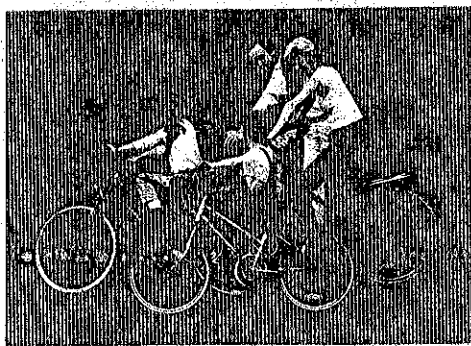


Supplementary reading B

Development of the United Kingdom National Cycle Network

In 1978 the cycling group in Bristol, in south-west England, decided the best way to encourage local people to walk and cycle more was to build a short traffic-free route on a section of the disused railway between Bristol and Bath. They persuaded local companies to give materials and to lend their construction machines, and over a series of weekends constructed the first few kilometres of path.



The result was a success beyond their wildest dreams. Local people appeared with their children, dogs, bicycles and baby strollers even as the path was being created. Some of those people came back to join in the construction effort. It was obvious that there was a strong suppressed demand to walk and cycle and that when the conditions were safe and attractive people would leave their cars and travel by their own power.

From that small beginning grew Sustrans and the National Cycle Network, as well as a number of other sustainable transport projects in the UK.

Cycling has declined as motor traffic, and with it the unpleasantness of the road environment, has increased. Cycling has become about 10 times more dangerous per distance travelled than in Denmark for example.

There are a few towns where cycling accounts for 10-20% of all trips, such as York and Cambridge, but these until recently have been the exception, with the vast majority of councils having done very little to cater for people who might like to cycle at least some of their journeys. This includes the school trip: children's preferences have been largely ignored and so only 2% of children cycle to school (compared with 60% in Denmark). However, bicycle ownership amongst primary and secondary school children remains high (90%) and in a survey of 10,000 children many expressed their frustration at not being able to cycle.

Comprehension check

For questions 1-5 decide whether the statements are true or false.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. In 1978 cycling group in Bristol decided to build a long traffic-free route. | T | F |
| 2. Cycling has declined as motor traffic has increased. | T | F |
| 3. About 60% of children cycle to school in England. | T | F |
| 4. Children are frustrated at not being able to cycle. | T | F |
| 5. Majority of councils have done very little to satisfy the need of people to cycle. | T | F |

Listening

In this listening activity you will hear what Sustrans is. Listen carefully and fill in the gaps in the text with the words you hear.

What is Sustrans?

Sustrans Ltd. is now registered as a Charity, a non profit-making organisation under UK law, with the remit to promote environmentally sustainable forms of 1. _____ in the UK.

Sustrans owns about 400km of disused railway and have numerous legal agreements for 2. _____ along canal towpaths and forest roads, through public parks and across private land.

From 1979-1994 Sustrans worked steadily at building traffic free paths wherever it could. All these paths are designed for the equal and shared use of 3. _____, for people using wheelchairs and in some cases also for the use of horses.

4. _____ sculpture was introduced at an early stage in order to punctuate the route and to help give it a strong sense of place, to win the affection and support of the local public.

Sustrans publishes a range of materials for the use of the public and the guidance of practitioners working on the development of 5. _____. These include a guide to traffic-free path construction and Guidelines and Practical details covering details on roads.

In conclusion, Sustrans believes that national and international projects are key to 6. _____ the whole public to participate in travelling more lightly through our world and into the next century.

3. The Czech Republic has developed the plan of a national cycle _____, including the EuroVelo _____

- A) network, routes B) network, paths C) net, routes

4. We believe that EuroVelo can play a vital role in the future promotion of _____
A) driving a bicycle B) cycling C) going by bike

5. The national Cycle Network also helps us to promote other projects which might turn around _____, such as the "Safe Routes to Schools Project".
A) transport expectations B) transport plans C) transport policies

Vocabulary feedback

EXERCISE 1

Choose the most suitable word or phrase to complete each sentence.

1. EuroVelo will promote and guide a major programme of works to promote _____ as a form of _____
A) car, motor transport B) bicycle, transport C) bicycle, transfer
2. Expert consultants from ten different countries have identified the best cycle _____
A) paths B) streets C) routes