



## Case Study

### Travel

### West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust

## Active travel – cycle improvement facilities

- The Trust employs over 4,000 staff in West Hertfordshire covering three hospital sites at Watford, St Albans and Hemel Hempstead
- Each year the hospitals treat over half a million people and have over a million visitors
- These numbers generate significant traffic problems to congestion and parking for both staff and visitors
- The Trust decided to encourage more staff and visitors to cycle to the sites by increasing the quality and quantity of cycling facilities
- This project supported the Trust's commitment to sustainability and good corporate citizenship

### A common problem

The provision of sufficient parking spaces at hospitals is a daily challenge for doctors, nurses, support staff and volunteers, as well as patients and visitors.

Encouraging people to cycle to the sites is a great way to reduce congestion, reduce pollution and improve individual health.

At West Hertfordshire Hospitals, three key factors were identified as deterring people from cycling:

- Not enough storage,
- Current storage was not secure
- There were no shower facilities.

### Action taken

Through consultation with staff and working with Watford Cycle Hub (a not for profit community bike centre) the

Trust identified what was required to improve the facilities and encourage more staff, patients and visitors to cycle to the hospitals.

The Trust worked in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council **BIGHERTSBIGIDEAS** (a package of projects aimed at improving sustainable transport and local economic growth in Watford, Hemel Hempstead and St Albans) to secure funding from the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) to support the project.





*Three-times Olympic medallist and double track World Cycling champion Rob Hayles opening the facilities in Watford (06 Feb 2014)*

The funding was also supported by the Trust's charitable funds.

Once funding was achieved, the Trust worked with Cyclepods Ltd, a zero carbon company, to provide new cycle storage. Cyclepods Ltd designed colourful new cycling pods, made out of recycled materials, which provide secure storage for 36 bikes, doubling the number that could previously be accommodated. They also provided a bike repair stand and an industrial bike pump to allow on-site cycle repairs.

Providing shower facilities was a bit trickier as there was no space available within the hospital buildings. ClearSpace Buildings, through the cycle network, worked with the Trust to design a custom-built, dedicated external changing and shower unit, specifically to be used by cyclists. The attractive units are the size of two car

parking spaces, and clad in sustainable cedar wood,

### **Lessons learned**

The partnership working formed from networking was invaluable to the success of this project and the commitment shown from a variety of sources, both inside and outside the healthcare sector. The ongoing support provided by Watford Cycle Hubs will be a key driver to promoting cycling. The Trust are currently considering running basic maintenance courses and return to cycling familiarisation courses, as well as working with apprentices to provide on-site bike repairs to break down some of the blockers to cycling. The interest generated by the project was further supported by Rob Hayles, who officially opened the new facilities at Watford Hospitals.



**Samantha Jones, Chief Executive, West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust:**

*“As part of our efforts to deliver more sustainable services and facilities, we want to make cycling as desirable and easy for our doctors, nurses and support staff, as well as patients and visitors, as possible. The new cycle hub is absolutely key to this.”*

**Rob Hayles:**

*“The cycle hub at Watford Hospital is an excellent resource for cyclists. I’m passionate about cycling, professionally and personally, and if the introduction of these facilities encourages more people to leave their cars at home and take up cycling, that’s excellent news for everyone.”*

**Stephen Lloyd Jones:**

*“Hertfordshire County Council is pleased to be supporting the cycle storage and staff shower project at West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust. This has been possible thanks to our successfully securing £11.7 million from the Department for Transport’s Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). The money has gone towards BIGHERTSBIGIDEAS; a package of projects aimed at improving sustainable transport and local economic growth in Watford, Hemel Hempstead and St Albans”*

**A delighted staff member:**

*“Heartfelt thanks for the new cyclist showers and repair facilities from a happy (and occasionally very sweaty) cyclist!!”*

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