**The Department for Transport funds sustainable travel project in the Derbyshire Peak District**

**Saturday May 14th 2022**

The Department for Transport has today announced funding of £120,000 for first year of the Travelling Light project, to make the Hope Valley a national beacon for sustainable rural travel. Hope Valley Climate Action has been working with the Department to develop the proposal to help make walking and cycling the best options for short journeys, increase the take-up of improved public transport, and reduce private vehicle use in the popular area of the Peak District National Park.

HVCA’s travel and transport co-ordinator, Roger Clarke, said: “The project aims to improve everyday transport for local people alongside boosting vital access to the outdoors for residents of surrounding urban areas. The Hope Valley is within an hour’s drive of 16 million people, principally in Manchester and Sheffield. However, one-third of residents in Sheffield do not have access to a car and Manchester has amongst the lowest car ownership levels in the country. The Hope Valley currently receives between 3 and 5 million visitors per year, making it one of the most popular rural destinations in the UK. An estimated 90% of these journeys are made by car. This level is unsustainable given that the transport sector remains the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the UK. Excessive car travel also causes congestion, results in antisocial parking, and makes roads unsafe for walkers and cyclists.”

Roger Clarke said: “Travelling Light is unique in that it will be led by the local community and puts the future needs of rural communities front and centre. By 2030, the project aims to replace the current congestion, noise and pollution resulting from journeys by private car with safe walking and cycling, accessible for people of all ages and abilities, high quality, seamless public transport and limited use of electric vehicles, many of them shared.”

Support for Travelling Light was today announced as part of a range of measures to increase active travel across the country. In its first year, the project will work with the community to overcome barriers to walking and cycling, develop proposals for integrated public transport hubs and bring peer to peer car sharing to the Hope Valley villages. Hope Valley Climate Action has been developing and building support for the project over the past year, in partnership with Derbyshire County Council, the Peak District National Park Authority and the Foundation for Integrated Transport. Learning from the project will pave the way for low carbon rural travel solutions across National Parks and Areas of Outstanding National Beauty (AONBs) facing similar challenges nationwide.

Hope Valley Climate Action is a charity set up three years ago to tackle climate change, with a particular focus on travel and transport, energy and land use. It has over 800 members in the Hope Valley and beyond.

**Minister for Active Travel, Trudy Harrison MP**, said: “We are committed to decarbonising rural travel and this government-funded project will help more people to travel to and around Hope Valley by public transport, bike or on foot. This is just one part of our £200 million package to transform cycling and walking across the country by implementing hundreds of new schemes to help more people enjoy free, healthy and zero-emission journeys.”

**High Peak MP, Robert Largan**, said “I am delighted by today’s announcement that the Hope Valley Climate Action Travelling Light project will receive £120,000 of Government funding. For the past year, I have been working hard behind the scenes to support this project, meeting regularly with the group and ministers at the Department for Transport. I would like to thank Roger Clarke and all those at Hope Valley Climate Action who have worked so hard on this fantastic local initiative.The Peak District is a special place. We must conserve it for future generations.”

**Derbyshire Dales MP, Sarah Dines**, said “The Travelling Light Project is fantastic, and I am so pleased the government money will be given to help make the Hope Valley a brilliant example of sustainable rural travel. The Hope Valley is a very special place and this will have a positive impact on those that live, work and visit there.’’

**Leader of Derbyshire County Council, Barry Lewis**, said “We’re committed to helping Derbyshire to become a net zero county by 2050 or sooner, but we can’t do it alone. We need communities to play their part – and this is exactly the kind of initiative that we’re proud to support. As well helping to cut carbon emissions in Derbyshire, it will help move us towards achieving our ambition of becoming the most connected county in the country for cycling and make greener travel a real option for residents and visitors alike, not just in Hope Valley but across the whole of Derbyshire.”

**Peak District National Park Chair, Andrew McCloy**, said: “We are delighted that this ground-breaking and ambitious project that we have supported from the beginning has received Government backing. As Britain’s first National Park, the Peak District has always pioneered new approaches and it’s essential that we encourage fresh thinking and develop sustainable travel options into and around the National Park, for the long term benefit of people, nature and climate.”

**Foundation for Integrated Transport Chair, Stephen Joseph**, said “We welcome the Government support for the Travelling Light project. The Foundation was keen to support the development of this project, as part of its funding for projects that tackle car dominance and reduce road traffic. This project also follows one of the key interests of our founder, Dr Simon Norton, who was passionate about being able to visit the countryside and leisure areas without a car. We look forward to seeing the project develop and act as a model for other rural areas in reducing traffic and promoting public transport and active travel."

The project plan for Travelling Light can be read at <https://hopevalleyclimateaction.org.uk/travel-and-transport/travelling-light/>. Keep an eye on Hope Valley Climate Action’s website and social media feeds for more on how to get involved in the project.

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