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SHARED USE PATHWAY TO REPLACE BRIDGE PLAN

Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cycling England and the charity Sustrans have ended the uncertainty over the proposed Curzon Park walking and cycling bridge.

It was revealed today (Thursday) that the current economic climate, restrictive time-scales and complex planning requirements have forced the partners to abandon the £1.5m plans to replace the current footbridge.

However, work will start in early Spring on a shared use pathway providing a safe and attractive route for pedestrians and cyclists around the local area.

Built to the highest standards the £300,000 route will link Curzon Park, Westminster Park and Lache to existing cycle routes to the city centre.

The scheme will include a new Toucan crossing on Hough Green at Cavendish Road; improvements to the cycleway along Hough Green and modifications to the signal crossings at Overleigh Roundabout.

The footway along Overleigh Road to River Lane will be widened and converted to shared use.

The route then continues down River Lane via Nowhere, to Edgar's Field and thence to Old Dee Bridge where provisions for cycles is already there in the form of advanced signal stop lines.

At Dingle Bank the steps to the Dingle will be modified and the path from the steps to Nowhere resurfaced.

Said Councillor Lynn Riley, Executive Member Community and Environment: “Despite our difficulties in delivering a new bridge, the Council and its partners remain committed to providing this vital connection for cyclists and pedestrians.

“We are determined to deliver a cost effective and immediate improvement in cycling into Chester. Alongside our other work to promote cycling and train children in safe cycling, I am convinced this will help us achieve our goal of getting more people to cycle more often.”

Peter Foster, Sustrans NW Regional Director added: “We are confident that this alternative plan gives people a route that meets the need of the local community and will get more people travelling around on foot and by bike.”

Cheshire West and Chester Council is committed to maintaining the present footbridge, an opportunity to work with Network Rail on general refurbishment of the main spans is likely in the next couple of years.

Cycling England will not be funding the Council's new cycling as the organisation needs to reduce its budget for 2010/11.

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