

Greenways and Quiet lanes demonstration sites

Furness Greenways Partnership

In the Furness Peninsular, busy main roads and industrial landscapes at Barrow and Ulverston, co-exist with national nature reserves and historic places such as Furness Abbey. A study into the identification of potential corridors is complete and detailed route appraisal is underway. Baseline survey methodologies for Pilot Greenways are being developed. Greenways are included in the Local Transport Plan.

In 2000 the first section of new Greenways route on Walney Island was opened as a demonstration project. It caters for walkers, horse riders, cyclists and is fully accessible. Work has been done with a local special school who have a high number of disabled pupils. The route has been hugely popular especially since the Foot & Mouth crisis in 2001.

A longer section from Askam to Roanhead (immediately north of Barrow town) is due for implementation in 2001/02. This section has involved very close working with a local rural regeneration partnership. Routes are similarly being developed in Ulverston - contact Alastair McNeill at South Lakeland DC.

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Greater Lincoln

Valuable arable land surrounds Lincoln and busy radial roads link the city to outlying villages. A demand assessment study in 1997 in the Lincoln area showed there was a very strong interest for the Greenways and Quiet Lanes concepts, with a desire to create a Greenways network to increase the opportunities for non-motorised users.

Interested local organisations, including Lincoln City Council, West Lindsey and North Kesteven District Council's and Lincolnshire County Council, along with Sustrans, Groundwork Lincolnshire, the Community Council of Lincolnshire and the Countryside Agency decided to work in partnership, and formed a Steering Group to develop a Greenways network for the Greater Lincoln area to address these demands and at the same time tackle the issue of a fragmented Rights of Way network. In July 1999, Lincoln City Council offered a seconded project officer to develop a plan-based strategy. A work programme and action plan was agreed to September 2000. A series of meetings and consultations were held to help formulate the strategy.

In the summer of 1999, a 12 parish community consultation exercise was carried out by Groundwork Lincolnshire and the Community Council of Lincolnshire to help inform the project, reporting in September 1999. There was almost 100% support expressed for the Greenways initiative, and it detailed the public's preferred routes in the Greater Lincoln area. This was followed by an education and publicity campaign covering other parishes within the designated area to give them a chance to express their views. A newsletter was produced and a travelling display made up to tour the area. Also, several local newspaper articles and radio pieces featured the project, and invited feedback.

Around 30 businesses/ employers attended a business consultation meeting in January 2000, and received presentations explaining the Greenways initiative; the benefits to business; and the potential role of the business community.

A similar meeting was held in March 2000 with representatives of 6 of the main users groups representing walkers, cyclists horse-riders, and the less able, including The Ramblers Association, Lincolnshire Fieldpaths Association, The Open Spaces Society, The British Horse Society, CycleLincs and Accessibility Lincoln.

During Spring 2001 the Greenways and Quiet Lanes Strategy was approved by Lincoln City Council's Transportation Committee, and agreed by Lincolnshire County Council's Highways and Planning Committee, West Lindsey District Council's Recreation and Planning Committee and North Kesteven District Council's Tourism and Community Services Committee.

After full co-operation and a great deal of commitment from all parties the Lincoln Greenways Strategy is now fully adopted by every local Council. The Strategy is the result of partnership working between members of the Steering Group with input from the Countryside Agency and ajt Environmental Consultants. A highly successful public launch in October 2001 introduced the Strategy to a wider audience including councillors, local groups, tourism promoters, local businesses and the media.

The Strategy identifies existing routes and imminent schemes. It offers a list of priority schemes which link with other existing parts of the network and which meet the biggest demand, particularly in respect of commuting and city centre

shopping trips. The Strategy has already been used to identify, timetable and cost routes. It is also being used to support funding applications for routes and to complement other wider strategies such as the Lincolnshire Waterways Strategy. One route, an extension to the very successful Riverside Path, is already the subject of a bid application with the benefit of planning permission.

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South East Dorset Greenlink

The landscape of South East Dorset is marked by contrast - from the rugged and spectacular world heritage coastline of Purbeck, to the formal gardens and promenades of Bournemouth.

The proximity of high quality and often-fragile countryside to densely populated urban areas is striking. An increasing population, alongside already high tourist and visitor numbers puts increasing pressure on the countryside and the rural road network in the area.

Greenlink, a partnership of the six local authorities in South East Dorset, is committed to finding ways to reduce the need of countryside visitors to rely on their cars and to providing new, safe and sustainable opportunities for countryside recreation. The Greenways Network will help to deliver this objective in addition to improving travel choice in urban areas. Throughout the Greenways project this partnership has grown in strength, incorporating officers from the fields planning, transport, tourism, countryside and leisure.

The partners have identified five pilot networks with a wide spectrum of potential users and uses. They include:

- Improving part of Route 2 of the National Cycle Network in Mundeford.
- Two non-vehicular commuter routes serving Bournemouth International Airport and Bournemouth Town Centre.
- Linking a small housing estate on the edge of Wareham to the station, town centre and local woods.
- Improving an ancient Roman track in Poole, with sensitivity to its heritage value.

Research has identified demand and network links for each pilot route, with encouraging results. Greenways principles have been adopted in the two Local

Transport Plans (Dorset and Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch) and funds allocated towards building the pilot network. Feasibility studies, environmental impact assessments and negotiations with landowners are being undertaken, whilst construction has begun on some routes. Initial monitoring pilot routes has been undertaken, and targets for improvement identified.

The partners continue to work closely with other statutory bodies, local communities, user groups, highways and planning colleagues in the further development of these routes. Further capital funds will need to be secured for the completion of a successful network.

Greenlink is now producing a new strategy and action plan to bring the project forward during the next three years. The partnership is working towards developing health initiatives to promote walking, cycling and the use of Greenways.

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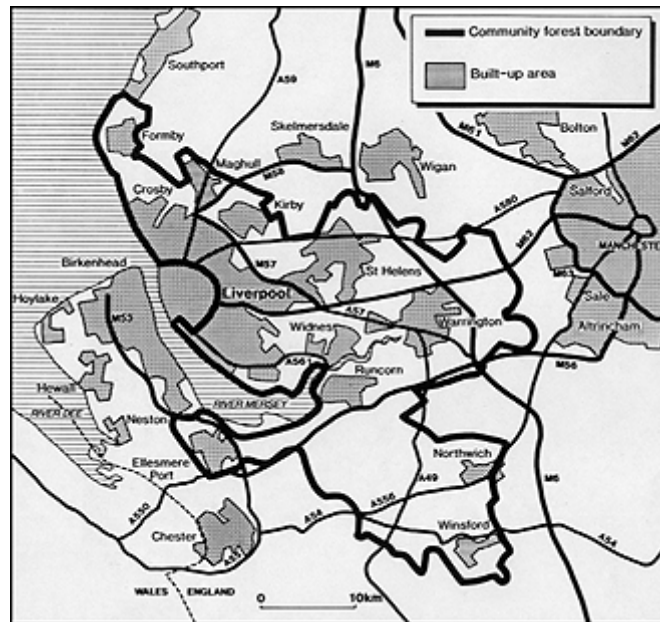
The Mersey Forest

The Mersey Forest is sponsored jointly by the Countryside Agency, the Forestry Commission and nine local authorities, and is the largest of England's 12 Community Forests. It aims to restore the landscape, to create better opportunities for recreation, nature conservation and economic regeneration.

The Mersey Forest partnership seeks to develop a network of Greenways, building on the existing network of routes, such as the National Cycle Network, the Trans Pennine Trail and rights of way.

Elements of a Greenway network are being developed across the forest area by a variety of partners. Greenway strategies are being prepared and new policies to develop and promote Greenways are being integrated into Local Transport Plans and Development Plans. Funds have also been allocated via the Merseyside, Warrington and Halton LTP's.

The project is now looking at the best way of organising itself to continue to deliver Greenways and meet the challenges ahead over the next few years.



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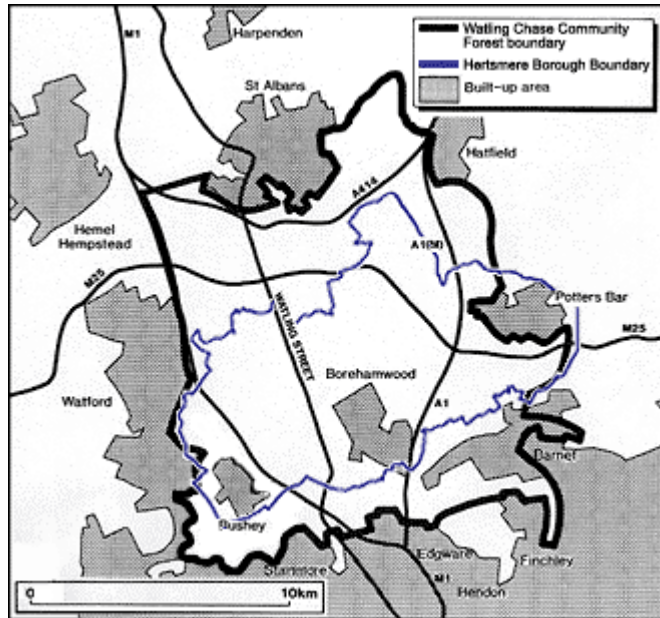
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Watling Chase & Hertsmere

This pilot is a broad partnership that has been developed from Local Agenda 21 origins. Key players are Hertsmere Borough Council, Watling Chase Community Forest, various organisations and individuals including representatives from user groups and of course the Countryside Agency. Together they form a community steering group who meet regularly to develop the project. This is summed up in the group's collective vision:

'A community partnership to develop an accessible network embracing town and countryside for non-motorised journeys'

The Borough of Hertsmere lies entirely within the boundary of Watling Chase Community Forest which is situated on the urban fringe of North London. Links between the four main settlements in the area for non-motorised transport are almost non-existent. A network of Greenways linking the towns and people to work, the countryside and leisure pursuits would therefore be very beneficial.



A demand assessment carried out in Spring 2000 has backed this up by showing that there is a strong demand for an off-road network.

During our pilot period 8km of Greenway routes have been successfully completed and are proving extremely popular.

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Swindon Greenways Partnership

Overall Aim: To develop an integrated strategy for Greenways in Swindon which balances environmental, social and economic objectives.

Swindon Borough lies within the Great Western Community Forest which extends across north Wiltshire and into Oxfordshire. Swindon is the largest urban centre in the area and is surrounded by a variety of attractive landscapes from the Marlborough Downs to the south and the Thames Vale to the north.

There is an existing network of footpaths, bridleways, disused canals and railways that connect the urban centre out to the countryside. The close proximity of these rural areas to Swindon provide a great opportunity for the creation of Greenways in and around the town.

The project is steered by officers from the Countryside Agency, Swindon Borough Council and North Wiltshire District Council planning, transport, landscape and countryside officers, Great Western Community Forest and a community network user representative. The intention is to broaden community involvement in the future to provide a network that will meet the needs of the people of Swindon. Local communities have already been engaged through workshops and consultation as part of the demand assessment process.

New policies to help promote Greenways have been integrated into the Swindon Local Transport Plan and Wiltshire Structure Plan. We are working closely with the local transport planners, landscape and design and conservation officers, with regards to the large housing developments to the north and south of the town to ensure that routes are incorporated at an early stage of the planning process.

Existing and potential routes have been mapped using MapInfo GIS. This involved identifying the key resources within the Borough from various publications and fieldwork. It has also helped with the analysis of data to show where socially excluded communities are and their need for access to facilities.

The following routes/potential Greenways have been identified;

- River Ray Parkway - 12.7km
- Chiseldon to Marlborough, Sustrans Route 45 - 12.5km
- Hreod Burna Parkway - 3.4km
- Richard Jeffries Parkway - 2.63km
- Shaw Ridge Linear Parkway - 1.85km
- Disused Canal between Greenbridge and Magic Roundabout - 1.15k
- River Ray Parkway to town Centre;
- via Sustrans Route 45 - 2.7km
- via disused town canal route - 1.45km

The following Quiet Road route has been identified which connects Swindon to the countryside;

- Coate Water to Chiseldon - 6.9km

The GIS has enabled us to analyse the number of people living and working within a certain distance of a route, this will help us to target the companies where they work to provide facilities for cyclists and walkers to encourage them

to use the routes. Missing connections between routes have also been identified and these areas can be targeted for future funding.

A route audit matrix was produced to assess the quality of the routes, and the infrastructure and environment of the existing routes has now been identified. A SWOT analysis for these routes has also been undertaken. Existing routes are currently used for leisure, recreation and commuting.

A user-demand assessment has been undertaken by ajt consultants to determine travel patterns and potential demand for Greenways. This will also help to establish routes which do not currently exist.

Liaison with community development officers will enable us to work alongside local groups who can benefit from the Greenways network. Their involvement will help to identify potential routes and may also provide volunteers to help maintain the routes.

We are currently working on the production of our Greenways Strategy for Swindon for the next 5 years. A draft has been produced, which will help us decide on the best mechanism for the continued management of the project.

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Greensand Ridge

The demonstration site lies between 3 built up areas (Medway Gap, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge) with a population of about 100,000. Most of the area is within the Kent Downs AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and Greensand Ridge Special Landscape Area.

The area is characterised by historic villages linked by a network of attractive country lanes, dissected by some major roads in a few places and some busier country lanes used as through routes.

The project is working to make country lanes better for local people who wish to walk, cycle and horse ride, without restricting the access needs of the local communities, such as farmers and local businesses. They are lanes which link to form a network where people live, work, shop, go to school and use in their leisure time. They are designed by local people for local people.

The initiative completed three phases of public involvement in the form of local workshops allowing local people to develop their ideas for the network and contribute to the implementation of the scheme on the ground.

The scheme has involved providing five key elements

- Creation of a Network - Quiet Lanes linking with country Lanes footpaths and bridleways where communities live and work and where people visit
- Use of the Lanes - Encouraging the use of the lanes and every one to travel with care and consideration for others
- Signing - Fingerpost destinations have been revised so that through traffic is not encouraged. Cast iron and wooden signs retained or replaced to keep the distinctive local character. Reducing sign clutter
- Entry Treatments - A simple wooden post and a Quiet Lane sign at the Entry and Exit points of the network
- Traffic Management Measures - Some limited measures to improve safety where the network crosses busier roads.

The prolonged wet weather in Kent from October 2000 through to the early Spring of 2001 affected the progress of the construction stage. Further delays occurred on the creation of a new off road link and improvements to existing PROW links with the restrictions in force during the Foot and Mouth crisis.

The Quiet Lanes Project was finally launched on 21 July 2001. It was a low profile event for the local people that had supported the initiative and helped to create the network with innovative ideas and an enthusiasm the experiment in their communities. The week of the launch coincided with a leaflet drop to the 17,000 properties within the network.

The success of the scheme will be measured in part by the overall use by local walkers cyclists and horse riders The launch of the project is not the end and there is a long term monitoring programme in place to assess the effect the project has on local use and driver behaviour.

Norfolk

The pilot area is a stretch of north-east Norfolk bordered by Bacton, North Walsham and Cromer. It's a joint project by Norfolk County Council, the Countryside Agency, North Norfolk District Council and the Norfolk Coast Project. The initiative is part of the Norfolk Coast Transport Strategy which takes forward the governments desires to see people using their cars less and walking and cycling more.

In Norfolk the aim is to work with communities to create networks called Quiet Lanes - peaceful routes between villages for walkers, cyclists and riders. In June 1999, a consultation and involvement process lasting several months began and village meetings are being held in July. Monitoring of traffic and attitude changes is underway.

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