

Enterprise and Business Committee
Active Travel (Wales) Bill
AT 14 – John Palmer

Dear Mr Ramsay

Active Travel (Wales) Bill

I am writing to you to ask for your full support and influence to ensure there is a truly effective and worthwhile Active Travel (Wales) Bill enacted.

I have had over 20 years of working and campaigning with Sustrans and am a very keen walker and cyclist. As a 70 year old I am very lucky to enjoy the great advantages to fitness and health of regular walking and cycling and wish others to have similar benefits.

As published the Bill has particular deficiencies.

There is particular uncertainty over Compulsory Purchase Powers. I believe these to be essential as a last resort to ensure key sections of much needed safe well graded routes are made possible to avoid long and unsuitable and sometimes unsafe diversions. For instance there is a mile long section of the otherwise well graded and very popular Clydach Gorge route which has had to be diverted way from the old railway line on steep and narrow country lanes because of the refusal of the landowner to negotiate.

There appears to be no provision for softer measure programmes. In my experience travel planning is most important and effective as has been shown in Cardiff, and adult cycle training and working with schools are a must. I have worked with my local Ponthir Church in Wales School to prepare a Travel Plan which resulted in a series of road safety measures around Ponthir and provision of a larger school cycle shed which has encouraged many more pupils to cycle to school.

Finally it is essential for the Bill to introduce targets for local authorities to increase levels of active travel which might be proportional to increases in funding. These have already been suggested by the BMA and NICE.

Yours sincerely

John Palmer