

# Press release: Highways England working in tandem with Sustrans to help cyclists

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This network criss-crosses the country, linking villages, towns and cities – and with 4.4 million people using it every year for commuting and leisure, the partnership will benefit cyclists up and down the country

Working with the charity is just one of the ways Highways England is making it easier for people of all ages and abilities to cycle and walk across and alongside its roads.

Highways England Head of Road Safety Richard Leonard said:

We want to make cycling and walking safer and easier – not merely locally, but across the country as a whole.

The National Cycle Network is a great initiative, and this project is a great example of how people can be encouraged to cycle and walk more – with obvious benefits to their health, safety and the wider environment.

The Department for Transport also recently awarded £1 million in funding to support projects repairing and upgrading sections of this popular network. Our overall plans to increase cycling and walking are set out in the 2017 Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

Sustrans have identified a long list of opportunities and will be working together with Highways England to create a shortlist of schemes which can be quickly taken forward.

Anita Konrad, Sustrans' National Director, England said:

We are delighted to be partnering with Highways England and welcome this investment that will make it easier for more people to cycle

to work, the shops and for leisure.

Cycling and walking for local journeys is part of the solution to many of the challenges we face today, including road congestion, air pollution and high levels of inactivity. The schemes demonstrate how – with some practical design solutions and minimal interventions – we can address these challenges, and that retrofitting cycling provision can be done easily.

We hope to build on this partnership with Highways England, to make cycling safer, more attractive and easier for everyone, regardless of age and abilities.

Highways England has a £100 million dedicated cycling fund to provide improvements and new facilities which make it safer and easier to negotiate its roads. So far 80 new schemes have been built and 286 crossings have been improved, meaning it is now far easier than it was for cyclists to cross over motorways and major A roads.

People cycling or walking on the National Cycle Network linking London Stansted Airport with communities across Essex are already benefitting from £800,000 of improvements provided by this special fund. Cyclists can enjoy a safe and scenic route across the busy M11 motorway thanks to the Highways England project to restore the one mile route between Birchanger village and the airport.

Previously, people commuting on bikes to and from the airport were having to navigate the tricky junction 8 of the M11, and were often put off using what was little more than a dirt track. Resurfacing sections of the path, putting up new signs, and clearing overhanging vegetation has provided an attractive, traffic-free way to commute to the airport.

Some 200 schemes, worth £100m, will be on the ground by 2020/21. Over the past three years, 80 schemes have been built and a further 30 are due to be completed by spring 2019.

Another scheme completed this year is at a busy junction near Ellesmere Port in Cheshire. A £1.1 million scheme has created a new 320 metre cycleway through the Two Mills junction, which is used by more than 37,000 vehicles every day.

The A540, which runs between Chester and Hoylake, is popular with cyclists and the new path, which is shared by cyclists and pedestrians, runs along the southbound A540. The route crosses two new islands on the A550 at the Two Mills junction before continuing along the A540. New traffic lights and crossings also make it easier to cross the A550 and a new high-friction road surface has been laid to reduce the risk of collisions.

Highways England published its [Cycling and Accessibility Strategy](#) in 2016, and has recently published an [annual report](#) detailing the progress made so far. This includes integrating cycling and accessibility needs in the early stages of scheme design and working closely with key stakeholders to deliver

schemes which suit the needs of communities..

## **Designated funds**

Highways England is working to achieve a target to deliver 150 cycling schemes by the end of Road Investment Period (2015-2020), and 200 cycling schemes by 2020/21 after the government set up the £100 million dedicated fund for cycling in its Road Investment Strategy. This £100 million fund forms part of the £250 million designated fund for Cycling, Safety and Integration.

Designated funds are a series of ring fenced funds designated to Highways England by the Department for Transport to address a range of issues beyond the traditional focus of road investment.

There are 5 designated funds:

- environment – £300 million
- cycling, safety and Integration (CSI) – £250 million
- air quality – £100 million
- innovation – £150 million
- growth and housing – £100 million

More information about [Highways England's designated funds](#)

## **General enquiries**

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

## **Media enquiries**

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