



RIVER LEVEN CONNECTIVITY PROJECT ENGAGEMENT REPORT





Public engagement event held at Methilhill Senior Citizens Centre, 2nd March 2020

PROJECT PARTNERS

DIAGEO





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Public engagement deer walk and talk March 2020. Image credit: Forth Rivers Trust

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PART 1

[Pre-COVID 19]

Details the engagement process from November 2019 up until the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in March 2020

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PART 2

[Post-COVID-19]

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Introduction

The River Leven Connectivity Project aims to create an accessible, attractive, ecologically thriving and biodiverse river park for local communities in Levenmouth and visitors alike to enjoy.

The Stage 2 - Concept Design phase was initially to include the facilitation of a series of public engagement events to firstly gather local views and opinions on the existing issues within the river valley. After consideration of this initial feedback a draft Concept Design Masterplan which addressed these issues was to be presented at a final event scheduled for April 2020.

These germinal events were to be the first opportunity for the Leven project team to start up conversations with the local community with regarding their views on the river valley. The first two public drop-in events at the beginning of February and March 2020 went ahead as planned and were well attended with the team recording a substantial number of comments and views.

After the first two events the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown began, requiring the project team to adapt the engagement strategy including alternative forms of online engagement to address the evolving situation. In fact, despite the challenges to engagement presented by the pandemic, there has been extensive consultation undertaken on the River Leven Park Concept Design Masterplan proposals resulting in a wealth of useful community feedback including messages of positivity and the clear identification of areas in need of further development.

The following report outlines the engagement process to date, providing an overview of the activity in terms of local community and stakeholder engagement from late 2019 to November 2020. It concludes with a summary of the feedback emerging from the Concept Design consultation exercise undertaken in October 2020 and the proposed next steps.

Why we engaged

The Leven Programme "Growing with the Flow" is an ambitious multi-partner commitment to improving the area of the River Leven catchment, delivering economic and social success whilst improving the environment.



▲ View west of the Kirkland Dam near Methilhill

Within the Programme the River Leven Connectivity Project aims to improve connectivity within the communities of Levenmouth and encourage and enable visitors to access the river valley. To a certain extent, this involves changing a common local perception of the valley as an issue that requires to be managed in terms of anti-social behaviour, litter, pollution etc, to become a local asset that can have positive impacts socially, economically and environmentally in the Levenmouth area.

Engagement with local people is essential to the success of the Connectivity Project: to ensure that local needs and aspirations are captured, and the opportunity for local people to participate in design and delivery is properly afforded.

This could have been a straightforward statement on planned activities with largely face to face meetings in

local venues, supported by digital forums to ensure the reach of the discussions was as extensive as possible.

However, the reality was that the approach had to be considerably modified by the impact of Covid-19 and also to encapsulate the discussion around the re-opening of the Levenmouth Rail Link which was announced by the Transport Minister in August 2019.

While the pandemic health emergency would force adaptation and a rethink on how we ensure more marginalised and less heard groups are included within the bubble of discussion, the incorporation of the rail link project posed new challenges, notably the need to present these two significant projects, which at their heart have similar objectives as a single message. There was a potential for two very similar strands of questioning to take place at the same time and the need to avoid this has become paramount.

The Levenmouth Area - The Facts

Setting the background is important and there are some key facts that allow a better understanding of the Levenmouth area and some of the issues it faces. While it isn't an area that laments its situation it does face a number of challenges, suffering significant downturns in its fortunes due to the loss of heavy industry and coal mining (it would be pertinent if its future could be secured by carbon neutral approaches).

The Levenmouth area is one of the most deprived areas in Scotland and the most deprived area of Fife, with the highest level of data zones in the 20% most deprived category (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, SIMD 2020). The Levenmouth Local Strategic Assessment (LSA) undertaken by Fife Council in 2018 indicates that the population of the area is 37,288 which equates to around 10% of the total population of Fife. The assessment also highlights that 40% of the population live in socially rented or private rented accommodation. 19.6% of the Levenmouth population is considered as 'in poverty' (average in Fife nearer 12%) - while recent figures showed that 26.9% of children in Levenmouth fell into that category ¹.

Fuel poverty is one of the biggest issues for Levenmouth residents (27.8% of households), while the recent health crisis has further highlighted that food insecurity is another issue that many local people have to deal with on an almost daily basis ¹.

Recent Welfare Reform changes will by the end of this year see around £20.3 million effectively missing from the local area due to a reduction in benefit income – which is around £865 less per year available to every working age adult.

In spite of these challenges, there is still a level of pride in the area which has a rich history. This is tempered by a degree of jaundice about promises of recovery and regeneration which come along periodically, but have failed to have any real traction for nearly four decades.

It was therefore important that any approach in terms of the Connectivity Project engaging the local community

REFERENCES

¹ Levenmouth Local Strategic Assessment (LSA), Fife Council, 2018



Levenmouth area within Fife ▲

was measured with targeted key achievable objectives that were seen as clearly beneficial to local people and their area.

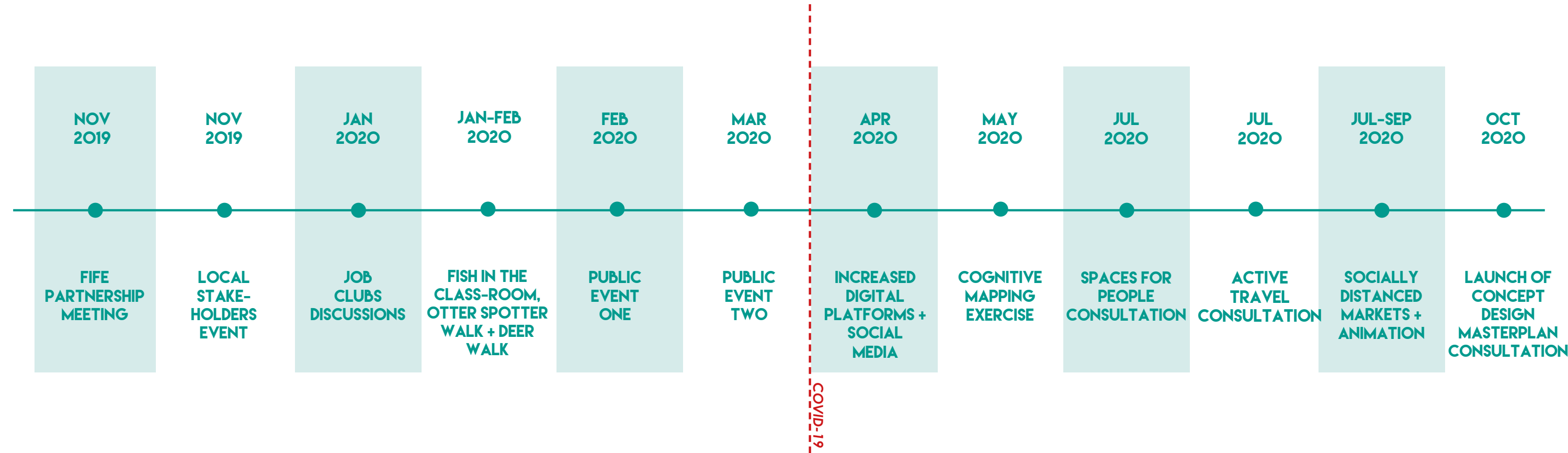
Target audiences

The target audience for this project would be mainly focused on local people within the Levenmouth area. However, scope needed to be given to allow comments from outwith the immediate project area and to carry a positive message about the area to a wider audience. Advertising the ambition of the Leven Programme beyond Levenmouth is vital to any future success.

Built into the approach was the understanding of the need to take into account a number of issues that could impact on the process, for example, low levels of car ownership, and lower than Fife and Scottish levels of digital connectivity.

It was important to get to the real heart of the community. As such it was agreed that as much as possible the project team would engage with local community events where people would naturally congregate to exchange views and ideas, including markets, galas, local group meetings or fun days. These conversations would be supported by set piece events where more of the partners would come together to engage with the public. This flexibility of approach was to ensure that the project team spoke to as many groups as possible, both online and face to face, across all age ranges, socio-economic groupings and those lesser heard within the immediate community.

All engagement work undertaken was in line with the requirements of the National Standards for Community Engagement in Scotland <https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards>.



Connectivity Project engagement timeline from inception to date of submission (Nov 2020)

Initial Engagement Approach

It was agreed at an early, pre-Covid, point in late 2019 that a range and variety of discussions and engagements needed to take place to establish a relationship between local people and the project proposal. The River Leven as a useful asset to local people had not been relevant for some time, planning decisions had further isolated the spaces by the river, and access arrangements were poor, based mainly on desire lines which often included the requirement to overcome obstacles including flooding, poor path conditions, and of course an unused but still technically 'live' rail-line.

Capturing the aspirations of local people would almost certainly have to overcome some of the negativity about the river area, which had been branded as a place where anti-social behaviour occurred.

Fife Partnership

The Fife Partnership Board were updated on the progress of the project in November 2019, along with a range of other activities taking place in Levenmouth as part of the Thriving Communities themed report.

This single meeting had the advantage of getting information out to senior staff (including Regional Directors, Chief Executives and Vice Principals) within the key organisations that combine in Fife to drive the outcomes contained within the Fife Plan. This grouping included representatives from the following organisations:

- Fife Council
- NHS Fife
- Police Scotland
- Fife Voluntary Action
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

- Scottish Enterprise
- Skills Development Scotland
- Fife College
- University of St Andrews
- South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran)
- Scottish Government
- Fife Health and Social Care Partnership/Integrated Joint Board
- Fife's Business Community
- Department of Work and Pensions

The overview of the project was contained in the report available via the link below.
http://publications.fifedirect.org.uk/c64_FPBPublicAgendaPack-19.11.19.pdf

Local Stakeholders Event

The stakeholders event which took place in November 2019 (see the Connectivity Project engagement timeline opposite, p8) was crucial to kickstart the project and as such was aimed at community leaders. Invitations went out to over 100 recognised stakeholders and groups who would have a specific interest in the proposals. The objective of this event was establishing general awareness of the scope of the programme and project and to ensure the brand of The Leven was established with those who could influence others in the wider community through established and trusted networks which would have been built up over a long period of time.

This event introduced local people to the concepts behind the SEPA-led initiative for the Leven Programme, and the specific aims of the Connectivity Project at an early stage in its planning. The event was able to introduce early concept designs into the discussion which was useful in generating meaningful and detailed conversations.

This was a valuable exercise and produced encouraging results – namely that the participants were keen on an initiative which focused on improving the fortunes of the river, and also that the early concept designs were not wide of the mark.

The event engendered positive press coverage and helped to introduce the partners involved in the project to local people of influence whilst establishing relationships which have continued to be built on since then.

In total 59 attendees were at the meeting to listen and contribute.

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/fife/1013041/public-to-get-involved-in-river-leven-restoration-project/>

Business Community

Initial outreach to businesses was facilitated through the stakeholders event, as well as a separate briefing to the Levenmouth Tourist Association. A significant piece on the project was also written up for the April 2020 edition of the Fife Business Matters Publication. This publication didn't go

to print due to the current crisis, however the editorial will run soon, and will be updated to reflect progress. Links to large businesses who are landowners of riparian parts of the river, for example Diageo and Fourstones paper mill, are well established through the forum of the River Leven Trust. Regular meetings have been held with the Trust given their pivotal role in much of the proposed improvements to the river itself.

Landowners

A number of the landowners who have an interest in the area have been very much involved in the discussions around the project , notably the Coal Authority, Metsa Wood (owners of the creosote site) Wemyss Estates , through Savills as their representative, as well as Scottish Water and Fife Council.

Other landowners have had direct contact from the project team updating them on progress and inviting contact should more clarification be required. A list of those landowners contacted so far is included in the Appendix on page 38.

Politicians

It is essential that we bring the local politicians on the Leven journey as ambassadors for the project. The view of local politicians has been that for too long we have been treating the symptoms of the issues that deprivation brings, rather than bringing about activity which shifts. Through the use of Ward meetings members were kept up to speed on the initial developments around the project and encouraged to take the message out through their own constituency work.

All eight of the elected members are on board with the project and can be relied upon to give positive support as and when required.

Interest in the approach has also been clear from both MSP and MP representatives for the area and periodic updates



November 2019 local stakeholders event

have also been given as requested.

Community Councils

As statutory consultees for all planning and development proposals, all Community Councils in Wards 21 and 22 were visited over the later months of 2019 for a detailed briefing on the Connectivity Project proposals. The Councils visited over this period are detailed below:

- Methil Community Council
- Buckhaven and Denbeath Community Council
- Leven Community Council
- Largo and Area Community Council
- Windygates Community Council
- Kennoway Community Council
- East Wemyss and McDuff Community Council

Latterly the Leven brand has benefitted from being included regularly in shared news items on many of the community council web and Facebook pages.

Community Groups

As part of the local partnership approach with existing community groups in the area, the Connectivity Project teamed up with CLEAR Buckhaven who agreed to host a series of 'pick and talk' sessions in late 2019. This approach expanded CLEAR's reach into the Methil and Leven areas and built on their experience of community clean ups which they have been doing for many years in Buckhaven. The objective was to tidy areas around the river while engaging in discussions with local people about their use of the river and what developments they would like to see to make it better (see image adjacent).

Using available merchandising the CLEAR team also encouraged people to visit The Leven website and leave comments as required. A link to the team working in the area can be found below.

<https://www.facebook.com/ClearFife/photos/pcb.3155611834454396/3155611184454461/?type=3&theater>

Author talk

On the 4th December 2019, the first of what was planned to be a series of authors talks on the River Leven took place at the Fife College annex at Levenmouth Academy. This session consisted of a talk with questions by the author David Munro, who wrote *Loch Leven and River Leven: A Landscape Transformed*. This publication initially released in 1994 funded by the River Leven Trust, gives a fantastic overview of how interventions over the centuries have changed the nature of the River Leven, with the greatest impacts being the work undertaken to ensure the river could drive a number of key industrial developments along its length.

A second event booked for early April 2020 unfortunately had to be cancelled, however there is a desire to start these again when possible. An understanding of the history of the river is key in laying the foundations of how it should develop and change to meet the new objectives of the communities it touches.

Local Workers

Via the Levenmouth Workers Forum 150 contacts are kept updated on the project. These contacts consist of a wide range of mainly frontline workers of statutory agencies



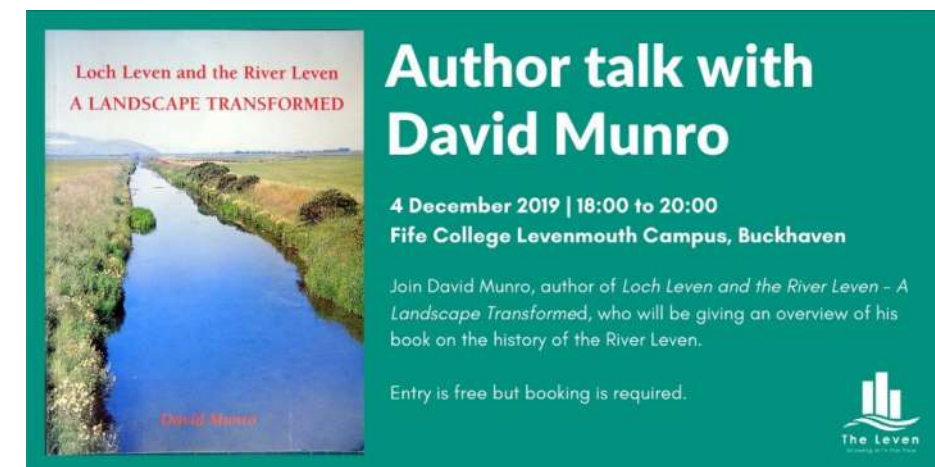
such as NHS, DWP, Police, Fire. Also, third sector agencies like CARF, Homestart, Gingerbread, Castle Furniture, BRAG and a plethora of voluntary agencies that cover drug and alcohol activity, heritage, sport and environmental work locally.

This range of contacts, especially those working with some of the more marginalised individuals within our community has helped to overcome some of the barriers that are an impediment for some people to engage in mainstream public events and meetings. In general, we encourage the workers group to help clients to comment via the Leven Programme online page or if possible, support them to come to events.

Job Clubs

To ensure we were getting a good mix of views job clubs were targeted as an ideal opportunity to discuss the project with a focus on how it could help the local economic picture alongside the other objectives. Early discussions in January and February 2020 were very productive though unfortunately further opportunities for these sessions were curtailed fully in March when the job club service went online, and on a 1-2-1 format only.

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1 CLEAR 'pick and talk' session
2 Author talk with David Munro invitation on social media



An example of the discussion at the Leven Job Club in February is shown below.

Good discussion with 9 participants at the job club session - 6 males and 3 females. The age of all of the participants was 40 and above, apart from one female in her 30's. All agreed to look at the website and add comments to the Common Place map.

Discussions were mainly on the unsuitable nature of the current footpath links and how these had been more established in the past, notably when the sawmill site (Creosote site) was up and running.

One participant raised the rail link project and was advised that there would be a close linkage between the two projects as they share common aims in terms of connectivity and active travel.

Discussion on the issue of illegal dumping was brief but agreed that it was a particular problem with a few hot spot areas, and that there should be ways of stopping this happening by design or enforcement. There was a good discussion about the potential for job creation - one participant advised that if we gave him a spade, he would start the path network off for us. The potential for job creation around tourism and the link with the Coastal Path and Pilgrims Way was brought up, however there were some concerns that the numbers of users needed to bring about regeneration could not be guaranteed.

As an example of a discussion it was interesting to see that people recognised the need for the project, and that it could have an impact on a range of issues from illegal dumping right through to economic regeneration.

Young People

Partners in the project have been involved in very targeted work around young people, notably work with primary schools within the Levenmouth catchment area. The details of this work are contained within the separate Green Network Report which shows some fantastic practical work undertaken by the Forth Rivers Trust with young people in the area - again, unfortunately brought to a halt due to the current pandemic.

We have however sought to continue the ties with young people in the area and this is evidenced later in the report which highlights the cognitive mapping exercise with pupils at Levenmouth Academy. It has also been important to link with young people who struggle with mainstream learning, and to facilitate this we worked directly with the Department for Additional Support (DAS) within Levenmouth Academy. This work consisted of a guided walk along the River Leven to discuss the issues from a young person's viewpoint, as well as facilitating a visit by the DAS youngsters to the Caledonian Hotel public event held in February 2020. The young people were then encouraged to use the experience in their school work and to relay the information they discovered at the events to their classmates.

The main concerns expressed by the young people at these events was around the potential for anti-social behaviour in the area mainly due to motorcycle usage, and the general lack of facilities, which if in place would provide a reason to go to the river after school.

A further link with the school has been struck by having a named pupil defined as the young person's representative between the Academy and the project team.

Most recently, through the project's interaction with the Bats Wood Project, the Connectivity Project has partnered with the cluster of schools in the area as part of the connecting classrooms campaign which has a focus on sustainable development and global citizenship.

The link to that can be found below.
<http://www.batswood.org.uk/Index.asp?MainID=30587>

This work also highlights again an excellent report on the River Leven proposal written by one of the senior pupils at the school and which can be found at the link below.
<http://www.batswood.org.uk/webs/31/documents/River%20Leven%20Report%20-%201%20copy.pdf>



▲ Guided walk along the River Leven with Levenmouth Academy pupils

Fife College

From the start of The Leven Project Fife College have played a key role both in terms of engagement and also in the development of the Leven brand. The Leven logo itself was created by Fife College Graphic Design students through a design exercise which formed part of the curriculum.

In addition, students from the 3D modelling course have produced 3D models and rendered visualisations for a multitude of potential facilities (such as outdoor gyms and eco-cafes) within the river valley. There was also an impressive range of interactive gaming prototypes aimed at different age groups developed by students.

Fife Centre for Equalities

Contact with the Fife Centre for Equalities was established to help with conversations on the detail of the project with individuals from a range of backgrounds who often find it difficult to engage in local discussions and engagement.

In terms of the harder to reach or lesser heard voices it was important that we ensured fairness in progressing this work by giving people who may face additional barriers to getting involved an equal opportunity to participate. By having ongoing local conversations in spaces where people who may not normally enter into a process of engagement, feel more comfortable has helped this objective. For example some good quality conversations have been had in the likes of job clubs, older persons sheltered accommodation, off campus and additional needs school settings to expressly find groups that are often disenfranchised. This is an approach we will continue in the next phase of the project.

The work with Fife Centre for Equalities has allowed us to drill down even further to reach marginalised groups where culture and language may well be the biggest obstacle to their involvement.

<https://centreforequalities.org.uk/>



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FRT Engagement events in the field

Forth Rivers Trust play a crucial role as part of the engagement team, organising and facilitating on-site wildlife-based events with members of the public. As noted in the FRT Phase 2 Green Network Engagement document, wildlife provides excellent opportunities for engagement and the variety of free public events held before lockdown were well received and attended. Conversations were held with the participants around how they travelled to the location on the day, how they perceived active travel in the area and how often they visited the river valley in general.

Fish in the Classroom

This project aimed to engage with P5 pupils from three primary schools close to the river valley: Mountfleurie, Methilhill and Aberhill Primary School. Each class was given an aquarium containing trout eggs which the pupils would nurture as they hatch into larvae and develop into small fry. Due to lockdown the only pupils that were able to release their small fry into the river was Mountfleurie, who did so into the old mill lade next to Kirkland Dam on March 10th. The day out included pond dipping, bug identification and wildlife games.

The area used for the exercises is now being considered as a potential location for outdoor classrooms, an ongoing project being undertaken by the Leven Programme.



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Otter Spotter

In December 2019 FRT's senior biologist led a walk-around the river valley with 12 members of the public to show them how to identify the signs left behind by otters: footprints, resting places and droppings (known as spraints). It is rare to actually see an otter as they are good at hiding and the River Leven valley has large areas of hard to access, marshy grassland, the ideal habitat for otters. There was a lot of interest in the otter spotter activity and although a second event had to be cancelled due to Covid, a series of walk-arounds have been pencilled in for Spring 2021.

Deer Walk and Talk

This event was led by FRT's deer surveyor in March 2020 and was also attended by 12 members of the public. The walk-around involved a dialogue around the ecology and behaviour of roe deer, their impact on the river valley habitat and how to carry out an official survey.



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Feedback

The participants in the otter spotter walk and deer walk noted that the river valley was good for:

- Fishing
- Recreation and leisure
- Wildlife and biodiversity
- Nature walks – lots to see and nice scenery
- Foraging and food sources
- Health, wellbeing and exercise
- Fresh air
- Community connection
- Local history
- Dog walking

However, they also noted the following issues:

- Better access to and along the river, and nicer walks to go on
- Better quality paths – currently muddy, slippery and uneven
- Less fly tipping
- Parking and signage
- Less pollution and litter – would like to take part in a litter pick
- Habitats and wildlife protection
- Fewer trees cut down and removed
- Dog waste bins – encouragement to clean up
- Fewer motorbikes
- Less graffiti

< IMAGES

- 1 Fish in the Classroom information leaflets identifying river bugs
- 2 An otter footprint discovered on the Otter Spotter walk
- 3 Gary Brown FRT deer surveyor leads the deer walk and talk

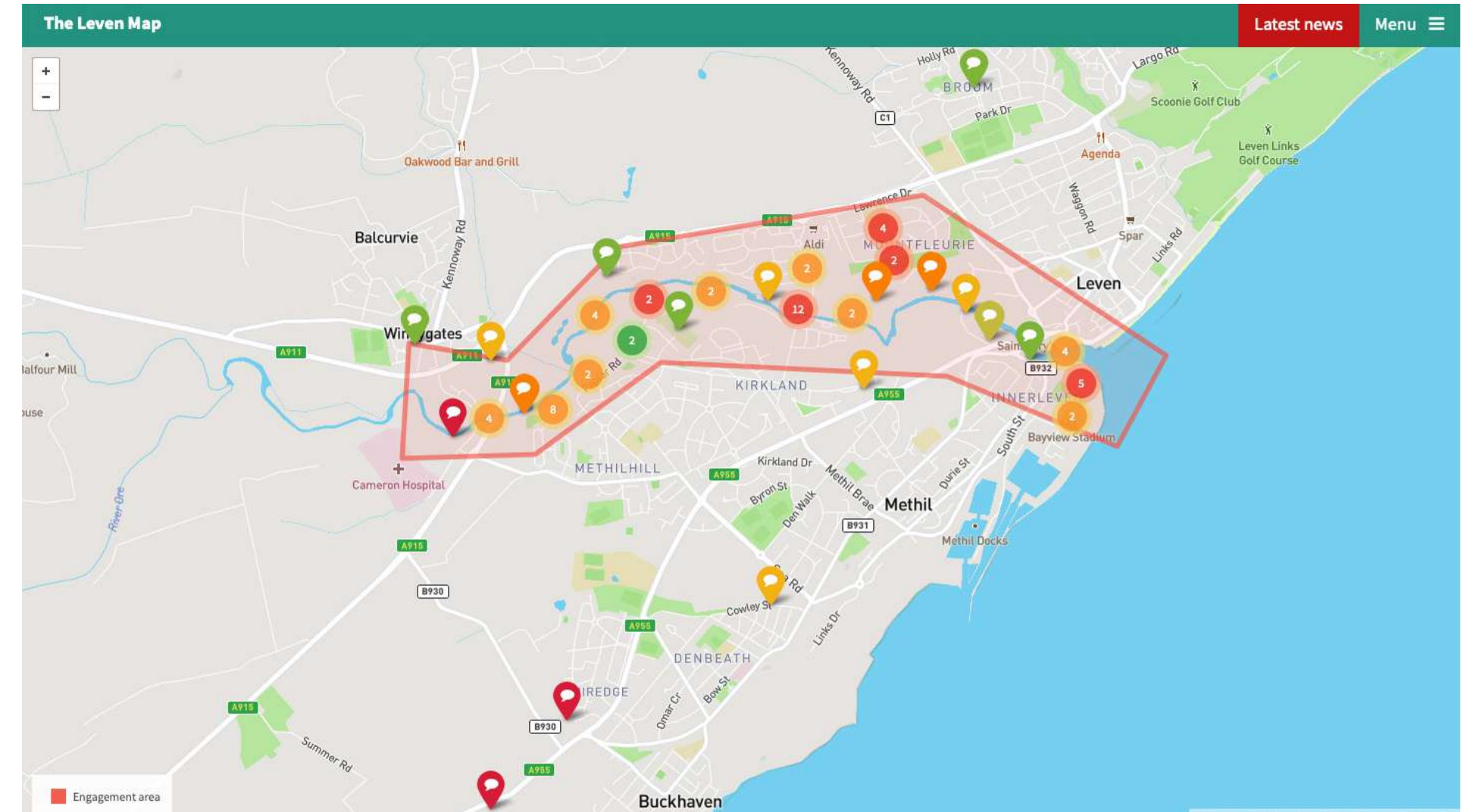
Commonplace map

A Commonplace map on the Leven Programme website (<https://thelevenmap.commonplace.is/>) was created to run concurrently with the engagement events. It allowed members of the public to visit the online platform and drop a pin on an existing location within the river valley, explain why they have highlighted it, how the place makes them feel and how they would suggest improving it.

Comments were welcome up until the portal closed in September 2020, when there were 75 constructive comments noted on the map, ranging from very negative to very positive. The majority of comments of existing issues are either very negative, somewhat negative or neutral, as the infographic, right, shows. This is perhaps due to the nature of the platform arguably providing a wider range of options on issues to improve rather than existing positives. Ultimately, although this is only a fraction of the total number of comments recorded throughout the engagement process, it does underline the challenge of shifting perceptions of the area.

Behaviour change

The two public engagement events allowed members of the public to inform the project team of barriers in the community which limit people from walking and cycling, and what is needed to be put in place to enable more active travel. There were also opportunities for the public to post comments on Facebook. In addition, two online community surveys, one aimed particularly at groups of those less heard, were made available during the lockdown period.



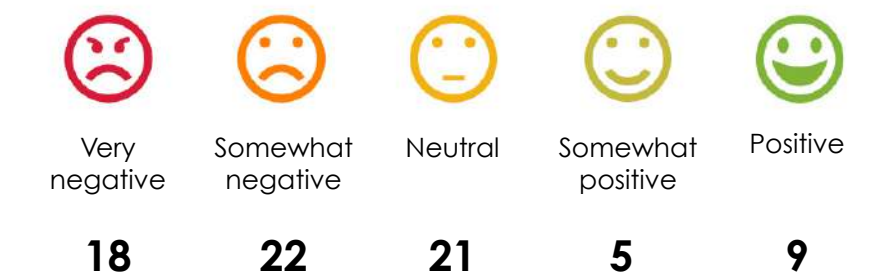
Screenshot of the Commonplace map for the Connectivity Project

Generally, the results of the surveys, feedback from the public events and online comments from the Commonplace map indicate the most prevalent barriers to active travel remain:

- issues resulting from dirt-bike use of the river valley, such as churned up mud paths, safety issues and anti-social behaviour
- litter and fly-tipping creating an unattractive environment to travel through, including broken glass on asphalt paths
- steep and uneven paths limiting accessibility
- issues regarding personal safety

A full report detailing the results of the behaviour change work has been produced by Sustrans.

How does it make you feel?



Detailed breakdown of the range of comments left on portal



1 Panel identifying fauna within the river corridor
2 Members of the public read the Visioning Report and complete the questionnaire
3 Selected Postcards from Leven

DATE: Monday 10th February 2020

LOCATION: Caledonian Hotel, Leven

ATTENDEES: 75

The purpose of the first public engagement event organised in Leven was to record the views of the general public regarding the river valley and its associated issues. Representatives from Fife Council, Nature.Scot, Forth Rivers Trust and Sustrans were present to engage with the public.

A series of panels were created by Iglu to provide information and encourage members of the community to share their stories and memories. The panels covered the industrial heritage of the area, fauna found within the river corridor and an interactive 'Postcards from Leven' exercise asking participants to write down their memories or general comments of the river and surrounding area. Other material presented included a video of drone footage taken above the river corridor, biodegradable stickers of various fauna available for the public to take away and a 'Where Do You Live?' poster intended to help locals orientate themselves.

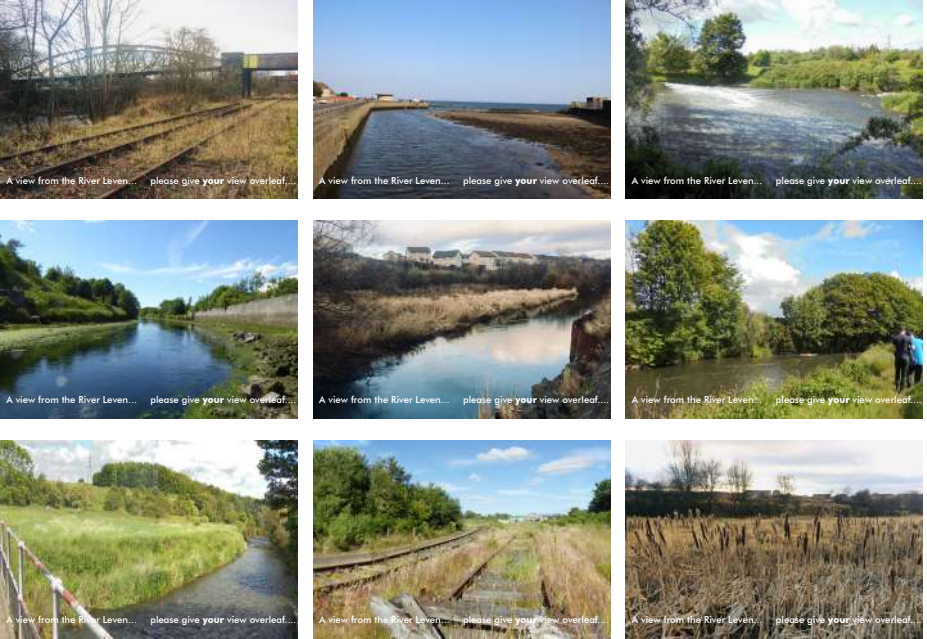


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One of the key objectives of the first engagement event was to gain a deeper understanding of active travel in the community; current pedestrian and cycle routes, existing barriers and future suggestions which would make active travel easier for all. Overall, the feedback suggested that the river valley could be an excellent resource for both pedestrians and cyclists if the existing paths were upgraded, both in terms of width and materiality. There were also many comments referencing barriers such as lighting, safety, use of the valley by dirt bikers, the lack of signage and a lack of facilities.

There was a broad indication that the river valley is already a well-loved and popular greenspace within the community. Many members of the public mentioned the abundant wildlife they would encounter while out walking or running and indicated that they thought the project should respect existing habitats and retain some secluded spaces.

Emerging potential solutions suggested by the community to make the river valley a more desirable, attractive and accessible place included the provision of new seating areas (currently minimal), new facilities for family use, improved lighting and upgrading all paths to a smooth surface, particularly for any wheelchair users. Several references were made to improve connections to the



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existing path network and key trails such as the Fife Coastal Path.

Several comments highlighted the requirement for regular maintenance alongside paths as vegetation has overgrown the verges and is creeping onto already narrow footpaths. It was noted that mowing or cutting should not be left as late as autumn. One idea to resolve this issue was for local farmers to provide livestock to maintain overgrown grass.

In general, the majority of the attendees were supportive of the project whilst also outlining key issues to be considered. The first community engagement event provided a valuable starting point for the project team by identifying and recording existing opinions (see Appendix page 29 for record of comments noted).

It was decided that the next engagement event should provide a greater level of base information to the community as a starting point for discussions. The areas identified for further presentation were the existing path network and more detailed information on the flora found in the river valley. Furthermore, the project team also decided to use the existing model at the next event as a highly useful resource for the public.



1 Members of the public complete the survey
2 Members of the public use the model to describe their journeys
3 Members of Methilhill Care Home share their views on community links

DATE: Monday 2nd March 2020

LOCATION: Methilhill Senior Citizens Centre, Methilhill

ATTENDEES: 85

The second public engagement event was facilitated in Methilhill to capture the views and opinions of the communities based at the western end of the project area. The aims of the event were threefold: to hear and record local knowledge and stories about the River Leven and its green spaces, to further understand patterns of usage and note key areas regarded as important for access or amenity and to capture aspirations for the future development of the area.

The information panels produced in addition to those created for the first engagement event included an overview of the existing habitats within the river valley (based on the Phase One Habitat Survey), selected flora and fauna found within those habitats (presented by project team ecologist Leonie Alexander) and the existing path network which since Event 1 had been extensively surveyed and drawn by Iglu Studio. The size of the hall also allowed plenty of space to install the existing model constructed during Stage 1 -Visioning. Bookmarks were also handed out to attendees which provided information



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on the online Commonplace map and encouraged the participation of the community to leave comments should they feel more comfortable airing their opinions from home.

Comments recorded at the event itself broadly mirrored those made at engagement event 1 in terms of social issues with dirt bikers using the area, the need to upgrade path surfaces (width and materiality), essential maintenance required alongside path verges and provision of seating/spaces to relax. In addition, members of the public who engaged with the Fife Council Roads and Transportation were generally supportive in principle of developing a network of active travel routes to link Levenmouth with the river and new railway stations.

A wide age range was represented at the event, from primary school pupils to young families and senior citizens. The model was utilised by many attendees, across all age groups, to orientate themselves and describe to the project team the issues they faced along the routes used within the river valley and beyond.

One member of the public brought in a series of photos dating back to the 1990's which showed the extent of a major flood event at various locations within the valley (see appendix). These photos underlined one of the fundamental principles of designing safe and accessible public spaces within a river valley: to provide room for the river.



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It was generally noted that there was a current lack of facilities within the river valley. Some suggested uses and activities which could be implemented through the project included;

- 5k Park Run
- Fishing areas
- Play areas
- Outdoor exercise areas
- Planting of fruit trees/orchards to connect with existing edible trails
- A safe, sheltered place for teenagers to go
- Paintball
- Telescopes at the Docks
- Miniature train ride
- A community hub/arts/nature centre.

Other key emerging comments related to finding an alternative site for the dirt bikers currently using the area, engaging with young people at an early stage in the project and to include more ramps and less steps.

Although a major aspect of the project, connectivity within the communities themselves (led by Amey plc) did not form a significant role at these initial events. This was arguably a lesson for future consultation. The project team responded by undertaking online consultation that focused on active travel through Levenmouth beyond the river corridor (see Appendix page 37 for survey results and comments).



^
Scale model of the River Leven valley and surrounding context used at engagement events



^
Cognitive mapping competition winning pupils from Levenmouth Academy

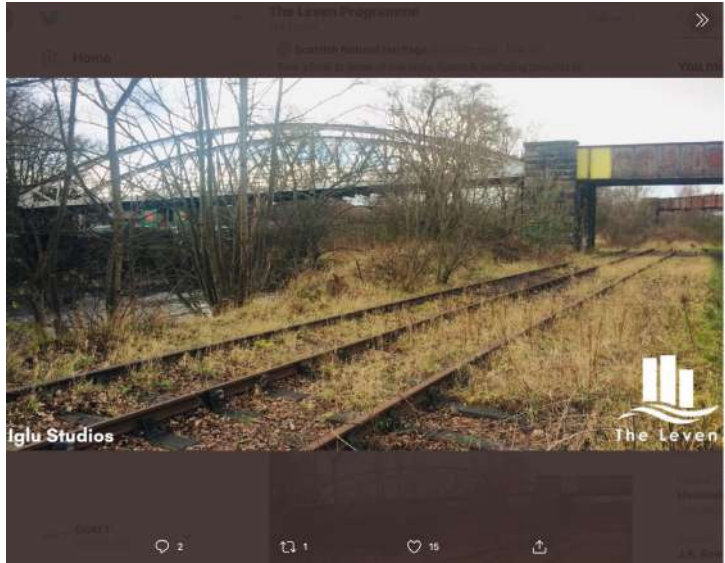
[Post Covid-19]

The following part of the engagement report covers the alternative methods used to stay connected with the community since the pandemic.

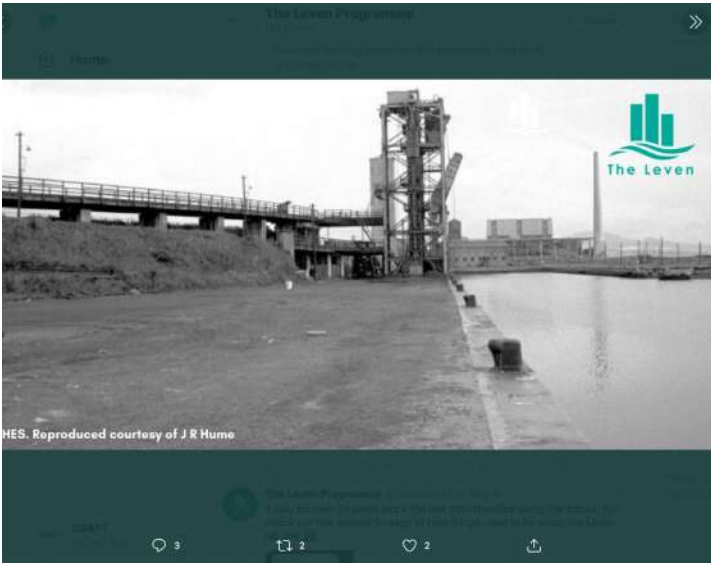
A combination of approaches were used to generate feedback and maintain interest in the project, through both online platforms and socially distanced outdoors events.

The Concept Design Masterplan proposals have been illustrated through an animation, tailored for people with sensory impairments and available on theleven.org

With the concept design masterplan proposals only being presented to the public in early October, placeholder pages have been included at the end of the report to outline community feedback on the proposals after all the comments are collated.



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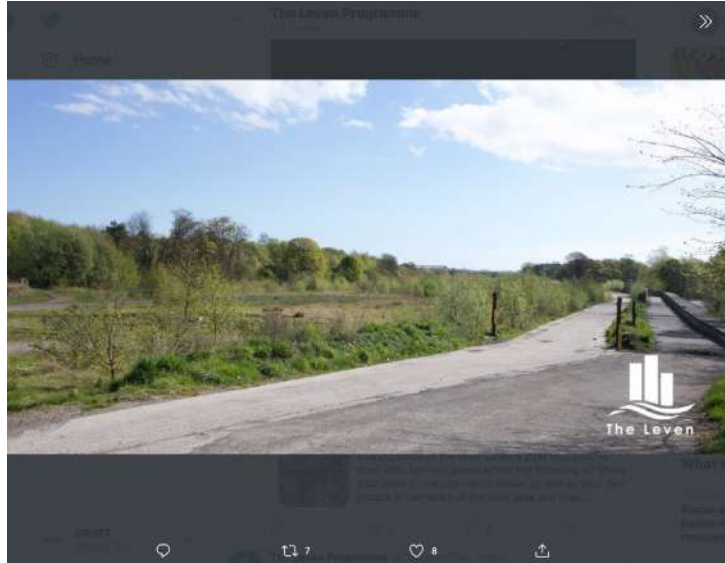
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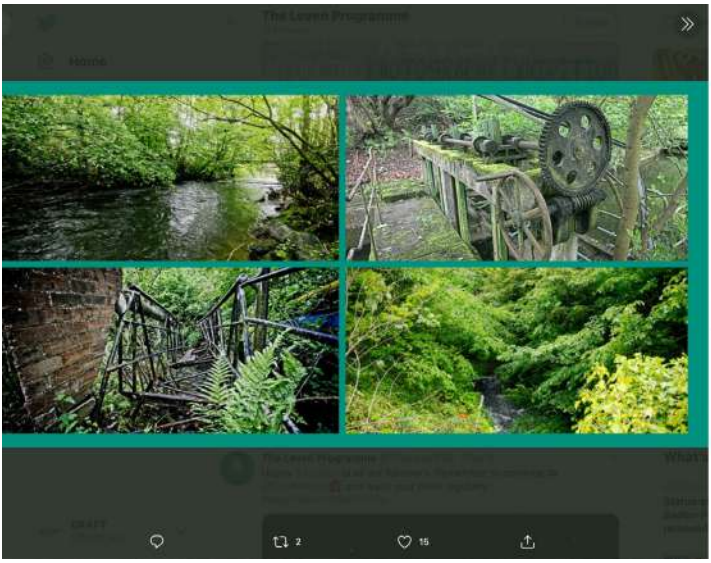
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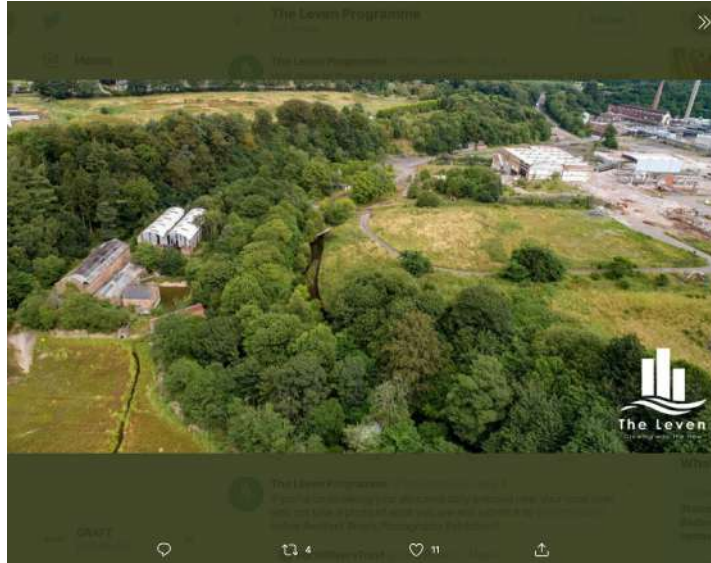
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Twitter

The Leven Programme Twitter account is managed by the dedicated communications officer and has been very active since joining the platform in August 2019.

During May 2020 to celebrate local history month, a series of historic photos (selected images above) were uploaded onto the platform as part of a competition for local residents to guess where the photos were taken from. The historic photos of various locations within the Connectivity Project elicited plenty of comments and ignited discussion on the various threads, including the future use of vacant and derelict land (the Creosote site and the former Methil Power Station).

The photos also referenced other ongoing projects further upstream within the river catchment, such as the former Tullis Russell paper mill in Glenrothes which The Leven Programme's partners have been actively involved in through discussions with Fife Council and the site developers to ensure the river is protected and enhanced as part of the wider Leven project proposals.

IMAGES

1-6 Twitter posts and threads as part of a competition for the public to guess the locations of historic photos for local history month in May 2020



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Facebook

During the summer the Leven Programme together with project partner Forth Rivers Trust set up a photography competition on Facebook with two categories for submission, Wildlife and Rivers/Scenic. The objective of the competition was to encourage the community to visit the river valley during the most verdant period of the year to really appreciate the incredible wildlife and nature on their doorstep.

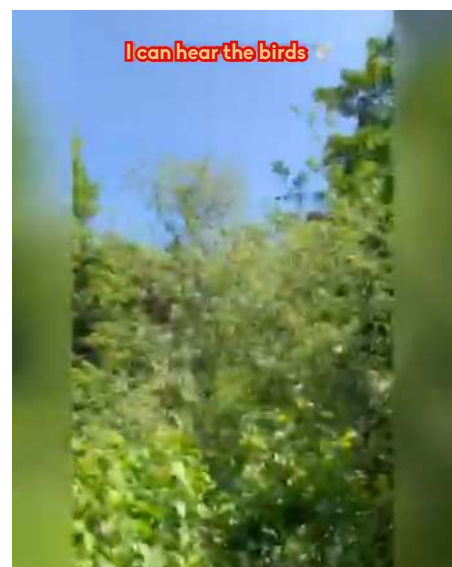
The competition was very popular with hundreds of votes received for the submissions. 12 finalists were nominated through 'likes' on the Facebook page with eventual winners Kenny Ritchie (Photo 1) above in the Rivers/Scenic

category with 541 votes and Kelly Donald in the Wildlife category with 460 votes. In total, over 3,000 votes were cast for the 12 photos.

A limited edition collection of the 12 finalists photos will be collated and included in a calendar which will be distributed at future community events.

IMAGES

1-3 Rivers/Scenic category submissions
4-6 Wildlife category submissions



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Cognitive Mapping exercise

This engagement exercise was developed during lockdown while schools were closed with the intention of encouraging children to explore the river valley and use their creativity to map their routes. The examples shown above highlight just some of the many sensory maps created by pupils from Levenmouth Academy who experimented with model-making, videos and multi-media formats to make their maps.

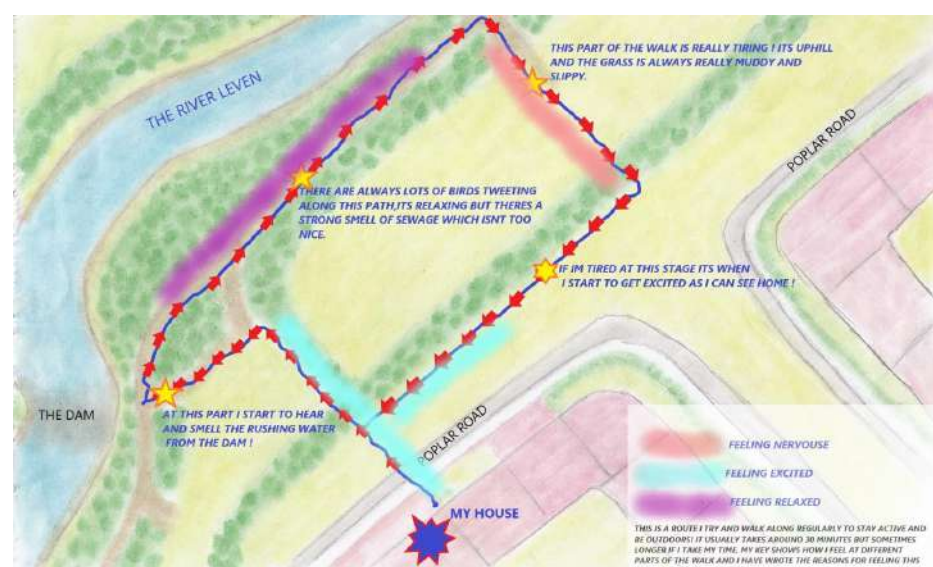
The pupils were asked to add a key, street names and names of places, shops and functions, if important to their understanding of a place.

The exercise aimed to inspire interaction between young people, animals, plants and environmental aspects such as the weather and the river itself. The pupils were encouraged to add sensory elements such as smells, touch and noises in addition to visual clues and markers. Feelings and emotions were also encouraged to be included in the maps.

The submissions revealed that most of the participating children already regularly visit the river valley and enjoy spending time in nature.



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IMAGES ^

1 Nieve Campbell 2 Emma Justice 3 Charity Nyoka 4 Diaz Anderson
5 Chloe Cunningham 6 Bethany Downes (winner) 7 Emily Barclay

Socially distanced markets

Since July 2020 and the slight easing of restrictions in terms of meeting the public in a face to face setting, the project team have been using socially distanced markets, organised by our third sector colleagues at BRAG to restart first hand discussions with local people.

The team used large scale maps including aerial photography which enabled attendees, notably young people, to locate themselves quickly by starting with the question of where they live and whether they can spot their house. The team outlined the advantages of better connectivity between neighbourhoods and the river, and how this will tie in with the development of the two rail stations, that effectively bookend the Connectivity Project site.

The first two markets in July and August attracted over 1200 visitors to each event with the River Leven stall sitting amongst approximately 30 others housing artisan producers of local food and craft products. This proved to be a productive environment for discussions with somewhere between 70 and 90 people visiting the stall at each event. Conversations focused on the evolving masterplan, and the wider active travel routes proposed by Amey, and about a third of the visitors were reasonably regular users to the river for dog walking, fishing or leisure activities.

The third BRAG market on 12th September attracted fewer numbers than in July and August (organisers noted around 600 attendees over the day mainly due to overcast and windy conditions) however this allowed time to have more detailed conversations. In total 59 people visited the stall, some for a quick look and taking away some merchandise with the promise of visiting the Leven website, however 20 of these visits turned into good quality conversations. The key elements for discussion at the September event were broadly in line with the issues raised in July and August, albeit less slanted to the negatives of anti-social behaviour and environmental concerns and more towards a positive and aspirational focus for the project and its outcomes.

All the markets were used to further promote the use of the Commonplace map for collecting feedback, and there is evidence of some spikes in usage after these events.



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IMAGES ^

1-2 Photos taken from the BRAG Market September 12th 2020

The majority of visitors were local people with a KY8 postcode, with a good percentage already aware of the project in one way or another, whether through attending other events or reading about the project in the local press. The make-up of visitors were across all age ranges, young people, families with children, middle aged couples, elderly couples and individuals. There were some very interesting conversations with older people recounting anecdotes of the things they used to get up to at the river when they were younger, as well as young families who have been using the area more due to lockdown restrictions impacting on their ability to travel, and a growing interest in the river due to their awareness of the project and its aims.

Both the MSP and MP for the area also visited the stall, which was advantageous in being able to bring them up to speed on the project in a less formal setting than usual.

Some elements of the discussions had on the market days included the following,



2

- The need to work with farmers in regard to controlling water run off from fields that then impacts on paths and access.
- Better linkages to Kennoway and the Pilgrims Way
- Requests for information in terms of the crossing points for both the river and rail link.
- The sensitive removal of undergrowth at path links to make the walk safer (COVID and other safety concerns) and easier for those with children or less mobility.
- Control of motorcycle usage – an ongoing concern, but couched in terms of looking at alternative provision.
- Better sightlines or viewing points to allow appreciation of the river, its views and wildlife.
- Infrastructure that would allow the river to be better utilised, fishing, canoeing etc.
- The requirement for alternative community facilities and more facilities on the river.

Over the three markets held so far, the team have interacted with around 200 people, these numbers were to be augmented through the ongoing use of this consultation opportunity however the market on the 10th October was cancelled and the 14th November event is still to be determined. A Christmas market is also proposed, the date for which is to be confirmed.

Brand Image

Early on in the life of the partnership group a logo and brand image (see image adjacent) were designed by Fife College students which is now carried on all communications about the project. This image has assisted in raising the profile of the approach quickly in the minds of local people. The Leven logo now has a high level of recognition in the area and beyond.

Merchandising

As part of the brand recognition approach for the Leven Project, merchandising has been used as a way of attracting attention and encouraging people to access the website.

Pens and pencils have been useful as handouts at public events notably for younger attendees, and they have been made more attractive by combining the message of their recycled or biodegradable credentials, which fit well with the ethos of the Leven project as a whole.

Small runs of coffee cups and water containers (see images adjacent) have also been used to send a message of single use items as being problematic, and associating their continued use with some of the deleterious impacts on the environment around the River Leven.

Reusable shopping bags made from recycled plastic bottles have also been popular – again the message against single use plastic bags is writ large in this promotion item, however they have also played a role in our distribution of emergency food aid through the pandemic process (see image adjacent). The main distribution point for food at The Centre in Leven used the bags to make delivery and doorstep collection more manageable for older recipients of food aid who would struggle with a box delivery.

All deliveries that went out were also accompanied by a bookmark in the package, this displayed the link and a pictorial representation of the Commonplace map, again to drive people towards the website and leave comments accordingly.



IMAGES ^

- 1 The Leven logo
- 2 Examples of recycled pens, cup and bookmark
- 3 Distribution of food aid
- 4 Advert to win a recycled reusable water bottle

Emerging community 'desired outcomes'

Despite the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the breadth and extent of the engagement programme has built up a substantive 'knowledge bank' of community comments, issues and aspirations. From the start of the engagement process, a recurring list of desired outcomes of the Connectivity Project began to emerge from the community from the first two public events in February and March and following through online comments. Even at this early Concept Design stage of the Connectivity Project, eight general issues that the project needed to address have been frequently raised by the community. These are outlined below.

1. Path quality

Throughout the river valley many routes are merely desire lines through grassland, dirt tracks and mown grass paths. One of the most common points raised both at the physical events and online was the need to generally upgrade the path network throughout the valley. Furthermore, upgrading pedestrian routes to smooth, hard surface paths into and within the various surrounding neighbourhoods was commonly identified as a priority to allow access for pushchairs, wheelchairs and anyone with a mobility impairment. This was particularly noted for the existing route between Mountfleurie and Methilhill via the Creosote site, already challenging due to the steep topography to the north.

2. Off-road dirtbikes

One of the most prevalent concerns and a significant barrier for accessing the river valley is the ongoing use of offroad dirtbikes throughout the area. Many locals have raised this issue at all stages of the engagement process. It has been noted that the dirt-bikes are loud, dangerous and can be threatening. However, it has also been suggested that there is a historical association with dirtbikes and provided they could be allocated a safe location away from pedestrians their ongoing use could be supported.

3. Litter, fly tipping and pollution

Another key issue often raised by residents is the frequent illegal dumping of litter and fly-tipping throughout the valley. Part of this recurring problem is perhaps the perception that some of the woodlands and particularly the areas of vacant and derelict land appear abandoned, unmaintained and are therefore unvalued. This is common for many post-industrial spaces in an urban context throughout Scotland.

One of the intended outcomes of the Connectivity Project is to create a wider appreciation of the verdant river valley landscape through upgraded active travel routes, new community facilities, outdoor education and an overall emphasis on ecological and environmental awareness.

4. Providing new community facilities

Most members of the public would welcome improvements to the river valley in terms of new community facilities. Some initial ideas which have been raised include a new community hub building, toilet facilities, shelters for young people, fishing platforms, cafes, outdoor exercise equipment, new play provision, bbq areas with seating and kayak hire. The Concept Design Masterplan includes many of the suggestions made by the public (see Masterplan Report page 50-51), in particular the potential use of the Creosote site as a location for a new community hub. It is anticipated that the finalised Concept Design Masterplan with confirmed train station locations will include a vast array of the facilities suggested by the community.

5. Personal safety

Anti-social behaviour by young males in the area has been raised as an issue. Some females have noted that they have felt vulnerable walking on their own within the valley. It is anticipated that the installation of lighting and greater footfall resulting from upgraded paths and new facilities will create a safer environment for all to enjoy.

6. Maintenance

Another key point raised by both attendees at the public events and through the online platforms is the ongoing issue of vegetation maintenance. Although grasses and vegetation are abundant throughout the valley and create the sense of 'wild nature,' in some areas they are overhanging paths and restricting mobility for pedestrians. The widening of paths will generally be tied in with a maintenance schedule to restrict vegetation from creeping onto routes.

7. Wayfinding

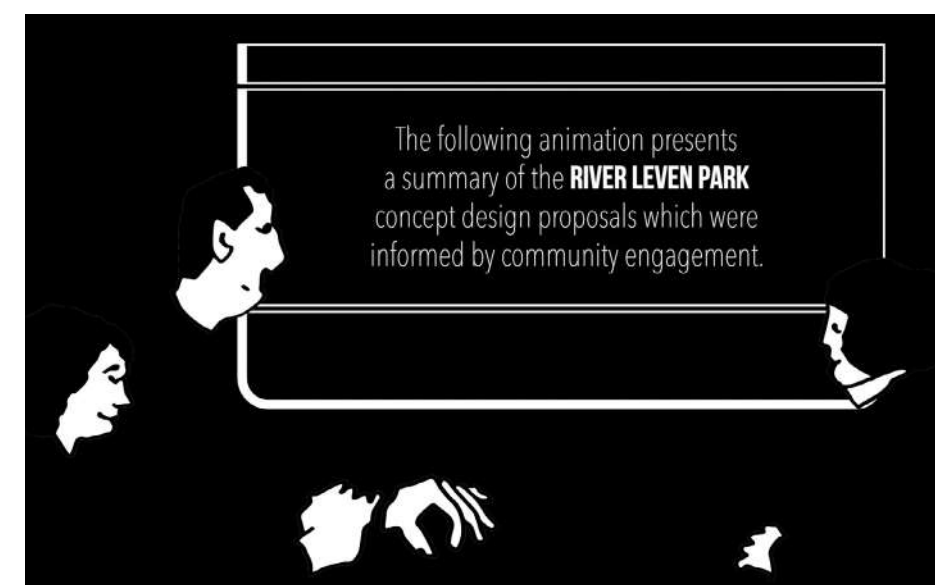
It has been noted that signage throughout the valley is minimal and visitors would struggle to orientate themselves with the current provision. Furthermore, as the upgraded path network accommodates a hierarchy of uses, ranging from shared use for pedestrians and cyclists to 2m wide pedestrian only routes, a new wayfinding strategy is essential to facilitate access for all (see Masterplan Report page 61).

8. Upgraded river crossings

Finally, a common issue raised during the public events and online was the need to provide more connections across the river. In particular, the communities of Methilhill and Mountfleurie have one crossing point at the Creosote site though the steep slope north forces anyone with mobility issues to take the longer route round via either the Iron Brig or the Bawbee Bridge. The river crossing near Kirkland Dam is also in need of upgrading to provide access for all.

Summary

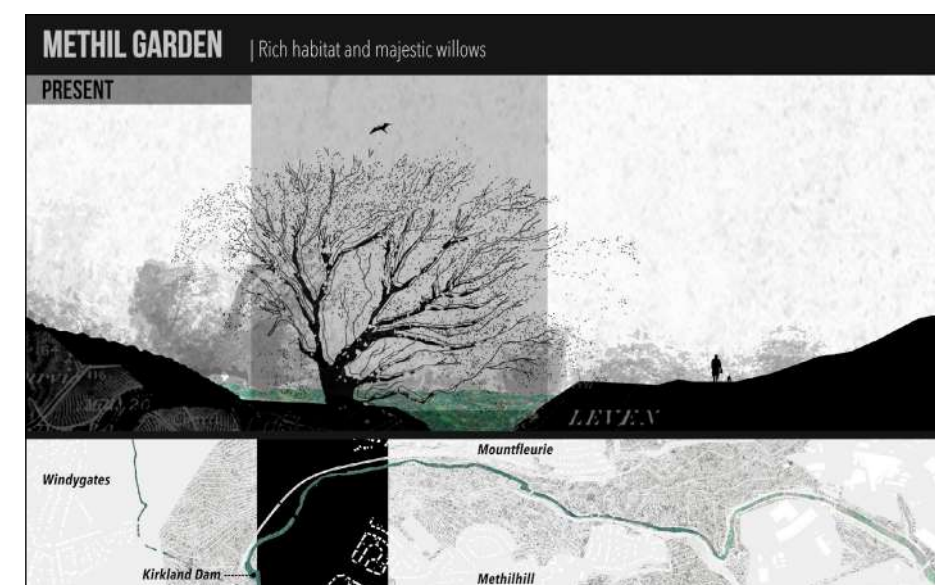
These eight community issues, along with the overall community feedback, were taken into consideration during the process of shaping the Concept Design Masterplan. The next step in the engagement process was to present the Concept Design Masterplan proposals to the public to see if they accurately address the conversations held, the key issues that were raised and sufficiently reflect community aspirations.



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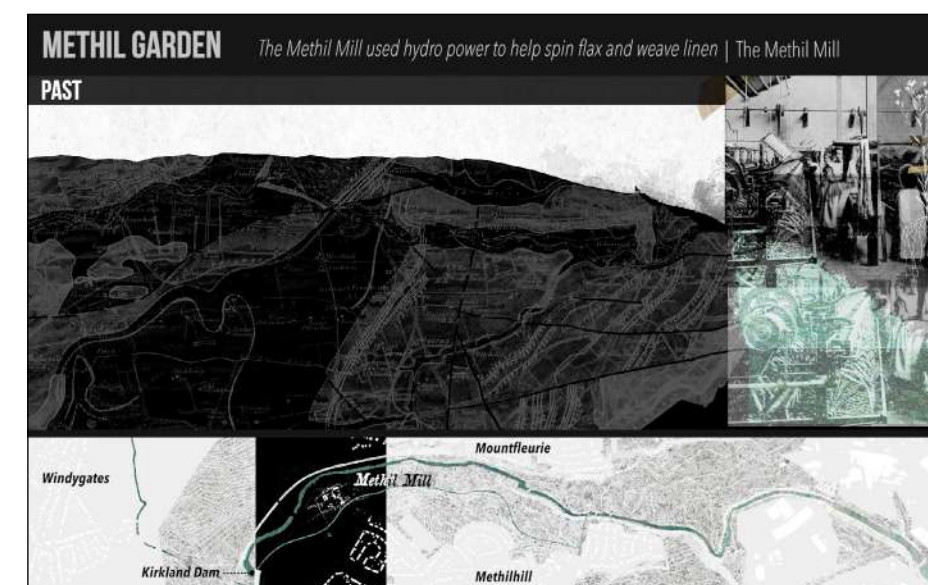
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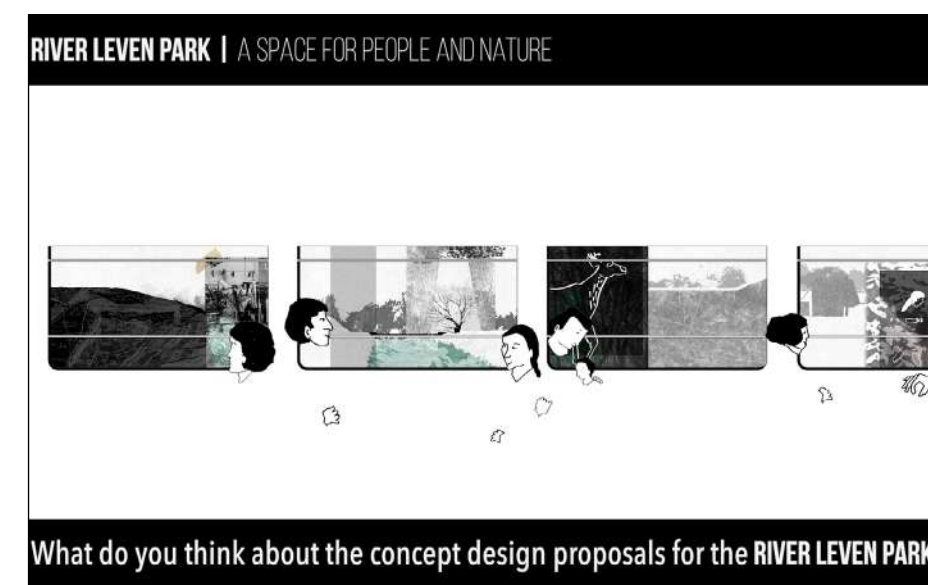
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▲ IMAGES

1-6 Stills from A Journey through the River Leven Park animation

A Journey through the River Leven Park animation

With the cancellation of the third public engagement event at the end of March the project team decided to create an animation as an alternative means of presenting the River Leven Park Concept Design Masterplan proposals to the public. Though it focused mostly on the river park proposals the animation also noted that new connections between communities would be established as part of the project.

The animation takes the form of a journey through the River Leven Park from west to east from an array of different users perspectives: train passengers, walkers, runners, wheelchair users, kayakers and even wildlife.

The animation presents the river park as a space for people and nature, a place for communities to experience together through improved connections, upgraded paths and new facilities. The six framework elements which shaped the masterplan are highlighted before the animation runs through past, present and proposed situations for four gardens designated for community focus within the river valley.

The public's response to the animation has been hugely positive (see consultation summary on page 26-27) and the project team are actively promoting its further use

within the community in doctor's surgeries, swimming pools, the FRIC, cafes/community spaces and even at a Drive-In Cinema event at East Fife Football Club stadium. In addition, there have also been discussions held within the project team about projecting the animation onto building facades within Levenmouth to promote the project.

The animation is available to view here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jv96gO4Q_qU&feature=youtu.be

The draft Concept Design Masterplan developed from the engagement conversations was first presented to the community through a series of on-line events held in October 2020. The events included,

- An on-line questionnaire through The Leven website which introduced the draft Concept Design Masterplan along with the supporting animation.
- A conversation through Facebook, and
- Two online 'Town Hall' events at which anyone from the local community could register and join in a presentation and conversation about the draft proposals.

Online Town Hall events:

The Town Hall events were hour long events held on the evenings of the 20th October at 4.30pm and the 21st October at 6.30pm.

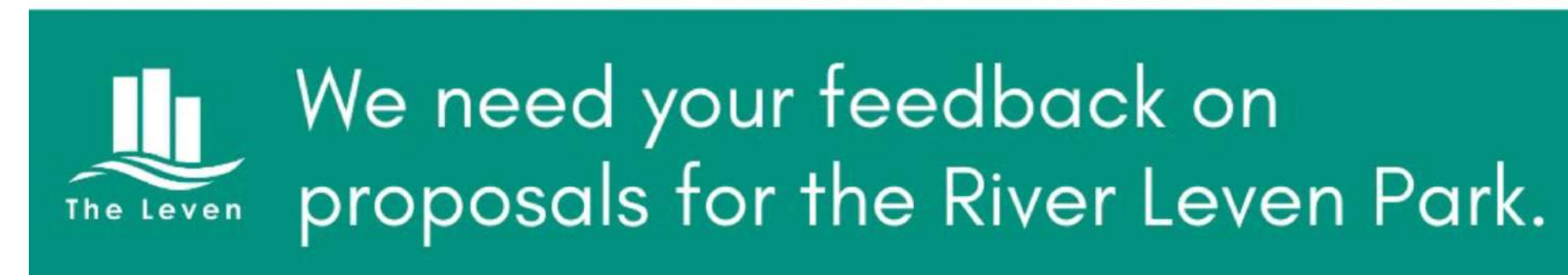
The project team presented a 20 minute introduction to the proposals which included information on the Green Network and Active Travel workstreams.

Town Hall event 1: There were seven attendees at the first Town Hall event, five members of the public, one member of Fife Council and one local Councillor.

There was a range of questions asked in respect of The River Leven Park project and the Concept Design Masterplan, from antisocial behaviour to the proposed provision for walkers and cyclists within the river valley. The overall consensus of the Concept Design Masterplan was favourable and in support of the proposals.

Specific points were raised about the water treatment plant and whether any consultation been carried out with regards to reducing the smell. In addition specific mention was made of the cracks in the concrete cap over the pipe that runs parallel to the river and the smells that came from that.

Access along the whole of the river was discussed along with the provision for cyclists as well as pedestrians which was regarded as comprehensive. This led to further discussions about boardwalks (noted as being an excellent idea) and the point well made that any future boardwalks needed to be accessible by all and wide enough for social distancing. Referral was made to the recent bridge and



▲ Event invitation sent out online for consultation exercise

boardwalk infrastructure constructed in the Hamiltonhill Claypits in North Glasgow.

One of the key concerns voiced at the event was the issue of anti-social activity including the off-road and quad bike use in the river valley to the burning of wheelie bins. Whilst these were identified as part of the on-going discussions, including work with Kingdom Off-road Motorcycle Club, all the concerns were noted.

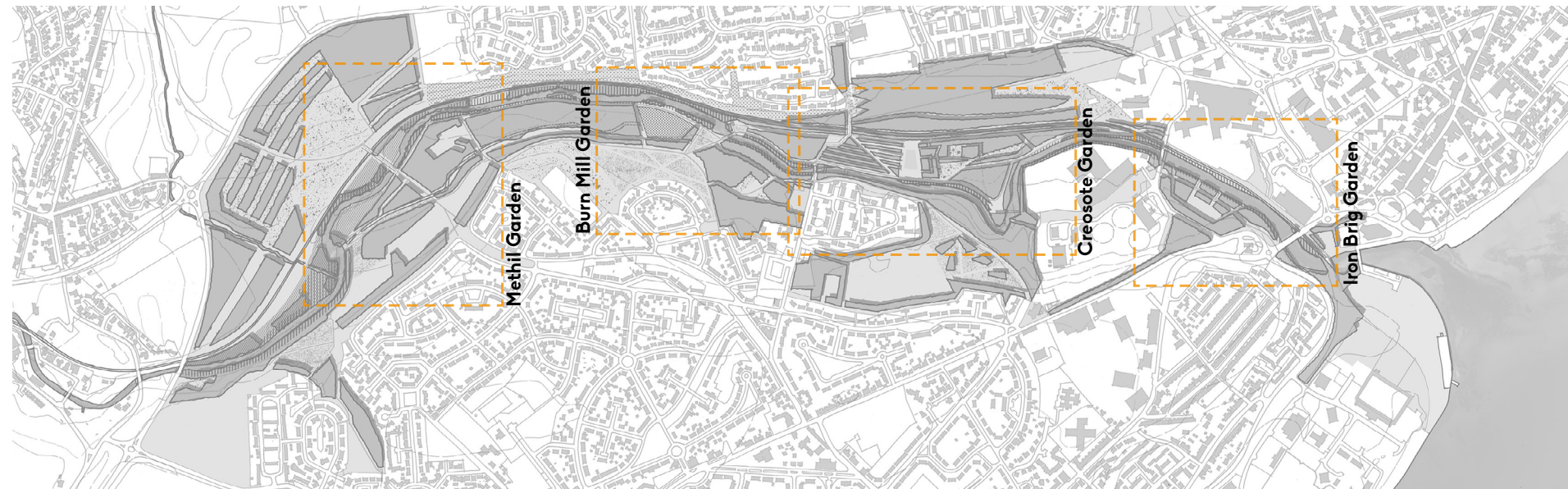
Other comments included the possibility of sculptures at access points, the need to provide toilet facilities within the river park area and a desire for well designed and innovative co-designed play infrastructure.

Town Hall event 2: The second event attracted five members of the public, all of whom live and work locally. All used the river valley area for general recreation and to walk dogs. The overall feedback was that the proposals were fantastic and that they were really enthused by the project. There was also a general consensus that the protection and enhancement of the river habitats was a

high priority and all hoped that the proposals would come to fruition.

A couple of the attendees voiced their surprise that more people had not participated in the online event, and this prompted a discussion about what could be done to spread word of the project and how those at the event could get more involved. Concern was also voiced about the elderly not receiving information, particularly during the pandemic. In response, the project team presented a brief overview of the engagement work to date, including the good response at events such as the BRAG markets, the competitions that had been run with the schools and the interaction with the elderly through care homes and food parcels. The attendees were informed that engagement work would be on-going and were encouraged to leave details on the website for future community sessions and participation events.

In summary, whilst the numbers at the online events were low, the overwhelming response was very positive, supporting the proposals and wanting to 'spread the word' to get the community more involved in the Leven Project.



River Leven Park Masterplan proposals

The online community feedback on the proposed River Leven Park Concept Design Masterplan proposals that ran from 9th – 23rd October 2020 is summarised below. Twenty questions were presented to those visiting theeven.org website with a total of 50 respondents leaving their answers and comments. (The detailed questions, responses and comments are included in the appendices).

The questions focused on the Masterplan proposals, including detailed aspects including the 'Garden' designs and the new railway line.

Consultation Questionnaire results:

The Concept Design Masterplan presented as part of the River Leven Park Consultation received overwhelming support acquiring a 92% agreement or approval. There were none that disagreed with the proposals and only 8% who were unsure.

This was an encouraging response from those that responded, and whilst it is understood that the numbers are a small fraction of the community, the comments and figures support and reinforce the earlier conversations and discussions with the community through the face to face and on-line engagement that had gone before.

The new Railway line - Whilst the new railway station locations have yet to be agreed, there was a range of proposals suggested to make it easier to walk or cycle to the stations. Key was the provision of new cycleways and footways (32%) with access across the river or railway

important (18%) along with off-road cycle routes also a key consideration (12%)

The proposed Pollinator Corridor The green network and habitat proposals are a strong element of the Concept Design Masterplan. As such specific questions about the key elements were asked with 88% of respondents agreeing with the idea (2% disagreed) of the proposals for a pollinator network. However when it came to learning how to create and maintain a pollinator corridor only 54% said they would be interested.

In respect of the new types of planting to the pollinator corridors, hedgerows, fruit trees, wildflowers and long grasses were the main types of plants agreed.

In a similar show of support 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposals to enhance biodiversity along the River Leven, with 84% agreeing with the proposal to introduce new native trees, and 86% in support of the introduction of bird and bat boxes.

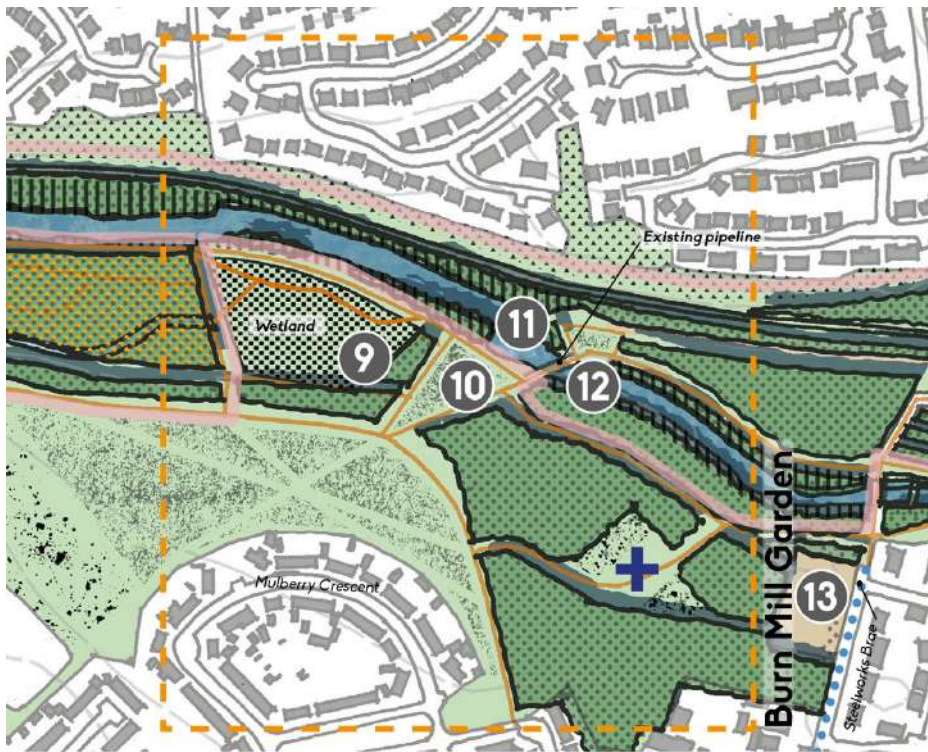
Segregated cycle routes – Respondents were asked about their views with respect to segregated cycle routes to make travel around the area easier without a vehicle. 80% were supportive of segregated routes with none in opposition.

Off-road motorbikes – When asked about a dedicated location for off-road biking in a location away from the River Park 64% were in support and 18% were not. The remaining 18% were unsure or did not answer.



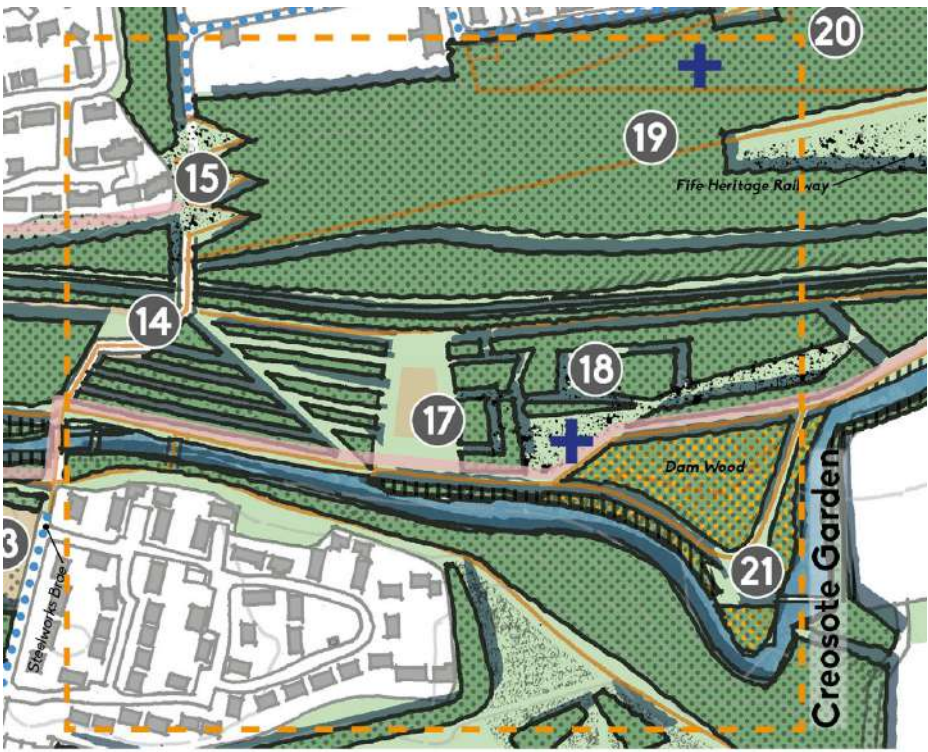
Methil Garden

The Methil Garden proposals were overwhelming well received with over 88% agreeing with the proposals and only 2% not agreeing. Particularly well liked were the proposals to include an active travel bridge and a heritage trail focal point at the former Methil Mill site both of which received 90% agreement (and 0% disagreement). The inclusion of a new viewing platform at the Kirkland Dam and the opening up of the former lade and exploration route were not far behind with 84% and 82% agreement respectively.



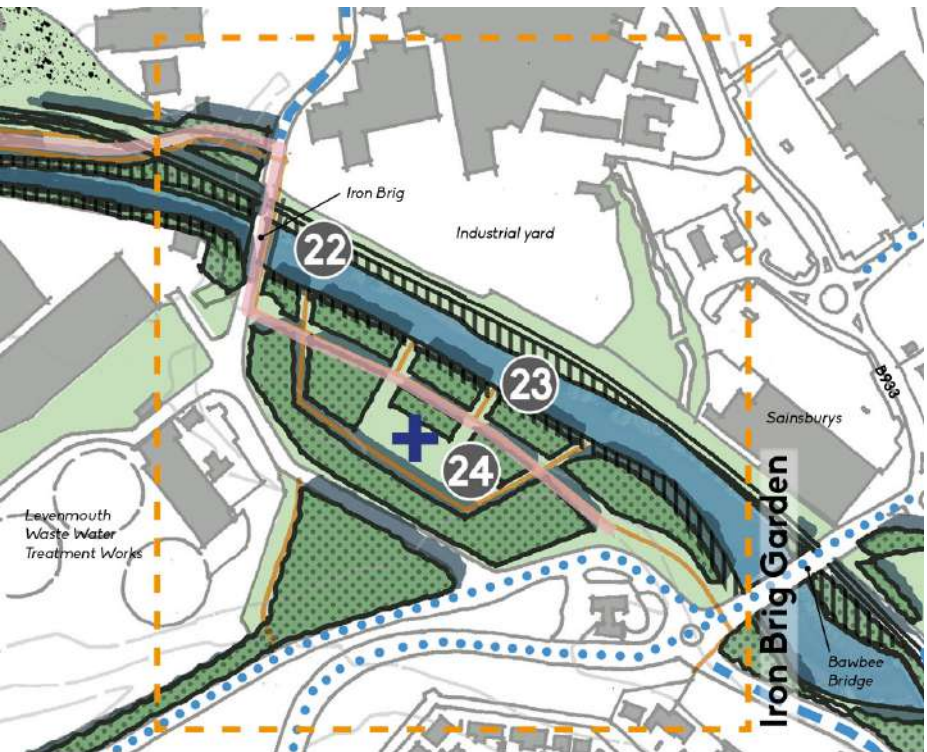
Burn Mill Garden

In a similar show of support to the Methil Garden proposals, 78% of respondents were in agreement with the proposed design of the Burn Mill Garden (4% not agreeing). The specific proposed features for the garden received comparable support, and in some instances were substantially higher. Of particular note were the proposed new active travel bridge and education / gathering space both of which received 86% agreement and 0% disagreement. Not far behind were the proposals for a new fishing platform and a new green roof hide / shelter, which were 78% and 76% in the agreement ratings respectively (2% & 4% disagreement respectively).



Creosote Garden

The Creosote Garden continued the trend of the Methil and Burn Mill Gardens with an 84% agreement to the overall proposals. The active travel bridge again scored highly with 86% agreement (and 0% disagreement), a statistic that was reflected in the feedback for the proposed wet woodland and river facilities. Not far behind were the approval ratings for the proposed community facilities, with the introduction of a community hub weighing in at 78% agreement (4% strong disagreement) and community growing spaces at 76% agreement (6% disagreement / strong disagreement).



Iron Brig Garden

The final Garden presented was the Iron Brig which was up with the other Garden proposals, recorded an amazing 86% agreement with the overall proposals, and 0% disagreement, placing the Iron Brig Garden in second spot just behind the Methil Garden. Once again the travel bridge was a popular feature with 90% agreement and 0% disagreement, putting the inclusion of travel bridges as the top preferred features within the Gardens. The two key features of the Iron Brig Garden, the viewing platforms and the proposed new community co-designed play space showed similar support to the key features of the other gardens with 82% and 78% respectively.

Consultation comments:

In addition to the specific questions asked and whether the respondents agreed or disagreed with the proposals, there was an opportunity for people to leave additional comments to fifteen of the main questions. The table of these comments is provided in the Appendix pages 42-55.

Overall the comments were supportive and very much in favour of the Concept Design Masterplan and the proposals for the River Leven Park, as the quotation from one respondent, right, shows. The question was about whether the respondent agreed with the overall concept design plans for the River Leven Park.

“Absolutely. I moved into the Mountfleurie area about 3 years ago and I love it here. I'm a keen walker, me and my dog have travelled far and wide to access the best of Scotland's environment. During lockdown and without the luxury of being able to travel far and wide I started to explore the length of the River Leven more extensively. I have been in awe at the sheer volume of life and habitat that this area supports. I have seen ducks raise their chicks, foxes scavenging, deer resting, an otter and her two young swimming and scurrying along the banks, kingfishers flash their iridescent feathers in flight, fish leaping in the strong current, hundreds of frogs emerging into life, buzzards circling overhead and heron embattled in their mating disputes. The biodiversity here is wonderful and an incredible learning opportunity for the community. I walk the river Leven daily with my dog and I meet other walkers and people on route between Kirkland and Leven. I was almost in tears at the video you have created as I think this will give more people the opportunity to explore our beautiful environment and give access to those who are less able-bodied. I know a lot of people feel that "the dam" area is unsafe, but I can honestly say in all the times I have walked here alone I have never felt intimidated and everyone I meet is friendly and respectful. I agree wholeheartedly in the plans to give respect to the heritage of the site and to prioritise the protection of the habitat for the wildlife first and foremost. But ultimately I think this site, once transformed, will be used more by the public and give incredible benefit to the mental and physical wellbeing of my community.”

Tempering the overall approval and support for the Concept Design Masterplan, there were a lot of questions about the detail of the proposals, the issues surrounding pollution, anti-social activities, safety concerns, off-road biking and the future maintenance of any proposals.

The detailed responses provided by the community will all be taken and considered at the beginning of Stage 3 - Detailed Design of the River Leven Park, and will be fed back and engaged on further with the community to ensure that all voices are heard, and to make sure the park is responsive to local needs and requirements.

Why we engaged

As stated at the beginning of this report, The Leven Programme “Growing with the Flow” is an ambitious multi-partner commitment to improving the area of the River Leven catchment, delivering economic and social success whilst improving the environment. Core to the project is the realisation of the first phase of the programme, the River Leven Connectivity Project, which includes the following developments,

- a new river park along a 5km stretch of the river from the river’s mouth at Leven to Windygates in the west,
- the realisation of the reinstated Levenmouth rail line, including two new stations, and
- the establishment of a wider Active Travel Network that connects park and rail with the surrounding communities.

Key to this first phase of the Leven Programme is the engagement with local people to ensure that local needs and aspirations are captured, and the opportunity for local people to participate in design and delivery is properly afforded. As documented in the earlier sections of the report, the project team have engaged a wide range of strategies and actions to listen to people, to hear about the place they live in and to provide control to shape and determine the fundamentals of the proposed River Leven Park, new rail line and stations, and the connecting Active Travel Network.

What we asked the community

In the first instance we wanted to listen to the local community, to the people of Levenmouth. We brought along big aerial prints of the river valley and the surrounding towns and we simply asked the community about themselves, their place and their stories. How they remember the place where they live, the place where they work, and the place where they socialise, the issues and conflicts and how they would like to see it in the future: their aspirations and hopes.

From these conversations we developed the initial draft Concept Design Masterplan and Active Travel Network. Once developed and drawn we asked more detailed, specific questions related to the proposals, but still focused on the everyday lives and stories of the people, the community.

This conversation will continue on throughout the future stages of the project, but what will always be core to the project are the stories of the people and the river.

How we let the community know about the project

With the pandemic health emergency, the project team have had to adapt and rethink strategies to ensure less heard groups were included within the conversations. As such we have engaged with both tried and new methodologies to reach as many people and groups as we could, including,

- On-line questionnaires
- Consultation through the creation of a project specific website and interactive map.
- Face to face events (pre-pandemic)
- Socially distanced markets – taking a stall at the local BRAG markets
- Events along the river including otter spotting and deer walk + talk
- Engagement with schools – Cognitive mapping exercise and Fish in the Classroom
- Behaviour change events and meetings
- Facebook and Twitter events – photograph competition
- Brand marketing and merchandising
- Production of an animation for use on social media and at events.
- Print including newspapers and postcards
- Talking to people at each and every opportunity
- Engagement with community groups – e.g. CLEAR
- Fife Council training and skills team

Who we heard from

Key to the engagement process was making sure we heard from a range of community members across the entire project area, and where possible beyond. We have heard from,

- Local stakeholders
- Land owners
- Business community
- Politicians
- Community councils
- Community groups – including Fife Centre for equalities

- Local workers
- Job clubs
- Young people
- The elderly
- The community at large
- And the project partners – Fife Partnership

As with any engagement process it was not possible for us to ask everyone, and not everyone we asked chose to tell us their views or provide details, but the voices we have heard have been listened to and have formed the basis of the proposed Concept Design Masterplan.

Community feedback

The response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the proposals to change and improve the river and surrounding connections throughout Leven, Methilhill, Methil and communities beyond.

- Specific topics that did arise included,
- Paths and improving their quality
 - Anti-social issues including off-road bikes
 - Litter, fly-tipping and pollution
 - Providing new community facilities
 - Personal safety
 - Maintenance of existing and proposed landscape and facilities
 - Wayfinding and signage
 - Improved and upgraded river crossings

What was notable from the community feedback, including the recent River Leven Park on-line consultation 2020, were the many comments of positivity one of which is set out below.

“Excellent - I love that these plans intend to increase biodiversity to the area. This, coupled with easier public access will make it an interesting and beautiful place to be! With these proposals I envisage more of the community coming together, outdoors in all weather enjoying this space and benefitting from connection to nature and other people.”

Next steps

Community engagement will continue to be a crucial aspect of the River Leven Park development. Below are a number of proposed starting points to consider during Stage 3 - Detailed Design.

- Once the train station locations are confirmed the masterplan will need to integrate traffic-free connections from the stations into the wider river park. This fully integrated Concept Design Masterplan will need to be presented to the community for final conversations and approval.
- The finalised Concept Design Masterplan will then be presented to the Sustrans Review Panel for further approval before progression to Stage 3 - Detailed Design.
- Stage 3 - Detailed Design Community Engagement Inception meeting or events with project team and partners to establish community engagement methodology and recording process.
- Community values and design event where we'll ask the community to provide input into key areas to help shape the design for the project. These areas will be based on things communities have already told us they are interested in including walking, cycling, wildlife, activities and community facilities.
- Project selection meeting between project team, partners and the Leven Programme Delivery Group



▲ Event 2 at Methilhill Senior Citizens Centre, March 2020

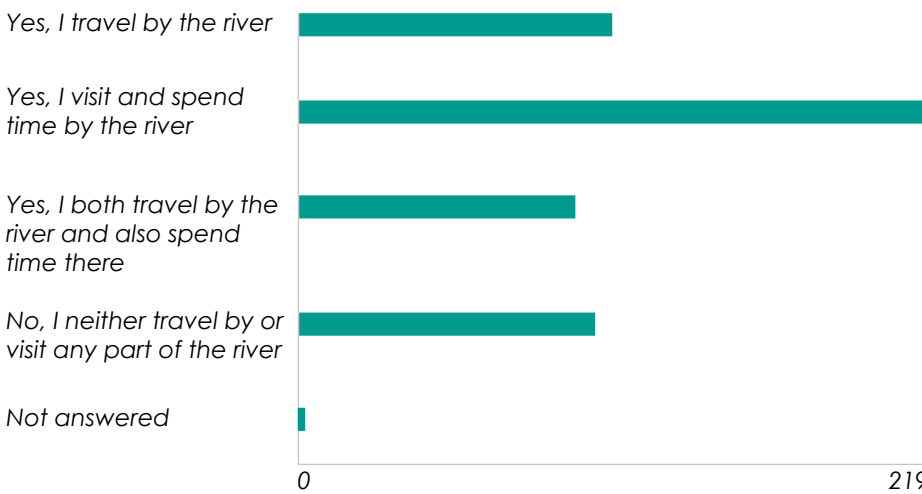
The following Appendix includes the responses from the first survey completed by members of the public to ascertain baseline opinions on existing use of the valley, comments recorded at the first two engagement events, responses from the Spaces for People survey, a summary of comments from the Active Travel Network survey, a list of landowners contacted by the project team about the Connectivity Project, social media posts and extracted pages from the report produced by Levenmouth Academy pupil Emma Justice.

| | | |
|----|---|-------|
| A1 | Initial community survey | 33 |
| A2 | Event one comments | 34 |
| A3 | Event two comments | 35 |
| A4 | Spaces for People survey | 34 |
| A5 | Active Travel Network survey | 37 |
| A6 | List of landowners / social media posts | 38 |
| A7 | Pages extracted from pupil report | 39 |
| A8 | Consultation comments | 42-55 |

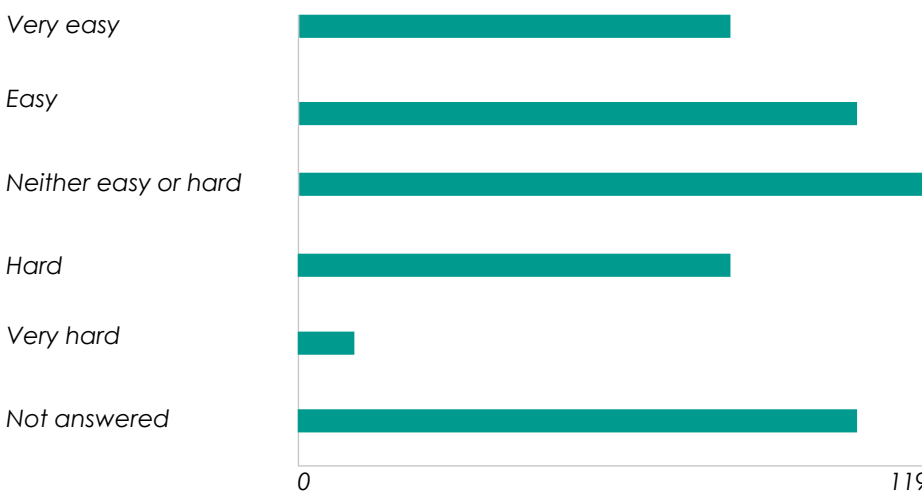
Monday 10th February 2020

This was teh first survey sent out to ascertain a baseline opinion from locals. The survey was promoted via social media with a link on theleven.org website too. Targeted boosting was carried out on Facebook to accounts that fell within the Levenmouth area, so it would appear on their timeline, even if they did not follow the Leven Programme. Locals were also asked to fill in paper copies at the events and these were transposed into the online system. The vast majority of responses came from the KY8 postcode area.

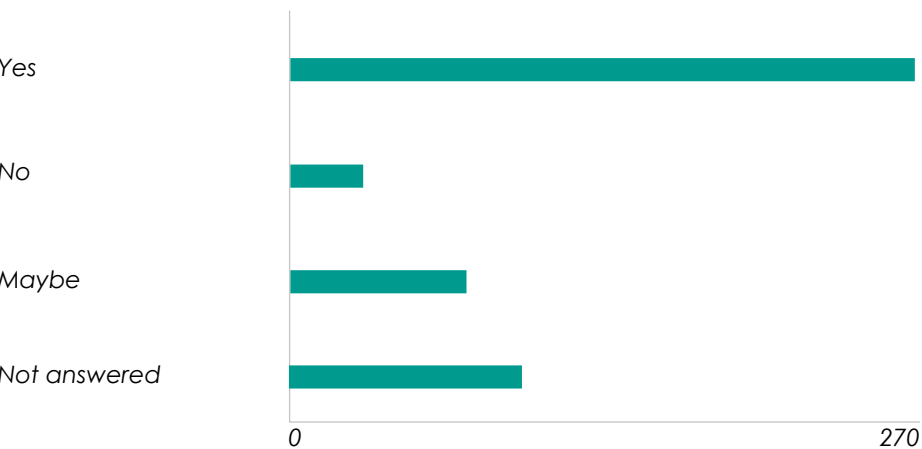
Question: Do you visit any part of the River Leven between Cameron Bridge and Levenmouth? (select one answer)



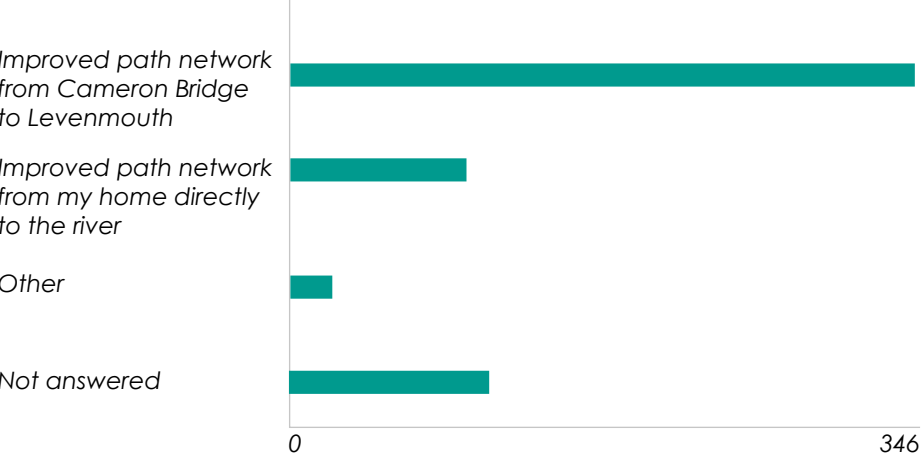
Question: How easy is it for you to get along the River Leven from Cameron Bridge and Levenmouth from where you live? (select one answer)



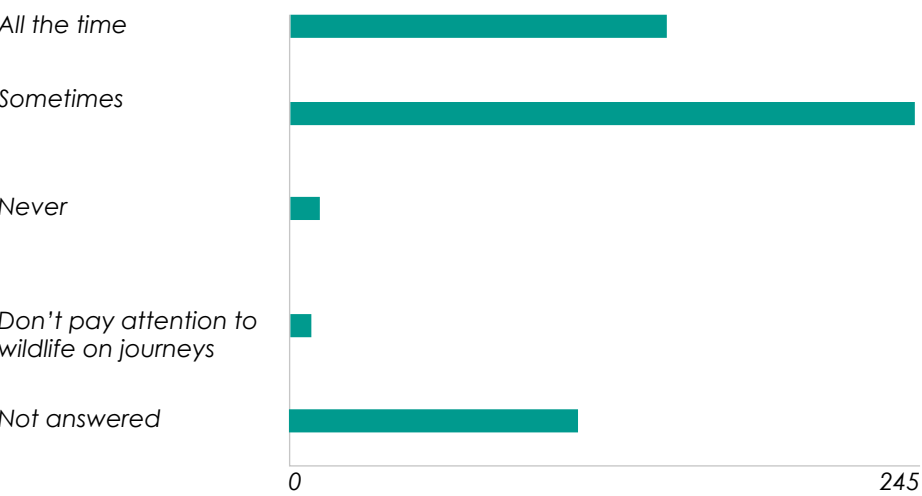
Question: Would you increase the number of times you walk along or visit the River Leven if it was easier to access? (select one answer)



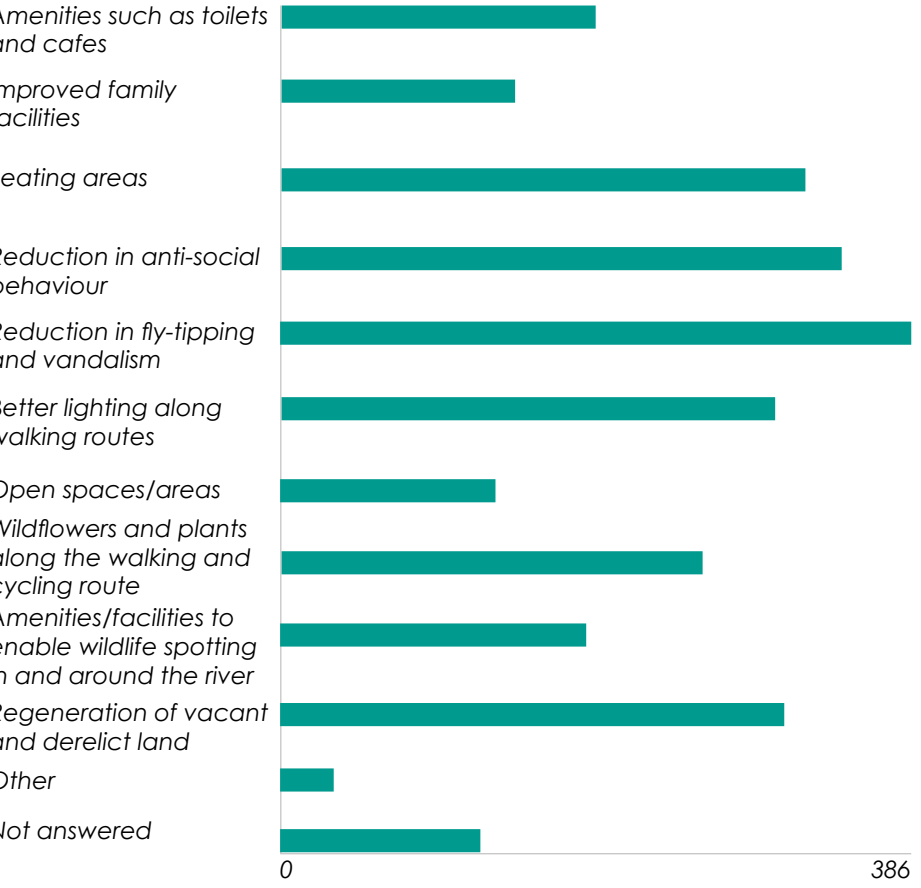
Question: What things would you like to see introduced that would help improve your access to the River Leven? (select all that apply)



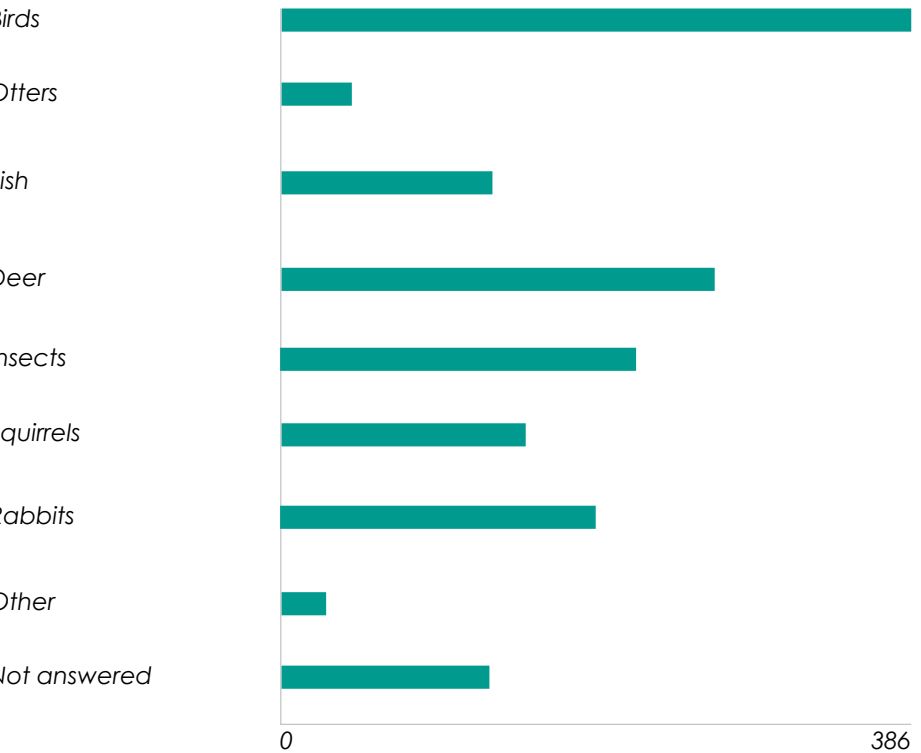
Question: When passing by or visiting the River Leven from Cameron Bridge to Levenmouth, how often do you see wildlife in the area? (select one answer)



Question: What things would you like to see introduced to improve the attractiveness of the river route between Cameron Bridge and Levenmouth? (select all that apply)



Question: If you see wildlife, which of the following do you see? (select all that apply)



The Leven – Connectivity Project

February 10 2020

Event 1 Sticky note comments

Connectivity / links

- Coast link isn't good for cycling
- Better links to and from Leven Valley needed (eg Buckhaven/East Wemyss)
- Step-over walls are too difficult
- Simon Crescent path now overgrown (fenced off)
- Accessible but not to quads + bikes, provision elsewhere
- Provision elsewhere for motorbikes
- Kirkland Dam steps are too steep
- Tactile markers along the route (ie wooden sculptures, mosaics)
- Wheelchair access on path
- Links into river for wild swimming
- Wide route for pedestrians and cyclists (hard surface + maintained)
- New houses at Aldi need access
- Access from Leisure Centre (depending on trainline)
- Land managed by overflow – pipes dangerous
- Likes the changes at the weir, can see the river and nature
- Nurture centre as contact for family involvement
- Leven Las Vegas 100 members – Sports Centre 10K 2019
- Inclusive routes for all users but there should also be more secluded spaces too
- Two vans parked in way of route to Aldi
- Wider paths needed as people/dogs often fall
- Narrow space on path – pushing towards river
- Wouldn't walk along 'coastal path' from Buckhaven to Leven – boring for residents
- Crossing to reflect new routes + paths
- Wider path on Methilhill side of river
- Do not confine path network to the valley – we need an integrated network across Levenmouth with as much off-road as possible
- Link to Aldi would be missed
- Access from a car park (visitor) too far to get to
- Car parking needs to be nearby
- Even surface – safe seating

General ideas

- Edible trails like in Perth
- Mass orchard planting along paths providing fruit, blossom, amenity
- Vegetation is overgrown, livestock could maintain
- Paths are overgrown, residents have to sweep cuttings themselves (blower would help)
- Should be maintained in early summer not autumn
- Natural flowers leaving things to nature
- Flora and fauna info boards
- Will you be putting a nature guide if repaired for walks by some people
- Trees + natural playground
- Would visit if there was interpretation info / locations for nature
- Use of logs or boulders for seating rather than benches as more robust
- Seating areas are needed as walks are long
- Nice seats would be good
- Lochore Meadows as an example of what Leven could become
- Heritage and nature information could be displayed in an area central to the scheme
- Dogs should mostly be on leads but there should also be space for them to run freely

Creosote Site

- Creosote site has potential rail parking or something for motorbikes or pump tracks
- Would like to see lots of different things in the creosote site, a park with water
- Develop creosote site as a recreational space
- Creosote bike park would be too loud
- Get timber yard involved with creosote site woodland

Schools / young people

- Involve young people in river activity as this will trickle up to parents
- School's outside – learning woodland
- School classes should encourage interaction with the outdoors
- Segregated safe space for nursery

Mixed use for different groups

- Community hub very important
- Get involved with the Festival of Fun, mix of disability groups last Saturday in July
- Opportunity to work with Sense Scotland based in Glenrothes, Festival of Fun, Bill Wood billwood@sensescotland.org.uk
- Encourage disabled access with resting points, seating areas with sensory materials
- Swimming at Methilhill near Ash Grove
- Men's Shed idea, build benches which will be installed along the path network
- Start new Men's sheds
- Working with church to look at community inputs

General issues raised

- Working mill on the river near Kirkland House
- Fear of antisocial behaviour ruining the changes
- How do we encourage people out into the countryside and nature?
- Does not feel safe due to remoteness, drugs and fear of mugging
- Felt creepy in 60s/70s
- Tractors make routes muddy
- Silt from Diageo causes issues for anglers
- Diageo killed deer on-site
- Nowhere pretty for Methil people to go
- Flooding seems to stop people getting to the river
- There's a seal near Aldi in a fallen tree
- Worried about bikes and vandalism if opened to all
- Sandy Brae Centre track not big enough for motors

River cleanliness

- When a lady was young, she believed the river was orange in colour
- River cleanliness should be improved

The Leven Programme – Connectivity Project, Community Engagement Event 2, Public Drop-in

Location: Methilhill Centre, Main Street, Methilhill, KY8 2DP
Time & Date: 10.00 – 16.00 Monday 2nd March 2020

Post-it notes comments

Connectivity / links

- Based in Maple Gardens, you can walk all the way to both Kennoway and Letham Glen
- Would use river if it was safer but there are more people on the roads so I go there
- Should be an entrance/signage to the valley at the Kirkland mini-market
- Would like to see links to the coastal path and more benches
- No buses to the river for those without a car
- Difficult to use due to debris, surfaces, vegetation and glass
- Resurface the existing paths, don't need new ones
- Link required to Glenrothes from Windygates
- Pavements between Windygates to Glenrothes allows cycling traffic free
- Try to cycle but too difficult along the river – hard to find off-road routes
- Need more cycle paths
- Pipes were always used by children for crossing
- Pedestrian bridge could be installed on the former piers next to the Iron Brig
- Re-open old railway line in East Neuk as a new cycleway
- Could there be a diagonal foot bridge underneath the Iron Brig to maintain off-road pedestrian routes?
- Wooden boardwalks – locals might try to burn them
- Community hub location next to new housing opposite Creosote site not ideal for elderly as no direct bus connections and steep road down from nearest bus stop
- Need to improve the Coastal Path too, it is far too narrow

General ideas

- Would like to see information on the nature and history
- Would like to see information boards
- Signage improvements are needed from Methilhill to the river
- Would like a gym trail, but natural, not too man-made
- Leven could become the next "Orchard City"
- River clean-up opportunity at old steelworks
- Poplar Road area has a lot of bother from motorbikes who constantly cause hassle for locals. They need an area of their own!
- Get the school pupils involved in picking up litter, Duncan Zuil from Levenmouth Academy could help
- Engage young so they are invested
- Paintball at the Creosote site
- Look at examples of trains in Netherlands for good bike storage
- Design for park run 5k in Leven
- Mass planting of fruit trees to connect the river valley to Buckhaven Orchard Trail
- Re-use sleepers as benches
- A nature/ecology centre
- Arts/pottery centre
- Gas barbecue areas in the large grassy areas
- There should be more seating overall, and picnic areas
- Get local kids to design artwork for the rail-line fences
- Could there be a miniature train ride – maybe at the Heritage Railway?
- Teenagers need a safe place to go. Firepit / shelter / if they help to design and/or build them they will take pride and ownership of them

General points raised

- There's illegal dumping, more mattresses in the river – about a dozen from S. Brae to Bawbee Bridge
- Trains used to go from Leven to Edinburgh
- Used to swim in the river when I was young
- Enjoyed seeing animals in the glen
- Invasive Himalayan Balsam spreading/re-infecting from the Back Burn to River Leven
- Build up otter habitats so they outcompete mink, build holts, create pools for hunting fish.
- Maintenance of vegetation is needed, though it does stop the bikes
- Would like to see restrictions to motorbikes
- Weren't physically able to continue dog walking
- Feels uncomfortable on own as a woman – frightened by groups of young people
- Too much glass for cycling from Friday nights
- Would be nice to see lots of fish
- Parking at Aldi
- Motorbikes and mink are issues
- We pick raspberries when we walk the line, I've seen strawberries on other paths which we also picked
- Area next to waste water plant used to be a dump so a detailed survey would be required before installing any foundations
- Raised area next to Aldi route filled with old cement from cement works
- Area to the right of Burn Mill dam is old infill
- Not much for kids to do in the area when the weather is bad
-

Spaces for People consultation

<https://consultation.sepa.org.uk/the-leven/spaces-for-people-consultation>

This report was created on Tuesday 13 October 2020 at 12:20

The consultation ran from 03/07/2020 to 13/07/2020

Responses to this survey: **39**

1: Which streets or paths in Levenmouth do you think are not wide enough to pass others safely?

There were 35 responses to this part of the question.

2: Which streets or paths in Levenmouth currently have queues outside shops, takeaways or cafes where it is difficult to pass safely?

Text - Queues

There were 25 responses to this part of the question.

3: Which streets or paths in Levenmouth have bus stops where there is not enough space to wait safely?

Text - Space

There were 19 responses to this part of the question.

4: Are there any roads in Levenmouth where a temporary 20mph limit would make it safer to walk or cycle?

Text - 20mph limit

There were 21 responses to this part of the question.

5: Are there any areas of Levenmouth where temporary cycle lanes would benefit cyclists?

Text - cycle lanes

There were 25 responses to this part of the question.

6: Any other comments or suggestions?

Text - Comments

There were 20 responses to this part of the question.

Q.

Do you support the overall Levenmouth Active Travel Route Network proposal?

A.

94% generally supportive comments

Q.

Do you have any comments about any of the individual links that make up the overall network?

A.

Some respondents felt Buckhaven was not adequately served. Comments included requesting better linkages from Buckhaven to the new railway station at Cameron Bridge, the river and Levenmouth Campus. Others also felt that connections north were lacking including through Kennoway and Broom. Comments were made regarding linking to existing core path network, coastal path, Pilgrims Way and Leven Loop. Quotes:

"The unconnected and brief stretches shown in Leven stand out as odd"

"i think better routes surrounding the dam and river leven would be awesome. Helps for lesuire cycling also. It also supports the properties across from diageo accessing the stations at cameron bridge also and not just leven station."

"It would also be nice to see wildflowers along routes □ a focus on being 'green' would be nice, as in recycling bins etc for the public to use on walking routes."

"It might be a good idea to try and get the local communities to help with planting flowers etc, especially young children and schools, I think this would help people take pride in their community."

"West of Levenmouth Campus, use existing developer plans for green corridors which link to Cameron Bridge."

Q.

Do you have any thoughts on how walking and cycling can be encouraged in the Levenmouth area?

A.

A popular response was the desire for segregated routes, improved access to low cost bikes and safe cycle storage. Public facilities such as seating, resting areas, dog waste bins, recycling bins, public toilets: Education and tackling the school run.

Accessibility for all.

Education.

Lighting and improved condition of and maintenance of routes.

Quotes:

"Provision of cycle parking in destinations, pedestrian/cycle priority in new developments, low traffic neighbourhood schemes, filtered permeability schemes, removal of obstructions on routes, raising awareness of safe cycle routes."

"It would be nice to have some secure bike storage facilities by Leven beach and around the area and safer cycle lanes. Maybe down by the river you could have a small nature reserve where people could go to and relax also having lots more bins to allow people to keep the area tidy. Also you could have that more accessible and illuminated at night creating a safer walking passage, also having lots of bins for glass bottles. It might be worth looking into having one of those recycling machines that give you money for glass and plastic bottles, I think this would help give an insensitive to keep the area tidy."

"I hope this becomes a reality would be great for all able & disabled."

Q.

Are there any missing links that you would like to be considered?

A.

Suggestions included routes to:

- Levenmouth campus
- Silverburn Park
- Methil docks
- Buckhaven waterfront/foreshore area
- Comments highlighted ambition to connect outlying settlements such as East Weyms and Lundin Links as well as up river to Markinch

Quotes:

"there is scope for a key offroad link between River/ Campus/Starkies Wood/Swan Brae/Energy Park/Buckhaven Foreshore "

"Key Route 6 appears to use Waggon Road at its southern end. The original pathway/route from Durie Estate to Leven Promenade followed a line from the bus turning point at Casan, following Holly Road to Broom Road then onto Waggon Road. If this was a recognised cycle route it would link Leven from North to South." E Wemyss/Buckhaven via Percival Rd/rear of Levenmouth Academy/Methilhill is the most glaring.

Q. Where do you consider are the most important locations to cross the river and new railway line?

A.

Common responses: Steelworks Brae Methil to Windygates/Kennoway Mountfleurie Mouth of the river Cameron Bridge At the new railway station locations

"This depends on final specific locations selected for stations. However as close to Cameron Bridge as possible - at present there is only the A915 road but there needs to be separate non-vehicle crossing. This is the major gap and may hinder use of Cameron Bridge station"

Lessons learned

Some respondents felt the map lacked detail and an appropriate key. There were also comments which suggested the respondents felt the map ignored the existing core path network, the Leven Loop and planned developments. It was also clear that the respondents didn't fully understand that the proposed routes would be segregated from road traffic. "I found the format of the map difficult to interpret, so it's hard to be specific about what is planned. Street names would have been helpful." Future maps used for consultation should include the Leven Loop and possibly the Fife Coastal Path. Specific reference to segregation should be included and, if appropriate, visualisations. Street names and/or trip generators/ landmarks should also be included to help respondents orientate themselves.

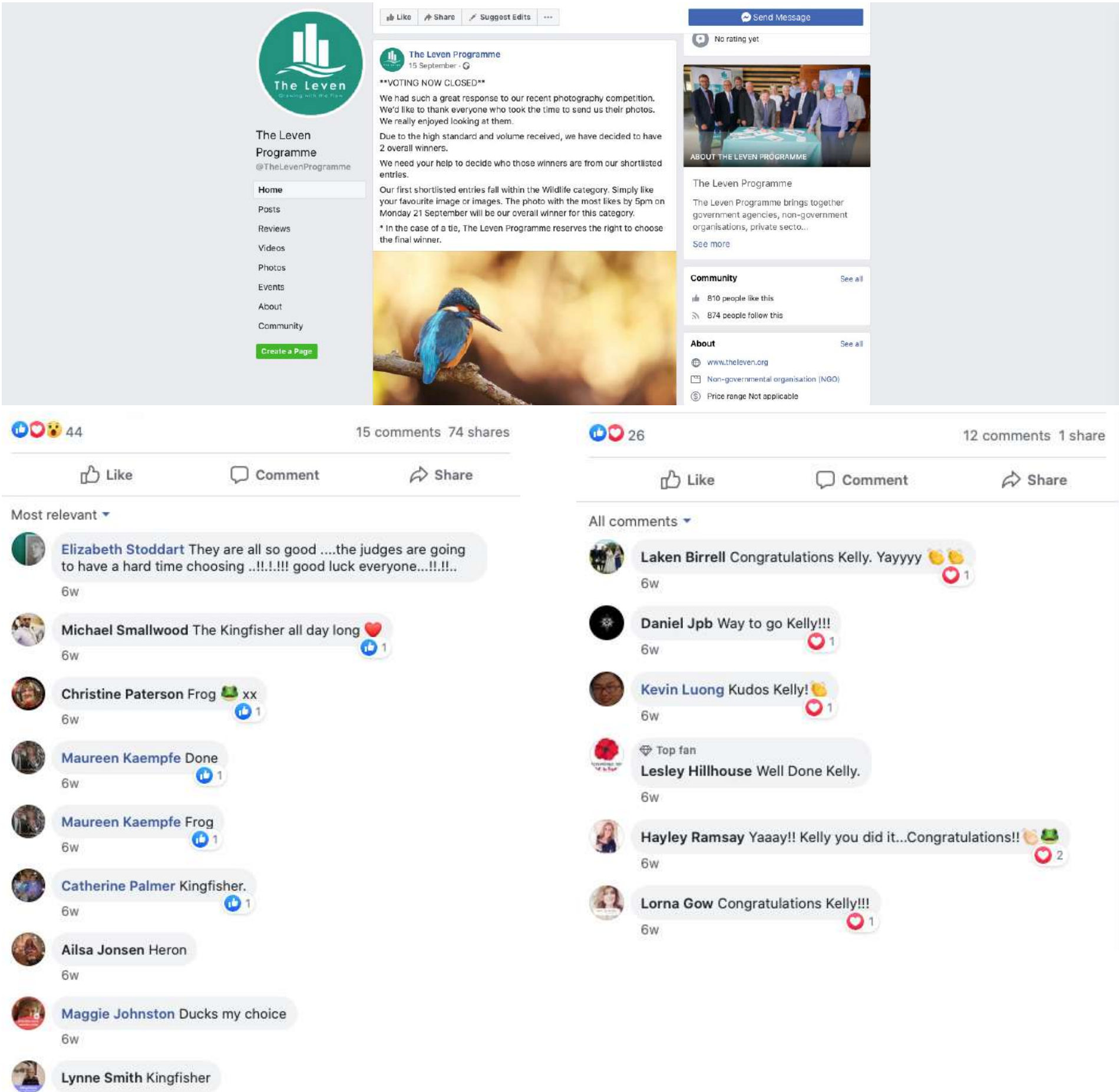
Landowners contacted by the Leven project team:

1. Tullis Russell Papermakers
2. Caledonian environmental services
3. Coal Authority
4. Metsa Wood
5. Fife Council
6. SP Distribution PLC
7. Glen Housing Association Limited
8. Robert Purvis Plant Hire Limited
9. Hermiston Securities Limited
10. Trustees of Michael John Wemyss
11. Andrew Michael John Wemyss
12. James and Teresa Selfridge
13. DB Cargo (UK) Limited
14. Sainsbury's Supermarkets
15. Epsilon 3 Limited
16. Robbings & Myers U.K. Limited
17. SJF Investments Ltd
18. Scottish Water



^ Tweet by Jenny Gilruth MSP highlighting her support for the Leven Programme

Facebook comments on the photography competitions ➡



Current Walking Routes

Currently there are several paths along the river with several different access points.

1 – Path shown in red in Figure 2 below

There is a path which starts next to the Sawmill Bridge on the left of the river and goes right along until the bridge crossing the river at Kirkland near the Burn Mill Dam. Along this path is the Dam wood which is an old park that was previously maintained by the Robert Gough Centre however is no longer maintained at all. The Dam Wood has potential to be a nice addition to the path.

2 – Path shown as green in Figure 2 and picture 5/6 below

Along the side of Burnside Motors, closest to Castlefluerie, there is a path that leads down over the old railway line and across to the River Leven and the bridge crossing near the Burn Mill Dam. This joins up both sides of the river into the local community from both sides as it comes out at the other side of the bridge into Methil, down the road along from the recycling centre.

3 – Path shown as blue in Figure 2 below

There is a path starting from that same bridge on the side of the river closest to Kirkland that goes all the way along to the Kirkland Dam Weir with several exit/entrance points that lead into Methil and a bridge crossing the river close to the Kirkland Dam Weir.

4 – Path shown as pink in Figure 2 below

From the Leven side of the river alongside the road there is an entrance just beyond the Duniface Farm area. There is an underpass which joins up with the bridge closest to the Kirkland Dam Weir.

5 – Path shown as yellow in Figure 2 and photo 12 below

There is a path used by dog walkers that goes alongside the old railway and goes behind Sainsbury's and comes out just behind the swimming pool at the promenade. Currently this path is not a proper path and links up at a large slope at the path at Sawmill Bridge.

These paths would all need work done to them to make them suitable to be used by large numbers of people. Currently many of these paths are simply mud paths or have been worn down by dog walkers. Some have been left behind by construction work and were rough to begin with but now years later have become potentially dangerous to use with the paths becoming obstructed by large boulders or holes obstructing the pathway.

The bridge closest to the Kirkland Dam Weir is small and although sturdy does not hold the appearance of being so. The wooden panelling making up the base of the bridge is old and is wearing away so that there are small holes in the bridge that could pose a potential danger to the public as a foot could easily get caught in one of these such holes. Maintenance needed for this bridge.



Figure 2: Colour coded map showing current paths



Photo 1: Path along the river



Photo 2: Wooden structure next to Dam Wood



Photo 3: Path covering sewer next to river



Photo 4: Old Railway line



Photo 5: Start of path 2



Photo 6: Continuation of path 2

Main Problems along this section

Fish Barriers, Weirs and Abstractions

Along this section of the river there are two main obstacles to fish migration, the Burn Mill Dam Weir and the Kirkland Dam Weir.

The Burn Mill Dam Weir (as shown in the photo below) is an old weir with trees on an island in the middle which split the weir into two parts. It does not completely stop fish migration as there are still fish as far up as the Kirkland Dam Weir however it does greatly restrict fish migration.

The Kirkland Dam Weir (as shown in the photo below) is combined with a sewer pipeline which is encased in the weir by Scottish Water making the weir complicated to remove (Sewer pipe route shown in Figure 3). Because of the slope that the weir is on there is very little way that fish can possibly move past the weir and so acts as a major obstacle for fish migration.



Photo 7+8: Kirkland Dam Weir



Photo 9: Burn Mill Dam Weir



Figure 3: Map showing where sewer pipe runs

Other Problems

Anti-social behaviour - The route is frequented by numerous individuals acting in an anti-social manner, mainly children and young adults who use the area and paths to smoke, drink and partake in less than legal activities. The number of these people tends to increase towards the end of the week (Thursday, Friday and Saturday). They also use the area to mess around on their bikes, motorcycles and quad bikes. They have been known to quite frequently start fires along the route either with the bushes lining the path or with rubbish they have found/brought, this not only looks really bad to anyone walking along these paths at the time or later when the fire is out, the scrap remains can also be potentially really dangerous to both the people involved in starting the fire but also to anyone passing at the time. Due to these individuals the path is also covered in broken glass that just seems to increase constantly, this can put dog walkers in particular off of using this route because of the increased risk that a dog is going to injure itself on the glass. This route is likely so popular for anti-social behaviour because it is not maintained and there is minimal foot traffic so they are unlikely to get caught or face any consequences for their actions.

Litter and Rubbish - The River has long been used to dump rubbish in which means that the river is far from clean and is littered with trolleys, car parts and other miscellaneous rubbish. Understandably this puts off a lot of people from using the path who would have been using it for the scenery, a nice day out etc. This could also prove a problem for fish migration etc. as the more people that dump rubbish into the river the higher the chances are that something that has been dumped will cause harm to the environment.

Safety issues - The area next to the swimming pool where the paths come out is fine and safe most of the time however at certain times throughout the year there are families parked in caravans that camp at the entrance to the path. Some of these families have been known to have with them dangerous animals such as dogs that have frequently attacked other dogs or put individuals at risk making the route much less used during these times of the year. 9 out of 10 of these families are completely fine and no bother to the locals however it is that 1 out of 10 that have made the community weary.

Much of the path, particularly from Burn Mill Bridge along to the Kirkland Dam Weir, is very thin and would only allow one person to walk along at a time safely, this would be fine however there is a slope on one side of the path and the river on the other which means it is really easy to put a foot wrong and fall and potentially have a serious injury. As well as this it means that if you meet someone coming the other direction then there is no space along much of the path to be able to step to the side and let the person past which also poses a serious safety problem.

In or after bad weather many of the paths, particularly the paths in and about the Dam Wood, currently become quite dangerous and hazardous because of the fact that so many of them are just mud or are covered in mud meaning that when it has been raining the paths become very easy to slip on and as previously mentioned the paths are very thin so a slip on those paths could be even more dangerous because it could mean falling down the slope or into the river which again could cause someone a serious injury and since the path currently isn't well used, if the person is on their own then it could be hours before they are found. (Shown in photo 12)

There is much less access from the Leven side of the river. This is likely because the river is separated by a wooded area and any access from the Leven side would require a bridge to join up with the path which is expensive and, in most cases, unnecessary.

Opening up the path starting from Kirkland Dam to make it more user friendly and clearly marking the walk and putting lighting along the walk so that it can be used as a safe route to school that cuts the walking journey time from Leven down to about 30 minutes instead of about 60 minutes.



Photo 16: Example of signage at Loch Leven



Photo 17: Example of signage for the Fife Coastal Path

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O |
|----|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| | Do you agree with the overall proposals for Methil Garden? | Do you agree with the overall proposals for Burn Mill Garden? | Do you agree with the overall proposals for Creosote Garden? | Do you agree with the overall proposals for Iron Brig Garden? | Where is the most important existing crossing across the River Leven that you use for journeys made by foot or by bike? | Where will be the most important location you will need to cross the new railway line? | There will be two new railway stations as part of the new railway link, one at Leven and one near Cameron Bridge, although we don't have the exact details yet. What would be the key thing that would make it easier for you to walk or cycle to either of the new stations? | We know there are bits of the proposed active travel network that we might not have got right just yet. Please tell us what you think is missing or where the network could be even better. | Do you support segregated cycle routes to make it easier to travel around the area without a vehicle? | Do you agree with the overall proposals for the pollinator network? | If there was a new pollinator corridor created, what types of plants would you like to see in it? | Would you be interested in learning how to create and maintain pollinator habitat, and/or take part in planting and mowing? - Text - Mowing reasons | Do you agree with the overall concept plans for the River Leven Park? | Do you think you would use or visit the River Leven Park regularly if the proposed improvements were made? | Would you support us providing a dedicated location for the use of off-road motorbikes in a location away from the public river park? |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | N/A | N/A | | N/A | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Any change or adaptation to the ground in it current state can only be an improvement. | | | | The most westerly crossing joining Windygates & Methilhill. | As per Q9's answer. | | N/A | | | | | | | I think all the residents of Kennoway, Windygates and Methilhill would all appreciate a dedicated location for the use of off-road motorbikes in a location away from the public river park as we are plagued by this menace during the summer months especially. |
| 4 | | | | | I use the bridge to Kennoway a lot but maybe the Steelworks | Heading from the old creosote works up to Aldi. | Good lighting and cameras to make me feel safe. | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | Currently the bridge nearest Cameron bridge as I travel from kennoway along to Kirkland where I cross again at new | As above | | | I think this is key. Reduces use of car by encouraging safe cycling | | | | Impressed with proposal | I already use the area regularly | This should be completely away from area |
| 6 | | | | | Near the wooded area and the sewage pipe | Methilhill and Leven | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | This is a great idea! | Route from lower methil to diageo, any route which minimises road use would be great for my bike! | Unsure, but a route from lower methil to diageo with seamless cycling would be ideal | | | I am a confident cyclist, happy to cycle on roads, but unfortunately there are a lot of impatient drivers around, so any attempt to protect cyclists is most welcomed! Especially as I tend to cycle with a child seat attached! | Love it! | | | | I already use it often and would use it daily with these changes! My daughter would love all of these parks and places to explore | This is an important feature |
| 8 | | | | | Main bridge at steelworks | Bridge at steelworks | | Not sure | | | | | | We live right next to river Leven so would love to see it thrive and be used well | |
| 9 | | | | | The Iron Bridge | I'm not sure where esactly I will need to cross the new railway line. I will be walking or cycling from and to Leven Town centre. | | I only hope there will be sufficient illumination and cameras in place so it makes me feel sufficiently safe to walk to and from the station any time day and night. | | I don't think this park is the right location for pollinators if it is supposed to be extensively and safely used by humans in the first place. There are other locations further away from the town centre where pollinator corridors can be implemented. | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | The final footbridge before Cameron Bridge | As above | It would be great to have a cycle path from Glenrothes to Leven. The existing route crosses the main A road....twice at Milton. One at Markinch junction and the other on the south side of Milton. Both extremely dangerous. It would be great to see all access points to connect a cycle path alongside the new rail route. | As above. Could their be considerations towards windygates and Milton | Absolutely. Safer greener and better all round can be family oriented also | | Don't think we really need fruit trees. | | Ambitious but really needed | Regularly use the area as a cycle track/path from Glenrothes to Leven. Beautiful area which needs enhanced | Absolutely. Let's accept people have off road bikes and give them somewhere local to use. The closest legal area to use is Cardenden/Lochgelly |

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O |
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| | Do you agree with the overall proposals for Methil Garden? | Do you agree with the overall proposals for Burn Mill Garden? | Do you agree with the overall proposals for Creosote Garden? | Do you agree with the overall proposals for Iron Brig Garden? | Where is the most important existing crossing across the River Leven that you use for journeys made by foot or by bike? | Where will be the most important location you will need to cross the new railway line? | There will be two new railway stations as part of the new railway link, one at Leven and one near Cameron Bridge, although we don't have the exact details yet. What would be the key thing that would make it easier for you to walk or cycle to either of the new stations? | We know there are bits of the proposed active travel network that we might not have got right just yet. Please tell us what you think is missing or where the network could be even better. | Do you support segregated cycle routes to make it easier to travel around the area without a vehicle? | Do you agree with the overall proposals for the pollinator network? | If there was a new pollinator corridor created, what types of plants would you like to see in it? | Would you be interested in learning how to create and maintain pollinator habitat, and/or take part in planting and mowing? - Text - Mowing reasons | Do you agree with the overall concept plans for the River Leven Park? | Do you think you would use or visit the River Leven Park regularly if the proposed improvements were made? | Would you support us providing a dedicated location for the use of off-road motorbikes in a location away from the public river park? |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 11 | the dam should be removed to restore the connectivity of the river and support aquatic life. Certainly the proposed use of mill lade should not be an excuse to keep it or reduce height of the weir. Not a fish pass creating a poachers paradise. Satanic Mills - why celebrate them? they brought fortunes to the few and pain and suffering to the many. Celebrate the here and now and provide sustainable re-naturalisation. What are your plans to help the river itself? what are the plans to reconnect the whole river? A viewing platform is fine but what is the purpose? it seems you want to celebrate the dam?? move the story on. | What's happening with the weir? If you remove the weir - which you should - then the fishing platform probably should be somewhere else. What are you doing to restore the river? Sounds like you are just keeping the weir. Does the covered hide come complete with fire place or are you expecting the locals to provide their own - it will last about 2 minutes. Good idea but not thought through. | What are you doing to remove hard edge to the river and create good in stream habitat? again noting about any works which will benefit the river - where are these in the project? What are river facilities? No point putting these in without proposals to enhance the river. People should be able to use the river - but this needs the river to be safe to use . Are you proposing bathing Water status? | What are you doing about sewage releases into the river? | | | | | | | | Not enough about the river itself. No point spending money on park when river turns yellow, has sewage discharges in it, hard edges with little access. Not sure who is responsible for this but they need to get this sorted. What's happening with the weirs - remove them or lower them - don't put in stupid non sustainable fish passes. Get the habitat of the river sorted. Get the pollution issues sorted. | Not unless you get the river sorted out as well. | |
| 12 | | | | | Bawbee bridge | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | Looks good on paper. What action will be taken to eradicate the Himalayan balsam and giant hogweed that grows along the bank at present. The balsam is also one of the main reasons why the river banks are eroding in places. | No11 needs to be reconsidered. A fishing platform at the Weir would go against the fishing clubs rules The rule is no fishing within 50m of the weir, this is to stop the foul hooking of salmon as they wait to pass the weir. | Management of invasive plant species along the river bank would need to be carried out | Viewing platforms sound good in principle but would be open to misuse by young ones jumping into the river at high tide | The main area I access are around the Cameron bridge and by the iron bridge. | At Cameron bridge for access to the left hand bank off the river to allow us to continue fishing the river. | Very unlikely that I would use the train at all | I need to know that we will be able to access all parts of the river for fishing. | | | Native trees and shrubs such as hawthorn | In theory it's a great idea But you must ensure that the river is kept open to the anglers who have been responsible for the upkeep and removal of rubbish from the river, long before this proposal was started | I would only be visiting to fish the river. Would not be making any other visits apart from that. | No, because they would not stick to that area anyway. Plus the noise impact would still be heard. The peace and quiet is one of many reasons people would want to visit in the first place. |
| 14 | | | | | Bawbee bridge. | Unsure | | An actual station would be beneficial and great for economy. | | | | | | |
| 15 | The more outside spaces, the better! | The more outside spaces, the better! | The more outside spaces, the better! | The more outside spaces, the better! | Bawbee bridge | Not sure | | | | The more nature the better | | | | |
| 16 | | | | | Iron Bridge crossing. There is most definitely merit in more crossings across the river to allow accessibility. | I will use the River Leven for leisure only. All crossing points will be useful as it will be for leisure / exercise. | N/A | The cycle network in Glenrothes is fantastic. A model for how Levenmouth can be connected. | | | | | | I would like to see off-road motorbikes being located elsewhere in the Levenmouth area. If this is to be close to the river, electric bikes only to prevent noise pollution |
| 17 | | | | | The bridge at Kirkland | Near Cameron Brig | | | | | Plants to give colour at different times of the year so no matter what the season is there is colour somewhere. | I like the idea that no matter what age or stage someone is at they will be able to walk the length of the River Leven safely | It's a forgotten area than needs attention. Riverside walks are calming and I would enjoy walking along it from Cameron Brig into Leven. | I know off road motorbikes can be a nuisance in the area so having a dedicated space for them makes sense. |
| 18 | I think this is great use of land that was forgotten. | This was not always the safest place to walk. Will be fine now. Fishers will be pleased. | Again not always the safest place at one time. So glad that it will be opened up. | Again a forgotten part. I hope there will be many information/history boards telling the story of this place. | I am sorry, but I do not use any of these crossings. | I do not live in this area, but I think it is wonderful. I will do my best to walk as much of it as I can. | | | | This is important for the environment I'm sure. | | Yes, a thousand times yes!!! | | They have been a problem for many years and I think it would help to have a designated area. |

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| 19 | | | | | Iron brig | Methil garden across the sewage pipe | N/A | The plan is fantastic and very environmentally friendly. I feel there needs to be activities for the locals to use more for youths. Parks good growing spaces bike track is good fishing walking extra. We need more activities for youths that won't use these services stated. Youths need to take pride in the environment they live in and appreciate what they have so it doesn't get damaged and also to change the perceptions of people's views of our beautiful area to come to. | | | | | Its fantastic and will improve our area so there is a purpose and an attraction for those people outside Levenmouth travel to Levenmouth. | | |
| 20 | Great idea especially the emphasis on biodiversity and accessibility. | More outdoor education should be encouraged in Fife. | New community engagement projects are needed in the area. | More play and recreation space is needed in Levenmouth. | | | | All very impressive , good luck | | Absolutely necessary. It would be a good idea to involve third sector organisations to participate in the project on voluntary basis. | | I am a localities support worker with Fife Carers Centre for Levenmouth area . I would be interested in getting the carers I work with involved in any planting and mowing and any other activities which would be suitable for them to take part in | Long overdue . It will benefit the local area and the rest of fife . It will contribute to improving peoples physical and mental health and provide much needed environmental awareness in the local community. | I would use the park while working with unpaid carers in Levenmouth but also privately. | Not good for the environment and noisy. |
| 21 | There is ALREADY a Methil Community Garden, with street signage, operating for the past three years off Kirkland Drive. Since the other three gardens along the river have more specific titles (eg Creosote, Iron Brig), it is suggested that some amendment of the name occurs to differentiate from the existing Methil Community Garden. Since connectivity is a lead project for the River Leven programme, the links between this garden and the rest of the Levenmouth community need more attention. There are already relatively well used links between this area/Dam to Buckhaven etc so some attention needs to be given to this aspect. This would include signage, perhaps some common features (eg trails which go BEYOND the immediate river) - eg sculpture, heritage, etc | Not Answered | Ideally, this site should be used/preserved for more productive use and specifically the possibility, mentioned by railway experts, of a Fife rail depot with the major economic boost including job creation, this would involve. Since there are other parks/natural sites all along the river and since linear connections along the river can be maintained, I think this space should be reserved for such use. The margins of the site can be developed to create biodiversity corridors , improved pathway experience etc but it would be best to focus on other sites first. If no employment creation opportunity can be found for this land, then it could be developed in a future phase | Not Answered | Much depends on the final site selected for Cameron Bridge railway station since this will influence where. At present there is no satisfactory or safe crossing from Methil or Buckhaven to Cameron Bridge so this must be the priority. (at present quite unsafe and unmarked crossing of the A955). The existing links further downriver are perhaps adequate (perhaps 1-2 could be upgraded) but this is the major gap. Unless this major connection is addressed (bridge/tunnel?) then the network is only partial. | At or close to the new Cameron Bridge station, wherever it's final site is determined | | The proposed network does little or nothing to address the major gap in the current network - namely the link between north Levenmouth (Leven, Kennoway etc) and south (Buckhaven, East Wemyss). This has long been recognised as the 'missing link' in what is already there and the reconfiguration of the western boundaries of the Levenmouth Campus reopened a key stretch 3-4 years ago which now enables a reasonably direct off-road route between the River Leven and Buckhaven/Levenmouth Campus/East Wemyss. This also allows a fairly direct but inland loop of the Fife Coastal Path so walkers do not need to trudge 3 miles through built up area, as well as serving local residents. Related to this, there appear to be very few stretches using offroad routes which currently exist and could be further improve or developed. Merely recognising/channelling active travel along existing major roads | The current system of white lines on local roads is not safe, or well recognised by motorists (for well known reasons - the side of the road is used for parking vehicles etc plus problems at junctions) We know local people have some reservations about using these routes for cycling for this reason | However there seem to be too many gaps in the map/pollinator network as proposed. There are opportunities to expand the interlinkages (eg corridors suggested by developers along the Levenmouth SLA), and also there needs to be work to introduce biodiversity into the sterile larger parks where only mown grass grows (eg Savoy, Muiredge) the network, and map need to include the whole of Levenmouth eg Wemyss Villages and Buckhaven. Some existing sites, where there has been planting and provision for biodiversity already established eg Starkies Wood, Rising Sun, East High Methil and Buckhaven Community Gardens, are not shown on the map. | Other shrubs which can support biodiversity. Spring bulbs to bring early colour | I occasionally volunteer for CLEAR which have planted tens of thousands of native, fruit trees, etc on greenspaces in Buckhaven and Methil. It would be good to see this greening of the sometimes uninspiring townscape extend much farther, not only onto open spaces but along roadsides, even gardens | See earlier responses - renaming of Methil Garden, addition of linkages/trails (eg fruit trees, history, art) which interconnect the riverside with the wider community and can help draw them in. It is vital not to create another mere nature 'island' such as Letham Glen or Silverburn (though the latter is now reaching out). Yes there should be concentrations along the river and at existing green spaces but other features are needed to provide this connection | | It may help reduce the periodic blight of trailbikes etc but it will not fully solve the problem. Efforts to encourage this have been made for the past 10+ years. the old bing sites used to provide some such space but some are closed. the Creosote works, if not used for productive space such as potential railway depot, might be a possibility provided access was not through quieter spaces |
| 22 | | | I love all of the ideas to make the gardens and walk ways. It would also be great to have a space for a small cafe or shop beside the river. | | For me, the most important crossing is at the back of houses across from Diageo to Methil. I'm not sure what this part is called. | It would be the same again | | I'm not sure if this is what you mean but the route around Diageo is connected to this from the bridge and could also do with some upgrades. For example under the tunnel of the road is always covered in water. | I love this idea as cyclist that doesn't love the idea of cycling on the road next to traffic | | | This would be a volunteer project for people who want to get involved | I think this will be a lovely idea to bring people that wouldn't normally visit Leven. It will also encourage a lot of people to get out and exercise. | | This would be brilliant. I appreciate that some people enjoy this and wouldn't want to stop people from doing it but it would be so much nicer for them to make the noise somewhere away from the peace and quiet. |

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| 25 | Wholeheartedly - I think this plan sounds fantastic. I love that support and protection of existing wildlife is paramount and many other proposals intend to enhance the flourishing of nature. I am interested in preserving the history of the site and creating an interest point for visitors. I am pleased to see that an upgrade to the existing bridge is to be made as its currently only accessible for able bodied people. It sounds brilliant! | Excellent - I love that these plans intend to increase biodiversity to the area. This, coupled with easier public access will make it an interesting and beautiful place to be! My cousin lives on the opposite side of the river to me and before I started walking the river Leven I rarely saw him. He is a keen fisher and so oftentimes now I will see him lugging his fishing gear and we stop to talk about the wildlife. With these proposals I envisage more of the community coming together, outdoors in all weather enjoying this space and benefitting from connection to nature and other people. | Yes again, these proposals are exciting! I would be keen to get involved in whatever way I can support the community gardens/veg growing etc. It seems that the Heritage Railway site could also benefit from these plans and increase visitor numbers. This is such a wasted opportunity when you consider how rich this area is in interest and space. the linking of the two sides of the river just makes so much sense. | Again, a space that is infrequently visited due to inaccessibility. the viewing platforms at the iron brig is a good idea because I don't know how many times I have stopped in the middle of the brig at sunrise to take a deep breath and enjoy the view...but its not safe, even with high viz clothes for any pedestrian to walk across the iron brig. The proposals set out play areas for children which i also fully support - as the benefits for children to explore the natural world, enjoy messy play and get outdoors is vital! | the crossing at the steelworks and the bridge at the methil dam. | From mountfleurie to the river Leven, probably at the site of the Heritage railway. | I love the proposals, i think that a number of elements have been considered and well thought out. I would be keen to get involved as a member of the public to continue with these consultations and offer my thoughts though. | Of course - its imperative that all communities consider ways in which we can support people to choose environmentally sustainable ways to work and play. | These proposals is music to my ear! I try hard to make my garden a haven for insects and wildlife, selecting pollinator friendly plants and shrubs. to see this replicated on a bigger scale on my doorstep would be fantastic. Not only will it be beautiful for visitors to see but will mean that our community is contributing to increased biodiversity and helping to combat climate change. | I have seen wild orchids in spring along the wall adjacent to the Dam Wood - these should be protected and could be a focal point as I'm sure they must be rare. | Yes definitely, I intend to continue to use this space so it's only fair I offer to contribute to the maintenance of the site. | Absolutely. I moved into the Mountfleurie area about 3 years ago and I love it here. I'm a keen walker, me and my dog have travelled far and wide to access the best of Scotland's environment. During lockdown and without the luxury of being able to travel far and wide I started to explore the length of the River Leven more extensively. I have been in awe at the sheer volume of life and habitat that this area supports. I have seen ducks raise their chicks, foxes scavenging, deer resting, an otter and her two young swimming and scurrying along the banks, kingfishers flash their iridescent feathers in flight, fish leaping in the strong current, hundreds of frogs emerging into life, buzzards circling overhead and heron embattled in their mating disputes. The biodiversity here is wonderful and an incredible learning opportunity for the community. I walk the river Leven daily with my dog and I meet other walkers and people on | I love this site as it is but I do feel that it is currently a wasted opportunity for our community to learn and benefit from nature and that these proposals would address that. | Yes, I know that off-road bikes can be a nuisance and often times I'm slightly irritated by the noise of them but they are often just youngsters with an interest in motorbikes wanting to have fun. On an occasion when the rider has spotted me or my dog they either stop or slow down from a distance away to ensure we are all safe. Again I have found them to be respectful and I try not to be annoyed too much by them. I would definitely support a dedicated location for the bikers. | |
| 26 | | | | | on the Kennoway to Methil-Hill pathway and also the existing bridge by the Creosote area | on the Kennoway to Methil-Hill pathway and also the existing bridge by the Creosote area | | | | | | This is an exciting project which I think will improve the area in terms of social benefits, ecological benefits and economic | | | |
| 27 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 28 | | | | | Footbridge near A916 P Roundabout | I will use any and all crossings provided. Not sure which will be most important until I see them | Putting us pedestrians and cyclists on busy roads especially A916 is bad for everybody, motorists included. Look again, there are lots of smaller residential and rural roads that we use when we walk and bike here. It takes a bit more effort in planning and signage but well worth it in the long run. | It is scary and dangerous to ride a bike on many of the busy roads here. Alternate routes are most welcome. | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Trees that will do well given expected climate changes Trees that sequester a lot of CO2 eg cypress trees | Would also like a voice in choosing what is planted and where. We have many years of experience in many different environments. Would be sad to see just the same old prunus and Rowan put in when you have this great opportunity to do something different with the long term future | Already go there a lot | Need to get away from petrol use altogether, don't build a new facility dedicated to it. They are wasteful,polluting, noisy, dangerous , they hurt wildlife and they stop the rider from experiencing the nature all around. A skateboard park would be fine. |
| 29 | | | | | Iron Brig or Baw Bee Bridge | Baw Bee Bridge | Park & Ride facility at the end of the line. Clear connections between rail and bus services, including through/joint ticketing so as to continue the journey into the East Neuk of Fife. | With street furniture for respite and rain coverage. | Would also be good to have hives spaced along the walk as part of the network. | Free access to wild grown fruits and veg for community use. Apples tress, plum trees, wild berries etc. | | | | | Cycle hire would be better - expanding the Fife Cycle network at Lochgelly |
| 30 | I think the concept is very exciting | This will help open the River to the local communities. | an area like this would promote a sense of well being in the local communities | This would provide an important educational opportunity to local communities | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | This initiative will support growth in a healthier enviroment | | | This project will Educate and grow the local environment, it will engage communities while promoting Economic Development giving much needed added value to Health and Wellbeing at a very challenging time | I would use it for both Leisure and Education | | |
| 31 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | The title is not specific enough . It is located at the farthest end of Methil-Methilhill and there are other gardens around. A more specific and maybe river-related title would be more appropriate eg Kirkland Dam Garden etc | Not Answered | Rail insiders have indicated this (or part of this site) has potential as a Fife Rail Depot with the economic boost this would bring the area. this option needs to be explored before committing to green development of the site, especially since paths, corridors etc can ALSO be developed here (ie it may not be either/or but it would be a strategic error to rule out the greater jobcreating use) | | Access to Cameron Bridge station = crossing the river and, if possible, Standin Stane Rd which is a dangerous and undefined crossing point at present. this is vital. All the other locations downstream have at least some current crossing already in place. Cameron Bridge station will serve much of Methil, Methilhill, Buckhaven & East Wemyss so a proper designated crossing is needed. | Access to Cameron Bridge station = crossing the river and, if possible, Standin Stane Rd which is a dangerous and undefined crossing point at present. this is vital. All the other locations downstream have at least some current crossing already in place. Cameron Bridge station will serve much of Methil, Methilhill, Buckhaven & East Wemyss so a proper designated crossing is needed. | Off-road is also important. | A Leven loop is shown but no similar loops eg for Methil & Buckhaven - why? There are existing path networks, including some off-road which can easily be shown in this way It looks like the main links in the path network are just following the main current road routes especially the Leven-Buckhaven arteries (ie Methilhaven Rd and Wellesley Rd) which is very questionable. If the main focus is on the River, then this red network encourages walkers/cyclists travelling to/from Buckhaven and E Wemyss to miss out the river corridor entirely. That's not to mention the fact that these are busy roads and so non-vehicle traffic will need to be shared, which does not feel safe for cyclists etc The Levenmouth Campus seems to be served at its front (ie via Methilhaven Rd) when there is a perfectly good route option around the back, which involves | Painting white lines on busy roads - as at present - is almost worse than no cycle lanes. As much as possible the routes should be segregated for traffic and intersections with roads need careful planning. Better still | the map excludes a number of areas/sites which have already been developed as biodiversity corridors (eg Starkies Wood, Rising Sun and other sites in Buckhaven) it would be nice to see extended corridors envisaged further including verges and parks | Native trees and shrubs | Already doing this in Buckhaven and parts of Methil so willing to extend this | Overall the concept is not bad but it needs more local knowledge in definition. There are a number of existing sites which surely need to be incorporated in the overall design (eg community gardens, Starkies Wood) so that the River Leven proposal becomes a centrepiece of an integrated green/connectivity. In the subsections, we have identified a few of the obvious gaps (eg crossing of the A955/better north-south of river links/including existing greenspaces etc). the proposed path network and pollinator corridors are shown as the main ways in which the wider Levenmouth community can link into the River Leven corridor but if it only uses the main road network and a few green nodes, we don't think this is ambitious enough nor is it likely to greatly increase non-vehicle traffic down to the river | It is not a pleasant experience cycling/walking the main roads to get to more rural sites. Even if improved routes are in place, I would still look for alternative off-road routes | The creosote works is the most obvious option as long as entry to and exit from does not disturb the peace of the river walks | |
| 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 33 | | | | | I do not currently use any crossings by foot or bike | The one closest to the Bus Station | I would be more likely to go into Leven by car to access the train | Hard to tell until it's there and in use | I don't know how many cycle users there are in the area so not sure | As long as plant life are not allowed to grow out of control - this makes places look untidy and | | | | | | |
| 34 | Would make the area better looking and encourage people to learn about their local area more | Would make the area more appealing to people | Might encourage people to spend more time in their local area | Would be nice to half wildlife View and area | The iron bridge or threw the dam | Not sure | | I'm not sure | It's always good to have nice cycle routes helps encourage people to use their bikes more that are but keen on cycling in | Always good to give back to the environment | | Too busy to do myself | Yes would make the area a nicer and better looking place to visit and live | I'm local so would be down often | Not sure possibly | |
| 35 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36 | | | | | Bawbee Bridge | Methil | | N/a | | | | | | | | |
| | If people have info about area and what to watch out for on walk make more interesting. | As a legal fisherman I don't think platforms would be a good idea as the river has a problem with poachers and if they have platform to use the fish stocks will be hit. | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | | | | | | I like the river and over the yrs I've seen a decline in it, I see poachers cutting down trees before to clear for them to get into layups for fish. So planting trees could be waste of time. Motorbikes RIP up paths again a concern | Only problem with this is most bike illegal so can't be used at riding centres |
| 37 | Not Answered | Not Answered | | Encouraging wildlife and leisure facilities is good for the area | | | | | | Wildlife needs to be nurtured and encouraged | | | Good facility for Levenmouth | | | |
| 38 | | | | | There are two: 1) Kennoway - Methilhill foot path 2) From Aldi's to Kirkland | Probably down from Aldi's side towards Kirkland | | | | | | | | | | I would be concerned about the noice and the impact on wildlife |
| 39 | | | | | Bridge beside sainsburys | Not sure | | | | | | | | | | |
| 40 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| 40 | I think this is a great idea. But I would like to see more trees. There is a large grass area just north of Ashgrove and Simon crescent. This could be planted with trees, leaving a walk route around it for access to the park for grass cutting. Alternatively, since a new park is already proposed, the existing park can be removed and turn into an orchard. | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | I love the idea of helping pollinators. Also bird and bat boxes sound great. I do t see as many bats as I used to. | Over grown grass land north of Ashgrove could have orchards planted too. This is wasted space. | | Love the plan so we can enjoy it. Especially for helping pollinators, birds and bats. | I visit anyway so would love it made better. | This is a big problem. Bikes constantly go by from the bottom of poplar road up to the play park at Ashgrove. Would be great to see them away from here to reduce the noise and potential of hitting children. I think trees could help stop this. | |
| 41 | This is an exciting part of the river with a very varied collection of wildlife. | This is a very popular section of the river and I'm sure these enhancements will add to this. | This area has great potential for development. | | Steelworks Brae crossing. | Path between Windygates and Methil. | | I believe Active Travel should be encouraged. the benefits have been seen by many this past year. | It is important that the Community feels it has an active role to play in the Project. | | | This is a very exciting for Levenmouth. The River Leven Project will greatly enhance and compliment the rail Link and the other Projects happening in Levenmouth. | I walk along the River most days and this year I have seen a huge increase in the use of the River corridor. I think that shows the great potential, once improvements have been made. | Off road bikes have always been used in the Area, despite great annoyance to the Community. I think that a dedicated area will reduce the annoyance to the public. | |
| 42 | | | | | Methilhill (Old Mill) Mountfluerie - Methilhill (Steelworks Brae) | Mountfluerie - Methilhill (Steelworks Brae) | | Key points I think are access to the promenade & shops + the extension of the cycle route along the river to Loch Leven | Existing cycle routes are not very well joined up which requires using public roads & therefore puts people off of using them | | Colourful scented flower species Scented Honeysuckle, Scented Coronilla & Jasmin | | | Motorbikes are noisy and dangerous, there use within the park would create a hazard and drive walkers & cyclists away - so anything that keeps them away from the park would be beneficial | |
| 43 | It's important to highlight the former working heritage of the river. | It's important to bring out natural beauty of the river so measures like hiding the ugly pipe work is excellent and bringing fishing points will involve all age groups which creates people investment in the surroundings and hopefully deter vandals | It is an excellent idea to create almost allotment type ideas again to bring people the chance to spend time there and produce food. Bringing reasons for people to be there is a winner. | Good to have a play area not too far away from the centre so better accessibility but just hope it doesn't become an area for vandals.... | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | All the suggestions sound great. | | It seems a well thought out proposal and diverse in its content | Sounds like a lovely place to walk and spend time | Anything to deter users from ruining the riverside experience for everyone else | |
| 44 | Providing essential pollinator friendly planting and improve connectivity for the river's inhabitants. | Enabling access for all is vital for the surrounding communities. Also providing an extension of the existing woodlands with native species to provide better habitat for birds and bats is so important. | I think that the community hub, could be constructed jutting out over the water, providing a cafe and viewing area. The community garden can then be used to support the cafe with fresh produce | 22 and 23 are fine. My concern is with 24 and the car park element. The map does not show how the car park will be accessed. More detail would have to be provided. There is an existing car park, which has been bamiered off and the enterance is not in an ideal position in terms of pulling out into the main traffic flow. | 1. I use the bridge that leads up to the old Lochty Line closest to Methilhill 2. Creosote crossing, leading to Aldi and Mountfleurie 3. Bawbee Bridge 4. Iron Bridge | 1. I use the bridge that leads up to the old Lochty Line closest to Methilhill. I use this to go up to Kennoway and to access the Broom area of Leven using the pathnetwork behind Diageo. | | Definatly missing is the linking up to the pathnetwork in Buckhaven. There is nothing proposed to allow the people of Buckhaven to access the River Leven other than going all the way to Kirkland and down that route. Despite this area being high in depredation and low car ownership, hence walking and cycling should be getting encouraged. Shamfully it completely ignores the link from the Bats Wood, behind Levenmouth Academy and the link down past the Shop & Save on B932, down the lane at the side, through the park and on to the River leven past Poplar Road. As there is an all weather cycling track being planned for the Bats Wood and it forms a safe off road cycling path to Levenmouth Academy which afterail is a Sports Hub and widely used after schoool hours. | Although I feel that it is safer and would ecourage more people to take up cycling, I still believe that there needs to be an element of on road cycling too. Without it then the motorist will ignore the cyclist and act in a manner that puts the cyclist at risk i.e. passing too closely. | Vital for the welfare of everyone and a great way of encouraging the youths in particular, but also the wider community to get involved in nature. | It is vital to have a mixture of habitats for the wild life, allowing them to thrive. | Post COVID-19, then would be delighted to become involved. | Yes, but active travel linkages to Buckhaven need to be added in. | For walking , cycling and to aid my mental welfare i.e. a safe accessable space to clear my heid. | Having a separate space, with clever design to minimise the noise, would hopefully encourage the motorbike and quad bike users to act more responsibly. Without their own designated space, it will only result in conflict with other users and will make the possiblility of a tranquil, family friendly, pleasant environment an impossibility. |
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| 46 | I like the idea of combining the historical and natural elements in this location. | Any improvements which help local people to reconnect with nature and the local area are welcome. My only concern would be that the minority would use shelters/meeting places etc for drinking and associated antisocial behaviour. Are there plans in place to ensure these parts are cleaned regularly so as not to put others off visiting these areas? | Much in favour of allowing the space to grow naturally and to make room for natural flooding. Would the vegetation still be maintained to an extent, rather than being left to grow out of control and just end up looking abandoned? | A great idea especially to encourage families with young children to find out more about the river and to respect it and it's beauty. | I work in the area and therefore don't walk or cycle - only drive currently. | Steelworks brae crossing | The area nearest to Rosemount Grove | | So far so good - I'm not sure what else to suggest. | Especially if it includes separate cycle/walking lanes | Anything to encourage wildlife to prosper and help educate the younger generations about looking after nature in general. | | This information would be useful and it would be great to be involved. | It's a fabulous idea and will hopefully encourage people within the local area to take a pride in their surroundings. Not only that, they will then use this to promote their own area to visitors, creating a better environment and encouraging investment. | Absolutely, it's a lovely part of the country already but these improvements would make a huge difference. | A thousand times yes! Off road motorbikes are the bane of people's lives in the area, but an important part of people's leisure time obviously. It would have to be accessible, but not so structured that it's no fun for those who like the thrill of just riding wherever they please. There also needs to be continued attention given to diverting this activity away from streets and local parks etc, and followed up with enforcement where appropriate. | |
| 47 | I do but I don't because some people like how it already is and plus teenagers and adults may vandalise the area therefore the hard work will all be ruined | N/A | Who is going to maintain and upkeep after it is built | Who will maintain it | Iron bridge | | Down the dam near Aldi methil brae and entrance to dam leven end | | Pedestrian bridge over railway cause some people go for shopping from methil and cross the dam to go to Aldi | Pollution | Vandilisation | Sunflowers | | | Because I'm normally in anstruther and can't really access it at all times | | |
| 48 | Make currently messy scary spaces useful. There are going to be more & more floods, looks like this might help divert floods away from the buildings nearby. | Likely vandalism of anything built, so would need commitment & money to fix rather than letting it be another eyesore the council doesn't repair. | Letting areas flood and maybe less problems for the buildings. Local allotments might be good if local people can use them and not expensive. But would need to keep the paths clean if they are used for flooding as it's muddy and messy. But if you can't keep them clean then they'll be more prolem areas. | Play area needs looked after. If the swings can be wound up, the kids will and then it'll be a mess again. | Mainly in the car | | Just where the road goes if it's a bridge or tunnel | I don't have a bike, so well lit, safe pavements that don't have loads of trees/ bushes to hide folk. | How to make sure it's safe. There's gangs of young folk, and if they are hanging about it wouldn't feel safe to go through. Things have been built and tried, but they get damaged and graffiti, so need to make sure the council will keep it working and clean. | Don't have a bike | Hedges and trees can be hiding places that cause trouble, but nothing about how it'll be looked after to make sure its safe. But I know its important for bees and pollen. | | | really needs something done, and its been great seeing the river in Glasgow done with the Hydro and the bridge, but that's got wide pavements and lights so it feels safe. Good that floods could be in gardens and protect the buildings. | Just depends if its looked after and safe | They're really noisy, sometimes can't hear yourself chat or hear the TV at my dad's because of the noise, and it's worse when he's having trying to sleep in the evening. So would need to be something to stop the noise bothering anyone that would hear it. | |
| 49 | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Not Answered | Having looked at the proposals I can only see positives. Bringing greenspace, a haven for wildlife and bringing communities together in a beautiful green area. | Most definately. Now, even more we are seeking out and appreciating the need for these greenspaces, nature and walking areas giving us time to destress and connect with nature and the environment. It is vital for mental health and general well-being of children and adults alike. | |
| 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

