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# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Active Travel– Annual Report 2016/17** |
| **DATE** | **18 October 2017** |
| **BY** | **Rebecca Evans, Minister for Social Services and Public Health** |

Today I am publishing the Active Travel Annual Report 2016/17, which provides an update on progress with the implementation of the Act and the Action Plan published in February 2016.

2016/17 has been an important year for the implementation of the Act. It saw the approval of the first set of Existing Routes Maps for all of the 142 towns and cities across Wales that are ‘designated localities’ under the Act. These provide the real starting point for the development of high standard walking and cycling infrastructure in Wales. The year also saw the start of work on the plans for integrated networks in each of these places. The resulting Integrated Network Maps will set out the plans local authorities will be working to complete over the coming years, including longer term aspirations for active travel routes.

It is essential that local authorities not only engage with people who already make walking and cycling journeys, but look for effective ways to involve people who currently do not walk or cycle regularly to get around. For this reason, I previously extended the deadline for submission of these maps for all authorities to 3 November 2017 to allow for meaningful consultation and engagement unaffected by restrictions linked to the timing of this year’s local government elections.

My officials have worked with local authorities and partners to bring the legislation to life, by providing advice on key stages and enabling exchange of experience during this first time that we are implementing this worldwide unique legislation.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) and its well-being goals now shape our and other public sector bodies’ priorities. Encouraging Active Travel contributes to all of the seven well-being goals, and presents huge opportunities, both at national and at local level. We explored how this is best translated into practice at our successful conference earlier this year.

Across departments we have been seeking ways of embedding active travel in our policies, planning and programmes to get people walking and cycling. We have already strengthened our planning policy and guidance and we are building it into how we appraise capital projects. We have continued to invest substantial amounts in active travel infrastructure; both as grants for local projects and on our own network, including the £5m cycle track constructed as part of the new Eastern Bay Link road.

Our ambitious Active Journeys programme has been making a real difference in the schools taking part with many more children choosing to walk, scoot and cycle to school. To complement Active Journeys, we have commissioned a Walk to School toolkit that all schools and the wider community can use to systematically look at walking routes to school and identify how they can be improved to remove barriers

As we have yet to complete the first full implementation cycle, the Active Travel Act has not yet been able to have a measurable impact on levels of walking and cycling. We are determined to reverse broader global trends of declining physical activity and in particular, encourage and enable people in Wales to make many more everyday journeys by walking and cycling.

This resolve is evident in our national strategy “Prosperity for All” which commits to deliver an integrated public transport network and combine different types of transport with walking and cycling. Improving infrastructure for active travel will enable people to adopt more active lifestyles and increase physical activity in their everyday lives.

We will work even harder across the breadth of Government, with local authorities and other partners to get children and adults across Wales more active by making it the easy, fun and natural choice to walk and cycle for daily journeys.

The report can be accessed here <https://beta.gov.wales/active-travel-annual-report-2017>.