

Highways England's pumps £85 million into getting people back on bikes

Since 2015, the company has pumped more than £85 million towards the creation of 160 new and upgraded cycle ways across the country.

To mark National Bike Week, Highways England has announced the opening of new paths and funding for the creation of cycle routes in the South East and South West of England.

There's never been a better time to get on your bike and try out one of Highways England's cycle routes which criss-cross the country, helping to link villages, towns and cities.

Highways England Chief Executive, Jim O'Sullivan, said:

We care about everyone who uses our road network and we've made significant progress integrating cycling into the design of our schemes.

Improved opportunities for cycling creates obvious benefits for health, safety and the wider environment. And during the current pandemic it is especially important that we can provide opportunities for cyclists and pedestrians, not barriers to their journeys as people return to work.

Following unprecedented levels of walking and cycling across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, the enhancements to the cycle network have given more people a choice when considering alternatives to public transport when they need to travel, making healthier habits easier and helping to make sure the road network is ready to respond to future increases in demand.

Cycling Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said:

We are determined to build a more resilient, sustainable transport network in the wake of COVID-19, with more people taking to two wheels as a healthy and green way to get around.

Bike Week is a great opportunity for people to give cycling a go and Highways England's new cycling infrastructure provides the chance for people to explore their communities.

In the latest initiative which opened on Tuesday 9 June 2020, Highways England invested £675,000 into Dorset Council's project to create improved cycle and footpaths, and upgraded crossings on both the A35 and Sea Road South.

As part of the scheme, a new, unsegregated footway and cycleway has been installed along Sea Road North, together with a new toucan crossing, while the existing puffin crossing on Sea Road South has been upgraded to a toucan crossing – all part of ongoing improvements to the North Bridport/Bradpole and South Bridport/Bothenhampton cycle route.

And this week it has also been announced that cyclists in West Sussex will soon benefit from a new 7-mile route linking Chichester to Emsworth travelling along the A259 corridor. The project is expected to begin construction next year and will connect villages along the corridor proving commuting and leisure facilities.

Cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders will see more benefits over the next five years, with £169 million set aside in Highways England's new 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.

Highways England 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.

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.

Final phase of North East flood scheme starts

Natural flood management features – including three large storage ponds and new water dependent habitats – are being created on land at Coatham Wood upstream of Stockton.

Coatham Wood is next to Coatham Beck, which is a tributary of Lustrum Beck, which flows through Stockton town centre.

The features will store flood water during heavy rain that will then drain

slowly back into Coatham Beck. The temporary storage will reduce water levels downstream.

New flood defences

The storage and slower release of water will work hand in hand with £3million in town flood defences which were previously completed in the summer of 2017.

This involved working with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to build new flood defences and improve existing ones in the town, and replace Londonderry Bridge.

Also completed as part of the project was a new area of habitat and upstream storage at Sixfields, next to Hartburn Beck, and additional areas of habitat creation at Coatham Wood and Burn Wood. These areas of new habitat have created a haven for wildlife to thrive as well as contributing to the storage of water through 'slowing the flow'.

Lustrum Beck Flood Alleviation Scheme reduces the risk of flooding to 150 properties in Stockton.

Work starts on storage basins at Coatham Wood

Final phase

For this final phase, the Environment Agency has joined forces with Newcastle University, Arup and Tees Rivers Trust to design the natural flood management features, which are being created on land owned by the Forestry Commission and managed by Forestry England.

It's expected the work, which is being carried out by contractor Ebsford, will be completed later in the summer. All work is being carried out within current Coronavirus government guidelines.

Dorian Latham, Lustrum Beck Project Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

It's exciting to be starting on site for the very final phase of the Lustrum Beck project. It's an innovative approach that provides benefits for flood risk management as well as significant opportunities for wildlife.

We are creating three large flood storage basins that will reconnect historic flood plain and the river at Coatham Beck. They are designed to slow and temporarily store excess water from the beck at times of heavy rain, reducing the volume of water closer to the town.

Lustrum Beck combines engineering solutions in the town centre and natural flood management upstream, which will work together to reduce the risk of flooding to residents, as well as creating vital

habitat for wildlife to thrive and the community to enjoy.

Partnership working

The trees planted as part of the natural flood management scheme will be part of a Forestry Commission woodland management plan to make sure it develops to provide a diverse, sustainable habitat.

Alan Eves, Forest Management Director for Yorkshire Forest District, Forestry England, added:

The holding ponds at Coatham Wood complement a range of measures in place across the Forestry England estate.

Working in partnership with others enables us collectively to provide catchment scale flood alleviation that benefits local communities.

Addressing flood risk from the wider river catchment and increasing resilience to flooding through working with multiple agencies and the community has been the focus of a European Union funded project called FRAMES which has run alongside the Stockton scheme. Through this, The Tees Rivers Trust has been working with the Environment Agency and farmers to find opportunities for NFM measures.

It's important residents understand their flood risk and know what to do during a flood. For more information and to sign up to receive free flood warnings visit the [prepare for flooding web pages](#)

[New solicitor member appointed to the Civil Procedure Rule Committee](#)

News story

The Lord Chancellor has appointed David Marshall as a solicitor member of the Civil Procedure Rule Committee.



The Lord Chancellor has appointed David Marshall as a solicitor member of the Civil Procedure Rule Committee (CPRC) for 3 years commencing 11 May 2020.

Appointments and reappointments to the CPRC comply with the Governance Code on Public Appointments and are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

The CPRC is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Ministry of Justice. The Committee was established under the Civil Procedure Act 1997 to make rules of court for the Civil Division of the Court of Appeal, the High Court and the County Court. The Civil Procedure Rules set out the practice and procedure to be followed.

Biography

David has been with Anthony Gold Solicitors since 1985 where he started as trainee solicitor. He is currently the managing partner. His specialism is serious personal injury cases, particularly brain and psychiatric injury. He was an assessor to Lord Justice Jackson's supplemental review on fixed recoverable costs, and vice-chair of the Civil Justice Council's working groups on noise-related hearing loss and on lower value clinical negligence claims.

David is also a member, and past chair, of the Law Society's Civil Justice Committee.

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[Dounreay helps motorbike charity support NHS in Caithness](#)

The cash will enable Highland and Islands Blood Bikes to establish a permanent presence in Caithness.

This will speed up turnaround times for samples such as Covid-19 tests between hospitals and healthcare facilities in the north Highlands and the medical laboratories at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness – a distance of more than 100 miles.

Until now, the charity has been running the Inverness to Caithness route from Inverness but wanted a motorcycle based in Caithness, with fully trained riders, to serve the local community

Ross Sharp, President of HAIBB, said:

We are looking to source funding for a motorcycle to be based in, operated from, and dedicated to each of the areas serviced by the major hospitals in Highland. One of these is Caithness General Hospital, so we approached Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd and applied for a grant.

It's just fantastic that this will now become a reality. Being able to fund this motorcycle will make a huge difference. We will now be able to service the whole of the Caithness area much more efficiently. In turn this will help the NHS and improve their patient experience by ensuring samples, and other important items, are processed more quickly.

We will now also be able to service the wider needs of the Caithness area and offer courier services, completely free of cost, to GP surgeries, care homes and other healthcare premises, as well as Caithness General Hospital. At this time of crisis we see it as important that samples, vital supplies, medicines and other products are able to circulate freely and flexibly between healthcare facilities. This will enable us to play our part in doing so.

HAIBB is part of a UK-wide network of blood bikes supporting the NHS, operated entirely on a voluntary basis.

Normally, it provides an out-of-hours service at weekends and evenings when NHS transport may not be available. During the coronavirus crisis, it has been working up to 14 hours a day delivering samples and materials.

Mr Sharp added:

This addition will bring our fleet to 5 motorcycles, something we didn't expect so early in our existence, and with some volunteers also using their own bikes, our service to the Highland and Islands community is expanding. Our riders will always be identified by their distinctive BLOOD vests and the bikes will also carry distinctive UN3373 BLOOD boxes on them. All our riders are committed to an advanced level of riding. If you see our riders out doing their bit please give them a wave and give them some space –

they are doing it for free, free to our NHS.

Mark Rouse, Managing Director of DSRL, said:

The NHS is such a critical part of the infrastructure of this area at the best of times. This agreement with the blood bikes charity will strengthen the long supply lines that support our hospitals and healthcare facilities at a moment of greatest need and I'm delighted we are able to support this.

Dounreay, once the UK's centre for fast reactor research, is now Scotland's largest decommissioning project. Work to decommission the site is being delivered by DSRL, a company owned by Cavendish Dounreay Partnership, on behalf of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority.

Further information including how to become a volunteer, make a donation or becoming a sponsor can be found at www.haibloodbikes.co.uk.

[Three New Appointments to the Forestry Commission](#)

Defra Ministers have appointed three new Non-Executive Commissioners to the Forestry Commission.

Dr Hilary Allison, Professor Julian Evans and Sandy Storrie have been appointed for three years commencing on 1 April 2020.

The Commissioners will play a pivotal role in establishing a strong, sustainable future for the organisation, enabling it to set out with confidence on the road to the next hundred years of forestry in England.

Julian Evans, formerly Professor of Forestry at Imperial College and previously the Forestry Commission's Chief Research Officer (S), is also a past president of the Institute of Chartered Foresters, vice-president of the Commonwealth Forestry Association and chaired (2013-19) the Forestry Commission's Expert Committee on Forest Science. Memberships include Confor, the Royal Forestry Society, and Woodland Heritage. He is an honorary fellow of Bangor University and author of over 100 research papers and many books on tree and forestry related matters. For more than 30 years he has owned a 30-acre woodland in Hampshire. He was appointed OBE in 1997.

Sandy Storrie in his 35 years in the British Army led the "Desert Rats" in Iraq, served as an Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff, taught at the Royal College of Defence Studies, and was deputy head of the NATO mission in

Afghanistan. In retirement, he works as a strategy consultant, company director and NATO senior mentor, advising the current generation of coalition commanders on crisis management and Board development. An Oxford graduate, he holds the IOD's Diploma in Company Direction, and is a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute. He brings an external perspective, broad experience of strategic and operational planning, and a strong track record of leadership and management in the public sector.

Hilary Allison is currently Head of Ecosystem Assessment and Policy Support at UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre. She was Director of Policy at the Woodland Trust for 17 years and has participated in several government-led processes on forest and tree health policy as well as leading advocacy work to enhance policy on woodland conservation. She is a former chair of Wildlife and Countryside Link, and also worked briefly for the National Trust and the Nature Conservancy Council.

The Forestry Commission (FC) is a non-Ministerial Government department established over a century ago as a body serving Great Britain (GB).

In 2013, Natural Resources Wales took over most of FC's functions in Wales, and the Scottish Government took over FC's functions in Scotland last year, which means that from this point on the FC's work will be primarily in England. Forest Research will continue to operate across GB, and the whole FC will remain an outward looking, connected organisation, engaging with the forest industry and other national and international partners and stakeholders, and delivering research and other services to Scotland and Wales by agreement with the devolved governments.

All appointments to the Forestry Commission are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. The appointments comply with the Ministerial Code of Governance on Public Appointments. There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) to be declared. All three appointees have declared that they have not taken part in any political activity in the past five years.