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Sustrans shares expertise to change Nottingham students' travel habits

Students and staff at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (NUH), the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University will be encouraged to walk and cycle to and from campus in an investment project worth well over £3million over the next two years.

Working with Nottingham City Council, the sustainable transport charity Sustrans will lend its expertise to an innovative new scheme to promote healthy, sustainable travel at the University of Nottingham, Nottingham Trent University and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.

New cycle routes and other facilities will be provided alongside investment in new services such as bike hire and cycle training. The project will also offer tailor-made information on cycling to thousands of students and staff, together with financial incentives including discounts at cycle stores.

Sustrans Regional Director Yvonne Gilligan said: "There is an enormous potential to improve the health of staff and students – and reduce traffic congestion around universities – by encouraging them to walk or cycle more of their everyday trips.

"Students in Nottingham, as in most university towns and cities, live in close proximity to where they study so there is usually no need to rely on cars to get about. Nottingham is also fortunate to have forward thinking councils, universities and a hospital trust within the strongly supportive Greater Nottingham Transport Partnership plus a good deal of cycle infrastructure already in place."

Phillip Darnton, Chairman of Cycling England, said: "At Cycling England we are always exploring new ways of getting more people cycling, more safely, more often.

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This initiative is a great example of how we can help people overcome the barriers to getting on their bikes, as well as creating innovative solutions to encourage existing cyclists to use two wheels as often as possible.

“We hope this programme will be replicated and rolled out in other towns and cities - there are many would-be cyclists out there and by identifying and utilising hubs, such as universities and hospitals, we can reach them and give them the training and encouragement they need to make cycling part of their daily lives.”

Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio holder at the City Council Jane Urquhart said: “Adults often don’t see cycling as an option but by setting up bike hire schemes, cycle training and other initiatives you can dispel some of the myths and help people realise the various benefits. People can say to themselves ‘This is something I can do today to help the environment, my own health and my bank balance – and have fun at the same time.’”

Cycling England will contribute £1 million with local partners Nottingham City Council, Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust and the University of Nottingham contributing over £2 million on new infrastructure around and in the city campuses.

Sustrans research and monitoring team will also measure the project’s impact with pedestrian and cycle counts, and surveys of staff and students.

Further information about Sustrans, including other news releases and detailed online route mapping, is available through our website:

www.sustrans.org.uk

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NOTES

- Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity. Its vision is a world in which people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment. It is achieving this through innovative but practical solutions to the UK's transport challenges.
- Sustrans' flagship project, the National Cycle Network, is now around 12,000 miles and runs within one mile of 55 per cent of the UK population. During 2008 a total of 386 million trips were made on the Network. There are around 2,500 rangers helping to look after the National Cycle Network.
- Throughout 2009 Sustrans is encouraging more women to cycle. Our website www.bikebelles.org.uk has advice for women on what to wear, where to go, how to get started and a specially recruited women's panel are sharing ideas and experiences. The thoughts and concerns of women, gathered throughout the year, will be used to inform our approach to UK governments with proposals on how to help more women get out and about on bikes, to the benefit of their health, the environment and our economy.