Improving access for local journeys

Linking Communities 2012-13 programme-wide impacts

July 2014

Department for Transport

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About Sustrans' research and monitoring unit

We provide key monitoring, evaluation and delivery of activities on a wide a range of work across Sustrans' portfolio. We provide information and support to Sustrans colleagues and external partners on research, monitoring and evaluation matters. We also help to identify and support the continuous development and advancement of methods used and communications produced by the team.

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Improving access for local journeys:
a summary in numbers

Background

In FY2012-13, the Linking Communities programme distributed £18 million to enable people in 35 communities to reach areas of economic activity through the creation and upgrading of traffic calmed and traffic-free walking and cycling routes. Data from eight representative schemes was analysed, and the headline figures are as follows:

Headline statistics

97%
said they used the route because of its surroundings

521%
increase in cycling, and 11% increase in walking

571,733
car kilometres saved, from 84,890 fewer car journeys

Increased access for all

Amongst women the schemes generated a **515%** increase in cycling trips and a **20%** increase in walking, and cycling and walking by people aged over 65 rose by **909%** and **20%** respectively. There was a **151%** increase in children using the routes to get to school and a **353%** increase in commuter trips, with **30%** reporting better access to work.

Improved health

£30 million:
the estimated value of health benefits over 30 years

Creating jobs

6.9 FTE jobs
per £1 million spent on the project

Very high value for money

10.9:1
benefit to cost ratio (BCR) over just 30 years, **rising to 13.8:1** when usage by children is included

The statistics within this sheet are derived from automatic and manual counts conducted on eight schemes combined with surveys of users on the routes. For further information on the methodology please contact publications@sustrans.org.uk

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1 Executive summary

Introduction

The Linking Communities grant was made available for the creation and upgrading of traffic calmed and traffic-free walking and cycling routes which link people and their community to areas of economic activity.

This report summarises the impacts of the £18 million Linking Communities programme 2012-13, which comprised of £7.5 million Department for Transport (DfT) grant funding and £10.5 million match funding. The investment delivered 35 infrastructure schemes across England.

Sustrans' role was to identify and suggest community links that would best achieve the objectives of the funding; to co-ordinate the activity of our local authority partners to ensure the links were delivered to time and to budget; and to ensure that the links were built to the highest design standards to maximise use by people of all ages and abilities to return the best benefit for the investment.

Unless otherwise stated the findings within this report are based on the analysis of eight schemes which were selected as case studies based on a range of typologies.

The evaluation of the monitoring programme shows that Linking Communities has successfully demonstrated impacts across all the intended outcomes.

Increase the number of journeys made by cycling and walking leading to health and well-being benefits

Across the eight schemes overall usage increased by 82%, with a 521% increase in cycling trips and an 11% increase in walking trips. The larger increase in cycling can in part be attributed to the fact that, on some schemes, there were more significant barriers to cycling before the programme than to walking. For instance, routes that had no sealed surfacing or considerably degraded surfacing make cycling more difficult whilst still being relatively accessible by foot.

The programme has encouraged new and returning cyclists. Before the programme, 3% of route users indicated that they were either new to cycling or starting to cycle again, in contrast to 7% following completion.

Usage by children has seen significant growth with a 117% increase in the estimated trips made annually. Particularly high increases in usage have been seen on schemes which provide direct links to schools.

The programme has increased the physical activity levels of users, with 70% agreeing that using the route has increased their level of physical activity, and 33% saying it has increased their physical activity levels by a large amount.

The increase in physical activity is worth an estimated £30 million in health benefits over 30 years.

Connect residential areas to local facilities, connect people to places of work, link people to transport hubs such as railway or bus stations and enable independent and active travel to schools, further education (FE) and higher education (HE) institutions

Linking Communities schemes have provided people with direct links to areas of economic activity.

Commuting by foot and bike has increased by 353% from an estimated 17,039 annual trips to 77,174 trips.

30% of survey respondents have also been accessing retail facilities, 22% health services and 28% transport hubs.

There was a 151% increase in children using the routes to get to school, from 19,222 estimated annual trips to 48,206.

Contribute to local economic growth both during construction of the scheme and through improved access to shops and local businesses and increased levels of recreation on the route

Linking Communities has significantly improved access whilst delivering very high value for money (VfM) based on the eight schemes analysed. The increased adult usage equates to estimated economic benefits of £48.2 million over 30 years. This gives a Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of 10.9:1 for the sites analysed, ranging from 3.7:1 to 32.8:1 for individual sites.

The overall BCR exceeds the very high VfM DfT BCR category, with the analysed sites ranging from high to very high VfM.[1] The wide range shown for BCRs can be attributed to variation in route usage increases between schemes relative to the cost of construction.

The construction of the schemes has supported jobs. Analysis across 17 schemes shows that:

- 6.9 FTE jobs were sustained per £1 million spent on Linking Communities, comparing favourably with other transport investment
- 0.9 FTE jobs were sustained per km of route construction.

Economic impacts generated through recreation have been estimated at a number of schemes. Across three schemes where these impacts have been assessed, we estimate the annual tourism spend on the routes to be £1.3 million. Over a year this could sustain 33 full-time equivalent jobs.

Provide alternatives to congested routes and increase local communities' pride in their environment by providing better quality, attractive and welcoming public spaces

Linking Communities schemes have reduced carbon emissions, with individuals choosing active travel over personal car use. 23% of route users said that they could have used a car for their trip but chose not to, equating to an estimated reduction of 84,890 car trips.

The reduction in the number of car trips equals an estimated 571,733 car km travelled each year. In turn this reduction in car km results in an estimated 72 tonnes of potential savings in carbon.

Welcoming public space has been crucial to the success of this programme, with 97% of users saying they liked the surroundings on the route and it was a factor in their decision to use it.

[1] http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/value-for-money-assessments-guidance/vfmguidance.pdf

2 Introduction

The Linking Communities programme seeks to improve access by active travel to areas of economic activity. In 2012-13, the programme delivered 35 schemes worth £18 million (£7.5million DfT grant funding and £10.5 million match funding). This report assesses progress made towards the desired outcomes by the programme in 2012-13. The 2013-14 round of the Linking Communities programme is currently underway with the monitoring due to be reported on in October 2014.

2.1 Background

The Linking Communities grant 2012-13 was made available for the creation and upgrading of traffic calmed and traffic-free walking and cycling routes which link local communities to areas of economic activity, for instance industrial estates and enterprise zones. Building upon the 'Links to Schools programme' which linked residential areas with schools via the National Cycle Network, Linking Communities routes targeted mainly utility use to help, for example, those wishing to walk or cycle to work or school.

The routes were selected on the basis of four categories:

- where possible, they attract high levels of funding from other sources
- they focus primarily on meeting the needs of existing or potential utility journeys
- they complement other transport investment in an area
- they reinforce wider initiatives (not restricted to transport) which aim to support the local economy.

The monitoring and evaluation of the Linking Communities programme was established in line with the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) priority themes of economic growth and carbon reduction. Additional impacts have been observed and are reported on too.

The following specific objectives were set with a focus around capturing impacts related to economic growth and carbon reduction.

- increase the number of journeys made by cycling and walking leading to health and well-being benefits
- connect residential areas to local facilities and link people to transport hubs such as railway or bus stations
- connect people to places of work
- enable independent and active travel to schools, further education (FE) and higher education (HE) institutions
- contribute to local economic growth both during construction of the scheme and through improved access to shops and local businesses and increased levels of recreation on the route
- provide alternatives to congested routes and increase local communities' pride in their environment by providing better quality, attractive and welcoming public spaces.

2.2 Monitoring and evaluation methodology

This section details the data collection methods and analysis tools used for the monitoring and evaluation of the Linking Communities programme.

Twelve schemes were chosen as case studies to provide a cross-section of the wider Linking Communities programme. The case studies include rural and urban routes; utility and leisure routes; and a range of scheme lengths and costs. Of these 12 schemes, eight provide data for the pre- and post-scheme usage comparisons and BCRs and form the basis of the analysis in this report. Pre-monitoring could not take place at three schemes where construction was already underway, whilst

construction delays postponed post-monitoring at one scheme.[2] Where possible, data was gathered at the remaining schemes to support the evidence base. Automatic cycle counters are to be installed at all schemes, where appropriate, allowing for continued usage monitoring.

Table 2-1 Details of the eight schemes used for analysis within this report

Scheme	Scheme cost	Scheme length	Main focus of scheme	Scheme location
U003 Hightown to Formby	£453,681	3.0km	School / General utility	Rural / Small urban
U004 Gellings Greenway	£509,115	2.6km	Workplace	Medium urban
U012 Westcott to Dorking	£167,408	2.2km	Severance / School / General utility	Rural / Small urban
U026 Houghton to St Ives	£371,260	2.7km	Severance / General utility	Rural / Small urban
U027 Cole Valley Cycle Way	£788,999	3.5km	School / General utility	Large urban
U029 Neston to Deeside	£541,350	5.5km	Workplace / Leisure	Small urban / Rural
U030 Winchester	£911,360	4.3km	Leisure	Medium urban / Rural
U039 Harrogate	£595,500	1.3km	Leisure	Medium urban / Rural

Data collection

An overview of the data collection methods used and the number of schemes they were applied to is provided in Table 2-2. Full details of the data collection and analysis applied to each individual scheme can be found in Table 9-1 in Appendix 1.

Table 2-2 Data collection methods used[3]

Collection tool	Where it was used	What it provides
Route user intercept survey (RUIS)	RUIS' were carried out at 12 schemes. Of these, eight were pre- and post-intervention and a further three schemes were post-intervention only due to construction design or timings. One scheme is awaiting its final iteration.	Demographics of users, journey purposes, trip lengths, perceptions and opinions of the route and active travel. A four-day manual count including two weekend days and two weekdays.
Automatic cycle counter (ACC)	ACCs were installed at 17 schemes. Of these, two are combined pedestrian and cycling counters and 15 are cyclist only.	Daily usage figures for either pedestrians and cyclists or cyclists only.

[2] Post-monitoring only surveys were also carried out at U018 Coalville, U037 Wolverhampton and U041 Truro. Due to construction delays post-monitoring for U019 Ashford is still to be completed and will be included in the 2013-14 report. The results from these surveys have not been utilised within this report but they have been used to support the evidence base from the eight schemes with pre- and post-monitoring. Table 11-2 in Appendix 1 shows detail of this data.

[3] Full details on which schemes this refers to, rationale for scheme selection and full details of monitoring tools used and analysis methods can be found in Appendix 1.

Table 2-2 Continued

Collection tool	Where it was used	What it provides
Time lapse camera	The time lapse camera was utilised at four schemes where it was not possible to install an ACC.	A four-day manual count of non-motorised users covering two weekend days and two weekdays.
Job creation survey	The job creation survey was issued to all schemes. 23 were returned of which 17 returned complete data and have been used in the analysis.	Project details including construction costs, route length and construction hours worked.
Qualitative consultations	Qualitative consultations were held at five schemes following scheme construction.	Qualitative data from 5 focus groups at 4 schemes and over 30 on route interviews at 3 schemes.
Workplace travel surveys	Workplace travel surveys were attempted at three locations pre- and post-construction.	Whilst pre- and post-data was successfully collected at two out of the three locations it was not of a sufficient quality or quantity to be used in this report.
School travel surveys	School travel surveys were attempted at three schemes.	Whilst pre-data was collected, all three locations we were unable to collect post-data and therefore school travel surveys have not been used in this report.

Data use and data limitations

A number of facets of the data and the processing of the data warrant comment:

The count material presented is limited to a four-day twelve-hour count before and the same after. The four counts are conducted on a weekday and weekend day during term time, and a weekday and weekend day during school holiday time. This is a pragmatic and cost effective means of obtaining meaningful before and after data. However, we can't rule out the influence of weather, seasonality and other local effects. Longer term sequences of continuous count material will to some extent counter these problems. Although installation of continuous cycle counting devices is also part of the monitoring programme for many schemes, it is necessary for a longer sequence of data to build up before this data can be analysed in a more statistically reliable way. Partners to the projects are currently assembling further data, and a further stage of analysis will be possible in due course.

A further point concerning count material relates to the extent to which displacement of existing users from other routes onto the new route is revealed. For example, if a new route is constructed parallel to an existing road route, then what proportion of new usage is attributable to existing users from the road route displacing onto the new route? Unfortunately, few examples are quite so cut-and-dried, and delivery of new routes often opens up new destinations, the existing route in question is very likely to be a complex network, so counts that can evidence the effect are often difficult to design and costly. Consequently, we have no definitive measures of displacement within this group of schemes. However, where we have previously studied these effects, we observe limited or no

reduction in usage on the existing network, and usage of the new route is 'new'. Surveys show that there is displacement from the existing route, but we theorise that the fact of the new route 'grows normalisation' of cycling, so more people cycle in the vicinity as well as on the route itself, and consequently the use of the new route is additional to existing usage in the area.

Estimates of carbon emissions savings are a direct derivative of the WebTAG process of measurement and forecasting. Intercept surveys ask route users whether they could have used a car instead of cycling or walking to make their current trip. This is a fairly crude metric in the sense that it is a self-report, subjective measure derived from expressed usage. However, it is considered the best available option within the constraints of cost and practicality. We then use this expression of modal displacement as the means of deriving a figure for car kilometres saved, and therefore decongestion effects and carbon emissions savings values.

Health benefit values come from the World Health Organisation's HEAT (Health Economic Assessment Tool). HEAT is the source of health benefit values for walking and cycling that come from WebTAG. Benefits are realised only by new individual route users. The tool uses a relative risk value for cyclists compared with non-cyclists (derived from published, fully peer-reviewed clinical research), and forecasts reduced mortality based on this difference. Consequently, values can be very high, and can form a high proportion of the overall benefit values. The developers suggest that HEAT still underestimates health benefit values on the basis that 1) the risk factor relates to four-cause mortality (albeit the four main causes of adult mortality), 2) no measure of morbidity is included in the model, and 3) children are not included in the model (i.e. any schemes that help with e.g. access to schools do not generated high health benefit values).

Maintenance costs of the routes are included in the cost-benefit calculations. A standard unit cost for maintenance of £500 per kilometre per annum is added to the overall cost of the scheme (over the same period as the benefits are accrued). However, this component is not presented separately in the calculations.

The estimates of recreation and tourism spend presented in the report come from a model commissioned by Sustrans and derived from academic research conducted on a number of sections of the National Cycle Network. Users making leisure type trips or multi-day tourism trips were asked to give figures for their spend during their use of the route. A series of coefficients were generated for factors revealed by regression modelling to influence spend patterns, namely group size, income, duration of activity in the day or duration of multi-day trip. The model requires a series of standard inputs to generate an output that includes local multiplier effects. The majority of the spend in the leisure category in relation to this group of schemes is day-recreation (most of the routes do not have a notable longer-distance tourism function).

Some qualitative data was also collected in relation to some of the case study schemes. This consisted of face-to-face interviews in some cases, and focus groups in other cases. The qualitative work is not used to support the empirical work elsewhere in the report, but some of the comments of interviewees and focus group participants are included in boxes within the text where they serve to emphasise the points made in the preceding text.

Analysis

Table 2-3 shows an overview of the analysis tools used, and Table 9-1 in Appendix 1 gives full details of the analysis applied to each individual scheme. The full details of the methodology used for all analyses can be found in Appendix 1.

Table 2-3 Analysis tools

Analysis	What feeds in	What it shows
Route user survey analysis	RUIS responses.	Demographics of users, journey purposes, trip lengths, perceptions and opinions of the route and active travel.
Annual usage estimate (AUE)	RUIS manual counts, ACC data and manual counts from time lapse camera.	Estimated annual usage at a fixed point on the scheme for pedestrians and cyclists.
Whole scheme usage estimate (WSUE)	RUIS manual counts, ACC data and manual counts from time lapse camera.	Estimated annual usage across the whole scheme for pedestrians and cyclists.
WebTAG appraisal	RUIS journey purpose, RUIS survey data, WSUE, World Health Organisation (WHO) Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT).	Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) economic impacts, carbon savings, car journeys replaced and car kms saved.
Tourism model	RUIS trip length, RUIS journey purpose, RUIS group size.	Economic impacts of tourism, potential employment sustained by tourism.
Job creation	Job creation survey responses.	Jobs sustained through infrastructure construction.

The findings from the data collection and analysis undertaken are presented across key themes in the following sections. Unless otherwise stated all data included comes from the analysis of the eight schemes detailed in Table 2-1.

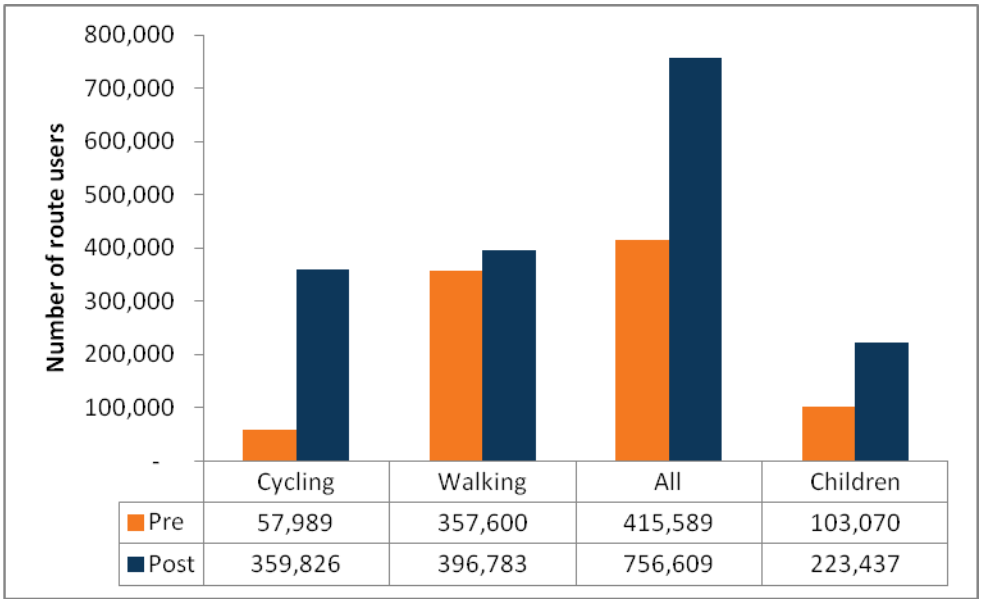
3 Increased number of journeys made by cycling and walking

The Linking Communities programme has increased the number of journeys being made by bike and foot, with 341,021 more trips being made annually.

3.1 Overall usage

The Linking Communities programme has increased usage. Across eight schemes usage increased by 82%, with a 521% increase in cycling trips and an 11% increase in walking trips.

Chart 3-1 Number of route users pre- and post-Linking Communities intervention



	Cycling	Walking	All	Children
Pre	57,989	357,600	415,589	103,070
Post	359,826	396,783	756,609	223,437

The high increase in cycling compared to walking can be attributed to the more significant barriers faced by cyclists using some routes prior to the programme. For instance, routes that had no sealed surfacing making cycling undesirable or difficult were still relatively accessible for pedestrians. Thus the benefit to travel by bike is even greater.

The following photographs demonstrate the route conditions pre- and post-construction at three of the schemes. These represent a sample across the range of improvements required, from no pre-existing path to a path in need of repair works.

Cole Valley Cycle Way

Gellings Greenway

Houghton to St Ives

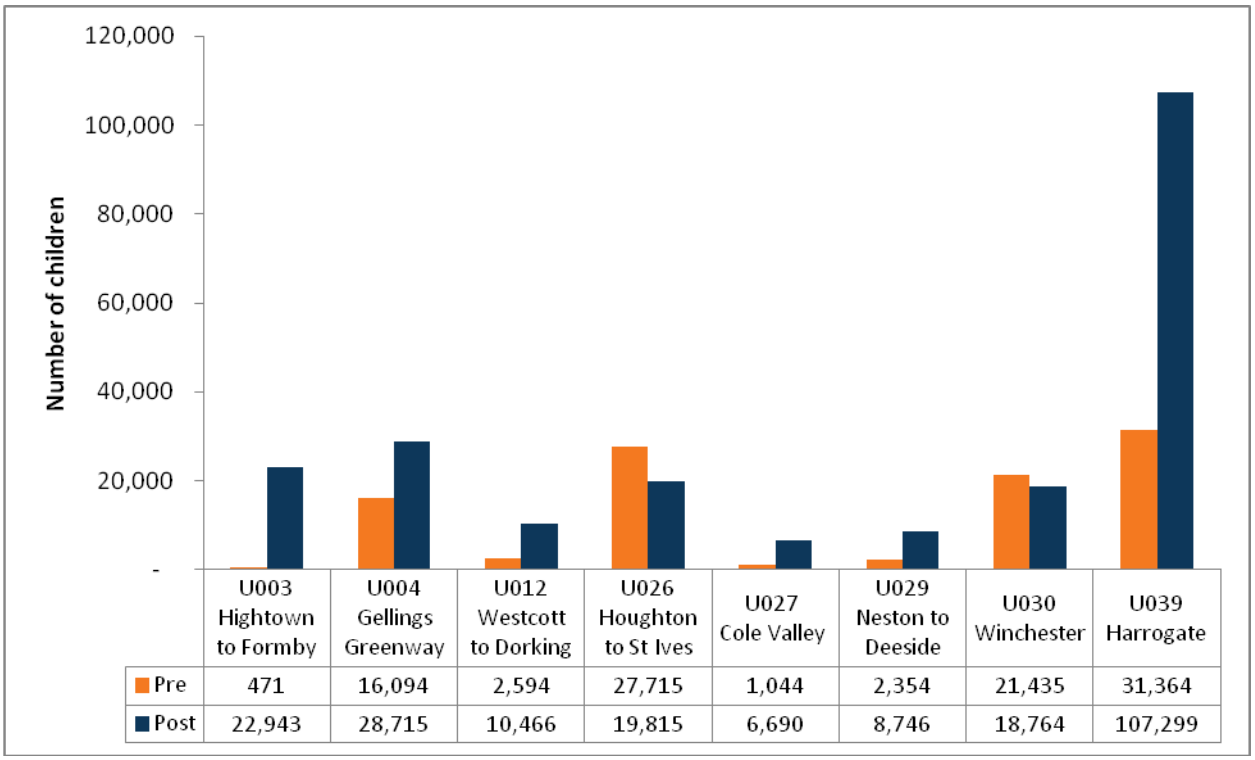
The evidence also points to more people choosing to walk and cycle only, with a nine percentage point increase in users who were only travelling by bicycle or walking. Furthermore, there has been a four percentage point reduction in those using a car or van as part of their trip.

3.2 Children's usage

Walking and cycling by children has seen significant growth with a 117% increase, from 103,070 to 223,437 trips made annually. There are three schemes that have seen particularly high increases in route use by children relative to their overall growth. These schemes are all routes which link to schools. The count data suggests that increases in usage during weekday term times on these routes is the primary driver of these changes.

At Hightown to Formby and Cole Valley Cycle Way, for example, weekday term-time usage increased from no child users observed prior to scheme construction, to 8,318 and 2,009 estimated annual trips respectively. This suggests that the Linking Communities schemes provide desirable traffic-free alternative routes, enabling more children to travel actively to school.

Chart 3-2 Number of children pre- and post-Linking Communities intervention



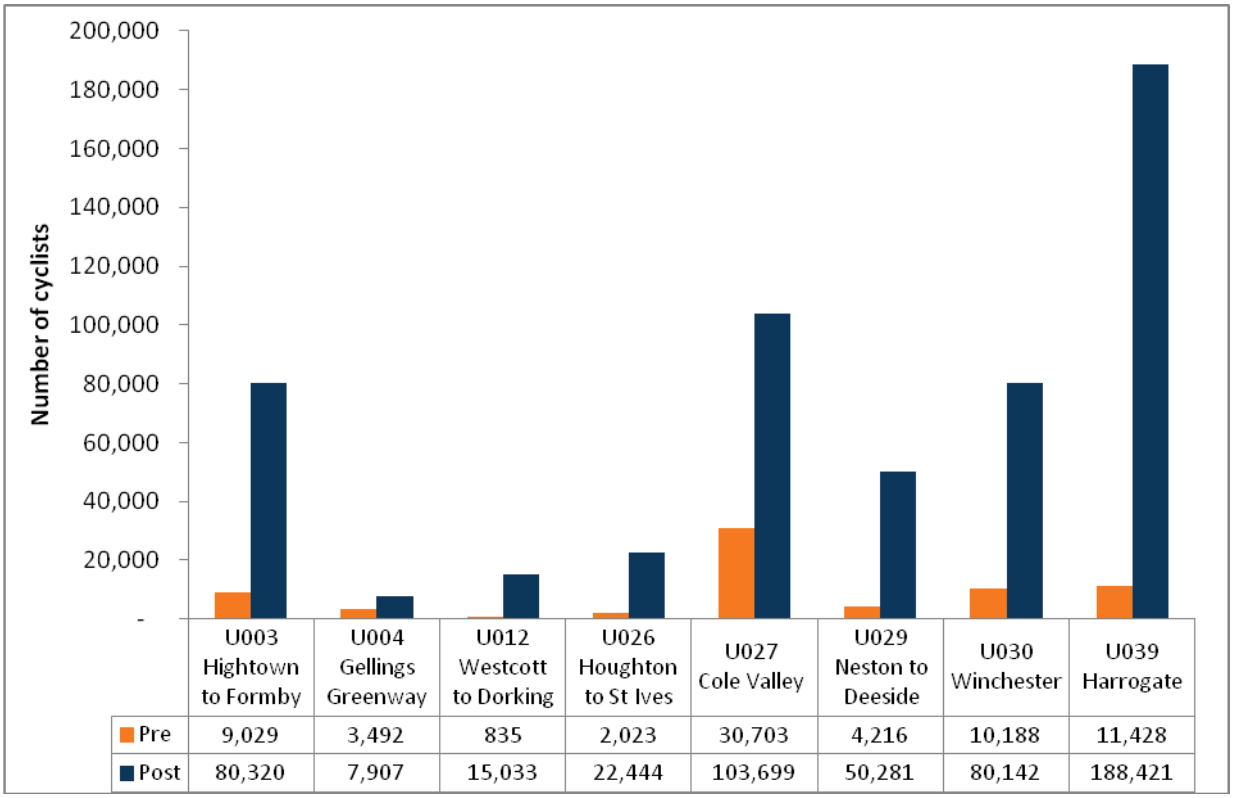
	U003 Hightown to Formby	U004 Gellings Greenway	U012 Westcott to Dorking	U026 Houghton to St Ives	U027 Cole Valley	U029 Neston to Deeside	U030 Winchester	U039 Harrogate
Pre	471	16,094	2,594	27,715	1,044	2,354	21,435	31,364
Post	22,943	28,715	10,466	19,815	6,690	8,746	18,764	107,299

3.3 Cycling usage

Cycling use has seen significant growth with a 521% increase in trips, equating to an annual usage estimate of 359,826 trips compared with 57,989 trips before the Linking Communities intervention.

Growth in cycling usage has varied across schemes as shown in Chart 3-3. This can be partly attributed to the condition of the routes prior to construction, with significantly degraded or unsurfaced paths making for undesirable or challenging cycling conditions.

Chart 3-3 Number of cyclists pre- and post-Linking Communities intervention



	U003 Hightown to Formby	U004 Gellings Greenway	U012 Westcott to Dorking	U026 Houghton to St Ives	U027 Cole Valley	U029 Neston to Deeside	U030 Winchester	U039 Harrogate
Pre	9,029	3,492	835	2,023	30,703	4,216	10,188	11,428
Post	80,320	7,907	15,033	22,444	103,699	50,281	80,142	188,421

Within the cycling increases observed there has been a positive change in the profile of users indicating a greater diversity amongst cyclists. There has been a 515% increase in trips by female cyclists, from 13,743 to 84,559 estimated trips annually and a 909% increase in cyclists 65+ from 5,741 to 57,932 estimated trips annually.

Without further investigation the reason for this increase in 65+ cyclists is not apparent. However, the increase is heavily driven by Hightown to Formby which saw usage growth of 3,407%. The Hightown to Formby route crosses through two wards, Harington and Ravemoels, which have retired populations of 9.6%[4] and 7.8%[5] respectively against the national average of 4.5%. Whilst this does not provide an explanation for the very high growth, it demonstrates that there is a significant 65+ population surrounding the route and suggests a demand for traffic-free cycling and walking routes amongst this age group. Further investigation into the increase in cyclists who are 65+ is planned in the 2013-14 monitoring programme.

The number of users on the route indicating that they were either new to cycling or starting to cycle increased from 3% to 7%, equating to an increase of 22,485 estimated trips annually. This implies that the routes have provided an opportunity for new or less confident cyclists to travel by bicycle.

Qualitative consultations show the positive impact that the schemes have on an individual level, with on route interviews at Westcott to Dorking and Neston to Deeside highlighting the influence on encouraging new cyclists.

> "I wouldn't have cycled without this path, no way… I didn't even have a bike until I knew this was coming!" Route user – Westcott
>
> "It's a marvellous development. And I've taken up cycling because of it, in my seventies!" Route user – Neston

[4] http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/ward/1308630130/report.aspx
[5] http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/ward/1308630140/report.aspx

There is also potential for future growth in usage with 51% of route users stating that they agreed that they intended to cycle more in the next 12 months.

3.4 Pedestrian usage

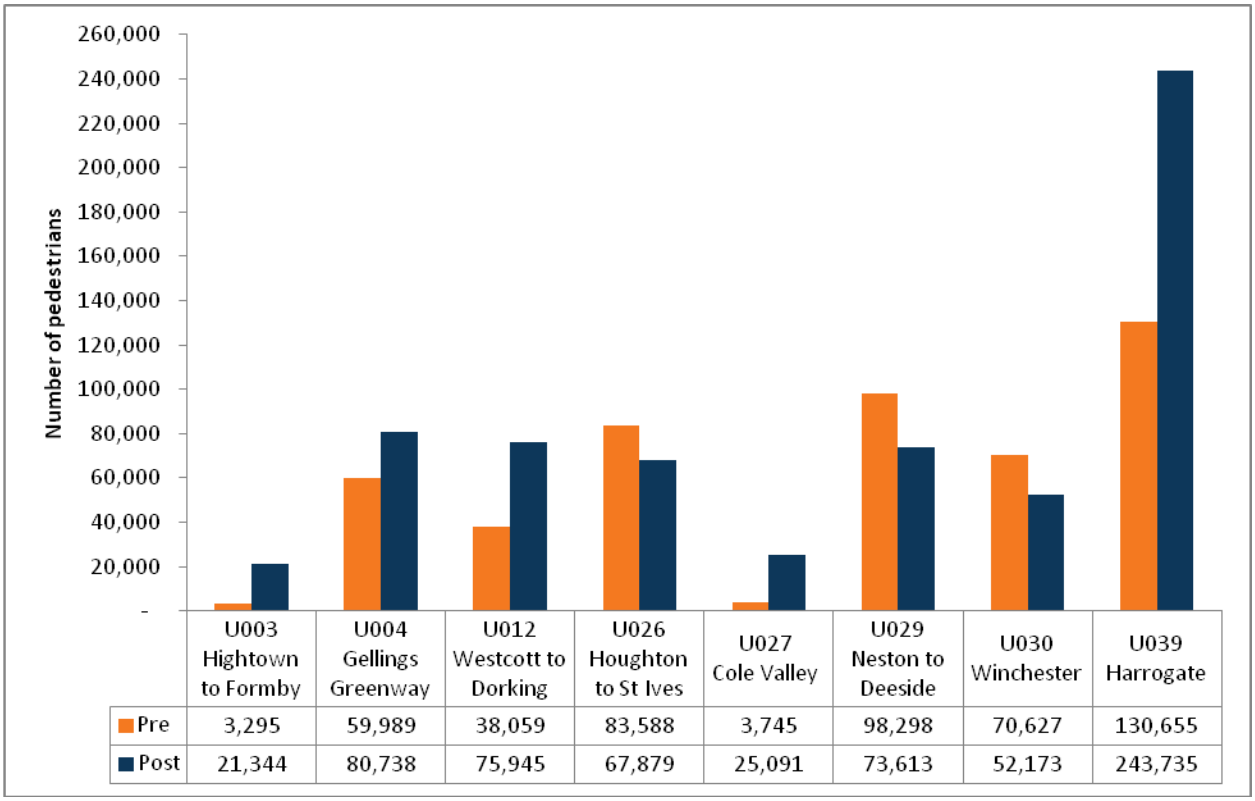
There has been an 11% increase in route usage by pedestrians, with an annual usage estimate of 396,783 trips made following the intervention.

However, there is significant variation across the schemes as shown in Chart 3-4. Whilst the majority of schemes have seen a rise in pedestrian usage, three schemes have seen a decrease. The decrease from these three schemes causes the pedestrian usage estimate to have a relatively low overall increase; a separate comparison of the five schemes with increases shows an estimated increase of 90% from 235,743 trips to 446,853 trips.

Without further investigation we are unable to say definitively what may have caused a decrease in usage at these three schemes.

There has been a positive impact on the diversity of pedestrian users of the routes, with a 20% increase in female pedestrians, equating to an estimated 29,747 trips annually and a 20% increase in pedestrians over 65+, from 79,745 to 96,022 estimated trips annually.

Chart 3-4 Number of pedestrians pre- and post-Linking Communities intervention



	U003 Hightown to Formby	U004 Gellings Greenway	U012 Westcott to Dorking	U026 Houghton to St Ives	U027 Cole Valley	U029 Neston to Deeside	U030 Winchester	U039 Harrogate
Pre	3,295	59,989	38,059	83,588	3,745	98,298	70,627	130,655
Post	21,344	80,738	75,945	67,879	25,091	73,613	52,173	243,735

Although we have seen a decrease in the number of pedestrian trips at three of the schemes, evidence shows the potential for change over a longer-term, with between 29-32% of users at these three schemes stating they strongly agreed or agreed that they intended to walk more in the next 12 months.

Across all of the eight schemes there is further evidence for future growth in pedestrian usage with 47% of route users stating that they strongly agree or agree that they intend to walk more in the next 12 months.

As demonstrated by an on route interview on Westcott to Dorking, the route is enabling people to choose to leave their car behind: *"My wife and I now walk into Dorking most of the time rather than drive so its encouraged us to walk"* Route user – Westcott

Further investigation into pedestrian usage trends is planned in the 2013-14 monitoring programme.

4 Improved health and well-being

Increase the number of journeys made by cycling and walking leading to health and well-being benefits

Health impacts have been observed both in terms of economic benefits and physical activity. Across the schemes the increase in trips made by active modes has resulted in approximately £29.9 million in health benefits over 30 years. On the Hightown to Formby scheme, which saw an impressive overall increase of 653%, the health benefits amount to £3.5 million.

67% of route users stated that the health benefits associated with walking and cycling influenced their choice to use the route. 70% of route users agreed that by using the route they had increased their level of physical activity, with 33% saying route use had increased their physical activity by a large amount.

35% of route users rated their health as excellent, an increase of six percentage points from the 29% before the programme, another factor suggesting that Linking Communities routes have generated health benefits amongst beneficiary communities.

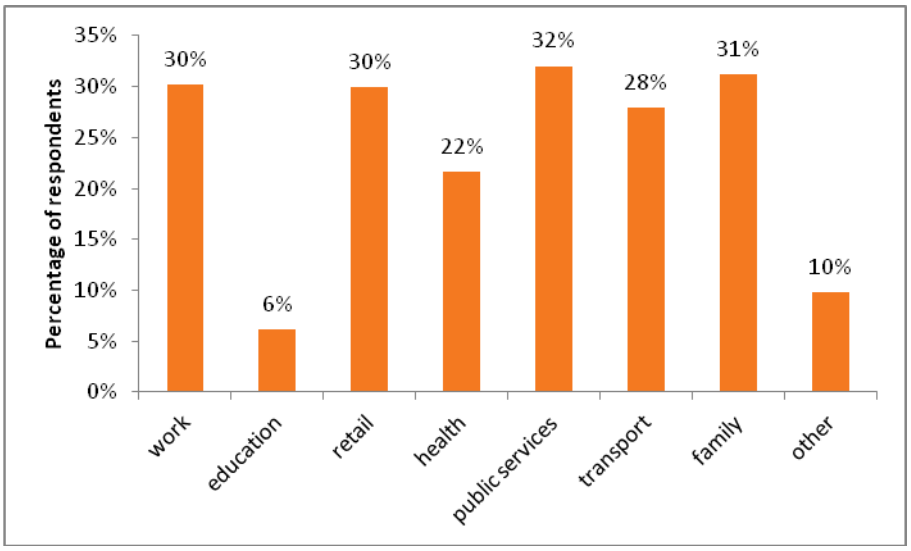
5 Improved access for all

Connect residential areas to local facilities and link people to transport hubs such as railway or bus stations

The Linking Communities programme has had a direct impact on improving accessibility amongst targeted communities. 64% of route users stated that the route allowed them to go straight to their destination, and 85% of route users agreed that it was the most convenient option for them.

The routes have provided people with an alternative active travel option to make necessary everyday utility trips. 30% of users stated that the routes had helped them to access retail facilities, 22% health services and 28% other transport hubs such as train stations or bus stations.

Chart 5-1 Percentage of responses to "This route has helped me access…"



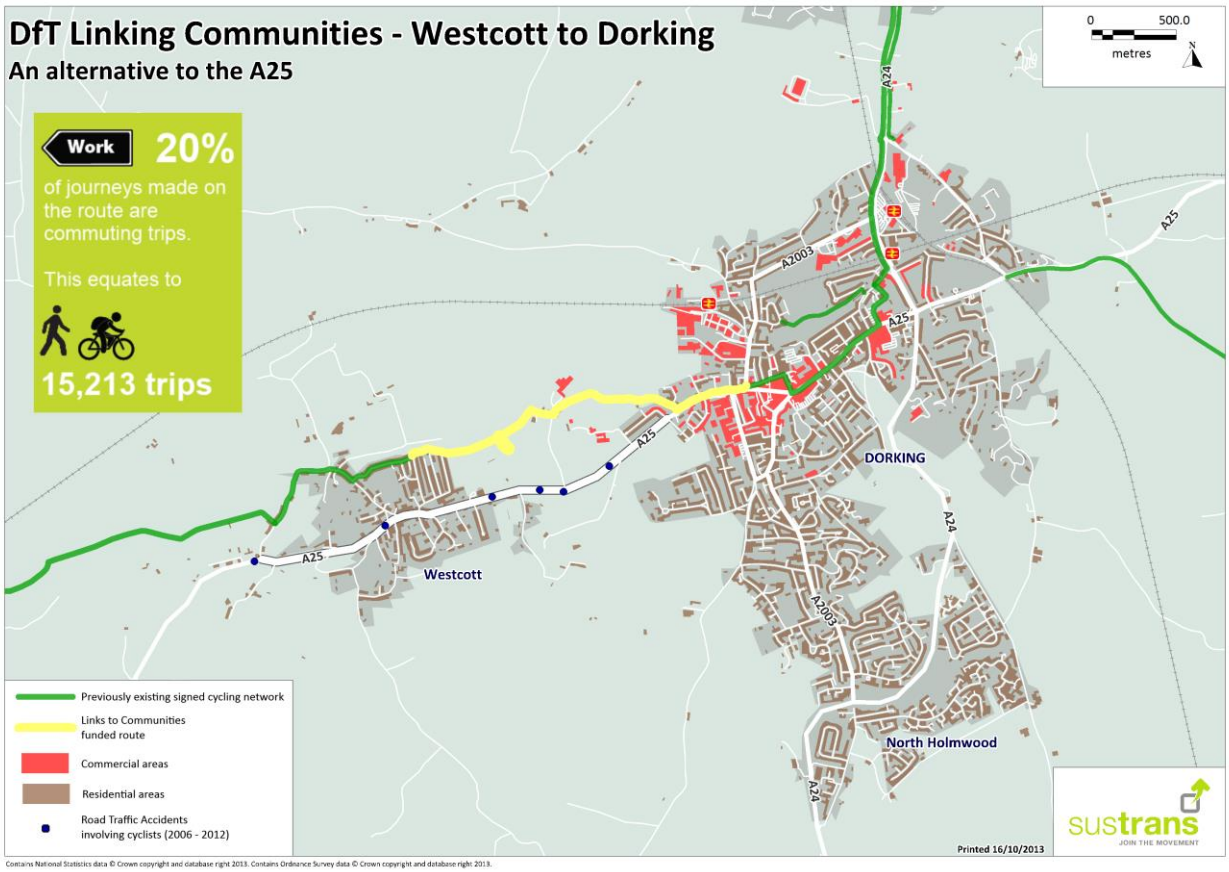
5.1 Access to areas of employment

Connect people to places of work

A key objective of Linking Communities is to improve access to employment by active travel. The Westcott to Dorking scheme is an example of how Sustrans achieves this by providing a safe and traffic-free alternative for commuters accessing main areas of economic activity. The scheme now carries an estimated 15,213 walking and cycling trips each year including commuting from Westcott to areas of economic activity in central Dorking and around Dorking West Rail station and Dorking Business Park.

Community feedback suggests that people have been encouraged to walk or cycle to work rather than drive, reducing traffic on the A25, which in 2012 saw an average daily traffic flow of 8,642 vehicles.[6] There are an estimated 10,500 jobs within one mile of the Westcott to Dorking scheme providing further evidence of how the scheme links residents with areas of economic activity.

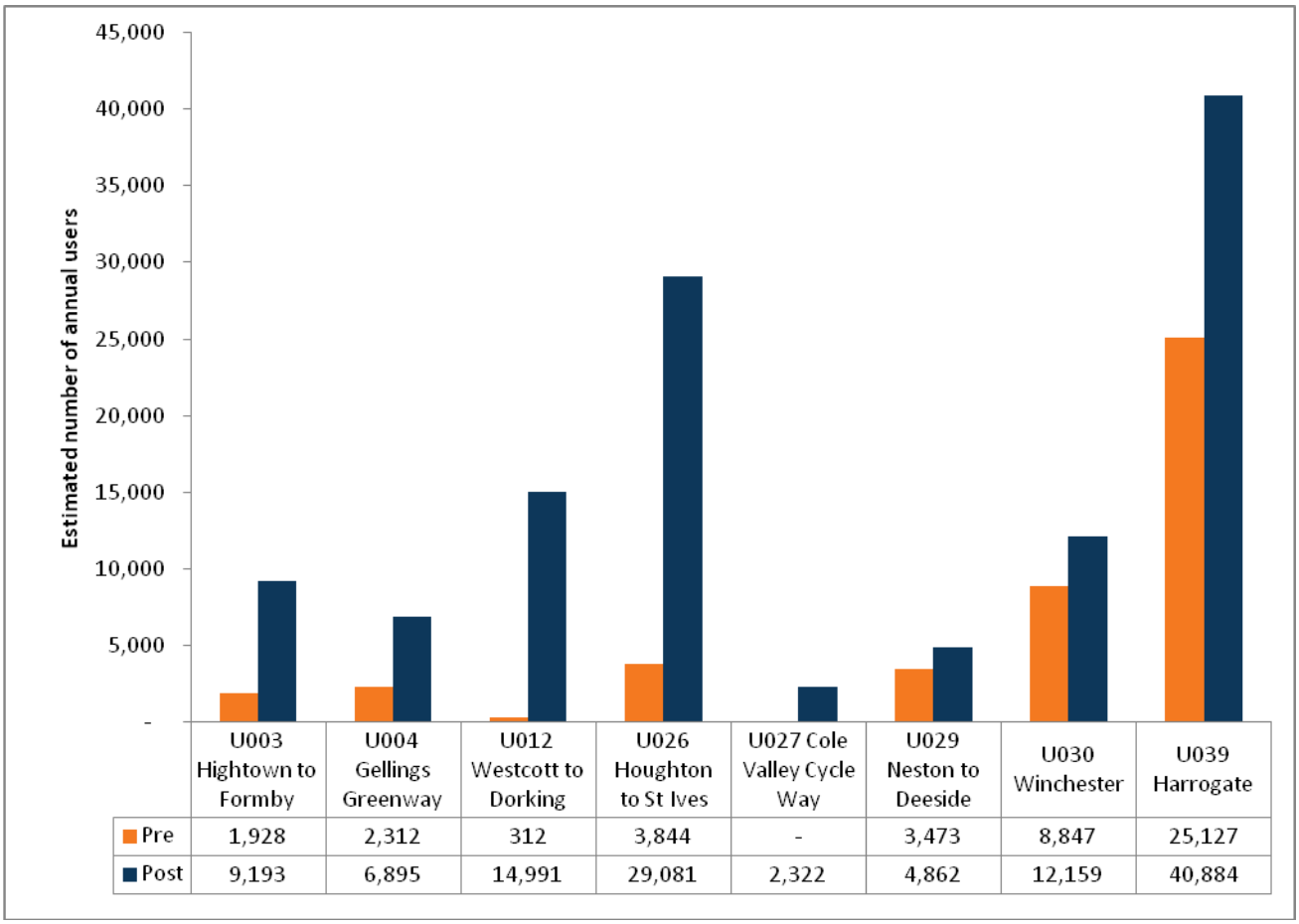
[6] http://www.dft.gov.uk/traffic-counts/



Overall we have seen improved access to workplaces allowing more people to commute by foot and bike. There has been an estimated 353% increase in the number of commuter trips being made on the routes, from 17,039 trips to 77,174. This increase is particularly evident amongst cyclists with a 517% increase in estimated trips. 30% of route users said that the presence of the new route helps them access work.

Chart 5-2 details the change in commuting use observed at all eight schemes. Hightown to Formby, Westcott to Dorking, and Houghton to St Ives in particular had significant increases in commuter use. These schemes all share a similar typology, linking smaller towns or villages with larger urban areas which are otherwise only connected by main A roads, suggesting a high demand for traffic-free alternative routes as provided by the Linking Communities programme.

Chart 5-2 Pre- and post-number of users commuting



	U003 Hightown to Formby	U004 Gellings Greenway	U012 Westcott to Dorking	U026 Houghton to St Ives	U027 Cole Valley Cycle Way	U029 Neston to Deeside	U030 Winchester	U039 Harrogate
Pre	1,928	2,312	312	3,844	-	3,473	8,847	25,127
Post	9,193	6,895	14,991	29,081	2,322	4,862	12,159	40,884

5.2 Access to education

Enable independent and active travel to schools, FE and HE institutions

The Linking Communities programme has increased term-time usage by children. Whilst the survey results across the eight schemes do not show a particularly high use for access to education this is because route users under the age of 16 are not interviewed. Therefore a more accurate measure of education use is manual counts of children recorded on weekdays during school term-time which across the eight schemes shows an increase of 151%, from 19,222 estimated trips to 48,206.

Amongst the qualitative data from both Wolverhampton and Westcott there was discussion of improved access to education.

> "We're certainly seeing people going to school… where we never saw them before." Focus group participant – Wolverhampton
>
> "There's lots of kids from Westcott who have to walk in to Dorking for school so that's really good." On route interview – Westcott

In Sibley and Etnier's (2003) study into 'The relationship between physical activity and cognition in children', a meta-analysis of 44 studies, concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between physical activity and cognitive function in children.[7] The qualitative data collected at both

[7] Sibley, B., Etnier, J. (2003) 'The relationship between physical activity and cognition in children: A meta-analysis' Pediatric Exercise Science 15: 243-256

the Wolverhampton and Westcott focus groups support this, highlighting the impact that walking to school in traffic-free environments has on children's concentration and attitude.

"When we get Alex to school that way, the difference in his general demeanour when he reaches Tettenhall Bridge is completely different than if you go by the road. He's much more alert and much more, as much as you ever get a [a child], excited [to go to school]." Focus group participant – Wolverhampton

"In the mood, I feel more in the mood." Focus group participant – Westcott, in response to a question asking the difference between walking to school and taking the bus

The journey to school – Westcott to Dorking

The majority of children living in Westcott attend school in Dorking. Previously the only walking or cycling access in to Dorking was along the narrow footpath adjacent to the A25, which in 2012 saw an average daily traffic flow of 8,642 vehicles.[8] A focus group was held with members of a local youth group to discuss the journey to school pre- and post-construction of the route.

Whilst the majority of the children walked to school before the construction of the route, the new route has allowed for the journey to be made away from the main road and its high volume of traffic. Children who were consulted agreed that the scheme has enabled them to walk or cycle to school in a safe environment.

When asked about the differences between walking along the main road and walking along the new path, children responded positively.

"Safer"

"Safer and quicker"

"I feel more safe"

"Safe away from the road"

This response from the children was corroborated by interviews conducted on the route, which highlighted the importance of safety in allowing children to walk or cycle to school.

"The kids use it to go to school and back every day now which is safer than going on the road."

[8] http://www.dft.gov.uk/traffic-counts/

6 Economic benefits

Contribute to local economic growth both during construction of the scheme and through improved access to shops and local businesses and increased levels of recreation on the route

6.1 Overall economic impact

Linking Communities has demonstrated good value for money (VfM) based on the eight schemes analysed. The increased adult usage on the schemes equates to estimated economic benefits of £48.2 million over 30 years. This gives a Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of 10.9:1 at the sites analysed, ranging from 3.7:1 to 32.8:1. In comparison to the DfT BCR categories, the overall BCR shows very high VfM, with the analysed sites ranging from high to very high VfM.

Table 6-1 The benefits over 30 years equal £48,245,814, compared to costs of £4,425,771 – a benefit to cost ratio of 10.9:1. Here is a more detailed breakdown:

Benefits	Total	From cyclists	From pedestrians
Health	£29,957,640	£18,946,143	£11,011,498
Absenteeism	£2,970,174	£2,308,580	£661,594
Amenity	£14,310,399	£12,203,495	£2,106,903
Greenhouse gases	£147,296	£126,094	£21,202
Accidents	£322,520	£276,083	£46,437
Decongestion	£1,112,102	£906,555	£205,547
Air quality	£7,697	£6,206	£1,491
Noise	£16,381	£13,399	£2,982
Infrastructure	£12,553	£10,746	£1,807
Indirect taxation	-£610,947	-£523,831	-£87,116
	£48,245,814	**£34,273,469**	**£13,972,345**

Table 6-2 Estimated economic benefit of each scheme

	30 YEARS		
	Total benefits	Total costs	BCR
U003 Hightown to Formby	£5,488,439	£483,241	11.4
U004 Gellings Greenway	£2,553,012	£487,508	5.2
U012 Westcott to Dorking	£2,910,721	£195,229	14.9
U026 Houghton to St Ives	£4,280,222	£400,820	10.7
U027 Cole Valley Cycle Route	£2,652,063	£715,082	3.7

U028 Neston to Deeside	£7,018,097	£596,031	11.8
U030 Winchester	£3,690,328	£949,201	3.9
U039 Harrogate	£19,652,934	£598,659	32.8

The high BCR found at Hightown to Formby, Westcott to Dorking, Neston to Deeside and Harrogate can be attributed to the significant increase in route usage that these schemes have seen relative to the cost of construction.

The economic benefits are based on adult usage in line with WebTAG appraisal guidance. However, we conservatively estimate that the benefits associated with usage of the schemes by children would add £13 million of benefits to the aggregate BCR over 30 years. This would raise the overall BCR to 13.8:1.

6.2 Employment

Analysis of the returned jobs creation data demonstrates that the Linking Communities programme is supporting employment:

- 6.9 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs were sustained per £1 million of investment
- 0.9 FTE jobs were sustained per km of route construction

These results are consistent with the trend found at other comparable infrastructure schemes where the same analysis has been applied.[9]

Indirect job creation – Neston to Deeside route

The popularity of the Neston to Deeside route has enabled a local farmer whose business is situated adjacent to the route to open a café. The café has enjoyed a high level of awareness and popularity amongst route users evidenced by its repeated mention by both those spoken to on route and those attending the focus group at Deeside Industrial Park.

"The farm down there has opened a little café now." Walker, on route

"Someone's opened up a café along there as well… they'll have a field day!" Focus group participant

An interview with the proprietor of the café showed the potential possibilities for wider economic benefit reaching out into the local community.

"My wife says she's going to have to take more staff on if it keeps going the way it is. It's employment for local people as well, giving employment to the community." Café owner

6.3 Recreation

Linking Communities is providing a positive economic impact on local tourism. Based on their rural locations and high leisure use, Houghton to St Ives, Neston to Deeside and Winchester were identified as being suitable for examining economic impacts of tourism. Across the three schemes the estimated annual tourism spend on the routes by recreational users is £1.2 million. No overnight

[9] Across the Valleys Cycle Network 2011-12 programme and the Community Links 2011-12 and 2012-13 programmes there is an average of 5.5 FTE jobs sustained per £1 million of investment and 0.6 FTE jobs sustained per km of route constructed.

tourists were surveyed at Neston; however at Houghton to St Ives and Winchester the estimated daily spend per head for overnight tourists is £25.43 and £29.74 respectively. Across all three schemes recreational trips could sustain 33 FTE jobs annually, with 19.8 of those being direct jobs and 13.2 being indirect jobs. A breakdown of the estimated impacts of tourism at the three is shown in Table 6-2.These results are consistent with analysis undertaken at similar sites across the UK.[10]

Table 6-3 Breakdown of the estimated impact of tourism at the three schemes

	Estimated annual spend	Estimated spend per head			FTE jobs		
		Tourists	Home-based	All recreational	Total	Direct	Indirect
U026 Houghton and St Ives	£363,796	£25.43	£12.30	£12.96	9.0	5.4	3.6
U029 Neston to Deeside	£576,497	N/A	£10.05	£10.05	14.3	8.6	5.7
U030 Winchester	£382,535	£29.74	£14.37	£14.83	9.6	5.8	3.9

6.4 Reducing household costs

Linking Communities routes are providing a viable alternative to car travel. 13% of route users who could have used a car for their journey but chose not to, stated that the cost of fuel and/or running a car influenced their decision to walk or cycle. 46% of route users stated that they saved money by using the route and that this was a factor in their decision to walk or cycle.

A participant at a focus group at Deeside Industrial Park for Neston to Deeside, discussed how the current costs of running a car has impacted on his travel choice: *"The biggest factor for me that made me think about other non-bike journeys was the cost of petrol and short journeys and thinking whoa, hang on, you know I really don't want to nip two miles somewhere."* Focus group participant - Toyota Factory, Deeside Industrial Park

The estimated savings attributed to individual economic benefits show that the average potential annual saving of commuters walking or cycling as opposed to travelling by car is £1,109 for cyclists and £385 for pedestrians.

7 Environmental benefits and improved public space

Provide alternatives to congested routes and increase local communities' pride in their environment by providing better quality, attractive and welcoming public spaces

Linking Communities has successfully reduced emissions by removing car journeys from the roads.

The increase in walking and cycling has resulted in a reduction in the number of trips made by car. 23% of route users stated that they could have used a car for their journey but chose not to, which equates to a reduction of 84,890 car trips.

The impact of this decrease in car journeys is a reduction in congestion, with an estimated 571,733 car kilometres taken off local roads, resulting in an estimated saving of 72 tonnes of carbon.

[10] An aggregate of the data from comparable routes across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland show an average spend per head for overnight tourists as £23.45 and £9.34 for home-based tourists.

Route users have demonstrated good levels of environmental awareness. 56% of route users stated that they had environmental concerns and that this was an influencing factor in their choice to travel by foot and bike. Of those route users who could have taken a car for their journey but chose not to 8% said that environmental concerns were a motivation for this.

Access to traffic-free walking and cycling routes and greenways has improved public space, with 97% of users stating that they liked the surroundings on the route and it was a factor in their decision to use it.

8 Conclusion

The Linking Communities programme has delivered 35 traffic calmed and traffic-free routes linking to areas of economic activity. The eight schemes analysed show a positive impact in increasing levels of walking and cycling with an 82% increase in overall usage. In particular, the schemes have enabled a big increase in cycling of 521%. Pedestrian usage has increased by 11%.

Walking and cycling trips by children has increased by 117%, particularly where the new routes link to a school, demonstrating the demand for safe walking and cycling routes to school.

There is every indication that the new routes will increase travel by foot and bike in future, with 47% of route users stating that they intend to walk more in the next 12 months, and 51% stating that they intend to cycle more. Furthermore there have been an estimated 22,415 trips made by cyclists who are new to cycling or returning to cycling, suggesting even more potential for a positive legacy.

Access to areas of economic activity and work has increased. For the schemes where data were analysed, the proportion of trips made by commuters has risen by 353% demonstrating that for many walking and cycling is a viable alternative to car use.

The programme has demonstrated high value for money with an overall BCR of 10.9:1 for the eight analysed schemes. The programme has also benefited the broader economy with 6.9 jobs sustained for every £1 million of investment. Furthermore, for schemes where there is the potential for increased tourism the data shows there has been a positive benefit in terms of economic impacts for local communities.

Linking Communities has successfully reduced carbon emissions by enabling people to choose to leave their cars behind, resulting in an estimated 84,890 fewer car trips a year, a potential saving of 72 tonnes of carbon.

Overall the data demonstrates how crucial walking and cycling are to extending people's travel choices whilst bringing significant economic benefits relative to the level of investment.

9 Appendix 1: Methodology

9.1 Monitoring methodology

Twelve schemes were selected as case studies and thus elicited a more enhanced level of monitoring. These 12 schemes were chosen on the basis that they provided a cross-section of examples within the wider Linking Communities programme, covering rural and urban routes as well as those more focused on utility trips over leisure trips. They also provide examples across the range of scheme length and cost. Consultations were held with project delivery teams to ensure that the schemes selected were suitable and to help build the context around the schemes.

A limitation in selecting the 12 case study schemes was the priority of being able to carry out baseline monitoring. Due to the short lead in time given for the monitoring of the programme this reduced the number of schemes that were available to select from.

Of the 12 schemes selected, eight had pre- and post-route user intercept surveys (RUIS), and three schemes had post-only RUIS. One scheme has currently only had a pre-RUIS as construction on the scheme has been delayed. The post-construction survey will be carried out following construction and the results will be included in the reporting for the 2013-14 delivery round.

The three schemes where post-construction only RUIS' were carried out were sites where the possibility to carry out a baseline iteration was limited by construction on the intervention having already started before monitoring could commence. The decision was made to continue to carry out these surveys post-construction only in order that they could help to build our evidence base and further our understanding of the impacts of the Linking Communities programme.

Table 9-1 details which data collection methods and analyses were applied to each scheme across the full Linking Communities programme. Automatic cycle counters marked with O are for schemes where a counter has been installed but there is not enough data to be included within this report. Job creation schemes marked with O are for schemes where incomplete data were received.

Table 9-1 Full breakdown of data and analysis across all Linking Communities schemes

Scheme	RUIS	WSUE	WebTAG	Qualitative	ACC	T/L	Job creation
U001 - Liverpool Broadgreen					X		X
U002 – Crewe							X
U003 – Hightown to Formby	X	X	X				
U004 – Gellings Greenway	X	X	X	X			X
U005 – Bristol – Greville Smyth Link							
U006 – East Northampton					O		O
U008a – Luton							
U009 – Lewes to Kingston					O		X

Table 9-1 continued

Scheme	RUIS	WSUE	WebTAG	Qualitative	ACC	T/L	Job creation
U011 – Boston						X	
U012 – Westcott to Dorking	X	X	X	X	X		O
U013 – Stockton-On-Tees							O
U017 – Halesworth					O		
U018 – Coalville	X	X					O
U019 – Ashford	X						
U021 – Northampton					X		X
U022 – Weymouth					O		X
U023 – Plymouth						X	X
U024 – Leeds							
U025 – Bradford						X	X
U026 – Houghton to St Ives	X	X	X				X
U027 – Birmingham	X	X	X		X		X
U028 - Neston to Deeside	X	X	X	X	X		X
U029 – Eastleigh							X
U030 – Winchester	X	X	X	X	X		X
U031 – Stockbridge						X	X
U032 – Durham, Wingate					O		X
UO33 – Durham, Stony Heap					O		X
U035 – Gateshead							
U037 – Wolverhampton	X	X		X	X		O
U038 – Dudley		X			X		X

Table 9-1 continued

Scheme	RUIS	WSUE	WebTAG	Qualitative	ACC	T/L	Job creation
U039 – Harrogate	X	X	X		X		
U040 – South Tyne							
U041 – Coosebean, Truro	X	X			X		O
U044 – North Dorset Railway					O		
U046 – Bath, Combe Down							
TOTALS	12	12	9	5	17	4	23

Table 9-2 Summary of key data for the 12 case study schemes

Please note that totals in this table may not match those in this document as they incorporate data not used for reporting. Please see Table 9-1 for details of which schemes were used for this document.

Scheme	Length	Key link	Pre Usage	Post Usage	Change in usage	BCR
U003 Hightown to Formby	3.0km	School / General utility	13,483	101,486	88,004	11.4
U004 Gellings Greenway	2.6km	Workplace	63,481	88,645	25,164	5.2
U012 Westcott to Dorking	2.2km	Severance / School / General utility	40,082	98,389	58,308	14.9
U018 Coalville	3.5km	Workplace	NA	32,388	NA	NA
U019 Ashford	1.8km	Severance / Workplace / General utility	208,944	NA	NA	NA
U026 Houghton to St Ives	2.7km	Severance / General utility	114,292	171,578	57,287	10.7
U027 Cole Valley Cycle Way	3.5km	School / General utility	4,580	40,124	35,544	3.7
U029 Neston to Deeside	5.5km	Workplace / Leisure	104,830	153,933	49,104	11.8
U030 Winchester	4.3km	Leisure	74,843	102,454	27,611	3.9
U037 Wolverhampton	2.8km	Workplace / General utility	NA	121,351	NA	NA
U039 Harrogate	1.3km	Leisure	142,083	432,156	290,073	32.8
U041 Truro	2.7km	School / Workplace	NA	38,030	NA	NA

9.2 Monitoring tools

Automatic cycle counters

Data are collected from a network of automatic cycle counters across the Linking Communities programme. Counters are typically inductive loop based technology, recording continuous counts of cyclists on an hourly basis. These counters provide valuable data on cycle and/or pedestrian usage over time.

Route user intercept surveys

Route user intercept surveys are conducted over four 12-hour periods at a particular site, providing 48-hours of coverage. Surveys are conducted over both term-time (one weekday and weekend day) and during the school holidays (one weekday and weekend day). A manual count is conducted concurrently with the survey, recording all movements for each user category (age, mode and gender), though only those over the age of 16 are surveyed.

Focus groups

Focus groups were carried out post-project to collect opinions on the impact of specific routes on local communities or specific beneficiaries. Focus groups were held at Deeside Industrial Park for the Neston to Deeside route, at Knowsley Business Park for Gellings Greenway, with residents of the local community in Wolverhampton and with members of a local youth group in Westcott. Informal interviews with route users were conducted on routes to gauge opinions about the interventions.

Time lapse camera

The time lapse camera records over a full week period to ensure that the required data are collected. Data are used from the recordings of four days (Saturday, Sunday and two of Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) between the hours of 7am and 7pm to conform to our counting methodology. A manual count is conducted from the footage, counting all non-motorised users.

Workplace travel surveys

Workplace travel surveys were carried out at three workplaces, two industrial estates and one supermarket. The surveys gathered data similar to that found on the route user intercept surveys and allow for an estimation of modal share within a particular workplace.

Whilst the three workplaces were successfully engaged and contacts were made to assist with the delivery of the surveys, response rates were too low to be utilised within this report.

School travel surveys

Hands-up style surveys were sent to schools to be completed by all pupils, where possible. The survey gathered data on mode used to travel to school, mode that the respondent would like to travel by as well as data to identify whether the respondent would be a direct beneficiary of the scheme.

Whilst contact was made with two schools and pre-surveys were successfully completed, without continuous and dedicated engagement the contact made was lost and we were unsuccessful in engaging in order to get completed post-surveys.

9.3 Analysis

Estimating usage at a single site using survey data

Count data collected during route user intercept surveys are used to generate annual usage estimates. These are calculated by comparing the manual counts conducted over four days with observed distributions of use from continuous counts at site which are comparable. Weighting mechanisms are applied to refine the annual usage estimate and give estimates by age, gender and activity. Responses by age, gender and type of activity are used to adjust the weighting to reflect changes throughout the year. For some surveys an insufficient number of responses are collected for weighting to be performed.

Estimation of economic benefits

The methodology adopted in estimating the benefit to cost ratio of the Linking Communities schemes is consistent with the WebTAG appraisal concerning walking and cycling.[11]

In order to estimate the value of the health benefit we have used the World Health Organisation's HEAT[12] model.

Estimation of car kilometres replaced

An estimation of the number of car kilometres replaced is required to estimate the following values: CO_2 reduction, decongestion, accident benefits, local air quality, local noise, and infrastructure. The number of car kilometres abstracted from the road network is calculated using the percentage of respondents stating that they did not use a car to make any part of their journey; and the percentage stating that they could have used a car or van instead of walking or cycling for their current journey. This was then applied to the trip length and the difference between car kilometres abstracted for the pre- and post-survey is taken to represent the total car kilometres abstracted as a result of the intervention.

Estimation of jobs sustained

Investment in cycling generates jobs, both in the construction of infrastructure and through the delivery of soft measure interventions.[13] Data provided about the delivery of the project from the local authority Linking Communities reports can be used to estimate the number of jobs sustained through Sustrans schemes. Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs sustained are based on the accumulation of man hours worked during construction of the project. One FTE = 8 * 220 days. Each FTE is sustained because the level of investment supports one year's worth of employment hours.

Economic impact of cycle tourism

Sustrans and the University of Central Lancashire have developed an economic impact model for touring and leisure cycling.[14] The purpose of the model is to enable us to estimate the impact of cycle tourists on National Cycle Network routes or other routes of interest where sufficient supporting information is available.

The model uses information on the number of tourist groups using a cycle route and the characteristics of these groups to estimate the economic impact. The inputs required by the model are: average trip duration; average group size; percentage of tourist users; percentage of leisure users; total annual usage. The output from the model is an estimate of total spending by home-based recreational users, total spending by tourist users, an overall average spend per head, and spending in different sectors (accommodation, food and drink, etc). The revenue spend is then converted into an equivalent number of full-time equivalent jobs that it can be expected to support

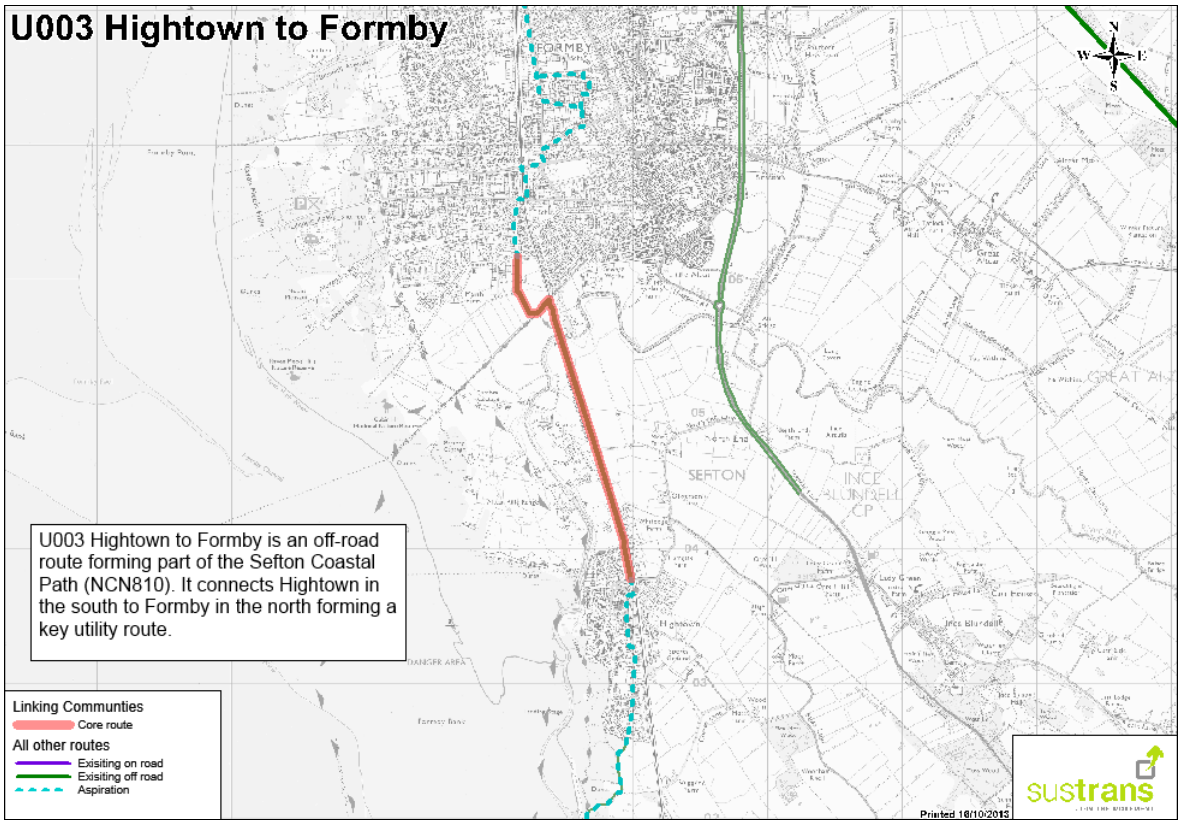
[11] DfT WebTAG 3.14.1. http://www.dft.gov.uk/webtag/documents/expert/pdf/unit3.14.1.pdf
[12] WHO, Health Economic Assessment Tool. http://www.heatwalkingcycling.org/index.php
[13] Sustrans (2012) Sustrans' job creation study: interim report, Sustrans.
[14] Institute of Transport & Tourism, Downward and Sustrans (2007) The economic impact of cycle tourism in North East England

and direct and induced jobs are calculated from input/output tables. Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs for tourism are calculated using the average estimated income required to support one full-time equivalent job. Based on previous research this was taken to be £62,054.[15]

[15] This figure was derived from the recent One NorthEast report on Cruise Tourism in the North East of England (2004). These in turn were calculated from a combination of figures reported in The economic impact of tourism in England's North East (2002) and regional multipliers published by the Scottish Executive.

10 Appendix 2: Scheme maps

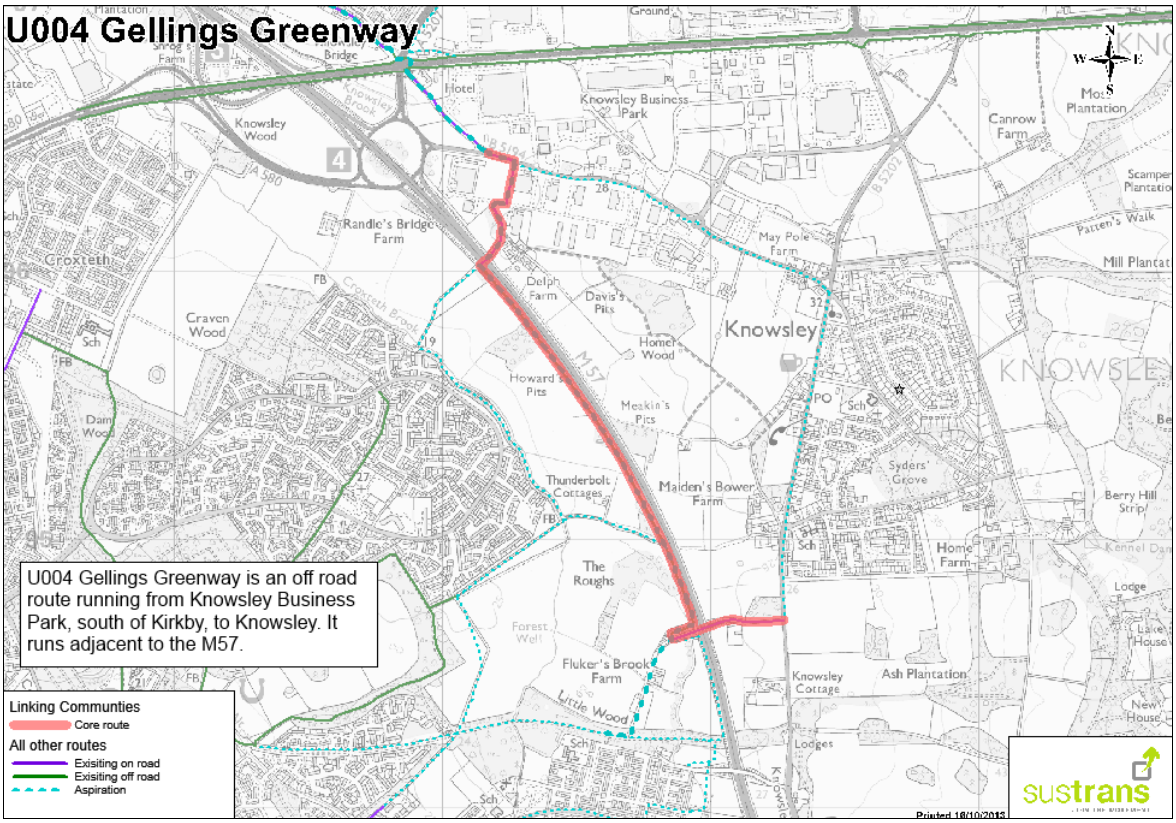
The below maps show the eight schemes reported on in this document.



Scheme U003 – Hightown to Formby

The scheme involved the construction of a 2.5km shared use path between Formby and Highton. The beneficiaries included schoolchildren in Hightown who attend the Range and Formby High Schools. The route also completes an important section of the Sefton Coastal Path.

The route was formally opened with extensive media coverage in September 2013. A number of promotional ride events were staged, and the route is shown on the local area cycle map.

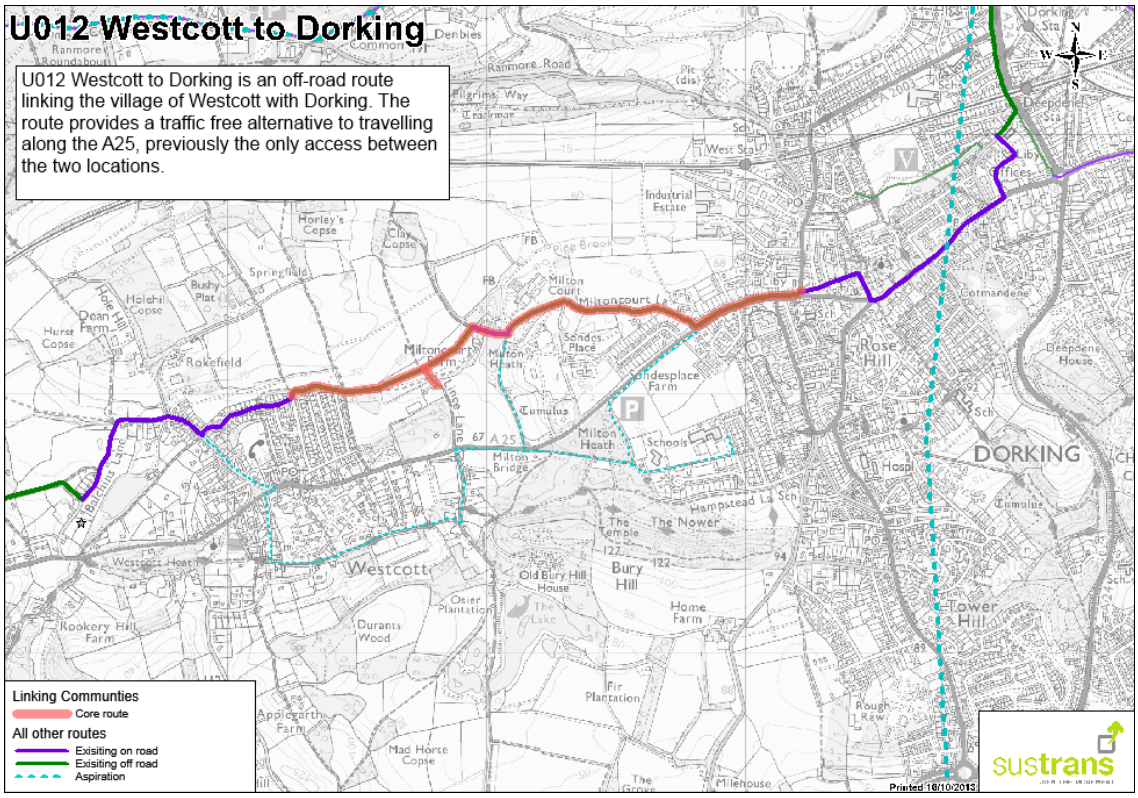


Scheme U004 – Gellings Greenway

This scheme involved the creation of a 1750m segregated path for cyclists, with provision for walking and equestrian use to the side. The scheme links into a Connect2 scheme, the Kirkby Valley Greenway, and will form part of a new section of the National Cycle Network.

The main aim of the scheme is to improve access to jobs at Knowsley Business Park from Croxteth, Stockbridge Village and Knowsley Village. The route helps to reduce barriers caused by the M57 by providing access to Randles Road and Fluker's Brook Farm (which links to the existing bridge over the M57).

The long term aspiration for the route is that it forms part of the development of the 'Green Super Highway' for Knowsley which sets out to develop a walking and cycling network connecting communities to employment, health, education and leisure. The next phase of this scheme (Littlewood Greenway) has been constructed (in partnership between Sustrans, Knowsley and Liverpool City Council).

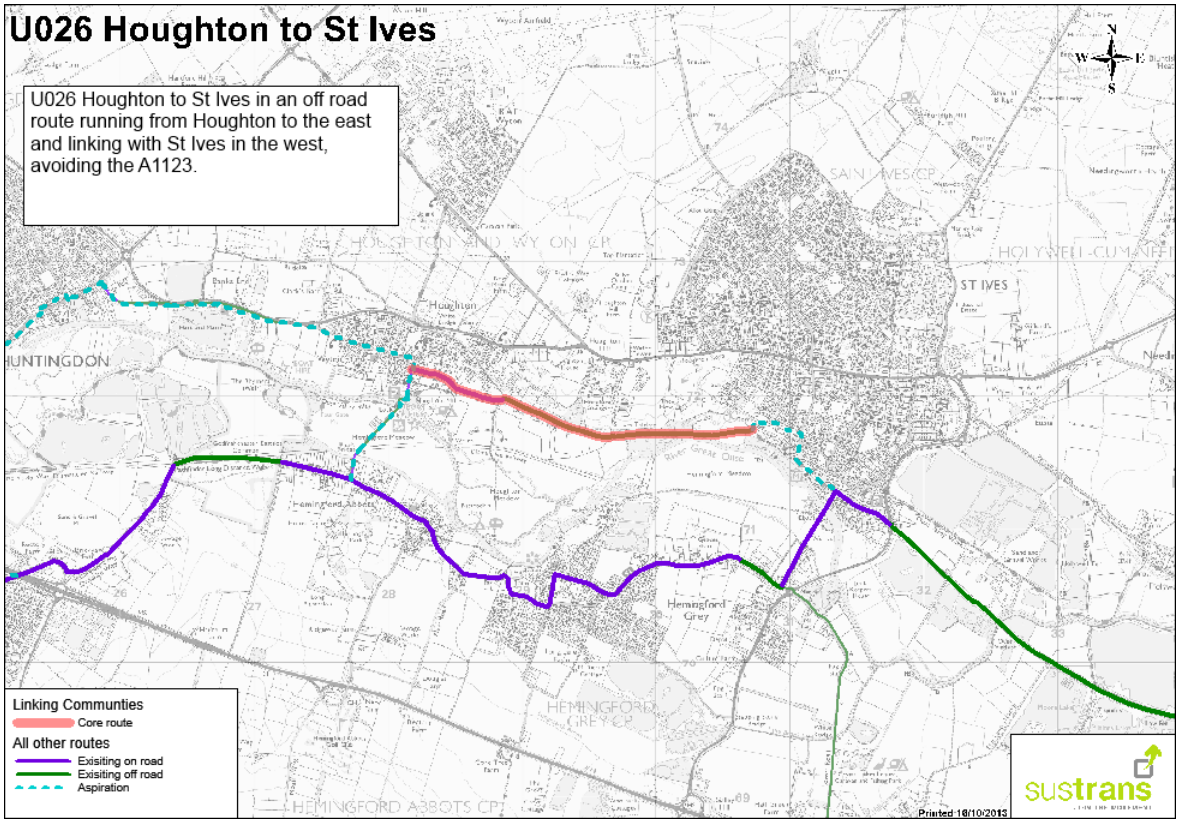


Scheme U012 – Westcott to Dorking

This scheme consisted of two elements:

1. Construction of a 2.5m wide cycling /walking path with verges on both sides and fencing/hedges making a total width of 5m, including construction of three new bridges providing additional links and flood alleviation works

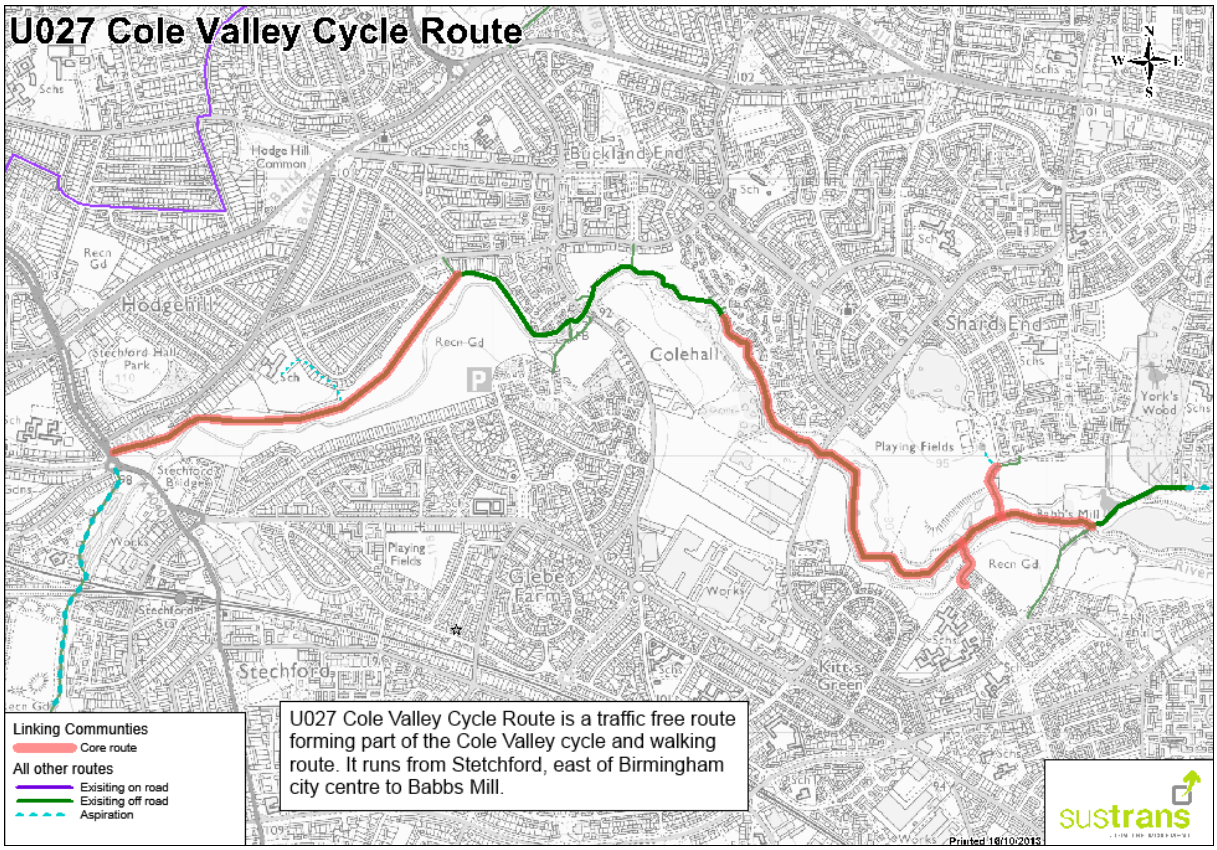
2. Construction of a shared use path alongside A25. The path enables active travel between the village of Westcott and the town of Dorking. This connects pupils of Ashcombe School in Dorking who reside in Westcott. The route is effectively a realignment of NCN 22 linking north to Purley. An opening event was staged upon completion of the route, and a map was produced which has been widely circulated locally.



Scheme U026 – Houghton to St. Ives

This scheme consisted of resurfacing an existing riverside and traffic-free path. The existing route was in a dire state of repair, and people were deterred from using it especially in the winter. The route links the attractive Cambridgeshire village of Houghton with the town of St. Ives (where there is a range of services and larger schools).

This scheme still awaits completion of the legal process of confirming the Cycle Tracks Order on what is recorded as a public footpath, so publicity has been limited to date – although a number of press releases have been issued by the County and District Councils. More activity is planned in 2014, most particularly schools oriented activity. The route is shown on a map which includes Huntingdon, St Ives and routes around the surrounding villages that was published in late 2013.

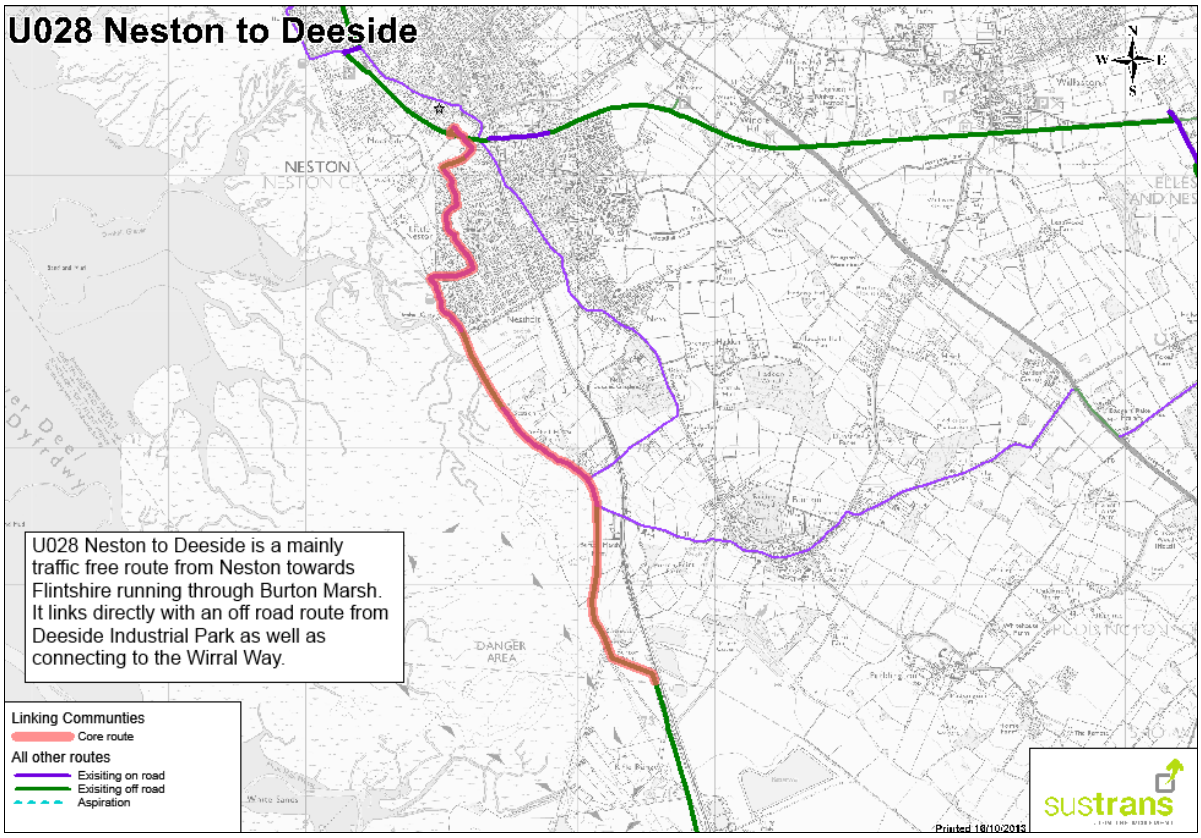


Scheme U027 – Cole Valley Cycleway

For this scheme existing unsurfaced paths in the Cole Calley – a green corridor on the eastern fringes of the city of Birmingham – presented a number of opportunities to enhance connectivity:

- Connections to a number of schools on the edge of Valley (including International School and Community College)
- Links to community shops and services in Stechford
- Extending work already carried out by Birmingham City Council at Cole Hall
- Extending existing green corridor routes out from the city centre
- A further scheme is extending this scheme to link to Colebourne and Hillstone Primary Schools.

Extensive media coverage of an opening event on 1st May 2013 was achieved. Two cabinet members attended the opening event. The council produced a leaflet and printed 10,000 copies which were delivered to neighbouring homes. Building the route enabled Sustrans to successfully bid for BIG Lottery funding to run a programme in the Cole Valley, which uses the new route to get local families more active. Called Active Families East Birmingham there are two full time officers running programmes in schools and neighbourhoods.



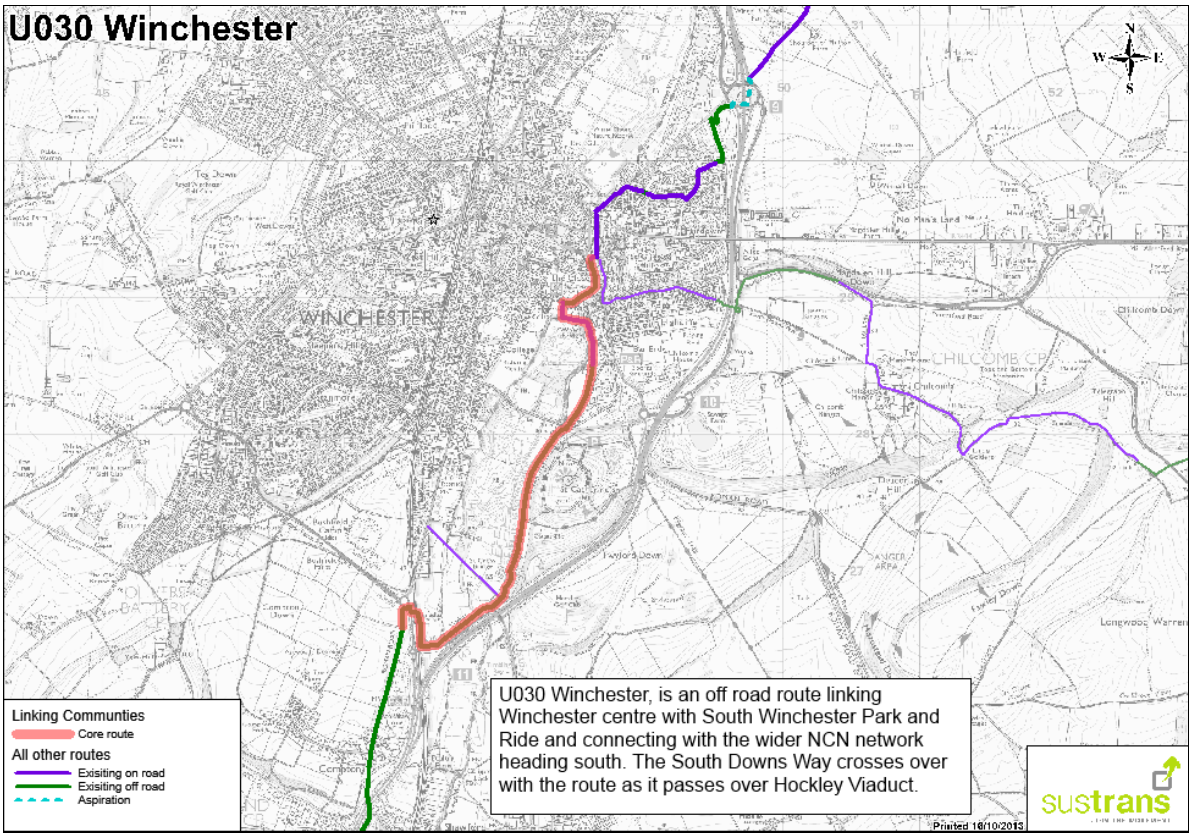
Scheme U029 – Neston to Deeside

This scheme consists of three elements:

1. A link from Neston town centre and the National Cycle Network to new path alongside Dee Estuary to Flintshire
2. A signed link on road through residential area from Flint Park to a new off road facility on the Dee Estuary
3. Surface treatment to existing PROW and construction of new cycle path on MOD and RSPB land

The cycleway is having a major impact for access to employment in the area by providing an off-road link through from Neston to the Deeside Industrial Estate. Some small businesses in Neston are thought to be profiting from additional off road access provision to the town centre. Users are also able to access areas of employment in Chester (via Hooton railway station), Wirral and Merseyside. From the Wirral peninsula it is possible to access numerous public transport links, buses, rail and ferry to Liverpool. Off road access to the University of Liverpool Botanical Gardens at Ness and the University of Liverpool Veterinary College will also be improved. The route also provides an off- road link to the Wirral Country Park, and other parks in the area which have BMX tracks, play areas, etc.

There was an opening for the Neston - Deeside route led by the Welsh Minister (it is an English/Welsh joint project). A few local press articles resulted. The route is shown in the East Flintshire map.



Scheme U030 – Winchester

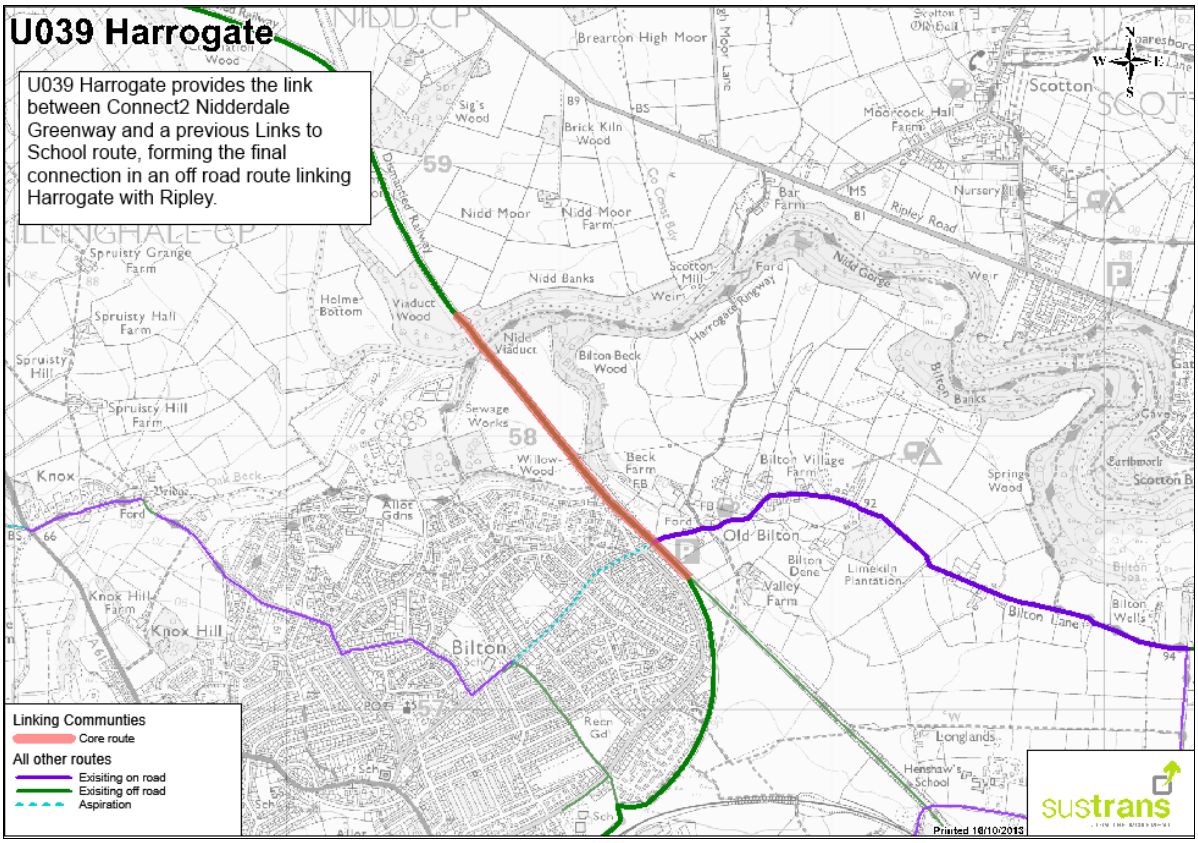
The scheme is an important utility and leisure route as well as a good link between rural settlements in this location. Previously walkers and cyclists had no safe link from the city centre south to other networks. The new route provides a safe and sustainable connection with the South Downs Way and the South Downs National Park, South Winchester Park & Ride (to enable sustainable walking and cycling links to Winchester City centre), community links to Compton and Shawford and completes the missing link in NCN23 through the City. NCN 23 connects Southampton, NCN2 in the south and Reading, NCN4 in the north.

The focus was largely on the Hockley Viaduct link as: the viaduct provided a level route out of the city centre and built upon route improvements from the city centre utilising land from Winchester College and Winchester City Council.

The route helps to provide sustainable transport options for people travelling between settlements and will also encourage more people to walk and cycle and to make use of the long distance footpath The South Downs Way, giving them greater access to the countryside.

New developments to the south of the town (including a new park and ride) presented opportunities to improve levels of active travel for commuters and those living to the south of the city.

The viaduct itself was in need of repair. Developing the viaduct as part of cycling and walking route, in partnership with the Friends of Hockley Viaduct Group, gave the historic structure a new lease of life and a secure future.



Scheme U039 – Harrogate

Sustrans, in partnership with local people and the local authority, developed a 3.7 km path that follows the route of a former railway line, between Bilton, on the northern edge of Harrogate, and Ripley. The only way to get between Harrogate and Ripley was via the A61, a very busy, undulating and dangerous main road. To get out of Harrogate town centre in any direction, and in particular to access the Yorkshire Dales, you either had to be a very experienced cyclist or use a car.

The completion of the Nidderdale Greenway, a vital traffic-free route on the former railway line between Harrogate and Ripley, included bringing back into use the Grade 2 listed, seven-arch Nidd Gorge Viaduct. The Greenway links into the existing cycle network to Knaresborough, Starbeck and the centre of Harrogate giving thousands of people better access to the National Cycle Network. The route forms part of NCN 67.

A large opening event was staged with numerous articles in the local press. The Steering Group was made up of a diverse range of stakeholders. A local school – Richard Taylor Primary School, Bilton - organised competition for pupils to ride the route and report back using photographs. Sustrans volunteer support and promotion also featured in delivery.