

Appendix F – Annual Report

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 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's annual report for the year 2023 - 2024.

<p>The actions taken to promote active travel journeys</p>	<p>During 2023 - 2024, the Council had been involved in the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implemented an ongoing programme of works to upgrade / improve sections of footway across the County Borough including resurfacing, provision of dropped kerbs, new railings and footway widening.• Undertook the removal of barriers, at selective active travel route locations and on a case-by-case basis, following an assessment of criteria at each location.• Continued its involvement in initiatives to promote Rhondda Cynon Taf as a tourist destination for walking and cycling.• Provided free bike balance training for 470 3-5 year old pupils to learn how to start riding a bicycle and become more confident.• Ensured the Council's website pages covering active travel were kept up-to-date.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In conjunction with Halfords, continued the Council's Cycle2Work Scheme for staff as part of its Staff Benefits Programme. • Delivered National Standards cycle training to 617 pupils in 2023 - 2024 which provided young cyclists with the necessary training to be safer and more competent cyclists. • Delivered Kerbcraft / Child Pedestrian Training to 1,135 pupils in 2023 - 2024 to give young pupils the skills and road safety awareness to be safer pedestrians. • Undertook a consultation exercise to inform and progress a further phase of constructing a new active travel route in the Upper Rhondda Fach.
The actions taken to secure new active travel routes and related facilities and improvements	<p>The following information relates to 2023 - 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressed studies to investigate the potential alignment and construction of new active travel routes within Aberdare and Pontypridd town centres and to/from surrounding communities. Active travel will play a key role in the development of the Council's Placemaking Plans for its main town centres. These Plans include improved connectivity to important facilities, gateways and quarters. • Delivered further 'Safe Routes in Communities' Schemes to local primary schools in Church Village and Hirwaun.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a number of highway improvements which benefit cyclists (as well as motorists) such as surface treatment works at various locations across RCT, construction of new lanes at key junctions, renewal of traffic signals and masonry repairs to river bridges and retaining walls. • Implemented a number of improvements, repairs and/or replacements to footbridges (such as in Gelligaled Park, Ystrad, Iron Tram Bridge, Trecynon, at Llanharan over the railway line and Colliery Street, Trehafod). Also, footways, retaining walls and crossing points to improve pedestrian safety. • Replaced Castle Inn Bridge in Trefforest and Tynybryn footbridge in Tonyrefail, that are used by both pedestrians and cyclists, following severe weather damage. The new structures are compliant with current active travel standards. • Installed a new signalised pedestrian crossing in Llanharan. • Undertook preliminary investigative work on the Cynon Trail (near Penywaun) in order to inform a future landslip remediation scheme. • Undertook various improvements, such as resurfacing and new signage, to the Lady Windsor Active Travel Route between Ynysybwl and Pontypridd.
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<p>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</p>	<p>Principal works and costs are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £391.5k - Hirwaun Safe Routes in Communities scheme. This scheme has delivered speed reduction measures (including an average speed camera system), improved pedestrian facilities (including dropped kerbs) and construction of new footways. This is year one of a two year SRIC scheme. • £425k - Church Village Safe Routes in Communities scheme. This scheme improved several key walking routes that people use to access local facilities with tactile paving, cutting back vegetation and upgraded pedestrian facilities at key junctions across the village. • £2.2M – commenced work to provide a new active travel route in the Rhondda Fach between Maerdy and Tylorstown – to eventually form a continuous active travel route along the Rhondda Fach to Porth. The initial phase involved upgrading, to active travel standards, an existing path in the Maerdy area, whilst Phase 2 of this scheme involved construction of a new route southwards along the alignment of the former railway line towards Ferndale. • £5.160M - delivering a number of road resurfacing schemes across the County Borough. • £790k – delivering a number of footway improvement schemes across the County Borough.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £540k – delivering street lighting and traffic signal renewals across the County Borough. • £920k – progressed the following schemes which are at various stages of development: construction of a new active travel route in the Rhondda Fach - phases 3, 4 and 5, various active travel route enhancements, Cynon Trail construction of missing section in Cwmbach, re-alignment of the Taff Trail section between Nant Cae Dudwg Bridge and Trallwn to improve resilience, Town Centre Enhancements in Aberdare and Pontypridd, construction of new active travel routes between Treorchy and Treherbert and between Llanharan and Talbot Green, re-alignment of the Taff Trail within Trallwn to assist users, construction of the Cynon Trail active travel link along Swansea Road, Hirwaun and construction of new active travel links to the Church Village Community Route.
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In addition to the above, the following information provides an overview of infrastructure that has been implemented during the previous year.:

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.	Where possible, the Council endeavours to obtain contributions from developers, as part of a S106 Agreement, to fund improvements to active travel facilities in the vicinity of their new development.
Length of new routes:	
- Walking	0.04 km
- Cycling	0.89 km
- Shared Use	2.70 km

Length of improved routes:	
- Walking	0.73 km
- Cycling	0.00 km
- Shared Use	1.05 km
New and improved active travel facilities	2 new cycle storage stands have been installed in the Tonteg area.

Additional information (optional)

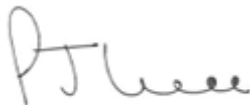
The Aberdare Business Improvement District has endorsed the Council's new Strategy for Aberdare Town Centre. One of the objectives in this Strategy is to improve and promote more walking and cycling journeys to / from the town centre.

A part of Stage 8 of the 2023 Tour of Britain Cycle Race was held in the Rhondda Cynon Taf area during the summer.

Working closely with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales (TfW), the Council has undertaken a review of the proposed Llanharan Link Road Scheme. It has ensured that sustainability (such as more prominent active travel and bus priority measures) is embedded into the scheme's re-design.

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 Signature:



Chief Executive Name:

Paul Mee

Date of submission to Welsh Ministers:

08/11/2024