

# Press release: Highways England working in tandem with Sustrans to help cyclists

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This network criss-crosses the country, linking villages, towns and cities – and with 4.4 million people using it every year for commuting and leisure, the partnership will benefit cyclists up and down the country

Working with the charity is just one of the ways Highways England is making it easier for people of all ages and abilities to cycle and walk across and alongside its roads.

Highways England Head of Road Safety Richard Leonard said:

We want to make cycling and walking safer and easier – not merely locally, but across the country as a whole.

The National Cycle Network is a great initiative, and this project is a great example of how people can be encouraged to cycle and walk more – with obvious benefits to their health, safety and the wider environment.

The Department for Transport also recently awarded £1 million in funding to support projects repairing and upgrading sections of this popular network. Our overall plans to increase cycling and walking are set out in the 2017 Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

Sustrans have identified a long list of opportunities and will be working together with Highways England to create a shortlist of schemes which can be quickly taken forward.

Anita Konrad, Sustrans' National Director, England said:

We are delighted to be partnering with Highways England and welcome this investment that will make it easier for more people to cycle

to work, the shops and for leisure.

Cycling and walking for local journeys is part of the solution to many of the challenges we face today, including road congestion, air pollution and high levels of inactivity. The schemes demonstrate how – with some practical design solutions and minimal interventions – we can address these challenges, and that retrofitting cycling provision can be done easily.

We hope to build on this partnership with Highways England, to make cycling safer, more attractive and easier for everyone, regardless of age and abilities.

Highways England has a £100 million dedicated cycling fund to provide improvements and new facilities which make it safer and easier to negotiate its roads. So far 80 new schemes have been built and 286 crossings have been improved, meaning it is now far easier than it was for cyclists to cross over motorways and major A roads.

People cycling or walking on the National Cycle Network linking London Stansted Airport with communities across Essex are already benefitting from £800,000 of improvements provided by this special fund. Cyclists can enjoy a safe and scenic route across the busy M11 motorway thanks to the Highways England project to restore the one mile route between Birchanger village and the airport.

Previously, people commuting on bikes to and from the airport were having to navigate the tricky junction 8 of the M11, and were often put off using what was little more than a dirt track. Resurfacing sections of the path, putting up new signs, and clearing overhanging vegetation has provided an attractive, traffic-free way to commute to the airport.

Some 200 schemes, worth £100m, will be on the ground by 2020/21. Over the past three years, 80 schemes have been built and a further 30 are due to be completed by spring 2019.

Another scheme completed this year is at a busy junction near Ellesmere Port in Cheshire. A £1.1 million scheme has created a new 320 metre cycleway through the Two Mills junction, which is used by more than 37,000 vehicles every day.

The A540, which runs between Chester and Hoylake, is popular with cyclists and the new path, which is shared by cyclists and pedestrians, runs along the southbound A540. The route crosses two new islands on the A550 at the Two Mills junction before continuing along the A540. New traffic lights and crossings also make it easier to cross the A550 and a new high-friction road surface has been laid to reduce the risk of collisions.

Highways England published its [Cycling and Accessibility Strategy](#) in 2016, and has recently published an [annual report](#) detailing the progress made so far. This includes integrating cycling and accessibility needs in the early stages of scheme design and working closely with key stakeholders to deliver

schemes which suit the needs of communities..

## **Designated funds**

Highways England is working to achieve a target to deliver 150 cycling schemes by the end of Road Investment Period (2015-2020), and 200 cycling schemes by 2020/21 after the government set up the £100 million dedicated fund for cycling in its Road Investment Strategy. This £100 million fund forms part of the £250 million designated fund for Cycling, Safety and Integration.

Designated funds are a series of ring fenced funds designated to Highways England by the Department for Transport to address a range of issues beyond the traditional focus of road investment.

There are 5 designated funds:

- environment – £300 million
- cycling, safety and Integration (CSI) – £250 million
- air quality – £100 million
- innovation – £150 million
- growth and housing – £100 million

More information about [Highways England's designated funds](#)

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

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## **[News story: New competition: Many Drones Make Light Work Phase 3](#)**

The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) is launching Phase 3 of the 'Many Drones Make Light Work' campaign.

Phase 1 of the 'Many Drones Make Light Work' campaign was launched in August 2016. This phase sought proof-of-concept demonstrations of new and emerging technologies, systems and techniques to enable militarily useful swarming Unmanned Air Systems (UAS).

Phase 2 was focused on further developing and proving the effectiveness of specific swarming technology aspects as well as swarming enablers.

Phase 3 of this campaign is seeking to further develop and integrate technologies with the objective of demonstrating a swarming UAS capability, through a flight evaluation.

Phase 3 is open to the wider community to seek a complete technology base to deliver an integrated capability. Technology in this area has been rapidly developing since the original Phase 1 call and reopening the challenge allows other organisations who have been developing capabilities related to swarming UAS to contribute. We actively encourage Phase 1 and Phase 2 participants to contribute to this call as well as new suppliers.

Total funding of up to £2.5 million is available in Phase 3 to fund 1 or 2 projects. Full details are available in the competition document.

The competition closes on Wednesday 28 November 2018 at midday.

Queries should be sent to [accelerator@dstl.gov.uk](mailto:accelerator@dstl.gov.uk).

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## **[News story: DASA dial in event: many drones make light work competition](#)**

DASA will be hosting a dial-in event on 31 October 2018, 10am to midday to provide a short briefing on the Many Drones Make Light Work Phase 3 competition followed by an open forum Q&A session.

Also available will be the opportunity to book a one to one telecon meeting with the competition team to discuss questions specific to your proposal.

Further information about the competition can be found in the Many Drones Make Light Work Phase 3 competition document, where you will find links to register for the dial-in and one to one meetings.

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## **[Press release: Dissolving seaweed sauce sachets among innovative schemes](#)**

# to cut down on harmful plastic waste

Dissolving seaweed sauce sachets and technology inspired by a suckerfish to remove plastics from rivers are among 11 innovative projects to win the backing of a £4 million government fund to clean up the environment.

To showcase the ground-breaking research being led by UK scientists and innovators during Green GB Week, the Business Secretary Greg Clark today announced the winners of a competition to develop new products or processes to end the scourge of plastic waste.

Moving to a greener, cleaner economy which helps protect the environment is a key part of the government's modern Industrial Strategy.

Among the winners are Skipping Rocks Lab in London, whose state-of-the-art facility is working on a scheme which could make the sight of single-use condiment sachets on takeaway counters a thing of the past by replacing plastic packaging with seaweed. The material, which has successfully been used as an alternative to the plastic water bottle, biodegrades as fast as a piece of fruit and is cheaper than plastic.

Other successful companies to win government funding include:

- Ichthion: Filters out plastic clogging up the UK's waterways with a boat-mounted vacuum which mimics the way remora fish feed.
- Axion: Recycles plastics like car bumpers and motorcycle helmets, currently sent to landfill, and turns them into plastic pellets for moulding into new products such as bins or cables.
- Polymateria: Makes biodegradable plastic which lets you put packaging straight into the compost with your food waste.

Business and Energy Secretary, Greg Clark, said:

Companies are capitalising on the UK's world leading research base to develop products that tackle the global scourge of plastic waste while grasping the business opportunities found in the green economy.

When you combine Britain's leadership, innovation and determination it is an unbeatable combination – exactly what our Industrial Strategy and Green GB Week are supporting and encouraging.

Professor Duncan Wingham, Executive Chair, Natural Environment Research Council and PRIF lead for UKRI, said:

The Plastics Research Innovation Fund starts bringing the strength of UK Research and Innovation's entire portfolio, from environment to technology to business to behaviour and regulation, to bear on the pressing and very widely recognised problem of plastic waste.

The innovative businesses awarded funding today have stepped up and are bringing their creativity and entrepreneurialism to bear in finding real-world solutions to problem plastics, while at the same time aiming to create cleaner economic growth.

The Industrial Strategy has research and innovation at its heart and as part of this, the Government has committed to boost spending on research and development to 2.4% of GDP by 2027 to ensure the UK takes advantage of the economic opportunities from the move towards a cleaner, greener economy.

The competition is supported by the £20 million Plastics Research and Innovation Fund which aims to build on the UK's global leadership in the fight against waste plastic, ensuring the UK reaps the economic benefits from the transition to a low carbon economy while leaving the environment in a better place for future generations. This announcement builds on the Government's world-leading Clean Growth Strategy which sets out more than £2.5 billion in low carbon innovation.

The announcement of the winners comes during the UK's first ever Green GB Week, calling on governments, businesses and communities to renew their efforts to confront climate change head on while seizing one of the greatest industrial opportunities of our time.

Just last week the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published a report stating that more rapid action is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emission to avoid devastating risks of climate change to health and global prosperity. Government support to tackle plastic waste will help the UK realise the economic benefits of this global move to tackle climate change.

The UK has already taken great strides to tackle plastic pollution with thirteen billion plastic bags taken out of circulation through our 5p carrier bag charge and a ban on microbeads in care products.

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## [News story: CMA CGM Centaurus report published](#)

MAIB's report on the heavy contact with the quay and two shore cranes by CMA CGM Centaurus during its arrival under pilotage at Jebel Ali, is now published. The accident in May 2017 resulted in the collapse of a shore crane and 10 injuries, including one serious injury, to shore personnel.

The report contains details of what happened, the subsequent actions taken and recommendation made: [read more](#).

## **Press enquiries**

Press enquiries during office hours  
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