



**Clennon Valley – Green Link  
Consultation Response Report**  
September 2019

## Introduction

The Council has shown commitment in the Local Transport Plan (2011–2026) to provide safe, sustainable and low carbon choices and make Devon the ‘place to be naturally active’. Torbay Local Plan (2012-2030) also makes strong links to walking and cycling in its health and transport aspirations and policies.

Torbay has high levels of deprivation and inequality with critical health issues which are reflected in the low levels of physical activity. National Indicators show Torbay residents cycle and walk significantly less than people do nationally. Only 78% (80.6% nationally) of adults do any walking at least once a week. Whilst only 9.4% (14.7% nationally) of adults do any cycling at least once a week (Active People Survey). Based on Chief Medical Office (CMO) guidelines of 150 minutes (the weekly exercise an adult needs to gain health benefits) the latest Active People Survey estimates that 30% are inactive (completing less than 30 minutes a week).

However, a range of statistics show that there is an untapped potential given the low levels of our population who walk and cycle.

Torbay experiences a significant amount of vehicle movement. We know it has a relatively high level of self-containment, with a higher number of people who live in the Bay travelling throughout the area for work and leisure. At the same time, many residents travel outside the area to access work and leisure opportunities in wider Devon. Torbay is also one of England’s premiere resorts and attracts many incoming visitors, commuters, shoppers, short and long stay tourists, all of which contribute to significant movement by various transport modes around the Bay. We recognise that exploring alternative modes, travel planning,

promotion, education and training are all key parts of an integrated approach to ensuring effective connections to existing and new services/facilities.

Our ambition is to create a well-designed, connected and safe network. We want to make walking and cycling the natural choice for the local community and visitors to the area.

## About the proposal

**Clennon Valley – Green Link** aims to create a walking and cycling route from Goodrington to South Devon College. It will:

- Create a traffic free link between the coast, leisure facilities, education, employment and residential areas.
- Improve the crossing to Dartmouth Road.
- Improve access to the leisure centre and a point of arrival into the velopark.
- Improve access to Clennon Lakes.
- Provide opportunities to enjoy and further enhance local flora and fauna.
- Improve crossing points and access from Roselands School to Brixham Road.

## Consultation panel:



**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this exhibition is to provide local people and stakeholders the opportunity to comment on proposals for a green pedestrian and cycle link through the Clennon Valley.

**KEY PROPOSALS**

The proposal will create a shared path from Torbay Leisure Centre and Velopark to residential areas to the west, South Devon College and adjacent employment areas.

Existing routes from Goodrington to Brixham Road are steep (up to 1:4) and deter walking and cycling. The proposed Green Link would provide an alternative, shallower, traffic-free route.

The proposed Clennon Valley Green Link is part of a wider strategy to improve sustainable transport links across Torbay and help connect people with nature. The link will:

- Create a traffic free route for the community which creates a new link to the coast, leisure facilities and Paignton town centre.
- Improve access to Clennon Valley Lakes.
- Provide opportunities to enjoy and enhance local flora and fauna.
- Improve point of arrival and access to the Velopark.

**ECOLOGY & WILDLIFE**

Ecological surveys have been undertaken to ensure that the proposed route protects and enhances the biodiversity of the Clennon Valley.

The proposals will improve access to the Clennon Lakes where the friends of Clennon Lakes have been working to enhance biodiversity and provide a great place to walk and a valuable educational resource.

The scheme will include improved habitat management, bird and bat boxes, seating, information boards and a bird watching screen overlooking the lakes.



**CONSTRAINTS**

The design process has been guided by:

- Topography – the steepness of the hillside
- Desire to provide access for all
- Providing places to rest
- Trees and important wildlife habitat, including bat routes

**HAVE YOUR SAY & NEXT STEPS**

We would be grateful if you could take the time to submit feedback to tell us what you think.

Please send your comments by e-mail to [naturalenvironment@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:naturalenvironment@torbay.gov.uk)

Once this community consultation process closes, we will examine and consider the views submitted by the local community and feed them into the design process. Then Torbay Council will begin these enhancements and improvements in phased stages.

**Thank you for your interest in Clennon Valley.**

## About the consultation

### Purpose

The objectives of the consultation were:

- Give stakeholders and the public easily understandable information about the concept and enable them to respond.
- Understand the level of support from the local community, users and stakeholders.
- Understand any issues that might affect the proposal which we were not previously aware.
- Understand any concerns and objections.
- Enable respondents to make positive suggestions.

### Potential outcomes

The potential outcomes of the consultation are:

- We proceed with further developing the idea and design of the scheme on the basis of what is proposed.
- We modify the scheme first before developing the idea and design of the scheme further.
- We re-consider the proposal to progress, develop and design the scheme further.

### Who we consulted

We captured views from the local community, users and stakeholders. We contacted a number of key stakeholders directly by email and held several meetings.

### Dates and duration

The consultation ran for over six weeks from 17<sup>th</sup> July to 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019. The consultation was timed to take place around the school summer holidays and during peak tourism season.

### What we asked

The proposal is still at concept stage, rather than completed final design. Any future planning application would include a full consultation process. This process was therefore aimed at gaining peoples early views on the principle of the proposed route.

### Methods of responding

People were able to respond through the following:

- By email: [naturalenvironment@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:naturalenvironment@torbay.gov.uk)
- The consultation webpage on the Torbay Council site provided explanatory text and images: <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/clennon-valley-green-link>
- Enjoy Torbay also provided an opportunity to understand more around the proposal: <https://www.enjoytorbay.co.uk/projects/clennon-valley-green-link/>
- Council Facebook and Twitter accounts were also used to promote the proposal with weekly updates which ran during the consultation period.

### Press and media activity

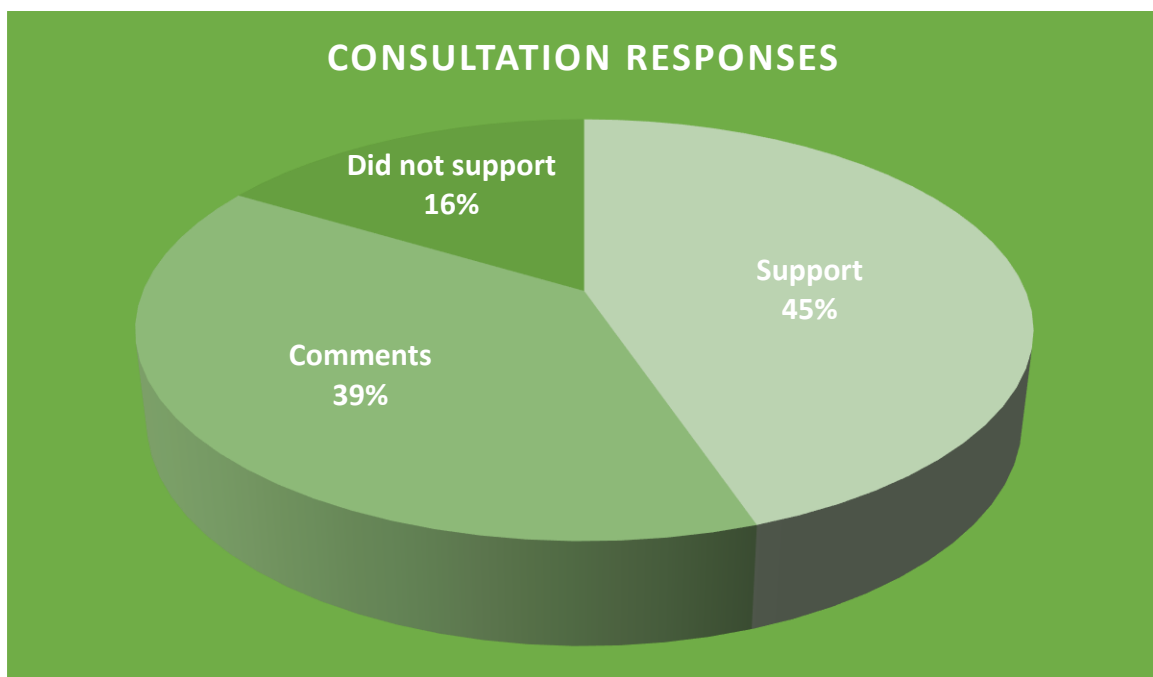
- Devon Live ran a short story on the proposal:  
<https://www.devonlive.com/news/new-cycle-route-planned-through-3157173>

### Summary of consultation responses

We receive 69 responses to the consultation.

- 30 supported the proposal.
- 28 generally supported and provided comments or suggestions.
- 11 did not support.

As part of the above, there were 7 social media responses and 5 stakeholder responses.



### Stakeholders

Stakeholder responses are set out below:

#### Walking and cycling project team

An internal project team including Officers from Spatial Planning, Highways, Public Health, Natural Environment and Sports Development have been integral to the early design process.

The team support the proposals and have commented on wider links to the network, potential use of the route and will continue to guide the final design.

### **Friends of Clennon Lakes**

The group commented at an early briefing meeting. They raised issues around access restrictions for cycles, maintaining access for all users and opportunities to provide a wildlife viewing screen.

There was a more recent friends group, public meeting where points were raised around protecting ecology, lighting, restricting the use by other vehicles and the interaction between walkers and cyclists on the steeper sections. They also raised a concern about the use of the route by runners and the potential for racing.

### **British Cycling**

Support the scheme and consider it will have a big impact on increasing cycling participation in Torbay, and footfall at the Torbay Velopark, which they consider a key local facility for Torbay, and regional facility for British Cycling.

### **Torbay Leisure Centre**

The centre are keen to ensure walking and cycling are connected into their site. Currently the concept plan makes a link around the velopark towards Dartmouth Road. We are working closely with both the Parking and Highways Teams to ensure an effective link is provided.

### **Member of Mid-Devon Cycling Club**

Supported the proposal. Comments were provided on appropriate widths to benefit users and connectivity to the network in and around the area.

## **Response to issues commonly raised**

Responses are set out in broad themes below. Officers have assessed the comments and respond as follows:

### **Support for the proposal**

People have shown support for the connectivity benefits, offering a traffic free link, celebrating the place in terms of landscape and ecology. There have also been comments about the benefits for people of all ages and the new communities occupying the homes being built in the area.

### **The misinterpretation of the proposal solely for cycling**

Perhaps due to the close links with the Velopark or the consultation images, a small number of respondents raised concerns that the route was designed solely for cyclists. As discussed previously, the aim of the route is to provide access to all users.

### **The need for clear signage**

The proposal is at concept stage and wayfinding will form an integral part of the final plans.

### **Appropriate crossing of Dartmouth Road**

The Highways Team are a key part of the design process and are looking at a range of measures to improve the crossing. We recognise the crossing acts as a barrier to movement in its current form and will need to be resolved.

### **The need for lighting**

We understand the need to strike a balance between public safety and ecological impact. Further work will be carried out to determine an appropriate level of lighting on the route.

### **Appropriate for all users**

We want to contribute to a connected, comfortable, attractive walking and cycling network. We're clear about the opportunity this route has to be suitable and safe for use by people of all ages and abilities.

### **Existing cycling facilities and alternative routes**

Analysis of the existing network has been undertaken to look at opportunities and barriers. This route has been carefully considered to ensure connection into the future planned walking and cycling network.

Demand analysis has been carried out and identified significant latent demand for cycling in this area. We believe there is a significant 'potential market' for cycling in this area, which could be realised if we put in place the right infrastructure.

### **Impact on ecology**

Ecological surveys have been undertaken to ensure the proposed route protects and enhances the biodiversity of Clennon Valley. The final scheme will also include improved habitat management.

### **Impact on landscape**

We understand the need to minimise the impact on the landscape. The change of level and distant views of the proposed route will need to be considered.

### **Potential conflict between users**

The potential conflict between walking, cycling and dog walkers has been raised by a small number of respondents. The National Cycle Network operates successfully in a range of ecologically sensitive areas and promotes safe access for all users. We will design the scheme to ensure it accords with national standards and requirements.

### **Safety**

The potential for anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime has been raised, but there is no evidence to suggest the route would exacerbate or generate negative behaviour. We will

need to understand the lighting levels provided throughout the scheme, its ecological impact and balance that with the potential use of the scheme.

### **Other vehicles using the route**

Concerns were raised around the potential for motorcycles using the route. We note the difficulty in preventing access from motorcycles. The usual Highway Code and enforcement would apply as with any off road route.

### **Topography**

The proposed route has been chosen to minimise the impact on the landscape and ecology of the area, whilst ensuring the optimum gradient for users. Given the alternative routes are so steep, indirect and more importantly on-road, the benefits out way the minor impacts.

### **Flooding**

One of the key drivers for this project has been improving drainage in and around the Clennon sports pitches. Several critical flood issues will be resolved as part of this proposal.

### **Wider connectivity**

The proposal has clear connectivity benefits, but we recognise this is a first phase in the improvement to our walking and cycling network. We aim to continue the process of improving our network linked to existing facilities such as the South West Coast Path.

### **On-going maintenance**

Funding is being sought to deliver the project. On-going maintenance is being considered which have influence over the scope of the scheme and design details such as material choice.

## **Conclusion and next steps**

This early consultation showed a good level of support with only a small proportion of objections. It also highlighted a number of observations, suggestions and concerns. After considering all the responses, we will continue to develop the overall scheme along the route consulted on, with some changes to the detailed proposals.

We aim to submit a planning application in 2020, this will include formal consultation as part of the process.

## **Planning for future demand**

We recognise that there a number of opportunities to connect to the existing walking and cycling network. There are projects currently underway to ensure this proposal complements those links.