

your environment

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■ Chief Medical Officer for Wales Dr Ruth Hussey opens the Llantrisant active travel community route joined by acting national director of Sustrans Cymru Jane Lorimer, service director Nigel Brinn and local users of the route
PICTURE: J Bewley

New cycling route is 'a healthy choice'

A NEW cycling and walking route linking Pontyclun railway station to the Royal Glamorgan Hospital has been officially unveiled.

Chief Medical Officer for Wales Dr Ruth Hussey opened the path on behalf of Sustrans and Rhondda Cynon Taff on May 8 – the latest addition to over 70 miles of new routes across the South Wales Valleys.

The route will provide the opportunity for residents – and people visiting the Royal Glamorgan Hospital – to build physical activity into their daily routine.

Dr Hussey said: "This new route has the potential to make a real difference to communities in Llantrisant and Pontyclun, making it easier for people to make healthier choices.

"Small changes to our daily routines, like walking and cycling short distances, can improve the way we feel as well as our physical health.

"This fits with the Active Travel

Mark Smith

mark.smith@walesonline.co.uk

Bill's aim of making cycling and walking the most natural and normal way of getting about and to ensure that active travel is a viable mode of transport for shorter journeys."

Jane Lorimer, Acting National Director of Sustrans Cymru, added: "By providing a safe and direct route linking communities in Pontyclun and Llantrisant, many more local people will be able to make their everyday journeys on foot or by bike.

"The NHS in Wales now spends upwards of £70m a year dealing with the costs of obesity, more routes like this will help people keep fit and healthy and prevent the onset of a variety of diseases linked to obesity and physical inactivity."

Nicola John, director of public health at Cwm Taf Health Board, said: "More than 60% of the adult

population living in our area is either overweight or obese.

"This new link between Pontyclun railway station and the Royal Glamorgan Hospital will be a great way for our residents to enjoy some wonderful scenery while getting some exercise at the same time.

"We also have a secure bike shed at the Royal Glamorgan so hopefully we'll see lots of our staff who live in the area making the most of the new route too."

The route will be followed by a further phase of the project, which will connect Llantrisant with the scenic Church Village and Treforest Community Routes, and onwards to the Taff Trail.

The new route has been funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government and is part of a project delivered by Sustrans and local authorities to extend the National Cycle Network in the South Wales Valleys by over 70 miles.

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