

Bitter blow for plan to add link to Ruby Way



Thursday, January 26, 2012



[North Devon Journal](#)

[Follow](#)

AN HISTORIC part of Holsworthy, which is to form a crucial link in the Ruby Cycleway, has been dealt a major blow.

A £390,000 bid to restore Coles Mill Viaduct has been turned down by the Heritage Lottery.



1.

CHALLENGE: *Councillor Barry Parsons at the Coles Mill Viaduct at Holsworthy. Picture: Ian Snell. To order this photograph call 0844 4060 269 and quote Ref: BNIS20120124A-001_C*

And eco-friendly [transport](#) charity Sustrans has pulled out of an agreement to support this vital part of the Ruby Way route.

Graham Cornish, Devon County Council's project manager for the National Cycle Network, insisted: "It is a major blow, but it is not a show-stopper."

Fears had been raised in Holsworthy that the project to save and restore the Coles Mill Viaduct as part of the long awaited Ruby Way scheme had been shelved or abandoned.

Mr Cornish said this was not the case and it was certainly not the end of the project.

He said: "We have been assembling the Ruby Way for 25 years.

"Hatherleigh to Holsworthy is 90% complete and various negotiations are going on with the gaps."

The gaps include one near Black Torrington, another at Dunsland Cross and the third and final one is the Coles Mill Viaduct.

The viaduct restoration project will cost around £660,000.

Holsworthy Town Council had offered £3,000 a year for three years to support the Heritage Lottery bid, but requested the return of the cash when the bid failed.

Mr Cornish said the county council had hoped to **buy** the viaduct and do it up with an agreement that Sustrans would take it on, but the charity has now pulled out of the agreement.

Mr Cornish said: "We need to find another partner.

"The owner lives in the Czech Republic, we are in contact with him and it might be a possibility for the county to acquire a lease from him."

Mr Cornish said Cornwall Council is building sections of its route towards Devon and Devon County Council has just completed another 600 metres west of Holsworthy towards Bude with a long term aim of linking the two counties.

The late Des Shadrack, a Holsworthy councillor who was hailed an ambassador for the town, fought for years to save the Coles Mill Viaduct. As well as being an iconic **monument** of the town, it is believed the viaduct could act as a valuable tourist attraction.

Devon county councillor for the Holsworthy area, Barry Parsons, said: "This is a big challenge given the economic climate but it will be of huge benefit to the town and tourism and will add to people's enjoyment of the countryside.

"We must keep exploring different avenues as we are determined to see this through."

An unbroken Ruby Way would form the longest traffic-free walking, cycling and horse-riding route in the UK. It ultimately hopes to link with the Tarka Trail at its eastern end and Bude on the coast in the west.

Source: North Devon Journal, first published 26th January 2012

See <http://www.thisisdevon.co.uk/Bitter-blow-plan-add-link-Ruby-Way/story-15040732-detail/story.html#axzz2WSSEMMvA>

Follow us: [@thisisdevonnews](#) on Twitter | [thisisdevon](#) on Facebook