

# Skye Cycle Way: Bridge to Broadford Path

Summary of presentations at given at Breakish Hall update event, 19 August 2022

*Cllr John Finlayson gave a brief introduction and highlighted the importance of this initiative. This was followed by Powerpoint presentations by the project's two part-time Project Officers, Andrew Prendergast and John Phillips, and a Q&A session. A map of Phase 2 was on display.*

## Andrew Prendergast

### Overview

Skye Cycle Way is an active travel path from the Skye Bridge to Broadford, which is being delivered by a volunteer group of local enthusiasts under the aegis of Broadford & Strath Community Company (BSCC) on behalf of the whole community. It is intended for everyone who wants to travel more sustainably and actively around our communities, linking Kyle of Lochalsh, Kyleakin, Breakish and Broadford. It will serve both local people and visitors, and will be open to all forms of non-motorised travel including; cyclists, walkers, strollers, e-bikes, mobility scooters, and horse riders.

### Phased delivery

At nearly 10km long the entire route is an ambitious project for a community-led group, so we recognise that it may be delivered in two separate phases; Phase 1 from the Skye Bridge to Ashaig Bridge is 6.5 km long and mostly follows the old road alongside the A87 which is still useable in large sections. Phase 2 from Ashaig, through Breakish to Harrapool on the edge of Broadford, is 3km long, and potentially more complex. John Phillips joined Skye Cycle Way in January this year to concentrate on bringing Phase 2 forward.

### Phase 1 landowners

Phase 1 has involved negotiations with 6 different landowners, and while the route is fairly settled, each party has had individual concerns and issues which need to be addressed. Fortunately, 5 out of 6 landowners along the route are supportive, and access has been agreed in principle. One significant landowner, however, remains uncooperative and after 3 years of frustration BSCC has recently asked The Highland Council to use the powers afforded to it under the Land Reform legislation to investigate a Public Path Order.

### Timescales

In terms of timescales for delivery, the earliest likely date for a start would be 2024-25, but this is dependent upon a number of factors, including match-funding and obtaining consents. While we attempt to resolve access issues we have pushed ahead with gaining planning consent and securing a significant proportion of the estimated £700,000 match-funding that the community will need to raise towards the estimated £2.3m Phase 1 construction cost. Active Travel (AT) paths such as SCW are potentially eligible for funding through Transport Scotland/Sustrans of

up to 70%, and with more support for AT infrastructure expected from both Scottish and UK governments over the next few years, this is a good time to be getting the SCW path 'shovel-ready' to take advantage of the policy focus.

### **Current status**

We are currently at 'Developed Design' stage with Phase 1, which means we are starting to produce details of bridges, road crossings, embankments and engineering works etc. which will need to be approved by Transport Scotland prior to going to construction. Transport Scotland have recently agreed to take on responsibility for long-term maintenance of most of the SCW path where it runs alongside the A87. This is a big step for BSCC, and a first for a community-led AT project. We will be holding a public engagement event in November to involve people in the 'placemaking' aspects of this design.

### **John Phillips**

### **Background to Phase 2 route selection**

In Spring 2020 public consultation was undertaken to select one of three routes for Skye Cycle Way Phase 2 (between Ashaig and Harrapool/Broadford). Consultation was held online and at a public event held on 5 March. The summary of the consultation can be downloaded on the Skye Cycle Way page of the BSCC website.

### **The route**

The route chosen following this consultation follows the line of the Committee Road through Breakish until it meets the A87 then runs close to the trunk road until the bridge at the Allt Lochain Cruinn. From there the route would cross via a new bridge and keeping close to the A87, and continue through Waterloo Common Grazings. The exact point at which the cycle way will rejoin the road at Skulamus/Harrapool has yet to be agreed, with user safety being the key deciding factor.

### **Route design**

The road proposals include the provision of a 1.5m wide pedestrian path beside the road, with cyclists sharing the road with other traffic. It is also likely that a change to the speed limit on the Committee Road (currently 60mph maximum) will be necessary.

### **Current status**

A topographic survey - fine detail mapping of the features of the chosen route - has now been carried out for all of the above. For the Committee Road section, a total of 44 owners and tenants were contacted for permission to survey. Of these, 33 consented to have the survey carried out, 5 refused permission, 3 did not answer and 3 could not be contacted.

### **What next**

The next stage involves gaining agreements from the 44 owners/tenants. Final plans need to be drawn up in order for costings to be prepared, which will inform applications for match-funding.