

Active Travel Public Engagement Reports Porthcawl



FEBRUARY 2025

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 This report presents the outcome of the community engagement undertaken as part of the proposal to construct an active travel route from Danygraig roundabout to the Porthcawl Metrolink. The proposed scheme will be a shared foot/cycle path starting at Danygraig roundabout and generally heading Southwest towards the town centre.
- 1.0.2 There are four sets of data (four questions) compiled from two different engagement sessions to gain an understanding of the public's views and opinions on the scheme. The two engagement sessions have been listed below:
- In-person Community Engagement – 6th of November 2024, this was 16:30 until 19:00 for residents to visit the Porthcawl YMCA and discuss the proposals with officers. This was to gain all user resident opinions, three route options were presented to the public and 16 participants took part in this survey.
 - Online Survey - The same survey was advertised and released online from the 7th of November 2024 to the 12th of December 2024. This was recommended by a local member to get interest from those in surrounding areas of Bridgend and those who could not attend the in-person session resulting in a larger response rate. This proved to be a beneficial decision creating a further 70 responses.
- 1.0.3 The Leader and Local Councillors were present at the in-person engagement session. The same survey was used for both of these with the results combined in this report for analysis, a template of the survey that was released can be viewed in Appendix A.
- 1.0.4 Each question starts with a table which is the raw results that have been tallied by an officer. A column chart is then presented to make it easier for the reader to identify patterns and anomalies. Finally, each question finishes with a pie chart that shows the combined results and outcome of the question.

1.1 SCHEME OVERVIEW

- 1.1.1 This engagement with the public was scheduled at an earlier stage of the bid than previous schemes so residents were given three options to analyse. They were presented with three route options which were listed A, B and C. This is before the feasibility stage to gain a better understanding as to what route the public favour and to investigate any concerns with each option.
- 1.1.2 The initial thought process was to find a solution that links Bridgend town centre to Porthcawl. This proved to be too difficult and expensive with land ownership, gradient and ecology issues that would push the budget too far. Therefore, the focus switched to serving those in Porthcawl and helping create a modal shift for those travelling to and from the town centre, the three options highlighted as Route A, B and C in Figure 1 (Page 5) can be seen below.
- 1.1.3 The scheme navigates through existing urban environment thereby giving access to local residential areas and nearby facilities. The shortest route is option C which will be 1.5 miles, the longest route is option A which will be 1.8 miles. All three route options are intended to

enhance connections between the Danygraig roundabout and Porthcawl Metrolink and feasibilities will consider existing routes along the way.

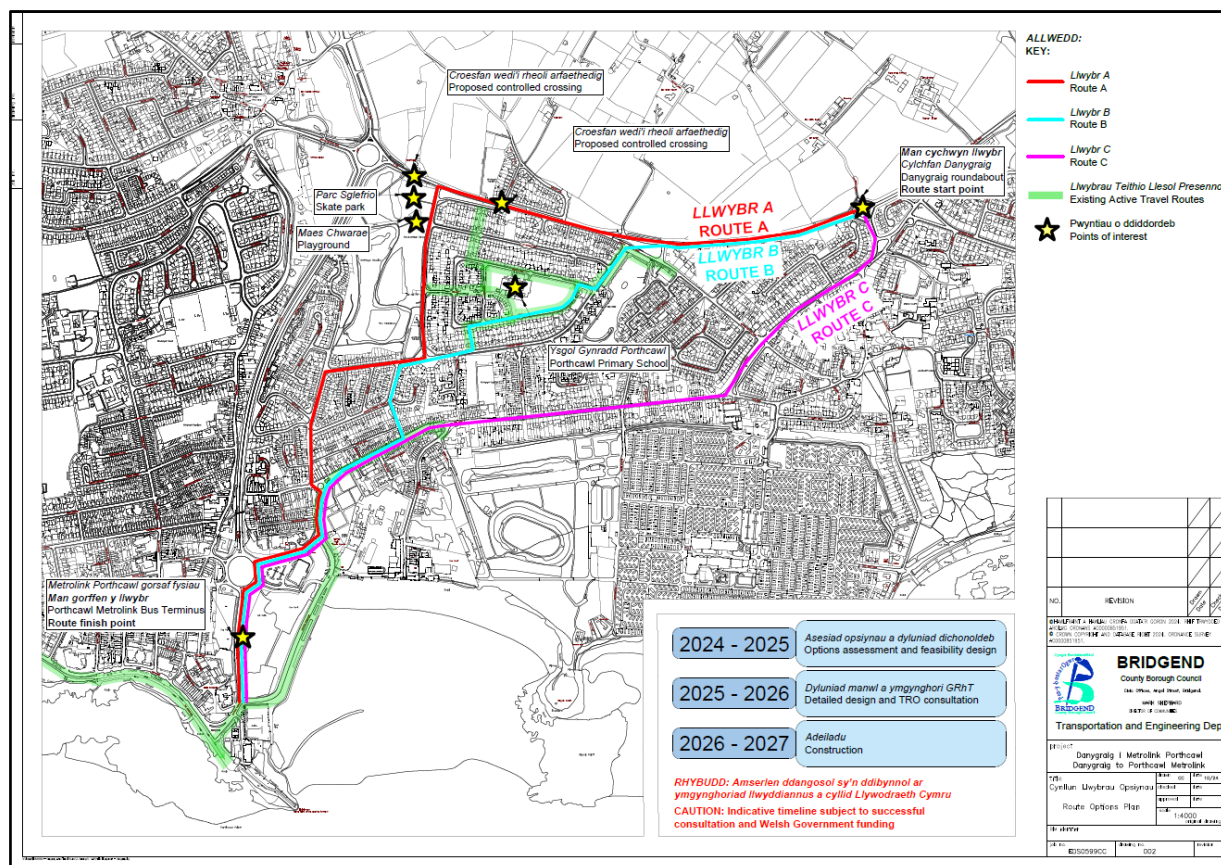


Figure 1

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME:

- Create a shared walking and cycling route from the existing active travel network map (ATNM) to Porthcawl Metrolink.
- Form widened access throughout the community, benefiting school journeys, local shops, amenities, and bus stops.
- Create prioritisation of active travel over motorized vehicles by providing safe off-road facilities, reducing carbon emissions.
- Focus on the scheme's alignment with local and national policies, including the Local Transport Plan (2015-2030), Well-Being Plan (2018-2023), and Net Zero Carbon Strategy (2021-2025).

2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

2.1 PROMOTION METHODS

- 2.1.1 Local Members were notified of the scheme's details in advance of the public to give them time to answer any questions that residents may have after the engagement session. Local Members were advised by officers to post the scheme on community hubs to promote the session. The scheme was also placed on BCBC (Bridgend County Borough Council) social media platforms. All correspondence that was sent out was translated into Welsh.

2.2 RESIDENT AND OFFICER CONVERSATIONS

- 2.2.1 Many conversations were held between residents and officers at the in-person engagement session. It was the perfect opportunity for the community to get an understanding of the thought process prior to the options plan. Firstly, they wanted an understanding as to what makes a route 'active travel'. Examples were given e.g., widening the footways, making sure they are in line with guidance provided by Transport for Wales (TfW). Officers explained it can vary per scheme, some need vegetation clearance, new highways, dropped kerbs, tactile paving, signalled and uncontrolled crossings.
- 2.2.2 Residents then wanted to understand how we have selected these three options, with one proposing that route B would be more beneficial if it went through the allotments, this was then highlighted on the map and officers advised this can be looked at again as part of Route B. It is worth noting that officers stated it's highly likely this has already been investigated as are all options, and there can be scenarios where BCBC may already own the land, but this doesn't necessarily mean they have the license to do work in the area (which could be the case in this instance).
- 2.2.3 There were conversations around the choice of Route C with on-street parking already causing a problem for moving vehicles, with this knowledge a resident questioned this being selected as an option at all. It was then explained that of the three, this is likely to prove the most difficult route with heavy on-street parking, narrow road widths and frequent speed humps. It has been included as it is arguably the most direct of the three routes and it has to be included before it is discarded.

3.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

3.1 'Q1 - HOW OFTEN DO YOU WALK OR CYCLE ON YOUR DAILY TRAVEL?'

3.1.1 The first question of the survey is asking residents how often they use sustainable transport in their daily commute, whether this be visiting Porthcawl town centre, neighbours or local services. This question has been included to get an understanding as to how often people would choose not to drive and favour active travel. The results can be seen below in Table 1.

Q1 How often do you walk or cycle in your daily travel?	
7 days a week	36
5-6 days a week	17
2-4 days a week	13
Once a week	8
Once a fortnight	2
Once a month	3
Less often	3
Never	4

Table 1

3.1.2 The findings highlighted that Porthcawl residents are already considering active forms of transport on their daily travel on a frequent basis. 36 of the 81 participants expressed they walk or cycle every day of the week, which is evidence that an improvement to the existing infrastructure will benefit a large proportion of users. Those who never consider active travel in their daily commute could be down to health purposes, longer journeys or a lack of cohesion with the existing active travel infrastructure. Only 5% of participants stated that they never walk or cycle on their daily travel (Figure 3 on Page 8), the reasoning for this can be seen in the following chapter.

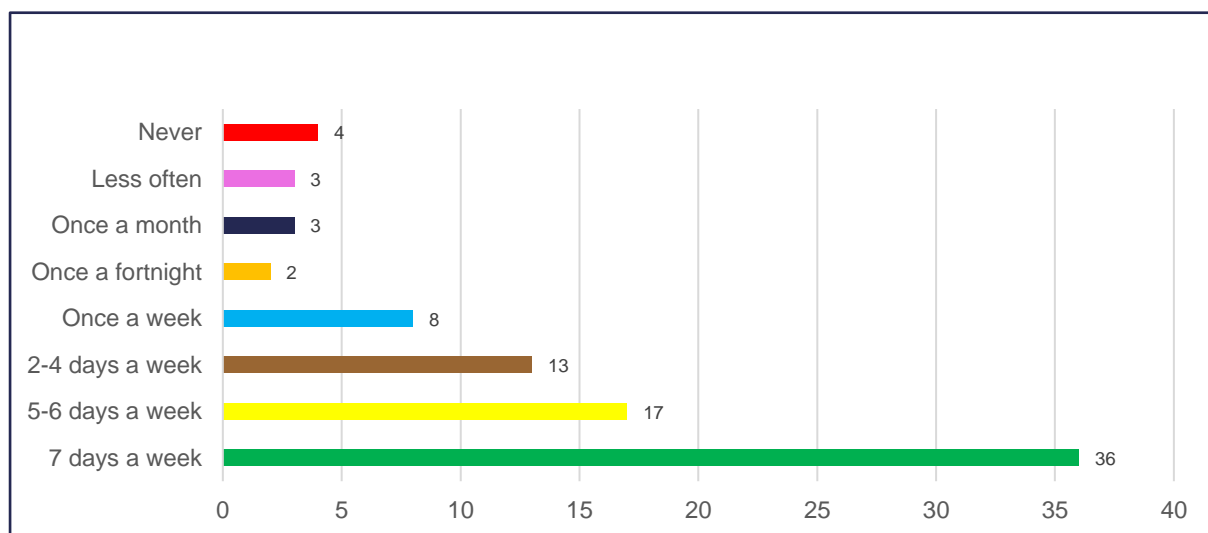


Figure 2

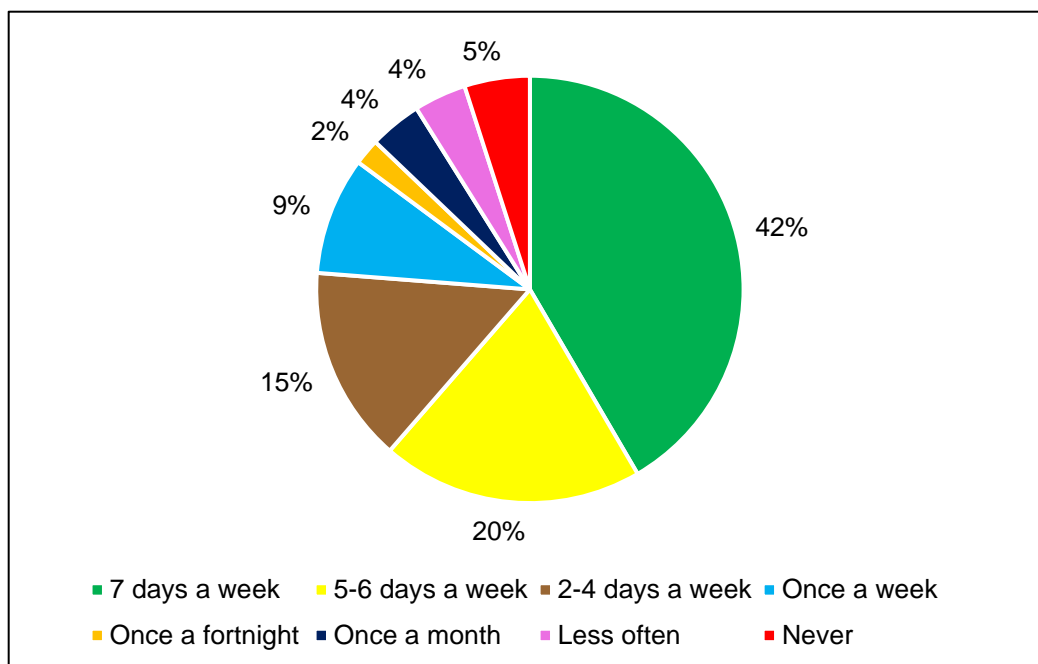


Figure 3

3.2 'Q2: WHAT CURRENT DIFFICULTIES ARE THERE WITH WALKING OR CYCLING IN YOUR AREA? (PLEASE TICK THOSE THAT APPLY)'

3.2.1 The second question was to gauge a further understanding as to why people may not consider active travel as their preferred method of transport and delve into those initial conversations held in Question 1. Many residents selected more than one option, which is appropriate as numerous answers are applicable and they can state there are currently many difficulties with walking or cycling throughout Porthcawl, the results are shown below in Table 2.

Q2: What current difficulties are there with walking or cycling in your area? (Please tick those that apply)	
Health reasons	10
Convenience	10
Lack of safe crossings	51
Lack of active travel facilities	24
Time consuming	10
Other (please specify)	29

Table 2

3.2.2 A lack of safe crossings is the prominent result for Question 2 with 51 of the participants highlighting that this as an issue when walking or cycling. Nearly a quarter of participants (24%) also stated that active travel facilities are either lacking or not up to standard in the existing infrastructure. This is a good indicator that the existing facilities are not up to active travel standards and improving these will encourage the many users to consider active modes of

transport in their daily travel. Creating a space where residents feel safer walking or cycling to their destination will encourage them to consider sustainable modes of transport more frequently, therefore contributing towards the modal shift officers are aiming to achieve.

- 3.2.3 Time consumption was also highlighted as a hindrance for the residents where it is just more convenient to use the car than walk. The chosen route will look to serve local services in a direct manner, where residents can travel throughout Porthcawl in a safe manner. This will then make it more appealing and convenient to all users when considering modes of transport. The aim of an active travel route is to improve the cohesion and attractiveness of a route as well as making sure it is up to standard.

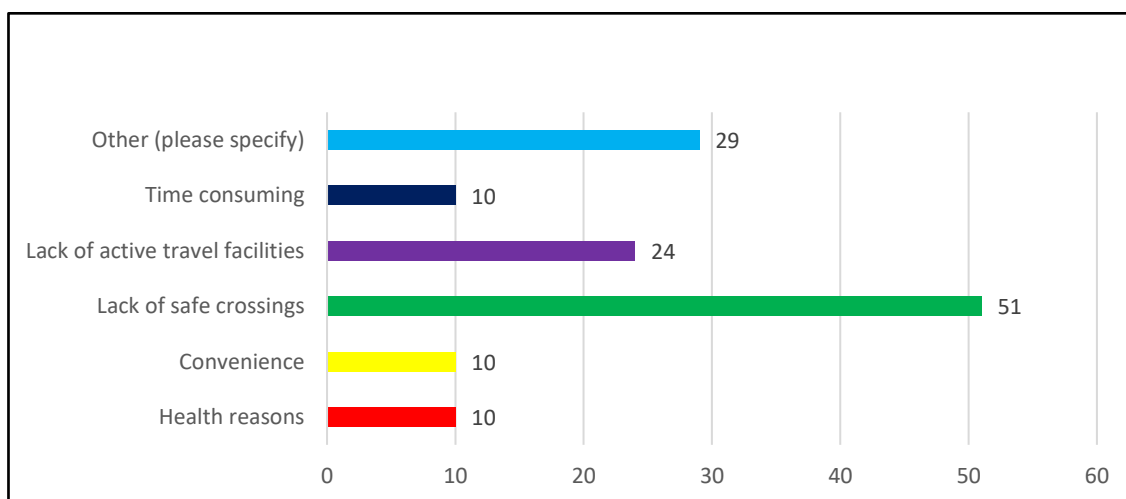


Figure 4

- 3.2.4 It is worth noting that for this question, some residents selected 'other' and wrote comments below that were already listed above. For instance, a comment was left where a resident wanted to raise awareness of a 'dangerous' location to cross but did not select lack of safe crossings or active travel facilities. This could be down to accidental duplication or that they wanted to make sure the point was heard and noted by officers. Additional comments were left that have been brought to officers' attention such as on-street parking and the speed of traffic in areas surrounding the school highlighted in the plans.

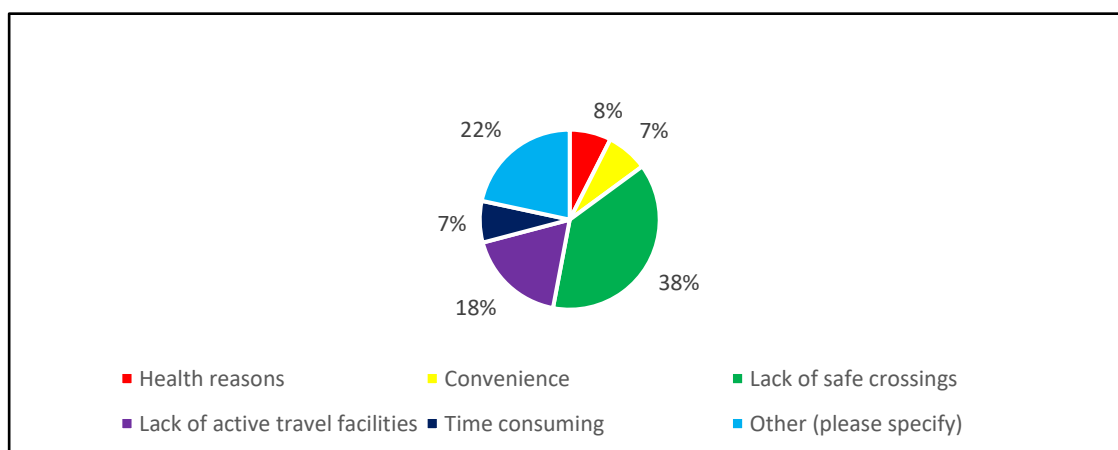


Figure 5

3.3 'Q3: WILL THIS SCHEME ENCOURAGE YOU TO WALK OR CYCLE MORE THAN YOU CURRENTLY DO?'

3.3.1 The purpose of the proposed scheme is to create a safe environment for cyclists and pedestrians to travel to and from Porthcawl town, improving access to surrounding services and schools. Officers wanted to get an understanding if the development of active travel facilities in the area would reduce the number of users choosing to travel by single car occupancy through question 3, the results for this can be seen in Table 3 below.

Q3: Will this scheme encourage you to walk or cycle more than you currently do?	
Yes	35
No	38
Undecided	11

Table 3

3.3.2 Creating a modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport will help achieve objectives to reduce the reliance on single car occupancy. Residents at the in-person community engagement session explained that this would encourage them to walk or cycle to and from Porthcawl town centre more, as they currently avoid walking due lack of safety with the narrowing footways that sometimes lead them onto the carriageway. Improving the cohesion and standards of the active travel infrastructure will improve the confidence residents have to walk or cycle into the town centre and encourage the modal shift that officers wish to achieve.

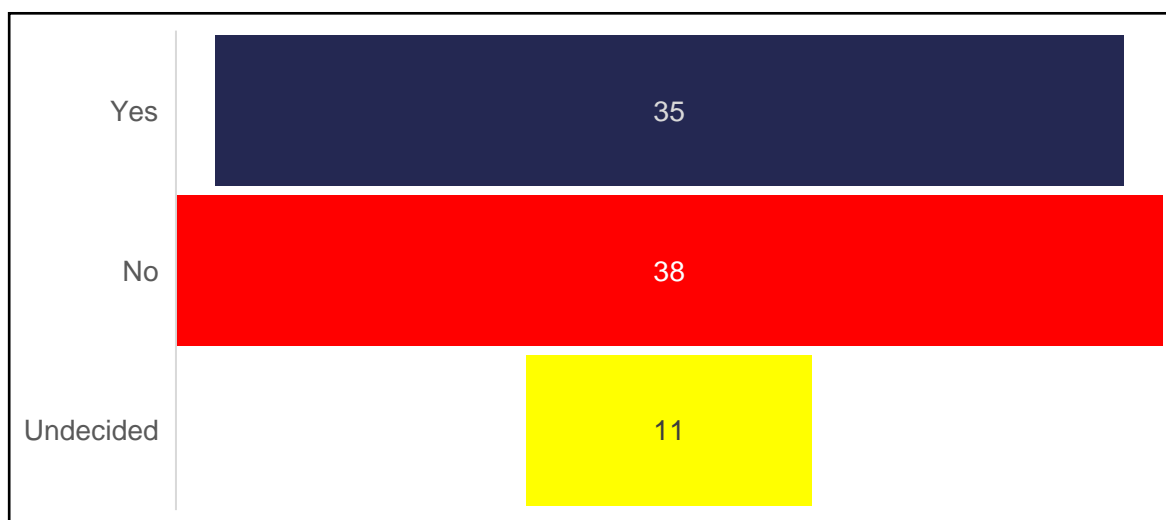


Figure 6

3.3.3 The final outcome of Question 3 highlighted a fairly split response as to how many people would be inclined to walk or cycle more than they currently do. 42% of people being encouraged to consider sustainable modes of transport is a big proportion of people taking into consideration the number of participants that are already walking or cycling frequently on their daily travel (Figure 7 on Page 11). If the BCBC can further improve on the number of residents considering walking or cycling in their daily travel, there will then be even less reliance on single car occupancy in the area.

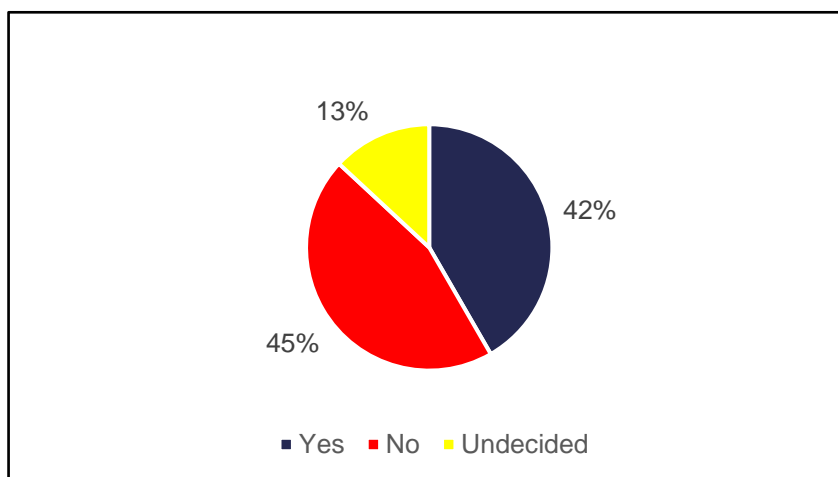


Figure 7

3.4 'Q4: WHICH ROUTE OPTION DO YOU SUPPORT THE MOST?'

- 3.4.1 The final question that officers wanted to get an understanding from residents was different to other public engagement sessions that have been done in the past. Residents were asked what they consider to be the best option out of the proposed routes so that they could provide input from the very beginning of the process. The thought process behind each route along with the pros and cons were explained at the in-person engagement, which prompted valuable feedback from local residents or frequent users of the routes. The feedback gained from residents will be taken into consideration with the final design. The results of Question 4 can be seen below in Table 4.

Q4: Which route option do you support the most? (Please select one)	
Route A	31
Route B	16
Route C	10
None	23

Table 4

- 3.4.2 The route that was deemed the favoured option by 39% of residents was Route A (Figure 9 on Page 12). One resident explained that they 'whole heartedly support Route A' as Newton Nottage Road isn't safe to cross due to the lack of crossings and this would resolve an issue for a significant number of residents. The stars highlighted on the map show key destinations along the route and this is why Route A was favoured by 31 participants, they want to interlink the active travel to serve these sites and encourage children to use the outdoors as much as possible.
- 3.4.3 20% of participants voted for Route option B with comments suggesting this is probably the safest route of the 3 with the least traffic adjacent to it, especially for those walking or cycling to school with children. Both Route A and B look to serve the existing outdoor sites such as the

playground and skatepark. Route B also links up to existing active travel routes surrounding Porthcawl Primary School which will encourage active travel.

- 3.4.4 Route C was the least favoured option with 12% of participants voting for this. This was expected from officers prior to the engagement as the route is likely to prove to have the most constraints that have been previously listed in Chapter 2.2.3.

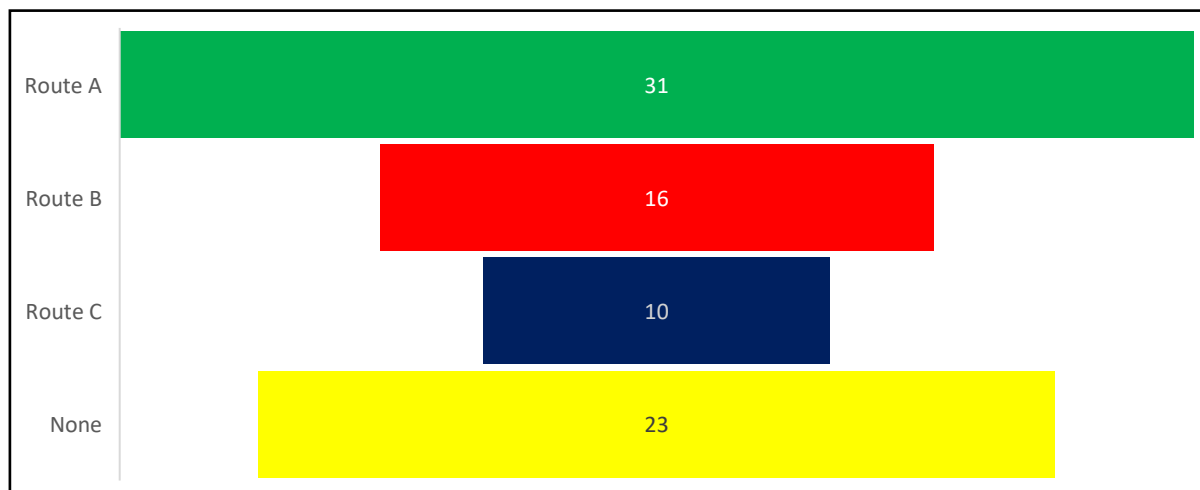


Figure 8

- 3.4.5 39% of participants believed that none of the routes were suitable with varied reasoning such as alternative suggestions or the lack of need for active travel routes in the area. Some comments in the online survey stated that none of the routes go via the seafront which is in close proximity to the town centre and the most densely populated area. There is an existing active travel route along the front, the aim of the proposed scheme is to serve this existing route and link residents up to the existing infrastructure so that it becomes more appealing to all users to consider active travel in their daily commute or when visiting Porthcawl town.

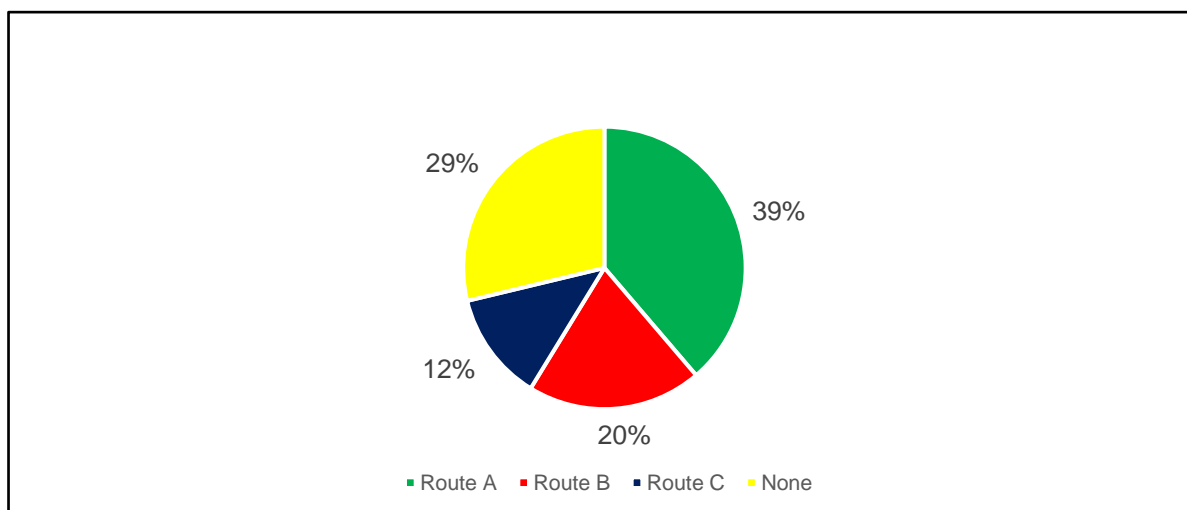


Figure 9

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 FINDINGS

- 4.1.1 The final outcome of the engagement session was that the scheme will encourage 42% of participants to walk or cycle more on their daily travel, with 13% being left undecided.
- 4.1.2 The public engagement highlighted that Porthcawl are frequent users of active travel and that they are already considering sustainable transport in their daily commute. It is the aim of this scheme to make the infrastructure safe, cohesive and appealing for all users.
- 4.1.3 The most prominent concern with current facilities is the lack of safe crossings, with 38% of participants expressing this is a current difficulty for them. The proposed scheme aims to improve cohesion enabling users to safely cross highways to get from A to B.
- 4.1.4 This report has highlighted that Route A is the preference for the current users. It is worth noting, public feedback does not determine one exact route that will be chosen, the selected route can be a combination of routes based on officer evaluation and deliverability. The proposals will result in healthier communities and a better environment.

4.2 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- 4.2.1 A lot of positive feedback was garnered from both the in-person engagement session and the questionnaire-based surveys. The in-person engagement session offered attendees the opportunity of expanding their views and opinions of the proposal, an opportunity that the questionnaire-based surveys did not offer. The opinions and views expressed, preferences declared have been taken into consideration in revising where relevant, scheme objectives, scheme outputs and where practicable contributed to better design.
- 4.2.2 The Active Travel Programme is an ongoing multi-year project that is funded through Welsh Government and subject to an annual grant bidding process. Consequently, single routes, especially routes that are very long can only be delivered on a phased basis due to the funding. Engagement sessions do not necessarily lead to a scheme being funded in the year in which the scheme is developed. The benefit of developing schemes and engaging communities on them constitute a crucial part of the council's forward planning process and meet the scheme development requirements defined by both Welsh Government and Transport for Wales.
- 4.2.3 Bids for schemes are submitted annually and are approved on the basis that they are delivered during one financial year, it is not always possible that projects can undergo feasibility, detailed design and implementation within the timescales allowed. The Active Travel Programme is the largest ongoing strategic transport commitment and is considered as being essential to encouraging a 'modal shift' from reliance on private motor vehicles to sustainable modes such as walking and cycling.
- 4.2.4 Active travel schemes constitute the bulk of the council's strategic transport programme. Engaging the public as part of the scheme development programme informs the cabinet of the decision-making process.

- 4.2.5 On 10th of December 2024 cabinet approved a report on strategic transport projects in the county borough among which was the Danygraig route, which is currently undergoing a feasibility study and will be a core scheme to be submitted for active travel funding 2025-2026.
- 4.2.6 Members will be given regular updates on the scheme whilst welcoming any additional comments and feedback that residents may have.
- 4.2.7 This report will be disseminated via council's website in bilingual form.

5.0 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A



Porthcawl Community Engagement Session

06/11/2024

Bridgend County Borough Council are investigating walking and cycling in Danygraig/Porthcawl. We'd love to hear your experiences with active travel and your thoughts on the proposed changes to your area. We greatly appreciate your feedback and thank you for your time.

How often do you walk or cycle in your daily travel?

Frequency	Please Tick
7 days a week	
5-6 days a week	
2-4 days a week	
Once a week	
Once a fortnight	
Once a month	
Less often	
Never	

What current difficulties are there with walking or cycling in your area? (Please tick those that apply)

Health reasons	
Convenience	
Lack of safe crossings	
Lack of active travel facilities	
Time consuming	
Other (please specify)	

Will this scheme encourage you to walk or cycle more than you currently do?

Please Tick		
Yes	No	Undecided

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Which route option do you support the most? (please select one)

Option	Please tick one
Route A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Route B	<input type="checkbox"/>
Route C	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide reasons for your choice: