



**Development and Infrastructure Services**  
**Pippa Milne Executive Director Development and Infrastructure**

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Mr Keith Brown MSP  
Minister for Transport  
and Infrastructure  
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Ask For: Pippa Milne  
Our Ref:  
Your Ref:  
Date: 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Dear Mr Brown

At its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> November this year Argyll and Bute Council instructed me to write to the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland asking that work to find a permanent solution for the ongoing problems on the A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful be progressed. The Council in considering this matter endorsed the earlier decision of its Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee which had considered the A83 issue at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November.

I welcome the fact that the A83 Task Group meetings are ongoing, with the next meeting scheduled for early in the New Year. I would ask that the Task Group meetings be used as a means to progress a permanent solution for the A83 as quickly as possible.

The works carried out to date in the way of debris netting and upgrading of the Old Military Road are very much appreciated but fall some way short of a permanent solution. There is currently a great deal of stigma attached to the Rest and Be Thankful and confidence is low in terms of the reliability of this route. This is adversely affecting the economy of Argyll and Bute with numerous reports of people not visiting due to the uncertainty of access and additional transport and business costs being incurred when the road is closed.

During the most recent landslip on 28<sup>th</sup> October this year the A83 was blocked not only at the Rest and Be Thankful but also at Ardgartan and Glen Kinglas. During the period that the Old Military Road was in use as the main diversion there were times when it was not available to all traffic due to the depth of water flowing across the carriageway at the eastern end. I understand that the level of this road was increased by overlaying the surface with additional material. I also understand that, despite this, the new surface was underwater for a period of time and therefore not available for cars to use.

The A83 will be of even greater strategic importance during the much welcomed improvement works on the A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan Whilst the detailed programme is not yet available it is expected that these works will involve site activity for at least a couple of years. During this period there may well be the need for road closures for these much needed works to progress safely.

In the event that both the A82 and A83 were unavailable the trunk road diversion route into Argyll would be via Stirling. This would be totally unacceptable. It is considered essential that a permanent solution is in place for the A83 and that a 'return to service' plan is agreed with the council and community to allow the much welcomed A82 works to progress swiftly.

I believe that it is only Scottish Government that can provide a permanent solution for the A83 and regain the community's confidence in the transport network at this location. The Council looks forward to working with you to achieve this.

Yours Sincerely

Pippa Milne  
Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure

Cc Graham Edmond