

Welsh Government pushes the pace on walking and cycling

First Minister Carwyn Jones will meet with cyclists at Cardiff's bike café today (Thursday 3 May 2018) to talk with them about the Welsh Government's £60 million investment in Active Travel.

Earlier this week, the Welsh Government announced it is investing £60 million over the next three years to create new active travel routes across Wales, connecting people's homes to schools, jobs and their local community.

This is the largest ever funding boost for active travel schemes in Wales and marks a step change in the Government's approach to Active Travel. The funding – which is the equivalent of an extra £20 per head of the Welsh population – will enable the building of major, transformative infrastructure projects, which Wales has not seen in almost a decade.

The First Minister will discuss what local cyclists would like to see from this major funding announcement – from more cycle lanes, bike hire schemes and parking facilities to cycle super highways.

The First Minister said:

“Active Travel is a phrase which not everyone will recognise, but is actually part of many people's daily routines – 61% of adults walk at least once a week and 42% of primary school children walk to school each day.

“However, only 5% of adults cycle at least once a week, while just 1% of children typically cycle to primary school. I want to see these levels rise significantly over the next few years, and so we need the infrastructure to support this.

“This funding – £60 million over the next three years – signals a step change in the Welsh Government's approach to Active Travel. Funding levels for walking and cycling has fluctuated year to year, but this is a clear commitment to prioritise this work.

“Getting more people to walk or cycle to work, school, or when popping to the shop for a pint of milk is a really straightforward action which has very real benefits. Building physical activity into our everyday lives improves our health, as well as reducing the traffic on our roads, decreasing air pollution and congestion.

“Creating footbridges, footpaths and cycle paths also makes our communities more connected and, improves access to education, jobs and services, while reducing travel costs.

“I am looking forward to meeting with local cyclists to hear first-

hand how they would like this £60 million to be spent. Different areas of Wales present very different travel challenges, and their own experiences of cycling around Wales will be invaluable as we plan our future Active Travel projects.”

National Director for Sustrans Cymru, Steve Brooks, said:

“This announcement is good news for the economy, the environment and public health.

“We know that congestion is hurting Welsh business, polluting our air and contributing to ill-health.

“This investment is a massive step forward that will help more people leave their cars at home and make short journeys on foot or by bike.”