

Aug 10, 2017

Mark Eccleston had this to say:

As a wheelchair user and a Former Paralympian and world wheelchair tennis champion, that uses a handbike, I regularly travel down from Widnes near Liverpool to use the Mawddach trail.

I have cycled trails all over the UK and the Mawddach is by far my favourite.

However, I sometimes do the trail on my own and I am unable to manage that last bit after the bridge that comes out onto the road as it is too steep and the road is too dangerous.

This is a shame as I love Barmouth and think its a great place. I therefore cross the railway line and go to Fairbourne, which I like but I would like the option of going to either places.

A walkway would definitely enable me, and many other disabled users to go to Barmouth independently if we so choose.

Jul 31, 2017

Gareth Lewis had this to say:

As I was brought up in Barmouth, always outdoors beaches and mountains this is the best spend of money. That makes this area accessible to everyone able and unable and has to happen. It would be fantastic for the town, it extends the harbour view and gives a different perspective of the outlook across the estuary and bay, something money can not buy. I hope this will happen the town needs this as a permanent reminder for people that visit and keep visiting through generations .

Jul 26, 2017

Julia Wilson had this to say:

I'm very concerned about the stretch of the A496 that makes coming up from Barmouth bridge so hazardous. Because it is a busy road squeezing between a rocky gorge with very little pavement and a perilous crossing at two points, I find it to be an extremely dangerous place. Being disabled I use a motorised trike, and, when meeting the road when there is a blockade of a bus going in one direction and a lorry in another, there is no room to make a complete safe ascent.

This means, and it's happened to me twice, I have to hold onto my trike on the hill for dear life while the traffic sorts itself out, at the risk of being dragged downhill while waiting. There is not enough room on the path when there is traffic congestion! I do hope an alternative route can be arranged, preferably with less of an incline.

The Co-Operative funds local projects if anyone would consider applying for this year that began in April.

Jul 8, 2016

Brian Matthews had this to say:

I have become aware of the problem that has occurred with access to the Barmouth Bridge.

My history with Barmouth, stretches back to 1940. My father was the Motor Transport Sergeant, of the Army unit stationed in Barmouth for the duration of the war. His office being in the the Lion Garage. I remember, my walks over the bridge to a farm house somewhere on the Athog side, for Blackberry teas.

I wholeheartedly agree that the route across the bridge has to be saved. I do think the proposed walkway, down and along the beach, is a Non Starter for economic reasons. Where is the money coming from? Has anyone from the group thought about a request to the National Lottery for funds. Best of luck with what you are trying to accomplish.

Jun 16, 2016

Peter Murrell had this to say:

I live in the neighbouring county of Conwy, but make a point of walking over your bridge each time I visit Barmouth. I have a hobby of walking bridges, the Forth road bridge-they won't let me walk on the rail bridge, and the Humber bridge just to name two.

With the demise of the old railway bridge at Penrhyndeudraeth I cannot recall where I would experience being able to use a wooden bridge for a river crossing. Your bridge is a major reason for tourism in the region and I have personally met a previous neighbour from 20 years ago making a visit.

My wife and I first visited your bridge in 2003 when we went to Aberystwth.

Feb 11, 2016

Paul Ben had this to say:

I agree in part with previous comment that Council should not pay Network Rail the current 10% of repair costs but rather just pay for repair of footpath and fence to footpath. If needs be the council should arrange for own contractors to do the work on paths etc.

Also it could be possible to have a contribution box at the old toll booth for walkers/cyclists to give a donation for footpath repairs. It would require locals to collect donations weekly.

I remember many years ago there was a Barmouth Marathon. Could this be started again to help raise funds.

Finally, if I have read correctly that 2017 will be 150 years anniversary of the bridge being built. Surely this gives an opportunity to raise funds for the footpath repairs.

As a visitor who uses the bridge many times over holidays I wish you all well in your attempts to ensure path never closes.

Dec 11, 2015

Alex Jones had this to say:

I think it's important for Barmouth Bridge to be open to pedestrians and cyclists. Why do Network Rail charge the Council a fee for this? Surely since the bridge is there anyway they should allow access for free? It's a lovely route to run or cycle over.

It's good that you're campaigning to save the bridge, but I don't support your other agenda, in campaigning for a NEW route from Barmouth Bridge into town. I think that would be a waste of money and resources, and bad for the environment. It bothers me a bit that a group campaigns on one issue, gets support for it, then claims it is also support for other things they want. I don't want new access, just for the bridge to stay open.

Nov 13, 2015

Duncan Lingard had this to say:

Malcolm Shaw and I visited Barmouth last month. We arrived on an exceptionally calm evening and before supper we strolled over the bridge to the other side of the estuary. We were absolutely spellbound by the beauty before us and it would be a great shame if this could not be shared by others.. please keep pedestrian and cyclist access open - it was a truly memorable experience.

Oct 30, 2015

Viv Sears had this to say:

I am unable to come to your action day on Saturday but would like to express support for your campaign. As someone who lives in the area and uses the bridge to walk and cycle, I would be very very upset if we could no longer use this route. What is the point of spending lots of money on a Welsh Coast Path and the shutting this important coastal route used by lots of people? Only in Wales would this crazy idea even be considered.

Aug 21, 2015

Jean Higgins had this to say:

My husband and I visited Barmouth for the first time in August and were stunned by the beauty of the area and the jewel that is the Barmouth viaduct bridge. We walked across the bridge on a beautiful day and all the way around to enjoy a coffee at the golf course on the other side of the estuary and were blessed by a trip back to Barmouth on the little ferry which take you straight back over to Barmouth harbour. The walk we enjoyed that sunny day was absolutely perfect. We really did feel we should have been asked for a contribution to walk over the bridge and would have happily paid a toll. An honesty box at the very least would be a really good way of raising funds for your walkway. We do support your plans to make the walkway to the bridge safer and more appealing to visitors and obviously all attempts to secure the future of the bridge itself for enjoyment by future generations.

This is not just of local interest but in THE NATIONS interest. I wonder Michael Portillo might not be a good supporter of the Barmouth Viaduct Bridge and its access to the public, if not already, given his love of railways.

Aug 15, 2015

Jean and Howard Alexander-Thomas had this to say:

This is a brilliant idea, which will be of great benefit to Barmouth and surrounding areas. If the seaward facing wall could be finished in the style used in the new walling along the Dolgellau roadway, it would not only look good but demonstrate the skills of local workmen, and use of local stone. In Wales for Wales by Wales!

Has crowdfunding been considered? Apologies if we've missed something on your site about this matter.

Good Luck

Aug 15, 2015

B-VAG had this to say:

The Barmouth Viaduct Action Group notes the previous entry by Jocelyn Whysall and makes the following response:

The survey was conducted by a well-respected and experienced consultant. The survey was not pre-advertised nor was anybody pre-selected to take part in the survey. In particular, given that most of our contacts have expressed support for the project, we were advised specifically, not to email our contact list, thus avoiding any potential bias arising from their participation. Full details of the methods used are on page 7 of the Economic Assessment Impact Report which was

subsequently produced. This report is available on the "Latest Update" page of our website www.b-vag.org.uk/next.html#eair

In addition, a smaller (for technical reasons) version of the survey was presented on our website to be completed by site visitors, Again, for the reasons mentioned above, this was not advertised or communicated to anyone by email. Comments on the online results are available on page 15 of the report.

B-VAG is aware that Gwynedd Council have included the option of no longer making the payment to Network Rail, in respect of the pathway over the bridge, in their list of possible cuts. However this is just one of many non-statutory sums that are on the list and potentially could be "saved" and will be part of their consultation process with the public over the next couple of months.

Aug 15, 2015

Jocelyn Whysall had this to say:

Unfortunately I do not access these pages on a daily basis so was unable to participate in the survey of May 2015. I would have LOVED to have participated but obviously was not given the option as I didn't know about the survey till today. How did you choose who could know about and access the survey? I would have thought an easy mass mailing to all the emails on record would have been ideal as those are obviously some of the people interested in this project.

I fail to see the logic in your group proposing to spend 3 million pounds on this walk/cycle way when Barmouth council is suggesting it is no longer willing to spend 30,000 annually to maintain the viaduct's walkway.

Rename your group "A Path to Nowhere."

Jul 31, 2015

David Evans had this to say:

I wish to state my strong objections to any plans to close the Barmouth Bridge walk. It provides many uplifting views to all of us who love to walk the bridge. I wrote to Gwynedd county council over a year ago (heard nothing) and suggested a donation box sited in the existing toll house to avoid paying for a permanent position to collect monies. This will go a long way to improving the financial position which threatens to close the bridge walk. I cannot tell you the enjoyment it has given everyone and is an important link on the Wales cycle network, keep it open for the sake of humanity.

I will work tirelessly to keep it open. I live over 40 miles away and visit at least 6 times a year.

May 14, 2015

Steve Dunne had this to say:

This is an excellent idea which would much improve the access to Barmouth for cyclists and walkers alike. During our recent visit (May Bank Holiday 2015) we were almost run over whilst attempting to cross the road to return over the bridge.

May 1, 2015

Robin Goodwin had this to say:

Over the years access to Barmouth bridge has become increasingly difficult and dangerous. This is a brilliant idea. Well done. I just hope the finance will be available for a successful completion.

Apr 7, 2015

Sue Slator had this to say:

I have been coming to Barmouth regularly for many years and no visit is complete without crossing the bridge numerous times, to view the ever changing stunning view. I have just watched the new video of the proposed access and I am fully supportive of what a great asset this will be to Barmouth. The bridge is only accessible to me because I am lucky enough to have an all terrain disability "Tramper" that can cope with the steep entry and exit point. However getting onto the road is a nightmare. When the bridge is busy I need two companions to exit the bridge. I can only do the last slope in one go, so need someone on the road to confirm the road is traffic free and another to ask other walkers and cyclists to hang back, so when the road is clear I can drive on to the road without stopping. As I am waiting to exit the bridge I often witness how difficult and frankly dangerous it is for families attempting to cross the road to the narrow pavement opposite the bridge exit. The bridge is now an important part of the coastal path, and this project deserves full support in making the bridge accessible and safe for all.

Jul 6, 2014

John Ward had this to say:

I drive from Birmingham to Dolgellau as often as I can (weather permitting) so that I can ride my bike along the Mawddach Trail to Barmouth. There I have something to eat, a lie on the beach (weather permitting) and buy a few gifts to remind me of my visit. The drive to Dolgellau is very enjoyable and the scenery is a complete tonic that keeps

me going until my next visit. The worst bit is the end, the steep climb to the road and the journey into Barmouth itself. It is such a beautiful place but it would be so much more enjoyable if the proposed project was implemented.

Jun 25, 2014

Colin Maclennan had this to say:

We have just returned from a visit to Barmouth - our fourth at this time of year! Barmouth is in a lovely part of Wales, but I must say that I find the walk from the town to Porkington Terrace to get to the bridge viaduct very scary indeed. It is far and away the worst thing about the town.

So I would definitely support the proposed new pedestrian link. Pedestrian crossings on the main road are not the answer. The proposed pedestrian link with views across the estuary and harbour would be in keeping with the high standard of many other walks around the town.

Mar 26, 2014

Colin J Cooper had this to say:

I have lived in Barmouth for many years now and I walk up and down Porkington Terrace and down to town every day [sometimes twice a day] so I know first hand how busy/dangerous it can be. This proposal must be one of the most innovative things I have seen in many a year I am all in favour of it, bring it on.

Jan 5, 2014

Ade Carr had this to say:

I whole heartedly support this project for Barmouth as a wonderful improvement for not only Barmouth but for residents and visitors alike, and also the sea defences, the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, and the added benefit for the disabled excess this would provide, as a frequent visitor to Barmouth I hope this project gets the support it deserves and not negative and unnecessary objections by folk living in the 18th century. This project is of benefit to all.

Aug 30, 2013

Iocelyn Whysall had this to say:

Continuing on with the theme of KISS - Install a pedestrian crossing light on the hill approaching Porkington terrace going out of Barmouth, and another closer to the bridge access (mid way?) down Porkington terrace into the town. The lights can be activated by the people who wish to cross the road. These crossing areas could form the only access to the bridge. The narrow roads are part of Barmouth's charm and have been successfully navigated by thousands of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians

for the past hundred years. People : walkers / riders and drivers have learnt to share the road.

Aug 26, 2013

Mark Sprague had this to say:

Having spent a wonderful weekend in and around Barmouth, as a visitor I entirely endorse what you are trying to achieve here. We hired bikes from the Birmingham garage in Barmouth and then cycled to Dolgellau along the estuary, the only dangerous point of the entire idyllic cycle was crossing the road at Barmouth at the beginning and end.

The current set up is very dangerous. We were in Barmouth for the August bank holiday weekend. The traffic in and out was heavy and constant. It was difficult to cross the road at the beginning. We were a party of adults who were able to stop on the narrow path on the road up the hill opposite the drop down to the bridge. I wondered as we did cross, how would you do this with children or disabled people. On the return I saw first hand how challenging this was.

At the top of the slope back up to the road from the bridge, a mother, her young sons and a dog were trying to navigate the dangerous crossing to the path on the other-side. The traffic flow was constant, speeding and dangerous. Without me and my wife standing in the middle of the road to stop the traffic both ways she would have had to taken undue risk to cross. Being a visitor to the area I assume you are planning this safer route because someone has already been injured or worse. If an accident hasn't already happened, it can only be a matter of time if nothing is done. The proposed changes are not only entirely sensible from my view but critical. I would not want to be responsible for the proverbial 'accident waiting to happen' if this does not get passed.

Aug 17, 2013

Jocelyn Whysall had this to say:

I just viewed your proposed alternative access point for the Barmouth bridge footpath. Instead of having to undergo the expense of adding on to the railway embankment which involves not only local planning/historical agencies as well as the Railway authorities why not use the simplest solution - KISS!

The park (Orielson Gardens) which was a beautiful area when I was a child, could be the easiest and safest solution. Use the path through the park which opens up onto the existing widened area of the road as the main access point. Safe for pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchair users who

could then cross over the road to the existing pavement which runs all the way down into Barmouth. The current access area could be changed to a pedestrian only access point. I don't feel that the cost and inevitable disruption of rail service during construction is the best use of funds as the new path would only be really necessary during the summer months. Redeveloping the park area would be a far less costly and attractive answer to the current problem. The park had beautiful gardens and seating areas that can be enjoyed by locals and visitors alike. I don't know why it has been left unattended for so many years.

I enjoyed the video though it's rather unfortunate that the English speaking presenters are obviously not from Barmouth originally as they are unable to pronounce even the most common local Welsh words correctly i.e Mawddach.

Aug 16, 2013

Kate Bradford had this to say:

I emailed you in June with my comments on the project but did not get a reply. Can you please confirm you received my email? I am happy to post my observations publicly on your guest page but would be very interested to receive your feedback.

(This omission has been addressed and Kate's original email is presented on our letters page: www.bvag.org.uk/ltrs.html - B-VAG)

The proposed project is ambitious and whilst I wholeheartedly support making the access safer, unlike some of your commentators, I don't support the construction of a concrete embankment as I believe there are alternative, more cost effective and practical solutions that would be aesthetically more suitable to this beautiful area. An interim solution to slow the traffic on Porkington hill and join the existing pavement to the entrance to avoid walking straight onto the road should be considered.

Aug 10, 2013

Daniel Brooks had this to say:

I have thought long and hard about this proposal before making the following comments.

But I have come to the conclusion that the group responsible for this

initiative should be commended. As a local that has walked this bridge countless times, I have become more and more concerned about what has become a highly dangerous situation. It is easy to say that there has never been an accident at the junction of the bridge access and the main road, but the volume of persons now using that access has multiplied immensely. The advent of tv shows and advertising that has popularised the Mawdach Trail has led to an unprecedented volume of visitors. The proposed new development can only enhance that popularity and lead to a safer environment for all those that have the privilege of using it. I have spent many years promoting the enjoyment of this wonderful part of the world and I can only lend my full support to all those involved in this wonderful initiative that will open up the Mawdach Estuary to a whole new audience that might never have otherwise enjoyed it. This scheme will at last bring the Mawdach Estuary into the heart of Barmouth where it belongs.

Aug 4, 2013

Norma Stockford had this to say:

I was pleased to read Emily May Peters' letter drawing attention to the needs of the deaf. The B-Vag project focuses on access for the disabled, and the word 'disability' covers many conditions, some not just physical. Deafness or hearing impairment is a silent disability all too often ignored. I too am registered disabled, being profoundly deaf in my left ear, and I sympathise with Emily's problems. I use the bridge regularly, but when I go for my weekly run I have to choose a time when it is quiet so that I can enjoy my exercise without fear of collision with cyclists. Nothing is more beautiful than a silent run across the estuary with the sun rising above Cader, bathing the Mawddach and the Clockhouse in early morning light. But I cannot allow myself to get carried away by the beauty, I have to concentrate on my more immediate surroundings, I was nearly knocked down by a tandem last week, and this morning at 07.40 a.m. six cyclists approached as I ran on the narrow iron part of the bridge. I flattened myself against the railings like a frightened rabbit and saying 'This is scary!' 'It ain't arf!' came the reply! Come on, I'm 68 years old, they should have given way to me on grounds of age alone!

In general, however, cyclists are mostly polite and pleasant. The other day I thanked a lady for drawing her presence to my attention with a genteel, but firm ring of her bell. She was most civilised.

I do love to see cyclists using the bridge. Nothing is more pleasing than

seeing a young family draw up in the layby opposite my house, prepare their bicycles, don protective gear and Mum, Dad and children happily make their way to the bridge. Then, they all have to dismount, get off the pavement and enter the road to get around the small wall. Removing this and widening the existing entrance would allow people to cross perfectly safely further down Porkington Terrace. The new walkway will encourage people to cross at an even more dangerous corner at Penlan Cottage – this is not an improvement, but simply moves the problem. But we must all acknowledge that Wales is hilly, that pavements are inadequate and that the bridge is too narrow for the volume of traffic encouraged to use it.

This brings me to ask whether the existing entrance to the bridge will be closed when the new walkway is built. If so, how do we access the bridge at highwater spring tides and when the walkway is covered in sand?

There is a good two to three feet more sand in this area in recent years, the sand accumulation worsened when Network Rail replaced the old wooden bridge with a more open concrete one in 2002. The pedestrian side of the bridge is also closed on occasions for necessary repairs.

So, come on B-Vag, just erect flashing lights warning motorists to slow down to 20 mph, demolish the wall that forms a barrier between access to the bridge and the pavement and widen the entrance. This is a far cheaper option, and the millions saved could be spent on keeping our EMI unit open in Dolgellau.

Aug 4, 2013

Gary Loveman had this to say:

Firstly, isn't it wonderful that we live in a democracy that allows us the freedom to comment on platforms like this guest book? Secondly, I am pleased that Mr Pritchard has taken the time to make a further address. I therefore feel free to make my own observations on his comments, yet I am also concerned that anything I say might validate, in any small way, his opinions. He makes incorrect, negative, suspicious (bordering on paranoid) and dismissive outbursts in nearly all his comments.

If he is genuinely concerned for the future of Barmouth please can he, rather than object to improvements to the town, come up with more helpful comments or better still his own up to date version of a 'Plan' that will bring 'Sustainability and Growth' to a town that deserves and needs both.

I am intending to uproot and move to Barmouth in the near future, to live

and open businesses that will provide growth, employment and careers for local people. Fortunately I have met many of the local residents that are infinitely more positive than Mr Pritchard ; otherwise my future plans would take me elsewhere.

I reiterate my comments from my earlier post that I fully support the aims of B-VAG.

Aug 1, 2013

Bill Pritchard had this to say:

OK, so you've had 6 weeks and have so far refused to deny that this so-called "walkway" is not an essential part of a harbour Marina scheme.

I first got suspicious when I saw that Smith character was involved. He was responsible for that other Marina asset, the floating quay by the slipway that is quite useless and sank last year, but part of the fiddle is that Zurich Insurence, Gwynedd Council, the ratepayers, will pay to replace it.

Railtrack, aka Network Rail, will have difficulty finding another operator after Arriva leave.

Never mind, if the Bridge is demolished we'll have to cross on the ferries. For "Marina" read floating caravan site. Pink and blue toilet paper floating everywhere every morning. Who intends operating that?

Jul 31, 2013

Zoe Hobbs had this to say:

We were so excited to see your proposal. My husband and I have been working at Min Y Don Christian Adventure Centre, Arthog for the last 14 and 10 years. We walk both school and family groups from the Centre to Barmouth on a regular basis. We have always been concerned about the crossing point. Our group sizes can be up to 50 people at any time so we have to organize a safe crossing using our staff wearing high vis and sometimes having to hold the traffic up to ensure the group get across safely. When we discovered the beach option at low tide a couple of years back it was revolutionary and certainly made our job that much less stressful. Obviously we can't always take that beach option because of the tides. For us to be able to have a route that doesn't take us near the roads would be absolutely amazing. It's always been something of a concern that I have always been meaning to contact the council to see if there is anything that could be done. So thank you and we hope your proposal is put to action.

Jul 31, 2013

Barmouth Walking Festival had this to say:

As organisers of the Barmouth Walking Festival we would like to add our support to this project. Barmouth Walking Festival was created to bring walkers back to the area following the Foot and Mouth Epidemic and has grown year on year.

We encourage the use of Public Transport and Footpaths and many many of our walks use Barmouth Bridge to access walks on the other side of the Estuary (often meaning that our walkers don't have to sit in a car for 40 minutes before commencing their walk).

The Walkway would be an excellent addition to Barmouth allowing our groups of walkers to safely access the Bridge, as well as showing them more of what Barmouth has to offer.

This is an excellent project and we support it wholeheartedly.

Jul 30, 2013

Rob and Caroline Gallimore had this to say:

We would 100% like to support this excellent idea from B-Vag. The video footage highlights how dangerous the entrance/exit onto the main road from the bridge can be , quite frightening really to see the variety of large vehicles especially which use the road, and the people trying to cross it safely. An accident waiting to happen we feel!

We run a local static caravan park and accommodate many hundreds of customers throughout the years in our extensive range of hire caravans, as well as the regular customers who own their own holiday homes. They all come because they love what Barmouth has to offer, but we have to say we are asked on a regular basis, 'can we walk or cycle across to bridge and how do we get to it ?'. We continually strive to maintain and upgrade our own park facilities to keep and encourage custom. We have no doubt that the addition of this walkway would certainly enhance Barmouths existing harbour features and make it a much more pleasurable and safe environment for locals and tourist to cross the bridge. GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR PROJECT.

Jul 26, 2013

Emily May Peters had this to say:

For many years I have crossed the unique and fabulous Barmouth Bridge but with ever increasing difficulties.

So why should this be?

I am profoundly deaf - for over 30 years - and I have a Hearing Dog for Deaf People. The ever increasing problems are because the 'Powers That

Be' have mixed fast moving bicycles with humans on the same narrow space - it doesn't work and it will never work.

The bridge is often awash with families, teenagers, middle aged and retired people, all of whom put much needed money into the pockets of West Wales.

One in seven of these people have hearing problems and some of us have no hearing at all. Should a cyclist ring his/her bell I will not hear it nor will I hear them bawling and shouting. Despite notices advising priority to pedestrians this has never happened. I have never seen or experienced a cyclist dismounting their bikes and walking passed a pedestrian whether they have ignored their shouts because they cannot hear them or whether they are in a wheel chair with an Assistance Dog or whether they are using a slow motorised scooter as a disabled person.

The cyclists complain bitterly and justifiably about motorist behaviour on the roads. What is shocking to watch and experience is to see those self same cyclists speeding like hooligans and even racing each other when they are sharing footpath space - wherever it may be.

Tywyn, a few miles from Barmouth is still building shared cyclist/human paths and they don't work either. On those I have nearly fallen into the paths of these 'runaway' bikes as they hurtle past me within an inch or two of my shocked, stunned mind and body. Never, never do cyclist get off their bikes and walk past.

I consulted a committed cyclist about Assistance Dogs (including Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Canine Partners for Independence, Dogs for the Disabled all of which come under the umbrella of Assistance Dogs UK) and they admitted that they do not see Assistance Dogs, although they are aware of the colour of a Guide Dog's coat. In other words he admitted that dogs are ignored. I pointed out that a Blind person would be able to hear the warnings that the cyclist is shouting but deaf people cannot.

Trying to keep looking behind for speeding cyclists is not an option as often this will create dangerous dizziness and loss of balance for deaf people.

Jul 23, 2013

Roy Watson had this to say:

I think the B-VAG proposal is an excellent idea. Some years ago I cycled with my 14 year old son from Cardiff to Barmouth. It was a great experience. However, I distinctly remember my worry as my son cycled

off ahead of me across the Barmouth viaduct. I was aware of the main road at the other end of the bridge but was unable to stop him.

Fortunately there was no mishap but this small section is definitely a hazard for inexperienced cyclists.

However, it is not just a question of safety. The estuary is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful stretches of coastline in the U.K. To link the cycleway directly into the town along the Quay would be a real feature that can only have major economic benefits from a tourism point of view. Cycling and cycling tourism is big business now. On the continent it is one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism market . The London School of Economics calculate the market in the U.K. at over £2 billion p.a.

A tiny percentage of this for Barmouth represents a lot of hotel bedrooms, a lot of meals, and a lot of bottles of wine for the local economy.

This is one of those projects where it is difficult to understand why no one has thought of it before. It would help to transform the image of Barmouth.

I fully support the B-VAG initiative. Hats off to all the steering group !

Jul 21, 2013

Peter Causton had this to say:

We used the cycle route yesterday and it was brilliant until we reached Barmouth at which point it was steep and then narrow path into the town along the side of the road dodging cars. My 5 and 8 year old sons were nearly mown down by the traffic. Why can't the trail go straight round to the beach and harbour? It's ludicrous.

Jul 13, 2013

K Jones had this to say:

I have used the viaduct since I was a little girl and holidayed in the area, I have lived in the area for over 30 years and use the bridge to get to and from Barmouth very regularly both cycling and walking. I agree the road is dangerous at the present crossing point, but common sense and patience means it can be negotiated safely. I have done so myself for years including the years of my youngest son in his pram and then pushchair. He now negotiates it on a daily basis on his bike. However the mounting of the narrow pavement by larger vehicles is something that needs addressing now not when someone has been hit. There are many places equally if not more dangerous in the area, I know I walk one to work on a daily basis and I think money cannot be found to favour one area rather than another. I do not think I would like to walk the proposed

walkway in the winter with a westerly gale blowing a full tide probably up to the proposed walkway. I much prefer the slightly more sheltered walk of today. The traffic is not a year round problem, at its worst just through the holidays. I do understand the problems of wheelchair users but doubt very much they would go via the walkway in bad weather, something which happens on a very regular basis here!

Jul 13, 2013

Gil Taylor had this to say:

Surely a pedestrian crossing would be a good start. I use the bridge regularly and think this would be a simple and safe way of getting onto the main road.

Jul 2, 2013

Gary Loveman had this to say:

I fully support the intentions of the B-VAG and any other plan that encourages the revitalization of Barmouth. Tourism is an integral part of the local and regional economy and the Wales Coastal Path is a hugely positive influence toward increasing visitor numbers, both day trippers and all season walkers and cyclists.

The WCP website,(http://www.walescoastpath.gov.uk/about_the_path/history.aspx) displays the aerial picture of the bridge to illustrate the beauty of the Welsh coastline and why not?

As the powers that be have agreed the Coastal Path should use the Bridge, (rather than divert inland), and that numbers crossing will very likely increase, it surely makes sense to plan ahead and fully support the efforts of the Group with assured funding.

On a more local basis, Barmouth has the opportunity to embrace a new era this project would encourage. Visitors, like myself, love the place and would like to share the experience with as many friends and family as possible.

Good luck with your efforts B-VAG

Jul 2, 2013

Seona Lightfoot had this to say:

We visit regularly and expecting to move into Barmouth within the next 6 months. The pedestrians, bike riders etc will benefit greatly from an alternative off-road route, for both safety and pleasure.

The Town is largely about tourism, so a well designed sea edge walkway can only be a further attraction. If it evolves into a Pontoon with sailing craft, how is that really a bad thing?

I recognise the negative comments are from an Accountants perspective, and a controlled budget needs consideration. But Barmouth has world class natural beauty which should not be ignored when focusing on the balance sheet.

I believe the Walkway will be of huge benefit and I applaud the local business people on the Committee for their efforts and passion.

Jul 1, 2013

Simon Weston OBE had this to say:

I am delighted to support the Barmouth Viaduct Access Group`s campaign to build a walkway from the Barmouth footbridge into the town centre. Community projects of this nature bring everyone together and the walkway will not only improve road safety but also improve accessibility for disabled people and those in wheelchairs. I fully support the efforts being made and offer my best wishes with the project.

Jun 15, 2013

N Fagan had this to say:

As somebody who has been visiting Barmouth for many years with young children I can't wait for this to be achieved.

No more having to cross a busy road right on a bend with children can only be a good thing surely!

I hope this project gets the help and support needed.

Good luck!

Jun 15, 2013

B-VAG had this to say:

The Barmouth Viaduct Action Group notes the previous entry by Bill Pritchard and makes the following observations:

* One sentence has been removed as it was felt not to meet our Guest Book policy.

Railtrack CEASED to be a company 11 years ago. Since which Network Rail have and are spending considerable sums of money on the Cambrian Lines.

The hourly service quoted is awaiting political decision as is the free transport for the elderly, also a political decision by the Welsh Government.

The reconstruction of Pont Briwet has already started.

The purpose of our project is to promote the idea of building a safe access from Barmouth, to the Viaduct across the Mawddach, for walkers, cyclists and others, including people with additional needs.

Jun 15, 2013

Bill Pritchard had this to say:

Yes, it has been known for years that the road crossing onto the Barmouth Viaduct is horrendously dangerous and in fact a road rebuild was scheduled and plans drawn up in the late 70's by the then District Council in Dolgellau. These plans are still to be seen in the County Highways Office in Dolgellau and as a local Cllr. then I got them produced for the Inquiry Inspector when the waste land in front of the Birmingham Garage was given over as a building site, despite the obvious dangerous double bends and narrow pavements of the hill.

*

Merioneth District Council was expecting the Railway to be shut down in the early Thatcher years, but it didn't happen. The road scheme was not possible without all the railway land as the present road is built over the railway tunnel.

However, Railtrack, the present owners, are acting in a very strange fashion now. They know that Arriva Trains will only run the trains with huge subsidies from Gwynedd Council. School's Transport will soon lose pupils from either Towyn or Harlech as both schools are not economic and pupils can be sent to Dolgellau or Porthmadog cheaper by bus. The free transport for Elderly People for the winter is no more, it ended last year. Arriva insisted it went on for the last year as it had been promised, even though Gwynedd tried to pull out, claiming lack of money. Tough! Arriva said they'd leave otherwise.

Barmouth Bridge itself is obviously nearing the end of it's days, rust alone makes it unlikely to be there for long as engineering safety is very strict. It won't be rebuilt. I know they say that the smaller Brewett Bridge at Penrhyn is to be rebuilt, but I'll believe that when I see it.

Arriva would prefer to use their Diesel Multiple Units on an hourly service between Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth. They are run by the German Nationalised Railway Company and are not sentimental. These Units run mostly empty 9 months of the year.

Why? One asks, has Gwynedd been so slow in employing someone just to sit on the Bridge and take the ticket money from customers. Railtrack charge us, the Ratepayers, £40.000 a year for the footpath usage. (See today's Daily Post, page 5.)

Expect All Change shortly.

All that road needs is well sighted Pedestrian Crossing and a speed limit.

Your Harbour Walkway planned looks OK, but it looks a bit like a Harbour Marina wall to me, so you can run pontoons off it into the Harbour for just another Floating Caravan Site?

Can you assure me now, on this website, this is not so?

Jun 6, 2013

Rachel Thomas had this to say:

The small mindedness of some people makes me shake my head in wonder. In an ideal world the best solution would be to widen the road, but since that isn't possible then I believe that the BVAG proposal is the best option. Yes, a little of the natural rocks and beach will be spoilt, but not that badly from what I can see on the video and surely the safety of people, especially children, is more important, whilst allowing people to enjoy Barmouth's best and most famous feature, the bridge! The latest letter against the proposal (Cambrian News 6th June 2013, Name and Address withheld!) has me completely flabbergasted. To claim that because no one has been hurt YET crossing the road, doesn't mean it is safe and that no one will, do we have to wait until a tragedy occurs before something is done? How would you feel if it was your child or grandchild who was hurt whilst you opposed and delayed this much needed route! Not to mention the danger from cars that mount the pavement as they navigate the bends on the hill. Slow signs will not deter drivers who are keen to get into Barmouth as quick as they can and although a crossing could help in the short-term something needs to be done for the long-term. As for walkers and cyclists who wish to go up Panorama, then they can use the new walkway and then use the old path up to the road with a crossing further along on the right of the road, closer to Panoarama and where the road is straight with good visibility to make it safer to cross. I am also aghast that someone would question why disabled people, especially those in wheelchairs, would want to cross a "rickety bridge". Why shouldn't they be allowed if they want to, the video plainly shows someone in a mobility scooter crossing! At the moment I don't like taking my young children across the bridge, and when we do we usually travel one way by train just so we only have to negotiate the crossing and road once. If someone is so against the loss of the beach by the bridge, then maybe they would like to come up with a better suggestion as to what can be done, because I bet they can't! At least not one that is safe and practical and carrying on using that road or widening it, is neither!!!

Jun 1, 2013

Samantha Wilson had this to say:

I am writing to convey my delight and absolute support of the Barmouth Viaduct Access Group's proposal for a safer path into Barmouth via the Barmouth Bridge. Not only for those who are fully able but especially for those of us who suffer disability or impaired mobility.

I have been visiting Barmouth since I was a very young child, a good 37 years or so. My family roots are in the area and it has always been a very special place to me. A highlight of all my memories of Wales is the walk from Fairbourne to Arthog, then across the bridge and into Barmouth and back across on the ferry to be treated to an ice cream at the kiosk on Penrhyn Point.

This excursion had continued throughout my adult life until January 2005. At that point my life changed drastically after a serious road traffic accident left me with substantial degenerative damage to my lower spine, leaving me in constant chronic pain and seriously impairing my mobility.

I have spent the last seven years rebuilding my life and I can now walk again, somewhat slowly and sometimes with the need to use my crutches or my wheelchair, but I am once again able to try and take up some of the activities I previously enjoyed when visiting "home".

Last year, I travelled some of the Mawddach trail in my wheelchair. It was challenging but was inspirational and exhilarating. However I was and am still, deeply saddened by the realisation that I can no longer access Barmouth via the bridge, even with the assistance of my walking aids and companions, a situation which could so easily be rectified.

Historically, the bridge access on the Barmouth side has always been dangerous. But, only last week, whilst visiting, I witnessed 2 cyclists with small children also with bicycles nearly be struck by a heavy goods vehicle whilst crossing over to the entrance of the bridge path. I can only assume that sheer luck was on the side of this family as I certainly held my breath for them for that short moment! It only takes a split second for your life to be changed, something of which I am sure you will appreciate that I am more than aware of.

With the increase in tourism, from which, I understand the area to be reaping the benefits, there has to be a duty of care to ensure the safety of the bridge users when entering or exiting the bridge path. On a more personal level, I whole heartedly agree that, to enable visitors of all physical ability to enjoy the beauty of the Mawddach Estuary is also a situation that needs to be urgently addressed.

I am sure you are aware that, the breathtaking views up the valley from the vantage point at the centre of the bridge are second to none. But, I believe it is nothing short of discrimination that some members of society, through no fault of our own, are excluded from this awesome experience for the want of an access path as proposed by the Group.

I travel to the area multiple times a year and would be "over the moon" to see that the amazing vision that the Viaduct Access group have for the development of the path has come to fruition.

May 31, 2013

Doreen Lindsey had this to say:

I am a supporter of Sustrans & represent the CTC Eryri Group, the Thursday Cycling Group (based on the Porthmadog/Caernarfon area) & have been visiting Barmouth via Dolgellau & the Mawddach Trail several times a year since 2005.

I wholeheartedly agree with your proposals & would like to see a safer route onto & off the viaduct.

May 31, 2013

Robert Pullan had this to say:

Great idea.

Have you thought about or already sought charitable status for the investigative part of the project? I, and I'm sure others, would support the idea with charity donations. It would seem to pass charitable aims and I note you are seeking funding for the ongoing promotion and 'steering' of the project.

We provide accommodation in Barmouth (since Jan 12) at Penbryn Mynach and obviously love Barmouth.

May 30, 2013

Katie Price had this to say:

This is a great project which I hope does continue as it will benefit many people of Barmouth - both seasonal visitors and locals. We live in Barmouth and have family in Fairbourne so often cycle/walk across the bridge following the Wales Coastal Path. This will make the route so much safer.

Also, as an accommodation provider in Barmouth, we find that many of our guests come to Barmouth just to walk the Mawddach Trail - again, this project will make their experience much safer and memorable, for all the right reasons!

May 30, 2013

Paula Duncan had this to say:

We have accompanied young children with cycles to the access point to Barmouth bridge and it is extremely dangerous. A serious accident will happen there if nothing is done to improve it.

I appreciate there is very little of Barmouth left untouched but we are blessed to be surrounded by wonderful natural countryside and, if Barmouth is to make the most of its considerable natural assets, it has to consider the safety of the thousands of visitors to the Mawddach Trail and the Wales Coast Path. To have a continuous level walkway from the Marian in Dolgellau to the northern end of Barmouth Promenade would be a tremendous draw to the great many people who are unable to negotiate steep paths. Pedestrians heading from Barmouth for the Panorama Walk could also avoid the dangerous corner opposite the current access point to the Bridge by using the proposed pathway.

I am wholeheartedly in support of the new access proposals as I believe they are of great benefit to the town. Barmouth has to continue to attract new visitors in order to survive and what better clientele than people seeking a healthy way to appreciate Snowdonia's beauty?

May 27, 2013

Louise Hughes had this to say:

I am the County Councillor for the Llangelynnin Ward on the opposite side of the estuary to Barmouth. As a user, both pedestrian and bike, of Barmouth Bridge I fully support and endorse your plans for a safer route from the Bridge itself to Barmouth promenade. The video is an excellent illustration of the existing serious dangers facing anyone wishing to access the Bridge from the Barmouth side or exit from the Arthog side of the estuary. I was once subject to a barrage of verbal abuse from a passing motorist as I tried to cross the road to the pavement! I agree entirely with the sentiment that the current route is an accident waiting to happen.

May 26, 2013

Barbara Snowball had this to say:

Our group, *Fairbourne Rights of Access Group Ltd.*, is very impressed with your plans for improving access at the end of the Barmouth bridge. Very professional presentation. I cycle over the bridge a couple of times a week and it is pretty frightening when you get to the end and have to face all that traffic, and returning out of the town is very bad. You just cannot see round the corner. I am very surprised that nothing has

happened there yet but it is an accident waiting to happen. As far as we are concerned, these improvements would be the "icing on the cake" for this area. It is desperately needed and as for wheelchair users, I am sure they would be just delighted to be able to use the bridge.

It is quite stunning how this has all been thought out, the plans and artists impressions are excellent. So, once our Fairbourne project is completed (8 years in the making) and your new pathway, it will be astonishing to be able to go all the way from Barmouth to Fairbourne without having to go on any busy roads. It will definitely help tourism as well.

May 24, 2013

Norma Stockford had this to say:

I am pleased that the dangers we face on the hill between Craig Fach and Porkington Terrace have at last been highlighted. It's just such a shame that the new walkway will be built on what is the only remaining natural piece of seashore in Barmouth. The rocky outcrop and sandy beach at Borthwen is so beautiful it would be tragedy to 'urbanise' it with a modern walkway with railings. We should value the natural landscapes which surround us; there are enough benches, bollards and bins on the quay without extending them to this unspoilt area of the harbour.

The hill towards Porkington Terrace is used by walkers and cyclists not just accessing the bridge but also en route to Panorama and Aberamffra walks. Irrespective of a new path, people will still use this pavement and it will remain dangerous. One expects to have to be vigilant crossing the road, but pedestrians don't expect to be run down on the pavement.

I appreciate the work that has already gone into this proposal, but as the video shows, the danger that already exists on the corner of Porkington Terrace is a much more important issue to be addressed for locals and tourists alike. This needs urgent consideration now.

May 23, 2013

Beryl Wych had this to say:

We have been coming to Barmouth for about 60 years and love it. My sister now uses a mobility scooter and finds it very difficult to access the bridge. A pedestrian walkway from the harbour would be brilliant. We completely support your proposals.

May 12, 2013

Rachel Thomas had this to say:

I'm a local of Barmouth and I think that your plans are brilliant and it is something that is desperately needed in Barmouth. The road crossing to the bridge puts me off taking my children over the bridge and your plans would make it so much safer and easier to walk the bridge. It's only a matter of time before somebody gets seriously hurt or killed, but hopefully your plans will come to pass before that happens.

May 12, 2013

John Moloney had this to say:

I am a frequent visitor to Barmouth. I often cycle over the bridge to Fairbourne and The Mawddach Trail leading into Dolgellau. This is a beautiful part of the world.

The access to the bridge via Porkington Terrace is not suitable, the amount of traffic using the only road into Barmouth is exceptional especially in the summer.

The proposed walkway is an excellent idea it would encourage more people to use the bridge.

Apr 10, 2013

(1) Hello Barmouth

The Barmouth - Viaduct Access Group invite you to leave comments in our Guest Book.