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INSTITUTION FORUM

Gaffney praises cycle scheme

The latest section of Edinburgh's cycleway was opened by President Tony Gaffney when he visited the East of Scotland local association last week. Later in a speech at the association's annual dinner he said that providing a better, healthier, and safer community was at the heart of what civil engineering was all about. By this criteria the cycleway was as important as the biggest civil engineering project.

The new 1800m long section of cycleway has been converted from part of the abandoned North Leith railway line. Lothian Regional Council's director of highways Peter Mason says that it is part of a strategic network now being developed for the whole of Edinburgh. About 80.5km of cycleways are being planned and developed by both the region and Edinburgh District Council.

Last year a section of the 'Innocent' railway (NCE 1 July 1982) under King Arthur's Seat was converted by Lothian under the direction of strategic highway planner Rowland Paxton, while another section of railway line plus the tow path of the



abandoned Union canal were developed by the district council.

Bob Nellist, Lothian team leader for its part of the project, explains that within two years there will be about 25km of cycleways on old railway lines forming an outer circle to the north of the city with two spurs leading into the centre. In addition there will be an inner circle of 20km of advisory cycle routes with, across the city centre itself, some 10km of bus lanes available to bicyclists.

The section opened by Gaffney is owned, and was designed by the region, with the work carried out by the district under its special measures programme. Bob Hunter, the district's coordinator says that the district has 300 people working for it paid by the Manpower Services Commission.

The wage bill came to £49 000, and material and other costs including street lighting (installed by a contractor) were paid by the

ABOVE: Tony Gaffney opening Edinburgh's latest section of cycleway watched by Lothian vice convenor Cllr Ian Cramond.

BELOW: Part of the converted 'Innocent' railway.



region. The three metre wide path was formed between timber edging, the 100m thick layer of railway ballast surfaced with a 25mm layer of fine crushed whinstone. ■