

Walking and cycling manifesto consultation summary 28 June 2020

Original text	Comments
Walking and cycling manifesto for Somerset	<p><i>Several, British Horse Society, The Trails Trust:</i> insert horse-riding</p> <p><i>Anon 1:</i> insert limited mobility</p> <p><i>Anon 2:</i> as this has got a bit wordy use 'all vulnerable road users'</p> <p><i>Asst Town Clerk Bruton:</i> is manifesto the right word?</p>
Somerset Climate Action Network has recommended that the five principal authorities in Somerset 'Remove barriers and lead joint funding bids to plan and develop effective cycling and walking infrastructure in all Somerset towns and key rural locations'.	
We call on the County Council to:	<p><i>Asst Town Clerk Bruton:</i> change call to ask which is a bit less confrontational</p> <p><i>Member of Transition Town Wellington:</i> they may have already changed their thinking, so a call is a bit redundant and outdated. This is the perfect opportunity to forge ahead.</p>
Reverse its current prioritisation, which puts predicting and providing for cars first, with pedestrians and cyclists a distant equal third.	<p><i>Anon 3:</i> 'Equalise' for reverse.</p> <p><i>Anon 2:</i> insert equestrians.</p> <p><i>Chris Hillier:</i> insert 'users of limited mobility equipment'</p> <p><i>Bruton Area Street Improvement Initiative:</i> this might be clearer the other way round, ie prioritise sustainable travel etc.</p> <p><i>Templecombe PC:</i> Possibly too radical to win over the car driving public. However, a huge imbalance at present in favour of capital expenditure on new roads versus cycle infrastructure. If equal amounts were spent on each, a huge amount could be achieved for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p><i>Wells City councillor:</i> I would put pedestrians first, both because of their specific non-linear</p>

	<p>usage and because at some point in any journey 98% of us become pedestrians or pavement users.</p> <p><i>Burnham and Highbridge TC</i>: Not supported as anti-car</p> <p><i>Stoke St Gregory councillor</i>: 'Reassess' for reverse.</p>
<p>Stop all investment based on 'predict and provide'. Future expenditure on Highways should only be for maintenance and safety improvements.</p>	<p><i>Anon 3</i>: 'Suspend' for Stop.</p> <p><i>Templecombe PC</i>: as previous comment re being too radical.</p> <p><i>Wells City councillor</i>: I agree with this but would add user-relevant changes, not just safety (which can, of course result in barriers, bridges and tunnels)</p> <p><i>Burnham and Highbridge TC</i>: Not supported as anti-car</p> <p><i>Stoke St Gregory councillor</i>: I am quite sympathetic to cutting back investment on extending the highway network</p> <p><i>Staplegrove councillor</i>: your policy 2, stating that new expenditure for roads should only be for Maintenance and Safety Improvements, is rather limiting and could prevent a new bypass, for example, from greatly enhancing the use of an existing highway for cycling and walking. Certainly there is great scope for adding to the existing expenditure of £116000 on cycle routes from the £M47 used on roads.</p>
<p>Establish a specific and substantial budget with a lead officer at Assistant Director level for the development of walking and cycling networks across the County.</p>	<p><i>Anon 2</i>: insert equestrian</p> <p><i>Templecombe PC</i>: Agree</p> <p><i>Wells City councillor</i>: I think this is very important, but to include an officer responsible only for walking.</p> <p><i>Burnham and Highbridge TC</i>: supported.</p>
<p>Adopt current best-practice guidance as policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Manual for Streets Vols 1 and 2 b. Cycling [what is it?] 	<p><i>Anon 2</i>: add British Horse Society Manifesto [having checked I don't think this document exists]</p> <p><i>Templecombe PC</i>: Agree</p> <p><i>Burnham and Highbridge TC</i>: supported.</p>
<p>Accept that the County Council does not have the capacity, nor the granular local knowledge, to control and manage everything that needs to be done for sustainable transport. Having set</p>	<p><i>Author</i>: The first sentence is perhaps a bit negative and confrontational.</p> <p><i>Director, SCAN</i>: I agree. Perhaps better to suggest a long term relationship between the SCC key officers and community representatives to ensure positive actions -some type of forum maybe</p>

<p>the appropriate standards and using the existing Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP), the Council should devolve to District and Local Councils where appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Mendip DC leader:</i> SCC does have the capacity. Strongly disagrees with this point. <i>Carhampton PC:</i> This Council is unhappy at the assertion that the County Council does not have the capacity... the buying capacity of the County Council allows it to have a multi-million contract with Skanska to deliver highway projects and maintenance. Devolving work to District Councils could mean each undertaking tendering processes...with no benefit. This PC would wish to see this policy re-worded to allow the County Council to undertake the work in full consultation with the District and Local Councils... the onus for consultation needs to sit with the County, not the Districts. <i>Anon 2:</i> insert after word standards in second sentence 'and using the existing Rights of Way Improvement Plan,' <i>Anon 2:</i> insert after word appropriate 'implementation of these routes.' <i>Templecombe PC:</i> Agree <i>Wells City councillor:</i> Basically agree. ? how would work in practice. <i>Burnham and Highbridge TC:</i> supported.</p>
<p>Recommend refusal of any significant proposal for development that does not include upgrading its pedestrian and cycling connections with local facilities to the standards set out in 4 above.</p>	<p><i>Author:</i> 'Recommend refusal' sounds a bit negative. <i>Director, SCAN:</i> instead of recommend refusal 'ensure that upgrading of pedestrian and cycling connections in mandatory for any development' <i>Anon 2:</i> insert after upgrading 'to restricted byway and use the RoWIP.' <i>Anon 2:</i> also horseriding. <i>Carhampton PC:</i> surely requires an amendment to respective local plans. Might it also be possible to include a requirement for developers to contribute to providing and/or improving cycle and walking routes within a certain radius of the development? <i>Bruton Area Street Improvement Initiative:</i> this should be more general eg 'unless sustainable travel and recreation are included.' <i>Templecombe PC:</i> I would definitely support this point. Currently no weight is given to pedestrian and cycle connections for new developments. Developers should have to include safe pedestrian and cycle routes to nearby facilities, as part of their sustainability. <i>Burnham and Highbridge TC:</i> supported. <i>Fivehead PC councillor:</i> I would strongly support these policies being used to refuse developments that cannot comply.</p>

<p>Establish a standard for cycle routes between settlements, which might include designation of existing roads as 'quiet lanes' or other regulatory measures, and adoption of the Knooppunten or similar system for wayfinding.</p>	<p><i>Anon 2:</i> delete cycle insert all <i>Anon 4:</i> could there be mention of walking routes here? Not everyone wants to cycle. <i>Anon 3:</i> insert and associated infrastructure after 'routes' <i>Taunton Environment Network and others:</i> explain Knooppunten. <i>Godney Parish councillor:</i> Designation of roads as "quiet lanes" - how can the periods of the use of a road by teams of contractors engaged in harvesting sileage, muck spreading etc for whom speed is an essential part of their work be taken into account. Again, my experience of the "blind bend" is that large tractors and trailers come round the corner with little reduction in speed. I am not criticising the contractors but want to point out that a "quiet" lane can quickly be turned into a very hazardous environment for cyclists.</p>
<p>Promote the connection by safe cycle routes of all settlements in Somerset of over 3,000 [?] population. The actual routes to be agreed by all the local councils through which the route passes and/or the local District Council.</p>	<p><i>Anon 2:</i> delete cycle, insert all. <i>Anon 4:</i> Again, can this also include walking routes. <i>Anon 5:</i> Maybe 2000? This would only increase the list of settlements by a few (5), but this includes Axbridge (Strawberry Line) and Castle Cary (the closest railway station to the Mendip towns), plus there's a steep dropoff in terms of population to the next highest population centres. <i>Anon 6:</i> Also ensure Road repairs especially of Potholes of ALL Somerset Cycle routes as a priority. <i>Carhampton PC:</i> there should be slightly more detail in this... eg insert 'ensuring that such routes pass through as many smaller settlements in order to provide maximum benefit for all those living in the County.' <i>Henstridge PC:</i> They have chosen to state that villages of over 2000 population should be linked by safe bicycle routes. Not many villages that size around here in S E Somerset and 1500 population might include us and be to our and some other villages advantage <i>Old Cleeve PC:</i> It is suggested within the manifesto to promote safe cycle routes between settlements of over 2,000 population - that will exclude a large area of Somerset. They should be prioritised where there is a lack of alternatives e.g. public transport. It's more likely that alternatives will exist in more populated areas, so the need whilst important will not be so great <i>Compton Bishop PC:</i> There is a need for a genuine creative reorganisation of pathways and cycle ways, particularly in rural areas where ancient pathways could now be upgraded</p>

	<p>for both pedestrians and cyclists. This is so necessary between and linking up of small rural communities, villages and towns.</p> <p><i>Chair, Axbridge Action Group:</i> I would suggest that pathways/cycleways between communities should not just be on the basis of connecting places of 2000+. it should also including connecting between other communities such as Axbridge and Cross.</p> <p>I think a key issue is that we should not only focus on urban areas. We must also encourage the creation of positive environments in villages/ small towns and in the countryside</p>
Support the use of off-road routes and former railway lines by (if delegated to SCC) giving financial assistance to landowners under s1(1) of the Agriculture Bill 2020 and using compulsory purchase and Highways Act 1980 powers where necessary.	<p><i>Trails Trust [as summarised by JH]:</i> there are common law mechanisms to secure Public Rights of Way that are more straightforward than compulsory purchase and statute law: Express Dedication.</p>
Prohibit pavement parking across the County.	<p><i>Anon 1:</i> insert 'all' after prohibit.</p> <p><i>Anon 1:</i> after the word parking insert '(including partial where this is allowed)'</p> <p><i>Carhampton PC:</i> the idea of prohibition is wonderful; enforcement is a different matter... the PC has no financial means of providing enforcement of a blanket ban and I suspect neither SWT nor the County would wish to take on such a responsibility</p> <p><i>Bruton Area Street Improvement Initiative:</i> I'm not sure if pavement parking deserve it's own point. Maybe in the "manifesto for safe roads" it's not specifically related to climate change and seems quite minor compared with the aspirational aspects of the rest of the manifesto</p>
Introduce 40 mph [Devon say 50 mph] limits on all single carriageway rural roads, and 20 mph limits within built-up areas.	<p><i>Author:</i> this could just be too controversial at this stage of the process.</p> <p><i>Member, Transition Town Wellington:</i> maybe not have the speed limit thing in here - it's so controversial, and might scupper the thing if we are too hardline at this point.</p> <p><i>Director, SCAN:</i> I agree with Anita. IMHO we need to push for proper cycling and walking infrastructure, dedicated cycleways etc.</p> <p><i>Anon 1:</i> insert '(classified and unclassified) after single carriageway.</p> <p><i>Anon 6:</i> Many more are cycling on our rural/unclassified roads which are the national</p>

	<p>speed limit, they should be 40 mph, detail (6) not be excluded from this draft - more accidents/fatalities happen on rural roads. If we want to encourage more people especially children to walk/cycle on our rural roads then we need the speed limit for vehicles to be reduced [more location specific detail was then given].</p> <p><i>Carhampton PC</i>: a 40 mph or 50 mph speed limit on all single carriageway rural roads would, again, be wonderful.</p> <p><i>Chair, Hardington Mandeville PC</i>: Regarding speed limits, I have long held the view that 50mph should be the maximum for single carriageway B roads, and at the most 40mph for all unclassified country roads.</p> <p><i>Bruton Area Street Improvement Initiative</i>: 40mph is actually fairly fast on the single lane roads around here. 30mph would be far safer.</p> <p><i>Keinton Mandeville PC</i>: we were very sceptical of the viability of your speed reduction wishes, desirable as they may be: they would be impossible to enact and are simply unenforceable given our current level of policing (especially in rural areas) and the dominance of the car and truck lobbies.</p> <p><i>Porlock PC</i>: support 20 mph in urban areas but have reservations about 40 mph on all single carriageway rural roads.</p> <p><i>Old Cleeve PC</i>: Proposed 40mph on all single carriageway roads and 20mph in built up areas would be a very expensive policy idea. Much better to have lower speed limits where they are actually needed and are more likely to be respected. Most drivers will slow down if they can see the reason for doing so, they're unlikely to slow to a signed only limit on open roads in the countryside where they can see no reason for a lower limit</p> <p><i>Compton Bishop PC</i>: Reduce speed limit to 40mph on all unclassified rural roads & 20mph in more built up villages and towns, the motor car lobby are ruling our roads</p> <p><i>Fivehead PC councillor</i>: I especially like the call for lower than national speed limits on single track country lanes.</p> <p><i>Stoke St Gregory councillor</i>: I believe that [40 mph limit on all single carriageway roads] would be widely ignored and undermine the system of speed limits generally.</p>
20-minute neighbourhoods (ie 10 minutes' walk there, 10 back, 800 m distance)	<i>Anon 1</i> : delete 'there', insert to a bus stop or railway station and'

SUGGESTED ADDITIONS	
Support longer-range cycle routes, liaising with neighbouring authorities as necessary.	<i>Anon</i> : delete cycle, insert multi-user.
Prioritise safe pedestrian and cycle access to Somerset's rural Primary Schools.	<i>This is from Templecombe PC</i> : Car congestion at rural Primary Schools is one of the issues which deters parents/pupils from walking and cycling to school. During lockdown, many more young children have become proficient riding bikes.

Comments on the document as a whole:

Chair, Hardington Mandeville PC: I heartily approve of all the recommendations in the document.

Deputy CEO, Mendip DC: this sounds really exciting.

Bruton Area Street Improvement Initiative: the manifesto is trying to address sustainable travel and recreation in one document. It might be better to split it. With all the edited comments the manifesto does seem to give horse riding equal importance to walking and cycling. Whilst horse riding is important, in terms of accessibility (most people can't afford a horse) and potential to limit climate change, it isn't as significant as walking and cycling.

BASII are happy to sign up to this or similar manifesto.

Wells City councillor: There appears to be very little attention to walking in the document, unless that is presumed to be covered by the 4a reference to Manual for Streets? The only specific reference is through pavement parking and 20 minute neighbourhoods. My observation is that this commonly happens when walking and cycling are considered together. I completely support cycling initiatives so would suggest that the two should be looked at separately. They have in common that they are so-called 'vulnerable' users but otherwise their needs and behaviour are very different.

British Horse Society Field Officer SW: I would like to fully endorse Rachel Thompson's response to the consultation – there was a misguided perception (which is thankfully receding) that horses may 'conflict' with other user groups on cycle trails. Increasingly the move has been towards multi use of a single shared surface on recreational trails – Sustrans have removed all barriers which could be an impediment to a

particular user group on their routes.

You will see from the attached response that up to and including parliamentary level it has been made abundantly clear that any walking & cycling strategy, or active travel strategy, includes horses – unfortunately in the title of respective documents horses do not appear and as a consequence they are too often overlooked and opportunities for inclusion are missed leading to equestrians feeling that they are the ‘Cinderella’ user group – forgotten and unfairly discriminated against. [PLUS MORE]

CPRE Somerset: I was interested to read about the Walking & Cycling Manifesto for Somerset and would love to see a copy when it is ready. If CPRE Somerset can do anything to help promote this and support your campaign, please do let me know.

Email 8 June: However, my main, over-arching comment would be to change the tone of voice of the manifesto, if possible. At present, it could come across as rather antagonistic and a bit grumpy! I think that now, more than ever, we have a great opportunity to look again at ways to make walking and cycling more appealing, safer and accessible to all and the whole manifesto should be presented under this banner. If you were to mention the results (when they are available) of the SurveyMonkey questionnaire (on your TACC Facebook page) and the fact that more funding will be available from central government due to Covid-19, then it looks fresh, topical and politically positive.

Email 9 June: I mentioned this to my Trustees last week and they are happy to put CPRE’s name to it, in principle

The Trails Trust: As a keen green traveller on foot, wheel and horse, whilst wholeheartedly endorsing this action plan can I please beg you not to forget horse riders and carriage drivers of whom there are many thousands in Somerset county alone...We all share thousands of miles of rights of way, unclassified county roads, both surfaced and surfaced and most of the NCN network. Now is absolutely the time to develop green active travel links between communities for everyone.

Please can we not reinvent the wheel but build on what we already have? We will proceed much further faster if we do that.

Later comment in telephone call: 95% of cyclists are male, 95% of horse riders female. This needs to be taken into account.

Cheddon Fitzpain and Carhampton: ‘support in principle the ideas of ...the Manifesto’

Godney Parish councillor: Any new initiative to promote cycling should include the need for cyclists to understand that a rural area is not a playground and that they need to behave in a responsible way to themselves, other road users and those who live alongside these roads.

Keinton Mandeville PC: we were disappointed by the lack of mention of the need to enhance public transport, for many reasons but not least

since this would facilitate a more positive and confident attitude regarding increasing the cycling and walking by the population and would, simultaneously, enhance road safety for those participants. We were also surprised to see no mention of priority routing and exclusion areas for truck through traffic. The experience of our own village in this respect is that the mounting use of our main street by quarry lorries as a rat run has rendered it extremely frightening for cyclists.

St Cuthbert (Out) PC: I can tell you that several Cllrs felt that they could not comment sensibly on the draft as the manifesto needs to be framed within an integrated travel plan and policy that has been properly thought through with pros and cons, risk management (horses, walkers and cyclists make a dangerous mix - each method of travel has its own set of requirements), flow, capacity assessments, public buy-in and suitable legislation.

Bruton TC transport committee: The tone needs to change substantially otherwise people's backs will be put up. Not all councillors were in favour of the 40 mph limit on rural roads. We need to mention e-bikes, and could there also be something about the promotional side of encouraging cycling: better bike racks, on-route charging points at cafes etc.

Ansford PC: I am pleased to confirm that Ansford Parish Council council agrees to support the resultant consensus manifesto and actively encourage this policy even if it requires spending some money to get all the new estates interlinked by cycle ways and footpaths and some safer routes for bikes with dedicated lanes in surrounding main roads linking into the Sustrans network.

Henstridge PC: generally the Parish Council supports the draft manifesto. *(individual councillor):* There seems to be a lot in this that aligns with our wishes.

Cranmore councillor: heartily endorse the policy paper giving more priority to use of footpaths and cycle paths.... The major blights on our rural existence are speeding traffic, dangerous roads and inadequate alternatives to car.

Trudoxhill PC: It was agreed unanimously to support your manifesto.

Compton Dundon PC: My Parish Council reviewed the manifesto at the last meeting. They had no comments to add, but asked me to email you to give you their support for the manifesto.

North Curry PC: I'm writing to convey to you North Curry Parish Council's unanimous support for the Cycling and Walking Manifesto.

Porlock PC: at this point, [councillors] are not able to offer undivided support for this initiative. However, would it be possible for you to provide a copy of the final form of the document for review in order to confirm their undivided support.

Wellington TC: Some elements of the manifesto are not believed to be achievable, however the Council supports the overall aims and is happy to endorse it generally without necessarily agreeing with all of the detail.

Old Cleeve PC: As the manifesto currently stands, Old Cleeve Parish Council would not be able to support it, but do support efforts to get SCC to do more - particularly in rural areas.

Compton Bishop PC: Thanks again James and to all the other campaigners that have instigated the Cycling and Walking Manifesto for Somerset.

Langford Budville and Runnington PC: broadly support the updated Cycling and Walking Manifesto

Chair, Axbridge Action Group: I think this manifesto is fantastic.

Fivehead PC: council has not had the opportunity to discuss. Individual views: 'I would support this in principle'; 'I agree with all the proposals'

Stoke St Gregory PC: There was a good deal of sympathy for the intention behind [the manifesto], but the collective conclusion was that we could not endorse it as it stood... though we did not go through the document in detail, there was quite a lot that other councillors choked on, and the general feeling was that while change was certainly needed, it would have to be more gradual to be effective.

Queen Camel PC: the Council approve[d] the draft Manifesto and supports the resultant consensus manifesto

Cotford St Luke PC: Wearing another hat, that of parish councillor in Cotford St Luke, I am pleased to respond on behalf of the parish council to the manifesto. In essence, we are keen to support the call for more walking and cycling routes, and better connectivity between and within communities.

Taunton Transition Town: support.

Transition Town Wellington: support. 'I'm all in favour of Mike's cycle and walk manifesto for SCC.' 'This looks fantastic! I think that we should support it in any way that we can.' (individual members).

Kingston St Mary PC: Unfortunately the KSM Parish Council is currently unable to support a consensus manifesto based on all the comments received from local council, as requested in Simon Pritchard's email dated 28th May. As you will appreciate the KSM-PC would need to

read, review, discuss and vote on a consensus manifesto at a scheduled Parish Council Meeting before being able to give its support.

Ilminster TC: unable to support as a council as there was considerable disagreement between members, particularly around the 40 mph proposals. An individual councillor has written 'In summary and in my opinion, it is the right direction and we should support any initiative that gets people out of cars and exercising more.'

Somerset Local Access Forum: We would be particularly keen and would recommend in this strategy that you:

1. Include other vulnerable road users, those with a disability and equestrians.
2. We also recommend that the grant be spent on improvements and new links using the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. This document is a statutory document and can be added to and reviewed as necessary.
3. We are very keen that the County Council oversee all improvements to the rights of way network and would encourage partnership working with all other councils, landowners and managers.

Wiveliscombe TC: Wiveliscombe Town Council supports signing the manifesto to ask for improved cycling and walking routes.

Langport TC: Langport Town Council would very much like to support the Draft Cycling and Walking Manifesto for Somerset.

Comeytrowe PC: Any investment made must be additional money and not result in a lessening of the substantial investment Taunton desperately needs for its dire road network. The town's growth over recent decades has not been matched by a realistic plan for roads infrastructure improvement on the scale needed to cater for its expansion. Any strategic plan for movement around the town must not be compromised or be overly reliant on an overly optimistic cycling solution that will do nothing to materially address Taunton's roads improvement deficit. Cycling may be a preserve of healthy exercise for some but the town has a well-defined demographic profile that does not have cycling as realistic means of mobility, - and even for those who can cycle it is largely a fair-weather exercise and the extent of the UK's adverse weather pattern has to be recognised. The town also has needs of commercial access and delivery. Taunton's planning has, for too long, been based simply on piece meal urban extension without any reference or adherence to a credible roads and traffic strategic plan, and this has resulted in a situation that cannot be reconciled or mitigation to any sensible degree by cycling. So, by all means we welcome any 'extra' money from Government for cycling access improvement BUT it must not be at the expense of or compromise the real financial investment and planning commitment to road improvement and vehicular access across all parts of the town.

Bishops Hull PC: Members do not agree with the majority of the document but, Members agree with point 6. Other comment: If cycle routes are provided then cycles should use them and not the other parts of the highway.

Cyclists do not use the current provisions I fail to see why there should be more just so cyclists have the option and in doing so penalising motorists who contribute to the upkeep via taxation. We are a rural county where the option to use a motor vehicle is vital to many elderly,

vulnerable and disabled people.

During my Insurance Career I spent a number of years processing RTA claims. Even prior to cycling becoming as popular as it is today , I dealt with numerous claims where a cyclist was the sole cause of the accident including some which sadly resulted in the death of either the motorist or his/her passenger. I cannot recollect any such claims where the cyclist was duly prosecuted. Consequently I strongly believe that it should be compulsory for all cyclists to be fully insured.