

# Chepstow and Tintern Railway Path — Overview

## Background

There have been a number of proposals during the last twenty years for a Cycleway in the Wye Valley between Chepstow and Hereford, culminating in a Feasibility Study in September 2001, commissioned by the local authorities through the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee. After public consultation on the Feasibility Study, the JAC resolved in March 2002 that:

*We cannot support this national cycle route through the valley;*

*We would welcome any initiatives by local people to develop local cycle routes along existing ex-railway lines where this does not involve CPOs or put pressure on private owners”.*

In line with the JAC resolution, Sustrans has continued to help develop proposals for local cycle routes where the previous there was local support and demand for them. The consultation highlighted the need for safe local links between the larger communities along the valley: Chepstow, Tutshill, Tidenham, Tintern; Redbrook, Wyesham; Monmouth, Symonds Yat, Whitchurch, Goodrich; Ross-on-Wye and Hereford.

Wye Valley Communities for Safe Cycling has campaigned for some years for a traffic free route for walking and cycling in the lower Wye valley and this proposal is largely a response to that campaign. It is intended that the Railway Path will become part of the National Cycle Network Route 42 between Chepstow and Ross on Wye, leaving the Wye Valley at Brockweir and crossing the Forest of Dean to Cinderford. The map opposite is an overview of the route showing links to other open and proposed cycle routes.

## Overview of Proposals

The proposal is to create a traffic free path for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and wheelchair users between Brockweir Bridge, Wire Works Bridge, Tintern and Sedbury, Chepstow with on road and pedestrian links to Chepstow town centre. The traffic free section re-uses the abandoned track bed of the Wye Valley Railway and Wire Works Tramway but includes a new bridge at Lyn Weir utilising the former railway bridge abutments.

Once completed, the path would enable people to travel on foot or bike, wheelchair or horse, from Chepstow to Tintern and Brockweir in a way that benefits their health and the environment. At present the only option for cyclists involves using busy roads which only confident cyclists would venture on to.

Most people arrive in the Wye Valley by car, bringing with them associated noise and pollution and the visual impact of car parks. Travelling by active means has recognised benefits to the physical and mental health of the traveller, who travels silently without polluting the atmosphere or the landscape. The path could therefore become a new gateway to the Wye Valley and an exemplar for access to this valued landscape in a sustainable way.

## Consultation

The proposed route is shown in detail on the fifteen maps displayed here. Notes and explanations accompany the maps. There is additional material relating to the Flora and Fauna on the route, maintenance issues, lighting, transport, and the bridge designs.

We would like your responses to the questionnaire so that we can develop the plans further with the benefit of the feedback provided. Responses to a number of common questions are also displayed.

We would also like your view on the two bridge designs which are displayed, or whether a new bridge has public support.

The responses to the consultation will be reported including to Town, Community and Parish Councils. The intention is to submit a planning application for this route in September or October 2009. Your input to this exhibition will influence the final designs so please give your views and ideas. You will also be able to make your views known to the planning authorities at the appropriate time.

## Getting more involved

If you want to be involved as the design develops, or help out as a volunteer, or offer support in any other way, please leave your details with us on the questionnaire or go to [www.wyevallycycling.org.uk](http://www.wyevallycycling.org.uk).

