

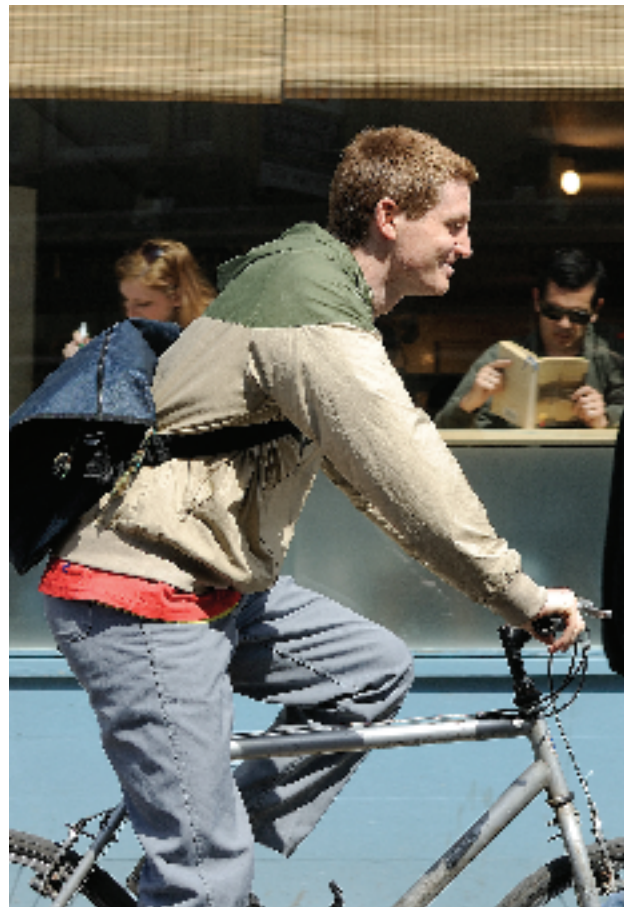
Lincoln students say “yes” to cycling

In the previous issue we brought you news about the success of our university cycling project in Nottingham, and now we have some more great results from Lincoln.

Since September 2010, we've been offering students and university staff in Lincoln the chance to borrow bikes and access information and activities to help them start cycling to the university campuses and for their other local journeys. After an initial slow start last year, the good news has spread and the project has taken off very quickly this year, with all of the 66 bikes snapped up by the end of October. We now have a waiting list for any that return! People really appreciate the trouble-free cycling experience that Sustrans' support gives them. "Everything is perfect, glad to have the bike," is just one of the many positive comments from our satisfied customers. Health benefits, low travel costs and the speed and convenience of travel were all quoted as reasons for joining the scheme.

Sustrans has been able to provide further covered cycle parking at the university and our monthly bike counts show a 20% increase in bikes on campus during November-December 2011 compared to March-May earlier in the year – proof indeed that a little encouragement achieves very positive results despite the onset of winter!

The initial Big Lottery funding has ended and we are now in negotiations with a range of funding partners to extend the project in 2012 to offer cycling and walking promotion and support to a wider range of local businesses and communities.



Sharpening cycling skills in Shropshire



Sustrans' cycle polo sessions help to build cycling confidence and skills

October was Love Your Bike Month in Shropshire. Sustrans ran a guided ride to lead people to the end of month finale in **Shrewsbury**, then offered bike polo skills sessions. Everyone who took part saw their bike handling skills improve as they attempted to ride their bike, hold their mallet, spot the ball and avoid the opposition - all at the same time!

Shrewsbury Town footballer, Carl Regan, also made an appearance at the event and met a number of the young cyclists. Sustrans has been running guided rides to each home game from the schools we work in and discounted entry to matches has been available for families who join the match day rides. This is a great way to inspire people to ditch the car for their leisure activities and enjoy cycling together as a family.

Dates for your diary:

Artist Rob Colbourne's work *20ft to an inch* will be displayed in Worcester Cathedral from 2 to 18 March. See Network News for the background to this interpretive artwork.

UPDATE

From the Regional Directors



There is so much happening currently in the Midlands. It's great to see the Bike North Birmingham project pressing full steam ahead with the start of a range of initiatives in workplaces, schools and leisure centres to get more people cycling more often. We're delighted that students and staff at further education colleges are now benefiting from our cycling project, alongside existing participants from the University of Nottingham, Nottingham Trent University and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust. In Leicester, we have been supporting school cycling projects in the city, and targeting key secondary schools and feeder primary schools that have an impact on local congestion. And, of course, we are continuing to help build bridges and establish better routes for cyclists and walkers throughout the region. These range from small scale improvements like resurfacing paths to larger scale projects such as incorporating Bennerley Viaduct near Ilkeston into an improved Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire cross border network.

Campaigning at national and local levels

Alongside our practical work, we are campaigning to persuade key national government departments of the need to continue maintaining and improving existing routes and to develop new ones. This, in turn, encourages local government to invest across the region and the local intelligence we receive from supporters is vital in helping us identify the most important areas for their work. An example of this is our work with Leicester City Council and local people, where we are looking at the reallocation of road space to create safer routes for cyclists along some of the city's main transport arteries.

Another cause that we are lobbying for at national and local levels is the reduction of speed limits to 20mph in residential areas. This has the potential to save lives and safer streets are more appealing for new cyclists and walkers, more pleasant places to live and much better environments for children to play in. So thanks to everyone who has donated to our recent Get There Safely appeal and signed our Free Range Kids pledge; your voice is a vital instrument for change. If you haven't yet heard about our campaign, please visit www.sustrans.org.uk to find out how you can support it.

So much of our work, large or small, has been possible thanks to your support and in particular your fantastic response to our funding cuts appeal last year. Your help has a real impact on the quality of existing routes and enables us to get involved in all aspects of local transport planning. We all want to see better facilities and support for sustainable travel and together we are much better equipped to achieve this.

Yvonne Gilligan
Regional Director, West Midlands

Matt Easter
Regional Director, East Midlands

Transforming travel across the Midlands

Anticipation is building in towns across the region as several schemes to help people get around more easily by bike and on foot are nearing completion. Back in 2007, we identified communities where new bridges, crossings, and cycling and walking networks would make it easier for many people to walk and cycle their everyday journeys. We were able to obtain funding from the Big Lottery Fund and other partners to start work on these projects and people all over the country are already benefiting from them.

In **Kenilworth**, a new bridge over the busy A429 at Crackley completes a link in the Kenilworth Greenway and is already proving to be extremely popular. This is part of National Route 52 which, when complete, will link Kenilworth with the University of Warwick.

Two further bridges are to be installed in **Scunthorpe** by the end of February, providing key connections over Bridges Road and West Common Lane along Scunthorpe's Ridgeway. The bridges will be opening to the public this spring and we hope they will be popular with students at John Leggott College and with other beneficiaries locally.

Within days of planning permission being granted in October, construction started on the **Carlton Le Moorland** and **Bassingham** Pathway. The details of the portrait bench and other seats are currently being finalised and we expect the new path to be open soon.

If you live in any of these areas, we hope the new routes will help you to get about more safely. To find out about similar projects in **Rugby** and other locations, see Network News on page 3 and visit: www.sustrans.org.uk/connect2

Contact details

If you would like to get involved or have any comments, do get in touch with the Midlands team:

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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.

53 The Viaduct Cycleway, Rugby

The first part of the Viaduct Cycleway, which will take cyclists over the magnificent 11 arch Grade II listed Leicester Road Viaduct, will be complete as we go to press. The route will connect northern areas of the town, including the industrial and employment hubs at **Cosford**.

Worcester's winning formula

Two projects in **Worcester** have received wider acclaim for their innovation and demonstration of best practice:

46 Liminal's *Organ of Corti* artwork, which has already won the Performing Rights Society's New Music Award, has gone on to gain the Noise Abatement Society's John Connell Award for Innovation. Over a thousand people came to see the 'organ' when it was alongside National Route 46 in Worcester last summer.

45 46 Worcester's new greenway has been recognised as one of the best projects of its kind across Europe at the European Greenways Association awards. Diglis Bridge and connecting paths were praised by judges for quality of design and technical execution.



Worcester's new paths have won popularity with residents as well as international recognition



Rob Colbourne's *20ft to an inch* artwork on Worcester's riverside

45 46 Riverside reflections

Last year, hundreds of **Worcester** residents worked with artist Rob Colbourne on an exciting banner which records their thoughts, words, photographs and sketches of the local riverside. The banner, which was unveiled in November and displayed on the riverside, will move to Worcester Cathedral (see diary dates on page 1) and Sustrans is looking for a permanent home for the work.

81 New links for Shrewsbury cyclists

The Raven Meadows/Smithfield Road link in **Shrewsbury**, which is part of our work to create a continuous riverside promenade through the town, was opened with a ceremony presided over by the Mayor. The work included widening footways and reconfiguring a junction and toucan crossings around the bus depot and one of the key roads in Shrewsbury to create better routes for cyclists and walkers.

45 Waking up to spring

The traffic-free **Coalport** to **Bridgnorth** route is open again after its annual winter closure. The route runs along the beautiful River Severn valley, so why not explore it this spring?

536 Traffic-free to the heart of Northampton

Residents will have a greatly improved traffic-free route into the centre of **Northampton** now that work along the River Nene has been completed and signed. On going works will improve the route further.

63 Conkers is complete

The Conkers circuit, a leisure ride though the old mining area on the **Derbyshire** and **Leicestershire** border, has been completed and local residents have been choosing which famous local characters they would like to see depicted on a Portrait Bench on the route.



Spring days out in the Midlands

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

Springtime flowers and bluebell woods

For a magnificent carpet of bluebells head for Trench Wood near Sale Green in Worcestershire which you can reach by following the **Crowle Tibberton Loop**, a circuit linked to **National Route 45** north east of Worcester. Alternatively, make for Clumber Park in Nottinghamshire, on **National Route 6**, south west from Worksop. Both of these woods have been named by the Woodland Trust as some of the best places in the country to spot this beautiful flower. Londonthorpe Wood, east of Grantham in Lincolnshire, near

National Route 15 is another good place for a springtime walk.

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! Both are being served at Croome, south along **National Route 45** from Worcester, and also at Coughton Court on **National Route 5** between Redditch and Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire; alternatively, make Mum a Tussy Mussy posy at Canons Ashby House on **National Route 50** in Northamptonshire.

Check the National Trust website at www.nationaltrust.org.uk for dates and booking requirements.

Easter Treats

There's lots of Easter fun to be had in the region too. Join the Easter Egg Hunt at Sudbury Hall on **National Route 549** south east from Uttoxeter in Derbyshire. Search for Easter Bunnies at Kedleston Hall north from Derby on **National Route 54** and local routes. For a truly chocolatey experience, Cadbury World is a short walk from Bournville railway station along the Worcester and Birmingham canal (www.cadbury.co.uk).

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

Featured Ride:

Kenilworth Greenway

Kenilworth Greenway is a peaceful, traffic-free route for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders which wends its way along the lovely former Berkswell to Kenilworth railway through beautiful Warwickshire countryside. It links the communities of Berkswell and Burton Green with the walking trails around Warwick University. Plus thanks to the brand new bridge over the busy A429, there's now great access to the wildlife-rich woods of Kenilworth Common and the cafés, restaurants, pubs and shops of Kenilworth town centre.

From Tile Hill station head along Cromwell Lane following the signs towards Burton Green. Continue along this road for just over a mile, keeping the water tower on your left, until you reach the railway bridge opposite Hodgett's Lane. On the bridge, leave the road and turn left down the ramp onto the former railway line following the signs for "Kenilworth Greenway".

Continuing in the same direction as the ramp, travel along this route which takes you along the greenway through Crackley Woods and open farmland. On the outskirts of Kenilworth you will cross the new bridge over the main Coventry Road, and from here you will also be able to access the link route to the University of Warwick which is being built. Carrying on over the new bridge will take you along the newly built path to the many trails of Kenilworth Common which are managed by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

To reach Kenilworth town centre, continue along the main path through the Common, exiting through the access onto Forge Road (where you will find a couple of nice pubs). If you're not thirsty, turn immediately right onto the shared-use path which crosses Park Road and then follow Finham Brook all the way to Abbey Fields Park from where you can easily reach Kenilworth Castle or the many shops, pubs and restaurants of the town centre.



The Route

Distance: 5 miles/8 km

Terrain: fairly flat, both country lanes and railway path

Getting there: railway station at Tile Hill

OS maps: Explorer 221, Landranger 140



Visit Kenilworth Castle by bike or on foot

Enjoywarwickshire.com

