

Friday, 15 May 2009

Schools join in Walk to School Week

Seventeen of Bath & North East Somerset Council's schools will be joining in national Walk to School Week (May 18 – 22).

The theme of this annual event, organised by Living Streets and supported locally by Bath & North East Somerset Council, is Walk 'n' Talk, aimed at highlighting the social side to walking to school. The Council has been working to encourage local schools to take part, and providing them with materials including activity diaries for children. Classes will also have wall charts which pupils can put stickers on to show when they have walked to school that day.



Some of the schools taking part are: Bathampton Primary School; Bathwick St Mary, Bath; Chew Stoke Primary School; Clutton Primary School; Farmborough Primary School; Freshford Primary School; High Littleton Primary School; Marksbury Primary School; Moorland Infants School, Bath; Oldfield Park Infant School, Bath; St Julian's Primary School, Wellow; St Mary's Primary School, Timsbury; St Mary's Primary School, Writhlington; Trinity Primary School, Radstock; Welton Primary School, Midsomer Norton; Westfield Primary School, Radstock, and Weston All Saints Primary School, Bath.

High Littleton Primary School's involvement follows on from the success of its Walking Bus initiative, which has recently expanded. Twice each week around 20 families leave their cars at home and join a Walking Bus to their local primary school.

Councillor Charles Gerrish, said: "Supporting Walk to School Week is part of Bath & North East Somerset Council's commitment to improving transport and reducing car use across the district. Whilst health benefits of walking are becoming increasingly well recognised, there is also a social aspect to walking together, benefiting individuals and communities. This initiative is part of a joined-up effort to increase road safety for young people, whether through pedestrian training, the safer routes to school programme or school crossing patrols."

Studies show that a daily walk to school reduces the risk of obesity in children, as well as in later life when being overweight can add to the risk of heart disease and other illnesses. Children who walk to school have been shown to be more attentive in class, compared to children who are driven. The valuable experience of the road environment can provide them with essential road safety skills which will serve them for many years to come.

Parents who want to know if their child's school currently runs a Walking Bus should contact the school. Headteachers who would like advice and guidance on starting and running a Walking Bus should contact Jessica Fox-Taylor, the Council's Safer Routes to School officer on 01225 394257 / jessica.fox-taylor@bathnes.gov.uk.

Bath & North East Somerset Council also offers Bikeability and Street Sense, the national standard for cycle and pedestrian training, for local primary school children. Speak to your school about when the next set of training is available for your child.

The Walk to School campaign, run by Living Streets, encourages primary school pupils, parents and staff to incorporate regular physical activity into their daily lives by walking to and from school wherever possible. Visit www.walktoschool.org.uk for more information.



2009 Bristol Half Marathon running workshops

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The 2009 Bristol 10K race may be over, but now thousands of runners - nearly 10,000 of them, with more registering every day - are focusing their sights on the 2009 Bristol Half Marathon, set to take place on Sunday, September 6.

And to help them achieve their very best running performance, running legend, Steve Cram will be in Bristol to support the city council and its partners at the next Run Bristol workshop on Tuesday, May 19.

Run Bristol has arranged a series of evening workshops and a special two-day, weekend workshop to support and advise local runners.

Guest speakers at the workshops include top running professionals, such as Olympic athletes: Steve Cram; Dan Robinson and Tracy Morris. Other specialist advice is in hand from top coaches Bud Baldaro, Martin Yelling, Bob Ashwood and Nick Anderson who have worked with many leading athletes. Bristol University Sports Injury Clinic will also be at the workshops and training camps to offer free advice.

The next evening workshop will be held on Tuesday evening, May 19, with two further workshops planned for Tuesdays, June 23 and August 11. They will take place at Coombe Dingle Sport Centre, Coombe Lane, starting from 6pm and include an hour run from 6.30pm to 7.30pm, followed by question & answer sessions with the guest speakers.

The focus of the evening will be a discussion on preparing for the Bristol Half Marathon with guest speakers Steve Cram, Nick Anderson and advisors from the Sports Injury Clinic.

Entry to the run workshops is free and runners are invited to arrive from 6pm.

The two-day weekend workshop takes place on Saturday and Sunday, July 18-19. Based at Henbury Leisure Centre weekend workshop offers expert guidance of race training partners and will enable anyone from the novice to the regular runner to improve their training and running, and reach their full potential.

Further information about the workshops can be found on the race website.

St Peter's Hospice, CLIC Sargent and CoCo are the official race charities for the Bristol half marathon.

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Plans for new Cycling City routes go on display

14 May 2009

A public exhibition goes on display today for members of the public to comment on proposals for three new cycle routes in South Gloucestershire.

The exhibition takes place on Thursday 14 May from 2pm to 7pm at the Willow Brook shopping centre, Bradley Stoke and is part of the Cycling City project.

Members of the public can view the plans and information about the routes and council officers will be on hand to answer any questions.

The routes covered in the exhibition are:

Route 1 – Bristol to Parkway Station via Abbey Wood

Route 9 – University of the West of England to Parkway Station via Harry Stoke

Route 12 – Staple Hill to the University of West of England via Frenchay Hospital

Planned work on the routes include upgrading and linking existing facilities, on and off road cycle lanes, safe crossing places and more priority over motorised traffic.

The proposed routes have been designed in collaboration with the South Gloucestershire Cycle Forum. Members of the Cycle Forum cycled the existing routes with engineers and discussed problems and suggested the best solutions for the new routes.

The new routes form part of the 18 routes in South Gloucestershire included in the Cycling City Project which was awarded in 2008 to South Gloucestershire Council, jointly with Bristol City Council, were chosen as Britain's first Cycling City.

Peter Jackson, director for planning, transportation and the strategic environment, said: "It is really important to us that we provide practical, well thought out routes which will enable people to get out on their bikes. We have worked closely with local cyclists to design these routes and would welcome comments for the public on whether the proposals are suitable. Future consultation is planned on all the Cycling City routes."

Plans are available at www.southglos.gov.uk/consultation

For further information please call 01454 863640 or email cycleforum@southglos.gov.uk

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