

New Trent Vale Trail a “lifesaver” for local users

The new section of the Trent Vale Trail which links Collingham and Besthorpe has been a huge hit with local users, proving to be a boon for walkers, cyclists, children in pushchairs, people in wheelchairs and runners keen to get exercise and fresh air away from traffic, especially during the current coronavirus lockdown.

“I am delighted with what has been achieved” said volunteer Andrew Hindmarsh, who looks after the Besthorpe Nature Reserve owned by the Notts Wildlife Trust. “It has enabled people of all ages and abilities to visit the reserve and appreciate its beauty and wildlife”.

“Most days we come out on this new path which for us is a lifesaver” one young mum with two young children told a volunteer. “I’ve used the opportunity to introduce my children to wildlife in the area.”

The Trent Vale Trail project is the initiative of the Friends of Trent Vale Trail, who have been working for seven years to turn the vision of a trail linking Newark with villages along the eastern side of the Trent into reality.

They have been supported by Sustrans, the Notts Wildlife Trust, Notts County Council, Tarmac, all the parish councils between Collingham and North Clifton, Newark and Sherwood District Council and lots of local businesses, organisations and residents. The project has been keenly supported throughout by County and District councillor Maureen Dobson.

After years of fundraising, a substantial grant from LEADER, the EU’s rural development fund, enabled construction to begin in September 2019. Despite serious setbacks caused by the recent floods, the Friends praised local firm CF construction for doing an excellent job. The Trail was due to be officially opened at the beginning of April – but then Covid-19 struck.

“I’m really chuffed to see how the trail is being used and appreciated by so many people even though some signs and information boards still have to be put in place” commented Alan Hudson, the Chair of the Friends group and a long-standing volunteer for Sustrans.

“It’s living proof of my belief that if only decent safe trails are built, people will use them for exercise, enjoyment and as an alternative to relying on motor transport for at least some journeys”.

Once restrictions on movement can be lifted the Friends hope that it will attract people from the wider region to visit the area and its attractions.

More information about the Trail including a contacts page can be found at www.trentvaletrail.org/