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Healthy, cost-effective travel for millions as walking and cycling projects get the green light

- Millions of people across the country will benefit from healthier, free local journeys in a boost to air quality and people's physical and mental health
- 'Golden age' of cycling and walking galvanised by £200 million Government investment, with Active Travel England overseeing 134 ambitious projects - part of a £2bn commitment to active travel
- Government continues to lead the world in tackling climate change, improving low-carbon infrastructure and growing local economies

Millions of people across the country will benefit from cleaner air and cheaper ways to travel and keep active, thanks to £200 million of Government funding for new walking and cycling schemes across England announced today [14 May 2022].

The Government's new executive agency Active Travel England, led by Chris Boardman, will oversee the delivery of 134 first-rate schemes, backed by £161 million, which include new footways, cycle lanes and pedestrian crossings across 46 local authorities outside London.

The projects will create new routes and improve existing ones, making it easier and cheaper for people to choose active and green ways of getting around while better connecting communities. These include new junctions and pedestrian crossings in Liverpool, new segregated cycle lanes across the North East, and a new "travel corridor" in Gloucestershire with reduced traffic and high-quality cycle routes.

In addition to the £161 million for the 134 local authorities schemes, 19 authorities - including in Nottinghamshire, Hull and Manchester - will also receive a share of £1.5 million for "mini-Holland" feasibility studies, to assess how the areas could be as pedestrian and cycle-friendly as their Dutch city equivalents.

The Government has also confirmed it will inject £35m to improve the quality, safety and accessibility of the National Cycle Network, a UK-wide network of paths and routes for walking, cycling or wheeling managed by the independent charity Sustrans. The new funding will see 44 off-road-sections of the Network upgraded to ensure they endure for years to come.

Up to £8 million is going towards a new programme to accelerate the uptake of e-cycles by offering short and long-term loans of e-cycles. The pilot scheme, which will be delivered by Cycling UK and launched earlier this week in Greater Manchester, will be massively beneficial in enabling those with longer or hillier journeys to cycle and access employment opportunities in a way that's not only more affordable but is easier, faster and good for our planet.

The latest £200m is part of the unprecedented £2bn for cycling and walking announced by the Prime Minister in 2020. Earlier tranches of the money have already delivered hundreds of schemes and cycling rose by almost 50 per cent in 2020-21. Active Travel England has been established to hold the budget and ensure that schemes are delivered to the new, higher standards set out in 2020.

Transport minister Trudy Harrison said:

"This multi-million-pound investment will ensure people right across the country can access cheap, healthy and zero-emission travel.

"Active Travel England will be working hard to create a new golden age of walking and cycling, enabling everyone to reap the benefits of a more active lifestyle, creating streets where children can play, and making nicer places to live."

Active Travel Commissioner Chris Boardman said:

"This is all about enabling people to leave their cars at home and enjoy local journeys on foot or by bike. Active Travel England is going to make sure high-quality spaces for cycling, wheeling and walking are delivered across all parts of England, creating better streets, a happier school run and healthier, more pleasant journeys to work and the shops."

£2 million will also go towards Cycling UK's *Big Bike Revival* - free events to help people start or return to cycling by fixing bikes, teaching skills and leading rides. People across the country will be able to turn up at events with their bikes and receive a basic service or learn to repair their own bikes at a workshop. They will also be able to learn to ride a bike from beginner level or join a ride to increase their confidence.

People travelling to and around Hope Valley in the heart of the Peak District National Park will be able to do so by public transport, cycling or walking rather than by car, thanks to £120,000 of funding also confirmed today. Hope Valley Climate Action's 'Travelling Light' project will benefit the whole country by leading the way in decarbonising rural travel and giving local residents and visitors more options to benefit their health, as well as conserving the beauty of the National Park.

The Government is also continuing to ensure cycling is available to all by funding *Wheels for Wellbeing*. An additional £75,000 will go towards a programme of inclusive cycling sessions for disabled people and their families, carers or friends, helping to remove barriers to cycling faced by disabled people.

Xavier Brice, Chief Executive Officer of Sustrans, the charity that makes it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle said:

"As custodians of the National Cycle Network, we're delighted that the Government is continuing to invest in these vital and much-loved walking, wheeling and cycling routes.

"This funding will see improvements made to the Network in England; connecting cities, towns and the countryside; making walking, wheeling and cycling a safer, more convenient and more accessible travel option for everyone.

"The Network is a national asset that is loved locally, and continued investment will advance our work with partners and stakeholders across the UK. Together, we're reimagining the ways in which we move around, empowering people to connect with others and helping everyone explore our shared environments."

This all follows the launch of new Government cycling and walking body, Active Travel England, earlier this year. Active Travel England is already delivering on its ambitions to drive up the standards of cycling and walking infrastructure across the country and make walking and cycling the easiest choice for local journeys.

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Notes to editors

- Chris Boardman is currently acting as interim national active travel commissioner for Active Travel England.

