



Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad Canal Towpaths Upgrade Projects

Consultation outcome report

Communities, Consultation & Engagement / May 2024



West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

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1. Summary

Overall, the 361 people who answered the survey are in favour of the ideas to improve the towpaths:

- For the Narrow Canal, **83% fully support** the proposals (281 respondents)
- For the Broad Canal, **75% fully support** the proposals (136 respondents)

The main reasons that people support the plans to resurface the path and remove the A-frame barriers are that it makes it easier to:

- use the path all year round, with less mud and a less slippery surface
- access for everyone, including those with wheelchairs, motorised scooters, prams, those with mobility issues and older people
- walk and cycle, as a safe alternative to using the road and to encourage travel that is not the car

But the main concerns are how to stop people who cycle too fast along the route, to protect the nature and biodiversity, and to make sure that people who moor their boats can still do so easily.

Some other suggestions were to add seating areas, dog waste bins and put up warning signs for people on cycles to slow down and share the space with people walking, especially for people who are hard of hearing.

During the four-week engagement period (25 January to 25 February 2024), 2,333 visits were made to the [Your Voice consultation page](#). We held two public drop-in sessions, an online webinar, and the Canal & River Trust met with people who are especially interested, such as the councillors for Dalton Ward, and the charity Experience Community. People could write to us via Freepost, could call MetroLine, or email us. The Canal & River Trust put messages on social media, and put up posters along the towpaths, and local newspapers shared the details of the consultation.

From our 'About You' questions, we learn that most respondents are in the 65 years and older category (26%), the majority are white (81%) and are of no religion (60%). 22% have a long-term physical or mental health condition or illness. 58% are male and 37% are female. The majority (79%) are heterosexual / straight. Respondents mainly heard about the consultation from social media, and most respondents are from the HD7 5 postcode area, near Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

Next steps are to include public feedback into the final designs. Then, we will present the 'Business Justification Case' to the Combined Authority's assurance process. If the scheme is approved, construction could start in autumn / winter 2024.

2. Overview

2.1 Background

We (the Combined Authority, Kirklees Council and the Canal & River Trust) want to improve parts of the canal towpaths along Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad Canal. We wish to provide mostly flat, attractive, traffic free routes and enable more people to make more active journeys (walking and wheeling), and we are seeking your views on the proposals to enable these plans to be taken to the next stage.

This would be further development, following on from the previous improvement works on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal from Milnsbridge to Slaithwaite. These were between the Thornton Lodge area of Huddersfield and Milnsbridge, completed in October 2018, and between Milnsbridge and Slaithwaite, completed in 2023.

Through this next phase of delivery, we are developing plans to improve the section between Slaithwaite and Marsden then onto the Standedge Tunnel Visitor Centre. Improvements will provide a safe, quiet, traffic-free route between settlements in the Colne Valley as part of your journey to work, for amenities, or for recreation.

Planned improvements will make it easier for people with mobility issues to access the towpath, and for everyone to share the space.

2.2 Aims

With funding from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund 2022/23 (ATF4), we wish to put down a new towpath surface and adjust restrictive barriers, focusing on nature and heritage to enhance the canal's overall appeal and ease-of-use.

The aims of consultation are to:

- Involve people and stakeholders in the scheme development process to help ensure the outputs benefit the majority, and generate feedback that could help to refine and enhance the project
- Build understanding of the proposals including the rationale, the benefits, and challenges
- Gain the trust of communities, businesses, stakeholders and interest groups in the intentions behind the project

2.3 Proposals

Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad Canal proposed improvements include:

Huddersfield Broad Canal

The entire length of the Huddersfield Broad Canal towpath will be included in the following proposals:

- To improve the towpath surface, making it easier for people to walk and cycle, and make it more accessible for people with mobility difficulties or people who use mobility aids to access for the route
- To widen the towpath, where possible, retaining grass verges and native plants and trees to support wildlife
- To install new signs and remove unnecessary access barriers

Huddersfield Narrow Canal

The proposed improvements are from Slaithwaite to Marsden and onto Standedge Tunnel:

- Improving the towpath surface between Slaithwaite Mill Car Park, by Empire Mills in Slaithwaite (Lock 24) and Tunnel End Footbridge at the approach to the Standedge visitor centre (Bridge 62), making it easier for people to walk and cycle and more accessible for people with mobility difficulties or people who use mobility aids to access for the route
- The towpath will be in keeping with the rural nature of this area and of the same design as the section between Milnsbridge and Slaithwaite
- Reducing the steepness of slopes alongside locks and re-laying cobbled areas to make smoother surfaces where possible, improving the accessibility of the towpath and making active journeys easier
- Widening the towpath, where possible, and retaining grass verges and native plants and trees to support wildlife
- Installing new signs and removing unnecessary access barriers

To improve the accessibility of both the towpaths, and make it easier for more people to use, we will also investigate the possibility of:

- Changing the angle of the slopes alongside some of the locks to make them less steep
- Lifting and re-laying cobbled areas to make the surface smoother and more even
- Maximising available towpath width where possible, whilst maintaining grass verges and native plants and trees to support wildlife along the canal corridor
- Installing new signage and improving access points, removing any unnecessary access barriers

2.4 Timeline

Before this consultation (25 January to 25 February 2024), we had:

- Gained approval of ATF4 bid
- Gained approval by the Combined Authority of ATF4 funding
- Identified count sites to collect baseline pre-scheme data
- Created detailed designs, which are subject to consultation feedback

3. Consultation activity

The consultation ran for over four weeks between 25 January and 25 February 2024. Throughout the consultation, a range of communication methods were used to raise awareness of the proposals amongst stakeholders and the local community, who were provided with multiple accessible and convenient means by which to provide feedback. The methods used to engage stakeholders and publicise the consultation are set out below.

3.1 Your Voice

The consultation was hosted on the Combined Authority's digital hub Your Voice at <https://www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/canals>. The page ensured that information on the proposals was readily available, easily accessible, and provided participants an opportunity to share feedback on the scheme.

The following tools were available on Your Voice to provide further information or gather feedback:

- **Documents:** uploaded as PDFs to the consultation page provided details of the issues, opportunities, maps and proposals
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):** Provided further information about the project and signposted participants to other resources
- **Survey:** We received 361 completed surveys. Participants could submit feedback via an online survey, or download a printable version. Once a survey response was submitted, it prompted the responder to share details of the consultation with their networks by email or social media
- **Webinars:** An online webinar was held where people could listen to a presentation and ask the project team questions. There were 11 attendees and a summary of the questions asked can be found in the [Appendix 1](#). A recording of a webinar can be viewed at: <https://www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/canals/widqets/88594/videos/4592>
- **Question & Answer:** We received 2 Q&As. People could submit queries for response by the project team. Questions asked are found in [Appendix 3](#)
- **Email:** We received 9 emails. Responses, questions or feedback were encouraged through the email address yourvoice@westyorks-ca.gov.uk. Emails sent in are found in [Appendix 4](#).
- **Post:** The freepost address (Freepost Consultation Team WYCA) was available, providing a further channel for people to submit feedback and pose questions to the consultation team in writing
- **Telephone:** MetroLine was publicised on materials to allow people to request printed copies and information in alternative formats

3.2 Marketing and communication methods

The consultation and associated activities were promoted using the following methods:

- **Press:** we sent information to the Huddersfield Examiner, Huddersfield Live, BBC Radio Leeds and Huddersfield Hub news website. It received coverage in titles including:
 - BBC: [Huddersfield: Consultation on towpath improvement plans - BBC News](#)

- Examiner Live: [Huddersfield canal paths to get multi-million-pound makeover - and you can have your say - YorkshireLive \(examinerlive.co.uk\)](https://www.examinerlive.co.uk)
- **Social media:** Social media posts from Canal & River Trust on X (formerly Twitter) were used to promote the consultation, which were in turn shared by the Combined Authority and Kirklees Council. Social media promotion had an overall reach of 13,616, with an engagement rate of 2% (above 1% is deemed 'good' and 0.5% - 0.99% is 'average').
- **Email:** Interest groups and local stakeholders were contacted by the Canal & River Trust and the Combined Authority by email to encourage their participation. Plus, over 2,400 people who registered their interest on Your Voice to receive updates were contacted by email by the Combined Authority. We also emailed those who took part in the [2021 engagement](#) on the previous improvement works on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal from Milnsbridge to Slaithwaite.
- **Newsletters:** We put articles in the following:
 - The Combined Authority's SME newsletter
 - Metro Messenger
 - Kirklees schools
 - Kirklees Travel Plan Network businesses
- **Flyers:** Distributed to 1,127 residential and commercial addresses along Huddersfield Broad Canal and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. They were also available at local businesses, sent to some stakeholder groups and to Ward Councillors to distribute amongst their networks.
- **Posters:** Distributed to local businesses, and displayed along the canal towpaths
- **Real Time Information (RTI):** engagement details were displayed on RTI screens at bus shelters from Slaithwaite to Huddersfield centre

3.3 Events

Events raised awareness of the consultation, informed attendees and encouraged feedback. They also allowed stakeholders and members of the public to meet with project team and ask any questions. Representatives from the Canal & River Trust and Kirklees Council attended the events:

- **Huddersfield Town Hall, Thursday 1 February, 12pm – 6pm:** 10 people came to the drop-in event, officers took notes to take into consideration
- **Webinar, Tuesday 6 February, 6pm:** 11 participants joined to see a presentation and to ask any questions they may have
- **Meeting with the councillors** for Dalton Ward, Cllr Kahn and Cllr Mather
- **Marsden Mechanics, Thursday 22 February, 12pm – 6pm** (rescheduled after snowy weather): encouraged all 10 attendees to fill out the form
- **Site visit** with Experience Community, Cycle Kirklees and EPIKS on 23 February 2024

For full notes from discussions at these meetings, please see [Appendix 1](#).

3.4 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder mapping was carried out prior to the consultation in order to identify those who may be:

- Interested in the proposals

- Influential over the proposals
- Connected to the area
- Able to support promoting the consultation

Targeted mapping was carried out to ensure the consultation was inclusive for seldom heard groups. Emails were sent to a list of stakeholders, including businesses and services, education providers, transport providers, community groups and other statutory stakeholders.

Prior to the launch of public consultation, the project team briefed local ward councillors from the scheme area. Stakeholders were invited to a series of online meetings. Some of the meetings were held in-person, others online, and detailed information on the proposals was provided along with the opportunity to ask questions and share any concerns. Attendees were invited to the webinars via email, with follow-up emails made where no response was received. Where stakeholders were unable to attend, they were provided with the pre-recorded presentation or leaflet. Briefings were also held with representatives from local accessibility groups including Experience Community.

3.5 Inclusive engagement

We are committed to promoting equity and value diversity and inclusion. We encourage fairness with equal chances for all to work, learn and be free from any barriers, discrimination, or victimisation. Please click [here](#) to read more about our approach to equity, diversity and inclusion.

The term 'seldom-heard groups' refers to under-represented people and/or, communities, who rarely have the same opportunities or access to express themselves as other stakeholders. Due to multiple barriers affecting access to and the use of public and social services, often the views of these groups go underrepresented. It is critical that efforts are made to connect and communicate with diverse groups, to facilitate fuller participation and ensuring that our consultations are as accessible and progressively inclusive as possible. Many factors can contribute to people, who use services, being seldom heard, including:

- Gender, including trans identity / history
- Age
- Disability
- Race and ethnicity
- Sexuality
- Community impairments
- Mental health
- Homelessness
- Geographical isolation
- Socio-economic background
- Caring responsibilities
- Marriage, partner, and relationships
- Religion and belief
- Pregnancy, maternity, and parental leave

Using existing data and building on previous engagement, an equality impact assessment was developed to ensure that the right people were consulted/engaged in the right ways. The equality analysis is a review of the actual or potential effects of project or policies on people who identify with any of the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act ([The Equality Act and protected characteristics | Local Government Association](#)). This assessment helped us identify who we need to engage with and how.

In our inclusive engagement, we are also keen to reach people who are unable to engage online, feel uncomfortable using online services, or may experience access issues. We supply a freepost address for letters or return of paper surveys, a dedicated telephone number for enquiries, printed leaflets, articles in local newspapers and we offer paper versions of our plans and surveys upon request. Contact details were supplied for those requiring consultation materials or to request alternative ways of accessing the information.

3.6 Your Voice engagement statistics

During the four-week engagement period, 2,333 visits were made to the Your Voice consultation page by 2,159 visitors. The total number of visits is higher than the total number of visitors, because a single visitor may visit the webpage several times. Visitors can be divided into the following categories:

Aware (1,916 visitors): Visitors that we consider to be aware have made at least one single visit to the webpage. These people have seen the information, but not taken any further action by clicking on anything.

Informed (702 visitors): An informed visitor has taken the next step from being aware of the webpage and clicked on something to find out more. That might be to download the plans (380 downloads), read FAQs about the scheme (44 views), or view the privacy notice (14 downloads)

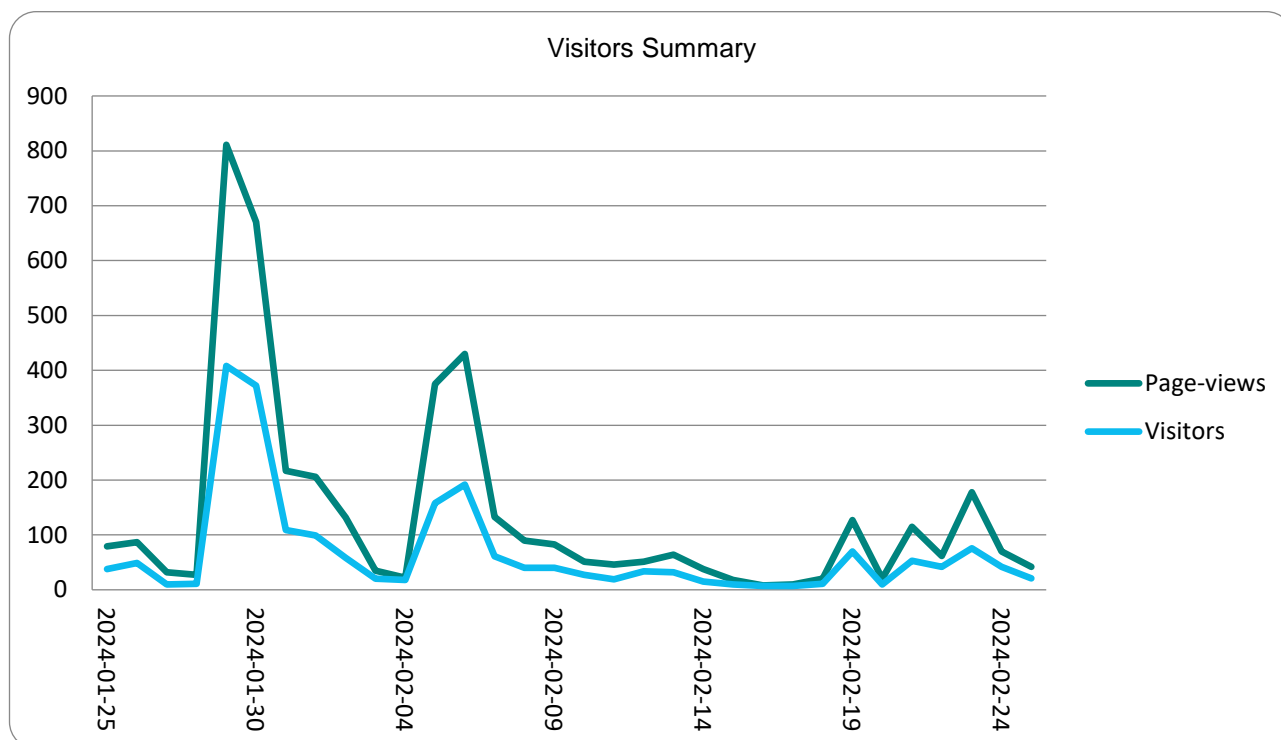
Engaged (359 visitors): Every visitor that contributes using a tool is considered to have actively engaged with the consultation.

- **361 surveys** were submitted - 358 online and 3 received by post
- **2 questions** were asked through the Q&A tool
- **9 emails** were received through the Your Voice email inbox

A summary of themes raised in questions and emails can be found in [section 4.4](#). The submissions can be viewed in full along with associated responses in the [Appendix 3 and 4](#).

Timeline of visits

The graph below shows the visiting trend to the Your Voice webpage throughout the consultation period. There was a peak of 811 page views on 29 January when the leaflets were delivered, 374 on 5 February when the BBC News piece was published, and 127 when the Marsden Mechanics drop-in was promoted.



Traffic channels

The table below shows the different channels used to access the Your Voice webpage:

Site access routes	Number of visits
Social media:	1,179
Facebook	1,098
X (formerly Twitter)	81
Direct: (By typing the webpage directly into the address bar on browser or using links within general emails)	728
Referrals: (re-directed to the site)	224
Search engine: (including Google, Bing, Internet Explorer etc)	109
Email: (through direct email campaigns using external email tools)	76
.GOV sites: (referrals from government websites)	17

The number of visitors to the Your Voice page is higher than the number of respondents completing the survey. While there will be various reasons why visitors may not engage further, we assume some are not concerned by the proposals and do not feel the need to provide feedback. While we aim to promote our consultations widely and in appropriate geographical areas, the [Consultation Institute](#) reports there is rarely a formula that can be used to predict participation rates in consultations. However, research suggests that even on important issues, participation rates of 1% of the affected population is normal. If we take the mid-2021 estimated populations for the Wards directly affected by these sections of the Broad and Narrow Canal, Golcar (population 18,710), Dalton (population 17,478) and Coln Valley (population 17,617), we see an awareness rate of 4%.

4. Consultation results

You could choose whether to answer questions on the Narrow Canal, the Broad Canal, or both. There was also an optional 'about you' section. Overall, 361 people responded to our surveys.

181 people only answered the Narrow Canal survey, 22 only answered the Broad Canal survey and 158 people answered both. Which means, 339 Narrow Canal surveys were filled in and 180 Broad Canal surveys were filled in overall. Some questions have fewer responses because respondents could choose which questions they answered.

Closed (quantitative) data analysis: The closed responses were analysed using standard frequency counts and percentages. Figures that do not add up to 100% is due to computer rounding. Percentages are not used in multiple option questions. Views are shown in the charts and graphs, alongside summaries.

Open (qualitative) data analysis: Open text questions let respondents tell us more about their opinions. We analysed their comments by finding themes and grouping responses (or elements of responses) to these themes. We then counted common themes to understand respondents' thoughts, shown in tables below. The total count may be more than the total number of comments as some respondents raise multiple themes. Full responses are in the appendices.

4.1 Overview of survey responses

Out of 361 survey responses, 354 chose to answer how they are responding to the survey. 346 said they are a member of the public, with 8 representing a business.

Out of 356 responses, 176 answered the Narrow Canal survey (49%), 158 answered both Narrow and Broad Canal surveys (44%), and 22 answered the Broad Canal survey (6%).

Note that not all respondents answered all questions.

4.1.2 Huddersfield Narrow Canal

How you travel

On how often the 338 respondents use this section of the towpath, the most common responses were once or twice a month (96) and once or twice a week (94).

On how the 332 respondents currently travel in the area, a majority selected walk / wheel (277), followed by cycle (109) and run (70).

The proposals

The proposals were generally supported by most of the respondents:

- Out of 339 respondents, 242 would use the improved towpath more often, 72 would use the towpath about the same. But 16 said they would use it less. 9 said they did not know.
- Out of 241 respondents who would use it more often, 77 said 3 – 6 times a week, 72 said once or twice a week and 49 said once or twice a month

For those who would not use it more often, the reasons given were:

- Concern about how to prevent fast cycles and/or motorcycles (20)
- Concern for how people will moor their boats (4)

Overall, the proposals were supported by the majority of the 339 respondents:

- 281 fully support (83%)
- 35 partly support (10%)
- 10 partly oppose (3%)
- 8 full oppose (2%)

Most of the supportive comments said how the proposals would make the towpath easier to access all year round, including for those with mobility concerns, and encourage more people to walk and cycle.

Most of the comments concerned about the proposals mentioned how to prevent fast cycles / motorcycles and how to protect the natural environment.

A number of suggestions were made for further improvements, including to reopen the currently closed section of towpath, and add seatings areas and signs for cycles to slow down.

4.1.2 Huddersfield Broad Canal

How you travel

On how often the 180 respondents travel in the area, the most common responses were once or twice a month (61) and less than once a month (48).

On how the 164 respondents usually travel in the area, a majority selected walk / wheel (277), followed by cycle (109) and run (70).

The proposals

The proposals were generally supported by a majority of the respondents:

- Out of 177 respondents, 116 would use the improved towpath more often, 43 would use the towpath about the same. But 9 said they would use it less. 9 said they did not know
- Out of 113 respondents who would use it more often, 45 said once or twice a week and 38 said once or twice a month

For those who would not use it more often, the concerns were about how to prevent fast cycles and/or motorcycles (4).

Overall, the proposals were supported by the majority of the 180 respondents:

- 136 fully support (75%)
- 21 partly support (12%)
- 7 partly oppose (4%)

- 9 full oppose (5%)

When asked if they had any further comments, the most popular supportive themes raised by respondents were:

- Support for the proposals (44)
- These would make for a better cycle route (15)

But the most popular concerns were:

- Concern about how to prevent fast cycles and/or motorcycles when remove barriers (11)
- Some wanted the proposals to go further (10)

4.1.3 About you

Respondents could answer several demographic questions, the headlines of responses are below. We use regional data by the Office for National Statistics census 2021 to compare. Full information of the demographics of the respondents can be found in [4.2.3 About You](#) and a map showing postcode areas of respondents can be viewed on page 24.

Age

- Of 336 respondents, 26% are aged over 65, which is more than the local population data (17%). 7% are aged under 34, which is less than the local population data (45%).

Disability

- Of 328 respondents, 22% have a long-term physical or mental health condition or illness, which is proportionately more than the local population data (18%)

Ethnicity

- Of 357 respondents, the majority are white (81%), proportionally more than the local population data (77%). 1% are Asian/British Asian, less than the local population (16%).

Religion

- Of 318 respondents, 60% are of no religion, proportionately more than the local population (37%), and 1% are Muslim which is proportionally less than the local population (14%). 26% are Christian, less than the local population data (41%).

Sex and gender/gender identity

- Of 339 respondents, 58% are male, proportionately more than the local population data (49%). 37% are female, proportionately less than the local population data (51%).
- Most respondents (93%) said the gender they identify with is the same as their sex registered at birth. 0% self-describe their gender in another way. 7% prefer not to say.

Sexuality

- Of 312 respondents, the majority (79%) are heterosexual or straight. 3% are gay, 2% are bisexual, 14% prefer not to say and 2% self-describe their orientation in a different way.

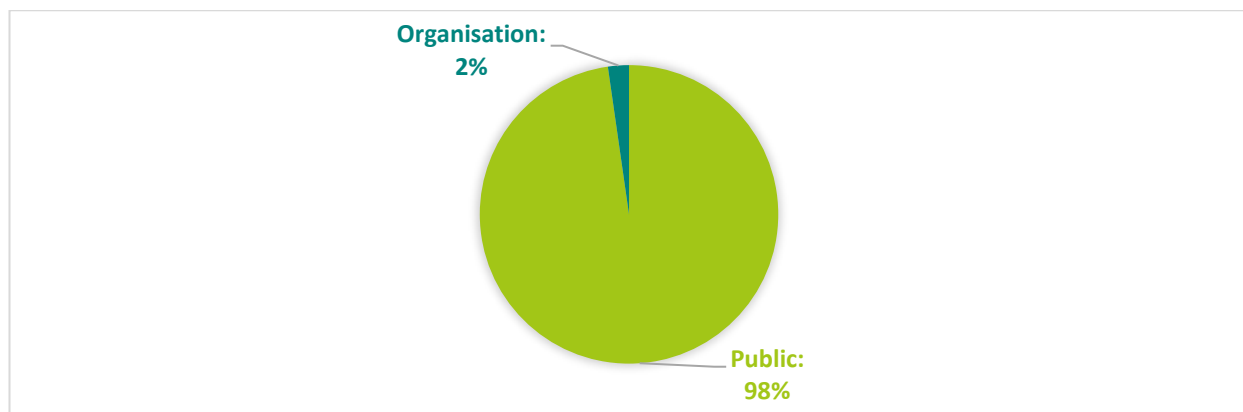
4.2 Analysis of survey responses

Q1. Please confirm that you have read and understood our privacy notice (347 answered yes, 14 skipped)

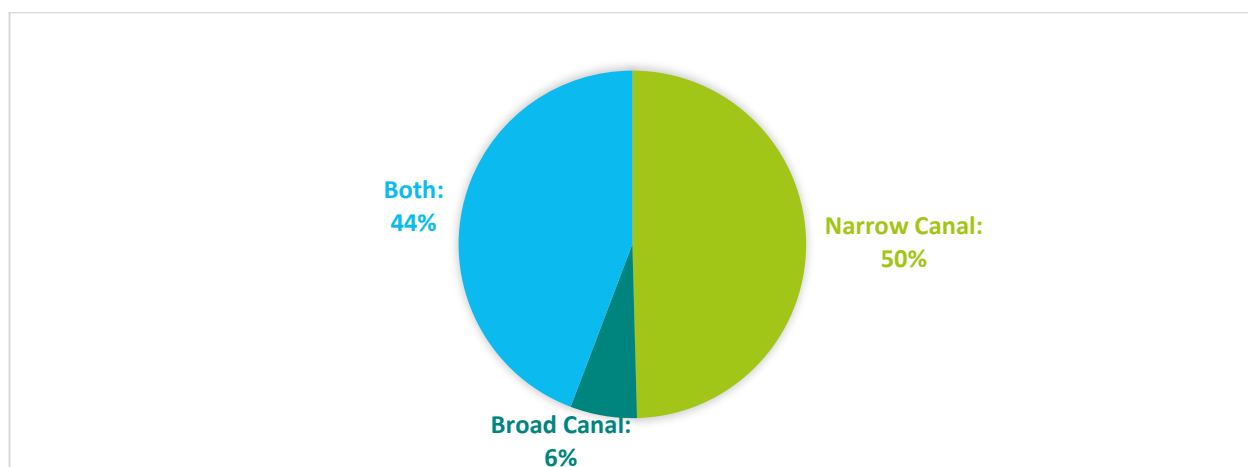
Q2. How are you responding to this survey? (354 responses, 7 skipped)

346 answered as an individual. 8 answered on behalf of a business or organisation:

- National Association of Boat Owners
- Aspley Wharf Marina
- Zapato Brewing
- Open Country Wakefield
- Marsden Community Trust
- Save the trees Kirklees
- The British Horse Society
- National Barge Travellers Association

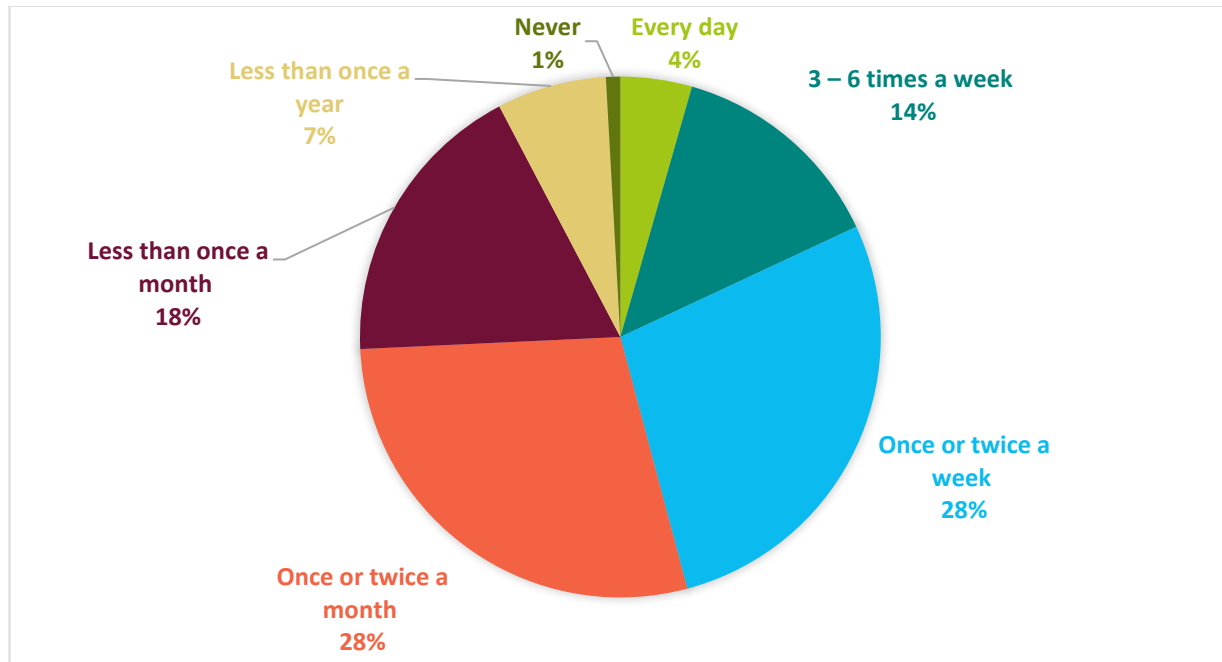


Q3. Please tell us which of the following you would like to comment on? (356 responses, 5 skipped)

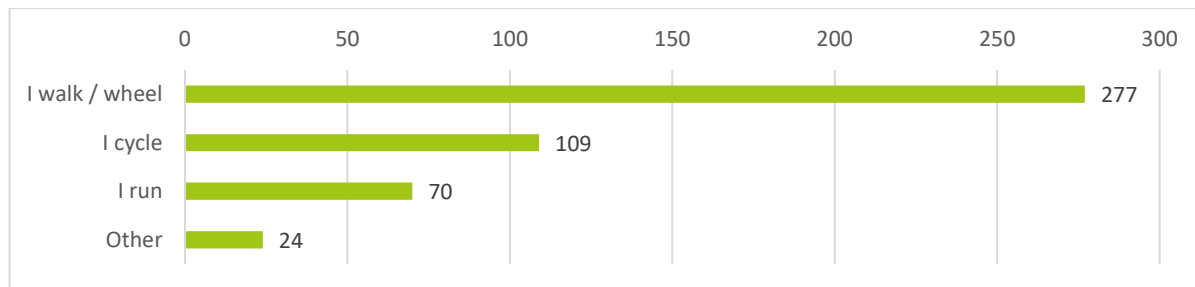


4.2.1 Huddersfield Narrow Canal Towpath Upgrade Project

Q4. How often do you use this route? (338 responses, 1 skipped)

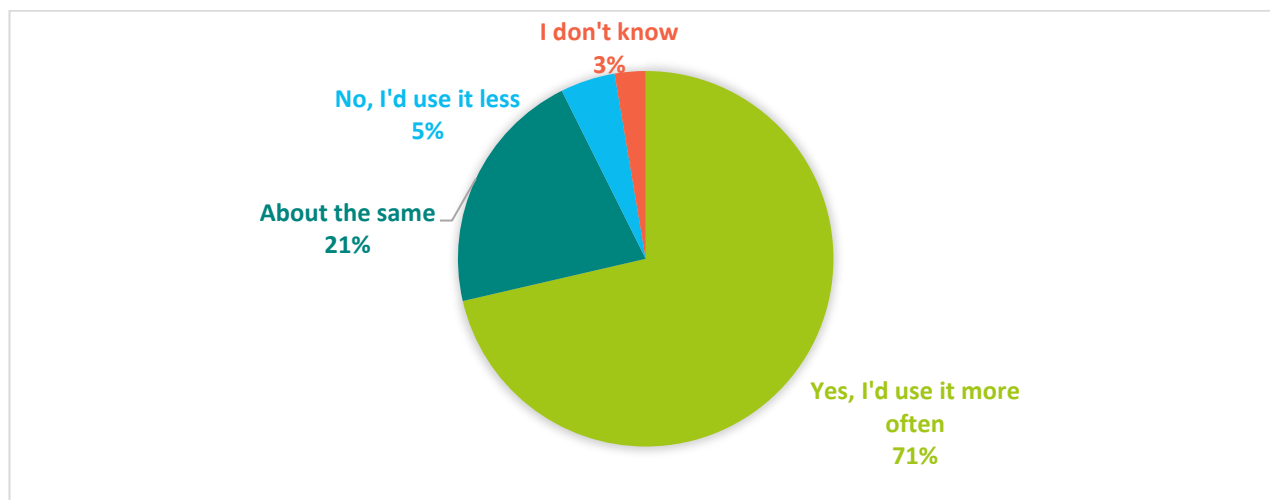


Q5. How do you currently travel along this section of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal? (332 responses, 7 skipped)

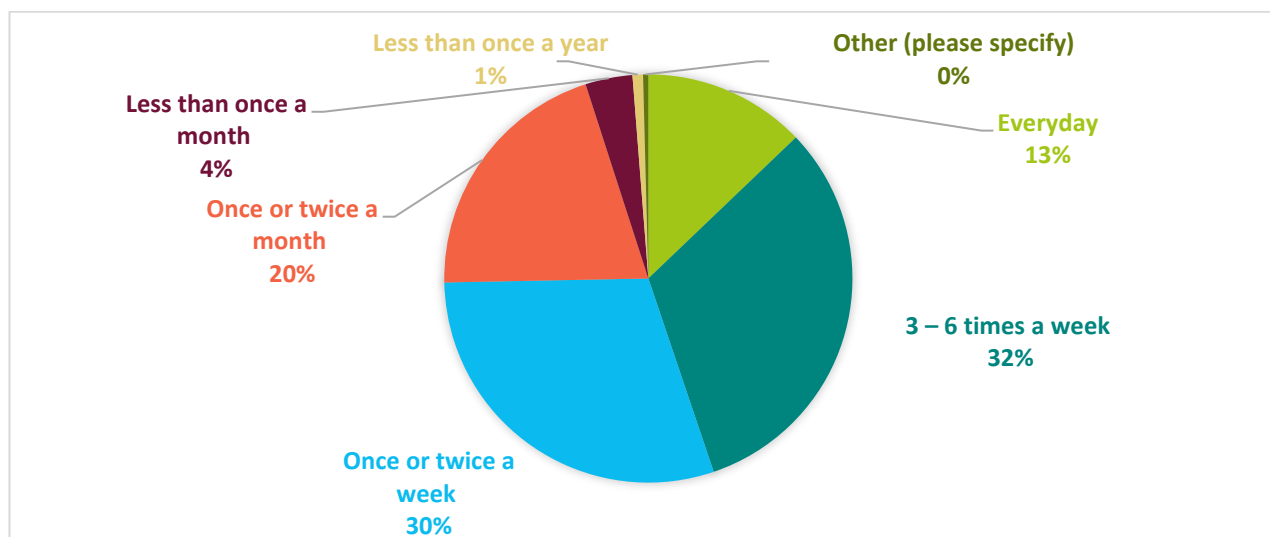


'Other' comments include: boat (18), mobility scooter (2), pram (1), car (1), our clients use the towpath on a daily basis (1), I don't (1).

Q6. Do you think the improved towpath would encourage you to walk, cycle or run along this route more often? (339 responses, 0 skipped)



Q7a. If yes you would use it more often, how often do you think you would use it? (241 responses, 98 skipped)



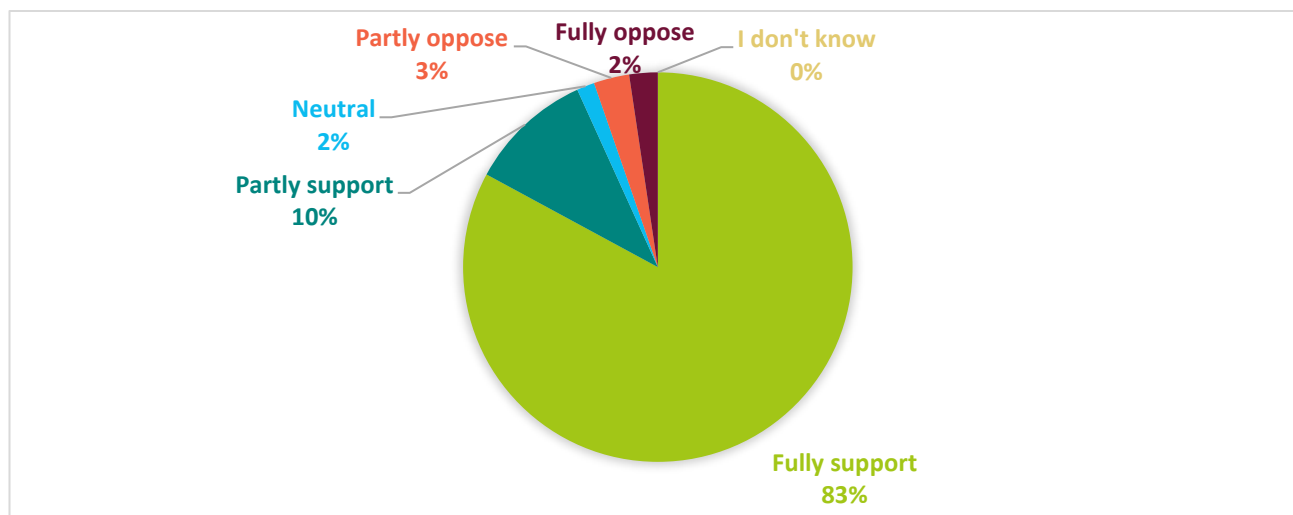
'Other' comments include 'With a better canal tow path we would be able to use it more during the winter months or after wet weather'.

Q7b. If you wouldn't use it more often and would like to tell us why, please use this box:

If no, you wouldn't use it more often and would like to tell us why, please use this box:	
Concerns	20
Concerned about fast cyclists	11
Need space for mooring	4
Concerned about powered vehicles	2
Prefer when less used	1
Prefer a more countryside feel	1
Concern for those who are deaf	1

The most common theme we identified was concerns (20 comments). There were 11 comments concerned about fast cyclists and 4 about needing more space for mooring.

Q8a: Overall, do you support the proposals to improve the towpath between Slaithwaite, Marsden and Standedge on Huddersfield Narrow Canal? (Please tick one box only) (339 responses, 0 skipped)



Q8b: If you would like to explain why you support or oppose the proposals, please use the box below:

If you would like to explain why you support or oppose the proposals, please use this space	
Support	236
Better to access all year round if no slippery surface / less muddy / not waterlogged	62
Other section improvements work well	25
Accessible for all	24
Encourages use / modal shift /active travel	17
Helps health and wellbeing	15
Better for local economy, businesses and tourism	14
More accessible for adults and children with wheelchairs / mobility scooters / disability / mobility issues	14
Support in general	14
Better access for prams and cycling	14
Safer alternative to main road	9
Current narrow sections are dangerous	6
Improvements overdue	5
Easier for commuters	4
Better for older people	2
Encourages running	2
Better for dog walkers	2
Important for the community	2
Review gate barriers	2
Would ensure less damage done by users	1

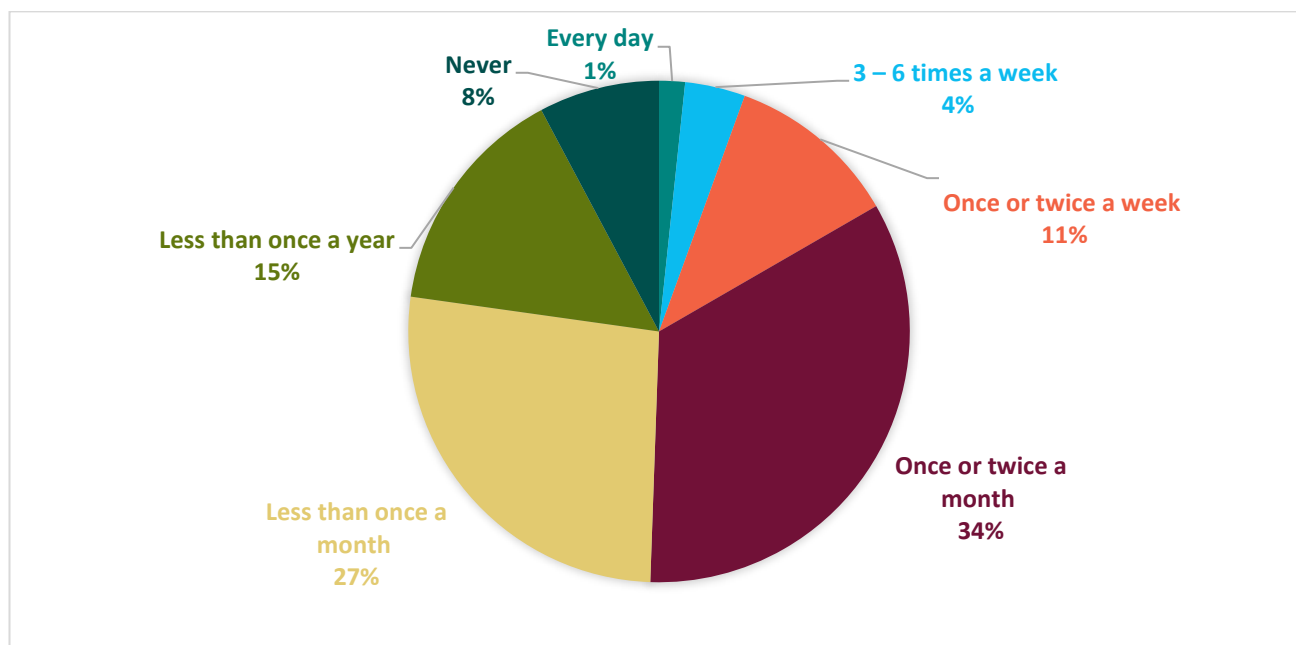
Huddersfield Narrow and Broad Canal Towpaths Upgrade consultation outcome report

Short term disruption for long term gain	1
Sustainable journeys combat climate change	1
Concerns	58
Fast cycles / motorcycles / cycling belongs on the road / separate cycles from walkers	23
Protect wildlife habitat /natural environment, prefer a countryside feel	10
Drainage /rain run off	5
Retain / protect heritage	3
Mooring for boats?	3
Don't waste funds / use money on maintenance instead	2
Needs maintaining	2
Narrow sections	2
Will get busy	1
For people who are deaf	1
Other section not done to proposals	1
Needs rubber like material	1
Proposals not cycle friendly	1
Flattening towpath around locks	1
More parking needed	1
Steep paths are challenging	1
Suggestions	24
Reopen the closed section	9
Benches for older people	4
Warning signs for fast cycles	4
Make wide enough	2
Retain verges and trees	1
Use gravel	1
Keep the cobbles	1
Dog waste bins	1
Needs drop kerbs to access pavement	1
Oppose	8
Waste of money	5
Don't use tarmac	3
Other	1
Incomplete sentence	1

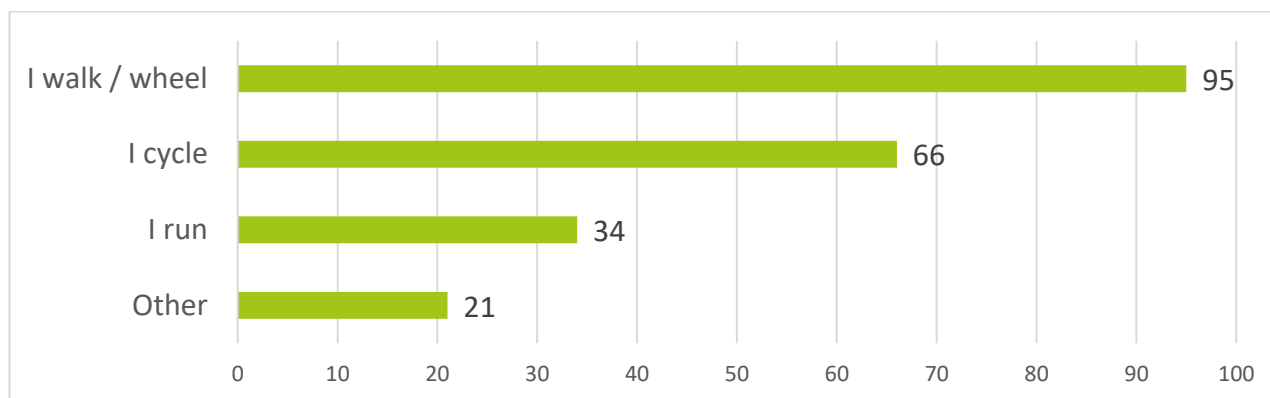
The most common theme identified was support (236 comments). Within the theme of support, there were 62 comments supporting better access all year round, 25 comments supporting the previous work done on the canal and 24 comments supporting the ability for all to access the canal as a result of the works being done. There were, however, 58 comments raising concerns. 23 of those comments were concerned about fast cyclists and motorbikes using the canal, as well as 10 comments concerned about the damage done to the natural environment. There were 24 suggestions which can be read in the appendix, 8 comments opposing the canal improvements and 1 miscellaneous comment.

4.2.2 Huddersfield Broad Canal Towpath Upgrade Project

Q9. How often do you use this route? (180 responses, 0 skipped)

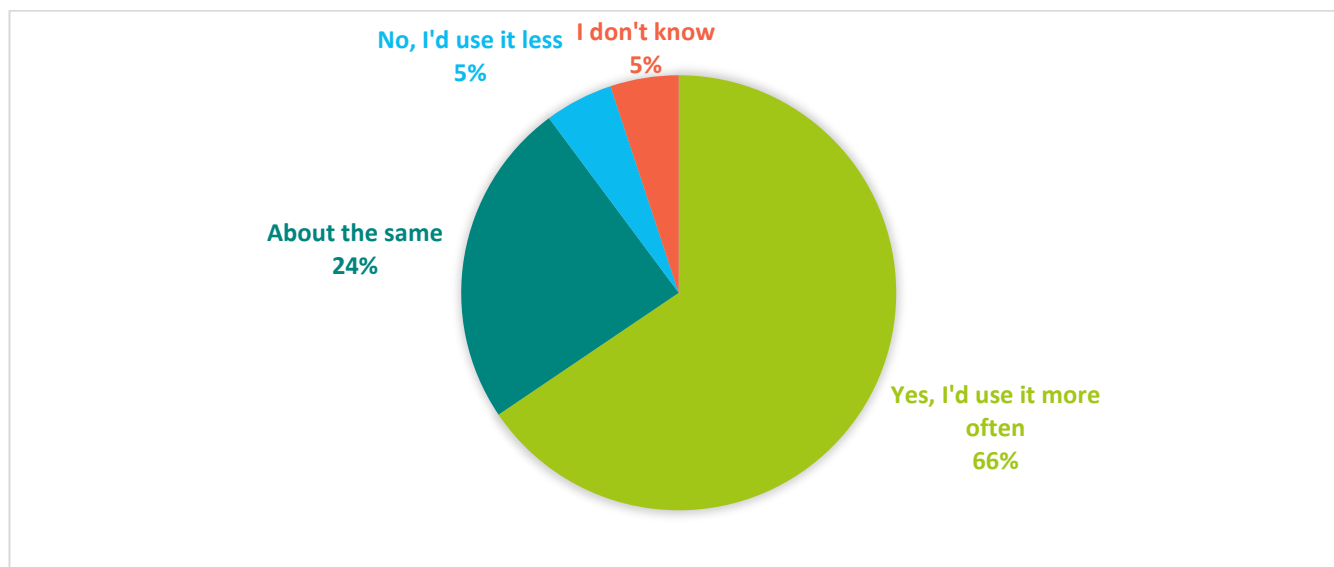


Q10. How do you currently travel along the section between Aspley Marina and Cooper Bridge? Please tick as many as apply (164 responses, 16 skipped)

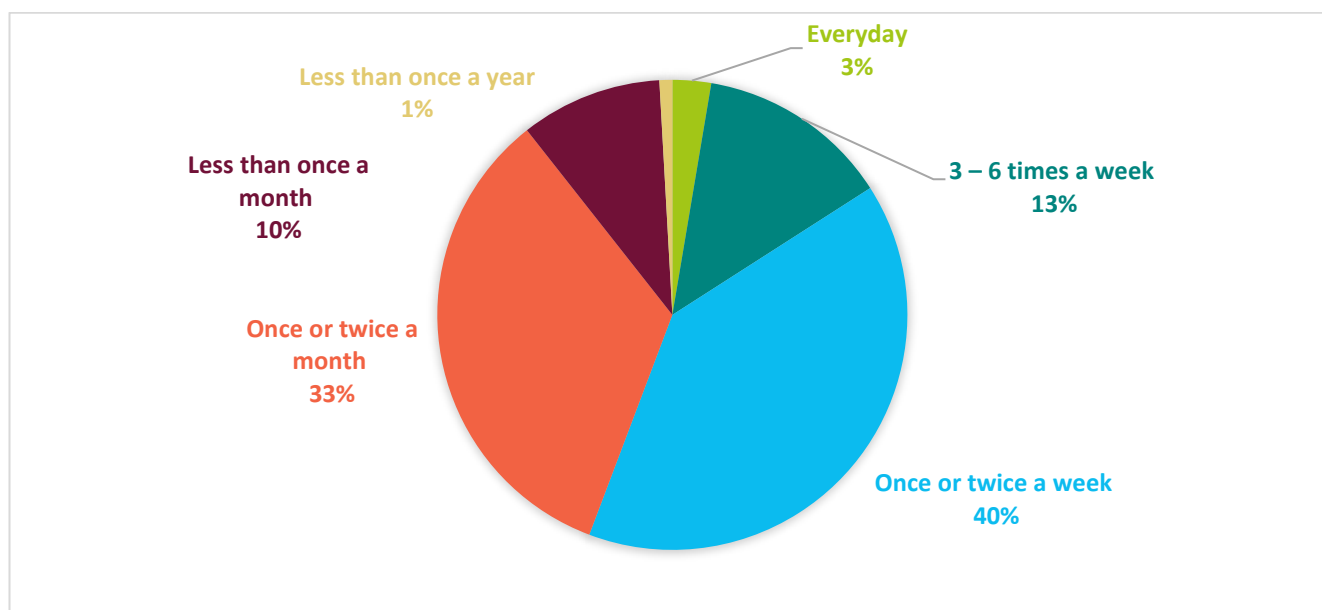


Of those who selected 'Other' and left comments, 15 people stated they travelled by boat, 2 walking, 1 by mobility scooter, 1 has a business and 1 does not travel here.

Q11. Do you think the improved towpath would encourage you to walk, cycle or run along this route more often? Please tick one box only (177 responses, 3 skipped)



Q12a. If yes you would use it more often, how often do you think you would use it? Please tick one box only (113 responses, 3 skipped)

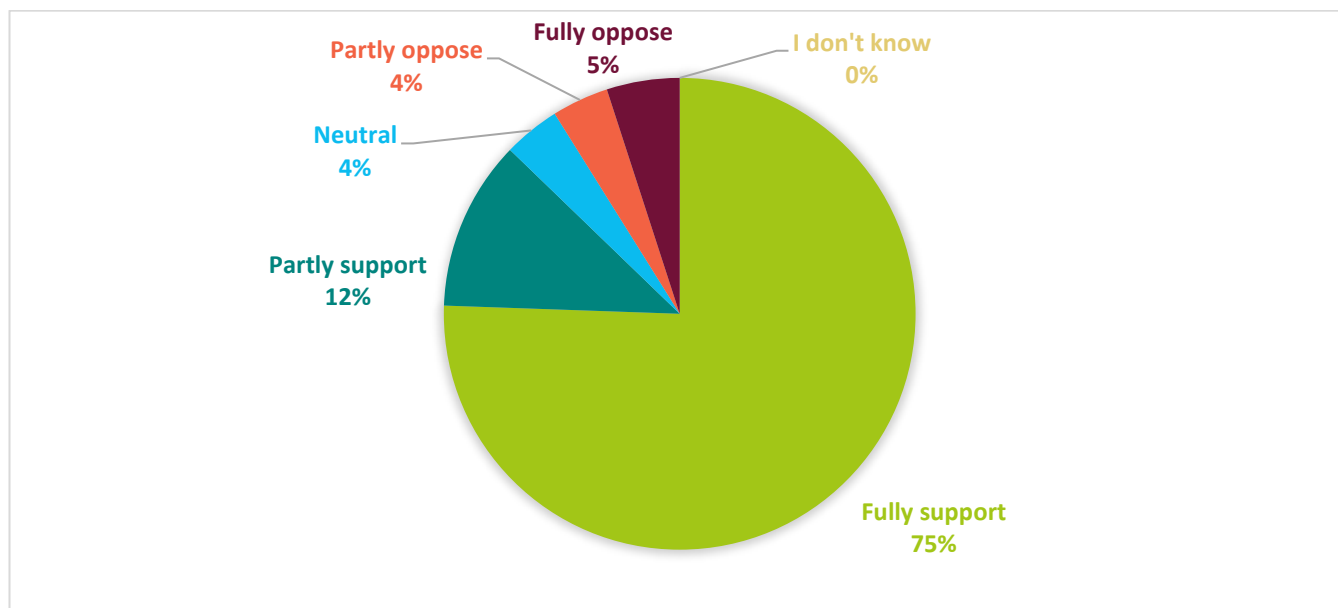


Q12b. If you wouldn't use it more often and would like to tell us why, please use this box:

If no, you wouldn't use it more often and would like to tell us why, please use this box	
Concerns	9
Too many cyclists and motor bikes	4
See previous comments	4
Concerned about mooring	1

The most common theme was concerns (4 comments) about too many cyclists and motorcycle users.

Q13a. Overall, do you support the proposals to improve the towpath between Aspley Marina and Cooper Bridge? Please tick one box only (180 responses, 0 skipped)



Q13b. If you would like to explain why you support or oppose the proposals, please use the box below	
Support	71
Support for improvements	44
Better cycle routes	15
Looking forward to using the towpath all year round	9
Support net zero and reduce car journeys	2
Better access for boaters	1
Oppose	9
Concerned on impact on boaters	5
Poor use of public money	4
Concerns	33
Too many cyclists and motor bikes by removing barriers	11
Wanted developments to go further	10
Areas feel unsafe	8
Frustration at lack of access points	2
About environmental damage/tree felling	2
Suggestions	10
Better accessibility for wheelchairs	5
More greenery on canals	3
Additional bins	1
Additional seating areas	1

The most common theme we identified was support (71 comments). Within the theme of support there were 44 comments showing general support for the improvements and 15 comments showing support for better cycle routes. There were 33 comments, however, raising concern. 11 comments of concern were about there being too many cyclists and motorcycles on

the canal. There were also 9 comments opposing the improvements and 10 offering suggestions.

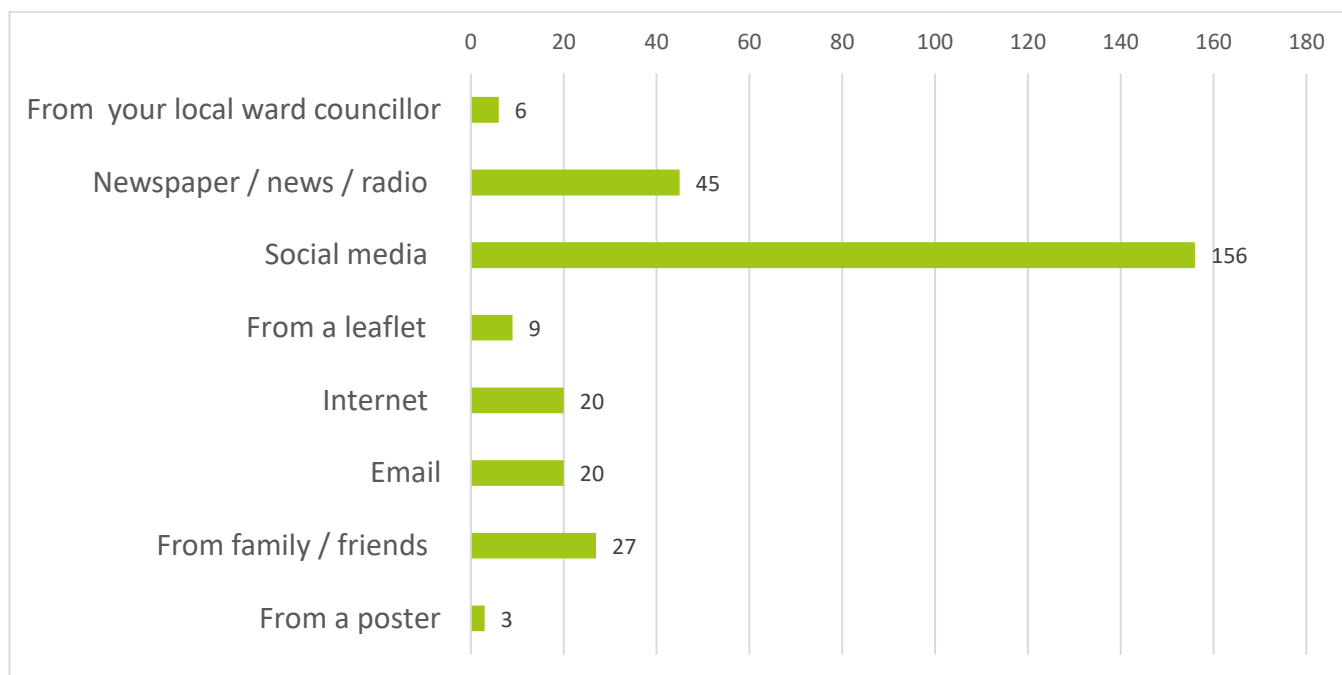
Q14. And finally, please use this space to provide us with any additional comments or suggestions you would like us to consider at this stage: (153 responses)

Please use this space if you would like to provide any additional comments or suggestions you want us to consider at this stage	
Support	42
Support for improvements	30
Better cycling routes	11
Looking forward to using towpath all year round	1
Oppose	11
Poor use of public money	7
General	2
Boaters' concerns	2
Concerns	51
Too many cycles and motorcycles by removing barriers	26
Wanted developments to go further	10
Areas feel unsafe	5
About environmental damage/tree felling	4
Frustration at lack of access points	4
Retain heritage	1
Separate cycles and walkers	1
Suggestions	55
Additional seating areas	12
Dog waste bins	12
Ensure moorings are available for boaters	7
Better access points and accessibility for wheelchairs	6
Additional bins	5
Better materials to be used	4
Make path wider	4
More greenery on the canals	4
Allow horses	1
Other	6
'No further comments'	4
Incomplete sentence	2

The most common theme we identified was suggestion (55 comments). Within the theme of suggestion there were 12 comments asking for additional seating areas along the canal and 12 comments asking for more dog waste bins. There were 51 comments, however, raising concern. 26 comments of concern were about there being too many cyclists and motorbikes on the canal. 42 comments offered support for the improvements. There were also 11 comments opposing the improvements and 6 miscellaneous comments.

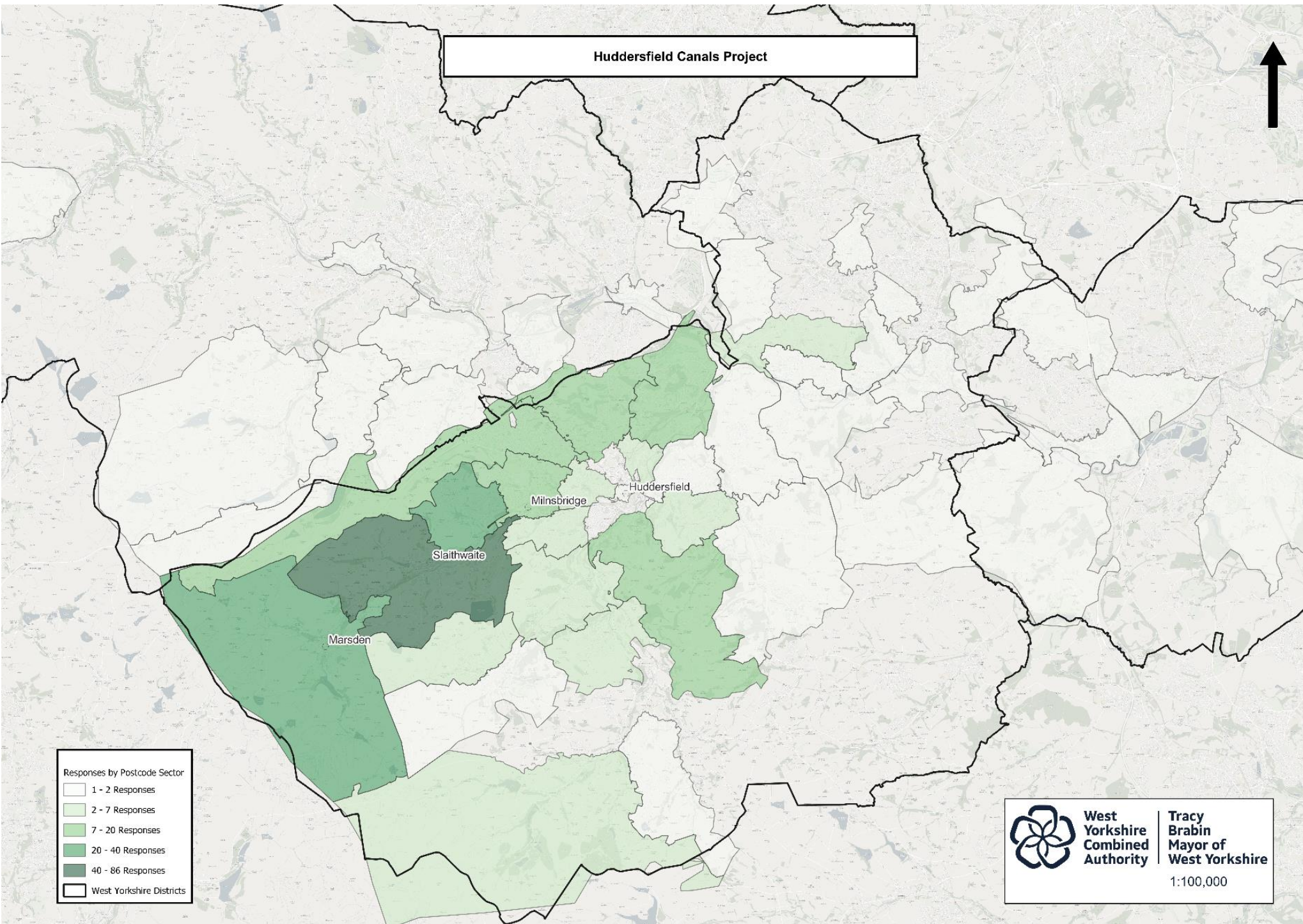
4.2.3. About you

How did you find out about this consultation? (357 responses, 4 skipped)

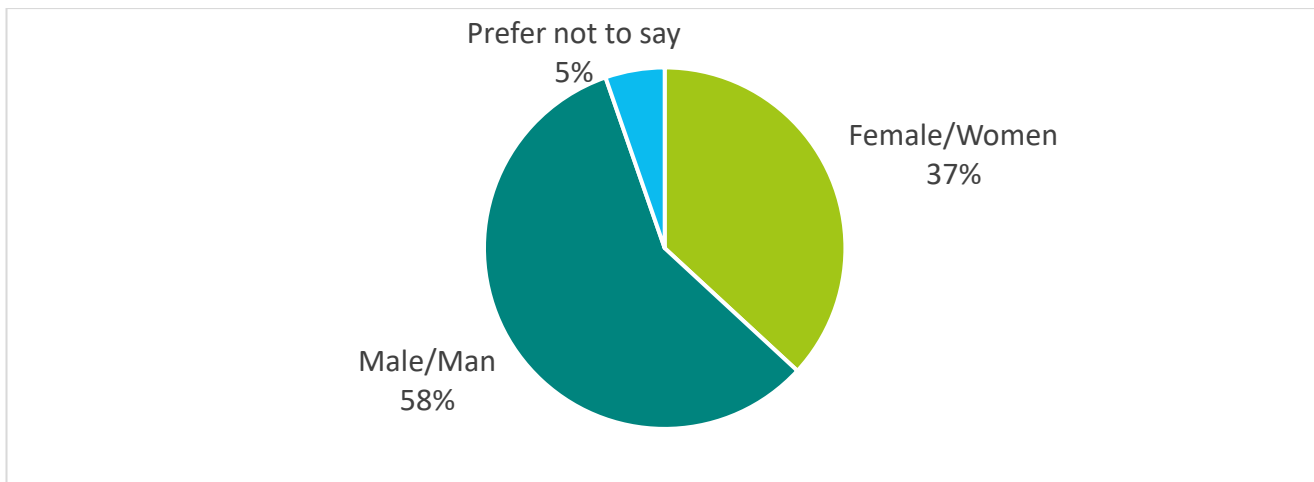


What is your postcode? (340 responses, 21 skipped)

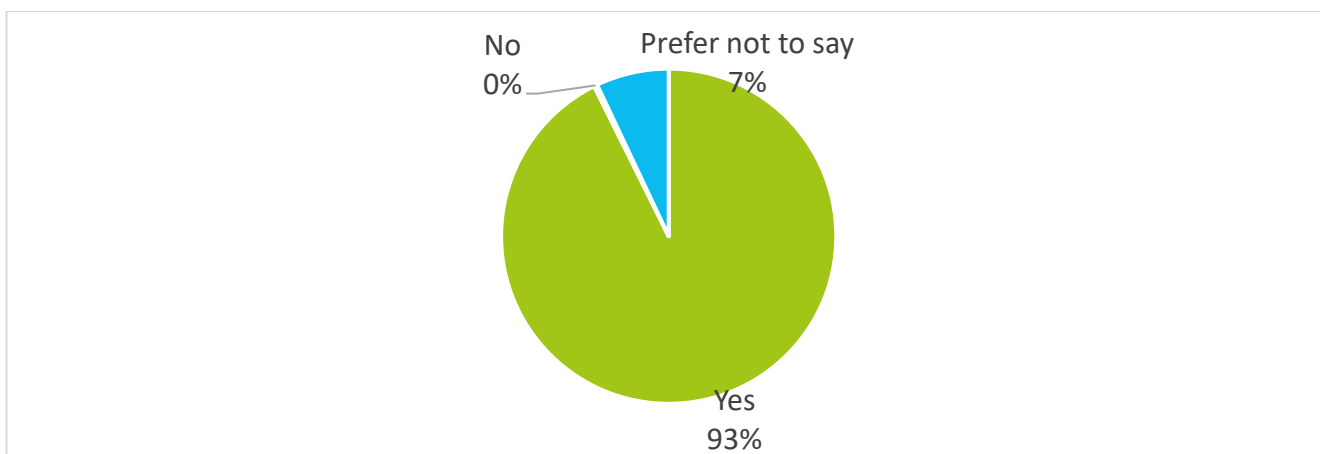
Postcode	Tally	Postcode	Tally	Postcode	Tally
HD7 5	90	HD9 4	2	HG3 1	1
HD7 6	44	HX4 9	2	HX4 0	1
HD7 4	33	WF12 9	2	HX4 8	1
HD3 3	20	Wf14 8	2	HX6 2	1
HD2 1	12	WF14 9	2	HX6 4	1
HD3 4	12	WF3 4	2	LS13 2	1
HD4 6	10	WF4 5	2	LS27	1
HD2 2	9	WF5 9	2	LS29	1
HD1 4	7	B1 2	1	MK14 6	1
HD4 5	6	BB4 4	1	OL14 8	1
HD4 7	6	BD	1	OL3 7	1
HD5 8	5	BD19 6	1	PO33 2	1
HD7	5	BS36 1	1	S35 8	1
HD3	4	CR08	1	WF12 7	1
HD1 6	3	DA1 3	1	WF13	1
HD2	3	HD5	1	WF13 3	1
HD9 2	3	HD5 0	1	WF13 4	1
HD9 5	3	HD5 9	1	WF14	1
HD9 6	3	HD6 1	1	WF15 8	1
WF14 0	3	HD8 0	1	WF16 9	1
HD1	2	HD8 5	1	WF2 6	1
HD1 2	2	HD8 8	1	WF2 8	1
HD9	2	HD9 1	1		



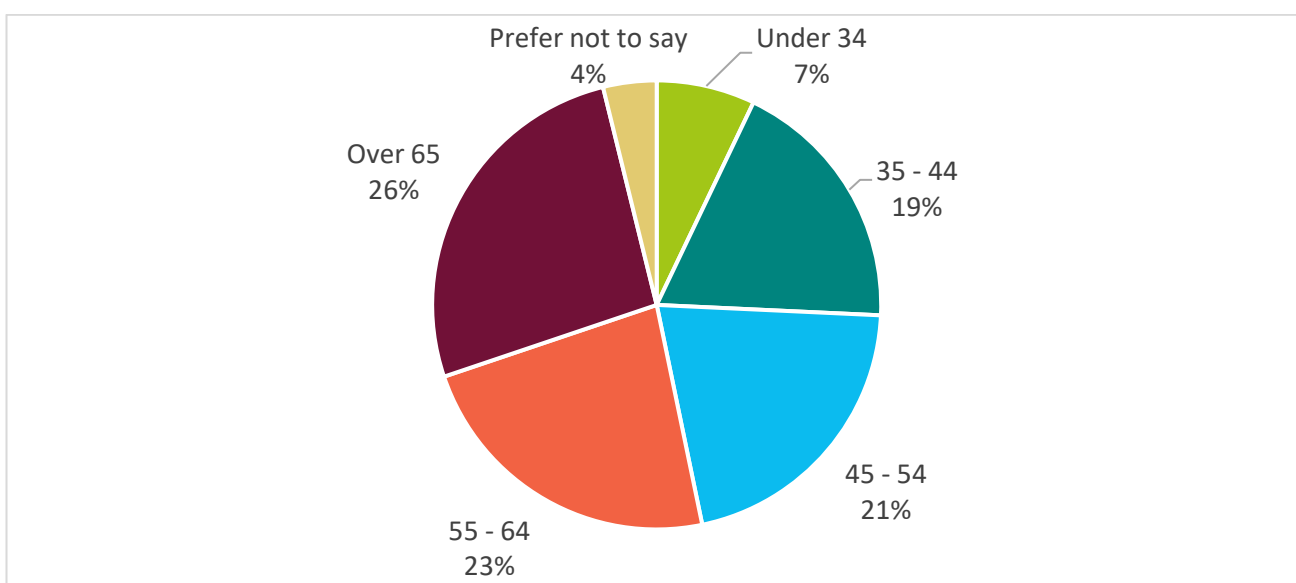
What is your sex? (339 responses, 22 skipped)



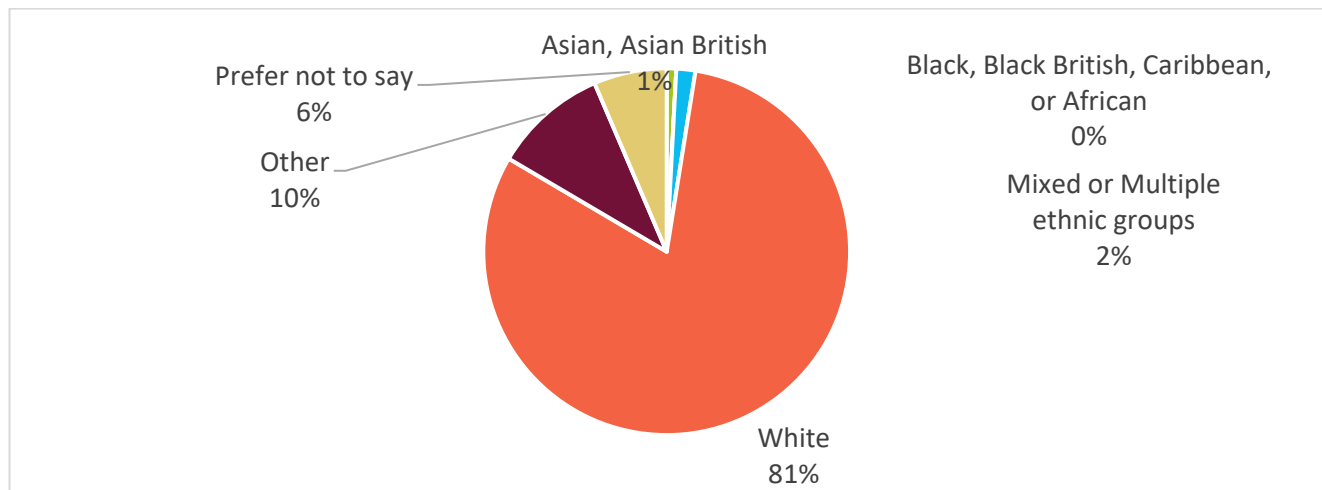
Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? (327 responses, 34 skipped)



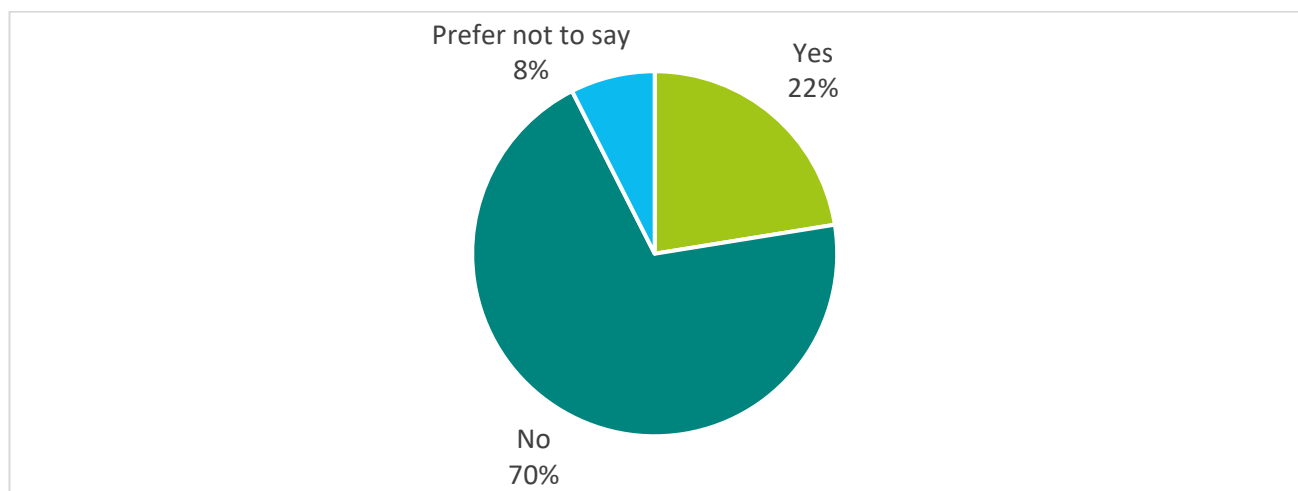
How old are you? (338 responses, 23 skipped)



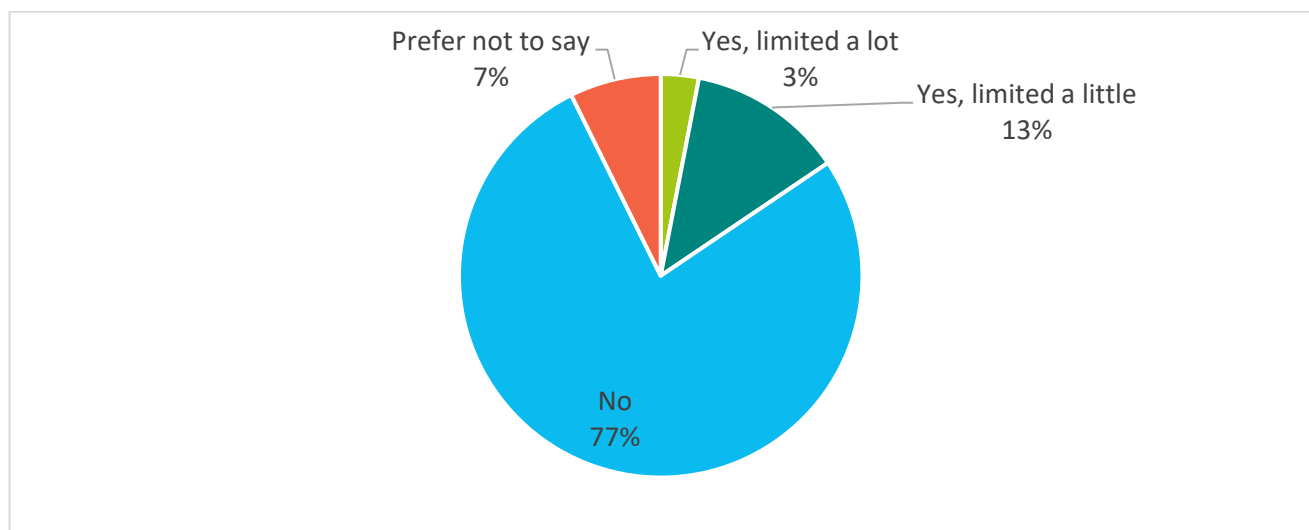
How would you describe your ethnicity or ethnic background? (357 responses, 36 skipped)



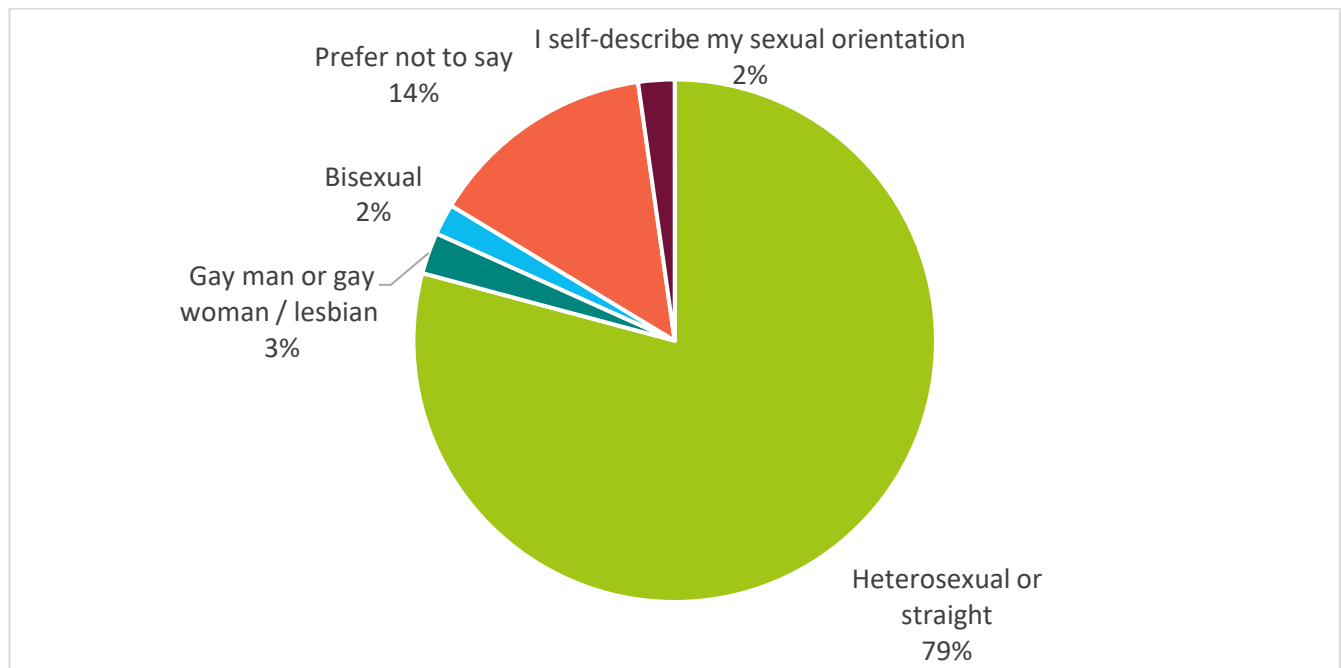
Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more? (334 responses, 27 skipped)



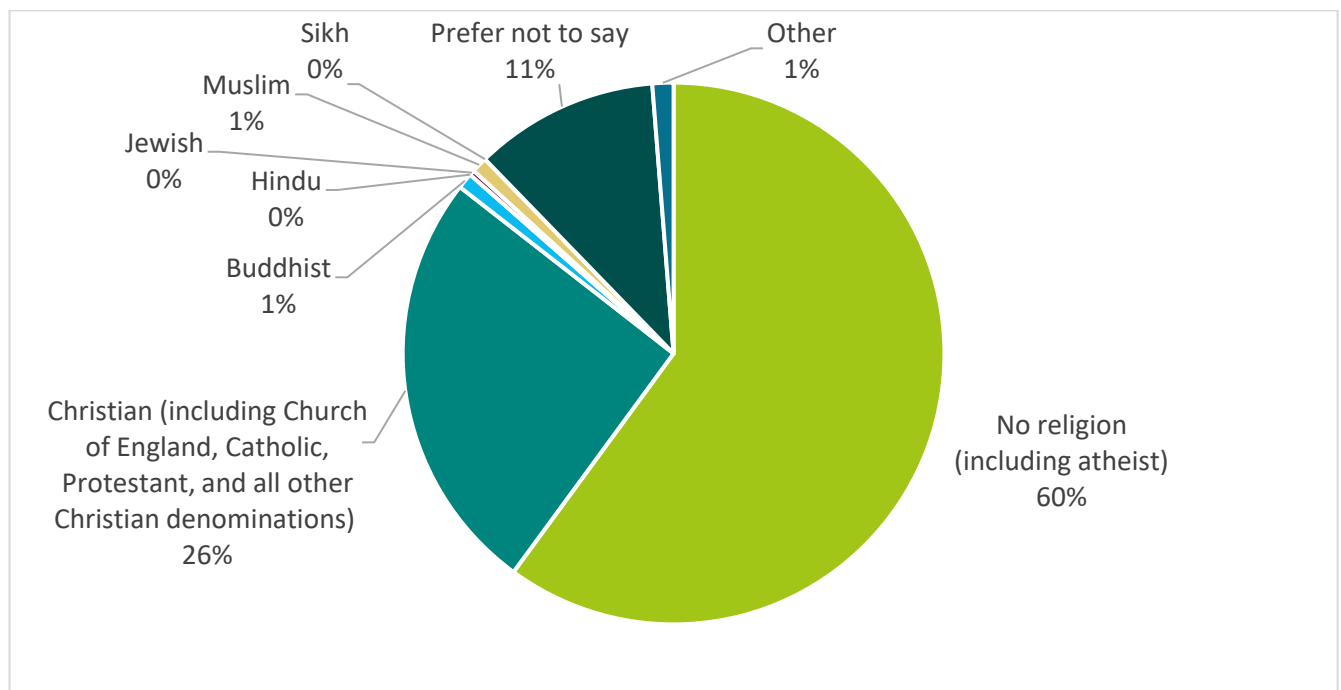
Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities? (328 responses, 33 skipped)



How would you describe your sexual orientation? (312 responses, 49 skipped)



What is your religion or belief? 318 responses, 43 skipped



4.3 Equity, diversity and inclusion informed analysis

We have a duty to demonstrate that we have considered the impact our projects may have on members of the public and to identify changes we can make to reduce/remove any negative impacts. Our equality impact assessment (EqIA) identified a number of key groups we should particularly consider and engage with as a result of this proposed scheme.

As part of our engagement, we received feedback from people from the below communities, as identified in the equality analysis.

Age

For the Narrow Canal, of the 23 people who are 34 years old or below, and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 91% fully support the proposals (21 responses)
- 9% partly support (2 responses)

For the Broad Canal, of the 13 people who are 34 years old or below, and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 85% fully support the proposals (11 responses)
- 15% partly support (2 responses)

For the Narrow Canal, of the 83 people who are 65 years old or over, and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 80% fully support the proposals (66 responses)
- 11% partly support (9 responses)
- 6% partly oppose (5 response)
- 2% fully oppose (2 responses)
- 1 response was neutral

For the Broad Canal, of the 36 people who are 65 years old or over, and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 72% fully support the proposals (26 responses)
- 14% partly support (5 responses)
- 8% response partly oppose (3 responses)
- 6% responses fully oppose (2 responses)

The EqIA identified that children form 18% of all population in the scheme area, comparable to 19% for Kirklees, 18% for Yorkshire and Humber and England as a whole, respectively. Given that transport choices for independent travel for children are limited to walking and cycling, making improvements to the towpath will not only impact positively on their safe travel to and from school and for other activities but will also facilitate opportunities for improved health and wellbeing.

Cyclists account for 14% of child casualties and safe cycling infrastructure (designed for ages 8-80), especially where it enables access to school or to existing/ proposed cycle hubs and tracks, is likely to play a role in improving safety of child cyclists. Enabling people of all ages to undertake more journeys by bicycle would contribute to modal shift, especially for shorter, more local journeys and therefore has potential to improve air quality, which affects especially children but also older people. In order to work towards this, the resurfacing of the towpaths will enable safe and smooth travel on a bicycle or walkers and will be easily accessible for all ages.

Recent research suggests that children in rear seats of vehicles have greater exposure to air pollution than those walking or cycling along a busy corridor. Research by Cardiff University indicates that around 40% of shorter car journeys (under 3 miles, or 5kms) could be feasibly replaced by walking and cycling, with associated reduction in air pollution. Provision of well surfaced and accessible paths has the potential to move pedestrians and cyclists away from busy traffic and reduce exposure to pollutants, which would benefit children's health in particular as their lungs are in development stage. This likely to have additional benefits for children's health, in particular reducing incidence of asthma. For the elderly, the scheme will facilitate safer routes for leisure and exercise, thus promoting increased physical and mental wellbeing.

Disability (physical and mental health)

For the Narrow Canal, of the 70 people who have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more, and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 77% fully support the proposals (54 responses)
- 17% partly support (12 responses)
- 3% fully oppose (2 responses)
- 1% partly oppose (1 response)
- 1% response was neutral (1 response)

For the Broad Canal, of the 43 people who have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more, and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 72% fully support the proposals (31 responses)
- 19% partly support (8 responses)
- 5% responses fully oppose (2 responses)
- 1 response partly oppose
- 1 response was neutral

The EqIA identified that the proportion of residents in the area that are living with a form of disability is slightly higher at 19% compared to Kirklees figure of 18%. The scheme will therefore provide an opportunity to enable this group of protected persons to engage meaningfully and safely in the great outdoors by providing access improvements at various crossing points along the route, notably: improved access to Quay street to the rail station; access ramp to Leeds

Road; connection to nearby NCN69 to Bradley and NCN66 to Mirfield/ Dewsbury; improved access from Colne Bridge Road; access to Cooper Bridge for routes to Calder and Hebble paths on the broad canal and better access to Marsden Lane and Marsden Station on the narrow canal.

In addition, the scheme will ensure the towpath is widened in parts to ensure it is wide enough to comfortably accommodate users with mobility aids such as wheelchairs, trikes as well as prams/push chairs. Furthermore, all barriers to access will be removed to allow for better access and connectivity to surrounding areas and other access routes. The towpath will be resurfaced to remove unevenness with an all-weather surface such that the route can be used all year round. However, there is still limitations for deaf, blind and partially sighted people using the towpath due to safety concerns with cyclists and other forms of active travel.

Ethnicity

For the Narrow Canal, of the 12 people who identify as Asian, Asian British, or Mixed of Multiple ethnic groups, or Other, and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 7 fully support
- 4 partly support
- 1 neutral

For the Broad Canal, of the 7 people who identify as Asian, Asian British, or Mixed of Multiple ethnic groups, or Other, and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 4 fully support
- 2 partly support
- 1 neutral

The Huddersfield Broad Canal is located in a ward (Dalton) that, although is predominantly white (75.8%), has a significant level of ethnic diversity (24.3% ethnic minority) comparable to the whole of Kirklees (26.3%). In both cases, the most dominant ethnic minority group is of Asian background at 9.6% (19.6% for Kirklees). The Huddersfield Narrow Canal is located in a ward (Colne Valley) that is predominantly white at 95.7% of the population, with BME only comprising 4.3% of the entire ward. The BME proportion is significantly less than the Kirklees and national averages of 26.3% and 19%, respectively.

Gender

For the Narrow Canal, of the 120 people who are women and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 83% fully support the proposals (99 responses)
- 13% partly support (15 responses)
- 3% partly oppose (4 responses)

- 1 response fully oppose
- 1 response was neutral

For the Broad Canal, of the 51 people who are women and answered the question, 'overall, do you support or oppose the proposals':

- 71% fully support the proposals (36 responses)
- 14% partly support (7 responses)
- 8% partly oppose (4 responses)
- 1 response fully oppose
- 6% were neutral (3 responses)

Women are more likely to depend on alternative modes of transport if they live in single car households, especially if they do not work full time. The feedback received through Leeds Transport Conversation indicates that women tend to rely on bus services more than men; they are also currently less likely to cycle. The provision of a safe and well-designed towpath is yet another option in the travel option toolkit available to female users in particular.

Personal safety along the towpath is likely to be a graver concern for women and young girls and it is therefore essential that the route is designed enforce a high level of visibility/ surveillance for this group. Furthermore, it may be that women will use the infrastructure as part of wider family outings therefore the pattern and frequency of use is likely to vary from that of men. However, the segregated nature of towpaths away from busy roads may encourage more women to venture out for physical activity if the safety thresholds are met upon improvement works completion.

Women are also much more likely to have family commitments – having inclusive, well designed and traffic free provision that can be used by families and young children may help unlock more avenues for outdoor physical activity, for example on a journey to school, or short routing shopping trips. Due to the above commitments, women can also be 'time poor' and struggle to devote time to physical activity especially when they are balancing work and childcare commitments. A segregated, well designed and ambient towpath may enable women to incorporate daily physical activity into their routine.

4.4 Analysis of emails and Q&A

Feedback was also captured outside of the survey. During the consultation period, we recorded feedback received by email, through the question tool on the Your Voice webpage, and provided during webinars. Full details of email, webinar and Q&A submissions can be found in the appendices.

9 emails and 2 questions were submitted. The content of these have been grouped by the topics raised and summarised into themes. Please note, a total tally may not equal the total number of comments as some respondents raise multiple themes.

Theme	13
Missed drop-ins	3
Feedback from stakeholders	2
Access for kayaks and canoes?	1
When will the landslide between Longroyd bridge and Milnsbridge be repaired?	1
When works will start?	1
Questioning the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion questions	1
Concerned about motorcycles	1
Support in general	1
Concerned about future maintenance	1
Keep weeds under control	1

5. Next steps

This consultation outcome report will be used by the project team to help inform changes to the proposals. This will be combined with further analysis and review, including the Active Travel England (ATE) design review and Combined Authority Quality Panel process to ensure compliance with relevant guidance/ legislation.

The next stage in the assurance framework is submission of a Business Justification Case into the Combined Authority's assurance process. Should the scheme be approved, construction is expected to start in autumn / winter 2024.

You can register to follow the scheme and have your say in future consultations at www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/register. Updates on the progress of the scheme will be provided on www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/canals. If you would like to contact us, please email yourvoice@westyorks-ca.gov.uk.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: Notes from meetings

Huddersfield Town Hall, Thursday 1 February, 12pm – 6pm

From the attendees, suggestions included:

- Would like more mooring rings at various points, where surfacing comes right up to washwall
- Whether new and better pegs would enable more of the area to be moored
- Leeds Road access would be better with ramps for wheelchairs
- Ashgrove Road – need access from there to towpath to be better as this forms part of a longer route
- Station to Station walking routes should be promoted once TP upgrade works complete
- Cooper Bridge to Ravensthorpe route would be good
- At Stoney Battery Road, there is an interpretation board orientated in wrong direction
- Phase works so that long closures don't occur over long areas

- Should include signage at bridge approaches where height and width is restricted
- Vine Street access, used by nearby Yorkshire Cycle Works, should be formalised
- Access points need adding to map at Bradley greenway and at footbridge off Ashgrove Road and need signage. Overall direction signage needs improving
- Ensure Huddersfield Town are on consultation list

Concerns included:

- Access routes around Lockwood Scar
- Wash Wall repairs at Aspley
- Courtesy signs for cyclists
- Steps at Queen Street South are steep and not very usable
- Ramp to Marsden Station, see if more First and Last Mile able to provide this
- Issue of speeding cyclists between Marsden Lane and Lock 33
- Experience Community users had difficulty with cobbled ramps at Lock 26E
- Drainage issue near Bridge 33
- Access to Red Doles Lane – key walking route but in bad condition and poorly signed

Questions included:

- What about route through Premier Inn car park?
- What is happening with closure at Bridge 53?

Webinar, 6 February 2024, 6pm

11 participants attended, and questions and comments are as follows:

Q&A box

Can you give some indication as to how long the work will take for both HNC and HBC? Thank you.

Is it possible to have a non cobbled slope using tarmac near locks

Some of the Hudds -> Milns route is more of a rubbery material which is more spongy. I guess that material is now not in the plan?

if you take away the 'A' frame barriers to motor cyclists, could you design into the scheme some small offsets at joining points that wheelchair or pushchair users could move round but look unattractive to motorcyclists, quad bikers or speeding cyclists

How many people are attending this webinar?

Thank you. I run Colne Valley Cycle Therapy in Slaithwaite so would like to keep our participants up to date on the closures when they happen.

OK thanks, thats good

Where possible will the canal remain open during these towpath upgrades?

Will the contactors be able to offer guidance to CRT on how the tow path surface could be kept clear (eg leaves etc) in the long term?

I have unmuted but you can't hear me. I wanted to say that dirt bikes are a real problem on the tow path near Leeds Rd. We run adult cycle training there and had to change our sessions because the greenway was closed and dirt bikes were on the towpath.

thank you

thank-you for the info and the excellent presentation. looking so forward to it!

On the broad canal at Aspley there are regular fishing competitions on Sundays. Their rods extend over the towpath but can be moved out the way. More users will be an issue.

Thank you for your time.

Site visit, 23 February 2024: Experience Community, Cycle Kirklees and EIPKS

This visit included a pre-meeting with Experience Community. Site specific comments from the pre-meeting are included below.

Huddersfield Narrow Canal Comments:

Britannia Road:

The ramp leading onto the towpath from the main Zebra crossing in Slaithwaite is steep and not easy to use by wheelchair. An alternative route via Market Place and Old Bank is possible but would be made easier with the addition of an extended footway and/or dropped kerb that would enable access to the road leading to the towpath without needing to wheel on Old Bank itself.



Entrance to towpath at Slaithwaite Mills:

A centrally located bollard could act as barriers to vehicle access and would need to be bright/reflective to be seen in the dark.

Lock 25E:

The lock ramp has a drainage channel, formed of stone setts, which crossed the towpath. This is a barrier for wheelchair users, whose castors get caught in the joints. It would be helpful if there was a 1.2m ramp over the channel. Setts also crossed the towpath at the top of the ramp and a section of smooth surface across it would also help accessibility.

Drainage at the top of the ramp should be examined as there was ponding on the southern side. Tar, Spray and Chip surfacing (TSC) should also be extended to the footbridge, which joins the towpath at the top of the ramp.



Lock 27E:

The ramp here was rebuilt around 2017 with stone setts, again these prevent use by wheelchairs. It would be helpful to resurface 1.2m of the ramp, on the left side with Tar, Spray and Chip surfacing (TSC).



Lock 28E:

Another setted ramp, on which a section of TSC would be helpful.

The track joining the towpath at the bridge is very important as it allows access to Old Lane, which bypasses an inaccessible ramp at Lock 29E. Levels need to be checked to ensure an accessible gradient onto bridge, still allowing farm access to the adjacent field.

Also need to check if Old Lane is a public or private road.



Lock 29:

The Lock ramp does not look like it could be made accessible. The gradient is too steep and there are upstands on the ramp.

The accessible alternative would be via Old Lane and the access point on West Slaithwaite Road. The access point would need amending to widen it and to remove the slight step.

The route should be signed as an accessible alternative.



Access point at Zapato:

The TSC should extend to the bridge. Work is needed with landowners on the Zapato side of the river to remove the bollard and to provide a ramp instead of the existing step-up in front of the bollard.



Lock 30E:

Another ramp where a 1.2m of TSC would aid access, including helping bypass the upstands. It is recognised that this would not leave a very wide section of remaining setts.



Lock 31:

Here the ramp is not setted but it would be helpful if the level of the ramp was raised to allow shallow access to the bridge leading to Kettle Lane and smoothing of the lip between towpath and the cobbles on the bridge.

Kettle Lane provides access to Park Gate Road and Marsden Lane but drainage part way along provides a barrier to wheelchair use and a danger to cyclists as it is formed by kerbing with a sharp upstand. Amendments should be sought from the Kirklees Public Rights of Way (PROW) team.



Lock 32 E:

The lock ramp has no setts but is steep. Would benefit from lengthening the slope to reduce gradient. A rest area halfway down (near an existing concrete lump) would be ideal.



Bridge 54:

Lock ramp has no setts but is stepped. Ramp should be lengthened to reduce gradient and remove steps. It would also be helpful if the bridge deck was resurfaced.



Sparth:

Sparth reservoir is a popular destination for groups using the HNC. But the path round it is inaccessible. Could the entrance to the path be amended to a ramp rather than existing steps?



Lock 34E:

The lock ramp here has been eroded. The ramp should be lengthened to provide a smoother gradient. Also the wall between lock and towpath is a pinch-point. This could be reduced if the space between this and the wall to the right was infilled and the towpath brought to the same level as the lock wall.



Marsden Lane:

The accessible route should be via the CRT access road to the east of Marsden Lane via the access point to the west of the gate (although the access road now has a steep rise to the gate entrance on Marsden Lane). This would bypass the steep setted ramp and lock gate.

Towpath users can then rejoin the towpath via the amended gate location as shown on the consultation drawings. Others have the choice to enter Marsden via Marsden Lane (and avoid pinch points and lock ramps) which should be signed. It should be noted that this alternative route into Marsden requires use of a significant hill.

The cobbles at the approach the Marsden Lane should have an adjacent width in TSC so the cobbles do not need to be crossed.



Marsden Station Access:

There are plans to upgrade Marsden Station and key to those plans is access to the towpath. Discussions are taking place between Kirklees, Marsden residents and Network Rail to transform the area around the goods yard.

Access from the towpath could be done as part of the remodelling to provide a new ramp directly from the towpath to Marsden Station near the disabled parking spaces on Station Road, but shorter term access could be provided via a new, wider bridge at Lock 41. Although this would also need amendment to the lock landing on the south side of the canal to enable users to get round the lock paddles. Some resurfacing of the path to the goods yard would also be needed.

The above proposals would avoid the need to use Marsden Lane, Warehouse Hill Road and Station Road, which adds a significant hill.



Marsden Station To Standedge:

There is an adjacent path in the woods built by Experience Community through the picnic area on the former sidings. Could a ramp be installed at the western access point (near B61), rather than improving the set of steps shown on the consultation drawings? The land is council owned and would enable an accessible circular route.

Heathland on the opposite side of the canal needs protecting.

Experience Community are looking at ways to use routes to Ainsley Lane to access the Tunnel End Reservoir to enable accessible volunteering. EC would also like to be able to reach Horseshoe (Hey Green Bridge and Weir) Waterfall and Easter Gate bridge with eventual access to the Pennine Bridleway

Huddersfield Broad Canal

Aspley:

Premier Inn access to include central bollard. This should include reflective strips.

Turnbridge Road:

There are proposals to close off Turnbridge Road to vehicular traffic.

Dropped kerbs are needed where Turnbridge Road meets the towpath. Also bollards need to be reflective.

Leeds Road:

Connection is needed between towpath and A62 Leeds Road at the point where the levels meet.

Vine Street:

Level access and dropped kerb required here.

Red Doles Lane:

Important link. Need to work with Kirklees PROW to ensure the connecting routes are improved. This links to the Calder Valley Greenway (CVG) via Aquamarine Drive.

Fieldhouse Lane:

Remove A-frames and work with PROW to ensure link to new bridge and CVG to north and A62 to south inc. local college.

Peace Pits Lane:

Remove A-frames and ensure improved route to north when Network Rail works finish.

A62 Leeds Road:

Useful link form towpath. Recognise an accessible ramp would be difficult but should, at least have better steps and a wheeling channel.



Ashgrove Road:

To be part of improved NCN cycle route, which will run along the towpath between here and the CGV at Bridge 5, lock 3.

Bridge 5:

If in CRT ownership, the bridge should be included in resurfacing, as such an important link (see above). Also the route on the far bank should be widened and the stone wall amended to create a smoother corner. At present it is narrow and 90 degrees.



Colne Bridge Road:

The informal access point here could be improved. Would need liaison with Kirklees Highways as on their land and would require amendments to the retaining bank to the B6118.



Bridge 3a and 3b

There was an old column from a removed bridge (possibly a pipeline) that creates a pinch point. There's nothing on the consultation documents about it. Can it be removed?

Cooper Bridge:

The existing listed bridge is inaccessible and unlikely to be improved as it is a listed structure. Need to examine alternative, including possibility of providing an accessible bridge on the lock itself. A lock gate at Elland could be an example but further research is required. Access barrier at entrance to lock keepers cottage needs to be altered to enable access even when closed.



Appendix 2: Feedback from stakeholders

Environmental Projects In Kirklees (EPIKS)

Huddersfield Broad Canal Towpath Consultation 18 February 2024 site visit observations

EPIKS broadly welcome the plans to upgrade the towpath along the Huddersfield Broad Canal. It is well-used by local communities both for short local routes and longer distance, but almost impassable in the winter months for those without appropriate footwear. An improved path will enable more local people to use it and encourage more active travel. The proposals fit well with our long term aims and vision of a 3 Valleys Nature Park, enabling better access to greenspaces for local people. It does need much better signage though, to help link into the adjacent communities better. The proposals will also contribute to the proposed Site Access Plan as part of the CCALL Landscape recovery project.

Detailed comments follow, to be read with the maps provided in the consultation, starting from Cooper Bridge:

At Cooper Bridge - Access off Leeds Rd – needs signage

Bridge 1 – not suitable for wheelchair access.

Proposed timber fence marked upstream of Bridge 1 and lock 1 seems unnecessary. The thicket is sufficient barrier.

Br 3 narrow path for level access from Colne Bridge Rd needs widening. This will involve reshaping the bank and or building a shallow retaining wall. Signage needed.

Lock 3 and bridge 5 –This is a key access point via the Greenway, improve surface over bridge, add better signage including a board with map showing Greenway to Bradley and Mirfield.

Bridge 6 at Lock 4– proposed surfacing on bridge not needed as this bridge goes nowhere other than the other side of the lock.

Bridge 7 – should be marked as key access. Signage needed for pedestrians over Footbridge to Leeds Rd and for all towards Ashgrove Rd/Leeds Rd and onward for pedestrians to Dalton Bank

Bridge 8 – agree need for improved ramp access. Much needed.

Lock 6 Bridge 9 – Signage to Greenway to north and Leeds Rd to south

Lock 7 Bridge 10 – Access to Old Fieldhouse Lane to south needs surfacing. Also signage needed in both directions

Lock 8 - There is no key access below lock 8 – this is private access by steps to the Huddersfield Town training centre

Lock 8 - There is a footpath access above lock 8 – the public footpath (steps) is overgrown and needs cutting back

Lock 9 Bridge 11 – Red Doles Road/Lane. This is an important cross-valley route between communities for pedestrians and cyclists. The ramp down to the south is steep and affected by tree roots. A possible improvement to this key access to Red Doles Lane and Leeds Rd would be to lay a more gradual ramp cutting the corner to the lock tail which would need some tree removal. Signs to Fartown and Leeds Road/Stadium would be useful. Signage from Leeds Road to the PROW and canal would be helpful.

Bridge 11a Vine St There is level access, which needs signing.

East of Bridge 12 there is a stone gabion retaining wall. The now unnecessary length of cracked top chain link fence needs removing here. It collects rubbish, is unsightly, and could add extra width to the path.

Bridge 12 pedestrian access up steps is good and needs signing to Willow Street

Between Bridges 12 and 13 A cycle path across the grassy triangle to Leeds Rd opp Phoenix Retail Park would improve this key access (currently steps so pedestrian only).

Bridge 16 Quay St Bridge – This should really be called Locomotive Bridge or Turnbridge and celebrated as a Landmark more fittingly as it is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, the only one on this canal. It should be repainted before the official reopening of the towpath to cover over the graffiti. Then it would make a great backdrop for publicity photos with the Mayor. Signage from here should indicate the route to the Town Centre as this is the closest point.

Aspley Basin: Beside the current bollards at the back of the Aspley pub and beside the Premier Inn there should be a detailed sign board with a plan showing how to link up with the Huddersfield Narrow towpath. Cyclists should be directed via St Andrews Road and straight along Firth St and Colne Rd to Chapel Hill and thence to lock 3E by Kirklees College. Pedestrians should be directed both ways around the basin and down the steps under Wakefield Rd, thence through the University as far as the steps in Queen St South and then onto the cycle route along Colne Road. The old signboard on the wall, to Aspley Basin & University should be removed.

Cycle Kirklees

Cycle Kirklees (the Kirklees Cycling Campaign) supports changes to our towns, roads, and traffic-free routes that improve the safety and attractiveness for people riding cycles. The consultation documents for the canal upgrades project provide an outline description of planned changes including surface width, removal of barriers, and repairs to stone sets.

Representatives from Cycle Kirklees spent a day on site with Mark from Canal & River Trust to go through the site in more detail highlighting areas for improvement. Also present were members of Experience Community, EPIKs and Marsden Community Association.

A document has been created by Mark with our agreement that contains detailed notes of issues along the route and at access points.

General Comments

Cycle Kirklees support the upgrade of the towpath to a widened, all-weather surface with all restrictive A-frame barriers and gates being replaced by correctly spaced bollards.

Due to the heritage of the towpaths, there are physical restrictions that cause pinch points at locks and overbridges. Moreover, throughout the length of both the HNC and HBC there isn't anywhere that meets the LTN 1/20 *minimum* width of 3m for a shared path or bi-directional cycle track.

The towpaths are often busy with families and dog walkers, particularly on weekends. As improvements are made to the surface and accessibility we would hope for an increase in use as the routes become more attractive. This is likely to make travel by cycle inconvenient due to a frequent need to slow and stop around people walking and additional waiting times at pinch points.

Canal & River Trust have made the point at active travel partnership meetings that where their towpaths routes are open for cycling, the width restrictions and multi-use nature of the environment, with fishing and boat mooring activities, means that should not be assumed to be a key part of any cycle network.

Cycle Kirklees would like to strongly remind Kirklees Council and WYCA that the existence of these multi-use leisure paths doesn't reduce the need for safe cycling infrastructure on these A62 corridors from Huddersfield to Marsden and Huddersfield to Bradley Junction. Recent long-term closure of both the Birkby Bradley Greenway and the HNC towpath at Longroyd Bridge have highlighted the fragility of the limited cycle network in Kirklees as both closures have diverted people's everyday cycling journeys onto the treacherous A62 roads that, other than a small section of Leeds Road outside Huddersfield, have no protected cycle infrastructure.

With the current long term closure of the Coal Lane bridge by TRU we request that priority is given to surfacing the stretch of towpath between Ashgrove Road and the Bradley Viaduct as this will provide a mud-free route to Leeds Road from the Calder Valley Greenway.

Huddersfield Canal Society

Huddersfield Broad and Narrow Canal towpath upgrade – Response to consultation from Huddersfield Canal Society

General support

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposals. Huddersfield Canal Society is supportive of efforts to improve the standard of the Huddersfield Narrow and Huddersfield Broad towpaths for all users.

We have responded positively to consultations on other sections and have been involved in a working group to develop green routes in the Colne Valley to link with the footpath networks on the Pennines. Continuity of routes, good signage and appropriate surface treatments taking into account the mainly rural and partially urban nature of the canal towpath and the ability of authorities to maintain the finished works are all important factors.

The Huddersfield Narrow Canal – Slaithwaite to Marsden

The Huddersfield Narrow Canal infrastructure is by design limited in cross-section and this has resulted in the towpath being narrower in width than is the case with the predominantly broad-gauge waterways of Yorkshire and the North East. This brings with it attendant safety issues particular in terms of conflict between fast and slow users and those wishing to stop and take in the scenery or pursue their interests in angling or bird-watching. Headroom clearances under historic bridges, important heritage features such as setted ramps, and blind corners mean that continuous cycling can cause a danger to others. Indeed for many years, up to 2012, cycling was prohibited on the Narrow Canal towpath in recognition of the limitations.

The need for respect between users

The Canal Society is supportive of the change to permit wider use but remains concerned about how individuals use the freedom to cycle or run along a path which was not designed for speed. Despite efforts to introduce 'two tings' guidance and other initiatives there are always a few people who do not understand or do not appear to care about the hazards they bring by

speeding along a narrow towpath in the vicinity of walkers who may be unaware of their approach.

The Huddersfield Canal Society is not alone in raising such concerns and has suggested that in promoting further towpath improvements users are warned that they should recognise that the route is not to be used by those seeking the quickest way between two points.

A particular area of concern on this length of canal is the Marsden flight of locks. During lockdown in 2020 this was often crowded with walkers and cyclists and there were some unseemly incidents with speeding downhill cyclists causing a hazard. We think that serious consideration should be given to signposting the alternative Marsden Lane as a quiet route for cyclists between bridge 56 and bridge 54.

Signage and access

Effective signage is important in directing those unfamiliar with the area to linking accessible routes and locations such as villages and amenities. As well as providing information for visitors signage should give the clear message that cyclists do not have precedence over pedestrians and that they should negotiate their passage by giving clear signals and stopping where it is clear that others are not aware of their presence. To avoid a cluttered environment signage needs to be well designed and well located.

Sign orientation is important as well. There are cases on the earlier HNC towpath upgrades where the signage including a map has been copied from earlier publicity and has been erected the wrong way round. This can confuse less knowledgeable visitors into walking in entirely the wrong direction.

A number of access points are identified on the plans. Some such as at Bridge 60 and others missing such as at Bridge 51. In each case finger posts should indicate linking footpaths, bridleways, designated long distance routes and roads.

Boat mooring

A key issue for the Society is that the Huddersfield Narrow Canal is part of a navigation network and therefore boaters should be able to moor practically anywhere along the length of the canal on the towpath side as they can on other such man-made waterways. The shallow dish-shaped profile of the Narrow means that it may not be possible to get in close so a boarding plank may be needed to access the bank. What is essential though is a means to secure the vessel to the bank. Ideally mooring rings should be provided in the most popular mooring places, some of which may occur where a former wharf has been sited with a deeper wash-wall. When new work is planned it is essential that it does not result in removal of accessibility for a section of the community, namely boaters.

To obviate the need for boaters to drive mooring pins into a newly laid towpath surface it is recommended that either the green strip is maintained or mooring rings are installed into the coping stones or separate anchor points behind the wash walls at the time the towpath is re-laid. Our Society has made such representations on earlier lengths of towpath upgrading work, and the principle has been agreed but to date no such rings have appeared. We have a follow up list agreed with CRT's Area Operations Manager to remedy the previous omissions.

We note that mooring rings are to be installed in the stretch between 25E and 26E. An important location which does not appear on your plans is one we have agreed with CRT's Area Operations Manager. It is along a 150m length downstream of bridge 53. This would mean that the 2 metre width of towpath may not be achievable over this length. To assist the relaying of the towpath here we urge that the mooring rings are installed prior to the laying of the new surface.

Surfacing

We recognise that the tar spray and chip surfacing is a practical solution and easier to maintain than the expensive Flexipave system used between Longroyd Bridge and Milnsbridge. The

actual construction depth is not specified but it will need to vary to take account of existing potholes and the need to provide a crossfall towards the canal.

Setts on lock slopes

The plans recognise that these historic features should be retained and improved with good pointing and any gaps filled. This type of formation has stood the test of time as it is less prone to erosion than most towpath surfacing. The Society however does recognise that setts even when well laid present a barrier to those with wheel chairs or the type of cycles used by Experience Community and that there should where possible be a parallel provision which can be negotiable by disabled users.

There is a general note about 'reducing the steepness of slopes alongside locks'. It is not clear how this can be achieved and given the presence of setts at a number of locks this will need careful consideration on a lock by lock basis.

Phasing

One of the problems presented by the towpath works between Longroyd Bridge and Milnsbridge was that a very long stretch was closed to users for a lengthy period in the summer. This was despite undertakings given during consultation that phased closure was planned. Similar long distance closure was planned throughout the summer on the Milnsbridge to Slaithwaite project although in the event the contractor allowed users to walk through the site. Given the higher existing usage of this next section it is imperative that the work is phased sensibly to minimise closure periods particularly during the summer.

Landmarks

It is not clear what criteria has been used to identify these. The one relating to Standedge Tunnel Visitor Centre should identify the Tunnel itself at the location shown but, following the closure of the Visitor Centre, consideration could be given to highlighting the warehouse building which is due to be managed by Hanson's Music from this Spring and developed as the Northern Centre of Music.

The Huddersfield Broad Canal from Aspley to Cooper Bridge

In contrast to the Huddersfield Narrow the infrastructure of the Broad Canal is more substantial, the cross section deeper and the towpath wider. Thus many of the challenges of towpath upgrading do not occur here. There are pinch points but by and large these have been noted in the plans.

Signage and access

As with the scheme on the Narrow Canal effective signage is important in directing those unfamiliar with the area to linking accessible routes and locations such as villages and amenities. As well as providing information for visitors signage should give the clear message that cyclists do not have precedence over pedestrians and that they should negotiate their passage by giving clear signals and stopping where it is clear that others are not aware of their presence. To avoid a cluttered environment signage needs to be well designed and well located.

Sign orientation is important as well. There are cases on the earlier HNC towpath upgrades where the signage including a map has been copied from earlier publicity and has been erected the wrong way round.

This can confuse less knowledgeable visitors into walking in entirely the wrong direction.

A number of access points are identified on the plans. In each case finger posts should indicate linking footpaths, bridleways, designated long distance routes and roads. More specifically here are some observations listed from Cooper Bridge to Aspley:

- At Cooper Bridge the access off Leeds Rd needs signage. The limited freeboard under Leeds Rd bridge on the narrow towpath alongside the river Calder may preclude this being incorporated in the scheme.
- The narrow path for level access from Colne Bridge Rd at Bridge 3 needs widening. This will involve reshaping the bank and or building a shallow retaining wall to achieve a suitable width.
- At Lock 3 and bridge 5, this is a key access point via the parallel Greenway. The surface over the bridge needs improving add better signage including a board with map showing the Greenway to Bradley and Mirfield.
- The proposed surfacing on bridge 6 at Lock 4 is not needed as this bridge goes nowhere other than the other side of the lock.
- Bridge 7 should be marked as key access. Signage is needed for pedestrians over the Footbridge to Leeds Rd and for all users towards Ashgrove Rd and onward for pedestrians to Dalton Bank.
- Bridge 8 is a key access where we agree the need for an improved ramp access as this is oversteep
- At Lock 6 Bridge 9 signage is needed to the parallel Greenway to the north and Leeds Rd to the south
- At Lock 7 Bridge 10 the access to Old Fieldhouse Lane to the south needs surfacing. Also signage needed in both directions
- There is no key access below lock 8 as this is a private access by steps to the Huddersfield Town training ground. There is however a footpath access above lock 8. This is overgrown and needs cutting back.
- The key access point at Lock 9 Bridge 11 (Red Doles Road/Lane) is an important cross-valley route between communities for pedestrians and cyclists. The ramp down to the south is steep and affected by tree roots. A possible improvement to this key access would be to lay a more gradual ramp cutting the corner to the lock tail which would need some tree removal. Signs to Fartown and Leeds Road/Stadium would be useful. Signage from Leeds Road to the Public Right of Way and canal would be helpful.
- At Bridge 11a Vine St, there is level access, which needs signing.
- The Bridge 12 pedestrian access up the steps is good and needs signing to Willow Street.
- Between Bridges 12 and 13 A cycle path across the grassy triangle to Leeds Rd opp Phoenix Retail Park would improve this key access.
- Aspley Basin: Beside the current bollards at the back of the Aspley pub and beside the Premier Inn there should be a detailed sign board with a plan showing how to link up with the Huddersfield Narrow towpath. Cyclists should be directed via St Andrews Road and straight along Firth St and Colne Rd to Chapel Hill and thence to lock 3E by Kirklees College. Pedestrians should be directed both ways around the basin and down the steps under Wakefield Rd, thence through the University as far as the steps in Queen St South and then onto the cycle route along Colne Road. The old signboard on the wall, directing to Aspley Basin & University should be removed.

Boat mooring

The plans do not appear to impinge on boaters ability to moor in most lengths of this canal.

Surfacing

We recognise that the tar spray and chip surfacing is a practical solution. The actual construction depth is not specified but it will need to vary to take account of existing potholes and the need to provide a crossfall towards the canal.

Phasing

One of the problems presented by earlier towpath works on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal was that a very long stretch was closed to users for a lengthy period in the summer. This was despite undertakings given during consultation that phased closure was planned. Similar long distance closure was planned throughout the summer on the Milnsbridge to Slaithwaite project although in the event the contractors allowed users to walk through the site.

In walking the length of the Broad Canal last week during this consultation period there was confusing signage north of Leeds Road bridge 8 suggesting closure of the towpath. The contractor at the actual works from lock 5 to lock 6 had signage indicating an acceptable pedestrian route around the construction works so 'towpath closed' sign appeared to be incorrect. It is to be hoped that clearer and better publicised temporary arrangements will be adopted for the new towpath project.

Landmarks

It is not clear what criteria has been used to identify these. One obvious one which is not highlighted on the plans is Bridge 16 Quay St Bridge. This should really be called Locomotive Bridge or Turnbridge and

celebrated as a Landmark more fittingly as it is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, the only one on this canal.

In the Society's view the footbridge should be repainted before the official reopening of the towpath to cover over the unsightly graffiti which has existed for many years. Then it would make a very good backdrop for publicity photos with the Mayor of West Yorkshire. Signage from here should indicate the route to the Town Centre as this is the closest point.

Other work

The proposed timber fence marked upstream of Bridge 1 and lock 1 is not necessary. The thicket is a sufficient barrier and the drop not significant.

East of Bridge 12 there is a stone gabion retaining wall to the car park of Travelodge and Yorkshire Rose pub.

The now unnecessary length of cracked top chain link fence needs removing here. It collects rubbish, is unsightly, and could add extra width to the towpath if it was taken away.

Further consultation

Huddersfield Canal Society is keen to provide further feedback during the developing project planning process such as when details emerge as to the phasing of the work.

The British Horse Society

Dear Sirs,

I am responding to this Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad Canal engagement consultation on behalf of The British Horse Society, an equestrian Charity which represents the 3 million horse riders in the UK. Nationally equestrians have just 22% of the rights of way network. These are increasingly disjointed by roads which were once quiet and are now heavily used by traffic resulting from development.

Since 2010, the British Horse Society has had over 4,774 road incidents involving horses reported to it, 1,080 horses have been injured, 395 horses have died, 44 humans have lost their

lives and 1,220 have been injured. The Society estimates that only 10% of such incidents are currently reported to it. The 2019/2020 hospital episodes statistics show that there were 3,331 admissions resulting from ‘an animal rider or occupant of an animal drawn vehicle being injured in a transport accident.’

The Scheme.

Project Background. Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad Canal Towpaths upgrade project.

“Improvements to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal & Huddersfield Broad canal towpath will provide a safe, traffic free route towards Huddersfield”. We see this as an excellent way of reducing the accident statistics as highlighted above. The route provides people with an enhanced experience of travelling by foot and by bike on a quiet and traffic free route. We believe horse riders have the same right to access this traffic free route as every other user. The towpath is also enjoyed by many for leisure use and accessing green space.

“Such improvements also make it easier for people with mobility issues to access the towpath, and for everyone to share the space”. Horse riders are part of the community and should be included as “everyone”.

The long standing agreement has always been: Noted on page 10 CRT National Users Forum meeting held on Wednesday 3rd April 2019.

“Where there are towpaths identified which would provide a safe off road route, and where it is safe and practical to achieve, the Trust will consider granting equestrian access working in partnership with The British Horse Society”. Noted on page 10 CRT National Users Forum meeting held on Wednesday 3rd April 2019.

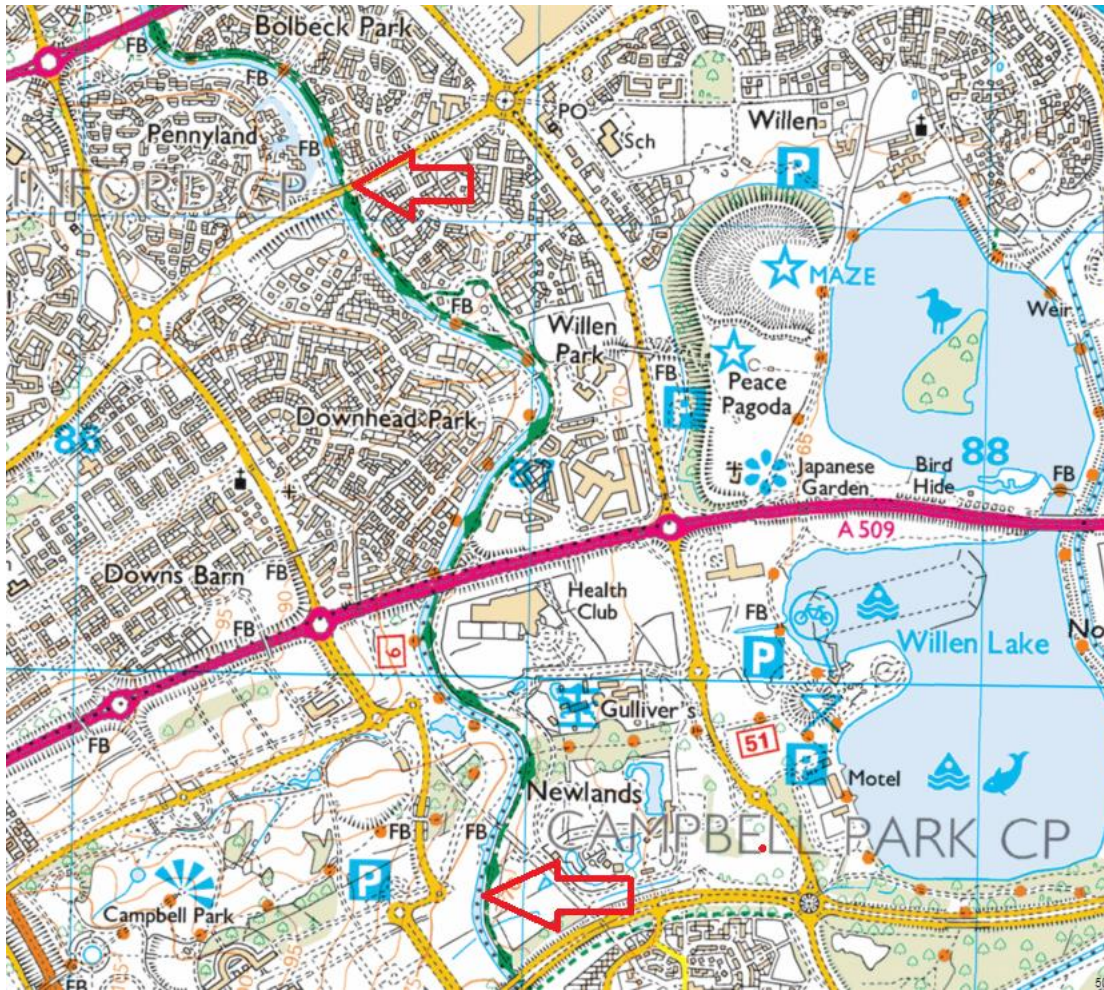
<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/original/40127-national-users-forum-notes-3-april-2019.pdf?v=186334>.

“Lay a new towpath surface to provide an even, accessible route for walking and cycling and for people using mobility aids that is in keeping with the rural nature of these sections of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad Canal.” We welcome the new surface along with increased widths and would draw your attention to a material that will benefit all users including horse riders. Flexi-pave KPI this material is used extensively in high usage areas on the Trans Pennine Trail, is porous, essential due to the continuing high levels of rainfall predicted to continue due to the effects of global warming. This material meets green credentials being a material that uses recycled rubber tyres.

“Maintain existing towpath widths and, where possible, increase up to two and a half metres wide whilst retaining grass verges and other vegetation to support the ecology of the canal corridor” We support the use of grass verges whilst pointing out that these verges could also be used as passing places for all users during the heaviest of use during busy periods.

Funding Parameters for this project are not limited and exclusive to user neither should this funding be used to discriminate against horse riders, public funds must be used for public good. There have been suggestions as to the viability of allowing horses on to the towpaths there have been concerns raised based on safety, Horses have used these towpaths for almost a century during the industrial revolution canals were the most important way of transporting goods the horses were the engines of the day. There remain examples where Canal towpaths have bridleways running along them examples below. These towpaths in this consultation cover large urban areas with very heavy vehicular use this makes the project an ideal opportunity to create safe off-road access to one of the most vulnerable of all road users.

Example of where a bridleway runs along a canal towpath can be found on the grand union canal in Milton Keynes a heavily used route. **See Below.**



Examples of Current Towpath Access for Horse Riders.

Leeds to Liverpool The Leeds to Liverpool canal which was opened up as a multi use track and has a large section which is a bridleway

Sussex BW 806 + 809 Loxwood, West Sussex runs along the towpath of the Wey and Arun canal in Loxwood. Some 5+Km.

Surrey Wey Navigation - BW 132 Dodds Lane goes over the bridge and the BW continues on the Tow path. BW 352 at Elmbridge which for some reason turns into FP393 south of Elmbridge. BW280a south of Utworth bridge runs along side the canal at Garson to Mill bridge. South of Fastbridge BW 400 continues alongside the canal. The canal disappears through Firtree copse and when it appears again FP547 runs along side and then disappears past the old lock house when it crosses Rosemary lane BW 417 runs on the line of the tow path.

Essex. On the Chelmer and Blackwater Canal in Essex. there is a section from Heybridge to Maldon that is a definitive bridleway over the towpath.

Burnley. Definitive bridleway on a tow path in Burnley.

Kent. Public Bridleway HB83 at Hythe in Kent runs along the towpath of the Royal Military Canal, between the golf course and the canal. It was dedicated when the public bridleway along the Royal Military Road beyond the bank on the other side of the canal was given a firm surface for the benefit of cyclists, so that horse riders would still have a stretch to use which was soft.
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploreKent.Web.Sites.Public/Default.aspx?#&lyrs=16&xmin=615908&xmax=618622&ymin=133905&ymax=135542>

Manchester/Cheshire. Peak Forest Canal between Ashton Under Lyne and Whalley Bridge in the Manchester area and also the Macclesfield Canal from Marple through Disley and Adlington which is part of the Cheshire Ring. The Bridgewater canal -a branch of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.

Somerset. The tow paths on the Bridgewater and Taunton Canal. A stretch of the Tone from Ham to Creech St Michael.

Shropshire. Adderley and Audlem - the Shropshire Union Canal. The Llangollen Canal in the Ellesmere and Whitchurch areas. The Shropshire Union canal from Hyde Mill Lane, up to the wharf. The canal tow path from Trevor to Llangollen.

Leicestershire/Warwickshire. Market Bosworth, Leics/Warks –access to towpath at Shenton Station which is situated below Bosworth Battlefield.

Leicestershire/Derbyshire. Ashby Woulds Trail, Measham to Spring Cottage – access to towpath obtained at a few places along the Ashby Woulds Trail, particularly at Donisthorpe. Cloud Trail – access to towpath obtained directly off Cloud Trail at Swarkestone, Derbys.

Leicestershire. Ashby de la Zouch Canal towpath from Conkers Waterside to the Donisthorpe basin.

National planning policy context states, “Planning policies and decisions should, take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community” Equestrians are part of the community.

Leicestershire. Ashby de la Zouch Canal towpath from Conkers Waterside to the Donisthorpe basin.

Lancashire Brookside, Bay Horse, Lancaster at grid ref: OL 41: 488528

I would like to draw your attention to the following Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan:

MOBILITY FOR THE FUTURE *‘We will work with infrastructure owners and operators to ensure that proposals brought forward for the development of the transport system reduce reliance on the private car by considering the needs of users on the basis of the following hierarchy:*

- i. *Active Travel Modes (pedestrians and cyclists)’. Active travel solutions should not exclude equestrians.*

James Palmer, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mayor has stated in a current transport consultation: *‘Active Travel – cycling, Walking and Horse Riding. Promoting active and sustainable transport like walking, cycling and horse riding are key objectives at a national, regional and local level.’*

He has also stated that Greenways are an *‘... off road route for walking, cycling and horse riding.’*

The recently adopted Joint Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan defines Active Travel as: *‘Active Travel: Physically active modes such as walking, cycling or horse riding.’*

Active Travel provision must therefore be embedded in new transport projects in the same way for all modes and should be adopted in all counties, not just Cambridge and Peterborough, to provide continuity and improved connectivity of the network for all.

Highways England Recently produced report GG142 states on page 15

4.8.1 Walking, cycling and horse-riding policies and strategies should be used to help inform the identification of opportunities for improvement of walking, cycling and horse-riding facilities.

A case for the inclusion of equestrians to all public trails

The British Horse Society (BHS) and other local equestrian access groups have a vision of a well-planned, joined up rights of way network that would be available and useable by all vulnerable non-motorised users namely walkers, cyclists and equestrians. As the road network becomes increasingly busier and subsequently more dangerous, there is greater need for authorities to do everything they can to adopt this vision and help bring it to reality.

To promote safety, healthy lifestyles, active travel, and tourism we do not expect any authority to deliver on an immediate, comprehensive network but do ask authorities to work towards that goal and make provision for all vulnerable non-motorised users through any opportunities that arise including new developments, new public rights of way proposals and changes to the existing network including upgrading existing footpaths to Restricted Byway or Bridleway status.

Many authorities use inclusive terminology such as ‘Multi-User Path’ or ‘Greenway’ and whilst these have no legal definition, we would see these as:

- A public Right of Way which permits all vulnerable non-motorised users, namely walkers, cyclists and equestrians.

The BHS and other local equestrian access groups requests that Local Authority departments (Planning, Highways, Rights of Way etc.) ensure that where provision for vulnerable non-motorised users is being considered, equestrians are wholly included.

Equestrians to be included in any shared-use routes, wherever possible

In order to maximise opportunities within development to help provide more off-road links for equestrians, where shared-use routes are created for active travel as a part of any development, planning policy should support the automatic inclusion of horse riders on shared off-road routes, unless there are specific reasons why this is not possible.

Conflict with cyclists is sometimes given as a reason for excluding horses from shared routes, but this rarely has anything to do with either the horse or the bicycle, simply the inconsiderate person who happens to be riding one or the other. Horse riders and cyclists as two vulnerable road user groups have more in common with each other than differences. This is illustrated by the work that the BHS is doing in partnership with Cycling UK in the current “*Be Nice, Say Hi!*” campaign and with Sustrans in their ‘Paths for Everyone’ initiative.

Appendix 3: Questions received via the Your Voice Q&A tool

Question	Answer
When will the work take place between Lock 5 and 7 of the Broad Canal? and will access across the towpath to the canal be maintained? West Yorkshire Scouts use this stretch of the canal for canoeing and kayaking during the summer, and I am trying to identify	<p>Once we have been able to appoint a contractor, they will then submit their works programme to us</p> <p>It would be at that point that we would know when work would take place between Lock 5 and 7 of the Broad Canal.</p> <p>We will work closely with our contractor to ensure that there are as few closures as possible on the towpath.</p>

<p>if we will still be able to access the canal to launch our canoes and kayaks. Thanks.</p>	<p>For example, the last phase of works between Milnsbridge and Slaithwaite, no closures were needed.</p> <p>All closures will be advertised in advance of any works and we can keep in touch and work with yourself to ensure the Scouts are inconvenienced as little as possible.'</p>
<p>When is the landslide between Longroyd bridge and milnsbridge going to be repaired so that section can be used?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question, you can find the answer in our FAQs and below:</p> <p>A phase of towpath improvements between Milnsbridge and Slaithwaite took place in 2021/22 as part of the CityConnect programme.</p> <p>In January 2023, a section of wall beside the towpath started to bulge and break apart due to the presence of tree roots, so Canal & River Trust closed this section of towpath to ensure public safety. Early investigations then uncovered the presence of asbestos and complications behind the wall, making the repair more difficult than initially expected. The Trust explored options to reopen the towpath on a temporary basis. However, due to the real risk of wall collapse this was not possible.</p> <p>The Trust's engineers are currently designing the permanent repair and the Trust anticipates that the repair work will take place in late summer/autumn 2024.</p> <p>Updates can be viewed on Canal & River Trust's notification pages: Towpath Closure - Lock 4 East, Longroyd Bridge to Bridge 30, Mark Bottom Road Bridge Canal & River Trust (canalrivertrust.org.uk)</p>

Appendix 4: Emails received and responses provided

Question	Answer
<p>Hello,</p> <p>I was just reading an article about the Summer improvements planned for the stretch of the Huddersfield Canal from Slaithwaite to Marsden - the article vaguely mentions that the work is set to start in summer 2024 - do you know if there are any more specific dates that can be given as this work is likely to heavily affect my transport routes.</p> <p>Many thanks for your help with this matter.</p>	<p>Good afternoon,</p> <p>Thank you for getting in touch about the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad Canal towpath upgrade projects.</p> <p>This scheme is currently in the developmental phase, encompassing various pivotal stages.</p> <p>Presently, we are actively engaged in the consultation and engagement stage. Valuable feedback obtained during this phase will play a crucial role in shaping the final design, potentially influencing the approval to proceed and marking the commencement of on-site activities.</p> <p>An advance notice informing users of the start on site will be advertised.</p> <p>There is a recording of the webinar that was held which can be viewed via the Your Voice page, in case this is of interest.</p> <p>Please feel free to get back in touch for anything further.</p>

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	Kind regards,
<p>Thank you for the information posted on the 2nd February, it's a shame it came the day after the 'have your say' meeting at Huddersfield Town Hall was this planned? Thank you</p>	<p>Good afternoon, Our apologies that you received the information after the Huddersfield Town Hall drop-in, this was not intentional. There is a recording of the webinar which can be viewed via our Your Voice page if this would be of interest. Please feel free to fill out the survey if you have not done so already. Kind regards,</p>
<p>Dear Sir/Madam, I sadly missed the publicity and therefore the organised meetings re the proposed upgrade of Huddersfield Narrow Canal towpath. Can I use this email address to inform you of my views about a subject that is very important to me? Thank you, regards</p>	<p>Good afternoon,</p> <p>Thank you for getting in touch.</p> <p>Please feel free to let us know what you think about the proposed upgrade of the Huddersfield Narrow (and Broad if you wish) Canal towpath via our survey.</p> <p>The survey can be found by clicking here.</p> <p>You can also access our survey via the Your voice page: https://www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/canals</p> <p>If you'd prefer to email us using this email address, yes, you can absolutely do so.</p> <p>Also, we had to postpone our Marsden Mechanics drop-in event due to snow, and this has been re-arranged for Tuesday 22 February (next week) if you can make it.</p>
<p>Dear Yourvoice,</p> <p>I have just completed the above consultation I always answer all questions I considered relevant, eg my age, gender and any disability. However, some here I considered irrelevant and therefore did not answer.</p> <p>The survey does not explain why, for instance, homosexuals/lesbians might use a towpath differently from heterosexuals. Without knowing your reason for collecting data, I suspect many people will not answer the question or refuse to complete the survey at all. Others may choose to deliberately give false answers when they see no reason for data being collected. Any data you collect from those who answer such questions may therefore be totally misleading.</p> <p>Please can you explain why you think my sexuality, ethnicity, religion or gender identity (if different from my real sex/gender) affects how I, or others, might use a canal towpath?</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	<p>Good afternoon,</p> <p>Thank you for your question about our optional 'About You' questions.</p> <p>You may have read the following on the survey itself:</p> <p>'The final sections of this survey are optional. If you choose to answer these questions you will not be identified by the information provided.</p> <p>'We want to better understand who we are engaging with and hearing from. We are required to act in line with the Equality Act 2010. By asking the following questions we can make sure our work reflects the diverse communities we serve. All information will be handled and dealt with in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, as detailed in our privacy notice'</p> <p>We ask these questions on every survey we run, to help us understand which groups of people we are engaging with and collecting feedback from.</p> <p>You can read more about the reasons why we ask About You questions here.</p>
<p>Thank you for the reply but you havent answered my question! The equality act requires that you do not discriminate... ..but you do not explain how you think that any aspect of the towpath design might be affected by, for instance, the religion or sexuality of the person walking along it.</p>	<p>I appreciate your concern that the questions we ask about people who respond to our surveys are not directly relevant to the projects themselves. We ask the same set of 'about you' questions for every survey, and these questions are always optional – so anyone</p>

<p>I repeat my question is: please can you explain why you think my sexuality, ethnicity, religion or gender identity (if different from my real sex/gender) affects how I, or others, might use a canal towpath?</p> <p>If you cannot find an answer, please can I ask that you raise with your managers (do you have a staff feedback system?) that surveys only ask questions which are relevant to the survey itself?</p>	<p>can decide either to only answer the questions they would like to, or to not answer any of them.</p> <p>Because we ask the same set of ‘about you’ questions for each project, the questions are not about each specific project. By asking the same set of questions we can compare the results as a whole. We can have a look at the demographic information of everyone who engages with Your Voice and answers our surveys. By doing this we can see whether there are certain groups of people that we are not reaching in our work, or certain groups of people whose voices aren’t being heard.</p> <p>We ask questions that are asked of people when they complete the census, so we can compare the demographic information of people who have engaged with Your Voice to the census information we have about people living in West Yorkshire. By doing this we can ensure we are meeting our public sector equality duty by acting on this information and doing more to reach those groups that are not being heard.</p> <p>There are some questions that can be useful for individual projects – for example it can be useful to know if we’ve gathered the feedback of disabled people when a project is trying to make crossing the road easier. For a project like this our project team may have made an assessment that new crossings will aim to improve safety for disabled people. Or, if we’ve gathered the feedback of women and girls when the project is hoping to improve safety in an area where we’ve had feedback that women and girls have felt unsafe.</p> <p>I hope this can provide some clarity on your question.</p>
<p>I fully agree that it is essential to understand the needs of disabled users when designing a towpath and therefore that is a valid question which I did answer.</p> <p>I suggest it is important to collect only such relevant data. If for example you do not know how you might design something, such as a towpath, for people according to their religion or sexuality, then please do not ask unnecessary questions.</p> <p>Your current approach discredits WYCA and puts people off answering consultations. Please get it changed!</p>	<p><i>[a further response was deemed not necessary here]</i></p>
<p>Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the proposed towpath upgrade on both canals.</p> <p>Please find attached a separate document setting out the Society’s response.</p> <p>Kind regards</p> <p>Huddersfield Canal Society</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to send us your response to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad Canal Towpath Upgrade Projects on behalf of the Huddersfield Canal Society.</p> <p>All feedback will be reviewed as part of this consultation and an outcome report will be produced once all data has been analysed.</p> <p>Best wishes,</p>
<p>Dear Sirs,</p> <p>Attached is a consultation response in relation to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad canal towpaths upgrade, on behalf of The British Horse Society.</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to send us your response to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Huddersfield Broad Canal Towpath Upgrade Projects on behalf of The British Horse Society.</p> <p>All feedback will be reviewed as part of this</p>

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	<p>consultation and an outcome report will be produced once all data has been analysed.</p>
<p>Hi</p> <p>Really wanted to get to your Marsden drop-in event but couldn't make it.</p> <p>Just wanted to say as a regular user of the canal tow paths pre and post the previous upgrades, we are a great fan and can't wait for the next bots to Cooper Bridge and Marsden.</p> <p>I just wanted to feedback that without any maintenance plan or budget we are beginning to see deterioration in the other upgraded paths. So please could we make a couple of suggestions of which I am sure you are already well aware;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where you leave vegetation at the side of the paths please try and ensure it is further away from the paths than on the previous projects because over summer the weeds in many parts of it grow, some as large as 5 feet, and then when all this vegetation dies off in Autumn/Winter it rots into mulch and then over the next year or two stimulates growth for fresh weeds/grasses and the path edges start disappearing and then this goes on again • Under some areas of the paths that have a lot of trees, the leaf mulch build up has become very large and some sections are so muddy now that it feels like it did before the path upgrades, which is such a shame. So please can you find some budget to ensure they are onward maintained? <p>All the best.</p>	<p>Good afternoon,</p> <p>Thank you for getting in touch about the towpaths upgrades projects.</p> <p>The funding for the towpath comes from Capital funding pots and we do not receive a sum for continued maintenance. As such we try and implement robust designs that need as little maintenance as possible on the towpath itself.</p> <p>Thank you for bringing the vegetation growing next to the path to our attention - we will cut back as much as possible. Vegetation and general clearance work will be done by our volunteers and we are also introducing Corporate Volunteer days in the area, working with people from private businesses to undertake clean-ups. We will ask organisers if they can include scraping off mulch as part of this. We have attended a number of site visits as part of the consultation process and have spotted a few areas where this is an issue.</p> <p>Best wishes,</p>
<p>Thank you for coming back to me and for the below information.</p> <p>That is as I expected, which is such a shame how these projects work with no onward funding for maintenance and then witnessing things that cost so much money go on to deteriorate afterwards.</p> <p>On our walks we are often picking up bits of rubbish and clearing some of the mulch or overgrown weeds but it is a much bigger task than the two of us can achieve but if you would like to know the areas worst affected then feel free to ask and we can send you location details and images when on our travels.</p> <p>All the best and we look forward to the new path upgrades 😊</p>	
<p>I attempted to use the your voice site to indicate my concern that the proposed improvements don't demonstrate a way of keeping motorcycles from using the towpath. This is as important as steps to prevent four wheel vehicles from using it.</p>	<p>Good afternoon,</p> <p>Thank you for getting in touch.</p> <p>We are consulting with police about what we can do to reduce motorcycle use, should it occur.</p> <p>We recognise the issue but also that it is difficult to completely prevent motorcycle access without preventing access by other legitimate users such as wheelchair, pushchair and adapted cycle users. We will take advice from the police and are looking at</p>

	including signage at certain points to ensure it is clear that motorcycles are not legitimate users of the towpath. Best wishes,
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Appendix 5: Full list of written comments to open text questions

Huddersfield Narrow Canal – full comments

How do you currently travel along this route? Please select as many as apply (Other (please specify))
Narrowboat
Pram
Boat
Narrowboat owner
Car
Mobility scooter
In connection with boating.
By boat
Boater
Narrowboat
I use a boat
In a narrowboat
i'm a boater
I don't
Our clients use the towpath on a daily basis
Boat
Narrow boat
By narrowboat
Narrowboat
Narrowboating
By boat
By Narrowboat and walking the towpath between locks.
Mobility scooter
Boat - specifically, liveaboard boats

If yes, you would use it more often, how often do you think you would use it? Other (please specify):
With a better canal tow path we would be able to use it more during the winter months or after wet weather

If no, you wouldn't use it more often and would like to tell us why, please use this box:
I stopped using the towpath some time ago because of the hazards of cyclists on the narrow towpath. It should for a place of quiet relaxation not conflict.
I enjoy the countryside feel of the route and would not enjoy the 'urbanisation' of the path. Easy to put on a pair of boots to access the path as it is currently.
I preferred it when it was muddy and less used!

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The works are very likely to increase conflicts between pedestrians and fast moving cycles & electric scooters.
Some cyclists travel at great speed without concern for others. Making the path smoother will make it more dangerous for pedestrians. My wife is deaf and cannot use paths that are for cyclists and pedestrians as it is too dangerous for her, she cannot hear cyclists coming. The issue has worsened over the years due to electric powered bicycles, increased speed of cycles is an issue
Opening it up to bikes is dangerous, Seen many near misses where prams with babies/toddlers have ended up in the canal because of gangs of bored kids hurtling down the paths.
Tarmac is an unsustainable and environmentally inappropriate material to use near a watercourse that could damage the water quality. it would also increase the speed of cyclists and danger to those less mobile making it less accessible/safe for those with mobility issues.
Because the canal is for BOATS not maggot drowners/speeding cyclists/walkers etc
Share the space is a concept not always adhered to by cyclists who see these upgrades of towpaths as ideal race ways. They can make it dangerous for boaters when mooring up or using the towpath for walking along. Pets have already been killed on towpaths and boaters and pedestrians injured. These upgrades also make it easier for illegal powered vehicles such as quads, escooters and motorbikes to use the towpaths. Almost impossible to police and very dangerous to everyone else. Also there appears to be no provision for boaters to use a grassy strip to put in mooring pins or bollards to attach ropes to for mooring up. In fact, boaters for whom the canal was originally built, so far have not even been mentioned.
I don't want the world tarmacked
Unfortunately, a smooth clear pathway encourages cyclists. One or two cyclists are polite and follow the guidance but 98% just go faster and want everything in their way to jump into the bushes so that they can get past without having to slow down, or even worse, have to stop and dismount
There is no pleasure in walking when one is constantly trying to avoid speeding cyclists, many of whom are totally disrespectful of other tow path users.
I am deaf and cyclists are a nightmare they whizz passed so quickly and totally disorient me... they are rude, they shout then peddle off if I say something. It makes what should be a lovey relaxing walk into gamble... should I just catch a cab to get somewhere? I don't see why deaf people have to loose out! Don't make it easier for cyclists to take over make them more accountable for their actions
I often used to go for walks on the canal bank and also go fishing, I now do not do not walk or fish due to cycling at great speed where the tow paths have been upgraded.
It depends how the towpath is upgraded. If the grass verges and/or mooring rings and bollards are not retained, it will become impossible to moor boats. Boats are entitled to moor anywhere on the towpath for 14 days or longer if it is reasonable in the circumstances (Sec. 17.3 c ii of the British Waterways Act 1995). If NBTA members are prevented from mooring on the towpath for 14 days, they will be unable to navigate on the Huddersfield canals. Another consideration is that when towpaths are 'upgraded', in our experience this opens the path to use by fast cyclicts, which endangers and intimidates other towpath users including boaters.

If you would like to explain why you support or oppose the proposals, please use this space

To encourage cycling by providing alternative to the A62
My only concern would be around any wildlife habitat. Though I do not believe there has been any such impact elsewhere during the upgrade works.
The towpath is important for connecting Slaithwaite to Marsden (and the businesses in between). It's commonly used for recreation by all ages. But the condition of parts of the towpath means it is difficult for people with prams or wheelchairs to access. And when it rains my family and I are less likely to use it - particularly for cycling.
The improvement of the tow path will help to increase tourism. Health and well-being of the community.
I cycle the route regularly but avoid it after heavy rain when the surface is slippery, muddy and blighted by huge puddles.

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This is obviously not wanted but additionally the limited "dry" space means that both walkers and cyclists are inconvenienced
The mud has been a barrier in the wet
Absolutely in favour of improvements, having the part from Milnsbridge to Slaithwaite done had made a massive difference to its accessibility especially when it is rainy, whereas the part past Slaithwaite can get extremely muddy
The tow path is already busy with families and individuals using it for leisure and also people walking/cycling to and from work . The footfall although encouraged is causing more damage to an already badly damaged path. The proposed works will ensure that people can continue to use the path safely whilst not causing anymore damage .
This is long overdue & this stretch has been overlooked for many many years. The path is not fit for purpose & the sooner it is put right the better. Can't wait for you to sort it. Soon
Fully support the proposals which should make the towpath usable 52 weeks a year
I used to walk along this section on average 4 times a week but was regularly dodging puddles and returning home muddy. Since the tow path from Slaithwaite towards milnsbridge was improved I much prefer that section and use instead. I think it is important to make as much as the tow path accessible for as many people as possible and improving this section will help with this.
My husband uses a mobility scooter & struggles with the access to & on the towpath in parts as a result he rarely uses it unfortunately. Hopefully after the upgrade it will be more accessible.
The stretch between Marsden and Slaithwaite is very popular and heavily used, as a result the path is very muddy in places, which the already improved sections are not. The length before Longroyd Bridge needs reopening.
This is a wonderful gentle walk. It's wonderful to walk a gentle gradient and access beauty by walking a gentle route. It would be very good to have seats along the way. The seats nu Marsden train station are so.hoid to rest a while. I'm 84 enjoy the walk because of ease of access and gentle gradient however seats will help.me walk further distances and hopefully continue walking along as I grow older. Well done when it's an easier walk to Tunnel End.
After any degree of rainfall, sections of this part of the canal become waterlogged and very muddy.
I support this proposal as the narrow canal is a treasure to the community that needs to be maintained and managed to encourage use and make it more accessible to all.
Occasionally we choose to not walk the canal as it is too muddy. This should improve it.
It will also help commuters access the town without needing to cycle on busy roads.
I acknowledge that the improvements will slightly disrupt regular users such as myself by appreciate that this is necessary for long term gain.
I often walk the Slaithwaite to Marsden route via the canal, however some days after particularly bad weather, I opt to walk along Manchester Road, which obviously has its disadvantages. The canal is such a lovely route between the two villages.
Only concern is flattening towpath around locks
Fully in support of this proposal. The canal footpath gets so muddy and loose underfoot that it puts me off walking along the canal and taking alternative routes along the road which feels dangerous due to the traffic.
I have seen the improvements that have been made between Slaithwaite and Milnsbridge. These improvements have made me more likely to use that section of the canal as it it less muddy and easier to walk along with young children.
Between Slaithwaite and Titanic Spa it's certainly attracted more people and it would do the same between Slawit and Marsden. It makes it easier to walk with the new tarmac and stones, people don't get dirty anymore
The path is often waterlogged and muddy and some sections have had a lot of erosion.
It's a great walk between the villages, the only reason we don't use it more often is we have a pram and if it's muddy it's just not practical. By doing the upgrade we would use this more.
It's a busy path for walkers, runners and commuters. It's very muddy and impassible when icy so any improvement to the surface would be great.
This section is in desperate need of an upgrade, it's an absolute mud bath after just the smallest bit of rain, people are often walking on the narrow stone edge to avoid the awful mud. I walk, run and cycle along here 3 times a week, and if it were improved, I could do this more often particularly after bad

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<p>weather. It's a really important active travel link between two villages, as the the only other way is along the hostile Manchester Road, and I'm not aware of any proposals to improve this. Not only is it a good link between the villages, there are excellent businesses along the towpath, it's really important for local people, as well as visitors and it's so busy, especially on a weekend that we really need the space an improved path would provide. It's also really important that the improvements made are accessible for people in wheelchairs, with physical disabilities and mobility issues. There are charities in the villages who make use of the tow path enable people who physically disabled to be active and access the countryside. There are also charities, E.g Waves based at the Slaithwaite end of the towpath who make use of this for their groups and clients and it will benefit them. I think the businesses of both villages, will benefit from the improvements. Please make it wide enough, and please make it to the high standard of the previous sections</p>
<p>So muddy currently that it's not pleasant to run or cycle on in most of winter The ground can also be impacted in summer when it has dried and create problems for running</p>
<p>Would avoid busy road and enable me to shop via cycle</p>
<p>I fully support this improvement which is long overdue. The villages of Slaithwaite and Marsden are very popular with locals and tourists alike and an improved towpath can only benefit the economy of this area. The other major benefit will be health based. I am certain that a lovely new towpath will encourage many more people to walk particularly given the generally flat towpath. The improved path will also encourage people with disabilities to use it given the much improved surface. Once completed this will be one of the best improvements the Colne Valley has had for years.</p>
<p>At moment too muddy at winter with potholes great to even out these surfaces to run it more and make it more accessible for people. Thanks</p>
<p>It would be great if the towpath was more accessible for people with additional needs. My son has complex needs and whilst he can walk, he is deafblind and needs to walk alongside his guide. He struggles on uneven surfaces but loves canal walks. I am a runner and an improved surface will make a huge difference. I love walking there and retaining the verges and trees will retain the natural feel and views.</p>
<p>This is desperately needed. The main road is so dangerous that this is the primary objective to improving active travel in the Colne Valley. You must, must, must, also re-open the resurfaced section that leads in to Huddersfield, of which there was no reference in the consultation documents. What is the point in improving an active travel route and then having it closed for nearly a year (since March 2023 I think).</p>
<p>The current state of the path is such that it is a danger to pedestrians and cyclists. It's muddy, rutted, wet, unpleasant.</p>
<p>The section between Milnsbridge and Slaithwaite has greatly improved the route and the continuation from Slaithwaite to Marsden will be a welcome improvement also as the surface is muddy and waterlogged.</p>
<p>It is a life saving breath of fresh air, a gift to people who can walk it. Doing so without the lethal mud traps currently along the tow path would be a delight.</p>
<p>I think the canal towpath it a great public amenity and enables a large number of people to enjoy the environment in an easily accessible way. This will extend that value although it it likely to mean even more people use it</p>
<p>I live alongside the canal and try to walk most days but the present path is unusable after heavy rain. So the all weather path will encourage me and others to use it more often</p>
<p>The towpath upgrade would provide a safer and cleaner path to use without having to dodge the mud and puddles. It's difficult to enjoy your surroundings when you are having to constantly concentrate where to walk on the towpath.</p>
<p>The muddy paths are a drawback at the mo so anything that helps with this is a plus</p>
<p>I have slipped in the mud, skidded on the setts, and feel that access would be improved making it safer for everyone. As a regular Walker on the newly improved section of the canal (Slaithwaite to Milnsbridge), I am impressed with the accessibility and the work done. Thank you.</p>
<p>I use the towpath to get to work and an improved surface will make my journey easier, particularly in bad weather</p>
<p>Because this work will make a big difference through out the winter to the usability of the towpath. Due to climate change we are getting much wetter winters and the towpath has been a complete mud bath all winter.</p>
<p>The surface has been terrible for decades. Thank you for improving it.</p>

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Ease of access to green spaces is vital and a safe alternative for travel away from the main road is important
sometimes the paths are in passable - i use walking boots to walk from West Slaithwaite (work) to Slaithwaite (home) as the paths are so wet and muddy
Presently the muddy puddles and uneven cobbles make it a slightly challenging walk.
It needs upgrading like the Milnsbridge section to enable enjoyable walking without mud & puddles
It's a popular walking route at all times of the year. When the weather is bad it becomes impassable in places - as seen with the recent temporary closure near Marsden. Resurfacing would make it far more accessible to all at all times of year.
It will make it easier to use and more accessible. We don't tend to use it in Winter or after wet periods because of the mud and increased surface water on the tow path
The improvements would be such a boost to a lovely scenic walk along our local canal
Concerned that the nature at the sides of the path will be lost. We come to walk the towpath from town to Marsden as a nice country walk, I do not want to feel I am walking along a road or motorway, I can do that in lots of other places. I am also worried you will destroy the historic nature of the towpath.
At the moment only use for dog walking in scruffs. Will be nice to walk in decent cloths to zapato, olive branch or slaithwaite without mud everywhere Can't wait. Exited
The towpath becomes very muddy and wet after rain and z as hard all weather surface would be a great improvement.
Because it is currently extremely muddy and slippy during the winter so improving the towpath would make for a much more pleasant experience and encourage greater use
I would like it to remain natural looking, it's part of the countryside and it would be a shame to spoil it.
This is a very welcome project that I support wholeheartedly. At the moment, walking the towpath is difficult after rain and puddles can remain for weeks. There seems little to be done about the obvious pinch points but the overall proposals seem sound and will greatly improve the environment.
Currently the towpath is very muddy and pot hopped and uncomfortable to ride. Cyclists get splattered in mud. Inclines at the side of locks are worn and uneven. Any improvement will increase use of the towpath
Slaithwaite to Marsden is the most walked part or the cancel and is busy weekdays and very busy weekend...It very muddy slippy and dangerous...I've know people who has slipped on the mud and fallen into the camel..
I would support the proposals to repair fences, steps, walls, etc, , but less so the surface of the path. Following periods of bad winter weather repairs to the canal walls are often needed and it is evident that there are significant drainage/run off issues at points along this stretch of canal. A new surface to the towpath will not last long if some of these underlying issues are unresolved. The money would be better spent by the Canals and Rivers Trust in securing and maintaining the canal and associated drainage. This in turn would benefit the towpath as it is.
I support these proposals as the tow path needs improvement, the mud is unavoidable in wet weather, and the path is very rutted in dry weather.
The towpath is currently difficult to use following periods of rain due to water logging
Love the idea of improving this beautiful canal area but we like more thought to improving mooring & travel. I walked the whole of the canal along the towpath while my wife steered the boat as I was unable to get near the bank to get off /on at any point, even at the lock landings. There are very few descent mooring places even where the map say where they should be. Please help - thanks
I live next to the recently improved section from Milnsbridge to Slaithwaite. The improvements have made a huge positive impact on the way and how often people use the towpath. Previously during winter or wet weather it was so muddy and uneven that many people were put off or unable to use it at all. The proposed stretch to Marsden suffers from the same problems and these updates would make a substantial difference to allow more people to use it throughout the year. The canal has such a positive impact on people's mental health and physical wellbeing. It is my favourite place to walk and relax, and these changes are thoroughly welcomed to extend how much of the canal is accessible to all.
Would appreciate having a flat hazzard free space to excercise.
Any think that encourages people to be out in fresh air is good
This is an exceptional beauty spot that serves locals and tourists well. However the roughness of the path can make it unpleasant or impassable for less able users in wheel chairs or less confident on

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<p>their feet, or babies in pushchairs without substantial wheels. Access to this spectacular section of canal, community and countryside should be as equitable as possible. Thank you</p>
<p>The canal is a beautiful walk linking up some great places / local businesses but is only suitable 6 months of the year due to the muddy / wet conditions. It certainly falls short in maintenance compared with the Calder Valley canal</p>
<p>Personally I don't feel slopes are a problem, but understand this maybe for those with less mobility.</p>
<p>Brilliant idea. The section of the HNC already improved is so much more welcoming to all users</p>
<p>It is time this was so e</p>
<p>How about you sort out the bit at Longroyd Bridge . Maybe put in a scaffold Bridge over the obstacle or a floating pontoon.</p>
<p>Path will be more accessible in all weathers, encourage car free journeys to Marsden</p>
<p>This section has been in need of repair for years so I'm really looking forward to the works being completed.</p>
<p>I absolutely love walking along the canals and anything that improves access and makes this easier will be fantastic.</p>
<p>Current path is dangerous in places especially when passing cyclists or walkers</p>
<p>Since the canal was upgraded between Linthwaite and Slaithwaite, there has been a noticeable increase in parking along Low Westwood Lane making the road dangerous to both cross and travel along. Please would you consider providing adequate parking for visitors to the canal.</p>
<p>The pathway surface has deteriorated to such a level that repair work is urgently needed. Muddy stretches can lead to people being close to the waters edge trying to find a dry surface to walk on</p>
<p>This would help with tourism as it is too muddy and rough to walk on in its current state</p>
<p>This is a great question place for people of many ages and abilities to walk, enjoy the incredible scenery, speak to others and even travel to and from local employment either by walking or cycling.</p>
<p>The towpath needs to be repaired. Its current muddy state means that it isn't really usable after heavy rain. My only concern is that a smoother surface will encourage more cyclists who, when they cycle quickly and aggressively, are a dangerous menace to pedestrians on the towpath.</p>
<p>C&RT & KMC should be commended in the main for the planned improvements to both canals, almost all of which I support. My main concern is the plans to remove some of the barriers to improve access. I support the intention to allow easier access for wheelchair users by appropriate measures. However I am concerned that this will allow access by anti-social individuals who will inevitably take the opportunity to speed along the path on motorcycles, quadbikes, illegal e-scooters and e-bikes. The towpath is already congested at times, and the current lack of separation of pedal cycles and pedestrians can at times create dangerous situations. Opening up to powered transport is a recipe for disaster.</p>
<p>Vital to providing a recreational, traffic free route that is accessible to the community. Very helpful for running in that it doesn't result in muddy shoes - the only alternative is the road (and associated traffic issues / hazards / pollution, with interruptions of junctions).</p> <p>The route is presently impossible to use with some bikes (e.g. small fold up ones) - a flat surface will remedy this.</p> <p>The present muddy surface also means that the route is largely seasonal. As the likes of Colne Valley Leisure Centre are under the risk of closure, this is a key leisure / exercise amenity.</p>
<p>The towpath is a hazard to walk on at the moment. So muddy. Atrocious. Needs sorting out so that people can walk and enjoy the surroundings.</p>
<p>I support the proposals as it would be more user friendly to all.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It will help the business and make the area more accessible to a wider variety of customers especially our older and differently able ones - especially through the winter when our footfall drops off considerably. All allowing us to grow further - It will encourage people to walk to the tap from Slaithwaite and Marsden train stations and help our messaging about not driving to the tap to reduce our carbon impact - It should help businesses in Slaithwaite and Marsden by encouraging foot traffic and stop offs in the villages for people visiting us - It will help us in reducing mud dragged into the bar reducing our time and costs keeping everything clean - It will help our staff in getting to work more quickly, more healthily and again not using cars - It will just be a lot nicer in general!

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<p>I walk my dog along the canal most days and it is often very muddy and slippery, with puddles often very deep. These improvements will make a big difference to my enjoyment of my time on the canal. I also avoid running along the canal when it has been very wet as running with wet feet is no fun! This will make for a much better option than running along Manchester Road on the (very many!) wet days we have. I also often see people from Waves pushing wheelchairs along the towpath and can only imagine how much better things will be for them.</p>
<p>As I work for a disability outdoor access charity, I am fully supportive of improvements to path surfacing. At present wheelchair users often struggle with the pot holes, narrow sections, mud, etc on these routes and such improvements would allow us to use them more often, and safely.</p>
<p>More pleasant and safer to walk my dog and would probably encourage more tourists</p>
<p>Normal people don't like to walk, cycle, run in mud and huge puddles of water, the sections that have already been improved seem to be a lot busier</p>
<p>Experience of using the excellent canal paths in London. If we take better care of our towpaths these can become excellent active travel routes. However they are currently almost unusable through the winter.</p>
<p>The section of towpath between Slaithwaite and Longroyd Bridge has been transformed by the resurfacing that has taken place. The Marsden - Slaithwaite section will be similarly transformed which will be a real benefit. The canal is a busy multi user route with walkers, cyclists, runners, families, elderly people, people with prams & pushchairs, dog and horses all of which put strain on the towpath surface. The towpath gets very muddy in places and during the busy periods for boaters, misuse of the lock system by boaters sees water flooding from locks on to the towpath which has further degraded the surface. The resurfacing will repair and greatly improve the surface and make it more resilient to all these factors</p>
<p>Nowhere does it say what the proposed surface will be, although your photos suggest aggregate. Anything as long as it's not tarmac!</p>
<p>Ban all cycles on the tow path and make them cycle on roads. The reason is they cycle in big groups and very fast causing mayhem and danger to walkers, children and dogs.</p>
<p>Part of the amenity of the towpath is its appearance. While upgrading the surface sounds positive, this should retain its "traditional" appearance where possible.</p>
<p>I partially support this project because there is no point in completing an upgrade here whilst the lower end of the canal towpath remains closed nearer to Huddersfield. Shouldn't that be considered to be reopened also, as it currently deprives users of a direct route into town from the outlying villages.</p>
<p>Path gets very muddy which reduces my use. Improved access for people with mobility issues could encourage healthier lifestyle and enable more participation. Widening path allows more space for cycles to pass pedestrians.</p>
<p>it often floods, there should be bins for dog waste - there must be a more suitable method for dog waste, there should be warning signs for cyclists who cycle with no lights or dark clothing and often too fast with headphones. fast cyclists and dog walkers do not mix! I am both so both communities need to pay more attention to fellow users of public spaces. also dogs should be kept on leads especially if a pack of dogs as the towpath is narrow in places, loose dogs can cause stress for some dogs. But yes, please improve the towpath!</p>
<p>Thankyou.</p>
<p>Would be fantastic. Having extra benches for places to rest for those less physically able would also be encouraging.</p>
<p>Will make towpath much more accessible and more useable in poor weather.</p>
<p>'The towpath improvements from the Titanic to Slaithwaite and back towards Milnsbridge have improved things significantly but there are also some concerns - a couple of times I've seen motor bikes riding along the towpath- an obvious danger - I park my son's WAV near the stretch by Titanic - a popular stretch and parking place on a busy road. It is impossible to gain access to the pavement with a wheelchair when parked up - and had some verbal abuse at the weekend from a car driver for not using the pavement as we carefully walked along the road to join the towpath. Return route I tried the drop kerb bear the tow path - followed it along - no other drop kerbs before the pavement narrows and goes uphill to the lights . Ensure these points are considered please and if possible rectified .</p>
<p>Fully support path but have questions about dry stone wall repairs which I'm not sure is necessary & may destroy existing natural habitats. Entry & exit points to the river through walls also need to be maintained.</p>

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<p>It is a great initiative and, in my opinion, will benefit the communities of Slaithwaite and Marsden a lot.</p>
<p>It's very frustrating to set out on a walk from Slaithwaite to Marsden to find part of the towpath closed as it is impassable due to mud. So I'm in favour of an all weather surface so I know I can complete my walk.</p>
<p>It will encourage more people to enjoy the canal and nature. The particular accessibility of this stretch of the canal to public transport is notable. Personally I have friends who I will visit by bicycling along the canal and this will be easier to do and also more favourable at night. Recently bicycling back in the early evening felt quite hazardous, negotiating the puddles and mud with dim bike lights but even going through the puddles and unpredictable surface was tricky</p>
<p>Well at the moment there is lots of damage on the pathways due to the heavy rainfall which makes it dangerous to walk on. It would be great to see plans that prioritise protecting the natural environment and historical fabric of the towpath, ensuring a safer and more enjoyable experience for all and easier access to the businesses along the canal.</p>
<p>I cannot support a tarmac surface that will pollute the canal water thus lowering further the already fragile numbers of wildlife. Secondly you don't seem to have any plans to improve rain run off at bridges and locks...which seriously deteriorates the towpath surface. Thirdly, where are the extra benches that we need?? Fourthly, please do not engage the Canal and River Trust to undertake any upgrade....they are grossly wasteful of funds in many ways I have observed!</p>
<p>Having walked the Titanic to Slaithwaite canal towpath this morning I know what a great improvement it will be.</p>
<p>I fully support the improvement of the path as it increases wellbeing and happiness for the users of the path.</p>
<p>I'd still leave the cobbles</p>
<p>The previous work carried on the path leading up towards Slaithwaite was a good quality and seems to be lasting well (so far). Stretches of the path from Slaithwaite to Marsden would benefit from the same improvements.</p>
<p>I volunteer as a volunteer Ranger on this stretch of the HNC, L24E -L42E. This tow path is well used by many visitors. People enjoy the walking by the canal and many families, groups and visitors from throughout the UK are uplifted by their visits to the canal. All this is despite the muddy state of a lot of the tow path. The improvements as proposed will enhance the experience of all tow path users. We can expect more visitors, greater numbers of users and enhanced well being of all.</p>
<p>As a mobility scooter user, it is frustrating to not know day to day if I can use the canal between Marsden and Slaithwaite. It is very dependant at present upon the weather- due to mud, and washing away of the slopes near locks. The steepness pf the paths are a particular challenge too. Also there are times when the gate across the towpath is closed and I cannot travel any further, and I need to turn back. If these barriers were reviewed I would use the towpath so much more often, and I look forward to the work being completed.</p>
<p>welcome improvements but concerned about potential increased cycle usage</p>
<p>I live in Slauwit, having access to use the HNC all year round would definitely enhance the feeling of wellbeing I get when I am able to enjoy walk the tow path, also provides opportunity for physical exercise, and socialise..</p>
<p>It provides a safe route to travel between Slaithwaite and Marsden without using the car, and without having to negotiate some tricky junctions.</p>
<p>The section Slaithwaite to Marsden is very muddy and in need of improving</p>
<p>The towpath is an extremely attractive route between Marsden and Slaithwaite, with many advantages over the options using vehicular roads. Improvement is seen as a crucial component of the regeneration of the upper Colne Valley, especially for its capacity to attract tourism visitors as well as improving it as a place to live.</p>
<p>Standedge Tunnel & Visitor Centre has extremely limited parking capacity. Potential visitors are advised to park at the old goods yard carpark and walk along the towpath. The path is often in a wet muddy state even in summer months which is discouraging to visitors, often young families, who are most likely not wearing walking boots or other suitable footwear, thereby losing valuable footfall to Standedge Tunnel, a fantastic piece of local heritage! The improvements will encourage visitors to take the short walk along the beautiful valley towards the Tunnel, the Nature Reserve and the fabulous Eastergate area. More visitors will enable the CRT to provide more activities and events and improve the local economy!</p>

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<p>Sometimes it is impassable when rain has set in, and the canal is particularly muddy and slippery. Having a solid footpath benefits all, and now is the time to upgrade, so all including prams and wheelchair users, which in the past have been unable to access sections of the said canal path. Only concern is cyclists using it as a race track! As I am of hard of hearing, I never hear cyclists coming up behind me, and have been almost knocked over on more than one occasion due to cyclists not slowing down for walkers.</p>
<p>I'm getting old and the improvements would greatly enhance my ability to get to Tunnel End and back</p>
<p>While I strongly support resurfacing the existing path with gravel, the proposed works appear to be a recipe to destroy the nature, character and heritage of the footpath. Faster cycling is not conducive to shared access where pedestrians should have priority. Please reconsider!</p>
<p>I support the proposals as at the moment the tow path from slaithwaite to marsden after any wet weather is a mud bath and virtually unpassable on a bike, and definitely not good for walking on.</p>
<p>The Milnsbridge to slaithwaite upgrade has made it an amazing place to cycle or walk and has made it much more inviting and comfortable. Having the same all the way to Marsden would be perfect and I'm sure would encourage people to use the paths even more than what they do now</p>
<p>Doesn't sound very cycling friendly. There is a real lack of safe cycling options locally. You shouldn't make this hostile to cyclists which would force them back into the road or not cycle at all</p>
<p>See above. Cyclists should have their own paths and not mix with those on foot</p>
<p>The previous section between Milnsbridge and Slaithwaite was not completed to the original proposals. One particular point being at the bridge near Spa Mill in Slaithwaite there was supposed to be an improvement to the existing steep slope by constructing a zig-zag formation. This was never done. Also the surface used on this section was supposed to be like that used between Longroyd Bridge and Milnsbridge which has a rubber like feel and is much more pleasant to walk on. It is all very well upgrading the towpath but it also needs to be maintained otherwise all the hard work is worthless. The surface in many places is starting to revert to mud, it needs to be cleaned occasionally The section between Longroyd Bridge and Milnsbridge is partially closed because of a dangerous wall, this needs to be addressed ASAP. Incidentally the barriers preventing use of this section have been repeatedly destroyed presumably by cyclists or walkers who ignore all the warning signs.</p>
<p>This section of the canal , for the majority, becomes a muddy mess and full of puddles after rain. I can do a big off road ride and in wet condition will avoided the canal path as I would just get covered in the grit and mud.</p> <p>I also walk parts of the tow path with my wife. We avoid most of this section when wet becauseof the mud, only walking the top 2 length in Marsden or the sections below Slaithwaite .</p> <p>The improvements from milnsbridge to Slaithwaite have been great. People now use this section loads more than when it was also a muddy mess.</p>
<p>The improved pathway would encourage people to use the pathway because at the momentparts of it are very poor underfoot. It can be very muddy in parts and unless you have appropriate footwear it is not useable.</p>
<p>I very much support using the canal towpath as an active travel route for walking and cycling. It's a fantastic resource for off road travel down the length of the Colne Valley. Hopefully with the upgrade people will use it not only for leisure but as a way to travel for work, shopping, visiting friends etc. I would hope that with some promotion it will be well used and take some traffic off the roads for short journeys.</p>
<p>Visitors and locals alike would have full enjoyment of the canal and valley and be more inclined to walk for enjoyment</p>
<p>It needs upgrading</p>
<p>Canal towpaths are for countryside walks where muddy patches are to be expected. NO mention of heritage value and negative effect of tarmac in conservation areas and on adjacent listed structures. Local council has a statutory duty to 'protect and enhance' those heritage assets designated or non designated</p>
<p>This is an essential resource for boaters which has been in decline for some years now, significantly in some areas, and will make boating and access to local amenities easier and safer.</p>
<p>Ease of access looks much better than current and would be a great addition to my running routes!</p>
<p>Widening the towpath would make the canal more accessible to people, encouraging residents and visitors to the area and having a positive effect on the local economy as well as health benefits.</p>
<p>It's muddy and uneven at the moment so can be dangerous. It would allow me and my son to ride our bikes on it more and visit places.</p>

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<p>The canal towpath is the only sensible place my 6 year old can use his bike. We cycle every week from Marsden to Colne Valley leisure centre for swimming lessons, and also frequently cycle to Stanage visitor centre. These changes would make it easier, and more normal, for children to cycle in the area. It will reduce the wear on our bikes and increasing the width of the path will help to reduce conflict</p>
<p>I support the proposal as it mean I could avoid roads and not get filthy once the surface is upgraded.</p>
<p>It will encourage more people to walk</p>
<p>Fully support as it encourages people to be physically active and walk between Slaithwaite and Marsden and the businesses in between. This is the only flat walking available beyond Manchester Road, for people without vehicles. The towpath between Slaithwaite and Milnsbridge is well kept therefore between Marsden should be just the same.</p>
<p>However I believe bicycles or mountain bikes should not be allowed during weekends or busier times. They are often not children but rather bicycles driven by mountain biking men who have converted them to mobility scooters. Why wouldn't they use Manchester Road that has a specific bike lane? I have even seen a man on a motorcycle traveling to his narrow boat.</p>
<p>The towpath is in the next valley to me- the improved section is excellent apart from the collapsed section. I'd be able to use it much more in the wet weather and the winter.</p>
<p>A better all weather surface would be a benefit for winter walking</p>
<p>In the winter the stretch between Slawit and Marsden is difficult to walk along (slippery, uneven and muddy). Creating more usable paths would make that section safer.</p>
<p>There are, however, some very narrow sections. If the goal is to increase foot and wheeled traffic, some consideration will need to be made of the narrower sections</p>
<p>We have loved the first two upgrades and forward to the next stages</p>
<p>My mum is disabled and it would be nice for her to be able to come on her mobility scooter with me on my walks.</p>
<p>Improved ability to cycle on the towpath, in all weathers, on a 'normal' (i.e. not mountain bike) bike. Disability-friendly and pushchair friendly by getting rid of A-frames</p>
<p>.</p>
<p>it's a lovely route to exercise and improve your mental well-being</p>
<p>Support for accessibility. Think it's important to preserve or better still enhance the grass verges etc next to the path - more flora/bushes for example for BNG</p>
<p>The £2.3 would be far better spent on canal maintenance, dredging, leak free lock gates etc</p>
<p>I walk with my young child - I currently feel like I have to use a carrier because the towpath is not smooth and consistent enough to use the pushchair. As my son gets bigger and I can no longer easily carry him, I may have to switch to walking along the road when I would prefer to keep using the towpath.</p>
<p>As in answer to question 7 above. Please consider the needs of boaters too!</p>
<p>As a boater I'm happy to support improved towpaths as it is less dangerous for mooring. I would oppose anything that enabled cyclists to go faster.</p>
<p>I'm concerned that, as has happened in other areas, the path will be widen to the water's edge making it difficult to moor a boat without damaging the surface of the path. Additionally, I am concerned that some sections of the proposed improvements are not sufficiently wide to meet the legally required width for a shared cycleway and footpath.</p>
<p>Please do not take away places to moor. I only support them if mooring is going to be included.</p>
<p>The work done to this point has enhanced my leisure time increasing my activity levels and giving me chance to see more of the wonderful nature that surrounds the canal.</p>
<p>Long overdue. The work on the Milnsbridge to Slaithwaite section has been a great improvement, dealing with the mudbath beyond Slaithwaite would be great. If you could do something about vegetation (esp nettles) encroaching onto the towpath from neighbouring property that would be great</p>
<p>i'm a boater, what are you doing to improve the facilities for boaters that live along this stretch</p>
<p>Firstly I must say that I do not live in the area so please ignore any questions where I have said that I used the towpath. The reason I am doing the survey is to say that Wigan Council and West Lancs Council have recently completed similar towpath schemes and the upgrades have meant that there is a fully accessible towpath without barriers from Beech Hill in Wigan to Parbold in West Lancashire that can be used all year round. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth as everyone will take some benefit.</p>

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<p>I would be able to use the path in a variety of weather conditions. Currently I avoid the paths when they are very muddy.</p>
<p>The improved towpath from Slaithwaite to Huddersfield has made it practicable for me to cycle that section when going to and from Milnsbridge and Huddersfield rather than using the busy, noisy, quite hilly - and, coming back, often head-windy - A62. Compared to cycling on the main road, the pleasure of using the scenic and more sheltered towpath, with its bird-song and wildlife, is incomparable. Since that work was completed I have hoped that the section from Slaithwaite to Marsden -where I live - would be similarly improved, and I'm so pleased that that is now scheduled for 2024.</p> <p>I'm aware that the towpath is a shared use path, and I take care to keep my speed down and slow and ring my bell to warn walkers. I suggest occasional signs for cyclists indicating that walkers take priority, and to slow and give audible warning of approach, might add to safety and enjoyment for all and could be included.</p> <p>More locally, I also enjoy walking along the towpath, and now look forward to a surface that doesn't involve frequent puddle and mud-hopping.</p>
<p>the improvements are fundamental to the operations of the canal and are wholeheartedly supported</p>
<p>I won't be able to get mooring pins in without a hammer drill</p>
<p>I object to towpaths being hard surfaces especially right to the waters edge preventing boaters from being able to put pins in for mooring</p>
<p>I just think any investment/work that makes 'active' travel or leisure time more attractive getting people out of cars/vehicles and just walking, taking in fresh air, appreciating nature etc is to be welcomed</p>
<p>I am very concerned that these proposals will encourage unpleasant conflict between motorcyclist, cyclists, and slower speed pedestrian/wheelchair/push chair users. I would like to think I would make great use of the walking route, which I avoid at the moment because of the condition of the service, but I am not convinced if the inevitable conflicts are allowed to arise.</p>
<p>The money available could be better spent on maintenance and vegetation removal as the waterway is becoming very overgrown and the infrastructure dilapidated.</p>
<p>The towpath is rough & muddy in places. An improved surface would encourage more use by pedestrians & runners. I do have slight concerns about push bikes going faster and use by unauthorised vehicles.</p>
<p>To make it more accessible for all users</p>
<p>Frustrated at how long the towpath has been closed at Longroyd Bridge. As a runner, it adds extra hazards to my activity as I have to navigate Manchester Road.</p>
<p>I fully support any improvement works.</p>
<p>The canal is always muddy and slippery. It can be difficult</p>
<p>It would feel safer</p>
<p>The path at Slaithwaite can get very muddy and paths at locks near Marsden are steep for users requiring accessibility</p>
<p>I am absolutely devastated that not once have boats been mentioned. Without boats there are no canals, let alone towpaths. Your slider picture filled in the narrow canal with plants?</p> <p>Money should be invested in saving the canal by dredging and keeping it fully navigable. This is essential to the longevity of any proposed scheme. A green path with mooring accessibility should be kept between the canal and the pathway. This is essential for the safety of all users plus keeps within the legislation of not restricting mooring or navigation. Essential for wildlife is a further nature strip on the other side of the path.</p> <p>While accessibility is vital for all, what is going to be done to make the paths safe from speeding cyclist and rogue motorcycles which this kind of pathway attracts? With accessibility in mind, why haven't you included boaters in your plan? How long is the longevity of the pathway material guaranteed for, as there's evidence everywhere of how quickly these ridiculous priced paths use.</p> <p>I am not against the proposal but the original purpose of boating navigations needs to be given priority along with nature. At present this proposal does not meet it's obligations there.</p>
<p>Linking other parts of the canal towpath that have been improved will benefit health, wellbeing and tourism.</p>
<p>Don't want to encourage more cyclists as they sometimes go far too fast already and can be a danger to walkers.</p>

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As I said above the increase in "entitled" cyclists will spoil the whole environment
Better for all users. I used to cycle on it a lot and was narrow in places
I don't have many problems on a Mountain Bike but removing barriers and widening the towpaths are good ideas
I support the proposals as they make access to the canals more inclusive.
It would make it more attractive for people yo use.
Any improvements that reduce flooding and wear of the towpaths is good
It's essential that the section of canal that is currently closed is reopened asap
I live by the Canal in Linthwaite and work between Slaithwaite and Marsden. What stops me using the towpath more often is that it only takes a small amount of rain for the sections between Slaithwaite and Marsden to become very muddy. If it was done up to be the same as it is now between Milnsbridge and Slaithwaite I would likely commute along the towpath every day.
It's a great way of getting more people into active travel. Th Colne Valley desparately needs this traffic free route. Please also re-open the closed section near Milnsbridge
I support the proposals but any upgrade needs to be wide enough for walkers and Cyclists to share
I would use it to cycle on away from the roads
I am very much against public.money being wasted to satisfy the needs of the lycia clad cycle brigade. Our roads are a shambles so we waste money on such stupid projects?
Seems to be a dead end. Why would anyone want to go to Cooper Bridge and join the traffic. More importantly than this is the missing link to Brighouse, which has been forgotten about . It would be worth it to go to Cooper Bridge If you could then reach the calder valley greenway .
I'd love to ride on it, but the muddy sections and the frequent steep, rough bits put me off. If it were surfaced better, I would use my bike as well as going on foot
It's a good idea but KMC cannot afford "nice to have" projects. The towpaths are accessible, improving them cannot under any circumstances be seen as a priority right now. This is why KMC is in the financial situation it is in... it cannot see what is critical and what isn't.
Currently the paths are very "rough" muddy and uneven it would be a lot nicer to walk on
I used these paths every day for seven years to get to work, beautiful green space ruined by non passable footpath in some sections. I would love to see changes.
The improvements will encourage more people to exercise
Fully support, the towpaths have needed this for years. We ride Wakefield to Marsden and Hebden Bridge many times throughout the year
The towpaths need to be sympathetically done. Mud removal is a good idea but shoring up the canal bank is a priority. You also have to think about anglers as well as access/egress for water users including us kayakers.
These upgrades must allow boats to stop and moor overnight. Over night we moor between locks, where towpaths are widened up to the stone canal walls, there needs to be a narrow soft grass edge where we can hammer in mooring pins or extra mooring bollards. It is a dangerous trip hazard for us to put mooring ropes across the towpath. Remember that E-scooters are not allowed on the towpath. Features should be added to slow electric bikes down. As there is no speed limit, the CRT recommended speed limit is only 8 mph, if they want to go faster use another route.
It's already a lovely stretch of canal towpath and is very well used but it does get very muddy and with huge puddles whenever there's any rain.
Improved paths and access would (should) reduce conflict between different users i.e. walking/cycling
The towpaths make for a wonderful traffic free alternative when considerate use (polite and respectful) is made of them. The path improvement between Milnsbridge and Slaithwaite has seen a noticeable increase in its use as it is now mostly accessible (subject to some original areas being too narrow by locks for wheelchairs). I now use it to safely get to Slaithwaite Station from Huddersfield (have to join at Milnsbridge as the path is closed near to town), this saves me around £10 on my train ticket commute to Manchester each time, to go to Marsden on a paved path would be even better.
The canal paths and access restrictions mean in a wheelchair you can not use them
The towpath is an important linear recreational facility open to all but has been limited in its accessibility due to its poor condition. I look forward to its completion as it is the most heavily used length of towpath (between Marsden and Slaithwaite) and yet the last to be surfaced. Good luck!
I am a wheelchair user who enjoys traveling and exploring using my powered add-on.

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<p>This stretch of towpath is extremely muddy with large puddles often covering the entire path. its often very difficult to use especially in winter.</p>
<p>The improvements between Huddersfield and Slaithwaite are excelent and make it easier to use in winter. Makes sense to extend it. My only concern is speed of cyclists who are sometimes inconsiderate if not dangerous to walkers</p>
<p>Having used the improved section between Slaithwaite and Huddersfield for cycle commuting since the work was done, I can see myself using the section from Slaithwaite to Marsden for more leisure trips than I currently do. Even for walking as opposed to cycling, the improved surface will make it much more likely I will use the towpath especially at wetter times of the year when it currently gets very muddy. Making the towpath wider will also make it more likely I will cycle on it because presently it is far too narrow in places, which makes it a bit of a stop/start experience when giving way to other users. The one concern I have from looking at the proposals is that the type of surface isn't stated for some sections. From a cycling point of view it has to be either traditional stone setts or bitumen/tar spray/chippings to make it a truly all-weather surface. The rubber-mix surface used from Longroyd Bridge to Milnsbridge is my favourite due to it being quiet and comfortable but I understand that isn't being considered for the latest round of improvements.</p>
<p>This part of the canal is very attractive to walk along, there are places to stop off and visit along the way and also an end destination to look around in both villages, there are trains to take you to a starting/end point also which makes ti more attractive and easy to access</p>
<p>I use the paths regularly during the summer / dry weather but less so in winter. The proposals would make year round access more feasible.</p>
<p>It's a wonderful part of our area and heritage and should be attractive to all and spoken about and promoted</p>
<p>Being 72 I only walk ... this is with a stick I experience Great Difficulty In Winter or Wet Weather ... both which make for Muddy Slipery conditions and with the surface flooded in parts ... This is more predominant in the Winter months so these proposals would help me no end I like to walk there because of the Tranquility - Silence and Nature which Is very Important to me and I would like to think to others especially in today's climate I would like to say that I feel very Intimidated by cyclists who nearly always pass me too near and at a faster than safe speed so Signs of so Description Reminding people on cycles of their obligations and of being an Hazard to the Elderly and Vulnerable will Help</p>
<p>Would not like to see removal of trees or barriers which would enable nuisance motor bikes</p>
<p>I love canals and played on and around them in my youth</p>
<p>I like to run on the canal. Particularly during bad weather this is currently difficult. The improvements would make a big difference.</p>
<p>tend not to go when very muddy so if path is less muddy would probably use more after wet weather</p>
<p>removing people living in ramshackle, and probably insanitary, accomodation on opposite bank between Marsden and Slaithwaite would be a further incentive</p>
<p>Maintaining heritage infrastructure assets is important for long term Conservation - " You don't know what you've got 'till its gone " (Joni Mitchel).</p>
<p>It's a wonderful local feature and bring me joy every time I visit however it's often difficult to use due to the poor condition of the towpath in some areas.</p>
<p>In wet conditions it is not SAFE to use the paths</p>
<p>Support as the better surface means much more likely to cycle on it.</p>
<p>This will be a great addition to the canal path from Huddersfield, once the section of collapsed wall has been repaired between Huddersfield and Milnsbridge</p>
<p>I support the proposal, as it will help create a more accessible and safe active travel corridor down the Colne Valley, too and from Huddersfield. South Kirklees has an absence of active travel corridors, unlike North Kirklees, and the canal towpath improvement would only help Kirklees move towards more sustainable journeys and our associated Net Zero by 2038 target.</p>
<p>Towpaths are a fabulous of road away from traffic so i would very much like them upgraded would make a big difference to a lot of people i think.</p>
<p>More usable all year round more people and therefore safer for single user.</p>
<p>Absolutely fantastic proposals, long overdue. I emailed the Canal & River Trust some time ago re the poor state of the narrow canal towpath. Thanks so much to all involved in securing these improvements.</p>

Huddersfield Narrow and Broad Canal Towpaths Upgrade consultation outcome report

<p>I have mobility issues making falling a real concern. Smooth LEVEL paths really help. Odd cambers and uneven surfaces, especially cobbles, make me very unstable and increase my risk of falling. As smooth as possible please. Also rest benches at intervals please.</p>
<p>I use the canal paths a lot in milder weather for exercise and leisure walking but during the winter months not very often due to the poor surface. The canal would be so much more enticing for others to enjoy if invested in its a lovely part of the town.</p>
<p>I have no objection to the work but wonder if the money would be better spent improving the facilities with Slaithwaite back towards Huddersfield</p>
<p>I think this is a fantastic plan. I hope it would encourage more people to use the canal for commuting and leisure.</p>
<p>It's a key attraction in the area, and provides great access to villages like Slaithwaite and Marsden with its lovely shops and cafes. Great on a weekend!</p>
<p>The narrow canal path isn't bad. I'm concerned that the proposal might lead to too many speedy cyclists using the route. The broad is in need of more attention especially the stretch opposite the chemical works where bad concrete makes cycling difficult. But much, much more in need of improvement is the path along the river Calder from Brighouse to Dewsbury there are missing bridges and impassable sections. (Copper Bridge to Brighouse and Battyeford to Mirfield) If there's funding, these should be addressed before making further improvements to the Huddersfield canals</p>
<p>I strongly support the proposals, given the steady deterioration in the towpath as a result of inadequate maintenance in recent years.</p>
<p>I am only concerned at the proposal to even out the gradients around locks. Whilst appreciating the need for easier access for wheelchairs and pushchairs, I'd much prefer this to be via new short loops away from each lock, rather than spoiling the historic locks with new tracks that encourage speeding cyclists.</p>
<p>Improvements would encourage more people to exercise. Cyclists would be a lot safer than being on a main road. It would encourage families to exercise together</p>
<p>It's great to give people of all ages and abilities. The opportunity to enjoy this amazing outdoor space, boosting people's health and wellness</p>
<p>The need to support and facilitate active travel for utility and leisure reasons, having regard to climate change and personal health. The need for traffic free safe routes. Whilst some potential users may be deterred by the fear of anti-social behaviours, the presence of more people on the towpath will act as a deterrent. Outdoor educational opportunities for local schools.</p>
<p>It would make life much easier as we live on a canal boat between Slaithwaite and Marsden and through the winter we are constantly muddy with wet feet when we go out. It'd be amazing to have a smooth, less puddly surface. When I need to use the mobility scooter it would be much better too as I've no mud guards and my coat gets very splattered with mud otherwise. When I'm really ill but need to get into Slaithwaite, it'd make it much easier on the scooter to not be bumped about as much.</p>
<p>The canal is a great way to get out and about off the main roads. It does need some upgrades to see it into the future.</p>
<p>I'm concerned about tree loss on these proposals.</p>
<p>I support the improvements, however it's a shame if original features like the cobbles are to be removed though. I also often wonder why if cycles are allowed on there, then why aren't horses?</p>
<p>Please see above make cyclists more accountable! They rip up the walk ways and make it unsafe for deaf people...</p>
<p>I support the proposals in general widening the path will help. I would like to see horses able to use the sections when they have been widened.</p>
<p>as per answer 6</p>
<p>It can become very muddy and boggy currently. If on my bike I often have to come to a stop when passing walkers to avoid splashing them. I have also slipped on the muddy sections recently and have had to get off and walk on steep slippery downhill sections.</p>
<p>The grass verges and/or mooring rings and bollards must be retained in order to keep the ability for boats to moor on the towpath either using mooring spikes that need to be hammered into the grass, or by tying the ropes to rings or bollards. If these are not to be retained, then NBTA opposes the proposals. We would also like to see measures to ensure that cyclists do not cycle so fast that they endanger or intimidate other towpath users, including dogs and cats.</p>

Will improve access for many people.

Can I please suggest that you somehow deter fast cycling while not hindering buggies and slower cyclists. For example by placing widely-spaced bollards at a shallow angle on the towpath so that it's necessary to slow down to say 5mph and change direction slightly to pass them.

Huddersfield Broad Canal – full comments

How do you currently travel along this route? Please select as many as apply (Other (please specify))

In connection with boating.

BOAT

Boater

Narrowboat

I use a boat.

in a narrowboat

on a boat,

I don't

we operate our business on this canal

Boat

Boat

I use a narrowboat.

Narrowboat

Narrowboating. Why is this not on the main list. The canals were built for boats and the towpath for boaters. Should they not be included in this survey?

Boater

By Narrowboat and walking the towpath between locks.

Mobility scooter

Only walk

Boat

If no, you wouldn't use it more often and would like to tell us why, please use this box:

See above

See comments above

Please see answer to question 7 and 8

As I wrote before, arrogant "entitled" cyclists will ruin the ambiance of the towpath

There is no pleasure in walking when one is constantly trying to avoid speeding cyclists, many of whom are totally disrespectful of other tow path users.

Please see comments above make cyclists more accountable don't make it easier for them to go even faster!

as per answer 6

It depends how the towpath is upgraded. If the grass verges and/or mooring rings and bollards are not retained, it will become impossible to moor boats. Boats are entitled to moor anywhere on the towpath for 14 days or longer if it is reasonable in the circumstances (Sec. 17.3 c ii of the British Waterways Act 1995). If NBTA members are prevented from mooring on the towpath for 14 days, they will be unable to navigate on the Huddersfield canals. Another consideration is that when towpaths are 'upgraded', in our experience this opens the path to use by fast cyclists, which endangers and intimidates other towpath users including boaters.

If you would like to explain why you support or oppose the proposals, please use this space

Huddersfield Narrow and Broad Canal Towpaths Upgrade consultation outcome report

<p>I am very glad that the towpath is to be widened and the barriers removed - they were a real hindrance. I am extremely disappointed that there is no mention of improving link routes to the towpath - these are extremely degraded, uneven / dangerous and poorly signposted in places. What the public needs to see is clear signage from Leeds Rd and Birkby Bradley Greenway and safe, clear, well surfaced paths that link the towpath to other areas of Huddersfield and also show how the towpath links to other greenways such as Birkby Bradley and Calder Greenway... please do consider this opportunity otherwise the opportunity for this amazing active travel route will only partly be realised. I am disappointed that the Brad Canal towpath will not have the same standard of surface as the Narrow... I understand that budgets are limited, but I think we will be 'back to square one' in a short time if the paths are merely widened with a bit of top dressing. Also, the route would be more widely used if links and signage were improved at this stage.</p>
<p>I do use this section sometimes, and I would like to see it improved. However, the state of the towpath isn't what puts me off using it. It goes through very isolated parts of huddersfield and I don't like to walk on there alone because I'm nervous of the environment and don't always feel safe. I think that this funding should only be used if there is improved safety along this route, lighting, more enforcement against anti social behaviour. I would also say that whilst this section could be improved, it is not the only way to access huddersfield from Bradley or cooper bridge direction after the new cycle way put in along Leeds Road. I would also say that this route is in a much better state of repair than the route between Slawit and Marsden and that needs taking into account. Bad weather and a mud bath the day after rarely puts me off using this route. I would say improve if it you can but please not at the expense of Slaithwaite to Marsden, and not if you can't improve safety for people along there.</p>
<p>The current path is slippery and dangerous, together with being mostly mud. Having an appropriate surface would increase usage by many.</p>
<p>It would create a useable alternative to cycling on the A62</p>
<p>A stunning part of the history of Huddersfield, neglected for so long. Any improvements would be most welcome. The inclusions of appropriate waste collection points and seating would be much appreciated.</p>
<p>Although the towpath was originally used for boaters it has now become a racetrack for cyclists & unlicensed dirt bikes, every time we take our boat out I risk my life with these bikes passing at speed.</p>
<p>Electric cycles and unlicensed motor bikes</p>
<p>The towpaths are in woeful state and they get worse in the wet winter months. Overgrown vegetation and broken surfaces make the pathways dangerous.</p>
<p>I often go for a lunchtime walk along the towpath in the Leeds Road area, but generally have to avoid it in winter as it's too muddy and I'm in work clothes.</p>
<p>I rarely use in winter months due to the condition of the path. I'd welcome any upgrades to make usable all year round</p>
<p>I Cycle to work 5 days a week from Hartshead to Paddock, from November to March i have to use the A62 as the mud is too thick on the canal tow path. This improvement would allow me to cycle all year round on the canal and would make a massive improvement to my commute. Please please go ahead with this plan. Thanks Thomas.</p>
<p>Your plans do not provide for a safer , equivalent alternative to the A62 Your plans should have been in place and completed before Kirklees withdrew its objection to Network rail plans to sever the Greenways</p>
<p>The current towpath is ok in sections, but really muddy in others. It's an excellent traffic free route into Huddersfield to avoid the A62. More should be done to upgrade the Calder and hebble towpath to Batteyford to a similar standard too to give an easily navigable alternative to cooper bridge main roads</p>
<p>Because it would encourage more people to cycle. The Leeds road is a nightmare as regards traffic and it would give a better option than the Deighton path which is littered with glass</p>
<p>Looks excellent. Especially the removal of the A-frames</p>
<p>This is a much needed alternative to the main greenway route, which has been severely disrupted over the last few years. The section of towpath between the bridge under Leeds Road and the canal bridge connecting to the greenway, would be my priority, as a couple of spots are difficult to cycle through.</p>
<p>The surface is currently poor especially in wet weather, so a new surface will be a great improvement. I welcome the suggestion that there will be some improved signs too. However, there is a need to improve a number of the access points, which I've detailed in the next question.</p>

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no thanks
Muggers paradise at the mo.
Same as above
This is an essential resource for boaters which has been in decline for some years now, significantly in some areas, and will make boating and access to local amenities easier and safer.
Widening the towpath would make the canal more accessible to people, encouraging residents and visitors to the area and having a positive effect on the local economy as well as health benefits.
It's too narrow and muddy at the moment. The barriers need removing so cyclists can get past freely. It would look better and make me want to visit more.
This path is a really useful cycling link to the caldervalley greenway, but it is often unusable in bad weather and many of the gates prohibit legitimate use. If improved I will more frequently use it when travelling to visit family in the Dewsbury area
This part of the canal gives great access to other traffic free routes. At the moment when we're it is filthy and makes one think again about using it in these conditions.
It would be brilliant to join up and improve the towpath through to Brighouse to create a joined up active travel network between valleys / towns and rail links.
Better surface for winter walking
As above
It's the best way to commute down the Leeds road corridor. Upgrading would encourage more to use and reduce the wear and tear on my bike
Support for accessibility. Think it's important to preserve or better still enhance the grass verges etc next to the path - more flora/bushes for example for BNG
As above
I am a long distance runner and would welcome improvements as I could use this as part of a running route.
Please see answers to question 7 and 8
As above
Make sure you keep moorings.
I would support any improvement on access to make walking along the canal network in the Huddersfield area. The work already done has directly impacted my life in a very positive way, I would wish the same for the whole community.
what are you doing to for people that live on the canals ?
As above
Another accessible path for walks would be appreciated.
When cycling out from Huddersfield towards Mirfield I would use this route rather than the A62.
We have major issues and safety concerns with the current state of the towpath. we are really looking forward to see the plans
Mud and bumps slow bikes down
Same reason as previously stated, hard surfacing to the waters edge is not in the interest of boaters
same reason as stated before and actually I live much nearer to this canal than the other one so would benefit much more personally if the upgrades were carried out
I am very concerned that these proposals will encourage unpleasant conflict between motorcyclist, cyclists, and slower speed pedestrian/wheelchair/push chair users. I would like to think I would make great use of the walking route, which I avoid at the moment because of the condition of the service, but I am not convinced if the inevitable conflicts are allowed to arise.
The money available could be better spent on maintenance and vegetation removal as the waterway is becoming very overgrown and the infrastructure is dilapidated.
The towpath is rough & muddy in places. An improved surface would encourage more use by pedestrians & runners. I do have slight concerns about push bikes going faster, and use by unauthorised vehicles.
To make it more accessible for all users
It doesn't feel very safe at the moment so it would be helpful
The barriers which narrow the path are unhelpful and reduce access. I may have concerns about anti-social behaviour though, if they are removed entirely
I am absolutely devastated that not once have boats been mentioned. Without boats there are no canals, let alone towpaths. Your slider picture filled in the narrow canal with plants?

<p>Money should be invested in saving the canal by dredging and keeping it fully navigable. This is essential to the longevity of any proposed scheme. A green path with mooring accessibility should be kept between the canal and the pathway. This is essential for the safety of all users plus keeps within the legislation of not restricting mooring or navigation. Essential for wildlife is a further nature strip on the other side of the path.</p>
<p>While accessibility is vital for all, what is going to be done to make the paths safe from speeding cyclist and rogue motorcycles which this kind of pathway attracts? With accessibility in mind, why haven't you included boaters in your plan? How long is the longevity of the pathway material guaranteed for, as there's evidence everywhere of how quickly these ridiculous priced paths use.</p>
<p>I am not against the proposal but the original purpose of boating navigations needs to be given priority along with nature. At present this proposal does not meet it's obligations there.</p>
<p>As per Q8</p>
<p>CYCLISTS MAKING EVERYONE ELSE GET OUT OF THEIR WAY</p>
<p>I used this regularly several years ago, it was just about ok for cycling but must be in great need of upgrade by now.</p>
<p>I don't find many problems on a Mountain Bike but removing barriers and widening the towpaths is a good idea</p>
<p>It's important to make access to the canal more inclusive and to attract more users</p>
<p>Any improvements that reduce flooding and wear of the towpaths is good</p>
<p>This is a really nice, but under used section of the canal, if the tow path was up graded it would be more accessible to others.</p>
<p>As above with the other question. Please make the surface wide enough</p>
<p>I would cycle on it to avoid the man roads</p>
<p>I am very much against public money being wasted to satisfy the needs of the lycia clad cycle brigade. Our roads are a shambles so we waste money on such stupid projects?</p>
<p>It would make me feel confident to use this route on my bike, because a) there'd be a good surface, and b) a better surface is likely to encourage more people to use it, and my 'it's a bit lonely and dodgy down there' feelings would be set aside (not saying these feelings are fair, but I do feel like that at the moment)</p>
<p>It's a good idea but KMC cannot afford "nice to have" projects. The towpaths are accessible, improving them cannot under any circumstances be seen as a priority right now. This is why KMC is in the financial situation it is in... it cannot see what is critical and what isn't.</p>
<p>Again I think more people would walk/cycle if the paths were better</p>
<p>I could use these paths with friends from Cambridge without filling embarrassment when they visit me.</p>
<p>It would make a great traffic free cycle route</p>
<p>Same as previous answer.</p>
<p>The towpath upgrades at Aspley and either side of the lift bridge are regular moorings, towpath upgrades should not affect this. The upper parts of the broad canal are frequently used by fishing competitions on alternative Sundays, their rods extend over the towpath, if more people use the towpath this could be an issue. Remember that E-scooters are not allowed on the towpath. Features should be added to slow electric bikes down. As there is no speed limit, the CRT recommended speed limit is only 8 mph, if they want to go faster use another route.</p>
<p>Improved paths and access would (should) reduce conflict between different users i.e. walking/cycling</p>
<p>The condition of the current path is in a terrible state with the concrete sections (Cooper Bridge to Leeds Rd playing fields) particularly bone shaking when on a bike, so much so that when I commute to Leeds once a month I choose to cycle on the busy Leeds Road simply to save the nightmare caused from the vibrations. Improvements to this would provide a good alternative to the busy Leeds Road route and a safe place for families to enjoy cycling.</p>
<p>Please make the parhs and all wheelchair accessible</p>
<p>Important link with both Huddersfield town centre and other cycle network routes, eg Calder Valley Greenway.</p>
<p>I notice steps are mentioned in the survey. Steps are impossible for wheelchair users and ramps should be used wherever possible.</p>

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It looks quite unfriendly and unsafe at present
Encourage more use as a green route. Encourage cycling not driving, but with need to ensure cyclists are responsible. Alternative to main roads for walkers. Good for local people to get into nature
I currently use this section of towpath as part of my cycle commute from Slaithwaite to Cooper Bridge but the rough sections on the second half nearer Cooper Bridge and the often muddy surface elsewhere make it more of a second choice option used out of desperation rather than choice. As the only other option is to use the A62 (Leeds Road) it makes the Huddersfield to Cooper Bridge half of my commute much less pleasant than the other half. There's no mention of the section of towpath from Aspley Marina to Queen Street South. Is there scope for improving that section at all? My comments about surfacing in the Slaithwaite to Marsden section also apply here, it needs to be a proper all-weather surface along the complete length.
I have never walked along this part of the canal apart from a small section near around Aspley, it has never seemed attractive due to the state of the path and overgrown vegetation, there would have to be areas to visit along the way, to have a picnic, have a drink, which would make it a destination, if this is successful, I could access this without the need for a train to get there, could there be a nature reservation like on the Brighouse Canal with Cromwell bottom? but if this area is improved, I would definitely try it out, My only concern is how many people would use this area to walk along if there is no destination, nothing to do along the walk, nothing to see really!
Make the paths accessible all year, along with a good tidy up would make this area feel safer
For the same reasons I support all the canal improvement plans
I don't use this part as often as I do the length to Marsden (I live in Paddock)... As things are now I go no further than Leeds Road but as I lived as a child in Fartown would feel more inclined to go further to areas I was once familiar with ...My comments as above with regards to cyclists would also apply
Nuisance bikes are active and ruin enjoyment. Methods should be employed to deter them
I love this canal, it's where I played in my youth.
The path is currently uneven and difficult to run on, it puts me off. I end up travelling into Calderdale to use their tow path.
Similar to my comments for narrow canal.
In parts the path is not SAFE to walk on
Support as the better surface means I'm much more likely to cycle on it.
I use sections of the canal path, but it is too muddy to be completely safe to cycle along currently. I would be very keen for the further work into Brighouse from Cooper Bridge to be completed - that would open up a beautiful path out to Halifax. However, I am concerned that there may be undesirable motorbikes making use of the improved Canal Path.
I support the proposal, as it will help create a more accessible and safe active travel corridor down the Colne Valley, too and from Huddersfield. South Kirklees has an absence of active travel corridors, unlike North Kirklees, and the canal towpath improvement would only help Kirklees move towards more sustainable journeys and our associated Net Zero by 2038 target.
I cycle and walk for daily exercise but when it's been raining some parts of the path are lethal on a bike and in summer the paths would benefit all users if the path was made wider as it requires careful judgment to get round dog walkers but the paths are such a lovely space and I welcome and look forwards to some serious investment put in to the paths for all bikers and walkers money well spent that what I think
As per my comments re the proposals for the narrow canal.
I have mobility issues making falling a real concern. Smooth LEVEL paths really help. Odd cambers and uneven surfaces, especially cobbles, make me very unstable and increase my risk of falling. As smooth as possible please. Also rest benches at intervals please.
I think this is a fantastic plan. I hope it would encourage more people to use the canal for commuting and leisure.
It's a key attraction in the area, and provides great access to villages like Slaithwaite and Marsden with its lovely shops and cafes. Great on a weekend!
Whilst the broad canal does need improvement, it leads nowhere at the Cooper bridge end What's much more in need of improvement is the path along the river Calder from Brighouse to Dewsbury there are missing bridges and impassable sections. If there's funding, these should be addressed before making further improvements to the Huddersfield canals

<p>I fully support improving the towpath as its condition has deteriorated significantly in recent years as a result of lack of maintenance.</p>
<p>I do not approve of creating new 1.5m wide gaps between posts at entry points. This will encourage rogue motorcyclists, quad bikers etc to use the path and cyclists to speed through junctions where pedestrians are joining or crossing the towpath. There looks to already abuse of tracks and nearby land by some people who live near the Broad Canal - the current proposals would encourage this onto the canal towpath.</p>
<p>Whilst agreeing the need for wheelchair and pushchair access, I would like there to be barrier offsets at these access points, designed to allow these users to curve their way carefully through, whilst preventing motorcyclists, quad bikers and speeding cyclists getting through.</p>
<p>Improvements would encourage more people to exercise. Cyclists would be a lot safer than being on a main road. It would encourage families to exercise together</p>
<p>Would be a great for everyone to have access to this amazing waterways</p>
<p>As for the narrow canal</p>
<p>It would make it easier to get to fartown using the tow path whereas at the moment, it's easier on the bus</p>
<p>I'm concerned about tree loss.</p>
<p>A nice stroll along the canal would be thwarted/ dangerous and just unpleasant... it's hard enough to get out and exercise without (weekend cycling enthusiasts the Lycra clad brigade) terrifying me when they whizz passed at stupid speeds... it's a stupid idea people love to walk but the cyclists just don't care riding as fast as they can!</p>
<p>I have concerns that planting trees too close to the path will mean that as they grow they will not only require maintenance, they will encroach on the towpath, and remove natural light making use less pleasant. Enclosing the towpath and limiting the sight lines also increases the security risk to people.</p>
<p>as per answer 6</p>
<p>Again, sections are very muddy currently and so chose other routes for my commute as sections are messy and closed off.</p>
<p>The grass verges and/or mooring rings and bollards must be retained in order to keep the ability for boats to moor on the towpath either using mooring spikes that need to be hammered into the grass, or by tying the ropes to rings or bollards. If these are not to be retained, then NBTA opposes the proposals. We would also like to see measures to ensure that cyclists do not cycle so fast that they endanger or intimidate other towpath users, including dogs and cats.</p>
<p>Will improve access for many people. Can I please suggest that you somehow deter fast cycling while not hindering buggies and slower cyclists. For example by placing widely-spaced bollards at a shallow angle on the towpath so that it's necessary to slow down to say 5mph and change direction slightly to pass them.</p>

Overall comments for both Narrow and Broad Canals

<p>Please use this space if you would like to provide any additional comments or suggestions you want us to consider at this stage:</p>
<p>Please work with local groups such as CRT volunteers, Friends of Bradley Woods, Naturescape, EPIKS and local walking groups and councillors to get local knowledge and momentum for this great opportunity to raise the profile of the Broad Canal and links to local greenspaces, schools and colleges and workplaces.</p>
<p>Not directly related to these plans, but please sort out the towpath closure at the Huddersfield end of the canal. Having to do the last section on the A62 is a big disincentive to cycling into town from Marsden, Slaithwaite, etc.</p>
<p>Keep the bike gates it stops it turning into cycle race track. More lights are required to ensure safety from rapists and muggers.</p>

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I would like to emphasise the lack of alternative options for children to use bikes in and around the colne valley. Canal paths are the only safe and useful option and that is the reason this work is so important. Many other users do have alternatives
Once upgraded I hope there are plans to maintain the work undertaken
Horse rides should be allowed to use parts of the tow path. If possible can the surface be shredded tyres like the Milnsbridge to town section of the tow path. In the plan is there any funding for the upkeep of the tow path . Clearing and repairing the tow path .
Please provide mooring rings in the Cellar's Clough area as it can be too far to travel between Marsden to Slaithwaite in one go by boat
Please consider prohibiting bicycles during busy times.
The cobbles & slopes are fine & should remain, they are authentic. The rest of the towpath needs serious attention.
Re-open the length to Longroyd Bridge. Make the paid parking next to the Canal at Slaithwaite free, this will encourage use of the canal and make it more accessible for the less ambulant without having to pay to access the canal.
As said previously seats pkease
The impact goes way beyond the side of the canal and has a significant social and economic benefit to the areas concerned.
Regular benches to enjoy the views
Interpretive panels to explain local history
The footpath is being used so much more now, i think it would feel safer underfoot but also would help bring custom to the businesses along the canal and in the villages
I hope that during the work there will be suitable alternative routes identified to allow walking between slaithwaite and marsden
As well as resurfacing it would be good to see more benches so people with walking difficulties can enjoy the the towpath and also take care of some of the dead trees which are a hazard in bad weather. Signage to inform cyclist that dont have bells etc that walkers have the right of way on the towpath.
My only concern is this will lose out if it's seen as a rural area and not important - it's the only route we have in the Colne Valley for active travel
The previous improvements are great but are wholly undermined by footpath closure outside Huddersfield.
I hope that the works definitely start in summer 2024 and do not get delayed in any way. I really look forward to walking on the new surface and I am sure do many other people.
Excellent work. Sooner the better thanks so much
A few more benches would be helpful, especially for those limited mobility who need to take rest breaks. Will it be accessible for horse riders? The towpath was originally for horses and it would provide a safe off road route for them. Clear signs for cycling rules at access points the the towpath. Too many of them go much too fast, don't have bells and don't give way to pedestrians. If access barriers are removed how will you keep motor cycles away? Will you be clearing up all the rubbish and junk hoarded by individuals living alongside the canal?
Please ensure that vegetation is further away as over time no one cuts it back, it overgrows the path and after Autumn decays into mud and hence the width of the path decreases over time as no one shovels this debris back.
Also please ensure there is a plan to maintain it as currently no one does on the first two sections and for reasons above some of the path are already disappearing in width.
It would be nice to imagine that higher quality upgrades can be delivered as part of this. For instance, I was in Edinburgh last weekend and ran on the Union canal from the city centre. This has been surfaced with solar lights embedded on both edges of the path for its length, illuminating it at night. This is the expectation for high quality. Kirklees deserves such quality implementations of active travel infrastructure. Take some pride in your work!
This stretch of the canal must be the busiest anywhere along the narrow canal. Investment in maintaining it and allowing hundreds of people to exercise along it daily is surely fantastically worthy and will pay back in health benefits many times over.
Lock 28E I think has a footbridge needing some repair

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The narrow canal between Slaithwaite and Marsden has some amazing wildlife and the new path will make it all more accessible
Dog poo bins or just more bins in general would help
Could there be Dog Dirt bins to encourage dog walkers to clean up after their pets?
Don't backslide on surfacing - it needs to be usable by wheels (push-chair, wheel chair, kids on bikes) in all weathers, not just the dry. So tarmac. No narrow A-frames, no cobbled speedbumps which are lethal to small children on bikes.
I would really appreciate it if any closures are signposted at the bridge 53 footbridge. While the next bridge over the mill pond is closed, I need to get to the bus via Marsden or West Slaithwaite and if any stretch is closed it would be very helpful to know straight away
.
Improvements would make it safer, more accessible and encourage more users
I remember it said a 2-2.5ft wide strip of hard surface. This section of the towpath is the most heavily used, some days it's like the M1 of paths with mixed use of dog walkers, prams and bikes. Surely where possible a 5ft wide hard surface would be much better?
It is also really important to put up signs indicating expected behaviour to users. On the Calder Valley Greenway there are good examples. The wording says: Towpath Code of Conduct, Pedestrians have priority, considerate cycling permitted, give way at bridges, be careful at bends and entrances. I would supply a picture but I can't paste it in this box. Feel free to contact me by email and I will forward [redacted]
In assessing the access, please consider safe pedestrian/wheel access from wet Slaithwaite Road. An unnecessary pole in the route over the footbridge from the industrial estate makes it impossible to access the canal in a wheelchair/ with a pushchair or on bike without travelling along the road with no pavement
Please ensure that all sections of setts are relaid if necessary as they can be quite hazardous. For example on the eastern end of the narrow canal towards Huddersfield the setts under Birkhouse lane bridge and the A62 Longroyd bridge have been untouched and are quite dangerous to cycle over. AND, PLEASE CAN YOU HURRY UP AND COMPLETE THE WORKS TO THE RETAINING WALL UNDER LONGROYD BRIDGE VIADUCT SO THE TOWPATH CAN BE RE OPENED SOON AND NOT IN 4 YEARS.
Signs indicating how cyclists and walkers can use the route safely together.
I'd like some consideration made about e-bikes. I'm not sure what can be done but I have been cycling on the towpath and been overtaken at 30mph ish. It was very frightening
Please encourage cycle users to have a bell. Cyclists are saying they are looking forward to speeding on the towpath. They make it unpleasant for people with children and pushchairs already. If cyclists want to use the towpath it should be for a leisurely ride & somewhere family's can ride together. Not speed racing!
As I said before the priority on the canal should be for boats.
There's no reference to boating? why?
Speed restrictions for cyclists
As a boat dweller I am very appreciative of well constructed, and maintained foot/cycle paths. Having recently spent several months on the Rochdale, Ashton, and Huddersfield canals I found there to be several points of concern. Firstly, although I understand there to be a 5 mph speed limit on the canal network it is highly unusual to come across a cyclist sauntering along. Generally cyclists seem to be in pairs, or groups, riding with purpose. Many sections do not meet the minimum 2m width for two way traffic. Fences, railings, and bollards to prevent cyclists or pedestrians from falling into locks make them not only difficult, but positively dangerous to use. However, most of the problems I encountered were down to people's lack of education or willingness to understand the environment and there's no way to design for that.
Nothing more to add
Once the towpath at Milnsbridge is repaired, a good route to connect with the greenway for longer rides.
boats are as much part of the canal, facilities should be improved for boaters too .. rings/ armco etc
Ensure that all full access is available for everyone and that barriers are removed.
I would be nice to have a firm and even path, however I don't want to feel I'm on a high speed cycle track as it is very narrow in places, and some cyclists do not respect walkers at all. Having a better

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<p>surface just encourages these few to go even faster!.</p> <p>This is just another Tory fudge, force on Bankrupt Britain, of instead of providing proper Cycle routes of people, you convert paths into high cycle routes.</p>
<p>Could we have prominent signs please, as on the Spen Valley Greenway explaining that pedestrians have priority over cyclists.</p>
<p>Not your responsibility but the bridge near the Wild Cafe needs fixing as a priority - can this be planned into the works with whoever is responsible?</p>
<p>we would very much like to meet and discuss improving the usability of the towpath</p>
<p>You are putting all your eggs in one basket. This will be your only option for a traffic free route along the Colne Valley. The canal is +200years old and while the canal navigation was worked on. The canal side infrastructure was not. Retaining walls and building remains are structurally unsound as demonstrated at Longroyd Bridge. When problems arise, there is no alternative route, and the towpath is closed forcing cyclists back onto the main road. Not everyone is comfortable to ride alongside water on a well used towpath. Cyclists have wobbled into the canal, two to my knowledge. There needs to be a traffic free alternative segregated from vehicular use</p>
<p>I think additional measures are needed to ensure that use by all users, but in particular users on bicycles and motorcycles, is appropriate.</p>
<p>Without active maintenance to these canals, they will soon revert to muddy ditches of little interest to anyone.</p>
<p>The durability of the proposed surface is not good as can be seen on the section of the towpath from Milnsbridge to Slaithwaite. Already parts of the surface are worn, the surface chippings are coming off the surface and being washed into the canal. Not good environmentally or aesthetically. It would be hoped that a much more robust foundation and surface would be used on the proposed section of towpath so that some longevity is built into the design. The poor quality of the towpath surface from Milnsbridge to Slaithwaite can hopefully be learned from and any new surface be much improved.</p>
<p>The tow path is still closed in Longroyd Bridge, this needs prioritising before any other work.</p>
<p>Could you please install signs to make it clear that pedestrians have priority over cyclists and would it be possible to have something in place to discourage cyclists moving at high speed?</p>
<p>I am absolutely devastated that not once have boats been mentioned. Without boats there are no canals, let alone towpaths. Your slider picture filled in the narrow canal with plants?</p> <p>Money should be invested in saving the canal by dredging and keeping it fully navigable. This is essential to the longevity of any proposed scheme. A green path with mooring accessibility should be kept between the canal and the pathway. This is essential for the safety of all users plus keeps within the legislation of not restricting mooring or navigation. Essential for wildlife is a further nature strip on the other side of the path.</p> <p>While accessibility is vital for all, what is going to be done to make the paths safe from speeding cyclist and rogue motorcycles which this kind of pathway attracts? With accessibility in mind, why haven't you included boaters in your plan? How long is the longevity of the pathway material guanteed for, as there's evidence everywhere of how quickly these ridiculous priced paths use.</p> <p>I am not against the proposal but the original purpose of boating navigations needs to be given priority along with nature. At present this proposal does not meet it's obligations there.</p>
<p>Educate ALL cyclists that they are not "top dog" on the towpaths</p>
<p>I lead our local WI walking group and the canal towpath is their favorite go to walk. Ideal for dodgy hips & knees. An upgrade would be much appreciated</p>
<p>People need to know the route is to share.</p>
<p>If possible, any heritage features (eg cobbled surfaces) should be left in place, if it is possible to provide an alternative bypass for users requiring a smooth surface.</p>
<p>This is a popular route which should be maintained to accommodate a growing number of users.</p>
<p>More signage regarding respect from cyclists and slowing down when passing pedestrians. Dog owners taking poo home.</p>
<p>Just go on the path around Slaithwaite and see the impact that it's had. This survey wouldn't be necessary if planners had a serious concept of forward planning, innovation and vision.</p>
<p>I think it's a great idea & will be a big success. - the canal between Brighouse & Elland has a cycle path & is very well used.</p>

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It should really link up with this as currently you can't get between Brighouse & Cooper Bridge without riding on the A644 which is a very busy & dangerous road for cyclists
More wasted money the country will have to borrow.
Stop wasting money!
I really appreciate all efforts to separate cyclists from car traffic. The more you can do this the better as far as I'm concerned
KMC... get a grip!!
.
I only wish Wakefield Council had your vision and commitment to improve Wakefield towpaths
Boater pay to use the Canal and towpaths via our licence. Most towpath upgrades are for the benefit of other users. Regular signs are required to inform people of the towpath code. Cyclists should have bells and use them.
Will you be considering changes to the lighting?
The other new surface on narrow canal is very bumpy in places
I fully support commitment to considerate and shared path use, signage reminders to cyclists to use bells politely and also headphone users to be aware that they can't hear those bells.
We should all have access to these places - even those who use mobility equipment
We pay annually to CRT to use the waterways & towpaths while the majority of the locks are in bad repair.
the stretch of towpath at thornton lodge/longroyd bridge is still closed and requires repair
I really supported the earlier improvements and use the Milnsbridge-Slaithwaite section regularly. I am concerned that some cyclists are now going at risky speeds due to improved surface. I prefer the surface used in the Milnsbridge - Slaithwaite section to that used in the Huddersfield - Slaithwaite section so hope that is continued. I also welcomed keeping the towpath open during the works to the Milnsbridge - Slaithwaite section rather than the complete closure on earlier works
I can see the Slaithwaite to Marsden section being use far more, but very clear signs need to be installed stating pedestrians have priority over cyclists (as these are still a pain on the already done bits) What is there along the Aspley to Cooper bridge section apart from retail parks? then nothing at Cooper Bridge when you get there
Possible safety rails on some sections of the towpath e.g. at Marsden Tunnel End where the boat turning area is and the towpath rises up and back down with a 90° turn.
Canal paths are so important and should be accessible to all, all year round. The difficulty will come with keeping motorbikes off the paths. This is unpleasant, but often comes with accessible routes. More volunteers / paid workers may be needed to keep paths feeling safe and noise free.
Please give thought to residents near towpaths. Anti social behaviour blights our lives . Canal towpaths are becoming race tracks
please see comments about people living on canal bank, opposite towpath, between Slaithwaite and Marsden which gives poor impression of local area and is probably having an adverse effect on local environment
Heritage Boards are a valuable complementary item -for older people & Apps for smart phones for younger people
Something needs to be done to prevent cyclists from speeding and causing a danger to others.
A question really, are there any voluntary groups that look after the towpath borders and collect litter etc particularly the sections through Huddersfield town centre and the stretch from Paddock to Milnsbridge as these are the most neglected from my observations. I would be very willing to join any such group to help improve and maintain this beautiful and useful feature of our locality. Also would it be a good idea when considering the future upkeep of the entire towpaths to have groups that adopt stretches of the canal towpaths and verges to help keep them looking their best.
Are there any plans to improve the links on the Aire/Calder beyond this? There is a big gap between Brighouse/Cooper Bridge/Mirfield for a safe, traffic free cycle route.
Installation of (additional?) dog poo bins might be an idea to discourage the inexplicable hanging of poo bags on trees and bushes.
Some method of slowing down cyclists, otherwise it will become a cycling motorway to the detriment of walkers.
This is a great way of starting to open up active travel routes from/to Huddersfield. I cycle from Huddersfield to Brighouse every day and believe the canal path will be a great way of connecting

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towns, while keeping people safe. Please be aware of the unfortunate consequence of increased usage - the increase in criminal element. Other areas that have improved these kinds of paths have suffered with an increase in muggings/bicycle theft.
A focus needs to be given as to how the canal towpath can link up to other travel nodes - i.e connectivity to local bus routes and cycle paths on the road network, to encourage its use as part of a broader network of sustainable travel options.
One part of the path just after Huddersfield collage as been closed for a long time you have to come of the path and if you know the way get back on further up the road its a very busy area and dangerous if you had children on a bike you would be safer to push the bike up a steep hill and rejoin the path but my point is we should not have to leave the path in the first place this is just one example all the path should be open not blocked to the public because the path as collapsed and no fund to fix it sorry for the rant!
It would be good to hear about the plans on dealing with motorcycles on the towpaths and the cycle route along them.
Ensure plenty of benches are present for those who might struggle with the hills. It'd be nice for the village if the surface alongside Upper Mills, Canal Side, Slaithwaite was resurfaced to match. This is currently very patchworky. Traffic is also increasingly an issue along this short stretch. Understandably access is needed but if there was a way to limit this, or reserve some space for pedestrians it would be beneficial.
The canal and towpath are essential to what makes Slaithwaite a good place to shop and socialise. The village is an attraction for people in the surrounding area to visit for its shops cafes and bars. Improving the towpath will be a great improvement for the village.
Could do with tarmaccing the route to the canal from Golcar to the lock just below Titanic mills as it's a mudbath.
It would really be appreciated if once the works have been completed that adequate, regular maintenance is undertaken. My only concern is how are motor cycles / vehicles to be prevented from accessing the towpaths?
To keep the stone sets that are already there. Any new wider paths to be in a natural material and of a light colour . Could there be signage for cyclists stating to ring bike bell to alert walkers rather than riding very close without any warnings. More wildflower areas please - like the small strip at the Marsden stanage car park. A few more benches too.
Accessible isn't only about wheels. Please put in benches so those who can only walk in shorter bursts can rest and achieve a longer walk.
My only concern is how long the canal path will be shut for. When the path was fixed towards Milnsbridge the towpath was shut for as long time
As part of this plan bins should be included that are emptied regularly ton reduce litter on the towpath. The amount of dog waste and general waste will likely increase and there are very few bins available at critical points
We are lucky to have the canal and these improvements would make it a feature to be proud of
Please reinstate the towpath from Cooper Bridge towards Brighouse or facilitate access to the canal bank by another method/track. The alternative is to use the very busy main road which is exceptionally unpleasant.
Improving the surface of the access point at Old Fieldhouse Lane by the bus depot would be good. This is sometimes impassable on foot due to large puddles and mud.
Think about places for pop-up businesses along the canal
Easier access for all
I think this towpath improvement is a really good thing to be investing in and will improve the health and wellbeing of many people and will deliver real improvements to a key part of public realm
Is widening of the footpaths considered in areas where it may be narrow, to allow people to get past others more safely e.g. people and wheelchairs, runners, cyclists? Having a wider footpath can also make people feel happier with it being more spacious and encourage people to walk more with friends and family.
As I've said above I'm disappointed that funds are available for further improvements to the Huddersfield canals but not for the much more needy River Calder

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Access points on the top pound - between the station and tunnel end - to the woodland track need consideration, as it is a mess at the moment and some points where people obviously scramble are dangerous. Also, please check (HCS Towpath Guide) the proper names of the locks - Booth, not Booth's, Upper Mill, not Uppermill, etc.
Add gates so cycles and motorbike have to stop.
None
Consider the lower end of the narrow canal towpath to be included and reopened
Get on with it please.
Are the plans in compliance with LTN1/20 and gear Change Government policies for path widths ,designs and high volume usage
Please, please, can you look at doing something to get cyclists from Cooper Bridge to Brighouse, or even just to the Motorway.
Benches for those less physically able to rest and to feed babies
Need some bins.
Consider measures to ensure cyclists keep to sensible speeds where possible, without impeding their access
Not many years ago the West Slaithwaite section was "improved" by Kier - now it's just as bad. Waste of public money.
I would imagine even with the upgrade, there may be situations where parts of the path have to be closed due to flooding. Can you consider how you inform walkers at key points of the path when this is the case as part of the upgrade.
Add more litter bins in the right places it is sad to see litter in the nature and people leaving their doggy poo bags.
If you were to raise the surface height to include a slope to promote run off into the canal, then I'm sure a surface of stone/slate chippings would suffice and would not add to water pollution!
Na
It will be a great improvement and will allow less able people to access this lovely part of the town.
I use the path from Slaithwaite to Huddersfield several times a week on my bike to commute to work. I think the canal and river trust and/or the council need to come up with a plan to keep the paths clear of mud/fallen leaves. Several sections of the very expensive path from Slaithwaite to Huddersfield is now so covered in mud and leaves that there might as well not have been a new path put down. The maintenance of the path surely increases the paths lifespan so I think it is paramount that there is a yearly maintenance plan that includes clearing the path (especially the problem sections with overhanging trees). This could either be done with a dedicated volunteer team, youth offenders or similar.
No suggestions just so looking forward to this being done
As someone living near to the canal towpath, I would appreciate if the closures were carried out in sections and clearly signposted to minimise disruption to people's routes (e.g. don't repeat what happened last time when the adverts made it sound as though the whole path section would be closed for several months, which wasn't actually the case).
I am very pleased to see the repeated references to access and ensuring that steep gradients by locks will be reduced and cobbles replaced where necessary, and detours considered (Lock 39 tow path a prime example.) I have worked as a volunteer with Experience Community and know how many people with disabilities would benefit from access to this stretch of canal. This will be life enhancing for many.
It's proven that water, and nature improve people's mental health. So it makes sense
Please please will you put a bin where the canal joins West Slaithwaite Road. Access is easy for the CRT/Kirkless van to collect. I take my dog mess home with me but there are plenty who leave it lying about or even hanging from trees in bags. It's crazy that such a popular route has no bin for 2.5 miles
My major concern is how the project can accommodate both walkers and cyclist on a a narrow pathway, it's an issue now.
Please consider congestion and visibility where path widths change. Cyclist prefer to maintain momentum (because it saves energy), and, where visibility is poor, this can lead to conflict with other users.
'Wherever possible, access points should cater for disabled users and those with limited mobility - both walkers and cyclists. Any remaining barriers should be disability friendly.

<p>Additional access points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From the Broad Canal to Ashgrove Road, below the railway viaduct. - From the Narrow Canal to West Slaithwaite Road - From the Narrow Canal to Sparth Reservoir / Sandhill Cottages <p>- The Turnbridge, Huddersfield - Cycle Kirklees have proposed its closure to vehicle traffic. The case for this is strengthened by the proposals for the towpath, and also the Council's Station to Stadium proposals and the University Health Campus Development. The Trust's support for it's closure, and advocacy to the council, would be welcome.</p>
<p>The new path material felt a little uncomfortable to walk on at first; I should give it another try to see how it feels.</p>
<p>On the sections that are already done there are long stretches where it seems impossible to get a mooring pin in the ground. I met a cyclist who'd been toppled off and I nearly got tripped off my scooter in the dark as a boater had had that problem and ended up with a rope across the tow path. If there could always be a narrow strip of soil by the canal for mooring it'd be safer and easier for boaters.</p>
<p>Other than that the improvements have been amazing and improved my quality of life a lot.</p>
<p>Might even try cycling if there is separation between walkers and cyclists</p>
<p>Please give due consideration to all active travel modes, especially for disabled people. Not only should the whole route be accessible along its length, there should also be numerous points of entry and egress to connect with the wider network of public rights of way. This should involve liaison with adjoining landowners where creative and bespoke solutions are required.</p> <p>Conservation of historic structures should be incorporated but with pragmatism to avoid compromising disabled access.</p> <p>Special attention should be given to the section through Marsden station area and old goods yard, where engagement with the Marsden masterplanning team and other landowners will be essential to optimise long term regeneration potential. This should include a comprehensive review of car-parking and possible reception of visitors at the goods yard and onward connection to Tunnel End.</p>
<p>The pathway under Bridge 61 is narrow and can't be widened. However, safety would be greatly improved if some form of lighting, possibly solar, was provided. It is dark under the bridge even during the daylight hours and particularly back on poor weather days.</p>
<p>This really does seem to be an ill conceived scheme which does not take into account the nature, character and heritage of the route and its immediate environment. It seems akin to making the canal itself a route for fast boats. Money would be better spent repairing locks and canal walls and dredging to allow proper passage for leisure boats.</p>
<p>I think having more areas for wild flowers and pollinators should be a priority, perhaps incorporating into the part of the footpaths along the canal but in a way which doesn't interfere with keeping footpaths tidy and accessible to those with disabilities</p>
<p>Picnic benches and places to sit would also be great</p>
<p>The bridges need work as well. Access for Manchester Road has been cut off due to the collapsed bridge by The Wild Cafe (Marsden/West Slaithwaite) where a new development of houses has tried to redirect water. Responsibility for this bridge over the old mill pond needs to be taken by somebody, either Kirklees or pressure on the developers to reinstate access via the old bridge.</p>
<p>Please don't do this</p>
<p>Dog poo bins at popular access points may help reduce discarded bags. Try and keep where practical, the original features of the tow path.</p>
<p>I would like to see horse riders allowed to use the towpath, they are recognised in the highway code jointly with cyclists as the second most vulnerable road users it is imperative to get them off the roads.</p>
<p>You would need to regulate the amount and speed of cycling and make provision for people to be able to identify these cyclists who break the rules. They spoil a nice day out in the fresh air.</p>
<p>If the narrow canal sections were improved, this would encourage me to walk and cycle more with my family and if the broad canal section was improved I would be able to commute that way more safely.</p>
<p>Some specific points: At Cooper Bridge - Access off Leeds Rd – needs signage Bridge 1 – not suitable for wheelchair access.</p>

Proposed timber fence marked upstream of Bridge 1 and lock 1 seems unnecessary. The thicket is sufficient barrier.

Br 3 narrow path for level access from Colne Bridge Rd needs widening. This will involve reshaping the bank and or building a shallow retaining wall. Signage needed.

Lock 3 and bridge 5 – This is a key access point via the Greenway, improve surface over bridge, add better signage including a board with map showing Greenway to Bradley and Mirfield.

Bridge 6 at Lock 4– proposed surfacing on bridge not needed as this bridge goes nowhere other than the other side of the lock.

Bridge 7 – should be marked as key access. Signage needed for pedestrians over Footbridge to Leeds Rd and for all towards Ashgrove Rd/Leeds Rd and onward for pedestrians to Dalton Bank

Bridge 8 – agree need for improved ramp access. Much needed.

Lock 6 Bridge 9 – Signage to Greenway to north and Leeds Rd to south

Lock 7 Bridge 10 – Access to Old Fieldhouse Lane to south needs surfacing. Also signage needed in both directions

Lock 8 - There is no key access below lock 8 – this is private access by steps to the Huddersfield Town training centre

Lock 8 - There is a footpath access above lock 8 – the public footpath (steps) is overgrown and needs cutting back

Lock 9 Bridge 11 – Red Doles Road/Lane. This is an important cross-valley route between communities for pedestrians and cyclists. The ramp down to the south is steep and affected by tree roots. A possible improvement to this key access to Red Doles Lane and Leeds Rd would be to lay a more gradual ramp cutting the corner to the lock tail which would need some tree removal. Signs to Fartown and Leeds Road/Stadium would be useful. Signage from Leeds Road to the PROW and canal would be helpful.

Bridge 11a Vine St There is level access, which needs signing.

East of Bridge 12 there is a stone gabion retaining wall. The now unnecessary length of cracked top chain link fence needs removing here. It collects rubbish, is unsightly, and could add extra width to the path.

Bridge 12 pedestrian access up steps is good and needs signing to Willow Street

Between Bridges 12 and 13 A cycle path across the grassy triangle to Leeds Rd opp Phoenix Retail Park would improve this key access (currently steps so pedestrian only).

Bridge 16 Quay St Bridge – This should really be called Locomotive Bridge or Turnbridge and celebrated as a Landmark more fittingly as it is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, the only one on this canal. It should be repainted before the official reopening of the towpath to cover over the graffiti. Then it would make a great backdrop for publicity photos with the Mayor. Signage from here should indicate the route to the Town Centre as this is the closest point.

Aspley Basin: Beside the current bollards at the back of the Aspley pub and beside the Premier Inn there should be a detailed sign board with a plan showing how to link up with the Huddersfield Narrow towpath. Cyclists should be directed via St Andrews Road and straight along Firth St and Colne Rd to Chapel Hill and thence to lock 3E by Kirklees College. Pedestrians should be directed both ways around the basin and down the steps under Wakefield Rd, thence through the University as far as the steps in Queen St South and then onto the cycle route along Colne Road. The old signboard on the wall, to Aspley Basin & University should be removed.

CRT has published an updated towpath design standard that includes the need to leave grass verges between the water and the path for boats to moor using spikes. See <https://cms-admin.canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/document/Mn2jc9w8d4LJqw-8tlUGKA/sK34Z1Bz2I9UTGudATIMmeneKoVwARlrUfIG5otmJvE/aHR0cHM6Ly9jcnRwcm9kY21zdWtzMDEuYmxvYi5jb3JlLndpbmRvd3MubmV0L2RvY3VtZW50Lw/018972f7-1ac0-7ffb-b333-e500e22f7f25.pdf>

Can I please suggest that you somehow deter fast cycling while not hindering buggies and slower cyclists. For example by placing widely-spaced bollards at a shallow angle on the towpath so that it's necessary to slow down to say 5mph and change direction slightly to pass them. Particular spots would be at the bottom of each lock and on longish stretches.

I'd like to see a really good cycling surface with sufficient space so that walkers and cyclists can pass each other easily. Often shared walk/cycle space is too narrow. I'd also like to see the path running along the edge of Sparth reservoir improved as part of the overall upgrade. This is a well used walking and cycling route too and is in poor condition. As part of the upgrade cycle/ebike hire could be considered / encouraged. Might be a n opportunity for a local business.



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All information correct at time of writing