

Date: 17 August 2010

CAMPAIGN TO GET PEOPLE CYCLING TAKES TO THE STREETS

Cycle Chester's aim to double to amount of cyclists in Chester by 2011 is now a step closer, following an 'on the ground' investigation into potential barriers which prevent people cycling within Chester.

Working in partnership with local charity Groundwork, the team took to the streets and ran public focus groups to find out what obstacles prevent Chester residents from 'getting into the saddle'.

Seventy residents from across the city, ranging from 13-77 years-old, shared their views with the charity's team. The results show that many expressed an interest in taking up biking for its weight loss, economic and family-orientated benefits but expressed concerns about their inexperience, other vehicles on the road and being able to get access to a bike.

Their responses will help shape Cycle Chester's future programme, focussing on working to alleviate these concerns through a range of methods including adult training sessions, bike loan schemes and open-day events.

Executive Member for Community and Environment, Lynn Riley, said: "Groundwork's findings helps Cycle Chester to target the specific concerns raised by people who otherwise would be very keen to take up cycling.

"We really want cycling to become a genuine option for most people in the city.

“Our new and upgraded cycle routes now stretch from the city out into some beautiful countryside and can provide a perfect way to spend a day with the family.

“Making journeys by bike also helps to reduce congestion on the roads, encourages fitness and helps the environment by cutting carbon emissions.

“The responses will help to shape Cycle Chester’s programme and enable Cheshire West and Chester to continue their work in encouraging more people to cycle around the city.”

The full report is now available on the Cycle Chester website

http://www.cyclechester.com/pdf/Groundwork_Cycle%20report%20final.pdf . For more information on Cycle Chester or how to get active on a bike please visit the website, email info@cyclechester.com or call 01244 973948.

Ends

Chester is one of eighteen official Cycling Demonstration Towns, securing a £2.4 million bid between 2008/11. The initiative aims to improve Chester’s cycling infrastructure and cycling opportunities, making cycling a genuine option for all Chester residents.

The project gives Chester a share of the largest investment in cycling the country has ever seen. The money will transform these nominated towns into areas where cycling becomes a genuine option, improving the local environment, city centre congestion and fitness of 2.5 million people.