



Cycle Survey, July 2013

Survey carried out by:

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Introduction

Harwell Campus Bicycle Users Group, HarBUG, carried out a survey of cyclists commuting to the Harwell Oxford Campus on Wednesday 10th July. The survey was carried out without prior publicity and the surveyors were members of the HarBUG organising committee. The weather on the day was fine and sunny.

Cyclists travelling away from the Campus were also counted.

Cyclists were only counted and were not stopped to see where they travelled from. We have included the results from our Bike to Work days from June to give an indication where cyclists are travelling from.

Three survey points were monitored from 07:00 to 10:00:

1. Road junction at the top of Hagbourne Hill:
 - Cyclists from Didcot using Sustrans route 544 via Upton.
 - Cyclists from Didcot via West Hagbourne.
2. The end of the Winnaway junction with A4185.
 - Cyclists from Didcot using the Winnaway via Harwell Village.
 - Cyclists from Abingdon, Oxford and villages and North of the Campus using the A4185.
 - Cyclists from Wantage / Grove using A417 and A4185.
 - Cyclists from Didcot via Harwell village avoiding the Winnaway.
3. Sustrans route 544 Western entrance (Tank Farm) into Harwell Oxford Campus.
 - Cyclists from Wantage / Grove using Sustrans route 544.

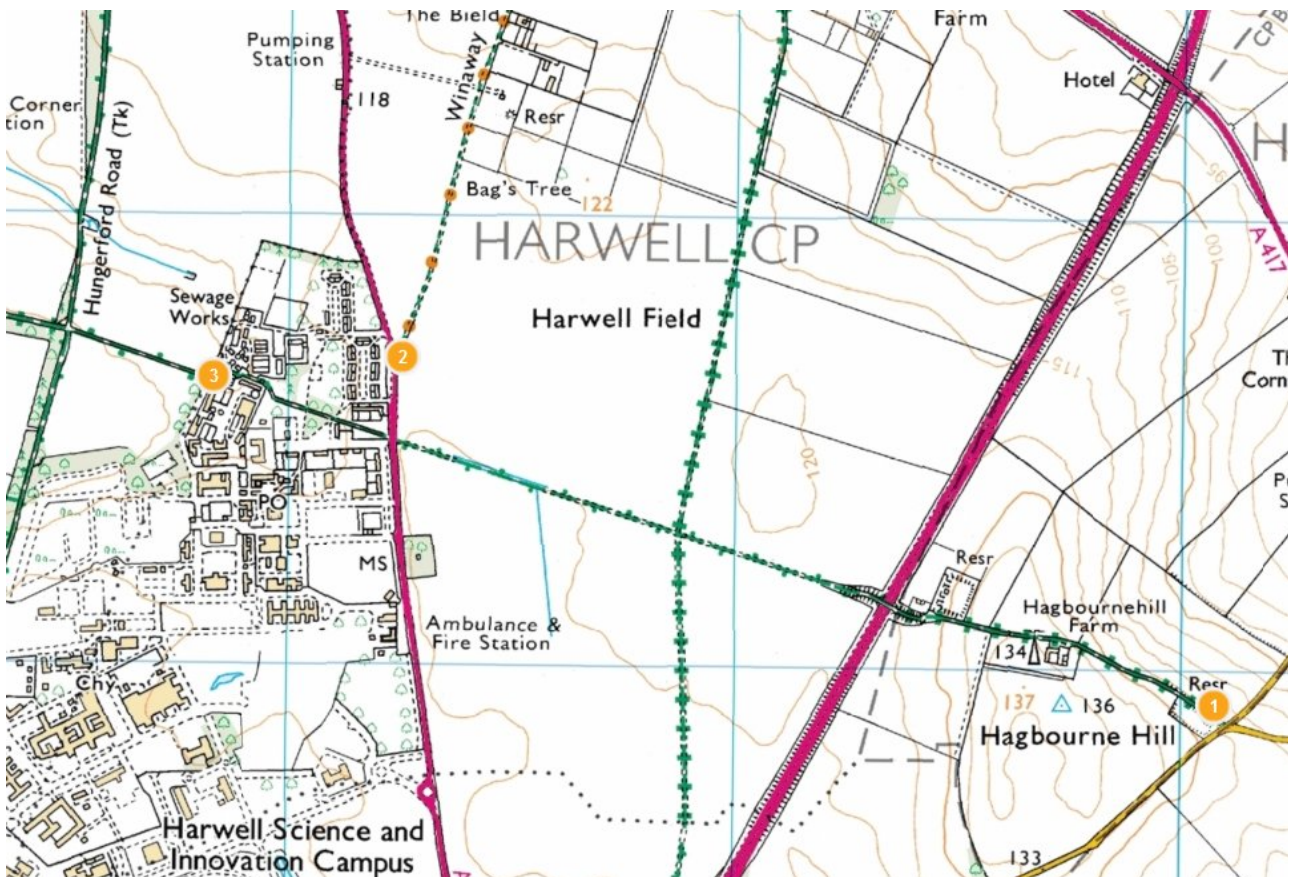


Illustration 1: Map Showing Survey Points

There were 192 cycle journeys to the Campus during the survey period. Most organisations on the campus operate a flexi-time system so there may be some cyclists who travelled after the survey period, although we expect the majority to have travelled at the standard commuting times.

Results From Road Junction at the Top of Hagbourne Hill.

Total number of cyclists cycling to the campus = 51:

- 35 cycled on the Sustrans route 544 from Upton and carried on route 544 over Hagbourne Hill to the Campus.
- 10 cycled on the Sustrans route 544 from Upton and then turned onto the road towards Chilton village and to the Campus via the A34 junction.
- 6 cycled via West Hagbourne and carried on the road towards Chilton village and to the Campus via the A34 junction.

The number of cyclists cycling from the campus to Didcot on Sustrans route 544 = 10.

Comments:

This is a popular route from Didcot. It is longer than the route via the Winnaway for most Didcot residents, but is more pleasant as most of the route is 'off road'. Some cyclists, mainly those with road / racing bikes, prefer to use the road via Chilton and the A34 junction due to the state of Route 544 (in between the A34 bridge and the Campus), which can get badly potholed over the winter and really only useable by off road bikes or a touring bike.

The Chilton road from Upton to the Hagbourne Hill junction remains a fast piece of road, as traffic heads to and from the A34 junction as well as the Campus. The Chilton road has high hedges and verges up to the carriageway edge, which means cyclists are 'sandwiched' in between passing traffic and the hedge / verge with no means of escape if trouble occurs.

Cyclists are also exposed when crossing straight over at the Hagbourne Hill junction with traffic cutting over the white lines when turning onto the Chilton road.

As the Campus expands more traffic, cyclists and motorised vehicles, will use the Chilton Road. This is likely to become more of a problem until the Harwell bypass road is built.

During the summer the route gets very overgrown in Didcot, including branches of trees hanging low over the track.

Results From the End of the Winnaway Junction With A4185.

Total number of cyclists cycling to the campus = 104:

- 50 cycled via the Winnaway.
- 54 cycled using the A4185.

The number of cyclists cycling away from the campus = 2, both using the A4185. There were also 8 pedestrians who used the Winnaway.

Comments:

The Winnaway is a busy cycle route from Didcot and likely to become busier as the Campus expands, and Didcot grows Westwards. With housing proposed for the Campus, there is likely to be more two way traffic and pedestrians. Also there will be extra cycle traffic when the route from Abingdon via the Backhill tunnel at Milton Park is realised.

Currently the Winnaway is in a poor state; in winter a lot of the track is a long puddle and the surface is very uneven and breaking up. The junction at the end to get onto the A4185 is very busy with fast motor traffic.

In Didcot there is a proposal for an 'off road' cycle track along Wantage Road to the new Great Western Park entrance. This is unlikely to be of any use to commuters who will continue to use the more direct and faster road route. However cyclists are subject to harassment from motorists where a cycle path is built and cyclists use the road. This is a regular occurrence for cyclists on the road in-between Drayton and Abingdon.

Didcot needs a good, well planned cycle network to ensure there are ongoing continuous and convenient routes once cyclists enter the town.

In Harwell village traffic calming is planned, the initial proposals, pinch points, are not cycle friendly.

The A4185 is and will remain a busy cycling route. Cyclists using the A4185 are from three directions. The majority are cycling from Abingdon, Oxford and villages North of the Campus e.g. Milton, Steventon etc. However there are cyclists from Wantage and Grove, on road / racing bikes, who prefer to use a road route rather than the Sustrans route, which is only suitable for off road cycles in places. Similarly some cyclists from Didcot with road / racing bikes prefer not to use the Winnaway in case the surface damages their bike.

It is likely that the A4185 will remain a main cycling route to the Campus even with an upgraded Winnaway, a new route from Wantage / Grove and an alternative route from Abingdon.

Results From Western Entrance (Tank Farm) into Harwell Oxford Campus on Sustrans Route 544.

Total number of cyclists cycling into the campus = 37

The number of cyclists cycling away from the campus = 8

Comments:

As with previous routes, the expansion of the Campus and Grove will result in more cyclists using the route. The route remains at risk due to a 'permissive permission' section. An alternative route has been proposed which parallels the A417, links up the villages in between and can be extended to connect to Milton Park. This route is currently subject to discussions within the villages with a potential problem at West Hendred churchyard.

A section of the route was upgraded a couple of years ago with new drainage and a re-surface although the final section of the route into the Campus from the Hungerford road track is badly degraded and needs to be re-surfaced.

33 of the 37 cyclists travelling into the Campus used the rough track, parallel to Eighth Street, to gain access into the Campus.



Figure 1: Photo Showing Rough Track Into Campus.

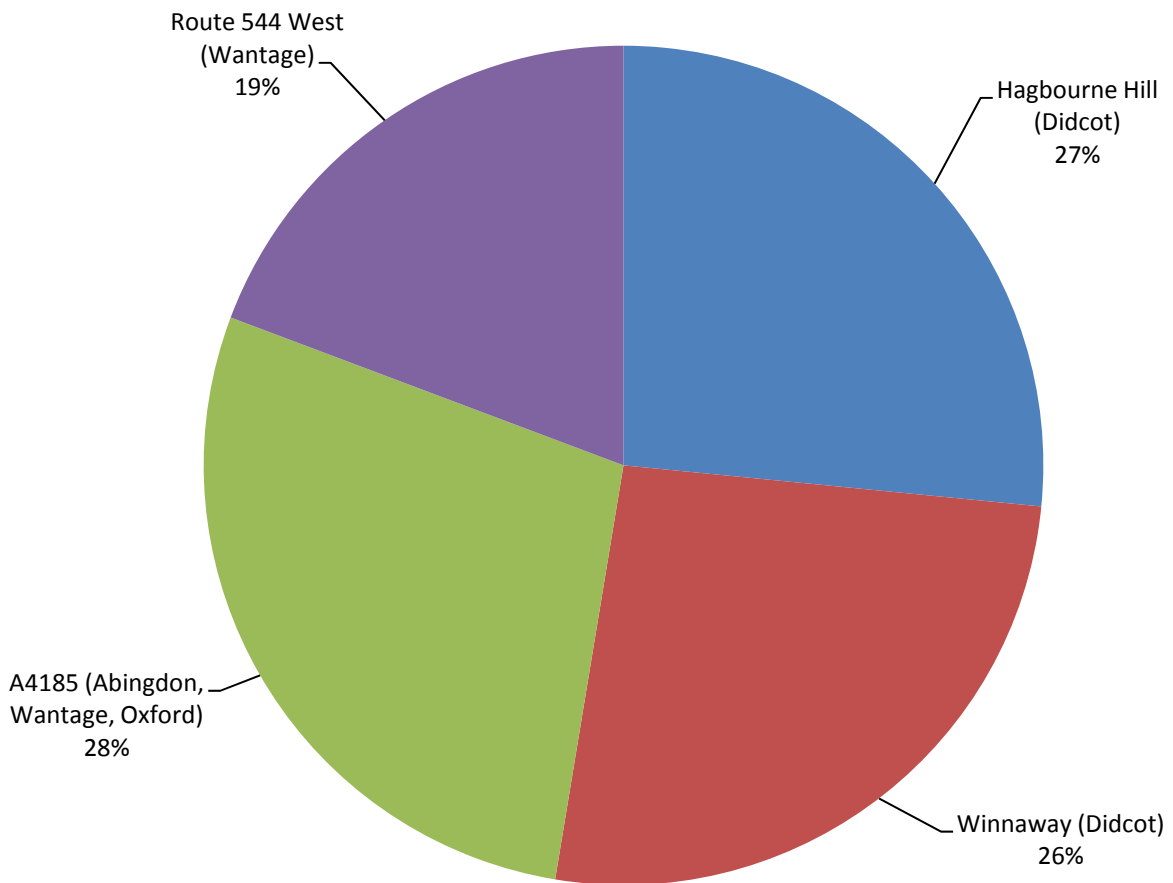


Figure 2: Survey Results Showing Total Number of Cyclists as a Percentage

Where do Cyclists Ride From and Where do They Work.

As previously stated we did not question cyclists on the survey but we do ask cyclists to register at the Campus Cycle to Work days.

The results of which are shown below for the June 2013 Cycle to Work day:

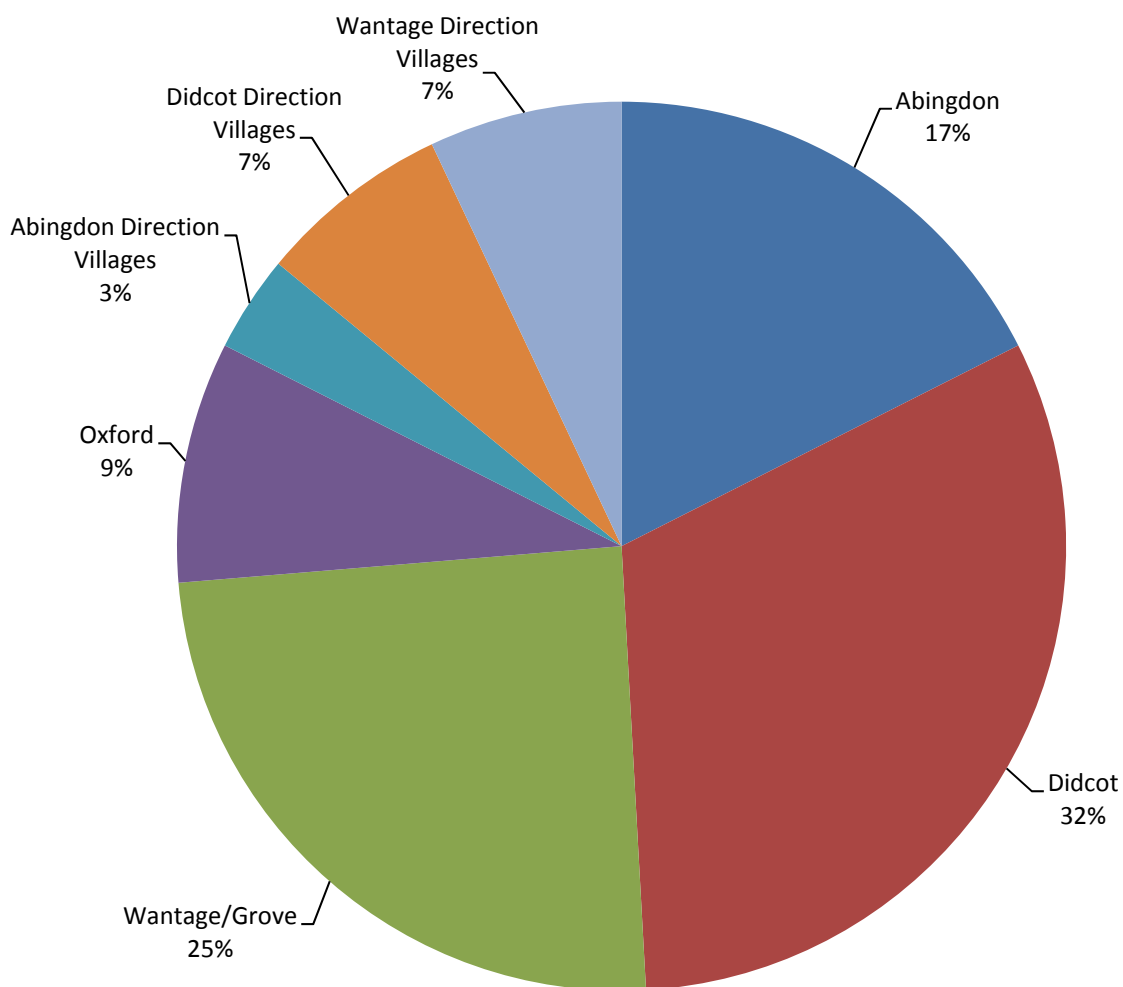


Figure 3: Cyclists Starting Points – Cycle to Work Day June 2013

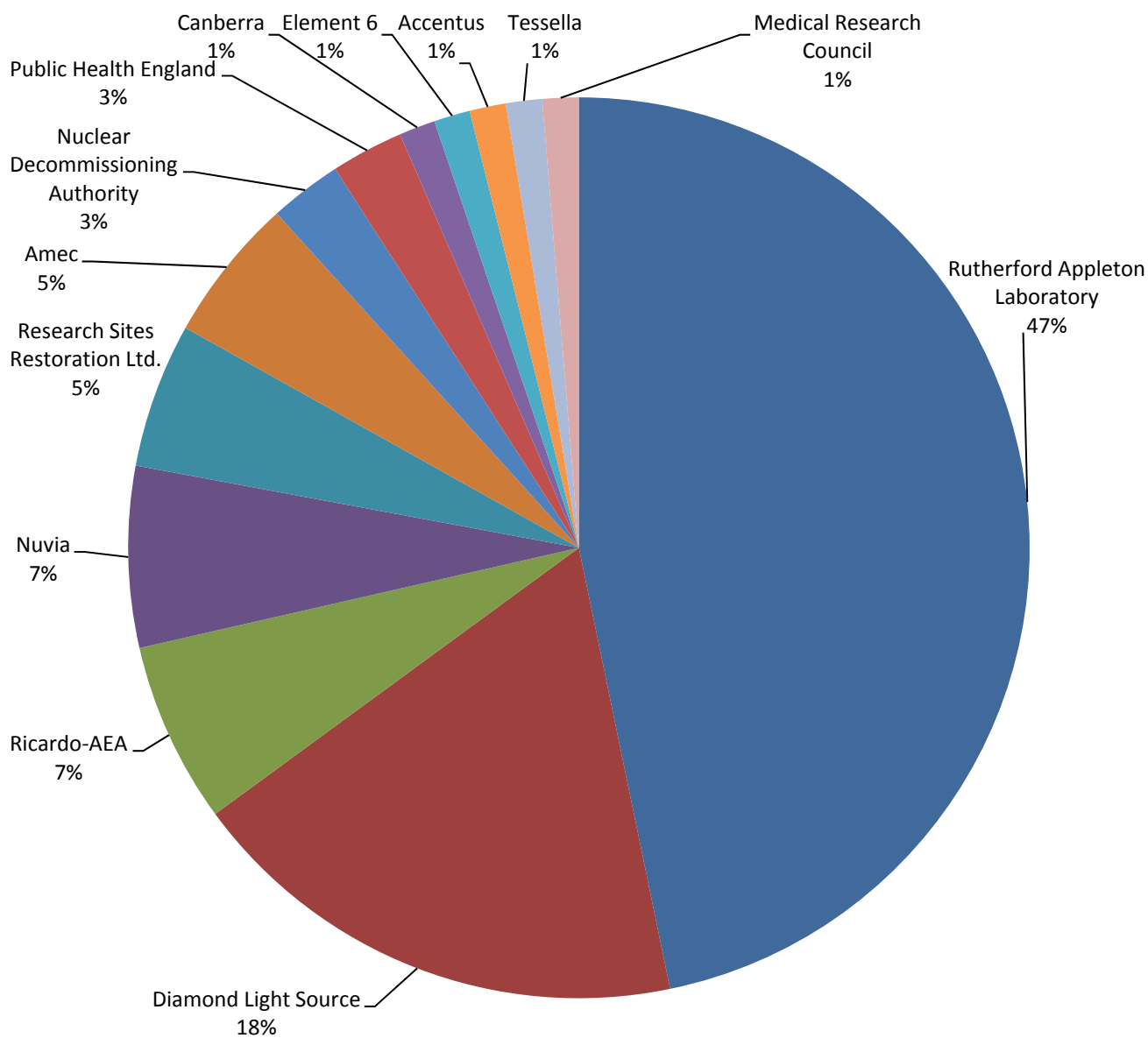


Figure 4: Cyclists Campus Destinations - Cycle to Work Day June 2013

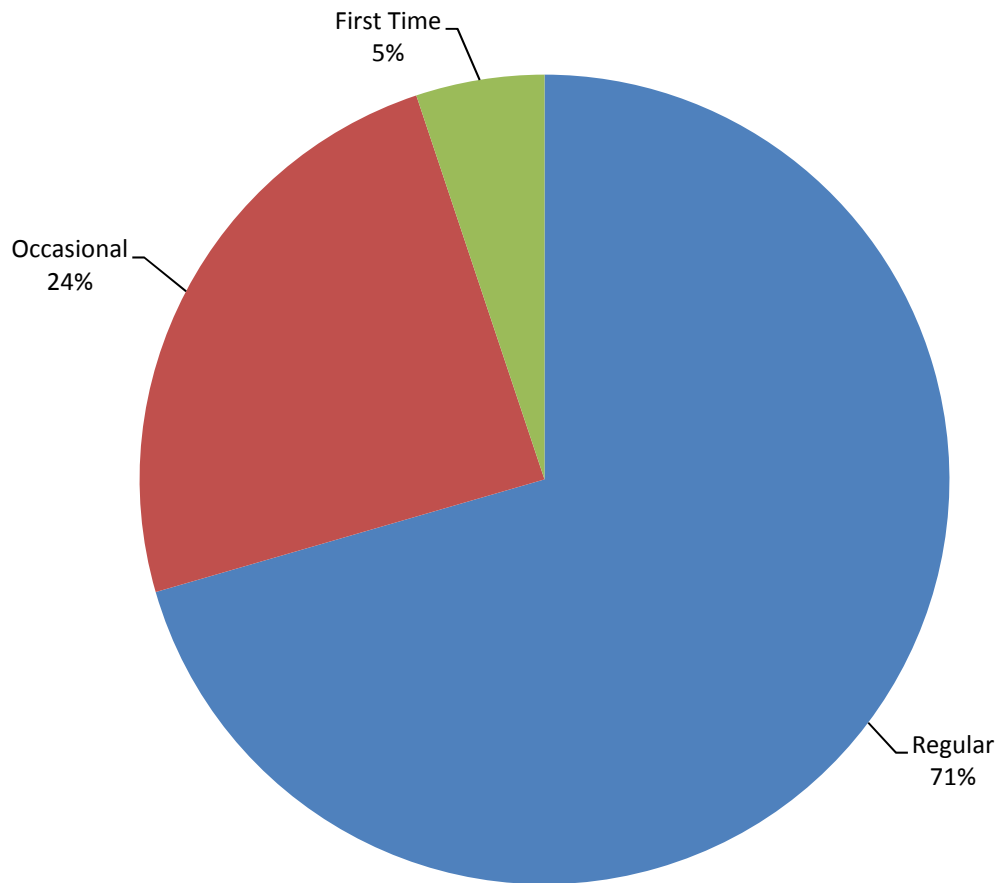


Figure 5: Cyclists Frequency of Journeys - Cycle to Work Day June 2013



Figure 6: Cyclists Breakfast at June 2013 Cycle to Work Day

Comments:

The results from the registration on the Cycle to Work days are broadly as expected. Most cyclists are from the towns and the largest employers have the most number of cyclists.

Conclusions

Generally there was a reasonable equal distribution of cyclists using the different routes i.e. about 50 on each route surveyed. There were more cyclists from Didcot than the other towns but they were split equally across the Sustrans route 544 and the Winnaway via Harwell village.

HarBUG's priority projects for cycle infrastructure are:

- The Winnaway upgrade (widening and resurfacing) and extension to the A4185 / Sustrans route 544 crossing.
- New route from Wantage via Ardington and the Hendreds and onto Rowstock.
- Measures to make the Chilton road from Upton to Hagbourne Hill a more cycle friendly route.

These priorities remain but the survey highlighted that the A4185 is an important cycle route and will remain so for cyclists who use road / racing bikes.