

FAQs for Lochgilphead Active Travel Path between the Front Green and the Crinan Canal Tow Path Public Consultation

What is the purpose of this consultation?

Argyll & Bute Council in partnership with Sustrans have commissioned a study to investigate options to implement a new walking and cycling path in Lochgilphead that will commence from the Front Green and connect onto the existing Crinan Canal Tow Path. The study has highlighted four potential options to achieve this and the public consultation allows the local community the opportunity to view the options and highlight their preferences through a questionnaire that is available on the Argyll and Bute website. Paper copies of the questionnaire can be made available to anyone without access to the internet.

Why are there no consultation exhibitions or meetings that I can attend?

Due to Covid-19 and the health issues around public gatherings that are not essential, a decision has been made to avoid any exhibitions or meetings as part of this consultation. All the information is available for viewing on the Argyll and Bute website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/corran-path and will be available between the 23rd March 2020 and the 5th April 2020.

Are you not already constructing a new path on the Front Green?

Yes, however this consultation is about how we extend the new path to link up with the Crinan Canal

Why can't cyclists stay on the road?

Confident cyclists are still able to ride on the road. However, an alternative path off the road encourages and empowers less confident cyclists to travel by bicycle and, compared to cycling on the road, it is usually safer, especially for children.

Will pedestrians be in danger on a shared use path?

Regardless of the footpath location, all highway users need to be polite, courteous and take responsibility for their actions. A shared use path may see existing footways widened or new paths constructed to an appropriate width to allow pedestrians and cyclists the opportunity to pass safely without conflict.

Why cannot the path follow the existing footpath along Poltalloch Street then across the A83 onto the Crinan Canal Tow Path?

As part of the feasibility investigations this option was considered. However, due to limited footpath widths along with restricted visibility, it is not viable to consider this alignment for a path that can be used by pedestrians and cyclists.

Why cannot the existing ramp to the Crinan Canal Tow Path be used?

The existing ramp that leads to the Crinan Canal Tow Path is used by traffic as well as pedestrians and cyclists. It isn't considered safe to direct pedestrians and cyclists along the ramp when they may encounter traffic. The purpose of the path is to separate pedestrians and cyclists from traffic.

Why do pedestrians and cyclists have to cross the A83 when there are alternative ways such as building a bridge over the road?

Whilst constructing a bridge over the A83 would mean pedestrians and cyclists do not have to cross the road, it would be extremely difficult to construct a bridge due to limitations around the site. There is specific legislation on gradients to ensure there is no risk for some users. To build a bridge in this area whilst keeping gradients within the allowance, it would be necessary to construct a very complicated unsightly structure that would not be welcome in the local area. This is because the bridge would be required to be high enough to allow all vehicles (including HGV's) the opportunity to pass underneath. It would also add a considerable amount onto the scheme cost.

What happens after this consultation?

The purpose of this consultation is to seek stakeholder views as part of the feasibility study into the proposed options. This will allow the future direction of the scheme to be determined. After the consultation all comments will be reviewed and proposals will be progressed if a suitable way forward is identified.

How much will it cost to deliver the proposed routes?

At this stage costs are unknown. However, as part of the feasibility study, high level costs will be provided to allow schemes to be prioritised. The outcome of the feasibility study should be available by late May 2020.

When will the route be constructed?

The purpose of the feasibility study is to understand what can and cannot be delivered. At this stage there is no certainty that a route will be delivered. Following completion of the study, it will be necessary to secure funding and further design work will be required to provide more robust cost estimates. If and when a route is ready to be progressed to a delivery stage, further consultation will be carried out. Support at this stage is vital to future project delivery.

How would the path be constructed if funding was allocated?

The path would include a sealed surface to ensure it's suitable for many users. The consultation provides alternative options on where the path should be constructed, and the different options would involve different types of construction. It will be necessary to raise the path if the route proceeds over the wetland to reduce the likelihood of flooding and potential issues with ground conditions. All options will require a structure to be constructed (either across the Loch or across the burn).

How will pedestrians and cyclists cross the A83?

There are different types of crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists. Each type of crossing has benefits and drawbacks. As the A83 is a trunk road, further work on the most suitable type of crossing is required and it's not known at this stage the type that will be constructed if the scheme is progressed.