

Leighton-Linslade Green Wheel Masterplan

Appendix 5: Consultation Summary

Introduction:

A process of consulting key stakeholders and interest groups has informed the development of the Green Wheel Masterplan, with a 'Summary Document' (with link to the full Masterplan online) being sent and/or presented to the following:

- Leighton-Linslade Partnership Committee (CBC and LLTC)
- Adjacent Parish Councils
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- Aylesbury Vale District Council
- Ouzel Valley Park Steering Group
- Sustrans
- Ramblers Association
- British Horse Society
- Central Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Local Access Forum
- Major landowners/estates

Alongside this was a process of public consultation, launched at the 2019 Linslade Canal Festival. Over 220 public and 12 stakeholder responses were received and used to inform the final version of the Masterplan.

Results of the Stakeholder Consultation:

The stakeholders identified above (plus others) were contacted on an individual basis and were asked 5 questions:

1. Do you support the principle of the Leighton-Linslade Green Wheel?
2. Have you carried out any local research/evidence gathering that might support the development of the Green Wheel?
3. Do members of your community travel into Leighton-Linslade for work, shopping, leisure or other reasons? Is there a desire for more non-vehicular options to do this?
4. What could your organisation contribute to the development of the Green Wheel? This could be in the form of knowledge/expertise, funding, policy/advocacy or other types of support.
5. Which is the most important element of the Green wheel for you? Is there a particular section/spoke/missing link that would make a significant difference to your community?

Their responses are included in full in the table below, along with the proposed action. These responses were discussed by the Green Wheel Steering Group in October 2019 and the Masterplan was modified as considered appropriate. Overall there was a high level of support for the Leighton-Linslade Green Wheel.

It was disappointing that some of the parish council's did not respond, but the response from Stanbridge PC illustrates that there may have been a misconception that the Green Wheel does not relate to the peripheral villages – this perception needs to be overcome.

Stakeholder	Response	Action
Janet Stewart, BHS	<p>I happy to assist, as I am working towards helping the BHS with the 2026 project regarding 'Rights of Way', this could perhaps marry up with 'the Green Wheel' project eventually.</p> <p>I am looking at maps new and old to find routes past and present for Leighton Buzzard and surrounding areas. The Green Wheel is a fantastic idea for non vehicular access, much needed.</p> <p>Horse riders would definitely appreciate a route which would enable them to commute between livery yards, tack shops and competition venues, this is very exciting</p> <p>I look forward to hearing from you</p>	Continue to engage.
Sandra Dunsterville, Leighton Fun Runners	<p>Thank you for your email below sent to Leighton Fun Runners. I am Secretary of LFR and am responding on behalf of our Committee. We have also publicised the consultation to our members and asked them to submit their own individual responses.</p> <p>In relation to your specific questions, LFR would say:</p> <p>es lo</p> <p>Most LFR members are local (Leighton-Linslade and surrounding villages) and some do work, shop etc. in the town. Answering as a running club though, we are always looking for different (and safe) routes around the town for when we go out running as a club, as well as running individually, and more non-vehicular routes would support this. Our club also has a cycling division and the answers would be the same - although some cyclists prefer very long rides on specialist road bikes so would still use main roads rather than Green Wheel pathways.</p> <p>We are a club of approx. 250 members. We would not be able to support the initiative financially although could support in other areas. For example, the Club has expertise in organisation of events (such as our own running races and at parkrun). We have a website and social media forums and could help promote the initiative through these channels. We can ask our members on your behalf for any voluntary support required. We have done 'plogging' litter-picking runs around the town previously to clear local routes and could participate in a similar event around the Green Wheel.</p>	Continue to engage.

	<p>here are two main areas for us 1) safety; 2) ability to link the proposed areas to enable good use for runners and cyclists. We cannot see any missing areas. We suggest there is way marking (with a unique symbol) so the Green Wheel route is clear. Distance markers; directional signs etc. could be beneficial for all users. Ideally the inner spokes would be lit for safety reasons. We do encourage all our members to run wearing hi-viz clothing and running lights when it is dark so they can be seen. We often run down the old railway cut through from Grovebury Road to Mentmore Gardens when the street lights are not working, and visibility is still difficult plus members feel vulnerable running on their own in non-lit areas. Clearly we would wish all our members to feel they can use the Green Wheel safely.</p> <p>If you need to contact LFR again, please use the emails: secretary@leightonfunrunners.org.uk and chairman@leightonfunrunners.org.uk.</p> <p>Thank you again for contacting us and we look forward to seeing future developments.</p>	
<p>Clive Beckett, Chair of the Central Beds and Luton Joint Local Access Forum</p>	<p>Many thanks for giving JLAF the opportunity to comment on the plan. The plan provides a good base for taking the initiative forward. Members of JLAF have considered the consultation draft and our comments are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is a pity there is no acknowledgement of the extensive work the British Horse Society has done in preparing a bridleway aspiration map. 2. Should the Master Plan specify the preferred specification for a green corridor, e.g. 10 metres wide? Should be mentioned under Appendix 2. 3. Under Section 5 Accessible Green Spaces, there is no mention of equestrian access. Surely the aim must be to provide such routes through Linslade Wood and Tiddenfoot Waterside Park and any new sites such as Pratts Quarry. The argument that providing equestrian access would make a site accessible to unauthorised users is not sustainable in today's world when bridlegates can be constructed to prevent motor cycle access. Also, the Greensand Trust has successfully incorporated equestrian access in Rushmere Park 	<p>Should be acknowledged as has been used.</p> <p>To be added at least as a guide.</p> <p>Principle included</p> <p>Include reference.</p>

	<p>without uncontrollable motor cycle access and any adverse impact on habitats.</p> <p>4. Under 9 Implementation Plan, Defra funding should be mentioned. At Regional LAF Natural England officers have on several occasions mentioned funding pots available for improvements to access and has previously funded work on the Biggleswade Green Wheel.</p> <p>It is crucial that every effort is made to provide a continuous bridleway network. It is all too easy to just provide pedestrian only access or develop cycle routes because government funding is available for such routes.</p> <p>I very much hope that these comments are taken on board.</p>	<p>Focus on this will be with the 'Outer Wheel'.</p>
<p>Francesca Sheppard, Clerk to Heath & Reach Parish Council</p>	<p>Thank you for green wheel consultation which was discussed by the Parish Council at the September meeting. The main concern is that the cycle route at Thrift Road is not included or publicised as it is having a detrimental impact on the residents of Thrift Road due to parking by cyclists.</p>	<p>The Thrift Road cycle route is included as a critical spur on the Green Wheel. It is not promoted as a location for 'park and cycle' in any way, by the Green Wheel Masterplan nor Rushmere CP (CBC and GST).</p>
<p>Mark Schnull, Arrow Planning Ltd on behalf of Arnold White Estates</p>	<p>These representations have been prepared on behalf of Arnold White Estates (AWE) Ltd and comment on the consultation draft Leighton-Linslade Green Wheel Masterplan (July 2019). These representations address the survey questions and respond to particular questions you posed to AWE in your correspondence to them of 9 August 2019.</p> <p>Overview</p> <p>AWE support the principle of the Leighton-Linslade Green Wheel and recognise the benefits it brings to the local environment, town, residents and businesses. As a long-standing local business and major landowner in and around Leighton Linslade, AWE plays an active part in the town and has a proven track record of commitment to addressing climate change and providing environmental benefits. AWE delivered the exemplar bus scheme at Southern Leighton Linslade; the Double Arches wind turbine (at the time the tallest</p>	

	<p>onshore wind turbine in the UK), and through quarry restoration is creating new publicly accessible open space areas such as the lake at Southern Leighton Linslade. Moving forward AWE will be delivering significant further environmental improvements and areas of open space around the north eastern part of the town. This is considered in more detail below in the context of the Green Wheel Masterplan.</p> <p>The Green Wheel Masterplan</p> <p>The Green Wheel Masterplan ('The Masterplan') states on p.3 that the aim of the document is to note the significant achievements made to date and to build on this. AWE welcomes this positive approach and that The Masterplan seeks to build upon existing achievements.</p> <p>Many of these achievements have been delivered associated through new development. Leighton Linslade has seen significant housing growth over the last 15 years and will that will continue across the next 15 years. AWE consider that The Masterplan should recognise the important role that development plays in bringing forward environmental improvements and helping to deliver the components and land required to make the Green Wheel a reality. The Masterplan should therefore cross refer to specific policies within existing and emerging Local Plans, including the approved developments at East Leighton Linslade.</p> <p>The Masterplan identifies a number of aspirations, with Section 5 identifying basic principles for the creation of the Green Wheel. Some of these principles are expensive items (e.g. signalised road crossings). The Masterplan notes on p. 18 under Funding Sources that development could contribute; however, it also recognises that there is currently no further 'major' development proposed for the town in the submitted Local Plan. AWE therefore query how sufficient funds may be generated to deliver all of the basic principles identified in Section 5 across the entire Green Wheel. Historically in Leighton Linslade development has been necessary to fund Green Infrastructure projects of the scale proposed.</p> <p>AWE has made and continues to make significant contribution to Green Infrastructure in and around the town. Reference has already been made to South Leighton Linslade. More recently, the Section 106 contributions as part of the Chamberlains Barn and Stearn Land developments are delivering items such</p>	<p>This is acknowledged.</p> <p>A range of potential funding sources has been identified.</p>
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	<p>as Shenley Hill Country Park, Heath Road Open Space, and the Stearn playing fields. All of these areas are recognised within The Masterplan and it is unlikely that these would have been deliverable without development to fund them.</p> <p>Suggestions for The Green Wheel Masterplan In July 2019 the Government published new planning guidance which includes advice on compensatory improvements to the Green Belt. The guidance advises that such improvements could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or enhanced green infrastructure; • Woodland planting; • Landscape and visual enhancements; • Improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital; • New or enhanced walking and cycling routes; • Improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision. <p>Many of the aims of The Masterplan align with the compensatory improvements identified in national guidance. The Masterplan presents an opportunity to align itself with national guidance and demonstrate the benefits to the Green Belt that are being delivered through the Masterplan. This approach would have a degree of synergy with the aforementioned recognition that Green Belt development is delivering (and has already delivered) a number of the Green Wheel improvements. Finally, by creating that link it would put The Masterplan in a positive and proactive role in the event that further development comes forward in the future.</p> <p>Concluding Comments As a historic local landowner and business, AWE welcome the emerging Green Wheel Masterplan. It builds upon many of the green infrastructure elements AWE has already and continues to deliver in the south and east of the town. These representations have highlighted some areas of concern; namely that the general principles are strong aspirations but may not be deliverable without specific identified funding sources. Secondly, The Masterplan should have a greater recognition of Local and National Policy and guidance, AWE wishes to keep engaging with The Greensand Trust and to be involved in future stages of the Green Wheel Masterplan.</p>	<p>Incorporated.</p> <p>Has been incorporated, but need to be careful that the Masterplan is not seen to be driving forward development or making the case for rolling back the Green Belt.</p>
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Bucks CC	No response received – Jessica Everett confirmed they would be making one. Followed up 8/10 but none received.	
Liscombe Estate	No response received	
Adam Howard, CBC Estates	<p>I consider that the Leighton Buzzard Assets are vastly infrastructural, both socially and leisure wise. No strategic assets are compromised by the proposals set out by The Leighton Buzz Cycles plan. It will be fantastic for the community to improve the leisure networks in the Leighton Buzzard area. The Council Assets Team generally supports the notion of The Green Wheel, as we have done so in other areas.</p> <p>Good luck with the project! Let me know if you need anything else from me.</p>	Map showing location of CBC assets also provided.
Eggington PC	No response received – followed up in October 2018	
Soulbury PC	No response received – followed up in October 2018	
Wing PC	<p>Claire Power, Clerk to Wing PC (28/10/19)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you support the principle of the Leighton-Linslade Green Wheel? <p>Yes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Have you carried out any local research/evidence gathering that might support the development of the Green Wheel? <p>No</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Do members of your community travel into Leighton-Linslade for work, shopping, leisure or other reasons? Is there a desire for more non-vehicular options to do this? <p>Yes to both of these questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. What could your organisation contribute to the development of the Green Wheel? This could be in the form of knowledge/expertise, funding, policy/advocacy or other types of support. <p>Wing Parish Council can offer local knowledge and general support. The Neighbourhood Plan is also under review so there is the possibility of adding policies regarding the Green Wheel.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Which is the most important element of the Green wheel for you? Is there a particular section/spoke/missing link that would make a significant difference to your community? <p>The most important element would be linking up the Green Wheel to the existing walks around Wing.</p>	Exploring further re answers to Q 4 and 5 and NP review, but note answer to Q5 requires a Wing Green Wheel to be created or similar network approach to be taken there.
Billington PC	No response received	
Stanbridge PC	Maxine Whiting, Clerk to Stanbridge PC 13/11/19	Followed up with Maxine on 14/11,

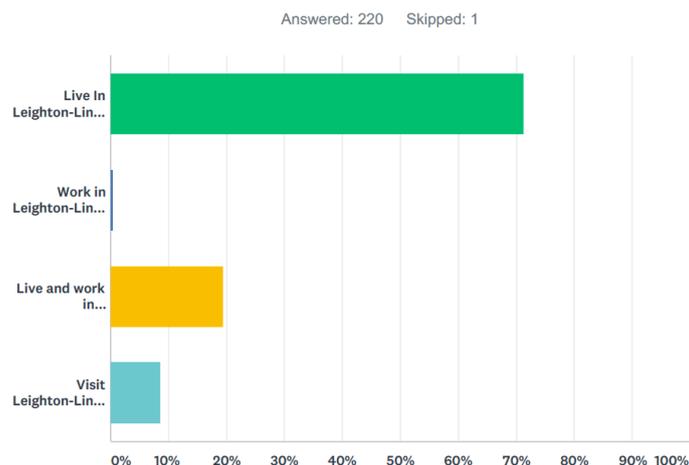
	Stanbridge parish council discussed this at their meeting last night and as there is no footpath or cycle path from Stanbridge provided and no benefit to the village, they do not wish to support the Leighton-Linslade Green Wheel.	clarifying that principle of routes connecting to villages around Leighton was supported through the GW. MW response on 14/11: From the comments they made at the meeting, I'm sure they'd welcome a cycle and footpath to LB from Stanbridge
SUSTRANS	No response received – followed up in October 2019.	
LB Narrow Gauge Railway	No response received	
Ramblers	No response received	

Results of the Public Consultation

A total of 221 people took part in the public consultation. Electronic responses significantly outweighed ‘hard copy’ responses, but both were provided to ensure everyone had an opportunity to take part.

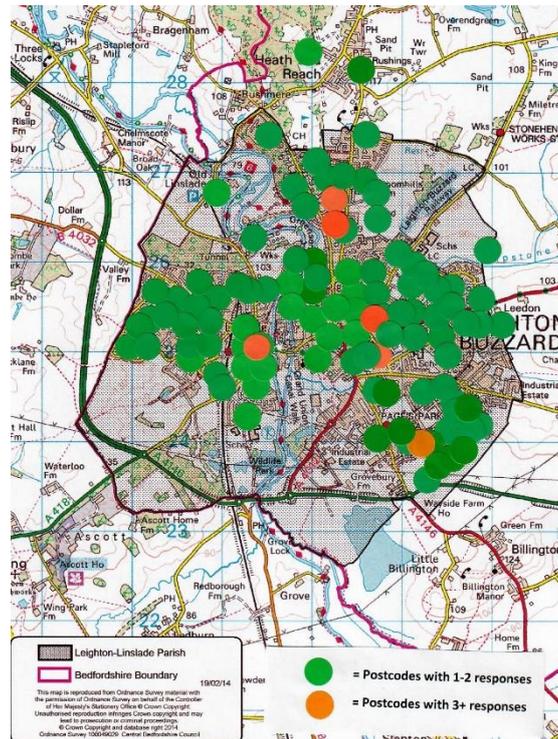
In terms of where the consultees were from, the majority were from Leighton-Linslade as the chart below illustrates:

Q1 Do you live or work in Leighton-Linslade?

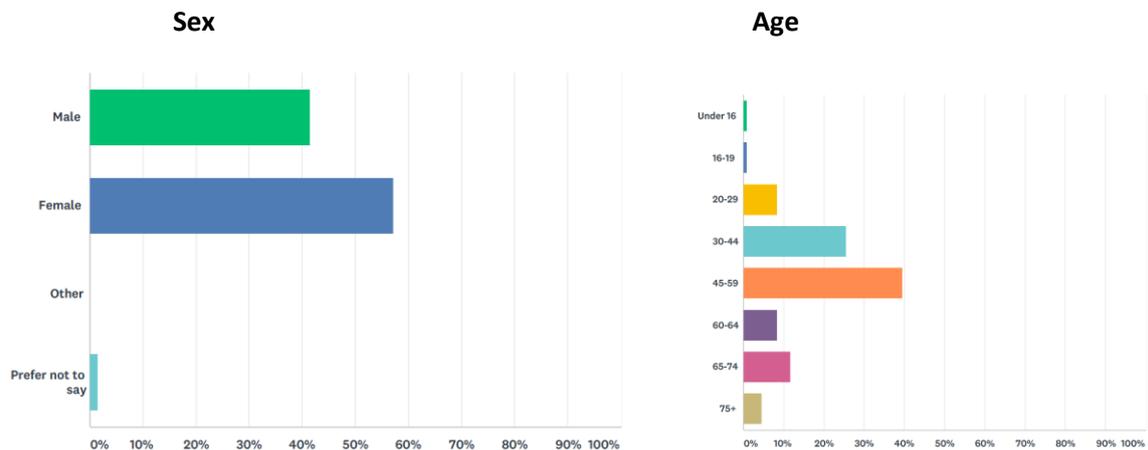


Further analysis was carried out on those who live in Leighton-Linslade, and the map below demonstrates the distribution of consultees. It shows that the distribution was wide and covered the majority of the urban area – the main areas where there were gaps are the industrial areas.

Some consultees came from areas of new development to the east of the town, only very recently beginning to be occupied.



There were more female respondents (57%) than male (41%). There was a reasonable spread of ages between 20 and 74 years old. Only 4 respondents were under 19, and it is recommended that future consultations engage young people more directly.



Just over 4% of consultees considered themselves to be disabled in some way. The vast majority were from a white British ethnic background (94%), with 6% considering themselves to be Asian, Asian British, mixed ethnicity or 'other'. Although there is obviously a strong bias towards white British, the profile is relatively close to the ethnic make-up of Leighton-Linslade, which is around 90% white British.

In terms of people's existing travel patterns, for journeys around/into Leighton-Linslade, the majority of people (83%) drive. However, respondents were given the opportunity to select more

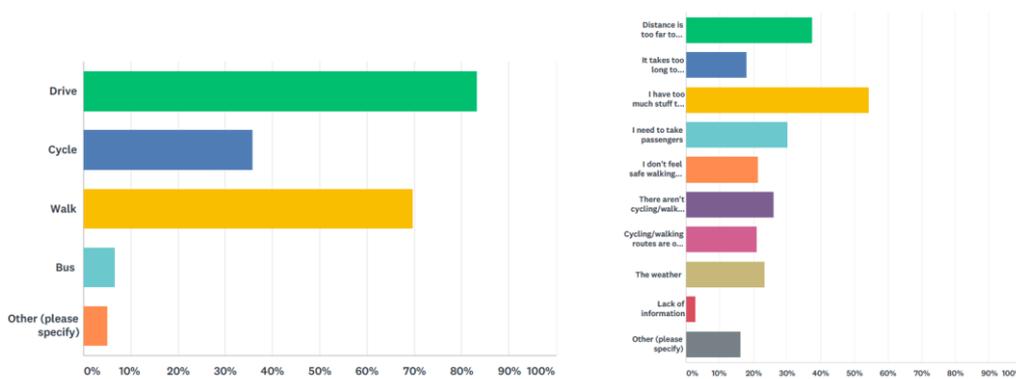
than one mode of transport, reflecting the fact that journeys and conditions differ, and an encouraging 70% also walk, and 36% cycle. Just under 7% use buses.

The main reasons for choosing to drive are:

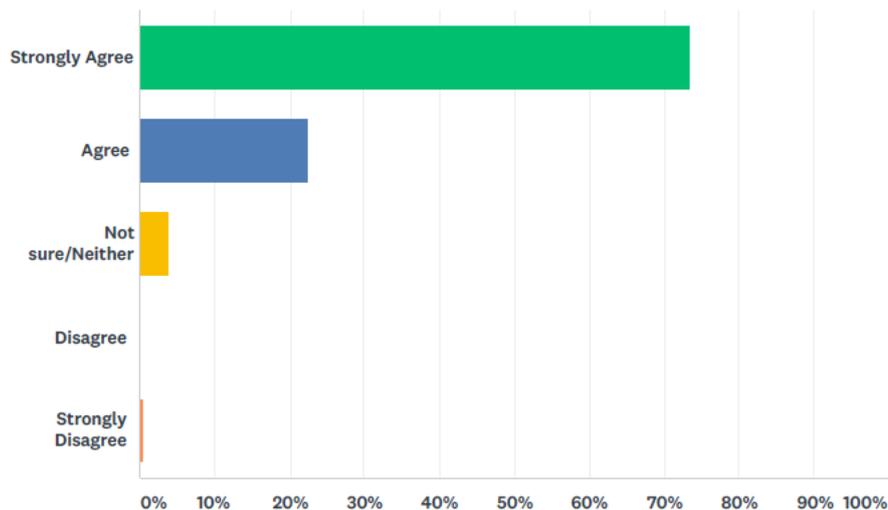
- People have too much ‘stuff’ to carry
- Distance is too far to walk or cycle
- There aren’t enough walking/cycling routes

These responses illustrate the fact that there is a good level of walking and cycling taking place, but with plenty of opportunity to further reduce car use.

Some factors (too much stuff) will be difficult for the Green Wheel to influence (although changing perceptions can help with distances and to a degree what can be carried). **The lack of appropriate routes is something that the Green Wheel can directly influence.**



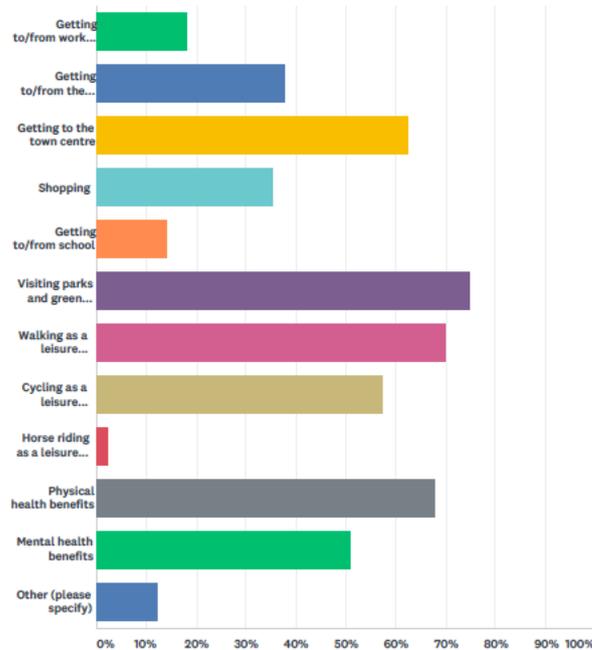
Approximately 96% either agreed or strongly agreed with the principle of creating the Green Wheel (only 1 person, less than half a %, disagreed or strongly disagreed).



When asked what people would use the Green Wheel for, the responses demonstrated that they are open to a wide range of potential reasons to use it, including both leisure and ‘utility’ (work,

shopping). **The most popular reasons were around visiting parks and green spaces and for leisure. Health and wellbeing benefits (mental and physical) were also really well recognised.**

Potentially using the Green wheel for travel to school was low (reflecting the very low number of young respondents) and for horse riding was very low.



There was also an extremely encouraging response when people were asked whether they would be interested in joining a 'Friends' group to help look after and promote the Green Wheel. 46 people (21%) said they would be interested, and a further 59 (28%) were potentially open to the possibility. There was also a comprehensive response to the open-ended question asking for ideas and suggestions – the most frequent areas for comment or suggestion were:

- Creating traffic-free roads is critical to the Green Wheel
- Safety concerns around travelling to Rushmere, along Old Linslade Road, Stanbridge, Billington and need for safe routes.
- Creating continuous routes along the Clipstone Brook.

These have been fed into the Green Wheel Masterplan development.