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Lee Waters MS
Deputy Minister for Climate Change
Welsh Government
5th Floor
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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28 February 2024

Sent via email to: correspondence.lee.waters@gov.wales

Dear Lee,

Walk, Wheel and Thrive: Well-being and the National Cycle Network in Wales

I am writing to share with you our latest report, *Walk, Wheel and Thrive*, and to request a meeting to discuss the report's findings and recommendations.

The report sets out the contribution of the National Cycle Network against all seven of Wales' well-being goals, and highlights the urgent action needed to protect this important asset for future generations.

Looking at its positive contribution, for example, we know that almost 60% of Wales' population lives within a mile of the Network, and it runs through all 22 of our local authorities. It has numerous benefits for people's lives, among them health and well-being benefits, and financial benefits. 83% of its users say that it improves their overall satisfaction with life. Across the UK, physical activity on the Network is estimated to prevent nearly 600,000 sick days, and its users are estimated to benefit local businesses by £1.7 billion each year.

However, to preserve the Network and to amplify its social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits, it must be supported. For example, the impact of extreme weather is leading to significant issues, and several routes across Wales are shut down completely. Flooding and landslips are becoming very common and can happen very quickly, severing communities for long periods of time with high repair costs.

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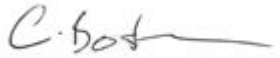
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We welcome the ongoing support for the Network from the Welsh Government. As you will be aware, until 2020, there was no specific public funding for the Network in Wales, and this has now risen to £680,000 per year. This has allowed us to work with local authorities to upgrade parts of the Network that are in poor repair or inaccessible.

We are also working with the Cross Party Group on the Active Travel Act to secure a debate in the Senedd chamber, with a motion aligned to the findings of the paper, where the Welsh Government may decide to respond.

I would be grateful for an opportunity to meet to discuss the findings of the paper and the challenges facing the network, in advance of any debate.

Yours sincerely,



Christine Boston

Director, Sustrans Cymru

c.c. Sam Hadley, Welsh Government Special Advisor

Attached: *Walk, Wheel and Thrive: Well-being and the National Cycle Network in Wales*

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