



## case study

# environmental sustainability



Objective One is  
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The Objective One Partnership  
for Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly

### WALK TO WORK

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### the project

North Cornwall District Council received investment to enhance and expand the multi-use trails in North Cornwall through the creation of an additional 3.5 kilometres of new routes. This included building two new extensions to the Camel Trail and a new 'greenway' connecting the east and west sides of Bodmin.

£255,855 from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was invested in the project with a total cost of £1,070,000.

The new trails give easy, safe access within Bodmin, between housing estates and employment sites. Awareness campaigns have been developed with the local residents' associations.

The new trails that link with local cycle trails will stimulate the local economy by attracting more tourists to Bodmin and the surrounding area, encourage walking and cycling to work or school, and give greater access to leisure facilities such as the Cornish Way and National Cycle Network.

Project monitoring has counted:

- Over 100 schoolchildren using the trail to get to school
- 32 cycle counts a day on the east-west link

And on one summer's day:

- 209 cyclists accessed the trail at Scarlett's Well, Bodmin and (71%) of those continued into the town.
- 62 walkers arrived in the car park at Scarlett's Well
- Bike racks full to capacity at Dennison Road

Bodmin Community College has received a Cornwall County Council Cornwall Travel Awareness Awards 2006 for the largest increase in school children cycling to school.

North Cornwall District Council will receive a Cornwall County Council Cornwall Travel Awareness Award for 'Outstanding service to sustainable travel 2006'.



The use of wildlife images in the cycle racks allows these features to tie in with the natural landscape and identity of the route

### measures of environmental sustainability adopted

#### To promote the prudent use of natural resources

**Sustainable transport:** The new routes are created as off road multi-use trails accessible for a wide variety of users such as cyclists, walkers, the less abled, and horse riders. They have been designed and built to a high standard for year round use. Infrastructure has been put in place to support walkers and cyclists using the routes such as bike racks, seating, picnic benches, and secure bike lockers at Bodmin Community College, one of the main beneficiaries of the new east-west link. The east-west link in Bodmin utilised the existing railway corridor for the majority of its length.

**Previously developed land:** The cycle trails have been constructed on disused railway lines which are brought into reuse.

**Local sourcing:** Local contractors and materials were used to construct the routes. The benches and cycle racks were created using local designers and materials (greenwood). Local businesses which are of interest to trail users, such as cafes and cycle hire outlets, are flagged up on the orientation boards. Promotional events use local produce for catering supplies wherever possible.

**Energy:** The need for lighting, for safety, came from public consultation. The lights are low emission and restricted to one corridor/route. They are timed to come on at dusk when they are most needed.



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### To protect and improve the environment

Fauna and flora surveys, including bat and tree surveys, were carried out and badger sett licenses were secured before work commenced. The surveys informed the nature of the routed development to ensure the work was carried out appropriately. The project tagged trees with landscape and wildlife value in order that they be protected and observed as part of the wider continued monitoring of habitat management. Access to the local nature reserve was achieved through the development of the east-west link in Bodmin. Fishing rights along the River Camel at Wenfordbridge, which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (Natura 2000 site) were retained to conserve and enhance fish stocks. Improvements were made to fences at the river frontage to restrict dogs and compartments of bush and scrub were kept as a buffer for the river and cover for otter. An eradication programme for Japanese Knotweed was also initiated, and approximately 100 metres of hedge, 50 meters of Cornish hedge and ¼ acre of new woodland planted.

### To increase awareness of residents, businesses and visitors of the value and importance of the environment

The orientation boards encompass information on the history and landscape value of the environment surrounding the routes. A Camel Trail newsletter 'In between the lines' is provided in boxes along the routes and gives information about wildlife that can be seen in the area, linked projects (e.g. land restoration) and the Camel Trail Code of Conduct (including ways to protect the environment). Environmental activities for schoolchildren are held along routes e.g. mini beast hunts, storytelling on history and surroundings. Practical events are also organised throughout the year and regular meetings of the Camel Trail Partnership held to provide guidance for the long term development of the trail.

### benefits of environmental sustainability

The raison d'être of the project is to provide sustainable transport options for local people and visitors; to provide multiuse trails enabling local people to get to work or school and give greater access to leisure facilities and create opportunities for the promotion of 'car free breaks'. The project brought a disused railway line back into beneficial use. The east-west in Bodmin, opens out to the Cornish Way Network and extends travel to the rest of Cornwall e.g. to the Eden Project, the Clay Trails, and the National Cycle Network.

Tagging trees of value meant it was possible to retain the Scots Pine trees which are iconic for the Great



*Benches along the trail were created using local designers and materials (greenwood)*

Western Railway. This creates an interest as well as being a nice landscape feature.

Initially there was no way of knowing what flora and fauna existed along the routes so the surveys were carried out to make sure species that needed protecting were not destroyed. The surveys allowed the project to maintain the habitats and help promote existing wildlife species to users, leading to much greater awareness of local environment, habitat and landscape.

Requiring the contractors to carry out works in a way which protect species has helped raise awareness about the need for, and practicalities of, this type of work which will be useful on future projects.

The provision of an accessible link for non motorists between the 2 sides of the town has opened up views; the beauty of the surrounding countryside has surprised local people discovering it for the first time. The link to the nature reserve allows a larger number of people (especially those with a disability who did not have access before) to enjoy this open space which has good conservation value. People are now creating their own circular routes using the new trails.

The addition of secure cycle parking at the College overcame the barrier of fear of crime i.e. of bikes being stolen, which has significantly increased the numbers of children cycling to school.



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The use of wildlife images in the benches and cycle racks allows these features to tie in with the natural landscape and identity of the route e.g. using images of the river Camel as the trail follows the river. Local artisans and materials were incorporated into the development of the projects because this was seen as an important tool for raising awareness of the value of the landscape, distinctiveness and identity. Local artists are passionate about their area which is an invaluable asset.

Timed lighting is helpful for safety but it also saves energy use and money.

In summary the economic benefits created through the adoption of environmental sustainability measures include increased visitor numbers, cost savings, support and trade for local businesses and reduced congestion on the roads.

### lessons learnt

Emma Rojano, Sustainable Access Officer for North Cornwall District Council, says of the project: *"The users of the trails perceive the benefits to be greater access, better health, better understanding and appreciation of the local environment. Many people are using it; it has been a real benefit to the area."*

Neil Burden, Chairman of North Cornwall District Council's Regeneration Committee said: *"North Cornwall District Council members and officers are always exploring ways to improve the local environment for local communities. This new multi purpose route named St Guron's Way on the southern side of Bodmin ably demonstrates this, people can cross from one side of town to the other, barely seeing a car and enjoying some of the area's most panoramic views and countryside. There are also positive spin offs in reduced car journeys and congestion, certainly a healthy way to go."*

Peter Moore, Chief Transportation Engineer at Cornwall County Council said: *"We are committed to the promotion of sustainable travel and the development of such a significant section of walking and cycling route as a safer alternative to the congestion on road routes around the town fits in very well with our Local Transport Plan. It is great to see that this route is already being well used and I hope that it will provide both a convenient and healthy alternative for commuters of all ages as well as an enjoyable leisure facility."*

Comments from residents using the east-west link:

*"A great asset to the town. Very heavily used by children on school days."*

*"Will be used daily by son when he starts school in September."*

*"I am a regular user and vary my route daily, sometimes to the Beacon or Kirland using the trail as an easy access route."*

Comment from visitor at Scarlett's Well - August 2006:

*"Today's route was up to Wenfordbridge for the first time and then down to Boscarne to visit the vineyard, prison and return to Scarlett's Well. A really good day out."*

Comment from visitor at Wenfordbridge, September 2006:

*"Cycled this route yesterday, then came again today to enjoy the early morning wildlife and views."*

**For more information about how you can incorporate environmental sustainability into your project please contact the Objective One Partnership Office on 01872 241379 or email [objectiveone@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:objectiveone@cornwall.gov.uk).**