

Department for
Transport

News Release

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GOVERNMENT PUSHES PEDALS TO BOOST CYCLING

Six towns in England will share in nearly £17 million to promote cycling Transport Minister Derek Twigg announced today.

The new Cycling Demonstration Towns will lead the way in encouraging local people to use pedal power. The funds will be used to make the environment more cyclist friendly, offering safety training and promotion to encourage take up.

Under the scheme, the towns will receive a total of £8.4 million Government funding over three years and this investment will be matched by the local authority.

The new Cycling Demonstration Towns are: Brighton, Darlington, Derby, Exeter, Lancaster and Aylesbury. They were chosen following recommendations from Cycling England - an independent expert body set up by the Department for Transport last March.

Derek Twigg said:

"I am delighted to announce the six towns which have been chosen to lead the way in promoting cycling across England and I congratulate Cycling England on the work they have done so far.

Cycling is a fun, healthy and environmentally friendly way to travel. Research has shown cycling can improve fitness and reduce obesity which can cause serious health problems.

This investment shows Government is committed to encouraging more people to take up cycling in all or part of their journeys."

Chairman of Cycling England, Phillip Darnton said:

"We want to support towns to work with local schools, hospitals, employers and the wider community to demonstrate the real benefits that cycling can bring: from reducing congestion to increasing levels of physical activity. People want to cycle and we must work together to help them do so more safely and more often."

Notes to editors

1. From 1st November, five of the towns will each receive £500,000 per year for three years and Aylesbury will receive £300,000 per year over the same period.

2. Cycling England had originally proposed funding for five Cycling Demonstration Towns. However a sixth town, Aylesbury has been included because it is a growth area with the opportunity to plan cycling into a major new programme of development.

3. The Cycling Demonstration Towns were chosen from a shortlist of 9 local authorities following initial expressions of interest from 32 local authorities.

4. Cycling England is a new independent expert body and was created by Department for Transport in March 2005 to plan and co-ordinate cycling across the country. Cycling England are supported and directed by a cross Government group including representatives from the Department for Transport, Health, Education and Skills, Culture Media and Sport and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Cycling England has a budget of £5m a year for the next three years to allocate to cycling programmes, with the aim of "more people cycling, more safely more often."

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