

## Request

Please can you provide details of responses to the consultation re Standish bridleway resurfacing including number of initial objections from local horse riders 2 years ago. Your consultation walks were reduced from three to one Please detail notes taken from this meeting including local objection.

## Response

Two different schemes have been consulted on:

1. Leeds & Liverpool Canal Tow Path and links.
2. Wigan to Standish Phase 2.

The first one is now constructed, and the tow path has a new upgraded surface. Consultation took place prior to scheme construction and a Microsoft Teams meeting was held with Equestrian Users. Feedback from that meeting is attached.

The public consultation was predominantly via an online platform which can be accessed here and you can view feedback:

[Community Forum - Leeds & Liverpool Canal And Links - Commonplace](#)

The second scheme was consulted on this year and included letters, leaflets, website updates and a walk. Two walks had to be cancelled due to verbal abuse from members of the public towards council officers.

All feedback from the consultation and the walk have been published here:

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Docs/PDF/Resident/Parking- Roads-Travel/Travel/Standish-Consultation-Questions-and-Queries.pdf>

Leeds & Liverpool Canal Towpath and Links Improvement Scheme

Meeting with Equestrian Representatives

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022

16:30 – 17:30 Microsoft Teams

**Meeting Summary**

**Purpose of the meeting:**

The purpose of this meeting was to engage with members of the equestrian community and share with them the Council’s proposals for the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Towpath and Links improvement scheme and hear their views.

**Attendees:**

|                                         |  |
|-----------------------------------------|--|
| Wigan Council                           |  |
| WSP                                     |  |
| Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) |  |
| Canals and Rivers Trust (CRT)           |  |
| Equestrian Community                    |  |

**Items shared (consultation leaflet, google map etc.)**

- The consultation leaflet from Summer 2021 was shared with attendees prior to the meeting. This included a map showing the proposed route.
- Google maps was used during the meeting to aide discussions and provide context of where was being discussed.
- The Councils GIS system was shown on screen during the meeting with Wigan’s Public Rights of Way highlighted.

**Comments made during the meeting**

| Comments made by | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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|                  | Crooke path to be upgraded to Shevington.<br>There are no Bridleways in Shevington.                                                                                                                        |
|                  | Safety for horse riders can be judged by themselves, not for us to determine safety and wants to know where we are getting our information from. Noted that horse riders can safely get under a 2m bridge. |

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|  | <p>The area in Crooke (paths to Shevington) is sufficient for horses.</p> <p>The Towpath from the bottom of Beach Hill / Martland Mill to Gathurst is very poor for pedestrians and cycling. It is only maintained by the local people (keeping trees to a level where horses would be able to go along safely).</p> |
|  | <p>Cycled from Martland Mill to Appley Bridge and notes that the route would be passable for horses, but they aren't allowed to ride along it so asks if permission can be given.</p>                                                                                                                                |
|  | <p>There is no access to the Bridleways from the north of Shevington and riders have to access from the south, which isn't always possible.</p>                                                                                                                                                                      |
|  | <p>In agreement with ___ and notes that the paths from Shevington to Crooke should be upgraded.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|  | <p>Agreed to send ___ the guidance on recommended widths for horse riders.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

### Comments left in the chat

| Comments made by | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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|                  | <p>I'm from the other side of Wigan, but any links that improve off road riding access between urban areas without us having to ride on the road will be fantastic. I'd just wish to request any improvements keep equestrian access in mind in terms of horse steps and lever gates.</p> <p>Yes mounting blocks are great where there are low, narrow bridges next to the canal. I do dismount if it is a blind narrow path under a bridge to improve safety</p> <p>It would be fantastic if the towpaths could be upgraded to include equestrian use, we are a great number of people that would fight to maintain these routes and the green spaces for wildlife and others to enjoy :)</p> <p>We are less vulnerable along the towpaths in terms of health and safety than on the roads</p> |
|                  | <p>Nor are they normal cycle paths. Their use as cycle paths is a modern construct.</p> <p>So think outside the box and include instead of exclude.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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|  | <p>Can the CRT tell me what the difference between the use of some parts of the towpath which are used by horses, and there are plenty of places where the towpath is used by all, and the parts were we are not supposedly allowed!</p> <p>Has the CRT taken all the historic ramps out? Do you think stock did not ever fall in from the unfenced sides.</p> <p>Forgive me ___ you may be an experienced rider but you obviously do not have a balanced view of this at all.</p> <p>Public money, public good, access equality</p> <p>Could numbers of anyone and anything falling in the canal - along the whole of the Leeds - Liverpool - please be substantiated?</p> <p>What funds do you think you need to include riders. Bridleways are often very narrow. W all manage to coexist without special treatment.</p> <p>So, how often did they lose riders in the water. Horses are not stupid, they don't tend to throw themselves into water. The point is, the route does not need to be designated as bridleway it just needs to be multi-user.</p> <p>I do wish people would not grandly state that something is dangerous. We riders are all capable of judging safety for ourselves.</p> <p>Please.... this is not an argument. What happens when a horse is hit on the road or a person falls in the canal or there is a clash between a cyclist and fisher/walker/runner</p> <p>Flexipave and other substances used on bridleways and cycleways are very good surfaces.</p> <p>It is the towpath as arterial route that is important.</p> |
|  | <p>Are there four issues here?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A sympathetic upgrade of the Bridleway from Crooke through to the Heinz factory that enables more use of that Bridleway by walking and cycling and equestrians (e.g. Flexipave surfacing / mounting blocks / bridge issues)</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

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|  | <p>2. Upgrading of the footpath to Shevington to Bridleway status to enable more use by walking and cycling and horses - not within the scope of the current funding but an important future phase to bring forward in the near term</p> <p>3. Potential permissive use of the towpath from Crooke heading out towards Lancashire (under the M6)</p> <p>4. Upgrades of footpaths to bridleways to create links to Standish</p> |
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