

GETTING AROUND SWANSEA

Hosted in the arts wing of the Swansea Grand Theatre, this event connected with others across the county to share perspectives and ideas for community-led transport solutions, and to discuss the issues and challenges that communities are facing, and to explore solutions and ideas to make things better.

EVENT OVERVIEW

The Getting Around Swansea project involves a programme of activities to strengthen sustainable transport and active travel in Swansea, with a focus on what communities can do for themselves.

In order to develop the themes covered in this event, hyperlocal community discussions were held across 6 wards in Swansea to consult community members and assessment of community transport and travel needs and a review of existing provision.

The event covered in this report was co-created as a result of these consultations with members and colleagues in these communities. There is a small funding pot to provide grants to support good ideas that emerge from these discussions.

EVENT AIMS

- *Raise awareness of the challenges surrounding transport;*
- *Present findings from focus groups and community engagement activities;*
- *Inspire people with ideas and examples from elsewhere and explore if they could work here;*
- *Hear from groups that have been successful in securing funding for pilot projects;*
- *Connect people and provide an opportunity for groups to form around ideas, challenges, local places and opportunities;*
- *Co-create the beginnings of a “roadmap and action plan” developed as part of this project.*

The planning for this project involved a colleagues from a range of organisations, including:

- 4theRegion CIC
- Swansea Environmental Forum
- Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS)

This project is supported by Swansea Council with funding from UK Government Community Renewal Funding.



COMMUNITY LED TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS

FORMAT OF THE EVENT

The event design and choreography was managed by 4theRegion, who have undertaken specialist training in the facilitation of large group discussions. The intention was to create a highly interactive event, where attendees could share a diverse mix of opinions, challenges and ideas surrounding transport in Swansea.

MORNING SESSION - CHALLENGES AND IDEAS

- Question 1 - What challenges do you think need to be addressed?
- Question 2 - What would make things better for you or your community?
- Question 3 - Pick one or two ideas and discuss HOW they might work.

AFTERNOON SESSION - THEMED DISCUSSIONS

The afternoon session focussed on discussion around key “opportunity areas”, which were themes that arose from previous hyperlocal discussions around Swansea.

Participants had the opportunity to choose any two themes, proposed as “How might we...” questions, in order to frame topics for discussion and solutions that could arise from them. These conversations were facilitated by volunteers in order to collect notes of everything that was shared. Attendees were also encouraged to write their thoughts and ideas onto notes, which were collected, organised into themes and compiled into this event report.

The themes that were set are as follows:

<i>How might we enable more people to use bikes, e-bikes and cycles?</i>
<i>How might we improve access to information about all forms of transport?</i>
<i>How might we make more community shared cars or car clubs happen?</i>
<i>How might we set up and support more community transport?</i>
<i>How might we help people get home after an evening out?</i>
<i>How might we encourage more people to volunteer with community transport schemes?</i>
<i>How might we get public transport providers to improve their services for everyone?</i>



What challenges do you think need to be addressed?

Accessibility

- *Signage should be accessible and available in an Easy Read format and larger fonts.*
- *People in rural areas are isolated from transport networks.*
- *Pavement quality needs improvement. Needs to allow wheelchair access.*
- *Getting to bus stops can be a long journey and a barrier to elderly and disabled people.*
- *Services don't ask what disabled people need to improve their travelling experience.*
- *Bus drivers don't always tell people to collapse their buggies so wheelchair users can get on.*
- *Sometimes student buses are the only service available, which can be intimidating for some.*
- *No seating in bus shelters or safe waiting spaces. Some locations have no shelter.*
- *People park in bus bays or block buses from stopping. Some people may miss their bus.*
- *Affordability of public transport is a barrier for some.*
- *Asylum seekers are hugely marginalised and can't always access healthcare appointments due to cost and lack of community transport.*

Frequency & Availability

- *Lack of services on Sundays and evenings. No services in some areas.*
- *The lack of evening transport can be dangerous for people.*
- *No services or very infrequently run services in rural areas.*
- *Some users are unable to get to events, job interviews, etc due to poor services.*
- *You need to leave plenty of time and plan around journeys.*
- *Lateness of buses and long journeys are a struggle for employees.*

Cycles and e-Bikes

- *Cycles can be expensive to buy.*
- *Cycling on roads in Swansea can be narrow and limiting.*
- *Dangerous roads for cyclists; No commuter lanes.*
- *Santander bikes are only available in the city centre.*
- *Lack of access to e-bikes and routes to use them.*

Transport Schemes

- *Limited cars and volunteers can be a barrier to using these services.*
- *Community transport is not always widely advertised. People don't realise it's available.*
- *There is a lack of ambition in the community transport sector.*

Technology & Information

- *Bus shelters/stops often have either no timetable information, or it's outdated.*
- *Transport apps can be unreliable, full of glitches and hard to navigate.*
- *Transport apps are a barrier for elderly people and those who don't use smartphones.*
- *Provide more options for people who don't use or don't have access to the internet.*
- *There's no dedicated place where all information is collated, both online and offline.*
- *The screens at Swansea bus station are poorly maintained: Screens change too quickly, face technical issues or don't display full service routes.*

Transport Operators

- *There seems to be a lack of communication between the council and transport operators.*
- *Lack of coordination between bus operators.*
- *No municipal bus company.*
- *Transport operators don't always respond to service users or requests.*
- *Drivers can be unhelpful, unfriendly and rude.*
- *Bus drivers don't always give people time to sit down.*



What would make things better for you or your community?

Transport Operators

- *Integrated transport and ticketing. Cross working bus and train tickets available to more people.*
- *Improved connections between bus and rail.*
- *Improved bus times, services to be more linked up together.*
- *More coordination between transport operators.*
- *Discounted tickets to local amenities, such as shops, libraries, etc.*
- *Email booking for tickets.*
- *Recognition of young carers ID cards on all bus services.*
- *Restore the X10 bus service from Swansea to Cardiff.*
- *Higher charges for car parking to fund public transport.*
- *Integrate the Fleccsi Bus service in Swansea and surrounding areas.*
- *Shuttle service and bus booking should be more widely available.*
- *Free buses and trains on the weekends.*
- *Free transport for asylum seekers should be more widely available.*
- *More protection against anti-social behaviour on public transport.*
- *24/7 public transport services.*

Infrastructure & Access

- *Regular pavement and road repairs.*
- *More pavements and green spaces.*
- *Safer cycle routes*
- *Better infrastructure for walking, cycling and public transport.*
- *Good parking outside of the city for park and ride.*
- *Levy on parking and driving to more people will use the buses.*
- *Localised circular routes of key areas with linkages to connecting areas.*
- *Improve the barrier to accessing EVs - price, EV points, production.*

Car Sharing & Community Transport

- *More pavements and green spaces.*
- *Make car sharing more accessible and easier.*
- *Better insurance for car share schemes.*
- *Hyperlocal electric car share scheme hub for cars, people can join the club and membership costs go towards the rent, car maintenance, mileage, and the insurer.*
- *More focus on car share schemes to improve barriers to access.*
- *Encourage parents to car share when on school routes.*
- *Link up EV with community transport groups.*
- *Community transport that serves people outside of 9-5 hours, e.g. for events, general use, nights out.*
- *Funding support to allow community members to volunteer as drivers.*

Cycling & E-bikes

- *E-bike hubs in hyper local communities.*
- *Electric cargo bikes for businesses.*
- *Support and education for people to feel confident to try new ways of travelling, like cycling.*

Information & Timetables

- *Label bus stops clearly with up to date information.*
- *Upgrade bus stops with live timetable information, detailing delays and cancellations.*
- *Direct routes to help neurodiverse people and people with learning disabilities.*
- *Telephone information service.*
- *Improved access to transport information: Braille, voiceover, easy-read, etc.*
- *People that can help commuters and offer information more available in bus stations.*
- *A county wide information centre, a "one-stop shop" for all transport information, leisure activities, on-going events, etc.*
- *Information or training workshops on how to catch a bus, how tickets work, etc.*

Community Engagement

- *More support for community engagement.*
- *Community engagement should include people higher up in transport businesses.*
- *Hyper local options for accessing community groups & activities.*
- *Keep young people with learning disabilities (autism, etc.) in mind as they're often forgotten.*
- *Way for grass roots to feed up to management to affect change - listen to community voices.*
- *Shared responsibility in community councils with representation of different genders and disabilities.*
- *More mentoring schemes to teach people how it's done.*
- *Step by step guide for community councils to set up transport schemes.*



How might we...

Enable more people to use bikes, e-bikes and cycles?

- *Information about e-bikes; Types, range of charge, etc.*
- *[Rad Power Bikes](#): Trying to get into the UK market, would they sponsor, supply cheap?*
- *More e-bike charging points.*
- *Find or persuade businesses to locate cycle storage and their natural surveillance. (Safer ways to store cycles)*
- *More bike stands with surveillance. Good bikes are valuable.*
- *Manned car park for cycles.*
- *Cycle to work days, advice for employees, access to showers at work.*
- *Coastal Housing as a key stakeholder in the existing e-bike scheme.*
- *Provided a lot of in-kind support to set scheme up, but didn't promote scheme to tenants. Would they support replication around Swansea?*
- *Pobl wants to set up a cargo bike scheme: Feasibility of different bike options.*
- *[The Bike Lock \(Cardiff\)](#) is coming to Swansea*
- *Offers secure bike storage, showers, co-working spaces, coffee, changing facilities and acts as an Active Travel info hub.*
- *Membership schemes and co-operative schemes.*
- *A Central Cycle Hub in town: Cafe, bike storage and repair station.*
- *Supermarkets could provide secure parking bays for cycles, especially cargo-cycles.*
- *Commuter lanes dedicated to cyclists.*
- *Drivers don't know about the new Highway Code.*
- *A culture shift is needed in a society where the car is king.*

Improve access to information about all forms of transport?

- *A resource hub/coordination centre to provide information and build skills for all needs.*
- *Information in an easy read format. 10-20 words, size 20+ font and simple wording.*
- *Use community venues, bingo halls, libraries to share information.*
- *Leaflets in libraries and train librarians to be in charge of information.*
- *Verbal communication of information.*
- *Talk to service users before making changes.*
- *Use community boards in areas with a lot of footfall. Information to be Easy Read with clear information.*
- *Information in the Quadrant and train station should be more localised.*
- *Support and coordinate the Local Area Coordinators(LACs) to share information.*
- *Local community boards to be kept up to date by LACs.*
- *Transport information needs to be kept up to date across all platforms and apps.*
- *Telephone numbers in bus shelters*
- *Different transport operators need to collaborate and share timetable information.*
- *Timetables need to be in new bus shelters: It's common for new shelters to not include it.*

Make more community shared cars or car clubs happen?

- *Identify car share schemes: Hiyacar.co.uk, CoWheels, TripTo*
- *Car share schemes could team up;*
- *Provide software/hardware systems.*
- *Closed system after or on website for anyone to use.*
- *Vet drivers before using car share schemes.*
- *Make insurance more accessible when using car sharing schemes.*
- *Car shares are good systems but insurance costs are an extortionate barrier. TRADEX is the only c/o that will insure in the UK.*
- *Set the cost of car sharing and Hiyacar can take a cut.*
- *Electric charging points in streets.*
- *Welsh Government to lobby insurance % to make it cheaper.*
- *Can asylum seekers and refugees have driving licences? Could they use shared cars?*

Set up and support more community transport?

- *Identify what already exists, types of services and vehicles.*
- *Identify needs and conduct surveys.*
- *Get expert advice from existing schemes.*
- *More volunteers and paid drivers. Provide incentives.*
- *Promote to users and drivers.*
- *Secure resourcing and funding.*
- *Third party provider could run the scheme.*
- *Varied and mixed use: Different times to make full use of vehicles.*

Help people get home after an evening out?

- *There is an opportunity for someone to start up a night time bus service.*
- *Could community transport help with this?*
- *Example: Leeds University [offer a night minibus service for £1](#).*
- *Encourage bus companies to do a regular, safe circular route.*
- *Larger buses.*
- *Bus companies need to wake up to the commercial opportunities.*

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- *Bus companies have buses at events & venues with the name of where they're going in the window. When it's full, it leaves.*
- *Regular communication to the transport providers.*
- *Registration point that people could call to say where they need to go.*
- *Free shuttle service paid for by the venues to key points.*
- *Venues could offer a 'matching' scheme.*
- *A pick up point at the Swansea Arena.*
- *Talk to taxis about accessibility.*

Help people get home after an evening out?

- *Secure volunteer funding pots.*
- *Paid volunteered hours.*
- *Positive messaging and promotion via word of mouth.*
- *Structure for management of volunteers.*
- *Benefits for volunteers.*
- *DBS Structure for volunteers.*
- *Probation services.*
- *Free training.*

Get public transport providers to improve their services for everyone?

- *Could we produce a charter or manifesto of demands and send it to operators?*
- *Create more transport options, such as trams, waterways, cable cars.*
- *Buses that access Bay Field from Swansea free. Free services could be for other built up areas like Morriston.*
- *Implement an Oyster Card system payment and top up anytime. Organisations could top it up for people who need to access a service.*
- *Need to improve bus routes, does every bus need to stop in Swansea?*
- *Improve bus times and routes. Some routes such as Landore to Morriston can take the same time as Swansea to Cardiff when taking wait times into account.*
- *Buses need to run in the evening.*
- *Improve the Gower College buses: They are late and students get to class late.*
- *Implement the Fflecsi bus service in Swansea.*
- *Create a text-a-bus service which is accessible to all.*
- *Bus schedules need to be updated and more readily available on the app.*
- *Make the app available in more languages.*
- *Transport providers should provide easy-read letters and timetables.*
- *Large screens with makaton/BSL information on board.*
- *Improve the screens in the Quadrant by slowing down how quickly the screens change.*
- *Bus stops all need to be marked with tables into possible seats.*
- *Create a 'Confident Traveller' scheme for bus users to help people who are unsure on how to use buses and plan their journeys.*
- *Bus drivers need training for disabilities and understanding language barriers.*
- *Make training mandatory for inclusivity awareness, work with organisations that are experts in this area.*
- *The monthly paper ticket can easily be lost and ink disappears quickly making it unusable. Find a better solution for this.*
- *Small old buses need updating. Can they fund new ones?*
- *Are buses too small because the roads are too narrow?*
- *Provide double deckers on busy routes.*
- *Clean and tidy buses with bins.*
- *Fares are too high, driver wages are too low. There's not enough bus drivers and a lack of engineers to maintain buses.*