



28 July 2020

Response to Wales Transport Strategy Consultation

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) wishes to submit a general response to this consultation essentially to make four points –

- The role of FBHVC and its willingness to work with the Devolved Governments
- The cultural and heritage value of historic vehicles
- The low social and environmental impact of historic vehicles
- The economic benefits that historic vehicle events can bring to an area.

The Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (<https://www.fbhvc.co.uk/>)

Set up in its current format 32 years ago the Federation represents over 500 member clubs with a total membership of a quarter of a million historic vehicle owners and enthusiasts. Interest in historic vehicles sustains economic activity worth £5.5 billion annually to the UK economy and supports the employment of nearly 35,000 people. The Federation, both itself and through its membership, is the primary national repository of knowledge and expertise on the subject of historic vehicles in general.

Historic vehicles owned by Federation members are of many kinds, including cars, motorcycles, buses, coaches, lorries, vans, utility vehicles, military vehicles, steam engines, tractors and other agricultural vehicles. These vehicles range in age from thirty years old (the internationally accepted definition of historic vehicles as used by UNESCO) to vehicles built during Queen Victoria's reign. Our members restore and preserve these vehicles for their historic interest, exhibit them at exhibitions, shows, community fetes, etc. and currently use the country's highways both in order to attend at those events, but also to participate in touring events and for general leisure purposes.

The Federation has regular contact with central Government, including Department for Education with respect to Heritage Engineering, for which the Federation supports a training scheme currently having 70 apprentices, and Department for Transport and its Agencies, including DVLA. It also works closely with the All-Party Parliamentary Historic Vehicles Group. It is keen to develop these valuable links to include the Devolved Governments where appropriate.

As noted above FBHVC works with the internationally recognised definition of historic vehicles as those being 30 years old or older. Unfortunately this does not correspond with the 40 year old definition used by the Treasury for nil VED and implemented by DVLA as the 'historic' tax class. Clean air zones and similar initiatives in England use the 40 year limit for exemptions but Scotland has, partly in response to representations by the Federation, stated its intention to adopt the 30 year definition. It is hoped that Wales will follow the Scottish approach.

Heritage Value

Historic vehicles are preserved to safeguard history, including their engineering, form, functions and their many and diverse relationships with society and social environments. Historic vehicles and their documented histories are significant in their role as means of transport, as witnesses to their historic origins, the technical state of the art of their period and last but not least for their impact on society.

The UK has a greater number and more extensive variety of historic vehicles, particularly those dating from before the Second World War, than in any European country. This reflects the different historical experiences of the UK, especially the absence of land war on its territory.

Wales has made its own small but significant contribution to this rich heritage, ranging from the Ganarew motorcycle produced in Monmouth the early years of the last century through the better known Gilbern car from Llantwit Fardre in the 1960s and early 1970s to the recent and important investments by Aston Martin and TVR. (<https://fbhvc.co.uk/motoring-heritage-of-wales>)



Low Impact

Historic vehicles do not form a part of the contemporary transportation structure of the nation. The primary purpose of their journey is seldom the transportation of either goods or people from one point to another but is rather the movement of the vehicle itself. Such use is largely an incidental part of their preservation, enjoyment and presentation to the public and to those having an interest in mobile heritage.

Research carried out by the Federation shows that in the UK historic vehicles represent around 3% of the total vehicle parc and that, on average, each one travels 1124 miles per year. This equates to a mere 0.2% of the total vehicle miles covered. This very low usage ensures that historic vehicle do not contribute significantly to any problems of congestion or air quality.

Economic Benefits

Historic vehicles and the heritage they represent are a great source of interest and entertainment for many people, not just those actively involved in the hobby but the public in general. The FBHVC research shows that more than 8 million people in the UK have an interest in historic vehicles. As a result events involving historic vehicles can bring significant income to the area.

Wales is well placed to make a significant contribution in this field as it has a long tradition of hosting motoring events and tours many of which continue as events for historic vehicles. Wales is also boasts a number of motor museums which as well as being attractions in their own right are often used as venues for motoring events. In addition to this the public interest often embraces wider historic transport and historic motoring events may well link with the steam railways for which Wales is rightly famous.

Conclusion

For the reasons explained above FBHVC believes the historic vehicle movement and the vehicles it embraces is very unlikely to be a part of any problems faced by the Welsh Government in drawing up its 25 year plan and could indeed be an asset in both cultural and financial terms.

FBHVC is keen to uphold its aim of 'Yesterday's vehicles on tomorrows roads' in Wales as elsewhere and asks that it be a stakeholder in road transport matters as the plan evolves.

Please see also the response of the Federation dated 18th June 2018 to The Consultation by the Welsh Government dated 25th April 2018 on a Framework for Clear Air Zones in Wales.