

Living Street's response to the Welsh Government consultation on the Statutory Guidance for the Delivery of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

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Question 1: Does the draft delivery guidance provide the information local authorities will need to meet their duties under the Act? If not, what else needs to be covered?

Yes, the steps are clearly identified.

Question 2: Are the approaches in the guidance the most appropriate way of delivering the requirements of the Act? If not, what approaches would be more appropriate and why?

The delivery guidance focuses primarily on the preparation, publication and consultation on the existing routes map and the integrated network maps. While the maps are central to the Active Travel (Wales) Act, encouraging more walking and cycling will also depend changing behaviours. The delivery guidance should consider the importance of raising awareness of the benefits of active travel alongside improvements to routes and facilities. This could be achieved through, for example, mass training events and education in partnership with large employers and health bodies. This could be built into bids for infrastructure improvements (e.g. through Lottery or European funding) or tied to corporate sponsorship.

Question 3: Would the actions in the delivery guidance incur costs on you, your organisation and/or the people you represent?

No.

Question 4: Are the links between the delivery guidance and the design guidance sufficiently clear?

Yes. The design guidance is signposted throughout the delivery guidance.

Question 5: We have asked a number of questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to address them:

The delivery guidance could do more to explore the various funding options for promoting active travel in Wales, for example, by providing examples of how current active travel projects have been funded. A commitment by the Welsh Government to ensure that highway construction, improvement or maintenance projects ring-fence a proportion of project costs for active travel would be welcome.

Specific questions:

Question 1: Do the facilities and features listed for inclusion in the maps capture all those that would be necessary for people to decide to travel? Do any not need to be included?

Yes. It is better to be as inclusive as possible in order to encourage a broad a range of active travel journeys.

Question 2: What are your views on the consultation processes for the existing routes maps and the integrated network maps?

While formal consultations on the existing routes maps and integrated network maps are important, as stated in section 3.1 of the design guidance, consulting communities during the development of the integrated network maps is essential. Communities are the experts on where they live; their intimate knowledge of each locality is what is needed to improve active travel routes and facilities, and to encourage more walking and cycling. Community street audits, for example, are an ideal way to bring together local residents (who may or may not engage in active travel), representative groups (e.g. disabilities groups, schools, local businesses) and council officers to identify barriers (perceived and physical) and opportunities for active travel. Audits like this can identify a range of often simple and cost effective solutions and should be recommended as part of the consultation process.

Question 3: What are your views on the guidance on how local authorities should deliver their duties to make year on year improvements to active travel routes and facilities?

We agree with prioritising routes (and facilities) that will achieve the greatest impact on increasing the number of active travel journeys and the number of people travelling actively. Consulting communities, in addition to the design guidance, is a key step in identifying barriers to walking and cycling, and prioritising and achieving local buy-in for proposed schemes. The chapter could be restructured slightly to discuss the innovative sourcing of funds (paragraph 5.1.5) alongside 'monitoring and measuring outcomes' (section 5.3). In this way the chapter would address how to prioritise schemes, the potential barriers to implementation 'involving landowners' and 'measuring and monitoring' across a wide range of outcomes in order to demonstrate relevance and fundability across diverse agendas (e.g. tourism, health, accessibility etc.).

Please note the incorrect reference to paragraph 3.4.26 in paragraph 5.3.1.

Question 4: What are your views on the circumstances when it would be unreasonable to make enhancements for walkers and cyclists in exercising functions under the Highways Act?

We accept that there may be circumstances where it is not possible for local authorities to provide safe routes or facilities or links to existing routes and facilities, as part of highway construction, improvement or maintenance. However, local authorities should not automatically reject the need for pedestrian infrastructure, for example, alongside high speed roads. Facilities, such as pedestrian/cycle bridges and crossings may be essential to minimise the impact of community severance.

When considering the distance that would need to be covered by a new route, we underline the guidance in 6.1.4 that improvements should be proportionate to the level of overall investment in the highway project. The design guidance also identifies that cycling journeys typically cover *up to 5 miles* and this should be a material consideration in any decisions made.

Question 5: What are your views on how local authorities can promote active travel in exercising their functions under the Act?

Currently the guidance on how local authorities exercise their duty to promote active travel is limited to seven paragraphs. We believe that the guidance needs to place much more emphasis on helping local authorities to encourage behaviour change, for example, through the mass awareness raising and training events mentioned above (response to question 2, general questions). Instead of one paragraph calling for imaginative plans to promote active travel, it would be more helpful to use case studies demonstrating, for example, to create low cost campaigns and promotions. We would be more than happy to share our experience, for example:

- Living Streets have been funded to deliver walk to school interventions across England through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund since 2012. At the end of year two, the Walk to School Outreach project has already engaged 532 primary and 112 secondary schools from across thirteen local authority partner areas. Project coordinators have been working with schools to explore barriers to walking, deliver awareness events and implement incentive and reward schemes. The result has been an average 23% increase in the number of children walking at participating primary schools (equating to almost nine million new walking journeys by children and accompanying parents and carers) and over £140,000 of capital investment on physical route improvements.
- We have operated the national Walk to School (WtS) campaign since 1995. Its aim is to encourage all parents and young people to make walking to school part of their daily routine. In the last five years our Walk to School message has reached over two million children across the UK and this year Living Streets will be working with over 650,000 children across more than 2,000 schools.

- Living Streets' Fitter for Walking project involved approximately 150 communities, across 12 local authority areas and 5 regions of England, selected based on low reported levels of physical activity and high levels of obesity. The programme achieved a benefit cost ratio for decreased mortality as a result of more people walking of up to 46:1¹. Furthermore the project led to 78 per cent of individuals who signed up reporting an increase in their day-to-day walking levels and 64 per cent of these still reported an increase in walking six months later, showing long-term impact.
- Living Streets' Walking Works project engages with adults in employment to encourage more walking to, from and at work. The project has raised awareness of the benefits of walking more to over 28,000 individuals so far, through walking pledges, regular digital campaigns and the annual Walk to Work Week challenge. Since participating in Walk to Work Week, 57 per cent of respondents felt that their overall level of walking had increased and individuals achieving 30 minutes or more physical activity on five or more days per week increased from 29 per cent at registration to 50 per cent at follow up².

Responses to consultations may be made public – on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to be kept confidential, please tick here:

¹ Sinnett, D., Powell, J. (2012) Economic evaluation of Living Streets' Fitter for Walking project. University of West of England, Bristol, UK.

² Sustrans Monitoring and Evaluation Unit. 2011. *Living Streets – Walk to Work Week 2011 – Follow-up Survey Results*