

National Highways delivers A38 bridge boost for all in Plymouth

Since 2015, National Highways has invested more than £85 million towards the creation of 160 new and upgraded cycle ways across England, providing safe, attractive and more accessible and inclusive facilities for people to travel for work, shopping and leisure.

And this week the company marked the completion of a significant £2.89 million scheme to upgrade the Mowhay footbridge, effectively joining up with a local cycle route around the city and also making it easier for wheelchair users and people with pushchairs to cross the A38.

The original bridge was not wide enough to safely accommodate both cyclists and walkers, and work started in June last year to modify both the bridge and ramps to enable it to link up with a recently completed footway/cycleway.

As well as the wider deck, the upgrade includes a more manageable gradient, new ramps, steps, fencing and guard rails, new lighting and a new surface water drainage system.

By improving the connection between Honicknowle, Weston Mill and St Budeaux further recreational opportunities will be unlocked in Plymouth and commuters will be provided with a new facility enabling them to actively choose an alternative sustainable method of transport.

National Highways Route Manager Ed Halford said:

We're committed to significantly improving safety across our road network, and the new and improved bridge will make it much easier and safer for a variety of users, including cyclists, travelling to and from the centre of Plymouth.

At National Highways, our work goes beyond operating, maintaining and improving roads. We're investing in the environment and communities surrounding our network, as well as the people travelling and working on it. We aim to address social and environmental issues and add real value to society.

We've worked closely with Plymouth City Council to realise this project – a glowing example of how this funding can make life better for communities living and working near our roads.

The original Mowhay bridge over the A38 (above) was too narrow to accommodate cyclists and walkers safely, and (below) the widened bridge

The scheme follows the completion of Sustrans' National Highways-funded cycle path scheme at the A38 Marsh Mills Interchange near Plymouth.

Councillor Jonathan Drear, Plymouth City Council's Cabinet Member for Transport, said:

We're delighted to see the newly improved Mowhay Road bridge open following this substantial investment by National Highways.

It provides a key walking and cycling link between communities either side of the A38 and will complement improvements we're looking to deliver through our Transforming Cities Fund, between the dockyard and city centre, and our Major Roads Network programme.

Plymouth's growing walking and cycling network will help more and more people to choose active travel and supports our Climate Emergency Action Plan commitments.

Iain Stewart, Sustrans Network Development Manager for the South West, added:

I'm delighted to see this project come to a successful conclusion. This bridge is an important active travel connection for the communities living north and south of the busy A38.

These improvements make it easier for people to choose walking, wheeling and cycling in the area, and are very much welcomed by Sustrans.

National Highways manages four designated funds, allocated by the Government, to deliver benefits above and beyond building, maintaining and operating England's strategic roads.

From protecting the environment and enhancing the landscape around roads, to improving safety, reducing congestion, and supporting communities, the aim is to make a positive difference to people's lives.

Elsewhere in the South West, designated funding has already provided safer journeys for cyclists around M5 Junction 16 near Bristol, on the A35 in Bridport, and Cycle Route 45 around the A303 Solstice Park near Amesbury.

Last year also saw the completion of South Gloucestershire Council's initiative to upgrade close to seven miles of walking and cycling paths around the Severnside Enterprise Area at Avonmouth, near Bristol, and a new cycleway on the A36 in Salisbury – both realised with National Highways' designated funding – while other ongoing schemes include:

- funding Wiltshire Council to deliver a new, safer toucan crossing on the A345 in Amesbury

- funding provided to Gloucestershire County Council towards the design of the A40/B4063 cycleway, currently under consultation.
- funding provided to North Somerset Council to create a cycle path between Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon and complete the final part of the cycle route between Brean and Portishead
- funding invested to enable Cornwall Council to deliver cycle routes alongside the busy A30 in mid-Cornwall.

Going forward, cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders will see more benefits over the next five years from the £169 million set aside for various community-focussed projects in National Highways' Users and communities fund.

The company is using the fund to improve services for users and neighbours of England's motorways and major A-roads, including increasing the options people have for sustainable travel.

Learn more about [National Highways' designated funds plan](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.