



PRESS RELEASE  
25<sup>th</sup> October, 2010

## Tewkesbury employers urged to help J9 staff keep fit

Employers at Tewkesbury's Junction 9 business parks who want to help their staff keep fit and healthy are being invited to take part in an exciting new walking and cycling project.

The "Active Travel" project is part of the **Count Me In!** programme – a Government-funded scheme promoting healthy living in Tewkesbury.

The Active Travel project highlights the ease with which employees can get active. Common forms of active travel are walking and cycling, which are convenient and accessible ways to travel short distances, particularly for those commuting to work.

**Count Me In!**, in conjunction with Atkins Global, is urging businesses at Junction 9 to encourage their employees to walk and cycle more often and get involved in upcoming events.

A "Cycle for Fun" Day is due to be held in early December promoting Active Travel to employees. The event will offer staff a chance to saddle-up for a 10-minute taster session on bikes, supervised by trained instructors. Experienced cyclists can have their bikes checked out by a bike mechanic free of charge. There will also be a prize draw and incentives for all those who take part.

Emma Shibli, from **Count Me In!**, said: "The J9 area of Tewkesbury already has a lot of cycle-friendly employers and the **Count Me In!** programme has supported the creation of new walk and cycle paths and maps for the town.

"This project is about getting more people cycling to work more often by breaking down barriers to cycling, from worries about British weather to just feeling a lack of confidence. We know that cycling brings all sorts of benefits and really contributes to our overall physical and mental

health. If you think that cycling sounds like too much hard work, or you're just not sure how to get started, come along to the 'Cycle for Fun Day' in December and discover how straightforward and worthwhile it can be."

The project is aimed not only at staff for whom active daily lives can improve physical and mental health, and lower the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, obesity, diabetes and some cancers, but also at employers who can benefit from having a healthier workforce.

Employers benefit in many ways, including:

- lower staff sickness absence rates
- higher staff morale
- increased productivity rates
- improved staff retention
- an enhanced corporate reputation through investing in staff well-being
- a reduction in the organisation's carbon footprint as more staff choose walking and cycling over driving

For more information on our Active Travel project and to sign your company up for the Cycle for Fun Event, please contact the project co-coordinator Emma Taylor at Atkins

([Emma.Taylor@atkinsglobal.com](mailto:Emma.Taylor@atkinsglobal.com)) or Emma Shibli at Gloucestershire County Council

([Emma.Shibli@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:Emma.Shibli@gloucestershire.gov.uk)).

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

**Healthy Towns** - Tewkesbury is one of nine towns across the UK participating in the Government-funded Healthy Towns initiative. The nine towns will share a £30 million pot from Government over three years.

**Count me In!** - is a partnership between Tewkesbury Borough Council, NHS Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire County Council, Active Gloucestershire and Gloucestershire Development Agency.

**Atkins** ([www.atkinsglobal.com](http://www.atkinsglobal.com)) is the UK's largest engineering and design consultancy and the world's 11th largest design firm. We have the depth and breadth of expertise to respond to the most technically challenging and time critical infrastructure projects and the urgent transition to a low-carbon economy. Recent projects include providing a range of transport planning and highways maintenance services for

Gloucestershire County Council as part of the Gloucestershire Highways partnership. Atkins is the official engineering design services provider for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

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