

Green link to Cricklade closer to lottery funding

THE Cricklade Country Way project has made it through to the final stage of the lottery bid for funding.

The scheme to create a green corridor linking Swindon to Cricklade and the Cotswold Water Park has progressed to the next round of the Living Landmarks bidding process, it has been announced.

The news means that a grant of £250,000 has been made

available so that the team can continue to work on the £15m scheme to produce detailed plans and designs.

When completed a business plan will be submitted in May 2007 for final consideration by the lottery panel for a £12.8m grant.

North Wiltshire District Council is one of nine organisations involved in the project, with partners

contributing the remainder of funds to complete the scheme over five years.

Chaloner Chute, the director of the canal project, said: "All the partners are really excited that the work of the last eight years in preparing for the Cricklade Country Way is now taking a step nearer reality.

"This scheme represents a unique mix of local authorities, national organisations and

voluntary trusts working together.

"The co-operation and dedication of the project team and their own organisations, deserves much praise.

"We look forward to challenge of the next few months to progress towards the winning tape."

The Cricklade Country Way starts at Mouldon Hill Country Park, near Purton Road,

Swindon and, when complete, as well as enjoying the country park, visitors will be able to choose a number of different ways to get to Cricklade, none of which involve travelling by road.

They will be able to go by boat along the rebuilt North Wilts Canal, by train thanks to an extension of the Cricklade and Swindon Steam Railway, by bike along the cycle route or

by foot via the canal towpath.

In addition the scheme will extend the Great Western Community Forest in the area, complete Mouldon Hill Country Park in Swindon and build a new visitor and sports centre at Cricklade.

Swindon Council, Cricklade Town Council and the Cotswold Water Park Society are among the organisations which are on board.