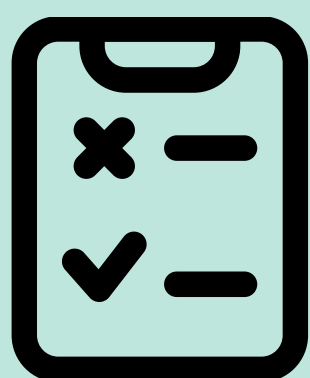


Grab your bike

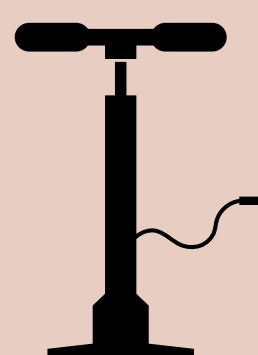
Spring is just around the corner and if you're thinking about riding to school, or as a family, now is a great time to get your bikes out and check they're ready to ride before the warmer weather arrives.



M-check

If you haven't ridden in a while, follow our guide to safety checking your bike to make sure it's ready to ride.

Get ready for Spring



Pump up tyres

Keeping your tyres pumped up reduces the risk of punctures and makes it easier to pedal.



Puncture fix

If you have a puncture, our step-by-step guide to repairing it can save you time and money.



Helmet check

Make sure your cycle helmet fits correctly by following our 'Helmet fit' guide.

THE M-CHECK

The M-check should be done on a regular basis. When you get used to it, it won't take more than a few minutes. If you spot a problem then tighten it, adjust it, lubricate it or pump it up.

What you need

If you are going to do your own basic repairs, tools you may need include:

- allen keys • screwdrivers
- spanners • a pump
- lubricant • puncture repair kit

(Visit shop.sustrans.org.uk to view a range of eco-friendly bike maintenance products).

Things to remember

If you haven't got the right tools or are unsure if your bike is safe to ride, visit your local bike shop. They will be able to make any necessary adjustments or repairs and are usually very good value for money.

2

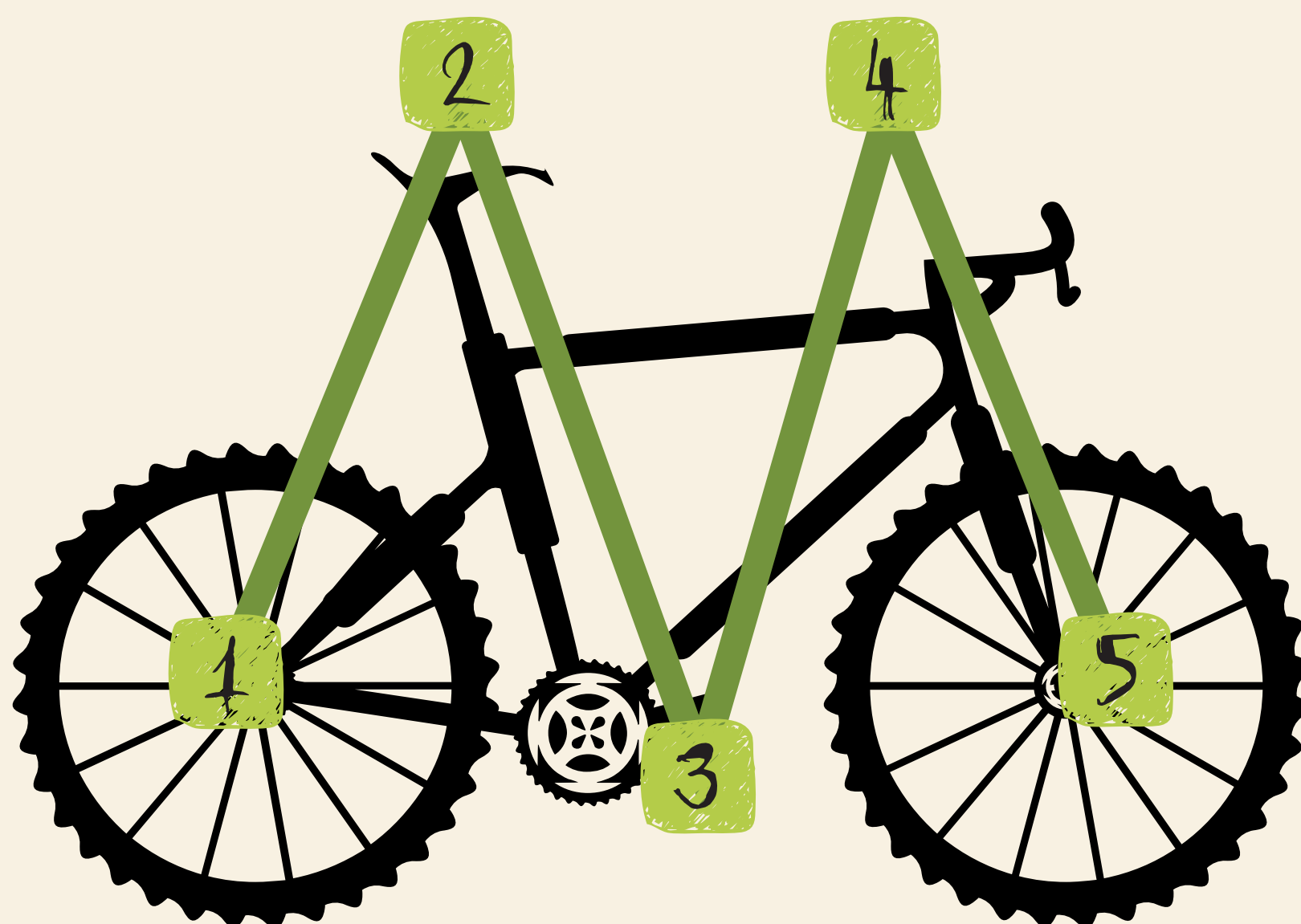
- Is your seat height correct? Your legs should be able to extend when pedaling, but your hips shouldn't be stretching to reach the pedals. Make sure the seat post isn't raised above the safety limit lines (marked on the seat post).
- Is the seat firmly secured? (hold the front and back of the seat and wiggle it. If it moves, it needs tightening).

4

- Are your handlebars tight? Move to the front of the bike and hold the tyre between your knees. Place your hands on the handlebars and wiggle from side to side. They shouldn't move independently of the wheel.
- Squeeze the front brake and take a small step forward. The rear wheel should lift off the ground (Don't raise it to high).
- Squeeze the back brake and take a small step back. The front wheel should lift off the ground without the bike rolling backwards.

5

- Now repeat the checks in step 1 for the front wheel.

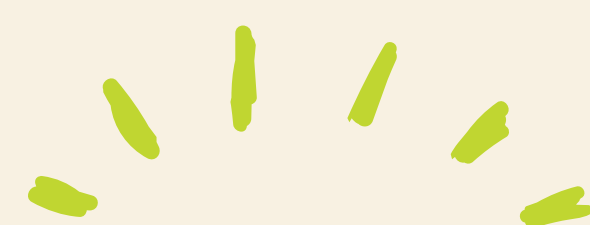


1

- Is the front wheel secure? Is the quick release lever or wheel nut firmly tightened?
- Is the tyre inflated to the recommended pressure written on the tyre wall. Give it a squeeze. It should feel as hard like an apple and not squidgy like an orange.
- Is the tyre worn or damaged?
- Are the brake pads worn or the cables frayed?
- Make sure the brake pads line up with the metal of the rim and don't rub on the tyre.
- Are the spokes tight and straight?

3

- Is your chain running freely and smoothly? (hold the pedal and rotate backwards a few times).
- Is the chain clean and lubricated? The chain should be black or silver. If your chain is orange then it needs replacing or cleaning and lubricating.



For more information, see our 'M-check' video

How to pump up your tyres

TOP TIPS:

Before you start, check your tyres are in good condition. Cracked or worn tyres may burst and should be replaced.

To remove the dust cap it's righty-tighty, lefty-loosey (clockwise to tighten, anti-clockwise to loosen).

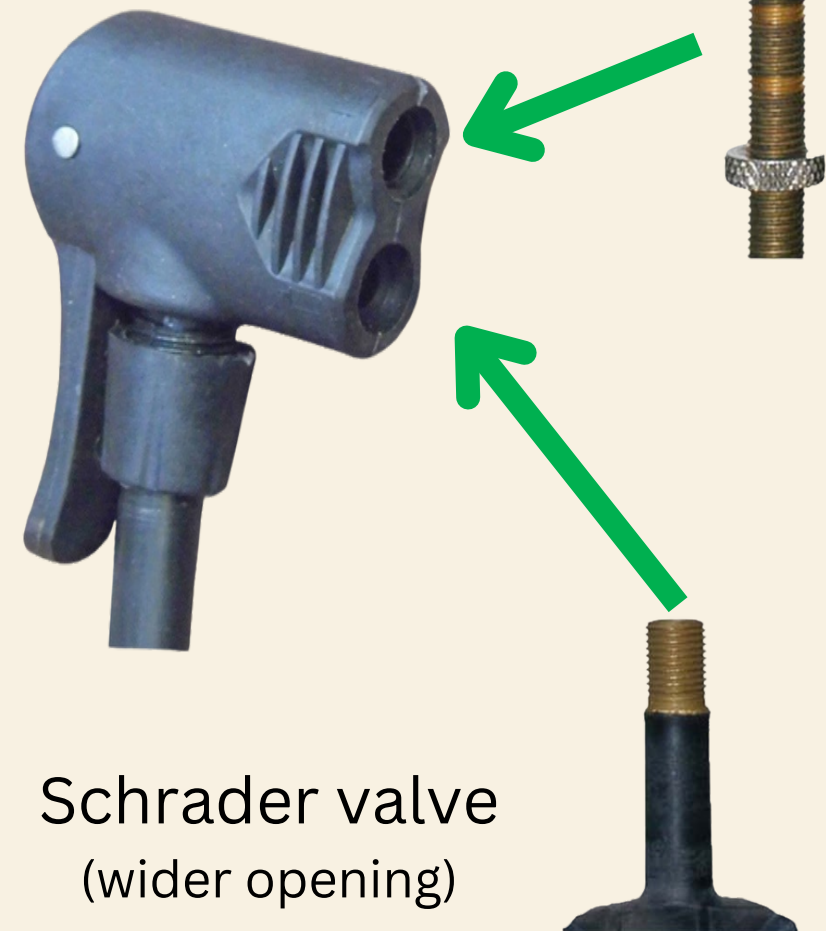
1. Remove the dust cap and check which kind of valve you have...



Presta Schrader

Presta valve

Unscrew the metal nut and push the top down to check the valve is open



Schrader valve (wider opening)

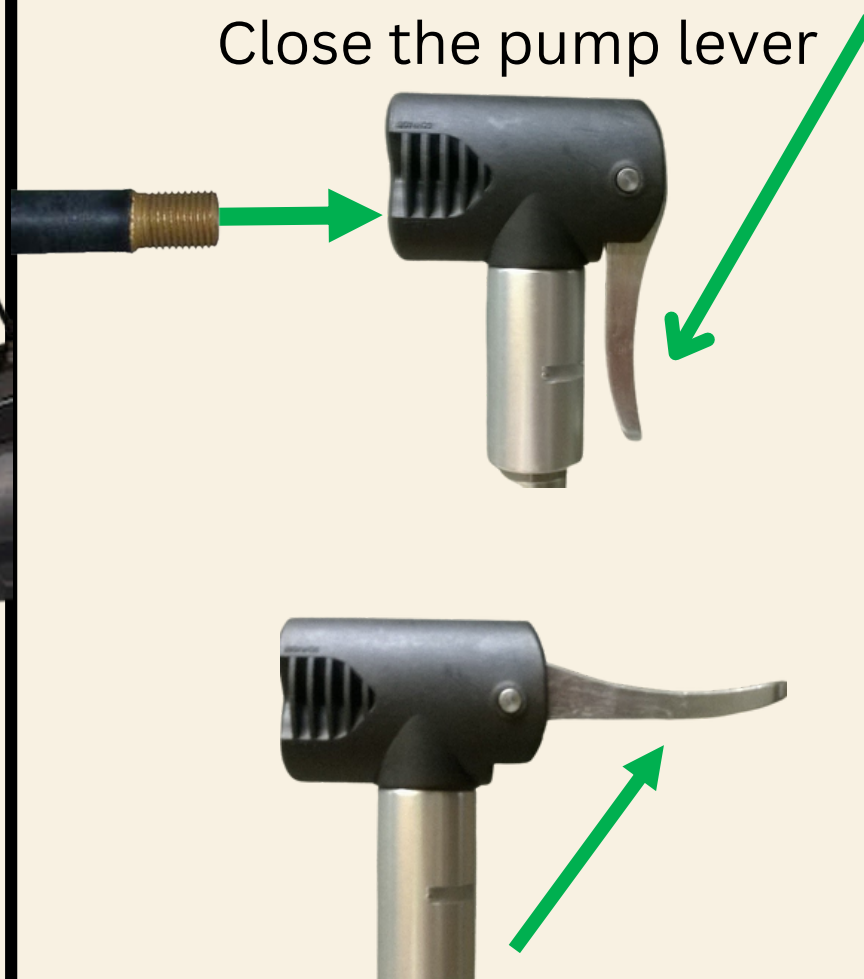
2. Find the recommended tyre pressure for your tyre



If you're unsure 40 psi is OK for most bikes unless the tyres are cracked or worn.

3. Attach the pump

Close the pump lever



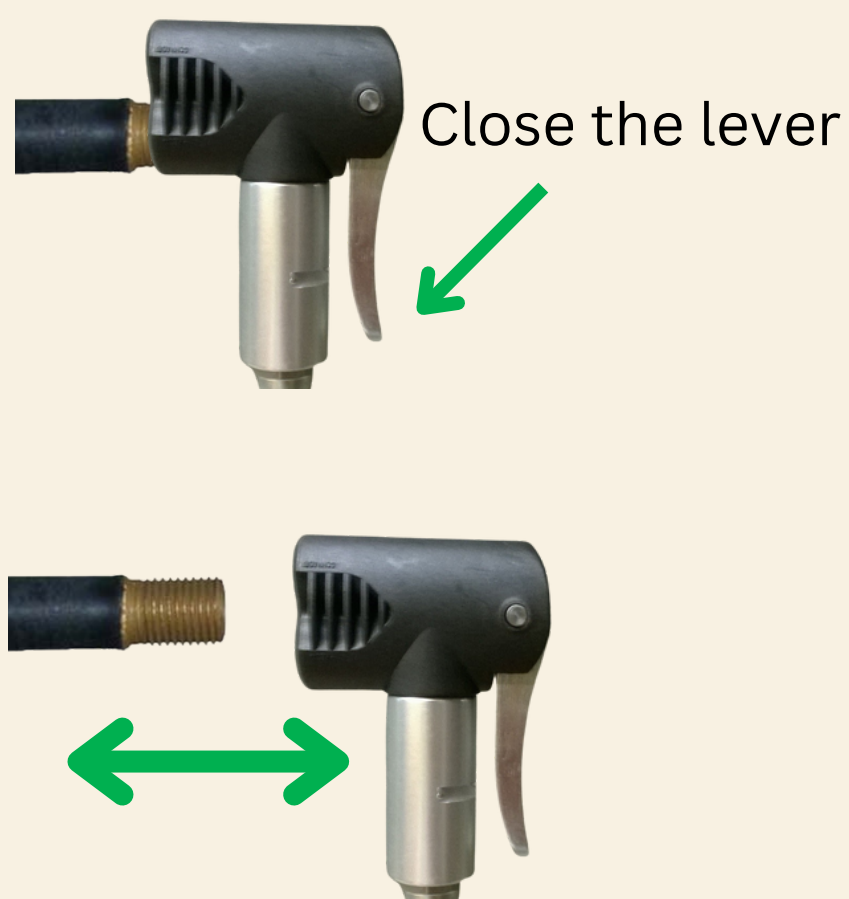
Open lever to secure the pump

4. Pump until you reach the recommended tyre pressure.



Squeeze the tyre. It should feel as hard as an apple 🍏 and *not* as soft as an orange. 🍊

5. Remove the pump



Remove the head from the valve (pull straight)

6. Replace the dust cap

Presta Valve: tighten the metal nut on top of the valve



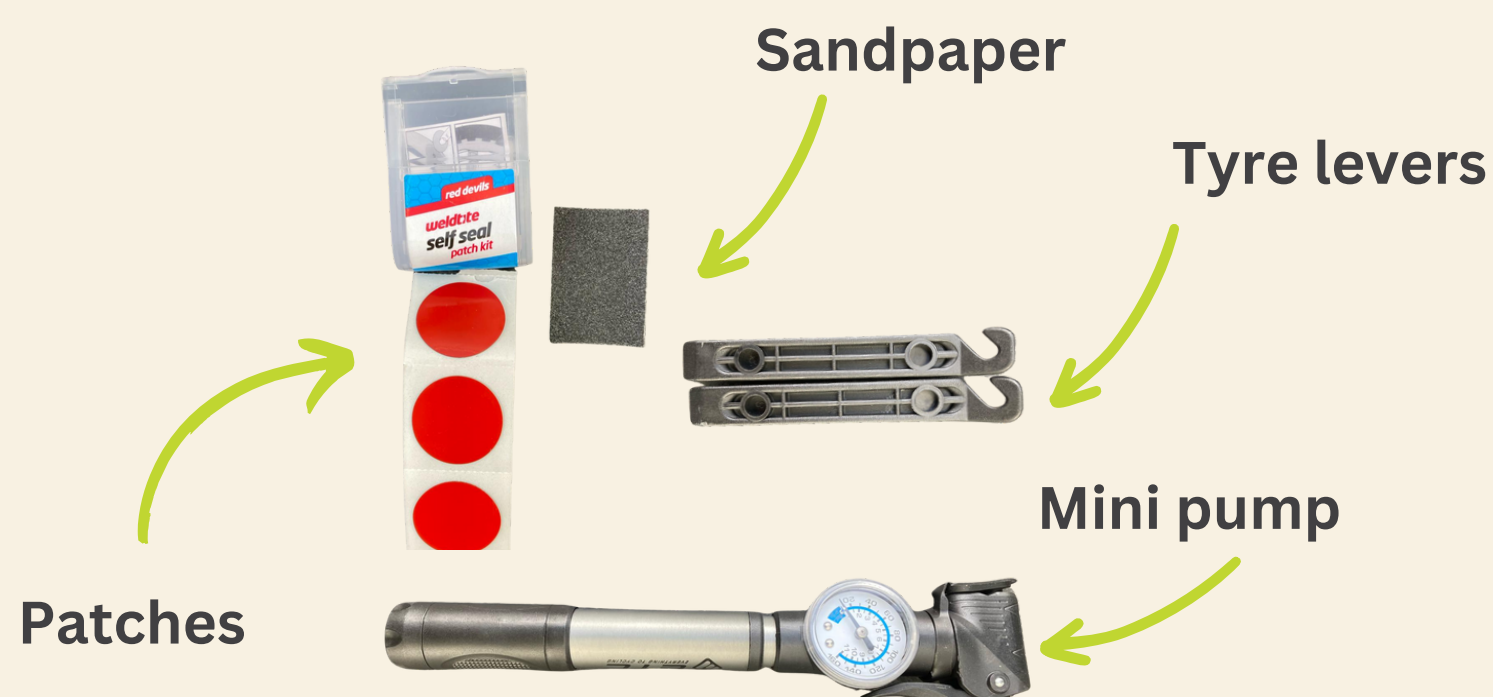
Repeat the steps on the other wheel and you're ready to roll

For more information, see our 'How to pump up your tyres' video



PUNCTURE FIX

What you'll need



Step 1 Remove your wheel

- If removing a rear wheel, put into the highest gear (smallest cog on the rear wheel).
- Flip up the quick release handle and turn it anti clockwise to undo.
- No quick release? Use a spanner to undo the wheel nut (usually a 15mm).
- You may need to loosen your brakes to get the wheel off.

Step 2 Let any air out of the tube

If your valve looks like this, it's a **Presta valve**. Unscrew the little nut at the top and press down to let the air out.



If your valve looks like this, it's a **Schrader valve**. Push the bit inside to let the air out.

Step 3 Remove the tyre.

- Starting opposite the valve, insert the lever under the bead of the tyre and push the handle down.
- Hook the end of the lever around the spoke to hold it in place.
- Insert a second lever and push around the rim until one side of the tyre is completely removed.
- Pull the inner tube out from under the tyre.

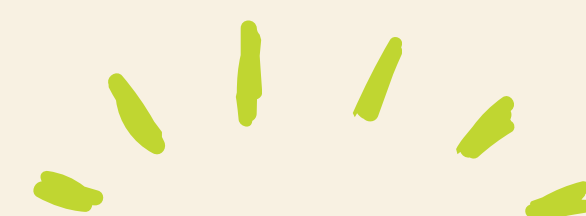


Step 4 Find and fix the puncture

- Pump up the inner tube. Listen and feel for air escaping.
- **TOP TIP** - if you can't find the hole, place the tube in a bowl of water and look for bubbles.
- Mark the hole with a pen or crayon.
- Sand the area around the puncture (larger than the size of the patch) and wipe clean.
- Remove the foil from the back of the patch and place over the hole (Try not to touch the sticky side).
- Press down firmly from the centre to the edges.

Step 5 Replace the inner tube and tyre

- Before replacing the inner tube, check your tyre for anything sharp.
- Add a small amount of air to the inner tube.
- Push the valve through the hole in the rim (make sure it's at 90 degrees to the rim).
- Push the tube back under the rim all the way around the wheel.
- Starting at the valve, use your thumbs and the heel of your hand to work the tyre back onto the rim.
- If you need to use the tyre levers, be careful not to damage the inner tube.
- Before you fully inflate the inner tube, work around the wheel, pushing the tyre away from the edge of the rim with your thumbs and checking that the tube isn't trapped underneath the rim of the tyre.



'How to repair a puncture' video

Step 6 Pump up your tyre and replace the wheel

- Pump up your tyre to the recommended pressure written on the tyre wall (if you can't find it, 40psi is usually good).
- Replace your wheel).
- Close the quick release or tighten the wheel nut.
- If you loosened the brake at the start, don't forget to tighten it back up.





Helmet Check



How to correctly fit a bike helmet:

2



Two fingers
above your eyebrows to
the bottom of your helmet

4



Four fingers
to make a V-shape around
the bottom of your ears

1



One finger
under the strap
beneath your chin



Helmet straps not clipped



Helmet too far back
and to the side



Helmet tilted forward

Is your school taking part in the Big Walk and Wheel?



11 - 22 March 2024

Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel is open to all primary and secondary schools in the UK, including SEN/ASN/ALN schools. It is free to take part and there are daily prizes to be won.

Find out which schools are taking part in your area

<https://bigwalkandwheel.org.uk/schools/map>

 A button with a light blue background, white clouds, and green hills. The text 'Register now' is written in bold black letters.

Register now

<https://bigwalkandwheel.org.uk/register>

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We work for and with communities, helping them come to life by walking, wheeling and cycling.

We campaign to create healthier places and happier lives for everyone.

Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

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