

FROME 'LINKS UP' WITH SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL TRAVEL CHALLENGE!

CURIOUS "Banksy"-style chalk "stencil-art" images of scooters, bicycles and footprints began appearing in town and outside some local schools over the last few weeks.

However, the mystery was solved when Frome's Missing Links introduced their School Travel Challenge in eight Frome schools between Monday 22nd and Friday 26th May.

During the Challenge Week, local schools enjoyed some friendly rivalry to see who would be awarded the Frome's Missing Links Trophy. The winner was to be the school with the biggest percentage increase in children walking, scooting or cycling to school. Beckington School has come out top with a "giant leap" up from 38% to 73% average travelling actively during the Challenge Week, that's an increase of 35%.

Fun events were taking place in each participating school. These included celebration breakfasts and pedal-powered smoothies.

There were also visits from Dr Bike in which mechanics provided a free "health check" for pupils' bikes. Bike doctors from Cycology Bike Shop in Frome, and the Julian House Bike workshops, worked on 22 bikes at Selwood and 27 at Steiner Academy. Critchill School showed their support for the project by helping Dr Bike at Oakfield when staff member Harry Frost helped work on approx 20 bikes. At Selwood, FML volunteer Chris Green helped with 22 bikes but was pipped by Geoff Pell who helped work through 33 bikes at St Louis. Bike owners were also provided with a free puncture repair kit by Frome's Missing Links.

Trinity School was the venue for a "Beetle to School Beetle Drive". Selwood Academy organised a well-being week in conjunction with the FML School Travel Challenge, with activities such as bushcraft and a climbing wall. Oakfield pupils were rollerblading round the playground and enjoying a penalty shoot-out, amongst other activities. Many schools held a mufti day in aid of Frome's Missing Links, with the Steiner Academy enjoying their own alternative "uniform" themed day.

The highlight of the week was probably the awesome "Coin Bicycle" which was made by Yr 6 Selwood pupils on their multi-sport pitch. The vastness of the bicycle meant it could only be truly appreciated from above. Luckily, Selwood staff Ms Howell and Mr Sharp had

organised a drone to allow filming and photos. The scale of the design and the work involved in laying out all the bronze and silver coins was amazing. The coins had all been collected in a "fill a bottle" competition between classes and were then generously donated to Frome's Missing Links. The total amount from all the donations from mufti, uniform days and charity events at participating schools was £1,431.77.

Pupils were given free "log-cards" which they could stamp each day that they walked, scooted or cycled to school. The cards that were returned on the last day of the challenge have been entered in a "lucky dip" competition. Prize winners will be announced shortly, and prizes will be given out at assemblies in the next couple of weeks.

Organiser Marjory Hatvany said, "Frome's Missing Links' mission is to make it easier to cycle and walk in and around Frome, especially by completing the missing couple of miles of cycle path to link Frome with the Collier's Way to Radstock. It seemed an appropriate "link" with the schools to promote all the benefits for health, improved concentration and the environment that come from active travel. The schools really rose to the challenge; the results are extremely impressive! We heard from parents that the roads around Frome were much quieter than usual, which would have been a boon to everyone in Frome by improving air quality, cutting congestion and making it safer for all the walkers, cyclists and scooters."

Mrs Richardson, deputy head at Trinity School said, "Wow! What an improvement across the Frome Learning Partnership! We certainly had a great week at Trinity." In support of the School Travel Challenge week, the Men's Shed in Frome created an excellent scooter storage area for Trinity School which will make it easier to keep the children's scooters safe and tidy.

(For more detail on the results, go to the "Hall of Fame" page on this website: <http://bigshift.sustrans.org.uk> Then zoom into Frome, and click on each school to see their profile.) In addition to all the events, Frome's Missing Links ran a photography competition and invited pupils to enter paintings or drawings in an art competition. These were both on the theme "My Journey to School".

Popular local Frome artist Amy Yates kindly judged the art competi-

tion. Art winners were; 1st: Robyn Dunn 5A Oakfield, 2nd: Luca Carare 5A, Oakfield, 3rd: Francesca Woolford, 5A Oakfield, Commended: Sine Scott, Yr 4, St Louis School.

All the children's drawings are being framed through the generosity of Mrs Jane Yates and will be on display in an exhibition running during the Frome Festival in the Town Hall, along with the photographic entries.

David Chedgy, Frome Times photographer, was the judge in the photography competition on the same theme "My Journey to School". His final decision was; 1st - Oscar Neilson, Class 5R, Oakfield School, 2nd - Dáithí Yr 3, Odharnait Yr 1 and Fionnuala Reception, of St Louis RC Primary School, 3rd - Maisie McDonald, Milky Way class, Vallis First School. Highly Commended: Maya Bruton, Holly class, Trinity School Frome; Highly Commended: Stan Hill, Year 3, Pine Class, Trinity First School, Commended: Joseph Walk, 8S, Selwood Academy, Commended: Oliver Brant, Yr 2, St Louis RC Primary School, Commended: Alissa Cooper, Yr 1, St Louis RC Primary School, Commended: Tobias Yr 2 and Sine Yr 4, St Louis RC Primary School, Commended: Esmee Welsh, Moon class, Vallis First School.

Boots in Frome kindly printed all the photographs and donated a £20 photograph album for the first prize. All the prints were generously framed by Studio Prints in the Westway. Mount-Art Services kindly printed a large A2 print of Oscar's winning photograph, which is being specially framed by Frome framer Geraint Thomas.

Frome's Missing Links were able to organise school events during the School Travel Challenge week due to their success in securing £500 by popular vote at Frome Town Council's Participatory Budgeting event.

Frome's Missing Links would like to thank the Westway Radstock Co-operative for their kind donation of breakfast items, and Knightstone Housing for helping with a Smoothie Bike at Trinity. Huge thanks to Halfords who donated a scooter and Charge Bikes who donated a bicycle as star prizes. Family swimming vouchers for the "lucky log-card dip" were kindly provided by Fusion Frome Sport & Fitness. Frome's Missing Links would particularly like to thank all the staff in the participating schools for their support and enthusiasm during the Travel Challenge.

