

A photograph of a community engagement event. In the foreground, three people are seen from behind, looking at a large map displayed on a board. The map is titled 'BIRKENHEAD TO LISCARD ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTE PLAN 13 LISCARD ROAD - SOUTH'. The people are dressed in winter clothing; one is wearing a dark jacket and the other a maroon hoodie. The setting appears to be an indoor public space with a tiled floor and a white pillar. In the background, there are other display boards and a banner with a logo that includes the letters 'b' and 'ins'.

# PLACED

PLACE EDUCATION

## Birkenhead to Liscard Active Travel Project Community Engagement Report

Prepared by PLACED  
February 2024

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## Introduction

Wirral Council is developing ambitious plans to redesign streets along a direct route from Birkenhead to Liscard Town Centre to improve accessibility, make streets safer and more pleasant for local people, and provide high quality facilities for walkers, wheelers and cyclists. The proposed 3.5-mile route runs from Chester Street in Birkenhead and connects Hamilton Square Station, Woodside Ferry, Wirral Waters, Seacombe Ferry, Eureka! Science and Discovery Museum, and Liscard Town Centre. Proposals include improved footpaths, redesigned junctions, upgraded crossings, street furniture, dedicated cycling routes, and parking facilities. Strategies like 20mph speed limits, one-way streets, and 'quiet streets' are also part of the proposal.

This report outlines the findings of the community engagement that was led by PLACED as part of the development of the proposed active travel route to connect Birkenhead and Liscard. Extensive community engagement activities were delivered, including a series of face-to-face pop-up events, unstaffed displays, and community workshops. Wirral Council conducted further online engagement and stakeholder engagement which is reported separately.

Key findings from the community engagement include:

- Strong support for active travel, safety improvements, and protecting the environment in general.
- Concerns about perceived loss of on street parking, traffic impacts, disconnected routes, and lack of infrastructure maintenance.
- Safety recommendations like separated lanes, 20mph speeds limits, and CCTV cameras were supported in general, although some mixed feelings were shared in regard to wider 20mph zones in Wirral.
- Suggestions to improve public transport access and connections to other routes (particularly cycling routes), introduce more street lighting, preserve existing trees along the route, and include other amenities like public toilets and cafes.



**Image:** Staff and visitors discussing the proposals at BirkenEd's Place, Birkenhead.



## Engagement Approach

The community engagement PLACED delivered included staffed face-to-face 'pop-up' events, unstaffed displays, and community workshops. The events were informal, interactive, and creative, and aimed to create accessible spaces where people could find out about the project and meaningfully share their views.

Pop-up events were held at accessible venues and locations along the active travel route. Event times and days were varied to create as many different opportunities for engagement as possible. This helps people to find a location, time, and date that works best for them, ensuring our events are as accessible as possible. The pop-up events launched in 'BirkenEd's Place' which was a dedicated community engagement hub in Birkenhead Town Centre that was delivered by PLACED in partnership with Wirral Council from November 2022 to October 2023.

The consultation was open for 10 weeks from Monday 25 September to Monday 4 December.

### Staffed Pop-up Events

- **BirkenEd's Place, Pyramids Shopping Centre, Birkenhead:** Monday 25 September to Saturday 7 October 2023. Approximately 178 attendees.
- **Cherry Tree Shopping Centre, Liscard:** Thursday 14 October 2023. Approximately 180 attendees.
- **Wirral Metropolitan College, Wirral Waters Campus, Birkenhead:** Wednesday 18 October. Approximately 29 attendees (Due to poor weather on the day this was only accessible to Wirral Metropolitan College students as we had to move from the street to within the building).
- **Seacombe Ferry Terminal, Seacombe:** Wednesday 25 October. Approximately 23 attendees.
- **MAKE Hamilton Square, Birkenhead:** Saturday 4 November. Approximately 15 attendees.
- **St Joseph's School, Wallasey:** Wednesday 8 November. Approximately 21 attendees.

In total we engaged with approximately 446 people through the staffed pop-ups.

Our staffed pop-up displays included large format plans showing the route and the proposed changes, along with example photos which clearly explained the key features, written descriptions of the plans, and a 3D video the entire route. Staff from the PLACED team and Wirral Council were available at events to talk visitors through the plans, record views and answer questions. Attendees could respond in-person or choose to provide their response in their own time via Wirral Council's online survey. Our pop-up events at BirkenEd's Place, Cherry Tree Shopping Centre and St Joseph's School also included a virtual reality experience enabling attendees to experience the proposals in 3D.

At our staffed displays, we asked visitors the following questions:

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'The council should improve the roads and footpaths to help people who wish to walk and cycle have more active lifestyle.'
2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'The council should make it easier for people who wish to walk and cycle to destinations such as schools, local businesses and employment locations.'
3. How do you normally travel for short local journeys (for up to 20 minutes journey time)?
4. Overall, do you support the proposed active travel route between Birkenhead and Liscard?
5. Do you have any other comments or suggestions you would like to make in relation to the Birkenhead to Liscard Active Travel Project?



**Image:** Visitors watching the 3D video of the proposed route at the Cherry Tree Shopping Centre in Liscard surrounded by the other engagement materials.

### Unstaffed Displays

Unstaffed displays were set up at various venues along the active travel route were designed to support participation by those comfortable with completing the survey independently, but who would benefit from being able to view hardcopies of the plans. After reviewing the plans, visitors to our unstaffed displays could share their views by completing the survey either online or in hardcopy. Hardcopy Easy Read surveys were also provided.

- **Birkenhead Town Hall, Birkenhead:** Monday 25 September to Monday 4 December 2023.
- **Europa Pools, Birkenhead:** Monday 13 to Sunday 19 November 2023.
- **Seacombe Ferry Terminal, Seacombe:** Monday 20 to Sunday 26 November 2023.
- **MAKE Hamilton Square, Birkenhead:** Monday 27 November to Sunday 2 December 2023.



**Image:** Unstaffed display materials at Europa Pools in Birkenhead.

## Community Workshops

Community workshops focused on specific community groups often underrepresented in consultation and engagement. These workshops supplemented the wider engagement and other briefings and meetings co-ordinated by Wirral Council.

PLACED delivered the following community workshops:

- **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Wallasey:** Wednesday 8 November, 13:30 – 15:00. 21 Year 6 pupils.
- **Accessibility Themed Workshop, Make Hamilton Square, Birkenhead:** Thursday 30 November, 17:00 – 19:00. 12 Attendees.
- **Youth Group, Pilgrim Street Arts Centre, Birkenhead:** Monday 4 December, 17:00 – 18:30. 6 Attendees (3 young people and 3 youth workers).

PLACED's community workshops focused on local young people and those with an interest in the accessibility of active travel as two groups often underrepresented and with a significant interest in walking, cycling and wheeling. St Joseph's Catholic Primary School was selected because it is on the



route of the Birkenhead to Liscard Active Travel Project, Youth Voice at Pilgrim Street Arts Centre is nearby to the route, and the accessibility of active travel infrastructure to disabled people is an important part of making sure our streets accessible to all.

Attendees to our accessibility themed workshop included representatives from Options for Supported Living, Wirral Mencap, RNIB Northwest, Wirral Older People's Parliament, Active Wirral, Wirral Cycling Group, Merseyside Cycling Campaign, Wave Radio, and local residents. The discussions reflected a collective interest in making spaces more accessible and to capture the diverse perspectives shared during the workshop, laying the groundwork for future considerations in the Birkenhead to Liscard Active Travel Project.

Whilst each workshop was tailored to the specific group we were engaging, all our community workshops discussed active travel (walking, wheeling, cycling, and scooting etc.) and accessibility. Participants were asked to analyse a journey they do by active travel (St Joseph's and Youth Voice), review the proposals for this project (accessibility group), and discuss improvements to help make streets more accessible to walking, wheeling and cycling.



Image: Engagement materials used for the accessibility themed workshop.

## **Accessibility of the engagement**

PLACED and Wirral Council worked hard to make the engagement accessible to all. These are some of the measures taken to ensure our engagement events and displays were as accessible as possible:

- large format printed materials,
- everyday language on printed materials,
- written descriptions of the changes being proposed,
- glossary of street design and active travel terms including example images,
- magnifying glass, dyslexia reading rulers, and mood cards,
- Easy Read and hardcopy surveys,
- accessible venues (e.g. ground floor rooms and disabled toilets),
- accessible locations (e.g. close to the project route, on bus routes or near Mersey Rail stations), and
- Wirral Council provided a dedicated email address and helpline to provide alternative access to information and assistance.

PLACED welcomes feedback if you have ideas about how we can make our engagement more accessible. Our contact details are at the end of this report.

## **Who we engaged with**

During our pop-up events in locations along the route, we spoke with people who lived, worked, or visited the areas most affected by the plans. We hosted our engagement events in prominent and accessible locations with high footfall. This meant we could provide opportunities for unplanned or incidental engagement so that those who might not have engaged or heard of the project were able to share their views. Our events and workshops were promoted ahead of time with reminders posted on social media so that residents most affected by the plans or with an interests in active travel could find locations and dates that worked best for them.

Our community workshops focused on reaching specific groups who are often underrepresented in public consultation.

## **Promotion of Engagement**

The invitation to share views on the Birkenhead to Liscard Active Travel Project was widely promoted through various channels to ensure broad community awareness.

Wirral Council provided considerable promotion of the engagement and all events through their social media channels, resident newsletters, online and on-street advertising and direct mail to 7729



residential and businesses addresses along the route. A copy of the direct mail is included at the end of this report.

PLACED supplemented Wirral Council's promotion through our social media channels, Birkenhead mailing list and stakeholder contact list.

The following outlines PLACED promotion of engagement:

- Twitter(X), Instagram and Facebook
  - Posts: 44
  - Impressions: 20,758
  - Engagements: 3,433
- 9 posts on LinkedIn.
- 2 emails via our Birkenhead Mailing List with 212 recipients.
- 1 email via our Wirral based contacts List (e.g. stakeholders, local orgs, businesses) with 114 recipients.
- Dedicated space on our BirkenEd's Place and multiple mentions on our BirkenEd's Place news website.



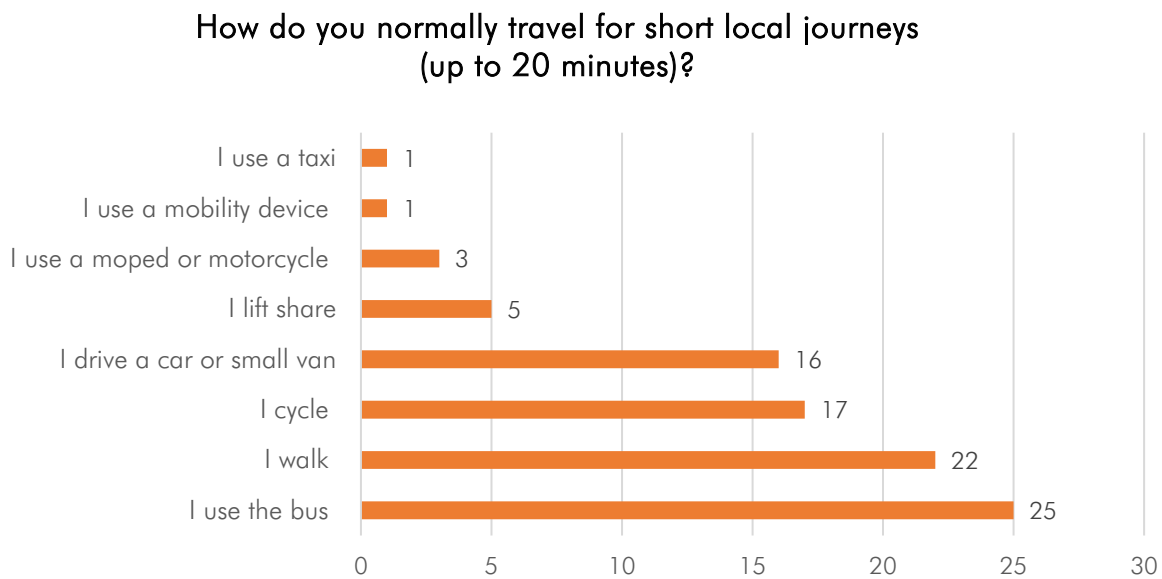
Image: Engagement materials used in the staffed pop-ups.

## Findings from the Staffed Pop-up Events

To understand how people make shorter journeys in the area currently, we asked participants 'How do you normally travel for short local journeys?' During our pop-up events, we collected 90 responses to this question. Participants were able to select multiple options to reflect the ways they get around.

The responses we received for this question included:

- 27.7% (25 responses) use bus or public transport
- 24.4% (22 responses) walk
- 18.8% (17 responses) cycle
- 17% (16 responses) drive
- 5% (5 responses) opt for lift share
- 3.3% (3 response) motorcycle
- 1.1% (1 response) use a mobility device
- 1.1% (1 response) use taxis

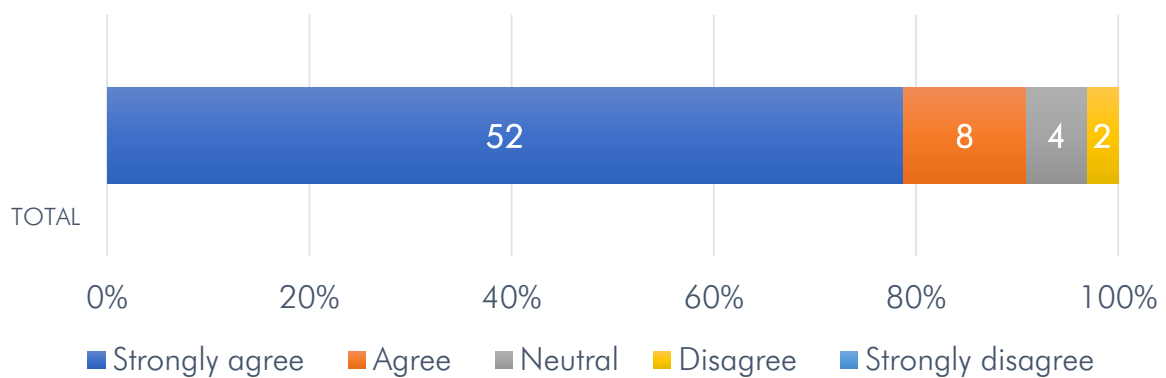


**Chart 1:** Results for the question: 'How do you normally travel for short local journeys?'

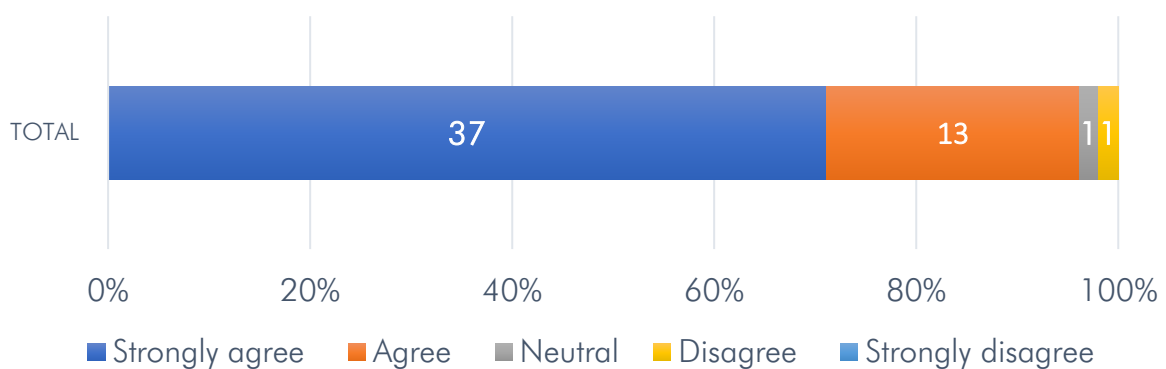
In order to understand people’s views on active travel, separate from the specifics of this project, we also asked people to read the following statements and asked, ‘Do you agree or disagree?’

- **Statement 1:** The council should improve the roads and footpaths to help people who wish to walk and cycle have more active lifestyle.
- **Statement 2:** The council should make it easier for people who wish to walk and cycle to destination such as schools, local businesses and employment locations.

As the data below highlights, many participants would like to see the local council improving walking and cycling infrastructure, making it easier for residents to choose these modes of active travel.



**Chart 2:** Responses to the question: ‘do you agree or disagree that the council should improve the roads and footpaths to help people who wish to walk and cycle have more active lifestyle?’



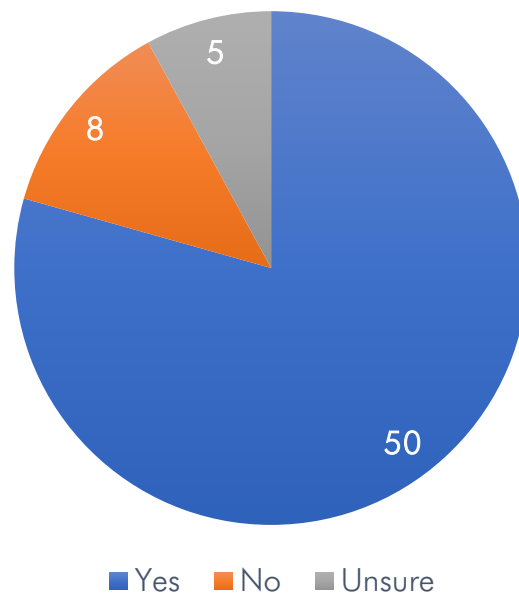
**Chart 3:** Responses to the question: ‘do you agree or disagree that the council should make it easier for people who wish to walk and cycle to destination such as schools, local businesses and employment locations?’



## General Feedback

We asked participants to indicate their overall support for the scheme and we received 63 responses. As the results below show, most people we spoke to said they supported the scheme - 79% (50 votes) were in favour, 12% (8 votes) were not in favour, and 7% (5 votes) were unsure.

Overall, do you support the proposed active travel route between Birkenhead and Liscard?



**Chart 4:** Responses to the question: 'Overall, do you support the proposed active travel route between Birkenhead and Liscard?'

The pop-up events also allowed for people to offer their general feedback on the scheme as a whole. From these comments we found that there is strong, widespread support for the proposed active travel route to promote sustainability, improve health, upgrade an inadequate cycling route, and increase safety. There was also support for the improvements the project provides to the walking environment by improving pedestrian spaces and crossings – highlighting that the scheme is not only supported by those who support the cycling elements of the scheme.

However, some participants felt that the new infrastructure may provide excessive space for cyclists and prioritised cycle space over the car parking and storage, bus services and general road use. Additional concerns included whether cyclists would use a disconnected route (if the route does not connect with other safe cycling routes), loss of on-street parking, and the impact of reduced road space on traffic. Concerns about security, the need for CCTV cameras, improved lighting, issues of anti-social behaviour, and location-specific issues like preserving trees were also expressed.

## Comments by theme

Most of our participants left comments on all or part of the route. Below summarises the overarching themes of these comments.

### **Safety and Accessibility**

Comments highlighted the need to create safe, segregated cycling routes to encourage more people to cycle, especially children and families. Fully segregated lanes are preferred to provide safety by separating pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Measures like continuous crossings at side roads were popular, although note more detailed comments on how these should be designed to ensure blind and partially sighted people can navigate. There is support for measures like 20mph limits that will improve safety and driver behaviour on the proposed route (other views were also shared on the 20mph zones elsewhere in Wirral). Some people felt that better street lighting along the route was needed to improve safety.

While there was significant support for the proposed new route due to increased safety, some people also suggested that narrowing roads to introduce segregated cycle lanes could increase accidents and create access issues for large vehicles. Other issues highlighted included the need to improve safety, addressing anti-social behaviour and theft of e-bikes through measures like CCTV cameras.

### **Pedestrians and Pavements**

Concerns were expressed that shared pedestrian and cycle spaces are not accessible to all pedestrians, especially disabled people, or those with mobility issues. Comments highlighted the need to ensure the needs of disabled pedestrians are fully considered alongside provision for cyclists in the design of shared spaces.

In general participants supported continuous crossings at side road as many could see the benefits to wheelchair users, those pushing prams and buggies and the general priority they provide to pedestrians crossing. However, there were some concerns raised on how continuous crossings work for blind and visually impaired people as they may lose the kerb for reference to let them know they are entering a crossing.

Recommendations were for the use of good quality, sustainable materials to provide smooth pavements and road surfaces that are durable. Some people suggested lower kerbs would be useful for disabled people (this needs to be considered alongside accessible street design guidance). Others suggested minimising use of materials in signage that can get damaged. Along with this, some residents questioned whether surface change is needed outside of Birkenhead Town Hall.

## **Parking**

Feedback flagged that car users are currently parking on existing cycle lanes such as those on Duke Street and Cleveland Street. Some respondents said that any on-street parking that is lost needs to be replaced with alternative parking options, otherwise vehicles may park in segregated cycle lanes. Others also shared that parking is already difficult during work and school times and that they are concerned that this project may make this more difficult. Removing timed on-street parking spots would reduce the need to rush back to cars to pay for parking. Concerns were raised about the removal of on-street parking affecting businesses and their footfall.

## **Traffic and Congestion**

There were concerns about other ideas like narrowing down streets. Some people felt that the proposed changes may increase congestion in already busy and/or narrow sections of the route like St Pauls Road, Tower Road, Liscard Road by the Tesco car park, and Chester Street by the tunnels. Whilst many of the people we spoke to supported 20mph speed limits, there was concern traffic pressures may cause speeds to creep up. Overall, comments suggested careful consideration is needed regarding the impact on congestion, traffic flow and road capacity from the proposed changes, particularly on major routes.

## **Public Transport**

Some comments suggested that more focus should be on improving public transport rather than re-designing roads for cycling and walking as many people rely on buses, particularly older people. Others recognised the connection between an improved walking environment and connection to public transport.

## **Greenery**

Several comments raised concerns about losing trees and green spaces on Liscard Road. We understand that trees along Liscard Road are not being lost as part of the proposals, but it is clear that many people want the trees to stay. In general, comments demonstrate that care should be taken to minimise tree loss, and replace any greenery displaced by necessary road changes. Suggestions were also made to add more trees or greenery along Wheatland Lane. There was also support for incorporating features like wildflower sections and rain gardens rather than just tree pits.

## **Cycling**

### **- Connectivity and Convenience**

Several comments supported the route due to it enabling easier, quicker cycling connections without parking worries. Suggestions were made to connect it with existing cycle paths and extending it to



destinations like New Brighton. Even though the project is largely supported by the community, some participants questioned whether there is enough demand and priority to justify the new active travel route and the cost of it, feeling that the area's limited cycling culture means the new lanes will be under-utilised, however, some noted it would encourage them to cycle more.

- **Infrastructure and Maintenance**

Feedback highlighted the need for good road surfaces with grip, proper signage, and cycle parking facilities. Some residents flagged that current cycle lanes are poorly maintained and cleaned.

- **Safety and Separation**

Many respondents welcomed segregation from traffic for improved cyclist safety. Several shared experiences of things being thrown at them, collisions and near misses. Fully separated lanes were preferred by some rather than shared space with pedestrians.

- **Active Travel Promotion and Accessibility**

There was enthusiasm for enabling accessible active travel for all ages. Nevertheless, questions were raised about fast commuter cyclists or e-bike users mixing with less confident cyclists, and whether the routes would be inclusive of different cycling abilities. Comments were also received about making sure that cyclists follow traffic rules like stopping at red lights. Some called for cycle training to promote safe cycling.

**Other Comments**

Many felt the scheme will help regenerate Birkenhead sustainably.

Disruption caused during construction should be considered and minimised. Concerns were also raised about maintenance, utility companies digging up surfaces, and ensuring emergency vehicle access.

Suggestions to improve the project included linking parks as part of active travel projects and including the likes of the promenade and areas like Adelphi Street and Lord Street. There was also interest in amenities like public toilets and pop-up cafes or coffee shops being incorporated along the route as this would make it more accessible and enjoyable for users.

Some participants argued money would be better spent on other local priorities and improving the area overall – although funding restrictions were generally explained and understood.

## Comments on specific parts of the route

To enable people to see the details of the proposals, we presented the 3.5-mile route in a large format across 16 plans. Each plan was numbered and included the street names and other labels to support understanding. The following comments were received related to specific plans and streets.

### **Plan 1: Chester Street**

Whilst dedicated cycling infrastructure was supported, some people felt that Ivy Street near Duncan Street junction and Chester Street plans should be re-evaluated to optimise cyclist safety. It was felt that relocating the cycle track to the opposite side could be better due to the proposed cycle track's proximity to heavy lorry traffic from Twelve Quays terminal. With Ivy Street becoming single carriageway, cyclists staying on the road could impede traffic flow by blocking vehicles from overtaking. The speed limit may need reviewing to ensure cyclist safety.

### **Plan 2: Duncan Street**

Some participants suggested that the corner from Duncan Street into Hamilton Square looked very tight for both cyclists and pedestrians, and this should be reviewed to ensure sufficient width for all users.

### **Plan 3: Hamilton Square**

Some felt that the purpose of the proposed section along Duncan Street and through Hamilton Square is unclear for cyclist. Suggestions were that the promenade may be a better cycling route to connect towards the docks, or that Bridge Street would be preferable to Hamilton Square itself.

Underground bins at Hamilton Square would reduce street clutter and improve the walking environment.

### **Plan 4: Cleveland Street**

Lighting should be installed along Hamilton Lane and consider making Brunswick Lane no entry except for residents.

### **Plan 5: Taylor Street and Canning Street**

On Taylor Street, cyclists' safety is still reliant on car drivers, and this is a significant concern. Installing a signal crossing at Lord Street or a super crossing would improve safety. For cycling routes, Bridge Street may be a better option than Cleveland Street.

### **Plan 6: Egerton Wharf and Tower Wharf**

Gravel from the landscaping along Egerton Wharf can obstruct pedestrians. Some suggested that the roundabout should be removed to simplify traffic flow. To stop wagons parking on the roadside designated Wagon parking was suggested. On-street parking on Dock Road by Wirral Waters poses a pedestrian safety issue and should be addressed. The port blocks part of the Wirral Circular Trail (WCT) for trailer parking at times, so alternate cycling access is needed at Morpeth Dock. The Tower Wharf - Tower Road junction is felt to be dangerous, and it is good that the plans provide a way for cyclists to avoid that.

### **Plan 7: Tower Road**

Varied public seating is needed, including blocked seating with greenery and different heights for all ages. Bus stops should have interesting visual and sensory features. Proper signage needs improvement as the routes are confusing. There is currently no cycle crossing from Wirral Waters Dock Road to Tower Road which needs connecting.

The Tower Road roundabouts need further consideration. The pedestrian and cyclists crossing design of the roundabout shown in viewport B is a better design than the roundabout with Birkenhead Road (viewport C). This shared space crossing needs improving. Crossings that require pressing buttons are frustrating for cyclist, this should be automated. The swirly traffic feature on Tower Road is hard to interpret and long queues can occur, especially when the bridge is up.

### **Plan 8 – Kelvin Road**

Kelvin Road is currently dangerous due to cars not indicating - a cycle route could be risky here. Better signage is needed at a minimum. The Kelvin Road section only links employment areas so demand may be minimal. It is good that rejoining the carriageway is not required. Kelvin Road junction to Seacombe terminal is not suitable for cycling because of broken glass and street furniture on the way.

### **Plan 9: Kelvin Road and Wheatland Lane**

On Wheatland Lane, articulated trucks need space to turn into warehouses and yards – this could block the cycling route at times. Concerns were raised about large vehicle not being able to access narrow roads.

### **Plan 10: St Pauls Road and Church Road**

Some turns may be too tight for larger adapted cycles, trikes, and cargo bikes, such as the turn at Wheatland Lane and St Paul's Road. There is not enough width and parking on St Paul's Road. Constructing the cycling route will cause disruption on St Pauls Road.



### **Plan 11: Wheatland Lane**

There are safety concerns where the cycling lane ends. Some people felt it is unclear why the cycling route on Wheatland Lane requires crossing over.

Some people said that the 20-mph speed limit change on Wheatland Lane was made without consultation and that clarity is needed on which roads are now 20-mph (this relates to changes made previously rather than changes proposed as part of this project).

### **Plan 12: Mainwaring Road**

On Mainwaring Road, on-street parking causes a bottleneck as the street is full of parked cars, leading some to suggest the need for double yellow lines. A 20-mph quiet street could create some congestion issues. It is possible that these comments may misunderstand the proposed redirection of through traffic along Liscard Road.

Residents on Mainwaring Road we spoke were concerned about the potential changes to their street. However, they generally supported the changed road layout once they were able to understand and see the details of the proposals. The restriction of the northern end of Mainwaring Road to vehicles was felt to reduce the risk of damage to parked cars through the removal of fast moving through traffic. Concerns were expressed about the loss of on-street parking. It is noted that the scheme does not propose to remove on-street parking from Mainwaring Road, but that the road layout changes may change how close some residents can park to their door. The need to maintain existing disabled parking bays was highlighted by several residents. Bollards to protect the pavement at the top of Mainwaring Road would be good. Residents also asked whether any new bollards would be removable and if disabled bays will stay in the same place. Some people suggested that middle disabled parking bay shown on our plan is currently two spaces and should stay as it is. It was felt that planting would be nice at the space created at the northern end of Mainwaring Road, but there could be a risk of vandalism. Enforcement is needed of one-way traffic on Hartismere Road.

Access from the Tesco car park onto the Liscard Road could be difficult with increased through traffic. Poulton Road is extremely busy.

### **Plan 13: Liscard Road (South)**

There were suggestions like adding opportunities for memorial benches and public art, including graffiti, along the route. Bus stop timetables can be obscured by seating and should be relocated. Using nicer pavement materials than just tarmac was suggested by some. Managing parking on side roads is important to prevent pavement obstruction. Ongoing maintenance like flooding prevention and leaf clearing needs to be ensured. The loss of bus stop laybys is seen as a downside by some

residents as it may create traffic. Continuous pavements will benefit wheelchair and mobility aid users.

Comments were received on adding laybys for buses so buses do not obstruct traffic. Providing cycle parking on the park side of the road received support from nearby residents. However, some felt that Liscard Road may be too narrow for the current proposals and that cyclists sharing roads with buses could be a safety concern. Maintaining emergency vehicle access is vital.

### **Plan 14: Liscard Road (Central)**

Countdown pedestrian crossings inform people of crossing time available were suggested. Some felt that residential areas may not see as much use of cycling routes. Swapping the parking and cycle lane locations on Liscard Road was suggested as a possible benefit, particularly bringing parking onto the same side as houses. The continuous side road crossings were well received, and people felt they can remind drivers of Highway Code responsibilities to stop for pedestrians and cyclists. Suggestions were made to have public toilets, seating, lighting, planting, and cafés along the route and to link to community projects.

On Liscard Road, specifically as it runs along Central Park, we received many strong comments on the importance of retaining existing trees rather than replacing or losing mature trees.

### **Plan 15: Liscard Road (North)**

There was a suggestion for cyclists to use the parallel path through the park rather than needing road infrastructure. Any shared spaces should still have clear delineations for pedestrians and cyclists like painted separator lines. Renovating community spaces such as old buildings in Central Park could help mitigate anti-social behaviour. The overall area is busy, especially Martin's Lane for right turns out. Longer crossing times are needed on the Liscard Road crossings. Additionally, signal lights at Martins Lane junction were recommended.

### **Plan 16: Liscard Way**

Support was expressed for distinct pedestrian and cycling areas on Liscard Way as it may stop cyclists going inside the shopping centre. Some people said they preferred keeping full pedestrianisation. Shared zones without clear boundaries may cause confusion and conflicts. Adding a contraflow cycling on Liscard Crescent should be considered.

### **Other comments not specific to this route**

Liscard's parking costs were raised as an issue by some.

The existing Wirral Way walking and cycling path works well when maintained.

Fender Lane needs accessibility improvements for wheelchair users by addressing maintenance issues like clearing blockages on pavements. Cleaning and flooding prevention are also needed. The cycling space could be reduced to reallocate area to pedestrians on Fender Lane. Obstacles like parking on cycle lane and rubbish on Duke Street need addressing.



**Image:** Participants using the VR experience showing the route in 3D available at some of the staffed pop-up events.



## Findings from Community Workshops

The following summarises our key findings from each of the workshops.

### St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

The workshop started with a welcome and introduction followed by quick-fire questions about journeys. The pupils then analysed their experiences of local streets by thinking of a typical journey they make, such as their route to school or to a friend's house. After that, they presented their thoughts, ideas, and opinions on active travel by making a poster. The final part of the workshop involved summarising some of the key themes and highlights from the students' posters.

#### Quick-fire Questions

The quick-fire questions were:

- How do you normally travel to school?
- Would you like to walk or cycle to school in the future?

The chart below shows the percentage of pupils who travel by car. From the total 21 responses, 4.7% (2 votes) travel by car, 57% (12 votes) do not and 33.3% (7 votes) sometimes travel by car.

Pupils who travel by car

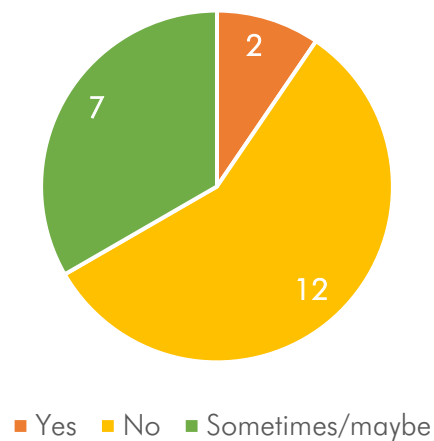
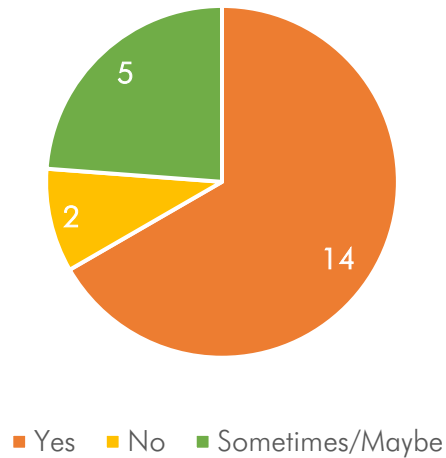


Chart 5: The number of pupils that travel by car.

Chart 6 below shows the percentage of participants who walk to school. Of the 21 responses, 4.7% (2 votes) do not walk, 23.8% (5 votes) sometimes walk and 66.6% (14 votes) walk to school.

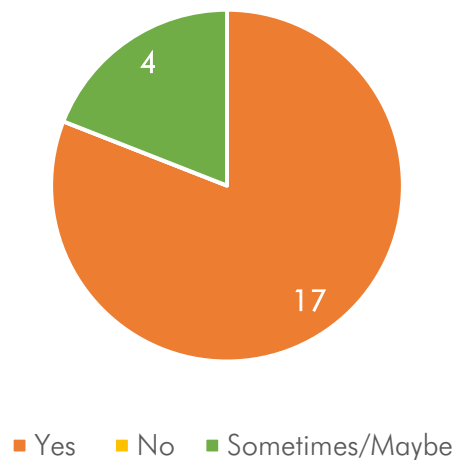
### Pupils who walk to school



**Chart 6:** Pie chart showing the number of participants walk to school.

We asked how many of the 21 participants cycle or scoot to school and in response 80.9% (17 votes) had cycled or scooted to school and 19.1% (4 votes) sometimes cycled to school. It is noted that the frequency of their cycling was somewhat unclear from the children's responses, but they had cycled or scooted to school at some point.

### Pupils who cycle to school (including scooting)



**Chart 7:** Pie chart showing the number of participants who travel by cycle.

The quick fire question round shows how most of the participants either walk or cycle to school. Some pupils also explained how their travel varied depending other factors like parent's schedules or the weather. We also heard about how they sometimes they might scoot to school rather than cycle, and that traffic can make them late sometimes.

The quick-fire questions helped us to understand more about the way the class travelled to school. We chatted with the children about the questions and their answers, and they started to tell us about their journeys. This was explored in more detail in the journey analysis exercise.

### **Journey Analysis**

Pupils were asked to conduct a journey analysis activity in which they visually mapped their route to school, identifying positive and negative elements along the way.

#### **The most enjoyable aspects of the journey identified by the pupils included:**

- Making stops at local shops such as the chip shop and Tesco to purchase snacks.
- Visiting friends' houses and knocking on their doors so they could travel together to school.
- Meeting friends at the school gates after the walk to school.

#### **Key negative aspects included:**

- Contending with heavy traffic when attempting road crossings and narrow pavements made some pupils feel unsafe.
- Waiting extended periods for traffic signals to change and numerous turns while walking and confusing walkways.
- Passing through alleyways containing litter, full of rubbish, rubbish bins creating unpleasant odours.
- Other concerns mentioned were polluted and noisy environments and gangs or intimidating older young people.

Some of the journey analysis drawings are presented below.

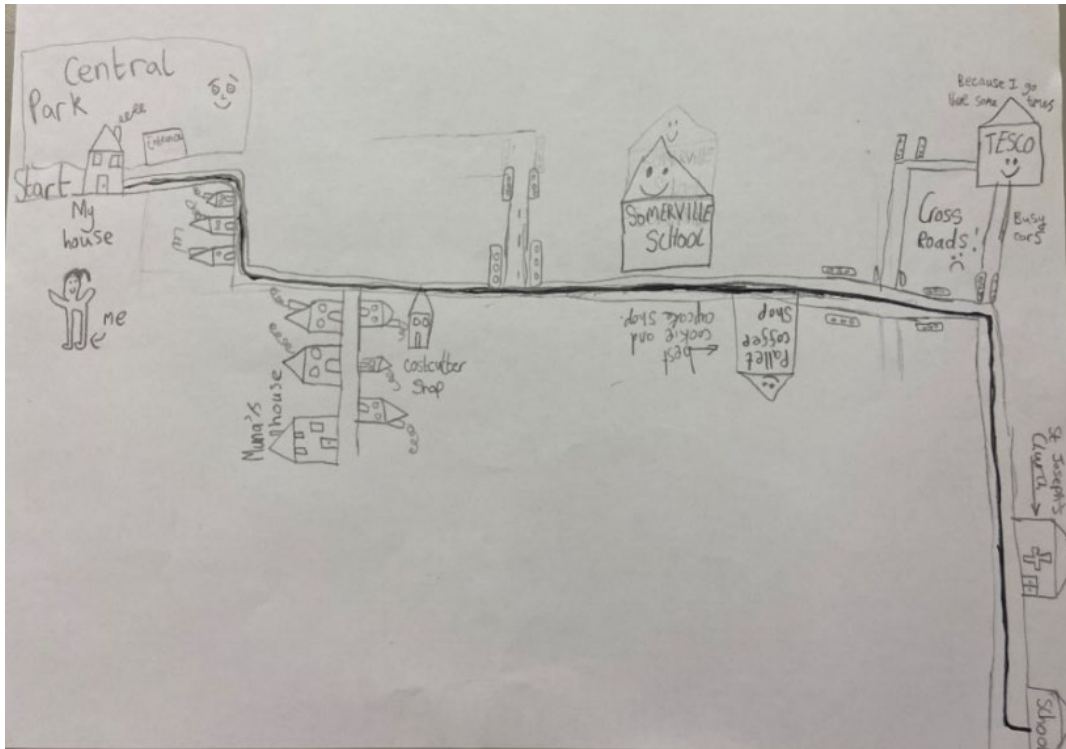


Image: Drawing showing a journey home from school with housing and shops.



Image: Drawing showing heavy traffic and overflowing rubbish bins on the way home from school.

## Active Travel Poster

We also asked pupils to create posters to summarise some of the things they'd learnt about active travel during the workshop.

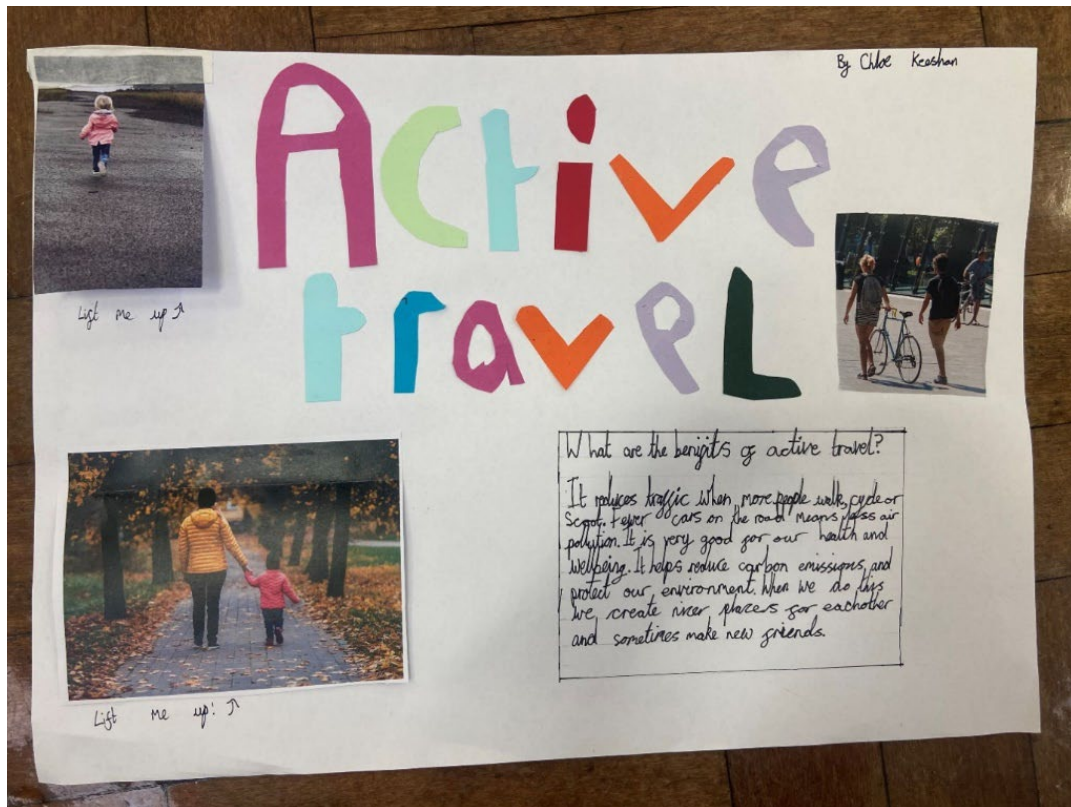


Image: Active travel poster by pupil mentioning benefits of active travel.



## Youth Voice

The workshop started with introducing PLACED and outlining the purpose of the session. We then introduced the Birkenhead to Liscard Active Travel Project, and this included a video overview of the route. Initial feedback was invited from the young people regarding aspects they like or dislike along the route now. The next exercise involved each young person analysing a journey they make using active travel and highlighting most and least enjoyable elements. This activity yielded qualitative insights into how young people currently perceive and utilise streets and public spaces. Although the youth group meets near to the Birkenhead section of the project, the participants were drawn from across Wirral and so our discussion necessarily reflected this mix of experiences.

### **Journey Analysis**

The young people and youth workers present in the workshop shared the positive and negative aspects of their daily journeys in Birkenhead. In terms of positive aspects, they spoke of walks through green spaces and historic architecture of Hamilton Square that enhance the aesthetic appeal of their journeys. Community assets like churches, community centres, and festively decorated houses were also mentioned. However, these journeys are often impeded by anti-social issues in parks or having to traverse run-down, abandoned housing in some areas. The group also flagged difficult crossings, anti-social behaviour, busy roads, unclean pavements, and disconnected areas which discourages walking.

The group was then asked about the challenges they face in their day-to-day journeys and what improvements they would suggest. They highlighted challenges currently hindering the effectiveness of public transport and pedestrian experiences. The group recommended various improvements, and these generally related to the creation of more inclusive and pedestrian-friendly spaces.

Outlined below are the various challenges and improvements the group mentioned.

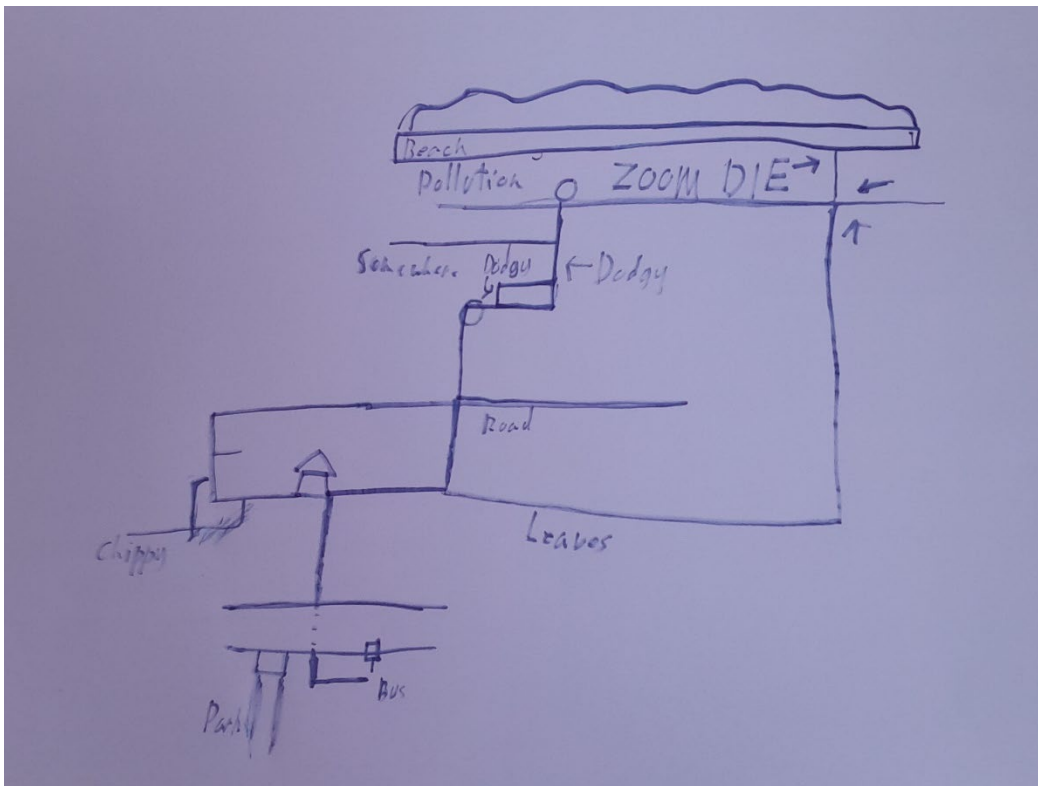
### **Challenges**

- Problematic public transport ticketing, making bus journeys less appealing due to frequency and accessibility concerns, particularly for older or disabled individuals.
- Litter and pollution in specific areas
- Inconsistent pedestrian crossings. Some do not work, and this reduces the desirability of walking.
- Swirly junctions, such as the one on Tower Road, pose confusion and safety issues.
- Cycle lane kerbs and disjointed cycle lanes contribute to a less desirable walking environment – particularly for those who may have mobility issues who must navigate more kerbs.
- The rural roads, in their current state, pose challenges for safe cycling to interconnect with this type of urban cycling infrastructure.

- The beach unfortunately contains high levels of pollution and litter, which is undesirable for a natural environment beside the sea and reduces the appeal of walking.

### Suggested Improvements

- Priorities include ensuring good wheelchair accessibility with smooth, level pavements and accommodate wheelchair users on buses during busy periods.
- Increased bus frequencies to mitigate overcrowding and improve accessible bus spaces availability at busy time, and improved bus stop infrastructure.
- Enhancements to the visual appeal of the Birkenhead tunnel along with the integration of local artists in street art projects aimed at creating a more welcoming atmosphere.
- Improved lighting for safety, and more benches and trees should be incorporated to make the journey more pleasing.
- Additional proposals encompass the introduction of greenery, inspirational quotes as part of public art, and a reduction in hostile architecture.
- Raised crossings as observed on sections of Tower Road help to slow traffic down and improve pedestrian crossings.
- Train stations need to be well connected for regular access.



**Image:** A young person's drawing of their journey to the beach.

## Accessibility Themed Workshop

The Accessibility Workshop aimed to gather insights on current travel experiences along the Birkenhead to Liscard route to help understand how to ensure the active travel project is accessible. Participants were engaged in discussions about their current use of the route, modes of travel, and what changes and improvements they would make to the scheme.

The workshop included introductions and a brief overview of the project. We talked about various forms of active travel, thinking about walking, cycling, and wheeling, but also sitting, resting and connecting with other forms of transport. We asked participants to share their thoughts on active travel. Following this, we focused on reviewing all the plans utilising various formats, including video, large format printed materials, and some 3D/tactile elements. We also provided images or other example places to illustrate some design options and gather further reflections. We asked participants very broadly for their reflections and comments on the plans and examples.

Broadly speaking, participants supported actions to make streets safer for active travel (widely defined) and more accessible. We also received general feedback on the plans as well as comments specific to certain sections of the design. These are presented below.

### General Comments

Questions were asked about the pavement improvements associated with the creation of cycle tracks and whether pedestrians will benefit as much as cyclists.

Comments also focused on the challenge of designing shared spaces that are accessible, addressing concerns from organisations like RNIB. Incorporating features like signage, visual separation, surface colour, and tactile paving were suggested.

Participants were happy to accommodate e-bikes but were concerned about the speed and anti-social behaviour of some cyclists, particularly for the shared space sections of the route. Some participants recommended educational programmes regarding the use of shared space, especially for cyclists. It was suggested that this could help to mitigate risks for pedestrians, even though segregated cycle lanes were favoured above all. They also said that there should be places along the route for cycle parking. Clarification is needed on the designated use of cycle tracks by wheelchair or mobility aid users.

Workshop participants flagged that continuous footways require thoughtful design to ensure safety for blind and partially sighted individuals, with attention to cane users and those using guide dogs and the difficulties caused by the potential loss of the kerb.

Pedestrian spaces should have clear routes without street clutter to improve safety, navigation for blind and partially sighted people but also to enable physical activity like running groups. However, street furniture like benches and bins should also be provided in sensible locations. The project should consider the distance between benches to support individuals with mobility challenges.

Good colour distinctions and signage were recommended to separate pedestrians and cyclists. Colour recommendations were for green to denote cycle lanes and red for pedestrian crossings. The need to re-evaluating shared spaces in areas like Tower Road to improve safety was also suggested.

Safety concerns related to nighttime walking were also flagged in the workshop with mention of isolated train stations and the importance of well-lit areas. The absence of infrastructure, particularly in isolated areas and poorly lit sections, raises the issue for promoting walkability. To enhance the safety of women and girls especially, participants felt there should be good lighting and more people living in the town centre to increase the number of people out and about.

### **Plan 1: Chester Street**

Concerns were raised about potential difficulties posed by kerbs for individuals with poor mobility. It was recommended that blue badge parking should be considered when planning parking facilities. Overall, satisfaction was expressed with the proposal, emphasising the necessity of the proposed crossing.

### **Plan 3: Hamilton Square**

Some participants expressed uncertainty about the anticipated usage of this part of the proposed route by cyclists. Some participants wondered if other routes made more sense, e.g. using Argyle Street or continuing along Hamilton Street or Chester Street to the Woodside gyratory and Canning Street or Bridge Street.

### **Plan 4: Cleveland Street**

Highlighting the presence of essential locations like Wirral Metropolitan College and business campuses along Canning Street, participants suggested exploring the option of using Canning Street instead of Cleveland Street.

### **Plan 6: Egerton Wharf and Tower Wharf**

Participants said that Egerton Wharf bridge is quite narrow, and pedestrians and cyclists currently share the space. Removing shared space here is beneficial.

**Plan 7: Tower Road**

Comments included integration with the existing cycle lane, lowering the kerb, clear cycle lane demarcation, and extra pedestrian crossings for new residents as more housing is built at Wirral Waters.

**Plans 8 and 9: Kelvin Road and Wheatland Lane**

Participants said that removing parking from here could be an issue for businesses.

**Plan 11: Wheatland Lane**

There is a need for clear signage to accommodate people with visual impairments along with safety features like lighting, and the presence of CCTV.

**Plan 13: Liscard Road (South)**

Continuous pavements can be good for people with mobility aids or wheelchair users (see other comments about continuous crossings).

**Plan 15: Liscard Road (North)**

The trees along the route should be saved.

**Plan 16: Liscard Way**

The presence of numerous pedestrians and wheelchair users suggests that establishing a cycle route on Liscard Way may not be advisable. Some recommended removing Liscard Way from the route due to safety concerns and to reduce potential conflict and accidents involving pedestrians and wheelchair users. A suggested alternative route diverts from Liscard Road down Lathom Avenue to Parkfield Drive and St. Albans Road, continuing to Wallasey Road to Seaview Road.



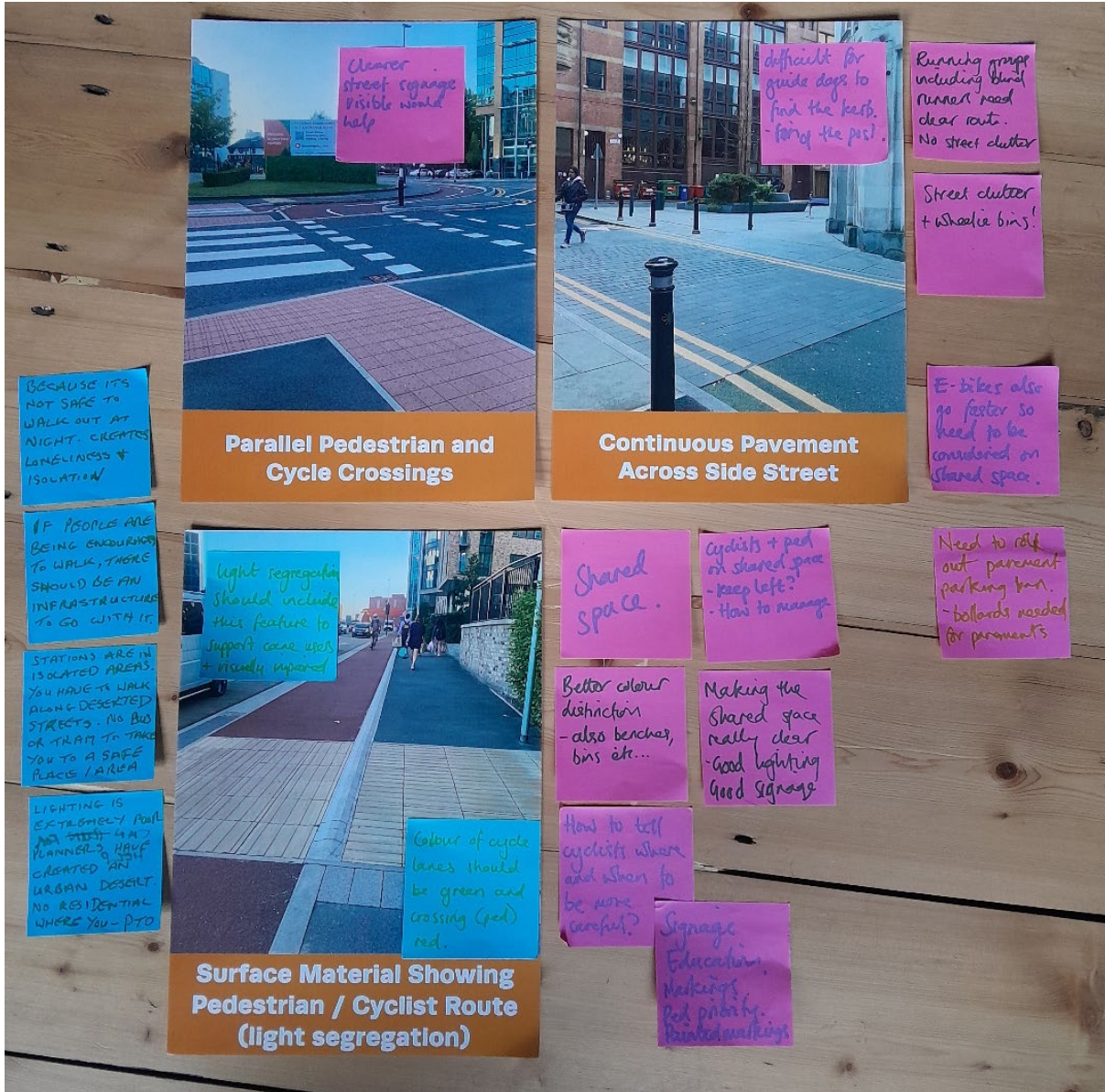


Image: Different comments by participants from the workshop.

## Summary and next steps

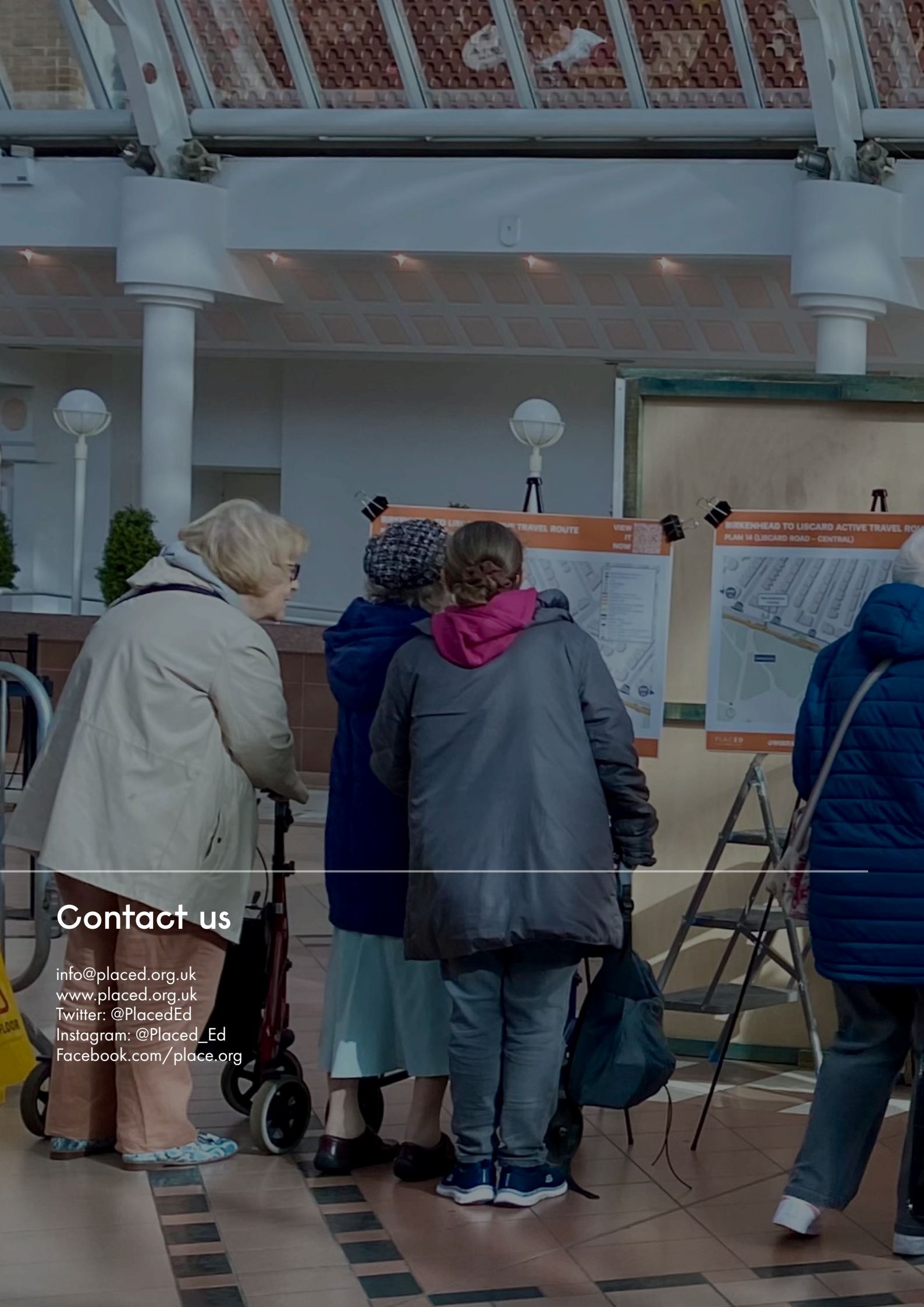
The community's response to the proposed Birkenhead to Liscard Active Travel Route has been robust, providing valuable insights into various aspects of the project. Here are the key findings derived from participant feedback:

- Strong support was given for segregation to encourage safety for all pedestrians, wheelers, and cyclists.
- It was felt that the scheme should connect to existing cycling infrastructure and provide secure cycle parking and repair stations.
- Emphasis was placed on smooth surfaces, safety, and promotion of walking and cycling for all abilities, including the provision of benches and seating.
- Concerns were raised about excessive space for cyclists, prioritisation of cycle space over other needs like bus services and general road users. Suggestions to focus on improving public transport alongside walking and cycling infrastructure were received.
- Worries were expressed about the loss of on-street parking and its impact on some residents and businesses. There were requests for alternative parking options to replace any lost on-street parking.
- Some people had concerns about potential congestion on narrow roads and asked for careful consideration of the impact on traffic flow and road capacity.
- There were calls for better street lighting along the route, particularly in critical areas such as around train stations and bus stops.
- Concerns were raised strongly about any potential loss of trees and green spaces. Planting greenery along the route was also recommended.
- There are some concerns regarding the accessibility of shared spaces for disabled pedestrians. Incorporating guidance from disabled people's advocacy groups on tactile paving and sensory elements is advisable.
- Maintenance was raised as something which needs to be factored in.

The wealth of community input provides a comprehensive understanding of both support and concerns to guide the continued refinement of the Birkenhead to Liscard Active Travel Route. We would like to thank everyone who gave their time to participate and share their views.

Wirral Council will review the findings included in this report alongside the findings from the other engagement and consultation activities. All feedback will be shared with the appropriate Wirral Council committee during 2024 to support decision making regarding project.





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