



Good news for schools in Hertfordshire

Children in south west Hertfordshire are receiving support and training to help them get pedalling, now that Sustrans' Stuart Duncan is working in schools in Watford, Hemel Hempstead and St Albans. As in Luton, the new project will aim to embed cycling into the school culture so that children can benefit from travelling to school under their own steam, arriving more alert and potentially improving their health in the longer term. Experience has shown us that this approach can at least double the number of children cycling to the target schools.

The project has been made possible thanks to our successful work with Hertfordshire County Council on their Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) bid, but unlike Luton this funding is only secure for one year so we will be doing everything we can to safeguard the future of the project. If the county council is successful in the next stage of their LSTF bid we hope to expand our work to households and businesses in the three towns.

Sustrans' Nigel Brigham says, **"Hertfordshire has led the way in the region in terms of LSTF and Sustrans has been pleased to support their bid and to work with the council. We really hope that they are successful with their next bid and they continue to support Sustrans to transform the school run for more families in the region."**

If you would like to know more about this project or would like to see us working in your child's school, please contact Nigel Brigham (details overleaf).

A bright future for Luton

After the success of our long-running work helping children and adults to travel more actively in Luton, there were fears that lack of funding could spell the end for our projects there. So we're delighted that now, thanks to our work with Luton Borough Council on their bid to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), we're able to continue working with schools there for another four years.

Up until now we've been working with schools to establish a cycling culture among the children and helping adults increase their everyday activity levels through affordable loan bikes, healthy walking groups and active travel maps. The new funding means that Sustrans' Richard Noon is now working full-time in Luton and we are managing a fleet of bikes that can be moved around schools for cycle training. Sustrans' Chris Wilkinson says there's great collaboration between staff at Sustrans and Luton Borough Council. **"The work of the last few years has shown us what works well in Luton and what needed to change, so the new funding and new team gives me great optimism for the future."**

Sustrans is still in discussion with Luton Borough Council about the future of our walking programme, but it's clear that the council is keen to see it continue and to develop new walks. Sam Ryan coordinates the walking programme which involves local volunteers and has introduced many local people to the pleasures and benefits of walking. The initiative has helped Sustrans build up a really strong group of volunteers, many of whom were new to our work. Sam takes particular pride when participants start thinking about walking for more of their everyday journeys. He says, **"Many of our walkers come to us because they want to improve their health and we try and encourage them to walk for more of their local journeys – it is really satisfying when you hear that this is happening."**

If you'd like to find out more about whether you could benefit from the project, or get involved by volunteering your time, please visit www.sustrans.org.uk and search for Active Lives Healthy People.



UPDATE

From the Regional Director



Reflecting on the last few months and indeed the last year, it is difficult not to think about funding, but despite these problems it is encouraging that there are still some great projects being delivered.

In terms of length of new route opened, the re-alignment of National Route 51 onto the path beside the Cambridgeshire busway stands out, but for me personally I have been particularly pleased to see the resurfacing of part of the Alban Way. The smooth surface is a great improvement as I pedal between Hatfield and St Albans and it's great to hear about the role that local volunteers have played in getting that to happen.

Supporters who received the funding cuts appeal a year ago will be well aware that funding is a major issue for Sustrans at the

In all cases Sustrans is already engaged in delivering projects. We are now hoping that bids by Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Central Bedfordshire, plus a further one from Hertfordshire, will bring good opportunities.

Across the region there are signs of progress on the highways. The "No-entry except cycles" sign which has only just been permitted is starting to appear as the benefits of reducing street clutter and encouraging two-way cycling in one-way streets are recognised. Similarly there is a gradual proliferation of 20 mph limits in Norwich, Cambridge, Central Bedfordshire and Luton to name a few.

In urban areas in the region there simply is not space for new off-road paths in many residential areas but the roads themselves can be made so much safer by introducing 20 mph limits. Of course, the problems are not just urban – sometimes speeds are a bigger issue in rural areas and that is why we need to keep persuading local councils and other decision makers that this is an issue that must be tackled. So, I'd like to thank all of you who have donated or pledged as part of our Get There Safely appeal.

Nigel Brigham,
Regional Director, East of England



moment and of course money is mentioned a few times in this newsletter. As a practical charity, Sustrans would much rather be delivering practical projects than worrying about money, but of course the two cannot be separated, so it has been a huge relief that, thanks to the help of supporters, we have been able to put a big effort into bids for the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. This has already brought dividends with successful bids by the local authorities in Suffolk (Lowestoft), Southend, Thurrock, Luton, Peterborough and Hertfordshire.

Contact details

If you would like to get involved or have any comments, please get in touch with Nigel and the East of England team:
t: 01733 319981 e: peterborough@sustrans.org.uk

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Network News

The National Cycle Network continues to grow and improve all the time due to your generous support. Thank you on behalf of happy walkers and cyclists everywhere.

Subway set to transform walking and cycling in Royston

A new subway with improved walking and cycling access is set to transform local travel in Royston. With much of the work already completed, the subway is expected to open in April.

With very little provision for cyclists and walkers in Royston, and the railway line posing an obstacle for many people's daily journeys, the subway is expected to make a big difference to the way those journeys are made.

Doug Drake, chair of the project steering group, is both delighted and thankful to see this railway underpass reaching its final stages of construction. He says, "This will meet the needs of so many people, creating a safe and convenient crossing for schoolchildren and adults. I thank Sustrans for initiating the advancement of this project which had been needed for decades. It has also resulted in a number of new cycle routes in the town which is yet another bonus."

The projects in Royston and Watton/Griston are just two of the many local networks Sustrans is developing with the help of funding from the Big Lottery Fund. The aim of the work is to bring the National Cycle Network into the heart of communities. To find out more visit: www.sustrans.org.uk/connect2



The new subway will allow more children in Royston to travel to school on foot and by bike

Other news

- A new section of National Route 51 between **Landguard Point** and **Felixstowe** has been opened.
- Work on links between **Watton** and the village of **Griston** have been given a much needed push thanks to the local community who have formed a steering group for the project.
- We are undertaking a study looking at improving routes through the popular Verulamium Park in **St Albans**.
- We have been working on a school links project in **Welwyn Garden City** and have been working with Peterborough City Council to improve access in the **Ortons**, removing unnecessary barriers and helping to make travel by foot and bike easier.
- The Cambridgeshire Busway path is complete now that the final section between **Swavesey** and **St Ives** has been opened.
- Walkers and cyclists in **Stowmarket** will soon find road crossings on National Route 51 easier now that new toucan crossing works are underway.
- Pupils at Darlinghurst Primary School in **Southend** are looking forward to a great new route to school once work on the Prittle Brook Greenway has been completed.
- Children at **Watlington** Primary School in Norfolk are enjoying an easier school journey by foot and bike thanks to a new link to National Route 1.

Improving the Network

- Two routes in the region have been realigned so look out for the signs showing the new routes on National Route 51 through **Ipswich** and Regional Route 30 through **Brandon**. You can also see where the routes now run using the online mapping at: www.sustrans.org.uk

Forging international links

- We recently helped host a visit to **Cambridge** by our partners in the Bike Friendly Cities initiative from France, the Netherlands and Belgium. Through collaboration, the partners are working to increase cycling in towns and cities in their countries. Sustrans is leading a survey of attitudes across the four countries.



Spring days out in the East

Whether it's spectacular displays of springtime flowers, a Mother's Day cream tea or foraging for Easter treats, the East of England offers lots of choice for car-free days out.

Spring blooms

With a wide range of species, including primroses, orchids and wild garlic, Priestley Wood, near Needham Market in Suffolk and a short detour from **National Route 51**, has been picked by *the Guardian* newspaper as one of the best woods in the country for springtime flowers. The paper also suggests Heartwood Forest, just off **National Route 6**, north of St Albans.

For a magnificent carpet of bluebells, try following **National Route 1** east from Chelmsford in Essex to Blakes Wood, the Ashridge Estate on the **Icknield Way** near Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire or Foxley Wood close to **National Route 1** and the **Marriott's Way** near Reepham in Norfolk.

Mother's Day

A cream tea or lunch can be a special treat on Mother's Day – and even better if you've worked up an appetite by cycling there! Peckover House on **National Route 1** in Wisbech is serving Mothering Sunday afternoon tea. Check www.nationaltrust.org.uk for dates and booking requirements. Alternatively, after a cycle along the **Wells and Holkham circuit** on National Route 1 and Regional Route 33 in Norfolk, you could call in at the Holkham Estate for tea and cake (www.holkham.co.uk).

Easter Treats

There's Easter fun to be had in the region too. Peckover House (see route information above) is also holding Easter activities or you could join the Easter Trail at Sheringham Park in Norfolk reached by travelling north on minor roads from **Regional Route 30**.

For information about attractions on the National Cycle Network plus nearby railway stations, visit the online mapping at: www.sustrans.org.uk

Featured Ride:

Ipswich to Landguard Point

This section of **National Route 51** starts and finishes on waterfronts and gives a taste of urban and rural Suffolk, plus some great views and a touch of history in between. It follows some minor and town roads so children would need to be confident in traffic.

Starting at either Ipswich docks or at Ipswich Station, make your way to Holywells Park and then to Landseer Park, where there are wildflower meadows. After passing through residential areas you'll reach what used to be Ipswich Airport, now a housing estate which you negotiate on new cycle paths.

After going under the A14 (take care on the slip roads) the nature of the route is very different and follows minor roads through the attractive villages of Nacton and Levington, where you could take a break at the 13th century Ship Inn. Look out for good views of the Orwell Estuary along your way.

After Levington you'll approach Felixstowe – the busiest container port in the country. In the town centre the one way system along Hamilton Road takes you towards the sea, but if you want Felixstowe Station you need to head in the opposite direction. At the end of your journey, you'll reach Landguard Fort which is now managed by English Heritage, but began its life under Henry VIII and continued in military use until the 1950s.

On your return you could take Regional Route 41 and National Route 1 back to Ipswich. Alternatively, if you'd like to continue on National Route 51, you could take the seasonal ferry to Harwich (it's advisable to check that the ferry is running).



The Route

Distance: 15 miles/24 km

Terrain: some gentle hills

Getting there: railway stations at Ipswich and Felixstowe

OS maps: Explorer 197

Maps/leaflets: Ipswich Cycle Route Map, National Cycle Route 51 (Newmarket to Felixstowe) – both free from Suffolk County Council

