

Skye Cycle Way: Bridge to Broadford Path

Public engagement report: Stage 3 Design

August 2023



1 Summary

Skye Cycle Way: Bridge to Broadford Path is a project to create a safe active travel path for all between the Skye Bridge and Broadford. The community-initiated project is coordinated by a volunteer working group, part-time project officer and local community development charity the Broadford & Strath Community Company. Work to date has been funded by Transport Scotland through the Sustrans 'Places for Everyone' programme.

Work has progressed from initial feasibility studies in 2019, through concept design in 2020-21, and now to developed design. Design & Engineering consultants SWECO (www.sweco.co.uk) were engaged to work on this stage of the project (Sustrans Stage 3 Developed Design). The developed designs were presented for public consultation in August 2023.

SWECO and the Skye Cycle Way working group collaborated on planning the public consultation which comprised displays, a presentation /Q&A, schools activity and online consultation. This work built on previous public engagement activities, including a community design event held in November 2022.

A total of 29 children and 3 staff members from Broadford Primary School attended the schools event, and 63 adults attended the afternoon/evening session. Feedback was provided, feedback forms, comments on plans, and online comments. This feedback has been collated and is provided in this report along with demographic data.

This feedback will inform Stage 4, Technical Design, which is the final stage before construction.

2 Aims & objectives

The key aim was to share Stage 3 Design Proposals for the path, developed by SWECO. We also wanted to share the developing Landscape Strategy. The agreed objectives were to:

- inform the local community of the developing design proposals to promote the benefits and community ownership of the project, and
- collaborate with the local community by seeking input on any issues which may inform adjustments to the design to optimise the benefits of the project.

We agreed a broad target audience, i.e. everyone in the local community (Broadford, Breakish, Kyleakin), with a specific activity aimed at children & young people.

3 Methodology

We agreed the following public engagement methods:

- Design displays in Broadford village hall with opportunities to comment formally & informally (stickies, conversations, feedback forms)
- Early evening presentation by SWECO in Broadford Village Hall with Question & Answer session. (Powerpoint slides made available online afterwards.)
- An online 'storymap' made available for 4 weeks immediately after the event, where people could access the plans and make comments.
- A dedicated workshop session to engage pupils from Broadford Primary School.

4 Publicity

The event and online engagement opportunities were publicised by:

- Emails from Project Officer to key organisations (including those representing Protected Characteristics groups) and individuals (e.g. local councillors)
- Local posters – 50 copies displayed in local venues
- Banner outside Broadford Village Hall
- Online: Facebook via Skye Cycle Way, Broadford & Strath Community Company (BSCC), and shares), BSCC website news pages
- Email newsletter from BSCC to people signed up for updates and BSCC newsletter - each c 200 subscribers
- Radio Skye 'Dol Dhachaigh' interview (15 August) with Project Officer John Phillips
- 2 x articles in West Highland Free Press: 10.8.23 and 25.8.23 (latter including MSP Kate Forbes and Cllr John Finlayson); 'Criomagan' listing in WHFP



WHFP 10.8.23



WHFP 27.8.23

5 Activity reports

5.1 Community update event (drop-in and presentations), 17 August

63 people attended the Community update event/drop-in, with 16 of these staying on for the presentation at 6pm. The designs were presented as aerial photographs to make them easy to understand. People were able to ask questions and leave comments both as stickies on the designs and through feedback forms. Refreshments were made available to attendees including home-baking by volunteers, to encourage an informal and welcoming atmosphere.

Skye Cycle Way representatives also held a meeting with Kate Forbes MSP who reiterated her strong support for the project and willingness to help the group overcome barriers to project completion



Viewing plans in Broadford Hall



Presentation by SWECO

5.2 School activity

This was held before the drop-in on 17 August. 29 pupils and 3 staff members attended a dedicated workshop facilitated by SWECO and supported by Skye Cycle Way volunteers and project officer. Pupils viewed the plans and took part in a fun activity designed to encourage them to think about the issues that must be considered when designing a path for all users. They then completed a specially develop survey with the chance to contribute their own ideas to make the path family-friendly.

5.3 Online 'storymap'

This was online resource was produced by SWECO. The objectives were to a) reach those unable to attend the consultation event in person, and b) give all attendees an opportunity to study plans in more detail and provide considered feedback.

The resource was made available for 4 weeks after the public consultation. It comprised: all developed designs in digital form, background to the project, and an online survey. The online resource was publicised through social media, press and Broadford and Strath Community Company website and e-newsletter.

6 Feedback

6.1 Adults

Adult feedback through all methods (surveys, stickies, online) broadly fell into the following categories

- General design comments on the path designs relating to signage, interpretation, maintenance, landscaping, need for pedestrian/cyclist separation
- Comments specific design elements e.g. a specific locality – access and crossing points, seating locations, trimming trees
- Suggestions for facilities e.g. dog waste bins and extending the path

There were also some comments relating to specific landowner issues which have been picked up with the individuals concerned.

See Annex for more detail on survey results.

6.2 Young people

The young people were asked what they would love to see on the path and who it could be made attractive for children and families. Recurring suggestions were:

- Needs to be smooth / even / wide
- Good signs, showing you where you are and where to go
- Things to do: park, trail, things to play with, fun things, playpark, places to get off
- Bike track / pump track / ramps
- Lighting, seating, toilets, water fountains, shelter, toilets, shop
- Natural / nature

We also asked how they currently travelled to school and what the barriers to walking and cycling more were. These were largely around safety. See Annex for responses.

They were also asked

7 Demographics

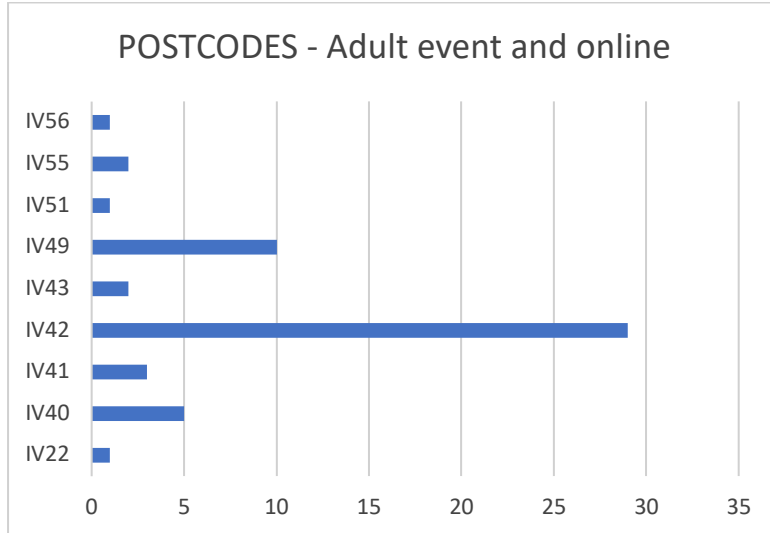
We encouraged all those who attended the Community Update and who provided online comments to complete a short demographic survey. Of the 63 people who attended the Community update, 39 (62%) completed the survey. A further 12 surveys were completed online.

The results of the in-person event were as follows:

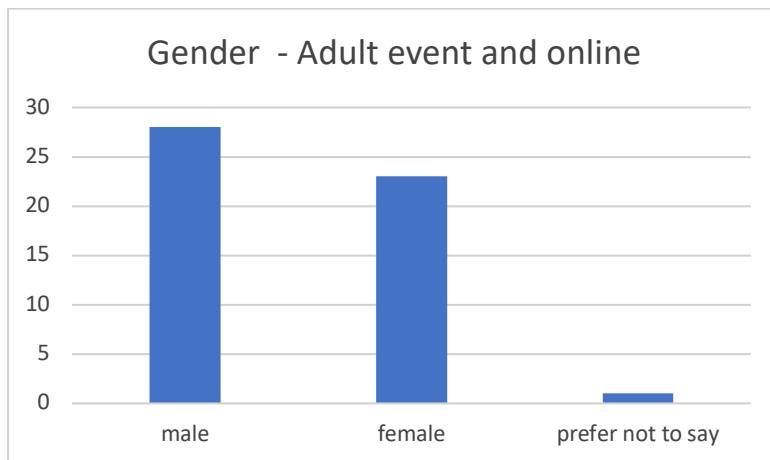
Postcode / No of responses
IV40 8 3
IV41 8 3

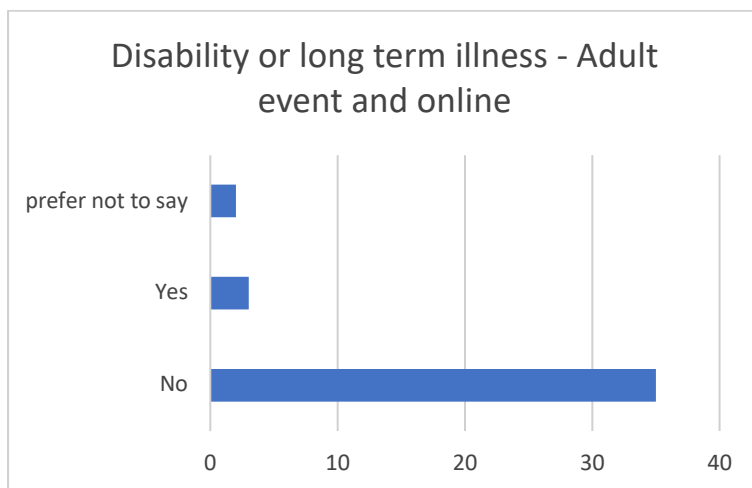
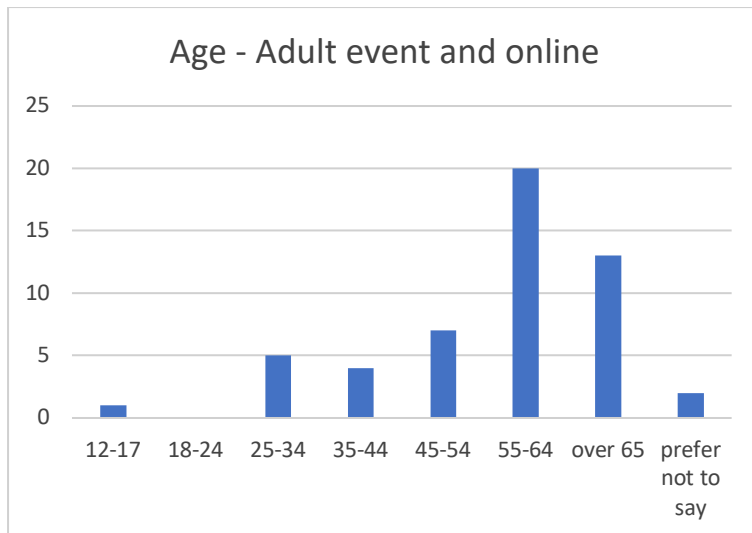
IV42 8 22
 IV43 8 2
 IV49 5 1
 IV49 9 6
 IV55 8 2

The best represented postcode was IV42 (Breakish) followed by IV49 (Broadford), IV40 (Kyle) and IV41 (Kyleakin). When combined with online surveys the results were as follows:



Other demographic information includes:





Full survey results (including adult work status and postcodes of school event attendees) can be provided on request.

8 Next steps

This feedback will be used to inform the next stage of the design process, Stage 4: Technical Design. We will continue to engage with the community through a variety of communication channels including the Broadford & Strath Community Company website and Skye Cycle Way Facebook page. We will also reach out to under-represented groups, particularly Disabled people, to ensure that their views are fully represented.

This project is funded by Transport Scotland through the Sustrans Places for Everyone programme.



Annex - Public engagement feedback summary, Stage 3 Design

1. Adult survey (paper and online)

1.1 Directly relate to plans

Concerns about separating transport modes:

- Pedestrian use should be separate to cycle use to avoid conflict eg children and dogs under cyclists' wheels. Commuters and many touring cyclists will want to make good progress....mixing with pedestrians, children and dogs will interfere with progress, cause safety issues, discouraging cyclists and encouraging them back onto the busy road....this is what happens with so many shared use paths. Bollards, chicanes gates etc also hamper progress, especially if the gap is narrow, forcing cyclists to dismount. I have seen gaps so narrow that panniers had to be removed to get through. Compliance with the new highway code should negate the use of stop or give way signs at each side road, farm and house entrance etc that the cycle path crosses....traffic on such side roads etc should give way to users on the cycle path, as they would if the cyclist was on the main road.....road marking and signage should make this clear. Many road cyclists will not be able to use it if surface is gravel.

Feedback on landscaping:

- Grass verge between road and path would ideally be low growing, low maintenance vegetation ie not require mowing, and be able to cope with heavy rain and drought.

Route

- I am sure the route reflects the available land. In just a few places it takes an obvious detour at a sharp angle away from the direct route. This can tempt people to joint the dangerous road.
- I particularly object to the destruction of the verges along the Committee Road, where your plans will result in the removal of nature-rich verges and the old stone walls (that you refer to as dilapidated) which are important refuges for wildlife.

Seating, interpretation, sculpture

- Looks good! If budget is an issue you could skip the sculptural additions. Skye views are inspiring enough. Please keep the signage and gateways tasteful and minimal. Additional cycle skills and natural play areas for children would keep them motivated to 'go to the next bit' and encourage return visits by locals families. Some rough seating would be welcome at these places. Clearance history relevant to mention at Ashaig. Fossils sounds interesting too - with notes to look not take.
- The Gateways shown as examples are particularly ugly and unnecessary. The idea of Gateways should be removed from the project immediately. The number of signposts, benches, play areas, parking areas and other infrastructure is excessive. Most of these are not needed and should not be built.

1.2 Specific to individual eg croft

- 4 x specific issues, all responded to

1.3 Other suggestions

- Please consider adopting the pavement alongside the A87 from Waterloo end through Harrapool to Broadford Village. Tourists would likely park in Broadford village when arriving by car and unloading bikes and it would allow safe, active travel to the proposed school and community hub.

1.4 General feedback

- The roads of Skye are dangerous for cyclists and effectively exclude cyclists - apart from at the quietest times of the day and week. This is a great project and I am looking forward to using and enjoying the path.
- I have cycled the main road from Broadford to the Kylerhea turning....it is not a pleasant
- This will help connect our communities so well. And provide a safe local cycle route that is usable for transport and leisure. I imagine it will be very popular with local families and active travellers too. I would take my older teenage children on it too.
- Well done. So pleased it no longer needs to cross the main road. experience, in fact, the speed and volume of traffic is intimidating. I would welcome this off- road cycle track
- The plans are fantastic, congratulations to all those involved. Apart from the benefit of simply having a safe area to walk or cycle away from the increasingly busy main road, the additional infrastructure for natural play, seating and information are the cherry on the cake! Can't wait to use, keep up the momentum.

1.5 General negative feedback

- I am against this development. I think that the development as shown in your StoryMap will change the character of the area for the worse. The huge amount of infrastructure and signage that is proposed will ruin the look and feel of the areas I enjoy visiting in Breakish, Ashaig and surrounding areas. I will be less likely to visit areas that are full of play areas, signs, benches, route branding, gateways and the like - as a result, I am more likely to drive to areas further away that have not been spoilt by over-development and unnecessary infrastructure. I will continue to drive along this route as normal. In addition, I will walk along the Committee Road as I do now but I do not need a new footpath to do this as there is very little traffic. My use of the road will not change as a result of this development.

2 Comments made on the drawings

2.1 General comments

- Good Idea for it to start at Kyleakin, but maybe add a zebra crossing or something for the bit when you cross? Just an idea!

2.2 Signage

- Have you clear signage that the cycle lane starts?
- Don't make the entrance too over the top - Simplicity is key to good design.

2.3 Facilities

- Dog waste bins.
- Due to the distance of the cycleway; water fountains and traffic lights should be placed along the route.

2.4 Maintenance

- Is there a commitment to continual maintenance.
- Will the council commit to sweeping and also gritting the path.

2.5 Specific

- Specific comments about trimming trees to increase visibility in places
- Specific comments about location of seating, access for housing, aerodrome access

3 Kids activity

Q: How do you travel to School?

Out of 29 surveyed, 10 (34%) always travelled by car, 7 always by bus, 4 always walked and the remainder a mixture of modes. 4 children cycled sometimes.

Answers to the question - Does anything stop you from walking and cycling more? This can be either to school or generally.

- If I lose my helmet I can't go on my bike. Mum and dad says it is too dangerous to go out on my own.
- Only pavements safe
- I live 15 miles away
- The roads are too busy
- I would cycle but the roads are too busy
- Main roads are busy for cycling
- I have to cycle on the road
- The weather
- Because there is no bike path were I live ..
- There is not many safe places where I live and the weather
- It is too far away
- It is too far away

Answers to the question - How can we make the path great? Please list up to 5 things you would love to see

1. Needs to be smooth.
 2. Wide enough.
 3. Don't disturb the animals territory.
 4. Gates that are easy to open.
 5. Benches along the way to stop.
- water fountains
restaurant
playpark
view
trees and a bench
Make it nice and wide
Look natural
seats
park area
A park, with like a den made out of wood Water refill
A shop, maybe you are hungry
Toilets (Along the route)
Pond at the park
Make ramps
Park with shelter
Pond with bridge
Allowed to go on my bike on my own
Small café
Pond
Park

Bathroom
Bench
Cycling ramps that are made of concrete and fun stuff for biking
Stones
Trees
Bike parking
Places to get off
Wide
To play
Signs
To see where you are
Signs
Lined
Lights
Signs telling us where to go
Bike sign.
Water fountains
Benches/seating
Snack shack
To go to Ard dorach
A football pitch nearby
Signs
Places to get off the path
It being wide
Bits to play on
Signs to say where you are
Seats
Eco-friendly
Decorative
Toilets
Pump
Shop
Dog waste bins
Seats
Nice view
Toilets
Bike-hire (?)
A pumptrack please
Shop
A line separating walking from cycling or to stop people from crashing
Playpark

Answers to the question - What can we do to make sure children and families use the path?

Make a sign.
Intresting
Good signs
Stuff for children
Bike track (?)
Make a sign
Make it safe for families
Fun things to do along the way

Put play parks in
Look nice
Signs.
Things to play with
Make path
Making it even
More nature stuff
Viewpoints
Telephone box
Park
Things for children to do and a trail.
It being even.
Lights for night-time
Make it fun
Its safe
To make it safe and have some fun thing to do when you stop.
Playpark