help aid future monitoring.



Figure 7: Picture of a radar box capturing walking and cycling data on NCN43.

Promotion – See section on ‘actions taken to promote active travel journeys’ for further details.

ATNM Development – See section on ‘actions taken to promote active travel journeys’ for further details.

Related Facilities – See section on ‘New and improved active travel facilities’ for further details.

3. Costs incurred for new active travel routes and facilities and improvements of existing active travel routes and related facilities carried out in the preceding full financial year

In 2023/24 Neath Port Talbot was awarded £716K core funding for further design work, minor improvement works, land negotiations and promotion of schemes.

£415K was awarded for the construction of the Tonna Active Travel Scheme.

£55K was awarded to look at Bryn to Goytre (and links to Port Talbot)

4. Indicative spending for new active travel routes and facilities and improvements of existing active travel routes and related facilities funded or part funded by third parties.

Multiple planning applications have been commented on in regards to active travel, ensuring that developers are putting in adequate active travel infrastructure, the total spending is unknown.

5. Length of new routes for walking, cycling and shared use.

0 metres- all funding was spent on improving future routes (or existing routes with statements) to the standards required by the active travel act guidance.

6. Length of improved routes for walking, cycling and shared use.

The **Tonna improvements** created the following lengths of new existing walking routes:

New Existing Route ID	Title	Length(m)
NPT-TON-P004	Heol-Y-Glo to Dan-Y-Bryn, Tonna	615m
NPT-TON-P005	Pen-Y-Bryn, Tonna.	495m
NPT-TON-P006	Heol Caredig to New Street, Tonna.	607m
NPT-TON-P007	Parkfield, Tonna.	285m
NPT-TON-P008	Brunel Close, Tonna.	276m
NPT-TON-P009	Whittington Street, Tonna.	114m
NPT-TON-SU001-P	Park Street to Tonna Uchaf, Tonna.	497m
NPT-TON-P010	Tonna Uchaf (South), Tonna	190m

NPT-TON-P011	Dan-Y-Bryn link, Tonna	89m
	Total=	3168m

The improvements around **Village Road, Baglan** created the following lengths of new existing walking routes:

New Existing Route ID	Title	Length (m)
NPT-PT-P071	Village Gardens to Village Road, Baglan	370
NPT-PT-P073	Windsor Village, Baglan	256
NPT-PT-P074	Cathedral Way to Cloisters Walk, Baglan	269
NPT-PT-P115	Pentre Afan, Baglan	226
NPT-PT-P117	Village Road - Lower, Baglan	726
	Total=	1,847 m

7. New and improved active travel facilities.

Barriers: The funding was used to remove and replace access control measures to ensure that barriers complied with the Active Travel Act Guidance. This work has continued the programme of works undertaken in previous years to replace non-compliant barriers and make our routes more accessible. Four non-compliant barriers were replaced to enable use by individuals of all abilities. During 2023/2024 four barriers were replaced enabling access to all users. Since 2019 we have removed/replaced a total of 56 access barriers in the county borough, making routes more accessible for everyone choosing to walk, wheel or cycle along them.

Cycle Storage: In 2022/23, a map was created to display the locations of available cycle storage within NPT. Gaps in cycle storage at many of our trip attractors were identified.

Funding was used to install cycle storage at key leisure facilities:

- 4 hoops at Cwrt Herbert sports centre (8 spaces)
- 4 hoops at Aberavon Leisure Centre (8 spaces)
- 3 hoops at Pontardawe Leisure Centre (6 spaces)
- 3 hoops and a shelter at Vale of Neath Leisure centre (6 spaces)



Figure 8: Picture showing cycle storage installed at Vale of Neath Leisure Centre.

Signage: In 2022/23, complaints had been received regarding the lack of signage for users navigating between NCN 887 and NCN 4. A review of the signage was conducted to identify any missing signs. Signage has been installed on the NCN 887.

8. Additional information (optional)

I confirm that this report will be published online and made available in hard copy on request, in accordance with the statutory Active Travel Act Guidance (2021 edition).

Chief Executive Name: Karen Jones

Date of submission to Welsh Ministers: 30/10/2024