

NEWS RELEASE 28 APRIL 2011

## **Work underway on new walking and cycling route in National Forest**

Work has begun on completing a vital missing link in the 5-mile Conkers Circuit, the walking and cycling route in the National Forest, providing a shared use path between Albert Village, Moira and Donisthorpe - close to the Conkers family attraction.

The route is being delivered by the National Forest Charitable Trust in conjunction with charity Sustrans, which enables people to make more of their everyday journeys by foot, bike or public transport. The new path will provide a safe and direct link parallel to the busy B5004 and join an existing route to Swadlincote. It is being part funded by the Big Lottery Fund, which awarded Sustrans £50million following a public vote in 2007 for the Connect2 project, creating new everyday walking and cycling routes in communities across the UK.

The existing pathway will be significantly widened and resurfaced to make it suitable for both pedestrians and cyclists, allowing them to avoid the 50mph B5004 providing an off-road link into the Rawdon Business Park, near to Conkers.

**Mike Ballantyne, of the National Forest Charitable Trust, said,** "The National Forest Charitable Trust is delighted that work has started on completing the missing link as part of the 5-mile Conkers Circuit, all thanks to support from Sustrans and the Big Lottery Fund. The Circuit, which takes a loop around CONKERS, is already very popular and well used; completing this final section will mean even more people can enjoy the heart of the National Forest, on either foot or cycle."

**Patrick Davis, Sustrans Area Manager in the East Midlands, said,** "Sustrans is delighted to be working with the National Forest Charitable Trust to deliver this vital link which will complete a vision first imagined by the Heart of the National Forest Community Forum back in 2002."

**Mick McGrath, Big Lottery Fund Head of Region for the East Midlands, said:** "This is great news for people living in the area as the new route will make it all that bit easier to make everyday journeys by foot or bike. People from across the UK voted for Sustrans to be awarded

the £50 million Lottery grant, so it's fantastic to see some of that funding making its way to support communities within the National Forest.”

When the work is complete, local volunteer rangers Shawn Brotherhood and Ben Stuart will be organising a variety of community events on the Conkers circuit, enabling both young and old to feel comfortable on their bike.

**Further information about Sustrans, including other news releases and detailed online route mapping, is available through our website: [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)**

**/ends**

**For more information on Sustrans or to request interviews, please contact**

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**For pictures, please contact Sustrans Picture Library**

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Press Office Out of office hours – 07802 986728

ISDN line available for radio interviews

## **NOTES**

- Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. Our work makes it possible for people to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in. It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)
- Sustrans' flagship project, the National Cycle Network, is now around 13,000 miles long and within one mile of 58 per cent of the British population. It carries over one million walking and cycling journeys every day.
- There are around 3,000 volunteers helping to look after the National Cycle Network.
- Sustrans' Connect2 is a UK-wide project that will transform local travel in communities, creating new bridges and crossings to overcome busy roads, rivers and

railways, and linking these to networks of walking and cycling routes, making it easier for millions of people to walk and cycle for everyday journeys.

- Sustrans' Connect2 won £50 million from the Big Lottery Fund's Living Landmarks: The People's Millions as a result of a public vote televised on ITV1 in December 2007. This is the largest ever single lottery grant. Combined with match funding, the project is worth £142million.
- Sustrans is calling on UK governments to invest in doubling the number of journeys under five miles made by foot, bike and public transport to four out of five by 2020.
- The Big Lottery Fund, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004. It was established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.

Big Lottery Fund Press Office: 020 7211 1888

Out of hours: 07867 500 572

Full details of Big Lottery Fund projects and grant awards are available at:

[www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)