

Bath and North East Somerset Council
Whitchurch village and Queen Charlton
Liveable Neighbourhood
Public Engagement Report

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Quality information

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Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	4
1.1	The proposals	5
1.2	Response overview.....	6
1.3	Respondent profile.....	6
2.	Methodology	7
2.1	Questionnaire	7
2.2	Receiving responses.....	7
2.3	Thematic coding	7
3.	Findings	9
3.1	Installing a signalised crossing across the A37 for pedestrians and cyclists	9
3.2	Upgrade the two bus shelters near the crossing.	10
3.3	Widen the long path which connects the signalised crossing to community facilities in the west.....	10
3.4	Make several other improvements to paths and junctions on the eastern side of the A37.	10
3.4.1	Narrow the junction of the A37 with Queen Charlton Lane and install a pedestrian refuge, received mixed feedback.	11
3.4.2	Improvements to the existing paths on the eastern side of the new A37 crossing, linking the national cycle route and Queen Charlton Lane.....	11
3.4.3	Widen the path from Queen Charlton Lane to the cemetery.	11
4.	Next steps for Bath and North East Somerset Council	13
	Appendix A Whitchurch village and Queen Charlton Liveable Neighbourhoods leaflet	14
	Appendix B Respondent profile	15
	Appendix C Coded Themes	17

1. Introduction

The Whitchurch village and Queen Charlton area is one of several areas that Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES) is developing under its community-led Liveable Neighbourhood (LN) programme.

During previous consultations, residents in Whitchurch village and Queen Charlton told us that they were concerned about the volume and speed of through-traffic in the area.

To tackle this issue, the council introduced a through-traffic restriction trial on Queen Charlton Lane using an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) which became permanent in January 2024 after a six-month public consultation.

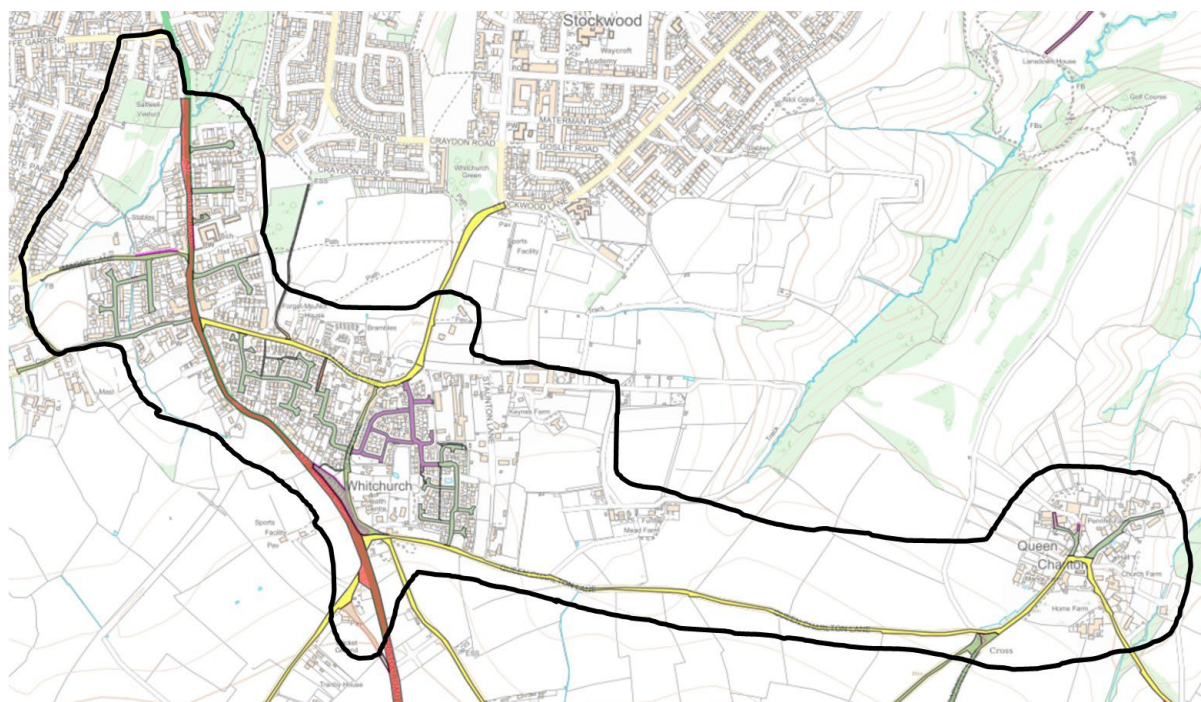
The council is now proposing additional measures, to support active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) in the area as part of the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme. This report summarises the initial feedback about these measures.

The public engagement ran from 20 January to 28 February 2025. To promote it, the council sent a letter and accompanying colour leaflet illustrating the proposals to 910 households and businesses in and around the Whitchurch village and Queen Charlton area.

An annotated map, full summary of the proposals and an online survey were also available online at <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/whitchurch-village-and-queen-charlton>. Alternative formats (print etc) were available on request and advisors were trained and in place to support residents.

The council also promoted the engagement via a press release, e-news and social media posts on X (formerly Twitter), Facebook and Instagram. A communications toolkit was developed and sent to ward councillors to help them share details of the public engagement. Upon request, copies of the colour leaflet or posters were sent to local business premises.

Figure 1 Map of the mailing area*



*Mailing area shown with a black line

1.1 The proposals

The public engagement during January/February 2025 was on proposals to complement the existing through-traffic restriction and further improve conditions for active travel in the area.

The proposals were based on ideas put forward by residents during earlier public engagements, including a co-design workshop, and further shortlisting work which is described on the Whitchurch Village and Queen Charlton web page:

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/whitchurch-village-and-queen-charlton>.

The proposals were to:

- install a signalised crossing across the A37 for pedestrians and cyclists
- upgrade the two bus shelters near the crossing
- widen the long path which connects the signalised crossing to community facilities in the west
- make several other improvements to paths and junctions on the eastern side of the A37.

The council stated these proposals would offer the following improvements:

- slower traffic and safer crossing facilities on the A37 for cyclists and pedestrians
- improved walking and cycling connections between the community facilities in the west (such as the village playground and playing fields) with village homes and the national cycle route in the east
- wider, shared paths and crossings enabling both cyclists and pedestrians to comfortably pass each other

For more information, see <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/whitchurch-village-and-queen-charlton> and the copy of the leaflet produced by B&NES for residents, shown in Appendix A.

To ensure an unbiased interpretation of the responses received, AECOM were appointed to carry out the thematic coding and analysis of open-ended questions.

1.2 Response overview

There were 34 responses to the proposals:

- All 33 responses were provided using the online consultation survey
- 1 response was provided by email

1.3 Respondent profile

There was an option to answer equality monitoring questions in the survey. Of the 33 respondents who completed the online survey, 16 answered these questions. Of those who responded to the questions most (n=10) were aged 55 or over and there was an even split of male and female respondents (8 each). A full breakdown of the responses to the equality monitoring questions is shown in Appendix B.

The age and gender of the respondents is shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 Age groups

	N
Base (number of respondents)	16
Under 25	0
25 to 34	1
35 to 44	2
45 to 54	2
55 or over	10
Prefer not to say / Not answered	1

Table 2 Gender

	N
Base (number of respondents)	16
Female	8
Male	8
Prefer not to say	0

2. Methodology

2.1 Questionnaire

Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on seven proposals, clustered into four distinct sections.

Installing a signalised crossing across the A37 for pedestrians and cyclists

- Proposal 1 - Install a 5.2-metre-wide signalised crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving across the A37 between Whitchurch Village and the junction with Queen Charlton Lane.

Upgrade the two bus shelters near the crossing

- Proposal 2 - Upgrade and move the bus stop on the western side of the A37 carriageway north to improve visibility of the crossing. Real-time bus information for buses towards Bristol would be provided.
- Proposal 3 - Upgrade and move the bus stop on the eastern side of the A37 carriageway south by c.40 metres. Real-time bus information for buses towards Pensford would be provided.

Widen the long path which connects the signalised crossing to community facilities in the west

- Proposal 4 - Widen to 3 metres the long path which connects the community facilities at Norton Lane to the new crossing on the A37, allowing cyclists and pedestrians to pass each other. The path would be set back from the road to improve safety.

Make several other improvements to paths and junctions on the eastern side of the A37

- Proposal 5 - Narrow the junction of the A37 with Queen Charlton Lane/Woollard Lane to slow approaching vehicles and install a pedestrian refuge to make it easier to cross the road.
- Proposal 6 - Improve the existing paths on the eastern side of the new A37 crossing for pedestrians and cyclists, linking to national cycle route (3) and Queen Charlton Lane.
- Proposal 7 - Widen the path from Queen Charlton Lane to the cemetery to 2 metres.

2.2 Receiving responses

The public consultation questionnaire was hosted on the Council's website <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/whitchurch-village-and-queen-charlton>. To ensure inclusivity, B&NES Council accepted responses via email and post, as well as online. Accessible formats were also available.

2.3 Thematic coding

AECOM developed a robust framework to analyse the free text comments and ensure the frequency and strength of feeling is accurately reported. This process is

known as coding. All responses received were read by a professional coder and grouped into themes to achieve meaningful analysis. Over 10 per cent of each coders work were checked as part of our quality control procedures.

These themes are to highlight potential considerations about the designs.

Throughout the report, quotes from the free text responses have been used to illustrate the points raised. Quotes have been selected to best show the essence of what was said for each theme. For ease of reading, any clear and obvious typos or spelling errors have been corrected.

3. Findings

There were 113 comments provided by 33 respondents about the seven proposals specified in the questionnaire. This section summarises the comments made for each proposal.

When a respondent mentioned the same theme on more than one occasion, the theme has only been counted once. A single respondent could mention more than one theme and this explains why the number of comments may add up to more than the number of responses. A full list of themes and the frequency of which each theme was mentioned can be found in Appendix C.

3.1 Installing a signalised crossing across the A37 for pedestrians and cyclists

The main purpose of the engagement was to understand initial views on the proposals and designs.

The main feedback was support for the proposed design from ten respondents who highlighted the current difficulties to safely cross the A37.

“Great idea. Something the community has been crying out for. This will make it much safer to cross.”

“Great idea to improve safe access for families with young children when walking through the Queen Charlton closed road and accessing the play park.”

There were very few other comments provided, with other themes mentioned less than 5 times. Examples of these were:

- A few respondents suggested the crossing could be incorporated into a wider set of road improvements. One suggestion was to introduce a three-way traffic light system at the Queen Charlton junction, integrating the crossing into it.

“Why not make the junction a controlled one with traffic lights? It has had several RTCs in the past and would slow traffic before the bridge”

- Suggesting an additional crossing near the Toby Carvery, as it is a busy pedestrian area.

“Please can you also consider adding a pedestrian crossing by the Toby carvery, as this is a very busy pedestrian crossing at a very busy crossroads. As a pedestrian, you just have to run across one of the three roads and hope for the best!”

- Some respondents suggested the crossing was not in the most suitable location, a few suggested that moving the crossing further south could align better with pedestrian movement patterns.

“Agree with the crossing in principle although a study of recent foot traffic would reveal that on crossing the road west, most [foot traffic] turns south and much comes from Charlton Lane direction from movements out of the White Church Court estate (Maes Knoll Drive). So this suggests the crossing needs to be further south, closer to the position of the existing refuge island”

3.2 Upgrade the two bus shelters near the crossing.

There were 14 comments provided about upgrading bus shelters with 9 respondents supporting this while the other 5 respondents had some concerns or suggestions.

Some of those who supported this, felt it would improve visibility and provide real time bus information.

"I welcome upgrades to the shelter to include digital display bus times"

"Would be great to have a shelter on both sides of the A37. Moving to make more visible would be great"

There were very few other comments provided, with other themes mentioned less than 5 times. Examples are these were:

- The need for the bus to pull-in to prevent traffic congestion.

"Please could you ensure that the new bus stops have pull ins so that the buses can pull off the road. Otherwise it will cause congestion and possible accidents on the A37?"

- Moving the bus stop is seen as disadvantageous to some residents in the area, it could make the bus stop less accessible.

"Moving the bus stops as described would have a negative impact on accessibility for people living in the village especially in Staunton Lane and Staunton Fields."

- The proposal to move the eastern bus stop on the A37 closer to Queen Charlton Road could create a visibility issue for drivers pulling out onto the A37.

"My only concern with this is in bringing the bus stop closer to the junction with Queen Charlton Road and if a bus is at the stop, this could reduce visibility for drivers trying to come out of Queen Charlton Road on to A37 if cars come around the outside of a stopped bus"

3.3 Widen the long path which connects the signalised crossing to community facilities in the west

The proposal to widen the path connecting Norton Lane community facilities to the new crossing on the A37 was almost entirely supported with 10 out of 11 respondents feeling it will make it safer especially for families and cyclists, Respondents felt it would help with the problem of pedestrians being too close to fast traffic.

"It will make it much safer for both pedestrians & cyclists"

"I agree that widening this long path could improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians, particularly those with children."

3.4 Make several other improvements to paths and junctions on the eastern side of the A37.

There were three other proposals included in the engagement, all with the purpose of improving paths and junctions on the eastern side of the A37 and this section summarises the response to these three proposals.

3.4.1 Narrow the junction of the A37 with Queen Charlton Lane and install a pedestrian refuge, received mixed feedback.

Eight respondents supported the proposal and agreed it would improve safety by slowing traffic.

There were concerns were raised that narrowing the junction would increase traffic at busy times (8 respondents), and as a result impact air quality (3 respondents).

“Reducing the 2 lanes to 1 from Queen Charlton’s side of the road to the A37 will increase the traffic jams that are already happening. This will increase the pollution levels at this location. It does need a pedestrian refuge at this location so I would suggest increasing the size of the road to fit this in”

There was a view that there will be increased rat running through Maes Knoll Drive and Sleep Lane with drivers trying to avoid the junction.

“Please take into consideration that Maes Knoll Drive and Sleep Lane are used as a rat run for vehicles wishing to avoid traffic lights and delays at the junction of Staunton lane and Bristol road (Toby Carvery pub). These improvements, although very much welcomed, need to be viewed in the context of the wider area and their potential impact on this rat running to increase”

3.4.2 Improvements to the existing paths on the eastern side of the new A37 crossing, linking the national cycle route and Queen Charlton Lane

There were 18 comments provided about this proposal and 14 supported it, with many welcoming it as a much-needed upgrade for both pedestrians and cyclists.

“I like this, I cycle and always find the area very scary when I'm on my bike.”

“I really appreciate this. It's becoming a well-used route by cyclists and pedestrians now. ”

A few people commented on the need for improvements to other footpaths in the area, there was a suggestion to widen the path along Stockton Lane as this route sees more traffic. There was also a comment to improve the path on Charlton Road as the current paths are narrow.

“In addition, I would like to see a footpath created on Charlton Road to allow better pedestrian access to Keynsham.”

“Can you also consider widening the liveable neighbourhoods scheme to include the path that runs along the west side of the Stockwood Lane from the junction Horseworld (Staunton Lane) along to the junction with Stockwood Road. That path is barely wide enough for one person.”

3.4.3 Widen the path from Queen Charlton Lane to the cemetery.

There were 13 comments provided about this proposal and 6 commented in support of it, though no further commentary explaining the benefit was included.

Of those who did not support it, it was felt the proposal was not needed or that other paths needed improvement instead of this one.

As well as paths already mentioned, respondents mentioned safer pedestrian access from Bilbie Green to Queen Charlton.

4. Next steps for Bath and North East Somerset Council

Design engineers have responded to the suggestions and comments summarised in this section. Please see Appendix D.

The feedback received for the proposals will be considered, and the next steps will be to:

- discuss the outcomes with your ward councillors
- draw up more detailed designs
- publish the final designs and make any necessary adjustments
- install the measures under standard Traffic Regulation Orders (where appropriate)

Appendix A Whitchurch village and Queen Charlton Liveable Neighbourhoods leaflet

ADD IN:

https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4112.Liveable%20Neighbourhoods%20Whitchurch_web.pdf

Appendix B Respondent profile

This set of tables shows the responses provided by the nine respondents who answered the equality monitoring questions.

Table A1 Age groups

N

Base (number of respondents)	16
Under 25	0
25 to 34	1
35 to 44	2
45 to 54	2
55 or over	10
Prefer not to say / Not answered	1

Table A2 Gender

N

Base (number of respondents)	16
Female	8
Male	8
Prefer not to say	0

Table A3 Ethnicity

N

Base (number of respondents)	16
White	15
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	0
Asian or Asian British	0
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	0
Other ethnic group	1
Prefer not to say	0

Table A4 Marital status

N

Base (number of respondents)	16
Never married and never registered in a civil partnership	1
Married	10
In a registered civil partnership	0
Separated, but still legally married	1
Separated, but still legally in a civil partnership	0
Divorced	3
Formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	0
Widowed	0
Surviving partner from a registered civil partnership	0
Prefer not to say	0
1 person did not answer this question	

Table A5 Religion**N**

Base (number of respondents)	16
No religion	5
Christian	10
Buddhist	0
Hindu	0
Jewish	0
Muslim	0
Sikh	0
Any other religion	0
Prefer not to say	1

Table A6 Assigned sex at birth corresponds with gender identity**N**

Base (number of respondents)	16
Yes	16
No	0
Prefer not to say	0

Table A7 Sexual orientation**N**

Base (number of respondents)	16
Heterosexual or straight	14
Gay or lesbian	1
Bisexual	0
Prefer not to say	0
Other	0
1 person did not answer	

Table A8 Health conditions**N**

Base (number of respondents)	16
Yes, I have physical or mental health conditions or illness lasting, or expected to last, 12 months or more	2
No, I do not have physical or mental health conditions or illness lasting, or expected to last, 12 months or more	14
Prefer not to say	0

Appendix C Coded Themes

Installing a signalised crossing across the A37 for pedestrians and cyclists

Total comments received about this proposal	18
Support for the crossing	10
Concern about traffic and congestion	4
Suggestion for improvement: proposals need to go further/suggest 3-way lights	2
Suggestion for improvement: improve other paths as well	2
Suggestion for additional crossing	2
Concern about bollards hindering disabled access/emergency service access	3
Impact on bus stop usage	1
Waste of time and money	1

Upgrade and move the two bus shelters near the crossing

Total comments received about proposals 2 and 3	14
Support the bus stop relocation	7
Concern about accessibility of the bus stop due to relocation	4
Support the improvements to the shelter	2
Suggests pull in bus lane is added	2
Visibility concerns for drivers coming from Queen Charlton Road on to A37	2
Will have a negative impact on bus stop usage	1
Additional shelter on opposite side of the road	1
No safe pedestrian access to the bus stop from Taunton Lane and Staunton Fields	1

Widen the long path which connects the signalised crossing to community facilities

Total comments received about this proposal	11
Support the widening of the footpath will make it safer for both cyclist and pedestrians.	10
Waste of time and money	1

Make several other improvements to paths and junctions on the eastern side of the A37

Total comments received about proposal 5	23
Support this proposal	8
Will increase traffic / already busy at peak times	8
Maes Knoll Drive and Sleep Lane could be impacted with more rat running	3
Will increase pollution	3
Do not support this	2
Introduce traffic calming measures	1
Introduce a roundabout to improve access (Woollard Lane / QC Lane)	1
Junction should be widened not narrowed	1

Total comments received about proposal 6	18
Support this proposal	14
Wish to see other footpaths improved	5
Problems understanding the material	2
Need more information	2
Views are irrelevant to the decision making process	1

Total comments received about proposal 7	13
Support this proposal	6
Disagree with this proposal / not needed	2
Look at other pavements in the area also	3
Need more information	2
Will impact property	1

Other Comments

Other comments	
Out of scope	2
Problems understanding the material	2

Appendix D Designer's Response

D.1 Response to suggested changes

Below is a list of concerns or suggested amendments requested by residents to be made to the proposed scheme.

D.1.1 Wider corridor improvements

A few respondents suggested the crossing could be incorporated into a wider set of improvements.

While we acknowledge the feedback, the suggestions contained in the feedback are beyond the scope of this project. However, the Somer Valley Links project aims to improve travel between Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Bristol via the A37 and is proposing improvements to bus infrastructure plus walking, wheeling, and cycling infrastructure. Find out more at <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/somer-valley-links>

D.1.2 Crossing Location

There was a view that the crossing would be more beneficial if it were placed in a different location.

Extensive design work has been undertaken to establish the location of the crossing. Crossings are required to be located away from conflict points to give drivers an adequate opportunity to appreciate the existence of a crossing and to brake safely. The 'safe' distance is dependent on the geometry of the junction and type of side road. The location identified is the only technically feasible position. A Road Safety Audit will take place as part of the design development process and will identify if there are any visibility concerns which will have to be addressed before implementation.

D.1.3 Bus Stop Location

There were concerns raised about the revised location of the bus stops.

Extensive design work has been undertaken to establish the location of the bus stops in relation to the crossing. The location identified is the only technically feasible position in relation to the new crossing and existing junctions. The bus stops will not be in lay-bys, this in line with bus stop design best practice. A Road Safety Audit will take place as part of the design development process and will identify if there are any visibility concerns which will have to be addressed before implementation.

D.1.4 Narrow the junction of the A37 with Queen Charlton Lane

There were concerns were raised that narrowing the junction would increase traffic at busy times i.e that it requires two lanes.

Whilst the junction has been narrowed to reduce the crossing distance, two vehicle lanes will be maintained at the exit of the junction.

