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Attendees:** AN (Chair), BJ, JW, JB, DK, JJ, GA, JA, MG, MW, CR, LW, TR, MB, AD (minutes).

1. **Apologies / Introductions**

No apologies. MB and TR were welcomed into the group. Discussion about how best to welcome new topic group members. MB said she was trying to understand what WCA can get involved in.

1. **WCA News / Upcoming Events** – May elections are the main focus at the moment. Some towns are holding hustings for the candidates (RWB, Corsham, BoA etc.) There will be a WCA meeting in which local party leaders will be invited.
2. **General - Documents
a) Draft Table of Tasks**This live document has been circulated via a google link. Members have edit permission and had started adding new tasks and/or offers to take on tasks.  **Please continue to review/edit/add**

**Buses Task -** Discussion on how to move this forward. Agreed services need to be reinvigorated and reimagined for a fit for purpose integrated transport system. Money seems to just go on subsidising services, not new infrastructure. Council were planning to extend real time information services but this was cancelled after too long getting underway. Bus services are in collapse because of Covid – how to get people back using buses post-pandemic when they are more wedded to cars than ever?

A raft of government investment has been recently announced, open to applications, so important to engage urgently, and impress need for more integrated systems that work to connect up towns and rural areas effectively.

Salisbury – JWa says buses are now really good. An app reports live timings, so much more convenient. Villages are a difficult issue, but could start by rolling out same tech for larger conurbations – e.g. Chippenham.

JWi offered to try to take forward, and others volunteered to help. See Rail. **Action: JWi (& Others)**

**b) Local Plan Review Response**A submission was made on Transport, forming part of the overall WCA response to the LPR consultation. This was based on MW’s initial draft circulated at the last meeting, added to by AN.

Discussion - Local Transport Plan used to be reviewed every 5 years, but has now not been since 2012 (LTP3) – where is LTP4? Council said this would shadow the LPR.

Also, LTP 3 was never completed - Walking Strategy was never produced. Cycle maps were produced for towns but little was invested and few routes were completed. We could publish scorecards on each of the 12 towns.

LWCIP (Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan) is also supposed to have been produced by now.

1. **New Topic – Rail**The Swindon and Wilts LEP commissioned rail strategy Systra wrote has not been adopted and was good. Wilts Council have ‘authored’ it/paid the consultants, so need to back it (Transport Leader BW says it won’t be looked at for a couple of years – too late!).
Proposals included new/revived stations at Corsham, Porton, Wilton, Devizes.
Corsham was seen to be most beneficial (scored 21/30 in Atkins report, with highest at 22/30). MB says Chippenham Station brings a lot of extra traffic into town which may be eased by Corsham. The town council have written a letter of support. Corsham has been long debated and in the past concerns raised about slowing of the Bristol – London line. But Corsham has become much more feasible with electrification which has improved acceleration and deceleration.

Devizes are conducting feasibility study, with support of MP Danny Kruger. Existing line here, out of town, but P&R bus and cycle paths planned to service it, aim is for 2025 opening.
BW is supporting Cllr Church (Wilton) despite Wilton scoring 5th from last (12/30). Wilton would rule out Porton, but Porton received a much higher rating. Wilton would effectively be a Park & Ride.

Comes back to need for overall strategy (LTP 4) based on where people move and why. Some of the group will try to get up to speed on rail and feed back to Wilts Council.

Separate Bus / Rail sub-groups or combined? Agreed an initial meeting of a ‘Public Transport group’

JWi, GA, MB, BJ, MW, MG, TR, AN, JJ all offered to be involved in sub-group initial meeting on 8th April at 5pm. Email invite to be sent round. **Action: AD**

1. **Cycling**

**Green Paper on On-road and Off-road cycling vision for Wiltshire** – AN still finalising this. **Action: AN**

**a. Cycling Information / Updates
Meeting with Parvis Khansari** – MW reported that Salisbury already have a dialogue via Cycle Liaison panel, and City Council may take up. RWB are also talking to Council with their developed plan. Focus for the meeting on garnering support for meaningful strategy and action to fund and implement across Wilts. **Action: AN (& others for meeting)**

**b. Popup Cycle Lane Consultation & Aftermath**

2 of the Salisbury routes (Brown & Exeter Street) and 1 Chippenham (A420 Bristol Rd) have been removed. AN wrote to Parvis Khansari to ask for a delay in outright removal and to trial with all but a few lane marking bollards removed. PK responded that it was felt that this arrangement would not be safe/compliant with LTN 1/20 guidance, but bollards are more of a hazard to all road users than a safeguard. Other authorities have worked to get useable lanes. Some use lower bollards, or none.

The consultation was subject to bias as mainly motorists replied. AN used a national attitudes survey to re-weight the Wiltshire responses, resulting in a majority in favour of every scheme. AN also received the text of all the consultation responses, in case anyone wants to analyse them.

The point of the exercise shouldn’t have been to justify removal at this early stage.

The routes involved were not ideally designed but better than nothing. A young cyclist from Salisbury had written this blog about his positive experience of using the two removed lanes as a newer cyclist: <https://danielkwright.com/my-thoughts-as-a-new-cyclist-in-salisbury/>

**c. E-Bikes & Cargo Bikes –** Could Wilts invest in e-cargo bikes for grounds workers / tree planting? - opportunity to model to members of public. There is £100K available and shouldn’t just be spent on a few EVs. Discussion on wide uses of cargo bikes/rickshaws (there is a related collection of images on the Cycling page of the website). Permit holders can carry a passenger (e.g. elderly relative to shops). LW says can see a hire scheme working in BoA. Salisbury initiative [www.greensladefish.co.uk](http://www.greensladefish.co.uk) will deliver e-cargo bikes in the area.
AN still working on list of E-bike retailers but has contacted Spindles (Corsham) to suggest partnering on some ideas (getting Councillors trialling, e-bike training etc) **Action: AN**

**E-Scooters –** are being trialled in Bristol and Bath, and seem popular.
Need to list out what we want to promote and ideas on how.

**d. Overall roadmap (‘Cycle Path’) to 2030 for Wiltshire**DK has supplied the presentation showing case for and proposed routes identified by EcoRWB’s cycling group, and this is uploaded to the Cycling page on WCA website, as a guide for other groups to follow. This RWB ‘blueprint’ will be presented for a second time to Wilts Council soon, with narrowing objectives and creating match-funding in mind at this stage. It needs more feasibility-cost-design detail and backing to make it a reality.

AN is talking to Sustrans next week about off-road links. Discussion – as a horse rider herself, MG suggests resurfaced bridleways would be good for cycling, but may be contentious / is it legal? **[Post-meeting note: cycling is legal on bridleways - AN]** All kinds of opportunities: paths along canals and railways, power line cut throughs in woodland, roman roads, etc. AN to prepare paper for next meeting on what off-road network should include. **Action: AN**

DK will try to co-ordinate the creation of an overall Wiltshire map, tying together and mapping existing identified routes. Others to input/ help map (CS, JJ, JB). Idea to be prepared for and able to actively seek available funding for suitable chunks of planned network which correspond to local need. Any others who want to help please email in! **Action: DK (with help)**

Discussion – at some point specialist cycling consultants (Atkins/Sustrans) are likely to be deployed to help justify funding as a community benefit. Cycle investment can have a BCR (benefit vs. cost ratio) of 8, roads generally 1-2.

1. **a. Roads Information / Updates
A303 Stonehenge campaign** is appealing for help for their legal challenge Crowdfunder, here: [www.crowdjustice.com/case/save-stonehenge-world-heritage-site/](http://www.crowdjustice.com/case/save-stonehenge-world-heritage-site/), as costs have recently risen from £60 - £80K.

**Yarnbrook to West Acton relief road** – WC haven’t replied yet to questions raised, but for now can’t proceed due to bat conservation**. [Post-meeting note: Wiltshire Council lost KMcC’s November questions for Council or Cabinet, but have now been re-sent them].**

**Melksham bypass** – Independent Councillor Jon Hubbard is for scheme: ‘people of Melksham want the road’.

**Bath CAZ (Clean Air Zone) –** Lots of anger in press etc as scheme gets underway. HGVs re-routed. Phillip Whitehead has publicly objected. Should get another in place for Wilts and reap benefits!
**Salisbury** – Some candidates are leading campaigns with support for a bypass. Very divisive issue.

 **b. Chippenham HIF funded Road (‘Future Chippenham’)**

Chippenham Town Council responded to say don’t support any road in Chippenham and MP now wavering on her initial support.

Badly designed and biased consultation with no option to say no to road, just options for route. Also selective mention of associated housing numbers – MB reported local signs showing potential road routes did not mention housing.
BJ pointed out it’s not too late to object, just email: futurechippenham@wilts.gov.uk with your comments.
Two FOI requests have been put in: AN (for the results) & AD (for methodology design in relation to bias, due 30th March).

**General Discussion 1 - How to make an FOI request**.
For Wiltshire Council visit: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/data-protection-foi-requests](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/data-protection-foi-requests) to check if a request has been made, or email: foi@wiltshire.gov.uk. For other organisations, email them and state that you are making an FOI request and list the information you require. Simple to do in a hurry, but AN happy to discuss with anyone some do’s and don’ts as there are a few pitfalls you can avoid. **[Post-meeting note: another way to do it is through WhatDoTheyKnow – “Make and browse Freedom of Information (FOI) requests” at** [**https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/**](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/) **. Advantages: easy to use, support, the responses are published online so everyone can see them - AN]**

**General Discussion 2 - Local Plan Review Consultation**There were several concurrent consultations, and LPR was highly technical and very time-consuming to do properly – ‘felt like putting in University thesis’. Also need to sift through and check for bias/misinformation/what wasn’t mentioned: e.g. predetermination (e.g. around HIF Bid in Chippenham) and biodiversity threat only raised in relation to rare species. Again, we can still send in comments on the draft plans and they have to be noted.

WCA survey on the accessibility of the recent consultation(s) is [here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CxNZN7I7UmA5esFKSLKW1a-XtytWIz5la9cRnxxsADI/edit?ts=602ae8c8) and responses are still being sought.  **ALL to** **complete if you haven’t already**

DK & JJ put in a complaint/FOI request(?) about the Swindon Borough Council local plan consultation and are awaiting results. MB has been notifying local press. LW also asked **all to consider sending a complaint** about the accessibility of the consultation if you found it difficult. This can then be taken to the Ombudsman, but without letter of complaint it cannot.

1. **Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 22nd April – 7 - 9pm** (with 6.45pm informal start to welcome new members).
2. **AOB**

**Elections** – Can we all please send a short list of main things we want candidates to answer on re Transport ASAP tocontact@wiltshireclimatealliance.org.uk **Action: ALL**

**Searching on Wilts Council website** - AN recommends using set phrase ‘site:Wiltshire.gov.uk’ with search term before or after it for finding specific info within Wilts Council’s website via Google. Often this comes up with the information when the website’s search feature does not.

e.g. site:wiltshire.gov.uk area board

or area board site:wiltshire.gov.uk

N.B. This works in Google but not Ecosia or other search engines, but works in any web browser.