

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 Monmouthshire County Council's annual report for the year 2020-21.

<p>The actions taken to promote active travel journeys</p>	<p>20-21 saw a significant refocus on the Active Travel agenda and progress in Monmouthshire to match our future ambition. As well as securing and delivering Active Travel grant funding, during a challenging period (due to COVID), we placed a strong emphasis on data collection to inform future decisions.</p> <p>Views were gathered on the Active Travel network and draft strategic priorities which ran from August to October 2020.</p> <p>Various approaches were used which included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Online questionnaires with digitised maps.</li><li>• Face to face meetings and webinars.</li><li>• Teams meetings.</li><li>• Targeted approach for vulnerable groups.</li><li>• Councillor seminars.</li><li>• Writing out to an extensive network of stakeholders.</li><li>• Encouraging schools to participate to give children and young people a voice.</li><li>• A full media campaign.</li><li>• All of the above saw a fantastic 2,713 electronic responses received in our phase 1 engagement;<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Adult – 825</li><li>- Easy read – 29</li><li>- Secondary – 602</li><li>- Business – 20</li><li>- Primary – 1,237</li></ul></li></ul> <p>Links were established with 'reopening town centre' COVID measurers promoting active travel right across our seven settlements. This saw an increase of bike infrastructure in and around our</p>
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town centres and further encouragement to 'Shop Local, Shop Monmouthshire'.

The Monmouthshire Active Travel website was redesigned and used as a key vehicle for promotion and obtaining views through our ATNM consultation. The website continues to progress enabling a 'go to' place for members of the public and key stakeholders to obtain regular updates on Active Travel developments across the local authority. (Website link - [Monmouthshire Active Travel - Monmouthshire](#)).

10 E-bikes were purchased through COVID town centre funding to promote Active Travel through targeted groups. This formed the basis for future developments of a hire facility to encourage modal shift. MCC also re launched its Cycle to Work Scheme encouraging employees to take up this opportunity.

A full and comprehensive governance structure was introduced which brought together various services within the local authority to focus on delivery of agreed schemes. This includes;

- Highways
- Planning
- Rights of Way
- Environment
- Road Safety
- Finance
- Strategic Projects
- Sport Development and Youth Service
- Leisure Services


Within this structure, specific roles were assigned for each individual Active Travel project which included a designated project manager and project sponsor to provide regular updates through the governance board and achieve agreed outcomes and objectives in line with project plans.



Links were established with officers responsible for the Climate Emergency Working Group, Learner Travel Measures, Pre-Planning Application process, MCC Strategic Transport Group, Education and Wellbeing Groups to ensure that these key areas of

	<p>work are aware of Active Travel and the positive impact it can have.</p> <p>Significant progress has been made throughout 2020-2021 to bring a whole authority approach to Active Travel and a more holistic approach to how each service area can collectively support.</p>
<p>The actions taken to secure new active travel routes and related facilities and improvements</p>	<p>A collection of package bids was submitted to Welsh Government for Monmouth, Caldicot and Usk – with funding received for the Monmouth and Caldicot schemes.</p> <p>A total award of £1,822,000 was allocated to deliver strategic projects in Monmouth and Caldicot, as well as our core ATF investment. Significant progress has been made across all aspects where funding was allocated, construction was implemented on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phase 1 of Kingswood Gate Williamsfield Lane</li> <li>- Phase 1 of Church Road.</li> <li>- Contraflow Cycle Lane in Lion Street, Abergavenny.</li> </ul> <p>All other projects saw progress in line with the project plans and WeITAG stages for future implementation. Match funding provided by MCC (£90,904) showed a commitment to this area of work and supported the grant funding allocated to ensure potential was maximised.</p> <p>Funding was also received for Active Travel related projects as part of the Covid 19 recovery fund. Part of this work saw a contraflow cycle lane introduced in to Lion Street in Abergavenny and increased cycling infrastructure right across our settlements. We have seen an increase of facilities for 163 bikes introduced to our four town centres, as well as 12 public bike pumps installed.</p> <p>Schemes developed as part of the pre-planning process included Wye Valley Active Travel Bridge, Kingswood Gate and the proposed velo park in Abergavenny. Further work was undertaken with planning to align the need for additional active travel routes with potential strategic growth in the Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033. This work is ongoing as the RLDP progresses.</p>

	<p>Throughout the year connections have been made with local community groups to establish a shared vision for Active Travel. This includes, but is not limited to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monmouth Town Council Active Travel Group</li> <li>- Monmouth Cycle Club</li> <li>- Abergavenny Road Cycle Club</li> <li>- Usk Town Active Travel Group</li> <li>- Usk Town Centre Strategic Group</li> <li>- Caldicot Town Centre Regeneration Group</li> </ul>
<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>Welsh Government Active Travel Fund - £1,448,704</p> <p>Re Opening Town Centre Covid Grant (Direct Active Travel Enhancement Projects) - £158,000</p> <p>Monmouthshire Match Funding for Active Travel Projects Linked to the ATF Award - £90,904</p>

In addition to the above, the following information provides an overview of infrastructure that has been implemented during the previous year:

<p>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.</p>	<p>Re Opening Town Centre Covid Grant (Indirect Active Travel Enhancement Projects) - £489,500</p>
<p>Length of new routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walking</li> <li>- Cycling</li> <li>- Shared Use</li> </ul>	<p>New Cycling Route: Lion Street - 135 metres.</p> 

<p>Length of improved routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walking</li> <li>- Cycling</li> <li>- Shared Use</li> </ul>	<p>Shared use routes:</p> <p>Kingswood Gate Phase 1 = 130 metres</p> <p>Church Road Phase 1 = 300 metres</p>
<p>New and improved active travel facilities</p>	<p>Increased Cycling infrastructure for 163 bikes across all 7 settlements, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Car Bike Port Installed in Abergavenny.</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 13 Public Bike Pumps - Located at a number of key areas right across Monmouthshire and Theta Cycle Hoops.</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plant Lock Planters, located in Chepstow Town Centre and Planter Racks Installed in Monmouth.</li> </ul> <p>Purchase of counters (£30k) has also enabled us to better monitor use of identified routes for future scheme delivery.</p>

Additional information (optional)

Whilst significant progress was made in 2020/21, it must be noted that there were considerable challenges during this year. The two significant challenges were progressing Active Travel during a worldwide pandemic and the delayed allocation of Active Travel Funding.

The Covid pandemic meant many of our resources were depleted due to staff furlough, materials not being available, limited movement of staff and adapting to new ways of working.


Monmouthshire County Council also took the decision not to progress Active Travel projects until we were officially informed by Welsh Government to whether our grant applications were successful. Knowledge of the grants was received on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020, which meant just over 3 months of delivery was lost and this problem was exacerbated because an opportunity for environmental surveys was missed.

Despite a challenging year, foundations have been embedded to continually progress this agenda and many positive outcomes have been achieved.

Priorities for the coming 2021/22 are to continue working with planning colleagues to ensure the new LDP development sites are, or will be, served by Active Travel connections, and to continue to work with the highways and regeneration teams to ensure Active Travel is incorporated into all highways and public realm schemes where possible. Work will continue to bring a whole authority approach to service areas right across Monmouthshire County Council and to continue to progress Active Travel project implementation, providing network improvements for our residents.

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 Matthews

Date of submission to Welsh Ministers:

30<sup>th</sup> September 2021