



Introduction

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) consulted on upgrades to the cycling and walking networks around Abington Park between 1 February and 15 March 2023, and 3 April to 15 May 2023. The scheme included improvements such as segregated cycle lanes and improved crossings along Abington Park Crescent, Bridgewater Drive, Park Avenue South, and the Billing Road / Rushmere Road Junction. The objectives of the scheme included improving safety for people walking and cycling in the area.

What We Did

WNC undertook many different activities to make sure that all stakeholders had a chance to respond to the consultations. This included meetings with local politicians, holding consultation events, sending postcards, publishing a consultation brochure, and running a virtual room. WNC also ran a survey to collect respondents' opinions on the scheme.

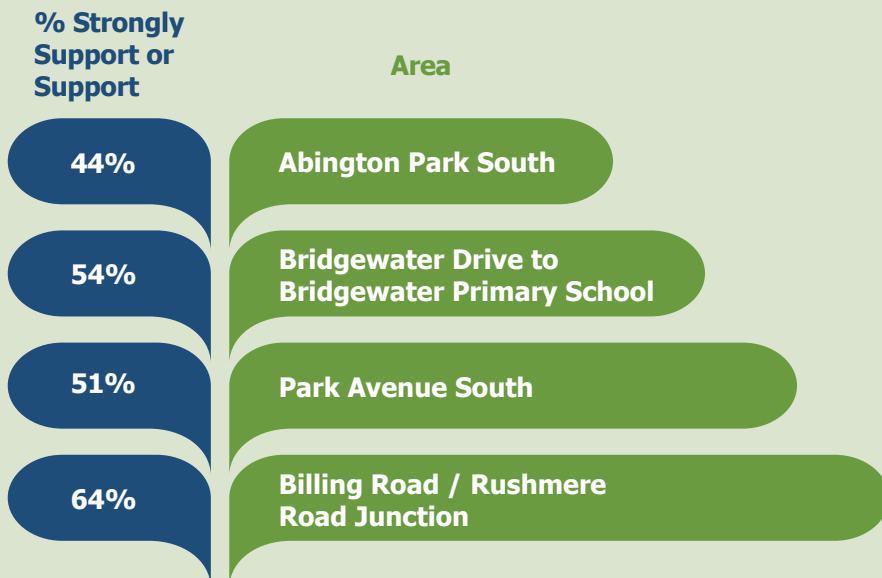


**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

www.westnorthants.gov.uk

What We Found

We received 281 survey responses, and 125 emails or letters. The majority of respondents (81%) came from the surrounding area. 54% of respondents were male and 39% of respondents were female. Currently, most journeys were made by respondents as car drivers (931 journeys). The second most common mode of transport was walking (749 journeys). The majority of respondents supported the proposals across all of the proposed areas.



One-third (33%) thought the proposals would encourage them to walk or cycle more.

However, respondents supported:

- ▶ important safety improvements for pedestrians and cyclists included in the proposals, particularly on the Billing Road/Rushmere Road junction.
- ▶ residents' ability to walk and cycle safely.
- ▶ upgraded toucan crossings.
- ▶ the plan to plant wildflowers and improve landscaping along the scheme route.
- ▶ resurfacing the path along Park Avenue South.

Some common feedback on the proposals was:

- ▶ the need for additional or the enforcement of parking and traffic management in the area, with some highlighting the junction with King Edward Road as particularly dangerous.
- ▶ that the loss of parking spaces along Park Avenue South would impact the tennis and bowls club.
- ▶ that the scheme doesn't provide good value for money.
- ▶ e-scooters and cyclists may act dangerously on new cycle paths.

Some respondents highlighted the need for the proposals to extend further throughout Northampton, linking people to other businesses or places of interest, or the need to improve or maintain existing footpaths.

We need to forge forward with active travel across the town and build a network of fully segregated cycle paths that enable active travel for all our cyclists, including women, the elderly, children and the [disabled].

A route along Billing Road would have big benefits for local people, by enabling them to cycle to the town centre, Barry Rd Primary School, Northampton School for Boys, and the hospital.

My priority would be to eliminate potholes and blocked drains and keep the existing cycle paths/lanes maintained before spending out on another scheme that may not achieve the desired effect.

Our Response

You Said	We did
We are concerned about pedestrian and cyclist safety on the route	Safety is a top priority. All work will be independently assessed to ensure it is safe. Concerns about the junction with King Edwards Road are being taken very seriously. A technical note is being prepared and includes possible solutions.
We are concerned about the loss of parking, which will lead to people parking elsewhere	Any proposed changes to the parking are to increase safety and the accessibility of the footway. Abington Park Crescent will see a minimal reduction in parking. A parking survey is proposed to see how many parking spaces can be retained along Park Avenue South. There are no changes proposed to the current parking provision on Bridgewater Drive.
We are concerned that the proposals will increase traffic in the area	The aim of the proposals is to reduce traffic by encouraging more walking and cycling.
We are concerned about the disruption that this scheme will cause, particularly to Abington Park	The scheme would be constructed in phases to minimise disruption. The aim is to undertake work around the park outside of the busy summer months.
We don't think this scheme is needed or are unsure if it will be used. Can the money be used somewhere else?	There is currently no dedicated cycling and walking provision along these routes. The proposals will provide walking and cycling routes that meet Government standards. Evidence shows that the routes can increase active travel. The funds we have received from the Department for Transport have been allocated for active travel schemes.

Next steps

An in-depth consultation report has been written and will be presented to West Northamptonshire Council's Portfolio Holder for Environment, Highways, Transport & Waste Services. The feedback we have received during the consultation will inform the detailed design of the project, which will enable the potential construction of the final proposal.

Phased construction is planned to begin in 2024, and we hope that the scheme will be fully operational by early 2025.