

World renowned fashion designer opens Merthyr's new route

Issued on: Tuesday 21 February, 2012

Fashion designer Julien Macdonald left London Fashion Week early to officially open 'Puddlers Bridge' - the brand new walking and cycling route in his hometown Merthyr Tydfil.

Julien joined Sustrans Cymru, Cllr Jeff Edwards, Leader of Merthyr Tydfil CBC and twenty pupils from Afon Taf school to open the bridge and unveil the new bench. Julien is one of three local icons whose portraits



have been sculpted in steel as part of a bench to mark the opening of the new route. He said; 'It's a really special feeling to have the people from the area I grew up in recognise me in this way, and I hope the portrait bench becomes a well-used and familiar part of the landscape.'

'Merthyr is a beautiful part of Wales and a route like this one will inspire more people to get out on foot or bike and discover just how beautiful it is.'

The bridge is a new traffic-free crossing on the Trevithick Trail, which links Pentrebach with Merthyr Tydfil town centre, and will allow walkers and cyclists a safer crossing over busy the A4060. It is also part of a series of new walking and cycling links right across the Welsh valleys, which has received funding from the European Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government.

Lee Waters, Sustrans Cymru Director, said; 'Creating safer routes for walking and cycling on is key to encouraging more people to make their short, daily journeys on foot or bike. This bridge, over a very busy road, will be exactly that, and will give everyone more choice about how they travel locally.'

The bridge links up Triangle Business Park, giving people more options for travelling to and from work and giving shoppers better and safer walking and cycling access to the local supermarket.

In partnership with Merthyr Tydfil Country Borough Council, the bridge has been built as part of a national project from charity Sustrans' to build new walking and cycling routes in communities across the UK. The project is part-funded thanks to a £50million from the Big Lottery Fund in 2007.

/ends

For more information on Sustrans or to request interviews, please contact

Wendy Johnson, Sustrans Press Office

Tel 0117 915 0128 / Email: wendy.johnson@sustrans.org.uk

Press Office Out of office hours – 07802 986728

ISDN line available for radio interviews

NOTES

The name 'Puddlers Bridge' was suggested by Pentrebach resident Alan Lewis in a recent Sustrans competition. It highlights the history of the local area, as 'Puddlers' used to work in the iron industry vital to this part of south Wales.

Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. Our work makes it possible for people to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in. www.sustrans.org.uk