Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government

Consultation on updated Active Travel Act Guidance

Consultation Report

November 2026

This document is for information only.

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.
Easy read version of the document available at:
https://www.gov.wales/active-travel-act-guidance

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Additional copies

This summary of response and copies of all the consultation documentation are published in electronic form only and can be accessed on the Welsh Government's website.

Link to the consultation documentation: original consultation (ATAG 2026)

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Executive summary

This report presents the findings of a consultation undertaken by Transport for Wales (TfW) on behalf of the Welsh Government to inform the second revision of the Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG). The consultation reflects a clear commitment to meaningful engagement, ensuring that the development of national guidance is shaped collaboratively by those who design, deliver and use active travel infrastructure across Wales.

The ATAG revision was shaped by extensive engagement, drawing on a broad range of perspectives, insights and real-world experience. Over a 12-week formal consultation between 21 November 2025 and 13 February 2026, TfW and Welsh Government combined an open online consultation, email responses, stakeholder workshops, targeted expert sessions and engagement with the TfW Accessibility and Inclusion Panel to ensure the guidance was tested against both professional expertise and individuals with lived experience, including that of underrepresented user groups and people who face barriers to travel.

The consultation achieved national reach and included:

- **165 total consultation responses** (131 via the online platform, 34 by email).
- **26 responses** submitted on behalf of named organisations, alongside individual members of the public.
- **4 stakeholder workshops** (2 online, 2 in-person – Cardiff and Llandudno) engaging **87 participants** from local authorities, disability groups, transport providers and consultants, education and third-sector organisations.
- **8 targeted technical sessions** involving **10 specialist organisations** with expertise in sensory and mobility impairments.
- **2 Accessibility and Inclusion Panel sessions** involving **16 panel members** representing people with sight loss, neurodivergence and mobility impairments, as well as people who are deaf, deafblind and hard-of-hearing.
- **135 respondents** of the email and online platform submissions were based in Wales and offered balanced gender representation.
- **34 respondents** identifying as disabled under the Equality Act, ensuring the evidence reflected real lived experiences.
- Feedback captured through structured surveys, open-text responses, digital mural boards and post-it note sessions, were all transcribed and integrated into a single thematic dataset.

The findings have directly informed over **200 substantive amendments** to the final guidance.

The findings show strong overall support for the direction of the revised guidance, particularly its emphasis on accessibility, inclusivity and improved design clarity. Respondents welcomed the ambition to strengthen standards, improve usability of the document, and better reflect the diverse needs of people walking, wheeling and cycling. At the same time, feedback has highlighted areas where further refinement is needed, reinforcing the importance of maintaining an iterative and responsive approach to guidance development.

A key theme emerging from the consultation is the value stakeholders place on ongoing engagement. Participants expressed a clear desire for continued opportunities to contribute, particularly in relation to detailed design challenges and the lived experience of disabled people and other groups who may face barriers to travel. Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government recognise this and have demonstrated a willingness not only to listen, but to adapt and improve the guidance in response.

More broadly, this consultation sits within a wider ambition to continually progress active travel across Wales. Active travel remains central to national transport policy, supporting wider goals around health, environment, equality and sustainable economic growth. The revised ATAG represents an important step in strengthening the tools available to local authorities and practitioners, enabling the delivery of higher-quality, more inclusive infrastructure that encourages more people to choose walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Active travel – defined as walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys – is a core component of transport policy in Wales. It plays a key role in delivering the ambitions set out in Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy, which seeks to increase the proportion of journeys made by sustainable modes and reduce reliance on private car use. Investment in active travel is increasingly recognised as delivering a wide range of benefits that extend beyond transport outcomes alone, particularly to health and the environment (Ding et al, 2024).

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 places a statutory duty on local authorities to plan for, develop and improve infrastructure and facilities for walking, wheeling and cycling. The accompanying Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG) provides the technical framework to support the design and delivery of high-quality, accessible and inclusive active travel networks across Wales.

This consultation considered the second revision of the Active Travel Act Guidance. The draft revised guidance for consultation, published in November 2025, reflects feedback gathered from users of the current 2021 edition of the guidance, new evidence, policy and regulatory changes since its original publication.

The changes made were aimed at strengthening accessibility and inclusion, consolidating new evidence and professional practice, and resolving any inconsistencies in the 2021 edition. The latest Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG 2026) supersedes previous versions and is the core technical guidance for planning, prioritising, designing and delivering walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.

1.2 Purpose and scope of consultation

The purpose of the consultation was to seek views on proposed changes to the Active Travel Act Guidance. It is being revised to improve the quality of walking, wheeling and cycling schemes, ensuring they are accessible and designed with inclusion at their core.

The proposed changes are intended to:

- Improve document information design, with refinements to clarity, formatting, inclusivity and accessibility.
- Use people-focused language better aligned with the Equality Act 2010.
- Refresh the policy context.
- Clarify design standards, including lane widths, and junctions.
- Addition of placemaking chapter.
- Support better integration between bus and walking, wheeling and cycling design interventions.
- Emphasise evidence-based practice and use consistent terminology to support delivery partners in delivering high-quality, inclusive active travel networks across Wales.

2. Method statement

2.1 Overview

This report presents an analysis of responses to the Welsh Government's consultation on the updated Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG) and sets out the changes that have been made as a result. The consultation forms part of the development of the second revision of the guidance, which aims to improve the quality, accessibility and inclusivity of walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure across Wales.

The consultation sought views from a wide range of stakeholders, including professional users of the guidance (such as planners and designers) and people directly affected by it, including users of walking, wheeling and cycling routes. Particular emphasis was placed on engaging individuals with disabilities, women and young people to gain an understanding of lived experiences for more vulnerable transport users.

The 12-week consultation was open between 21 November 2025 and 13 February 2026 and was supported by a programme of engagement activity, delivered alongside the online consultation at https://www.gov.wales/active-travel-act-guidance-atag.

This report draws together evidence from multiple engagement channels, combining quantitative and qualitative analysis to identify key themes across responses. This included additional engagement with specialist groups, such as the Women's Walking and Wheeling Workshop and the Transport for Wales Accessibility and Inclusion Panel, ensuring that the lived experiences and perspectives of disabled people, neurodivergent people, and those experiencing access barriers were meaningfully embedded throughout the consultation process.

2.2 Data collection

Online consultation responses

The primary dataset for this analysis was collected through the Welsh Government's online consultation platform, with a total of 131 responses received. Respondents were invited to answer a series of structured questions relating to specific elements of the draft guidance, alongside opportunities to provide open-text comments.

The consultation included both:

- Closed questions (for example, yes/no or support/opposition).
- Open-ended questions inviting detailed feedback.

Email consultation responses

Responses to the consultation were also accepted by email – engageatag@tfw.wales. There were 34 email responses to the consultation.

Stakeholder workshops

To complement the online consultation, a programme of stakeholder workshops was delivered to gather more in-depth qualitative insights. A total of four workshop-style events were held, engaging a total of 87 stakeholders:

Online workshop

ATAG consultation online workshop 1

Wednesday 21 January – 14 participants from local authorities, engineering/transport consultants and British Horse Society.

ATAG consultation online workshop 2

Tuesday 27 January 2026 – 18 participants from local authorities, Public Health Wales, Active Travel England and Canal and Rivers Trust.

In-person workshops

ATAG consultation workshop 1 (South Wales)

Friday 30 January 2026 – Atrium, University of South Wales, Cardiff Campus, 86-88 Adam St, Cardiff CF24 2FN.

The workshop included 28 participants from local authorities across South Wales, disability groups, active travel groups, public transport providers and consultants, educational institutions and members of the public.

ATAG consultation workshop 2 (North Wales)

Tuesday 3 February 2026 – Venue Cymru, Promenade, Llandudno, LL30 1BB.

The workshop included 27 participants from local authorities across North Wales, disability groups, active travel groups and the Conwy East and Denbighshire Local Access Forum.

The workshops were designed to:

- Facilitate discussion of key design elements within the guidance.
- Capture detailed, experience-based feedback.
- Engage with a diverse range of stakeholders, including those less likely to respond via online consultation.

The format of both the online and in-person events was similar. This involved a presentation from the project team and two breakout sessions covering:

- Design Topics (shared use paths, blended side road entry treatments and cycle track continuity at bus stops).
- Travel for All (information design, document accessibility and inclusion, and placemaking).

Feedback on the above was captured, along with wider issues using the digital collaboration platform Mural during the online sessions, or on post-it notes and facilitated discussions during the in-person events. This allowed participants to contribute ideas, concerns and suggestions in an accessible format and would form part of the wider comments within the consultation findings and outcomes.

All materials generated during the workshops were subsequently transcribed and digitised for inclusion in the main dataset and analysis.

Accessibility and inclusion panel

In addition to the open consultation and workshop programme, feedback was received from the Transport for Wales (TfW) Accessibility and Inclusion Panel during a specially organised consultation meeting on. A total of 16 members joined the discussion.

Members represent a diversity of perspectives and actively champion issues affecting people who experience barriers when travelling. The panel includes people who are neurodivergent and autistic, wheelchair users, blind, partially sighted or living with sight loss, as well as deaf people, British Sign Language (BSL) users and people who are hard of hearing.

The panel plays an ongoing advisory role to TfW, including:

- Influencing accessibility policies and strategic priorities.
- Advising on the design of new and refurbished trains and stations.
- Contributing to staff training and customer experience improvements.
- Providing feedback through activities such as mystery shopping exercises.

The panel meets regularly, including through workshops and task groups, enabling iterative and detailed engagement on specific topics.

For this consultation, the panel contributed targeted feedback on aspects of the draft guidance, particularly in relation to accessibility and inclusive design. This provided an important lived-experience perspective, complementing the broader consultation responses and supporting the consultation's objective to prioritise the views of groups most affected by the guidance.

Additional stakeholder engagement

In addition to the wider consultation and engagement programme, Transport for Wales undertook a series of meetings with organisations (appendix A) that:

- Possessed technical expertise in active travel planning, design and delivery, and/or
- Represented individuals with lived experience and/or specialist knowledge, particularly in relation to sensory and mobility impairments.

This approach enabled more detailed exploration of complex and sensitive issues, particularly those affecting people who may be more vulnerable within the transport system, including individuals with visual impairments, hearing impairments, and reduced mobility. The targeted engagement provided:

- In-depth, technical feedback on specific design elements.
- Insight into real-world accessibility challenges.
- Detailed consideration of how proposed guidance may impact different user groups.

A total of 8 organisations participated in 10 additional meetings:

- Women's walking and wheeling workshop.
- RNIB and Guide dogs.
- TfW's Accessibility and Inclusion Panel.
- Welsh Government's Strategic Road Network (SRN) Division.
- Age Cymru.
- Youth Parliament.
- Cycling UK.

All discussions from these meetings and workshops were captured and transcribed and subsequently integrated into the main dataset for analysis. This targeted engagement ensured that the analysis was informed by those with the greatest expertise and those most directly affected by the outcomes of the guidance. It played an important role in ensuring that the consultation findings reflect both professional expertise and lived experience, particularly in relation to accessibility and inclusive design.

2.3 Analytical approach

Quantitative analysis

Responses to closed questions were analysed quantitatively to provide an overview of levels of support, opposition or neutrality for each proposal. Where appropriate, results are presented as:

- Counts of responses.
- Proportions or percentages.

This provides a high-level indication of stakeholder sentiment across each consultation question.

Qualitative thematic analysis

All open-text responses (from both the online consultation, email responses, stakeholder workshops and meetings) were analysed using a thematic analysis approach. This involved:

1. Familiarisation with the data.
2. Coding responses to identify recurring ideas and issues.
3. Grouping codes into themes.
4. Reviewing and refining themes across the dataset.

Themes were developed both deductively (based on consultation questions and known policy areas) and inductively (emerging directly from respondent feedback). Findings are presented by consultation question, with cross-cutting themes identified separately where relevant.

Integration of data sources

Data from all sources, detailed in the previous section, were integrated into a single analytical framework. This ensured:

- Equal weighting of structured and discussion-based feedback.
- Consistency in coding and interpretation.
- A comprehensive understanding of stakeholder perspectives.

Where relevant, differences between engagement formats (for example, more detailed feedback arising from workshops) are reflected in the analysis.

Reporting approach

Findings are presented primarily by consultation question, reflecting the structure of the consultation. For each question, the report includes:

- A summary of quantitative responses (where applicable).
- A narrative summary of key views.
- Identification of key themes.

In addition, the report identifies cross-cutting themes that emerged across multiple questions, providing further insight into overarching issues such as accessibility, safety and design consistency.

3. Overview of respondents

A total of 165 responses, made up of 131 formal responses via the online platform and 34 by email were received to the consultation. Not all respondents answered every demographic question, so percentages are presented both as a proportion of all respondents and of those who provided a response to each question.

Location

The vast majority of respondents indicated that they live in Wales. 135 respondents (78.5% of all respondents; 97.1% of those who answered) reported living in Wales. Only 2 respondents (1.2%; 1.4%) stated that they do not, while a further 2 (1.2%; 1.4%) preferred not to say. Three respondents (1.7%) did not provide a response.

Connection to Wales

Most respondents also reported a direct connection to Wales through work, study, or business. 94 respondents (54.7% of all respondents; 74.0% of those who answered) indicated such a connection. 23 respondents (13.4%; 18.1%) said they did not, while 10 (5.8%; 7.9%) preferred not to say. Three respondents (1.7%) did not respond.

Age profile

The age profile of respondents is weighted towards older age groups. Among those who provided their decade of birth, the largest group was those born in the 1960s (47 respondents; 27.3% of all respondents; 37.3% of those who answered). This was followed by those born in the 1950s or earlier (34; 19.8%; 27.0%). Smaller proportions were born in the 1970s (22; 12.8%; 17.5%), 1980s (17; 9.9%; 13.5%), and 1990s (6; 3.5%; 4.8%). 46 respondents (27%) did not provide this information. Overall, the sample is skewed towards older respondents.

Disability

A majority of respondents indicated that they do not meet the Equality Act definition of disability. 87 respondents (50.6% of all respondents; 63.5% of those who answered) selected “No”. However, 34 respondents (19.8%; 24.8%) indicated that the definition does apply to them, representing a significant minority. A further 16 respondents (9.3%; 11.7%) preferred not to say, and 5 (2.9%) did not respond.

Gender

Gender responses were broadly balanced. 63 respondents (36.6% of all respondents; 45.0% of those who answered) identified as female, while 61 (35.5%; 43.6%) identified as male. A further 11 respondents (6.4%; 7.9%) preferred not to say, and 2 (1.2%; 1.4%) identified as “other”. Five respondents (2.9%) did not provide a response.

Individual vs organisational responses

Responses were primarily submitted by individuals. 26 responses (15.1%) were submitted on behalf of named organisations, indicating that organisational perspectives are also represented within the dataset.

4. Consultation findings and outcomes

This section presents the findings of the public consultation and the resulting amendments to the ATAG guidance. Feedback was gathered through the consultation survey, email correspondence, workshop events and targeted stakeholder engagement sessions.

The consultation findings are presented by theme and organised under the headings 'Respondents said' and 'How we are responding', providing a clear link between stakeholder feedback and the amendments made to the guidance.

Following review of the consultation responses, Transport for Wales and Welsh Government have identified a number of changes to the topics listed below that are reflected in the final updated guidance.

4.1 Shared use paths and widths

Overall, responses to the shared use path questions were mixed, but a clear pattern emerged across the consultation and engagement activity.

Respondents said

- Respondents recognised the need for clearer guidance on when shared use may or may not be appropriate, and there was broad support for the principle of discouraging its inappropriate use.
- Simultaneously, respondents expressed concern that shared use continues to create tension between deliverability, accessibility and user comfort, particularly where people walking, wheeling, and cycling are expected to occupy the same space.
- There was a strong recurring view that separated paths should remain the preferred approach wherever possible, with shared use considered a constrained or context-specific solution rather than a default design response.
    - This view came through particularly strongly in workshop discussions, where participants indicated shared use as acceptable only in certain low-flow or highly constrained locations, and cautioned against its use in busier urban areas where conflict between users is more likely to arise.
    - Similar concerns were reflected in the wider consultation responses, many of which stated that shared use paths do not work well in practice, especially for disabled people, pedestrians, dog walkers and other more vulnerable users.
    - A number of local authorities highlighted that whilst they understand the aim to separate people walking and cycling, very often shared use paths are the only infrastructure they can install in low flow areas due to restrictions on available width, in both the rural and urban fringe environment.

Q1A: Decision trees for shared-use paths

4.1.1 In relation to the proposed decision trees:

- Respondents welcomed the intention to provide a more structured method for assessing whether shared use is appropriate.
- There was support for the idea that a decision-support tool could help prevent shared use being selected too easily and could provide a clearer audit trail for decisions.
    - This aligns with the broader purpose of the revised guidance, which seeks to improve clarity, consistency and accessibility in design decisions.

4.1.2 However, support for the concept of decision trees was qualified by significant concerns about their current form:

- Across both online and in-person workshops, participants frequently described the proposed trees as too simplistic, too rigid, or insufficiently sensitive to local context.
- Workshop participants also noted that the decision pathways could lead to “dead ends” or fail to account for the complexity of real places, especially where local constraints, competing demands, vulnerable users, desire lines, schools, gradients or adjacent land uses affect how a route operates in practice.
- Several respondents suggested that the decision tree should either be expanded into a more nuanced decision-making tool or replaced with a broader multi-criteria assessment or checklist.
    - This was particularly linked to the view that judgments about shared use should account not just for cycle volumes, but also for user vulnerability, speed differentials, access frequency, route purpose, context, and likely future demand.
- There was also a repeated suggestion that the decision tree should be explicitly linked to the Design Decision Log, so that departures or more context-specific judgments can be properly recorded.

Q1B: Revised width guidance and flow thresholds

4.1.3 Responses to the revised width guidance were again mixed, but there was more support for the principle behind the changes than for the specific thresholds proposed.

- Respondents generally agreed that, where shared use is used, wider paths are preferable and that higher levels of cycle use should trigger stronger separation.
- Participants in the workshops broadly supported the intent of increasing widths and reducing conflict, and some noted that wider paths are especially important for adapted cycles, trikes and other non-standard users.
- There were also repeated comments about the practical deliverability of width standards.

  - Respondents acknowledged that wider paths are desirable, but stressed that retrofit schemes, historic environments, canal towpaths and constrained corridors may not always allow the proposed widths to be achieved.
  - In these cases, respondents asked for clearer guidance on intermediate widths, short, constrained sections, and how to weigh partial improvements against absolute or desirable minimums.

- A significant issue raised repeatedly across consultation responses and workshops was the contextual fit of the proposed cycle flow thresholds, particularly the figures of 100, 200 and 300 people cycling per hour.
- Respondents, especially those reflecting rural, valleys or smaller-town contexts, argued that these numbers were unlikely to be reached in most parts of Wales.
  - In workshops, this was framed less as opposition to better standards and more as concern that the thresholds may not reflect Welsh settlement patterns or everyday use outside the largest urban areas.
- A related theme was that future demand and local context should be given more emphasis than current observed flows alone.
  - It was discussed that a low observed cycle volume should not automatically justify shared use, particularly where route quality is itself suppressing demand.
  - Others highlighted that thresholds should distinguish more clearly between peak and average flows, or between urban and rural contexts.

How we are responding

Q1A: Decision trees for shared use paths

In response to the consultation feedback, the proposed decision tree has been revised to develop the ATNM Link Design Selector decision matrix (see ATAG 2026 Figure 11.1). The revised approach provides a more robust and context-sensitive framework for determining the most appropriate link arrangement, while retaining the transparency and consistency sought by respondents.

The decision matrix has been designed to address the key themes raised during consultation by:

- Reducing the overall reliance on shared-use facilities and promoting greater separation of walking, wheeling and cycling movements.
- Using objective, measurable inputs, including traffic volumes, vehicle speeds and user numbers, to support evidence-based decision-making.
- Incorporating both urban and rural contexts, recognising that the suitability of different arrangements is heavily influenced by their surrounding environment.

- Providing a clearer method for resolving links in narrow, historic, urban or otherwise space-constrained locations, where achieving preferred arrangements can be challenging.
- Producing clear outputs that align with existing design guidance and standards.

The revised matrix also recognises that design decisions cannot always be made through a single criterion or threshold. Instead, it guides designers through a range of contextual considerations and identifies the most suitable facility type based on local circumstances. Furthermore, the outputs are intended to be used alongside the Design Decision Log, ensuring that any deviations from intended solutions are appropriately documented and justified.

Q1B: Revised width guidance and flow thresholds

The revised guidance has refined the approach to shared use path width recommendations and flow thresholds to better reflect the diversity of contexts found across Wales.

The 2025 consultation introduced a more nuanced approach to determining appropriate provision for shared use routes. The updated table (appendix B) introduces an additional intermediate category, increasing the recommended width from 3.0m to 4.0m where cycle flows are between 100 and 300 total users per hour. The consultation also placed a greater emphasis on segregated facilities, recommending full segregation where cycle flows exceed 300.

A consistent theme emerging from the consultation was concern that the previous thresholds, based on combinations of pedestrian and cycle flows and including figures of up to 300 pedestrians per hour and cycle flow thresholds of 100-300 cyclists per hour, were very high, and unlikely to be reached in many rural, valleys and smaller settlement locations. Respondents indicated that while wider paths and greater levels of separation remain desirable, the thresholds should be more closely aligned with typical Welsh travel patterns and should better recognise local context.

To address these concerns, the revised guidance introduces two lower-demand categories of up to 100 users per day and 50 users per hour, providing designers with an option that is more representative of lightly used routes while still ensuring an appropriate minimum standard. The updated table also replaces the previous reliance on separate pedestrian and cycle flow thresholds with a combined user-based approach, simplifying application and reflecting how routes are experienced in practice.

The revisions continue to support the consultation feedback that wider paths are preferable and that greater levels of use should trigger higher standards of provision. The guidance retains the principle that increasing levels of demand should lead to wider facilities and, where appropriate, greater separation between users. At the same time, it provides additional flexibility for constrained locations through the introduction of acceptable minimum widths for short sections and permeability links.

The revised approach therefore seeks to achieve a better balance between ambition and deliverability. It maintains a strong focus on user comfort, accessibility and future active travel growth, whilst ensuring the thresholds and width recommendations are proportionate and applicable across the full range of Welsh urban, rural and valley contexts identified during the consultation process.

Welsh Government and Transport for Wales are investigating options on how future demand predictions for active travel routes can be estimated and factored into scheme development and designs.

4.2 Accessibility and side road treatments

Respondents were broadly positive across the consultation and engagement activity for improving accessibility and legibility of blended side road improvements.

Respondents said

Q2: Blended side road entry treatments

- Respondents agreed with the underlying intention of the change: to improve accessibility and user experience, particularly through the inclusion of tactile paving and clearer delineation of crossing points.
    - This reflects the wider rationale for the draft guidance, which identifies blended side road treatments as one of the layouts that can create barriers for blind and visually impaired people if not designed carefully.
- A consistent theme across responses was that the principle of improving legibility was welcomed, especially where it helps people with visual impairments better identify when they are entering a space where vehicles may cross.
    - Workshop participants and targeted stakeholders frequently described the addition of tactile paving as a positive step, and many respondents supported the intention to make blended crossings more understandable and safer in practice.
    - There was broad recognition that the 2021 guidance had not adequately addressed the navigational challenges experienced by some disabled users, and that the revised approach represented an improvement in this respect.

However, it was felt that the success of the treatment may depend on detailed design and interpretation:

- Respondents noted that tactile paving alone would not resolve all concerns, and some questioned whether it could create ambiguity if drivers interpret it incorrectly or if the relationship between the tactile surface, kerbline and crossing point is not sufficiently clear.
- In workshop discussions, the ambiguity of priority was raised by some participants, with concerns that drivers could read additional surface treatment as signalling vehicular priority rather than pedestrian priority, thereby undermining the intended benefit.

- There were also calls for more precise guidance on the use of tight radii, entry geometry, and the circumstances in which blended treatments are appropriate compared to more conventional side road crossings.

A second recurring theme was the need for clearer technical guidance and examples:

- Respondents wanted more explicit wording on what constitutes “tight radii”, how blended treatments should accommodate larger vehicles such as refuse vehicles and buses, and how tactile paving should be positioned in relation to ramps, kerbs and crossing desire lines.
- Several participants requested photographs or diagrams showing examples of good and poor practice, while others suggested that side road zebra or raised crossing treatments should be considered in some contexts.

A third theme concerned the role of behaviour and driver compliance:

- Some respondents argued that design changes alone would not ensure safer or more accessible blended crossings, particularly if drivers continue to turn at speed or fail to yield appropriately.

The responses indicate broad support for the intention to improve blended side road entry treatments and generally view the inclusion of tactile paving as a positive development. However, they also emphasise that the effectiveness of the proposal will depend on careful specification, clarity of priority, and stronger practical guidance on how the treatment should operate in different contexts.

How we are responding

Q2: Blended side road entry treatments

The evolution of DE605 demonstrates a shift from a largely geometric highway design towards a more accessibility-led and context-sensitive approach.

Since the 2021 version, this figure was significantly redeveloped. The layouts were restructured into two distinct arrangements: a two-way side road entry and a priority/one-way side road entry. This reflected a wider range of route configurations and provided greater clarity in how the treatment should be applied. There was also an increased focus on accessibility with the introduction of blister tactile paving, entrance kerbs and optional bollards or wands, representing a move towards providing stronger visual and tactile cues. The layouts also place greater emphasis on the physical design of the junction rather than relying on road markings and signage, helping to create a clearer indication of priority for people walking, wheeling and cycling through the layout itself.

Consultation responses, whilst demonstrating broad support for the intention behind the proposed changes, highlighted concerns that tactile paving alone may not fully address accessibility issues and that the effectiveness of the treatment would depend on the clarity of its detailed design. Concerns were raised around the relationship between tactile paving, kerb lines and crossing locations, as well as the potential for some drivers to misinterpret the layout.

In response to these issues, the 2026 revision further refines the design through the introduction of recessed areas adjacent to the tactile paving, specifically intended to provide additional protection and waiting space for guide dog users. However, as respondents noted, the effectiveness of tactile paving will depend on its detailed design and implementation in practice. We therefore encourage local authorities to monitor the effectiveness of these measures as schemes are delivered, helping to inform future reviews and ensure that accessibility outcomes are being achieved as intended.

Respondents also sought greater clarity regarding the circumstances in which blended side road treatments should be used and called for more explicit guidance on key design parameters such as entry geometry and tight radii. The 2025 and 2026 revision addressed this by introducing clear applicability criteria, limiting the use of the treatment to side roads with an AADT of less than 2,000 vehicles per day and an 85th percentile speed below 22mph.

The continued emphasis on tight junction radii, with a desirable maximum given in the preamble to the DE605 also reinforces the importance of reduced turning speeds in supporting safer crossing conditions. Responses requested that a refuse vehicle, or other suitable design vehicle, be tracked through the layouts. However, this analysis is more appropriately undertaken on scheme-specific designs, where the site geometry, including carriageway width, junction angles and proposed radii, can be accurately reflected, rather than on the Design Elements themselves.

Some respondents questioned whether design changes alone would be sufficient to address concerns relating to driver behaviour and compliance. Whilst behavioural issues extend beyond the scope of a standard detail drawing, both the consultation and 2026 guidance place greater emphasis on physical design measures that help communicate the intended function of the crossing, including tighter corner radii, clearly defined entry treatments, tactile paving and enhanced crossing legibility.

4.3 Cycle infrastructure and bus stops

The questions relating to cycle track continuity at bus stops generated some of the most detailed responses in the consultation.

Respondents said

- Respondents broadly accepted that this is a difficult area of design in which competing needs must be balanced.
- However, views diverged considerably on whether the proposed amendments go far enough to resolve long-standing accessibility concerns, particularly for blind and visually impaired people, older people, and those using pushchairs or mobility aids.
- Respondents generally supported the new emphasis on avoiding cycle track continuity at bus stops where possible but remain divided on whether the proposed mitigations are sufficient (where such arrangements remain necessary).

- The consultation revealed broad agreement on the importance of reducing conflict and improving legibility, but also that accessibility concerns in this area remain unresolved for many respondents, particularly those representing or speaking from the lived experience of sensory and mobility impairments.
- Respondents generally supported additions such as tactile paving, clearer markings, wider waiting areas and stronger emphasis on legibility, but many still viewed these as partial improvements to layouts that remain inherently difficult for some users.
- Several respondents called for a clearer hierarchy of preferred solutions in the guidance, setting out more explicitly which forms of bus stop treatment should be prioritised and under what circumstances.
- Others suggested the inclusion of controlled crossings, wider islands, or more active operational interventions such as audio announcements, clearer signage or temporary stopping of cycle movement when buses are present.

Q3A: Cycle continuity at bus stops

Views on the principle of aligning cycle facilities away from bus routes were mixed:

- Those supportive of the idea described avoidance as preferable to mitigation, arguing that reducing the need for cycle track continuity at bus stops is likely to be the most effective way of avoiding conflict in the first place.
    - Workshop participants generally welcomed this principle, and event reports recorded broad agreement that avoiding these situations, where feasible, represents an improvement on the previous guidance.
- Simultaneously, respondents were cautious about how this principle would work in practice.
    - Some argued that cycle routes should not simply be diverted onto less direct or lower quality alignments in order to avoid bus stops, particularly where this would reduce network coherence or shift people cycling onto more dangerous routes.
    - Others pointed out that in constrained corridors, avoidance may not always be possible, meaning that the guidance still needs to provide robust and accessible solutions for locations where bus stop continuity remains unavoidable.

Q3B: Bus stop design and cycle track continuity

Responses to the detailed amendments to DE502, DE503 and DE504 were mixed:

- Across all evidence sources, respondents highlighted that clarity of priority between people walking, wheeling and cycling is essential.
- Many agreed with the general aim of reducing the risk and severity of collisions, and some welcomed the additional tactile paving, wider islands, greater spatial separation and stronger emphasis on monitoring and future learning, though some practitioners did raise the point around the availability of space to accommodate the designs in typical highway environments.
- However, there was concern that the proposed changes may not fully address the experience of vulnerable users leaving or approaching a bus stop, particularly where they must cross or share space with a cycle track.
    - This concern was especially prominent in material coming from accessibility-focused stakeholders. Both workshop evidence and targeted feedback highlighted the risk that people exiting buses may not detect people cycling approaching in time, particularly where layouts are visually complex or cluttered with shelters, bollards, signs and ramps.
- Pushchair users, blind and partially sighted users, and people with reduced mobility were frequently identified as groups who may be exposed to heightened risk or uncertainty in these environments, with some respondents noting steep ramps at bus stops being problematic for wheelchair users.
- There was also concern about DE503, with some participants stating opposition to the bus boarder arrangement and expressing a preference for alternatives that provide stronger separation or more explicit control of movement.

Q3C: Alternative bus stop arrangements

Responses reinforced the point that stakeholders continue to seek further innovation in this area:

- Respondents proposed a range of alternatives and supplementary measures, including signal-controlled solutions, wider and better-positioned islands, clearer warnings for alighting passengers, larger or relocated shelters, improved use of tactile and visual contrast, and integration with bus operations and passenger information systems.
- There was also a repeated suggestion that ongoing research, trials and monitoring should be built into the future development of this part of the guidance, reflecting the draft guidance's own commitment to monitor emerging UK practice and update the document where appropriate.

How we are responding

The majority of the Design Elements for bus stops were improved and further refined following the consultation. Additionally, the sub-section on bus stop infrastructure in Chapter 11 was moved to create a combined sub-section on cycling and public transport routes.

Q3A: Cycle continuity at bus stops

A new bus stop selection decision tree has been introduced to provide a clearer hierarchy of preferred solutions, along with some reformatting of the supporting information to provide a clearer section on Cycling and Public Transport Routes. The decision tree guides designers through a structured process that prioritises provision of a bus stop bypass wherever space and local conditions allow. It also requires consideration of opportunities to reallocate highway space, relocate stops, reduce carriageway widths, or amend network arrangements before lower-order solutions are considered.

Where a bus stop bypass cannot reasonably be provided, the bus stop decision tree restricts consideration of the bus boarding island and bus boarder arrangements to locations with lower demand and constrained conditions. This responds to consultation feedback, which highlighted opposition to bus boarder arrangements, by maintaining clear restrictions on their use and preventing their application in a wider range of circumstances. While this approach is acknowledged as a compromise, a complete prohibition cannot be justified because the only alternative would often be a shared-use environment, which could present greater risks and reduce certainty for pushchair users, blind and partially sighted people, and those with reduced mobility. This reinforces the importance of engaging with affected user groups and the wider population throughout scheme development to ensure that local design decisions reflect the needs of those who will use the infrastructure.

To support consistent decision-making, the guidance also introduces a bus stop flow selector table (appendix B), which classifies locations according to levels of pedestrian activity, cycle use and bus stop use. The thresholds have been developed to reflect user comfort, potential for conflict, and the operational characteristics of different bus stop designs.

The overall revised approach therefore provides a clearer hierarchy of treatments, prioritises separation over risk-reduction where possible, and establishes a more evidence-based framework for selecting appropriate bus stop layouts. The guidance continues to emphasise the importance of engagement with representative groups throughout the design process, recognising that local context and user needs must remain central to the selection and design of bus stop infrastructure.

This approach seeks to address concerns raised through the consultation whilst retaining sufficient flexibility to accommodate the wide range of street environments encountered across Wales.

Q3B: Bus stop design and cycle track continuity

For the 2026 guidance, new Design Elements have been introduced. DE502 will continue to cover bus stop bypasses on one-way cycle tracks, while the new DE503 has been added to cover bus stop bypasses on two-way cycle tracks.

The 2026 guidance introduces a more substantial redesign (appendix B). DE502 and DE503 have been updated to strengthen visual, tactile and behavioural cues for all users. In both layouts, blister tactile paving has been repositioned to align directly with bus doors through adjustments to the bus cage and bus flag location, providing a clearer and more consistent point at which passengers are expected to cross. Additional measures have been introduced to reduce cycling speeds and increase awareness of pedestrian movements, including coloured surfacing at crossing points, ARAF SLOW markings, indications of gradients on ramps, optional warning signage, and landscaping features that indicate a change in environment and encourage more cautious behaviour.

The revised layouts also place greater emphasis on formal crossing points. As an example, DE502 includes a zebra crossing to reinforce pedestrian crossing locations and make expected user behaviour clearer. Both DE502 and DE503 have been strengthened further through the inclusion of a signal-controlled crossing arrangement option, providing a clear indication to people cycling when they are required to stop, while offering people walking and wheeling, including visually impaired users, a recognised opportunity to cross with greater confidence. The geometry of the boarding island in DE502 and DE503 has also been amended to encourage lower cycling speeds and improved manoeuvrability through the area.

In recognition of feedback regarding the need to reduce interactions between people cycling and people walking or wheeling where possible, DE502 now also includes an option for people cycling to merge onto the carriageway and bypass the bus stop environment altogether. This provides an opportunity to disperse cycle movements and reduce potential conflict in locations where conditions are suitable.

DE504 is a new design element which introduces a small boarding island, consistent with emerging UK practice, to provide greater separation between waiting passengers and the cycle track. Blister tactile paving has been positioned to align directly with bus doors, supported by adjustments to the bus cage and bus stop flag location, helping to provide a more intuitive crossing point for passengers. A trapezoidal delineator strip has also been introduced between the footway and cycle track to improve legibility and assist users in understanding the different functional spaces. To address concerns regarding cycling speed and pedestrian awareness, the design includes a suite of speed reduction and warning measures, including ARAF SLOW markings, coloured surfacing at crossing locations, optional warning signage, and a controlled crossing that provides a clearer indication of pedestrian priority. The boarding island geometry has been refined with perpendicular edges to encourage lower cycling speeds and more deliberate manoeuvring through the area, while a reduced cycle track width further reinforces the need for caution. In addition, an optional carriageway merge allows people cycling who wish to bypass the bus stop environment to do so, reducing potential interactions within the boarding area.

While some respondents favoured a wider boarding island, this must be balanced against the likely available space. Increasing the minimum width beyond the current 1.2m recommendation could weaken the distinction between boarding islands and bus stop bypasses, potentially leading to the overuse of boarding islands where a bypass would be feasible. Where sufficient space is available, a bus stop bypass would generally provide a higher-quality outcome for all users.

Bus boarder measures – DE505

The consultation proposal and 2026 guidance introduced several accessibility measures:

- Tramline tactile paving at the pedestrian crossing point.
- Diagram 956 and 957, warning people walking, wheeling and cycling.
- Angled kerbs.
- Defined bus kerb arrangements.
- More clearly defined bus stop infrastructure and boarding positions.
- ARAF/SLOW Guidance paving aligned with bus doors.
- Trapezoidal delineator along the footway/cycle track transition.
- More clearly defined waiting and crossing zones.

There are also enhanced bus passenger facilities:

- Bus flag location.
- Explicit positioning of the bus shelter at the rear of the footway.
- A more clearly defined bus boarding environment.

While some consultation responses expressed opposition to bus boarder arrangements, there are significant benefits to retaining them as an option within the guidance as the alternative would be a shared use bus stop. A shared use bus stop relies heavily on users negotiating priority and behaviour with one another. The bus stop boarder therefore provides a more structured and predictable environment by retaining distinct spaces for different movements while incorporating mitigation measures at crossing points. It also reduces significantly the size of the area to be shared between people boarding or alighting the bus and people cycling. Although bus boarders are not without compromise, they can offer a better balance between maintaining a coherent cycle route and reducing interactions between people cycling and people walking or wheeling than a wholly shared-use arrangement. For this reason, a complete prohibition of bus boarders could unintentionally result in a greater reliance on shared-use environments, which may present more significant accessibility and user experience challenges for some groups.

In response, the final proposal has been refined to include a more comprehensive package of accessibility measures, including guidance paving aligned with bus doors, trapezoidal delineator along the footway/cycle track interface, enhanced tactile treatments, improved transition details and additional cyclist guidance measures. Collectively, these changes provide clearer navigation routes, improve awareness of crossing points and support a wider range of users while retaining the benefits of the floating bus stop arrangement.

4.4 Design tables and technical standards

Responses to the revised design tables and appendices were generally constructive, with many respondents recognising the value of improving the technical usability of the guidance.

Respondents said

- Across the consultation and workshop evidence, there was broad support for the intention to make the document clearer, more internally consistent and better aligned with real-world design conditions.
- However, respondents also identified a number of detailed technical issues and inconsistencies that they felt should be addressed before final publication.
- A key theme across Q4A – Q4D, was that respondents welcomed the direction of change, but wanted the final guidance to be technically tighter, more internally coherent and easier to interpret in practice.
- Respondents therefore tended to support the revised tables and appendices in principle while also urging further refinement to improve consistency, accessibility and confidence in application.

Q4A: More decision trees in future revisions

On the question of whether more decision trees should be introduced elsewhere in the guidance:

- Responses were broadly supportive in principle, but conditional on the quality of the tools themselves.
- Participants felt that additional decision trees could be useful, especially for other complex design issues, but only if they are more detailed, less binary, and better integrated with supporting narrative and evidence.
- Decision trees and summary tools were generally welcomed as aids to understanding, but there was caution that they should support, not replace, professional judgment.
- Several respondents suggested future decision trees could be helpful for other areas such as route optioneering, bus stop infrastructure, side road treatments and wider design decision-making.

- However, some of this support was contingent upon the current shared-use trees being improved first.
- This reflects a key tension between respondents in viewing supportive decision tools as either being overly prescriptive or too open to interpretation.

Q4B: Cycle provision and crossing tables

Respondents generally viewed the revisions to Table 11.1 and Table 12.1 as a potentially positive change, particularly where they help designers make more realistic decisions about provision types, traffic speeds and crossing suitability.

- There was support for the aim of improving accessibility and deliverability, and some participants welcomed the move away from less well-understood visual devices towards tables that more directly express speed and flow conditions.
- This aligns with the consultation document's explanation that information relating to traffic speeds and volumes had previously not been sufficiently visible in the design elements, and that the revised approach seeks to make this information clearer and more prominent.
- Simultaneously, respondents perceived a need for greater consistency, clarity and explanation across the tables.
- Event reports note confusion about how different tables relate to one another, particularly Tables 9.9, 11.1, 11.5 and 12.1, and whether the thresholds and categories used are internally aligned.
- Participants also questioned the treatment of certain speed ranges and the extent to which the proposed categories reflect actual operating conditions on Welsh roads.
- A related concern was that technical terms, symbols and ordering conventions may be difficult for some non-technical users to interpret.

Q4C: Path widths and cycle link standards

Respondents generally supported the intention to improve usability and accessibility through more realistic width guidance:

- There was a recurring concern that the revised tables need to be more explicit about how they should be applied in constrained environments and how "desirable" and "absolute minimum" values should be interpreted.
- Some respondents expressed discomfort with wording that appears to normalise sub-optimal provision, arguing that this can weaken the ambition of the guidance in practice. Others emphasised that width choices should be more clearly linked to likely user needs, including the needs of disabled cyclists, adapted cycles, family groups and pedestrians in busy or complex settings.

Q4D: Appendices and design decision log

Responses were broadly positive in relation to both the revision of ATAG Appendix H and the introduction of ATAG Appendix L, the Design Decision Log:

- Many respondents saw value in stronger audit tools and more explicit recording of design decisions, particularly where this can improve transparency and accountability.
- In workshop discussions, the Design Decision Log was often singled out as a helpful addition, especially when linked to more structured decision-making elsewhere in the document.
- Participants suggested that this could provide a useful way of documenting why best-practice standards cannot be achieved in some locations and how different competing considerations have been weighed.
- This is consistent with the previous guidance, which has always required an audit trail of design decisions. The addition of the Design Decision Log (Appendix L) does not introduce a new requirement but provides a clearer and more structured approach to documenting and justifying departures from desirable minimum standards.

How we are responding

Q4A: More decision trees in future revisions

The tables in ATAG 2021 were showing speed limit bands (20mph, 30mph, etc), while a note would explain that if the measured 85th percentile was 10% higher than the speed limit, then the speed limit above should be applied. This note was often missed by the users, so this recommendation was applied throughout the tables for the consultation draft (appendix B). The use of 85th percentile speed has been retained because it provides a more accurate representation of vehicle operating conditions than speed limit alone. Using measured speeds helps ensure that the design process is informed by evidence of how a road is functioning in practice, supporting more appropriate and defensible decisions regarding the level of cycling provision required. This approach aligns with the objective of making traffic speed considerations more visible and transparent within the design-selection process.

Figure 11.28 Bus stop design selector supports designers in identifying the most appropriate solution for local conditions through a clear and consistent decision-making process. By considering factors such as traffic levels, bus stop usage, available space and network continuity, it helps ensure that design choices are proportionate, transparent and informed by the needs of all users, including people walking, wheeling, cycling and using public transport.

Q4B: Cycle provision and crossing tables

The consultation responses highlighted a need for greater consistency, clarity and explanation, including concerns regarding the relationship between different tables within the guidance, the treatment of speed ranges, and the ease with which users can interpret the information presented. In response, both tables 11.1 and 12.1 have been further reviewed and refined. Route audit tools in appendix H were revised in line with the tables.

The revised tables (appendix B) simplify a number of traffic volume and speed categories, reducing complexity while maintaining a clear relationship between operating conditions and the suitability of different infrastructure types. The structure of the tables has been rationalised to improve readability, and the progression from lower-risk to higher-risk environments has been made more transparent. Additional speed bands have been introduced where appropriate, including a specific category for roads with 85th percentile speeds between 33mph and 44mph in Table 11.1, helping to better reflect the range of conditions encountered on the Welsh highway network.

Table 12.1 has also been revised to improve the presentation of crossing suitability. The updated structure provides a clearer distinction between traffic speed, traffic volume and crossing complexity, including the number of lanes crossed in a single movement. Provision types have been reviewed and reorganised to provide a more intuitive progression from uncontrolled crossings through to signal-controlled and grade-separated solutions, helping users understand how crossing suitability changes as traffic conditions become more challenging.

Q4C: Path widths and cycle link standards

Desirable minimum widths represent the standard that schemes should seek to achieve wherever practical, supporting inclusive design and accommodating a wide range of users, including people using adaptive cycles, family groups and people cycling at different speeds. Absolute minimum widths are intended only for circumstances where significant physical constraints cannot reasonably be overcome and should not be regarded as a standard design target.

The consultation draft removed the intermediate 2.2m category and simplified the guidance to a two-tier approach for one-way protected cycle tracks:

- Low demand routes remain at 2.0m desirable minimum.
- Higher demand routes move directly to 2.5m desirable minimum.

For two-way protected cycle tracks, the desirable widths did not change however the threshold for requiring 4.0m was reduced from more than 1000 people cycling per hour to more than 250 people cycling per hour. This reflects a more ambitious approach to improve the connectivity and safety of routes by adapting to Welsh user demand and alignment with the DEs.

The 2026 guidance document also provides a clearer explanation that widths should be determined against the maximum active travel uptake future scenario, aligning the guidance more explicitly with long-term demand forecasting rather than current usage.

Q4D: Design decision log

The design decision log was a new addition to the 2025 consultation to support scheme promoters and designers with a format to record all decisions. It is intended to be a key tool for designers to support transparent and evidence-based decision making. It allows designers to record the rationale behind design choices, including how user needs, local constraints, project objectives and relevant guidance have been considered and balanced. It does not take the place of any formal departure processes that may be used but be used as supporting information.

The design decision log is referenced throughout the document and should be used alongside other relevant tools such as risk registers. Where deviations from preferred approaches are necessary, or where competing requirements have resulted in a decision, the design decision log helps ensure that outcomes are clearly justified, proportionate and aligned with the principles of the Active Travel Act Guidance.

4.5 Document accessibility and inclusivity

Responses to the questions on document accessibility and inclusive language were among the most positive in the consultation overall.

Respondents said

- Respondents welcomed the effort to make the guidance more accessible, more inclusive in tone, and more reflective of a wider range of users and journeys.
    - This aligns closely with the stated objectives of the draft guidance, which include improving document information design, using people-focused language, and strengthening inclusivity and accessibility throughout the document.
- Respondents generally view the revised document as more accessible and more inclusive than the previous guidance and welcome the effort to broaden the language of active travel.
- However, they also expect these presentational and linguistic improvements to be matched by practical clarity and by design choices that genuinely support inclusive participation in walking, wheeling and cycling.

Q5: Document accessibility

Respondents generally agreed that the updated PDF and document structure represented an improvement on the 2021 version.

- Comments frequently referred to better navigation, clearer cross-referencing, improved internal links and a more usable overall structure.
    - Respondents appreciated the attempt to improve readability and reduce ambiguity, particularly in a document of substantial technical length and complexity.

    - Workshop evidence also indicates that decision trees, summary tools and improved signposting were generally welcomed as features that could make the document easier to navigate and understand.

- However, support for the accessibility improvements was again qualified rather than unconditional:

    - Respondents repeatedly noted that technical accessibility and practical usability are not the same thing.
    - Whilst the Active Travel Act Guidance is a technical document aimed primarily at transport professionals and local authorities with responsibilities for improving walking, wheeling and cycling in Wales, some respondents argued that whilst the revised document is more accessible than its predecessor, it remains difficult for less technical users to navigate. Concerns were raised about the accessibility of terminology, table presentation and the complexity of some consultation materials.
    - One workshop note explicitly pointed to difficulties in the Easy Read consultation materials, suggesting that certain words and questions remained too complex or insufficiently explained for some users.

- Other comments called for improved use of images, better explanation of sign references, stronger hyperlinking and more intuitive internal navigation.

After receiving early feedback from stakeholders on consultation materials and documents, a number of improvements were made to ensure the accessibility of these for individuals with sensory impairments.

Q5B: Inclusive language and terminology

There was broad support for the shift to more inclusive language, particularly the consistent use of “walking, wheeling and cycling” rather than narrower terminology.

- Respondents saw this as a meaningful improvement that better reflects the diversity of active travel users, and welcomed the explicit recognition of women, girls, disabled people and other groups who may otherwise be marginal in technical guidance.

- Workshop evidence similarly records positive responses to the revised language and to the broader effort to foreground diverse user needs in the document.

How we are responding

Based on consultation feedback, there was clear support for the steps taken to improve accessibility and inclusivity of the guidance. Features such as decision trees, summary tools, enhanced signposting and hyperlinks within the 2025 consultation version were welcomed and have been strengthened further in the final version.

In the future, Welsh Government and Transport for Wales may consider providing supplementary online resources for less technical audiences, using clearer explanations, visual aids and online navigation to improve accessibility and understanding.

4.6 Placemaking

Responses to the new chapter on placemaking were generally positive, with many respondents welcoming its inclusion as an important broadening of the guidance beyond narrow transport engineering considerations.

Respondents said

- Respondents generally viewed placemaking as a valuable addition that better reflects the wider social, environmental and economic role of active travel infrastructure.
    - This is consistent with the consultation materials, which present the new chapter as part of an effort to strengthen the quality and wider value of walking, wheeling and cycling schemes in Wales.

It was felt that active travel and placemaking should be mutually reinforcing.

- Respondents linked good active travel provision to safer routes to school, healthier local environments, stronger town centres, improved liveability and better public realm outcomes.
    - Workshop participants also noted that the chapter could help reinforce the idea that active travel schemes are not simply movement corridors but part of wider places in which people live, learn, socialise and access services.
    - This was especially welcomed in places where it supports cross-sector thinking and helps embed active travel within a broader conception of place quality.

How we are responding

The placemaking chapter was particularly valued for its potential to encourage a more holistic and collaborative approach to scheme development. Reflecting this feedback, the revised guidance further strengthens the role of placemaking through additional references, enhanced supporting text and improved integration with the wider guidance.

4.7 Welsh language

Responses to the Welsh language questions were generally less extensive than those on the core design topics, but the comments received pointed to a broadly consistent message.

Respondents said

- Many respondents did not identify significant direct negative effects arising from the proposed updates to the guidance itself. Where views were expressed, respondents generally saw the guidance as neutral to positive in its likely effects on the Welsh language, particularly where improved active travel infrastructure can help support local access, community connectivity and inclusive public participation.

- A common view was that the guidance could have indirect positive effects on opportunities to use Welsh, especially where improved walking, wheeling and cycling routes strengthen access to Welsh-medium education, local services and community facilities.
- Some respondents also linked placemaking, community connectivity and reduced car dependence to the vitality of Welsh-speaking communities, particularly in smaller settlements where local services and everyday interaction remain important.

How we are responding

Consultation feedback indicated that respondents generally considered the guidance to be neutral or positive in its likely effects on the Welsh language. Improved walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure was seen as having the potential to support access to Welsh-medium education, local services and community facilities, thereby creating additional opportunities for people to use Welsh in their everyday lives. Respondents also highlighted the role that placemaking, community connectivity and reduced car dependence can play in supporting the vitality of Welsh-speaking communities, particularly in smaller settlements. These responses reinforce the wider benefits of active travel investment in strengthening local communities and improving access to services across Wales.

4.8 Wider comments

The final open question generated a wide range of additional comments, many of which reinforced themes already raised elsewhere in the consultation while also introducing broader strategic issues.

Respondents said

The responses suggest that, for many participants, the consultation was not only about specific design elements but about the wider philosophy, implementation and enforcement context of the guidance.

Ambition vs Real-world delivery

- A recurring theme in Q9 was concern about the balance between ambition and real-world delivery.
- Respondents often returned to the difficulty of implementing best-practice active travel design in constrained, historic or politically sensitive environments, and questioned how local authorities will be supported to make difficult decisions where space is limited.

Polarised views on decision trees

- Some comments expressed frustration that the guidance may still be interpreted too flexibly, while others cautioned that overly rigid standards may make delivery harder in practice.
- This reinforces a broader tension visible throughout the consultation between clarity and flexibility, and between ideal design outcomes and local constraints.

Capability to challenge and review

- Another common theme concerned compliance, accountability and iteration. Some respondents asked what mechanisms exist to challenge or review schemes that technically comply with the guidance but are still not usable in practice, particularly for disabled people.
- Others raised concerns about whether the guidance is treated as an endpoint rather than a starting point for learning, testing and refinement. These comments suggest that respondents desire stronger processes for feedback, review and improvement after implementation.

Continuous engagement and co-production

- Some comments also pointed to a wider appetite for ongoing engagement and co-production, especially with disabled people and other groups affected by accessibility barriers.
- This echoed the stakeholders who took part in the targeted phase and the workshops, in suggesting that lived experience should be embedded early and continuously, rather than only sought once design proposals are already well advanced.

4.9 Other Comments

A number of respondents raised concerns that equestrian users are not explicitly considered within the guidance. These responses highlighted perceived gaps in provision for horse riders, particularly in rural areas, and suggested that equestrians face similar safety and accessibility challenges to other non-motorised users. Some respondents called for greater recognition of equestrian needs within route design and network planning. While Welsh Government and Transport for Wales understand the concerns of these individuals, these comments relate to modes that fall outside the statutory definition of active travel within the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, which focuses on walking, wheeling and cycling, and were therefore considered outside the scope of this consultation.

A small number of respondents expressed the view that public funding allocated to active travel infrastructure would be better directed towards other public services, particularly the NHS. These comments reflected broader perspectives on public spending priorities rather than the specific content of the draft guidance. As the consultation focused on proposed revisions to technical guidance for active travel, rather than funding allocations or wider budgetary decisions, these responses were considered outside the scope of the consultation.

5. Conclusion

This consultation has provided a comprehensive evidence base on the proposed changes to the Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG), drawing on a wide range of perspectives from professional stakeholders, advocacy groups and people with lived experience of using walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure.

Overall, respondents expressed broad support for the direction of travel set out in the draft guidance. There was clear recognition of the need to improve the quality, clarity and consistency of the document, and strong endorsement of its overarching aims to enhance accessibility, inclusivity and user experience. The introduction of new tools, updated standards and a greater emphasis on inclusive design were widely welcomed as positive steps forward.

However, this support was frequently qualified by concerns about how the guidance will operate in practice. Across multiple questions, respondents emphasised the importance of ensuring that the guidance is sufficiently nuanced, context-sensitive and capable of being applied effectively in real-world conditions. A recurring message was that design decisions should not be overly simplified or mechanistic, and that professional judgement, supported by clear evidence and audit processes, remains essential.

A number of key cross-cutting themes emerged from the consultation.

First, accessibility and inclusion were consistently identified as central priorities. Respondents strongly supported the intention to design for a wider range of users, particularly disabled people, but also highlighted areas where proposed solutions may not fully address the needs of those most vulnerable to conflict or exclusion. This was particularly evident in relation to shared use paths and cycle track continuity at bus stops, where respondents expressed concern about the potential for ongoing ambiguity, discomfort or risk.

Second, there was a clear preference for design approaches that minimise conflict between users, rather than relying on mitigation measures alone. This was reflected in strong support for separation where feasible, and for avoiding complex or contested layouts, such as certain bus stop arrangements where possible. While respondents recognised that constraints will sometimes require compromise, there was a consistent expectation that the guidance should set a clear hierarchy of preferred solutions.

Third, respondents emphasised the need for the guidance to be grounded in Welsh context, reflecting the diversity of urban, rural and valleys environments. Several proposals, particularly those relating to thresholds, widths and flows, were seen as requiring further refinement to ensure they are realistic and applicable across different parts of Wales.

Finally, the consultation highlighted the value of engagement informed by lived experience, particularly in relation to accessibility. Contributions from workshops, targeted stakeholder engagement and the Accessibility and Inclusion Panel reinforced the importance of embedding diverse perspectives throughout the development and design process, rather than treating them as a secondary consideration.

The findings suggest that the draft guidance represents a positive and necessary evolution of the existing ATAG framework. Respondents broadly support its ambition and intent but have identified several areas where further refinement is required to ensure that the final guidance is clear, practical, and capable of delivering genuinely inclusive outcomes.

The consultation, therefore, provided a strong foundation for the next stage of development. By addressing the issues raised, particularly around accessibility, clarity of decision-making, and real-world application, the final guidance has been designed to be better positioned to support the delivery of high-quality, inclusive active travel networks across Wales.

Appendix A – Consultation respondents

The following organisations submitted consultation responses via Welsh Government's Online Consultation. Individuals who responded have not been published.

- Brynna Taff Ely
- Bridleways RCT.
- Carmarthenshire County Council.
- Llamau.
- Monmouthshire County Council.
- Pupils 2 Parliament.
- TACP UK Ltd.
- The British Horse Society.
- The Vale of Glamorgan Council.
- Torfaen County Borough Council.
- Vale Veloways.

The following organisations submitted consultation responses via the Engage ATAG email address. Individuals who responded have not been published.

- Age Cymru.
- Ambition North Wales.
- Angela Yates and Ben Yates (ORCC).
- Arup.
- Active Travel Board.
- Atkins.
- British Horse Society.
- Cardiff Capital Region.
- Chair Wheel Rights.
- Cross-party Group on the Active Travel Act.
- Cymru Women's Sport.
- Cycling UK.
- Design Commission for Wales.
- Guide Dogs.
- Institution of Civil Engineers Wales.
- Living Streets.
- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.
- Pembrokeshire County Borough Council.
- Play Wales.
- Public Health Wales.
- Royal National Institute of Blind People Wales.
- Royal Town Planning Institute.
- Sightlife.
- Welsh Government's Strategic Road Network.
- Trades Union Congress (Wales TUC).
- University of West England.
- Violence Against Women.
- Walk Wheel Cycle Trust.

Organisations at online and/or in-person workshops:

- AECOM.
- Active Travel England.
- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.
- Bridgend County Borough Council.
- British Horse Society.
- Canal River Trust.
- Cardiff Council.
- Cardiff Council (Access Equality Forum).
- Cardiff Metropolitan University.
- Carmarthenshire County Council.
- Ceredigion County Council.
- City and County of Swansea Council
- Flintshire County Council.
- Gwynedd Council.
- Jacobs UK Ltd.
- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.
- Monmouthshire County Council.
- Neath Port Talbot Council.
- Newport City Council.
- Pembrokeshire County Council.
- Public Health Wales.
- The Transportation Consultancy.
- Torfaen County Borough Council.
- Vale of Glamorgan Council.
- Welsh Local Government Association.
- Welsh Youth Parliament.

Additional meetings:

- Accessibility and Inclusion Panel.
- Age Cymru.
- Cycling UK.
- Older people's network.
- RNIB and Guide Dogs.
- Welsh Government's Strategic Road Network Division.
- Welsh Youth Parliament.
- Women's walking and wheeling workshop.

87 respondents asked to remain anonymous.
6 easy read responses.

Appendix B – Examples of before and after tables

Q1B: Revised width guidance and flow thresholds

Cycle route type and desirable/absolute minimum widths

Consultation (2025) – Table 9.9

Table 9.9: Cycle route type and desirable minimum widths

Cycle route type	Direction	Peak hour cycle flow* (one-way or two-way depending on cycle route type)	Desirable minimum width (m)	Absolute minimum width at physical constraints (m)
Protected space for cycling (including light segregation, stepped cycle track, kerbed cycle track)	1 way	<250	2.0	1.5
		>250	2.5	2.0
	2 way	<50	3.0	2.0
		50-250	3.0	2.5
		>250	4.0	2.5
Advisory and mandatory cycle lanes	1 way	Any	2.0	1.5

*based on expected future use.

ATAG (2026) – now table 9.10

Table 9.10: Cycle route type and desirable/absolute minimum widths

Cycle route type	Direction	Peak hour cycle flow* (one-way or two-way depending on cycle route type)	Desirable minimum width (m)	Absolute minimum width (m)
Protected space for cycling (including light separation, stepped cycle track, kerbed cycle track)	1 way	Less than 250	2.0	1.5
		More than 250	2.5	2.0
	2 way	Less than 50	3.0	2.0
		50-250	3.0	2.5
		More than 250	4.0	2.5
Advisory and mandatory cycle lanes	1 way	Any	2.0	1.5

*based on maximum active travel uptake future scenario.

Recommended minimum widths for shared use routes

Consultation (2025) – Table 11.5

Table 11.5: Recommended minimum widths for shared use routes carrying up 300 pedestrians per hour

Routes carrying up to 300 pedestrians per hour	Width
Up to 100 cyclists per hour	3.0m. Where not achievable, a corresponding note must be recorded in the Design Decision Log
100-300 cyclists per hour	4.0m. Where not achievable, a corresponding note must be recorded in the Design Decision Log
Over 300 cyclists per hour	Full segregation. Where not achievable use a minimum of 4.5m with a corresponding note in the Design Decision Log

ATAG (2026) – now Table 11.3

Table 11.3: Recommended minimum widths for shared use routes

Peak number of forecasted all users (people walking, wheeling and cycling)	Minimum width (m)*
Up to 100 users per day.	3.0m recommended, 2.5m acceptable.
Up to 50 users per hour.	3.0m recommended, 2.5m acceptable for less than 100m in constrained locations or for permeability links. Width between 2.5m and 3.0m should not be present for more than 25% of route length.
50-100 users per hour.	3.0m recommended.
100-300 users per hour.	Separation recommended. Shared use facility with a min 4.0m width may be acceptable.
Over 300 users per hour.	Separation recommended. Where not achievable width should be a minimum of 4.5m with a corresponding note in the Design Decision Log.

Notes

1. The minimum widths referred are subject to the additional requirements set out in section 9.8 and section 9.9 when the facility is adjacent to vertical features or a carriageway.

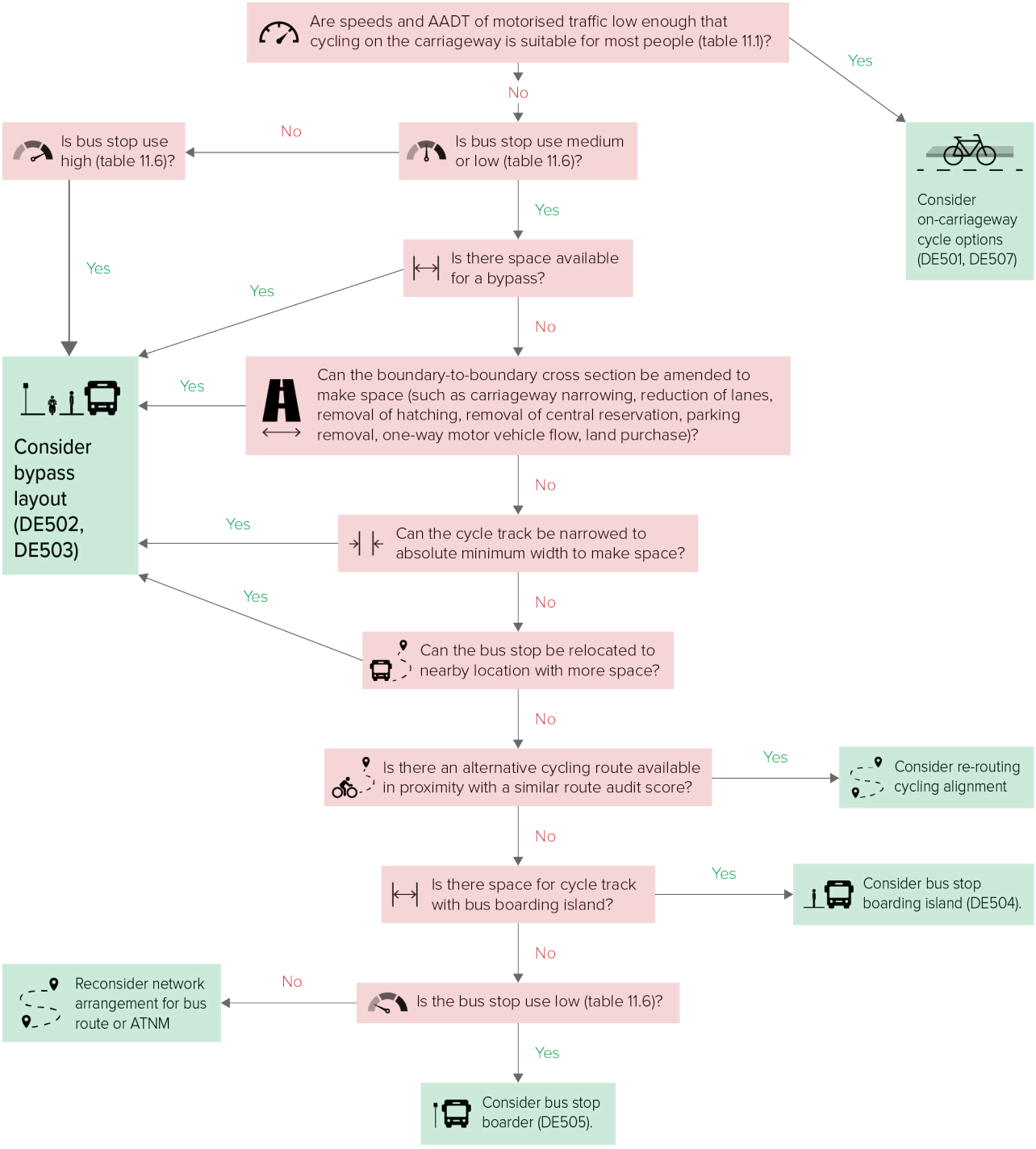
2. Where the minimum width is not achievable, a corresponding note should be recorded in the **Design Decision Log**.

Return to revised width guidance and flow thresholds

Q3A: Cycle continuity at bus stops

ATAG (2026) – new figure 11.28

Figure 11.28: Bus stop design selector



Note: Bus stops that intersect with cycle tracks, can represent challenges for some users, especially disabled, and for this reason early engagement with user groups representing disabled people is highly recommended. Engagement with local users, local cycling groups, bus providers and drivers is also recommended.

ATAG (2026) – new table 11.4

Table 11.4: Classification of bus stop use based on peak flows (people walking and wheeling on the footway behind the bus stop, people using the cycle track by the bus stop and people boarding at the bus stop)

Classification	Low Flow	Medium Flow	High Flow
Walking and wheeling (pedestrians per hour)	Up to 180	180 to 300	More than 300
Cycling (people cycling an hour)	Up to 50	50 to 250	More than 250
Bus users (boardings a day)	Up to 50	50 to 250	More than 250

Return to Cycle continuity at bus stops

Q3B: Bus stop design and cycle track continuity

DE502 continues to cover bus stop bypasses on one-way cycle tracks, while the new DE503 has been added to cover bypasses on two-way cycle tracks.

DE504 is a new design element which introduces a small boarding island.

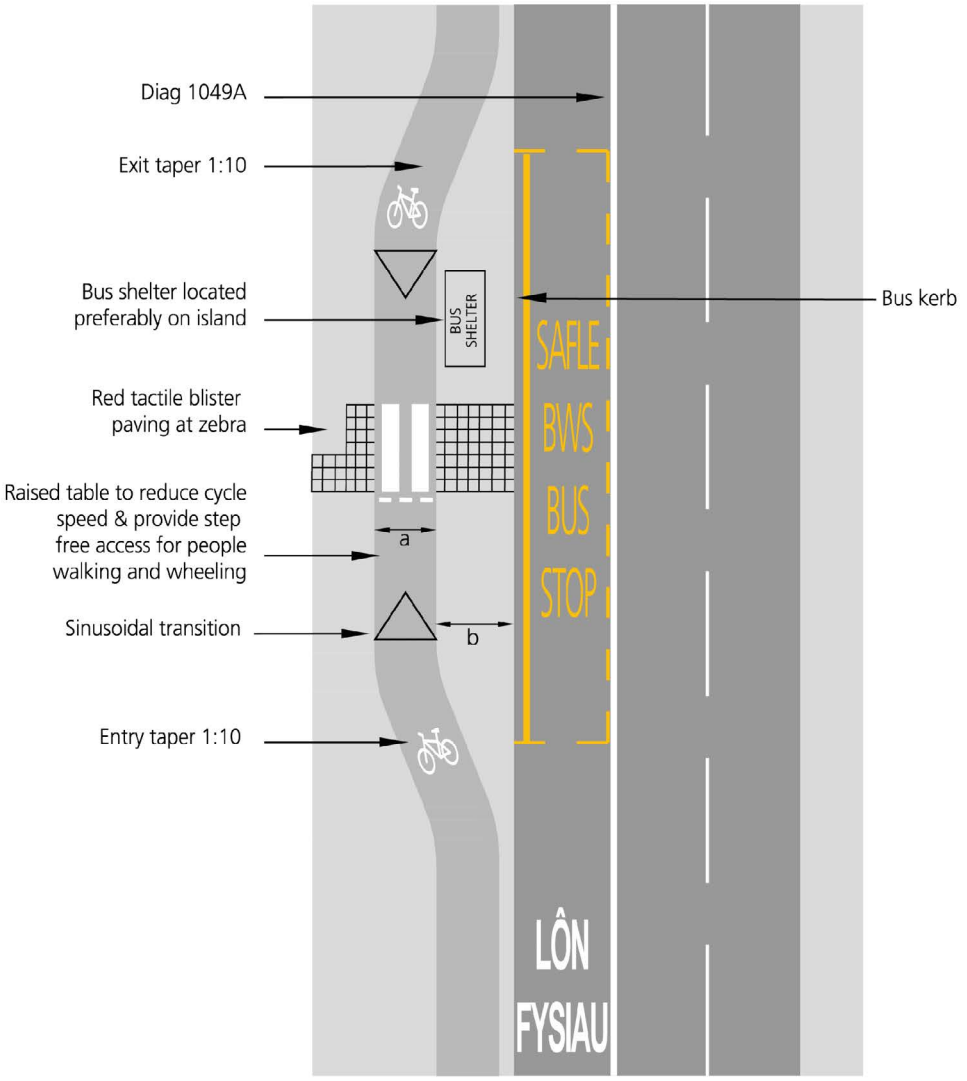
DE505 is an update to DE503 in the consultation.

Bus stop bypass

Consultation (2025) – DE502

DE502	Bus stop by-pass	AADT: Any 85th percentile speed: Any

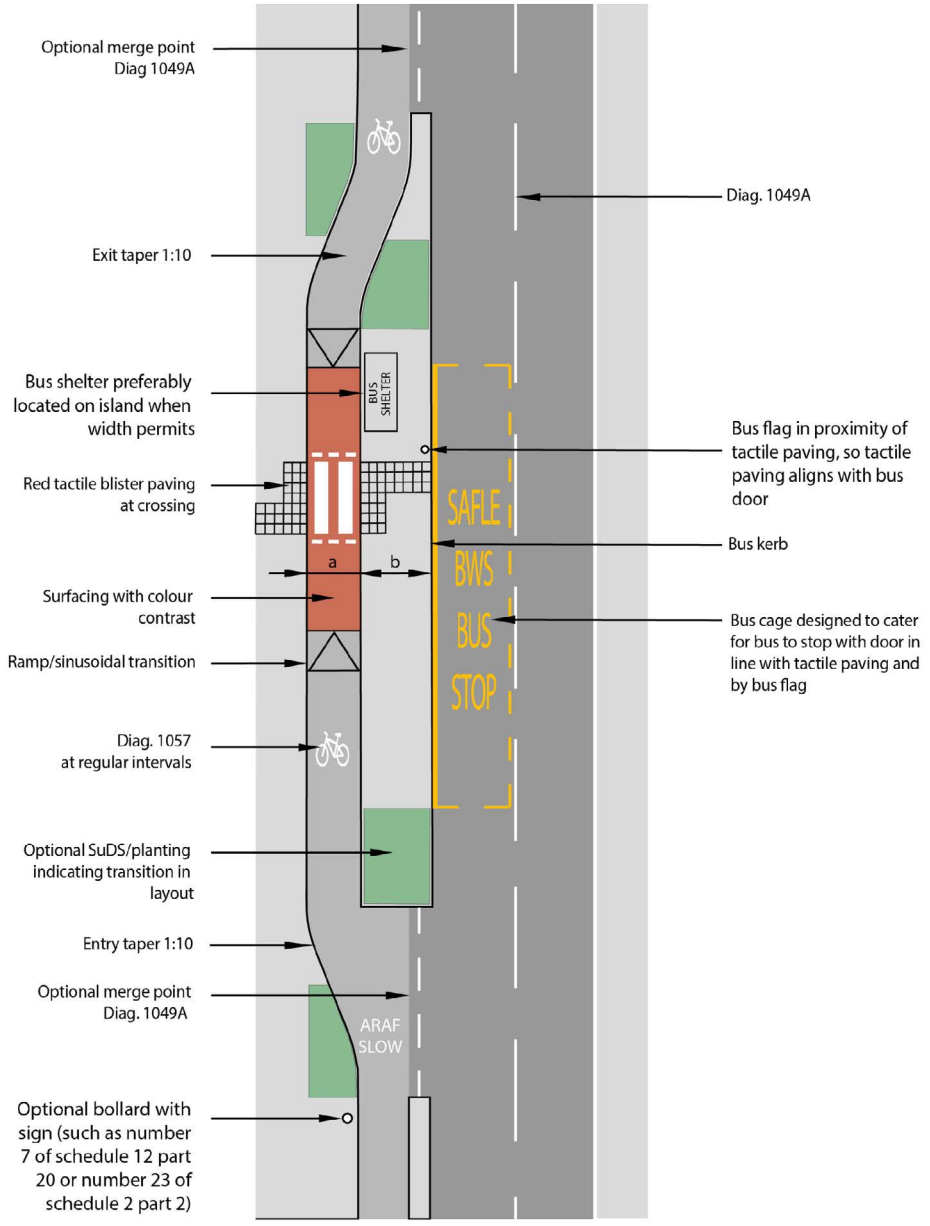
Local authorities should engage with relevant stakeholder groups during the planning and design process if this design example is being considered. Please refer to the accompanying text in section 11.31.



Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government	DE number: DE502	Previous DE number: DE502
	Do Not Scale Drawing	Revision number: 3
	Copyright: Welsh Government	

ATAG (2026) – DE502

DE502	Bus stop by-pass on one-way cycle track	AADT: Any 85th percentile speed: Any

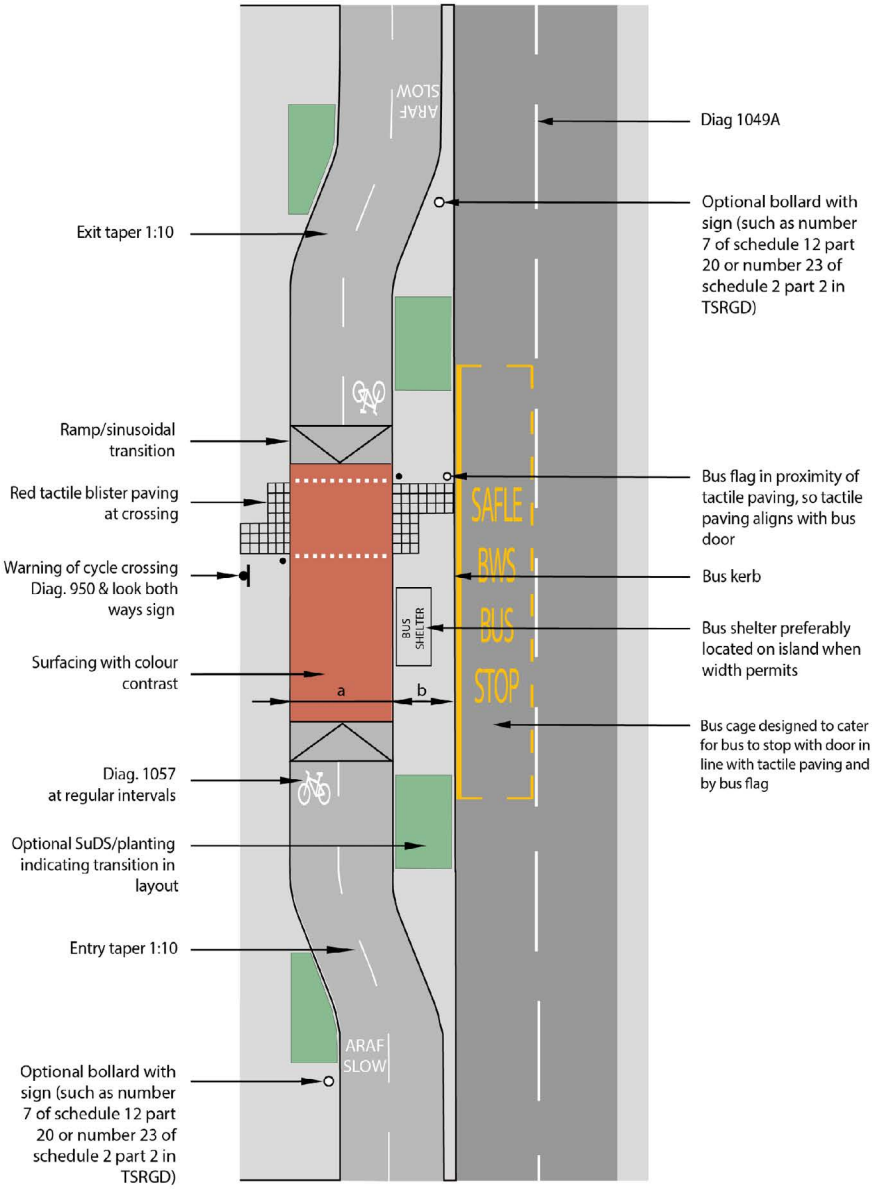


Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government	DE number: DE502	Previous DE number: DE502
	Do Not Scale Drawing	Revision number: 4
	Copyright: Welsh Government	

Bus stop bypass on two-way cycle track

ATAG (2026) – new DE503

DE503	Bus stop by-pass on two-way cycle track	AADT: Any 85th percentile speed: <33mph

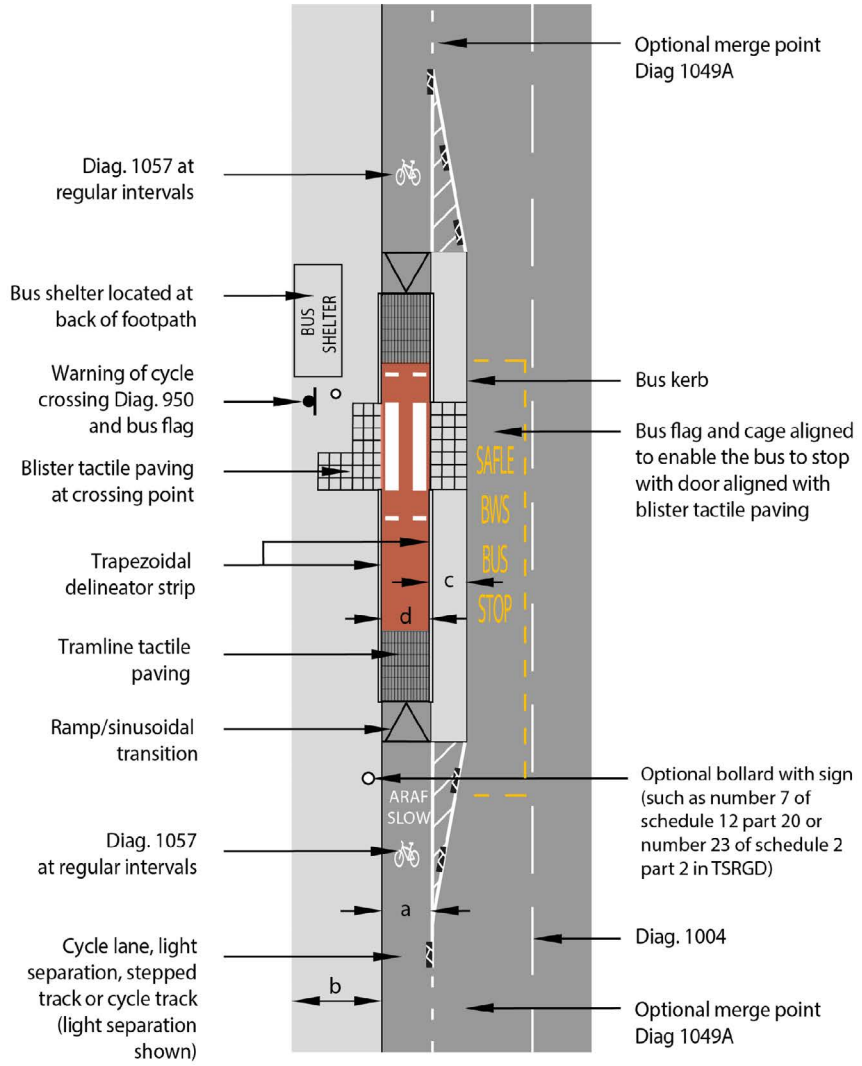


Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government	DE number: DE503	Previous DE number: N/A
	Do Not Scale Drawing	Revision number: 1
	Copyright: Welsh Government	

Cycle track with bus boarding island

ATAG (2026) – new DE504

DE504	Cycle track with bus boarding island	AADT: Any 85th percentile speed: <33mph



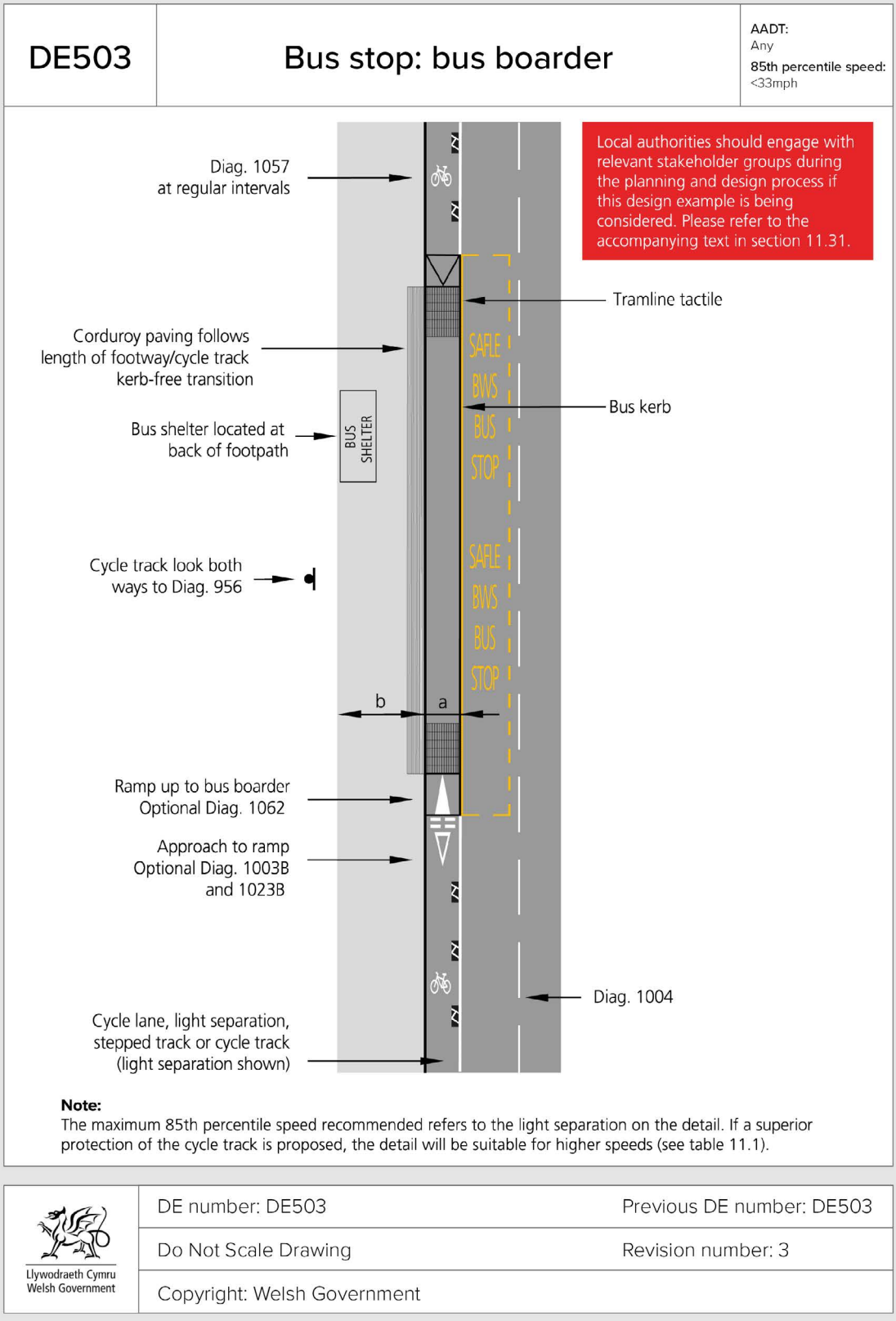
Note:

The maximum 85th percentile speed recommended refers to the light separation on the detail. If a superior protection of the cycle track is proposed, the detail will be suitable for higher speeds (see table 11.1).

Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government	DE number: DE504	Previous DE number: N/A
	Do Not Scale Drawing	Revision number: 1
	Copyright: Welsh Government	

Bus boarder

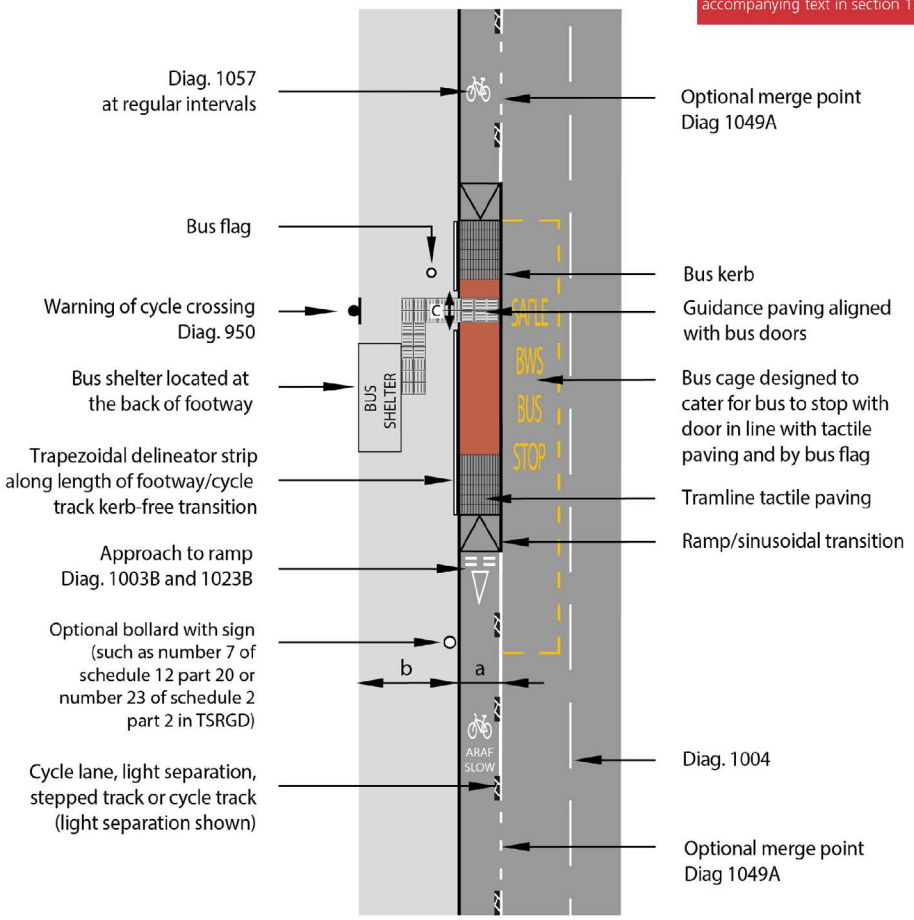
Consultation (2025) – DE503



ATAG (2026) – now DE505

DE505	Bus stop: bus boarder	AADT: Any 85th percentile speed: <33mph

Local authorities should engage with relevant stakeholder groups during the planning and design process if this design example is being considered. Please refer to the accompanying text in section 11.34.



Note:

The maximum 85th percentile speed recommended refers to the light separation on the detail. If a superior protection of the cycle track is proposed, the detail will be suitable for higher speeds (see table 11.1).

Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government	DE number: DE505	Previous DE number: DE503
	Do Not Scale Drawing	Revision number: 4
	Copyright: Welsh Government	

Return to Bus stop design and cycle track continuity

Q4B: Cycle provision and crossing tables

Cycle provision on links

Consultation (2025) – Table 11.1

Table 11.1: Cycle provision on links

85th percentile speed	Total motor traffic (AADT)	Fully kerbed separated cycle track	Stepped separated cycle track	Light separation	Cycle lane (mandatory/ advisory)	Mixed traffic
Up to 22mph	<2000	A	A	A	A	A
Up to 22mph	2000 to 2500	A	A	A	A	A
Up to 22mph	2500 to 4000	A	A	A	A	B
Up to 22mph	4000 to 5000	A	A	A	A	C
Up to 22mph	5000 to 6000+	A	A	A	B	C
Between 22mph and 33mph	<500	A	A	A	B	B
Between 22mph and 33mph	500 to 2000	A	A	A	B	C
Between 22mph and 33mph	2000 to 4000	A	A	A	B	C
Between 22mph and 33mph	4000 to 4500	A	A	A	B	C
Between 22mph and 33mph	4500 to 6000+	A	A	A	C	C
Between 22mph and 33mph	Any	A	B	B	C	C
Over 44mph	Any	A	C	C	C	C

ATAG (2026) – Table 11.1

Table 11.1: Cycle provision on links

85th percentile speed	Total motor traffic (AADT)	Fully kerbed separated cycle track	Stepped separated cycle track	Light separation	Cycle lane (mandatory/ advisory)	Cycling mixed with motorised traffic
Up to 22mph	Less than 2500	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Up to 22mph	2500 to 4000	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Not suitable for all
Up to 22mph	4000 to 5000	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Only suitable for a few
Up to 22mph	5000+	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few
Between 22mph and 33mph	Less than 500	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Not suitable for all	Not suitable for all
Between 22mph and 33mph	500 to 4500	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Not suitable for all	Only suitable for a few
Between 22mph and 33mph	4500+	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few
Between 33mph and 44mph	Any	Suitable for most	Not suitable for all	Not suitable for all	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few
Over 44mph	Any	Suitable for most	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Critical fail	Critical fail

Suitable crossings for speed/vehicle flows

Consultation (2025) Table 12.1

Table 12.1: Suitable crossings for speed/vehicle flows

85th percentile speed	Total traffic to be crossed (AADT)	Maximum number of lanes to be crossed in one movement	Uncontrolled	Pedestrian entry treatment	Cycle priority	Zebra or parallel	Signal control	Grade separated
Over 55mph	Any	Any	C	C	C	C	C	A
Between 33mph and 55mph	>10000	Any	C	C	C	C	A	A
Between 33mph and 55mph	6000 to 10000	2 or more	C	C	C	C	A	A
Between 33mph and 55mph	0-6000	2	C	C	C	C	A	A
Between 33mph and 55mph	0-10000	1	B	C	C	C	A	A
Up to 33mph	>8000	>2	C	C	C	C	A	A
Up to 33mph	>8000	2	C	C	C	B	A	A
Up to 33mph	6000-8000	2	C	C	B	A	A	A
Up to 33mph	4000-6000	2	B	C	B	A	A	A
Up to 33mph	2000-4000	2	B	B	A	A	A	A
Up to 33mph	0-2000	2	A	A	A	A	A	A

ATAG (2026) Table 12.1

Table 12.1: Suitable crossings for speed/vehicle flows

85th percentile speed	Total traffic to be crossed (AADT)	Maximum number of lanes to be crossed in one movement	Uncontrolled	Blended side road entry treatment	Cycle priority	Zebra or parallel	Signal control	Grade separated
Up to 22mph	0-2000	2	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Up to 33mph	0-2000	2	Suitable for most	Not suitable for all	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Up to 33mph	2000-4000	2	Not suitable for all	Not suitable for all	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Up to 33mph	4000-6000	2	Not suitable for all	Only suitable for a few	Not suitable for all	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Up to 33mph	6000-8000	2	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Not suitable for all	Suitable for most	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Up to 33mph	More than 8000	2	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Not suitable for all	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Up to 33mph	More than 8000	More than 2	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Between 33mph and 55mph	0-10000	1	Not suitable for all	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Between 33mph and 55mph	0-10000	2 or more	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Between 33mph and 55mph	More than 10000	Any	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Suitable for most	Suitable for most
Over 55mph	Any	Any	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Only suitable for a few	Suitable for most

Return to Cycle provision and crossing tables



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