

## AINA CASE STUDY

### SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

#### Lincoln's riverside path: small improvements can lead to big changes



#### *A series of small scale improvements have led to significant new use of a waterside route*

A muddy stretch of path running alongside the River Witham from Lincoln's city centre south to residential areas was upgraded into an attractive multi-user route. Running past allotments, fields and open spaces, it forms a pleasant way to escape busy traffic, making it an ideal alternative commuter and shopping route. The path was developed over a six year period in three phases, with plans to further extend the path as funding and opportunities arise.

The riverside walkway has been developed as part of Lincoln's wider Greenways strategy, which aims to create a network of traffic-free and quiet routes within a 13 kilometre radius of the city. The strategy is included in Lincolnshire's Local Transport Plan as part of a Rural Priorities initiative, and helps to fulfil many objectives such as increasing transport choices, making cycling and walking safer and improving the mobility of people with disabilities.

Regular monitoring of the scheme, using fixed counters, revealed a remarkable increase in use at each stage of development. When the third phase opened cycle usage increased by 20 per cent, and a manual count recorded 1300 cyclists and pedestrians were using the path each day. Local postal staff are now regularly using the route for both commuting and to assist their bicycle deliveries to outlying areas. One member of staff described the route as "the best thing the Council has ever done". Other residents are pleased to report a noticeable reduction in local road traffic on sunny days, when more people use the path to get to work.

Different partners worked with Lincoln City Council, and local communities have been closely consulted via Community Travel Zones - an initiative to boost walking and cycling for short journeys. Consultations have identified where links to other paths would be beneficial. The City Council has also worked with Sustrans to develop important links from both east and west (along the River Witham and the Fossdyke Navigation). Clear and comprehensive signage is provided and map leaflets distributed.

The formerly under-used path is now an attractive riverside route, encouraging local businesses to make small contributions to an overall project budget in excess of £600,000.