



Ein cyf / Our ref: OC-00402-24

17 May 2024

To Head of Highways
Local Authorities within Wales

By Email

Dear Sir / Madam

Following the legislation to lower the default national speed limit on restricted roads from 30mph to 20mph Welsh Cycling, the governing body of cycling in Wales, have raised concerns that the new 20mph speed limit will have a significant impact on road race cycling in terms of participation and performance. Welsh Cycling currently use escort motorcycles and convoy vehicles to travel a short distance ahead of the race to carry out their duties of ensuring the roads are clear and holding traffic where appropriate in line with their CSAS (Community Safety Accreditation Scheme Powers) training by the police. This procedure implements a "safety bubble" that ensure that races are delivered safely for riders and the public.

Road race cyclists do not routinely exceed 30mph, the average is around 22-25mph. Welsh Cycling are concerned that it would not be practical with a 20mph limit for the above to take place. Either the safety vehicles slow to 20 mph and are overtaken by the cyclists, or the gap between the riders and the race vehicles is increased significantly to ensure that the riders do not catch up with the race vehicles in the 20mph zone – however this could lead to the race vehicles being too far in advance of the cyclists to ensure the safety of the riders and the public. They would be unable to implement the "safety bubble" in the very areas where they would expect a significant risk of encountering traffic that interacts with the race.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

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Welsh Cycling have requested assistance from the Welsh Government to consider possible measures to mitigate the 20mph legislation in relation to cycle racing on the highway.

One way forward would be for Welsh Cycling to request Temporary Traffic Orders to be put in place for each individual event. However, this could involve more than one Highway Authority and would obviously involve a cost to Welsh Cycling as Local Authorities apply a charge for making such orders. Welsh Cycling would have issues with trying to fund such measures especially as some of the races are community based/volunteer groups with no funding for such purposes.

Welsh Government propose that the Welsh Ministers exercise the function of making the order(s) under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 on their behalf, under Section 83(1) of the Government of Wales Act 2006. This would incur no costs for either Welsh Cycling or Local Authorities.

Section 83(1) specifically enables arrangements to be made between the Welsh Ministers and a local authority for any functions of one of them to be exercised by the other. We anticipate that such arrangements would be recorded by an exchange of correspondence between the Welsh Government and each local authority.

The orders would suspend the speed limit for restricted roads during the short time period of the event and only exempted vehicles would be allowed to exceed 20mph but would not be allowed to exceed 30mph.

This proposal could also be implemented for other major events such as the Tour of Britain and the Women's Tour of Britain.

This issue has previously been discussed with all Local Authority highways staff at meetings to discuss the implementation of the 20mph legislation, but we would appreciate confirmation of each Authority's views.

I would be grateful if you could respond with your views within 14 days of receipt of this correspondence. If no response is received then it is assumed you have no objection to the proposal.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Day

Pennaeth Gweithrediadau / Head of Operations

Is-adran y Rhwydwaith Ffyrdd Strategol / Strategic Road Network Division

Cysylltedd Trafnidiaeth a Digidol / Transport and Digital Connectivity

Yr Economi, Ynni a Thrafnidiaeth / Economy, Energy and Transport