

## **Restoring the River Leven – Community Consultation Feedback**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Over the past 3 years, under challenging circumstances at times, we have held a range of community events and activities to seek people's views and feedback which have helped shape the Leven Programme projects as they develop.

Most recently a joint consultation event for the Levenmouth Connectivity Project and the Restoring the River Leven Project was held in December 2022. For the Restoring the River Leven project, the aim was to present proposals for restoring the river environment of the lower Leven, for the benefit of people and wildlife and to allow individuals and businesses in Levenmouth the opportunity to provide feedback on and help shape the proposals.

This was to ensure that, where possible, the final designs for the site reflect the needs and wishes of local communities. The consultation included two drop-in community information events (1st and 8th December 2022) an online option to share feedback alongside information and feedback forms that were available in two local libraries. Each offered people the opportunity to view the proposals and give their feedback. 38 online or written responses were received in total in addition to comments and thoughts shared verbally at the events.

We would like to thank those who have provided their feedback on the proposals, and this update provides a summary of comments received.

### **2. SUMMARY of FEEDBACK**

The majority of the responses were supportive of the proposals and felt that they would result in positive change in the area. The aim of this short document is to summarise key feedback in terms of the next phases of the project and set out how the project team proposes to incorporate the feedback using this information to shape developed design proposals.

The responses indicated that generally the River Leven is valued by the local community as a place to enjoy wildlife and peace and quiet and to fish and walk the dog. The industrial legacy of the area and its impact was noted and it was important to a number of the respondents that the design proposals were sympathetic to the area's heritage and that, where possible, opportunities were taken to tell the story of the area's past.

Whilst people were supportive of the proposals to improve fish passage at the Kirkland and Burn Mill Dams, the issue of poaching was raised as well as the need to take this into account as part of the design process to ensure any poaching issues are not exacerbated as a result of the project.

The benefit of linking the River Restoration Project with the Active Travel Project was highlighted in a number of responses with suggestions of setting up a park run and improving access for all. The need to recognise antisocial behaviour in the catchment such as litter and irresponsible off-road motorbike use was raised as a key issue for many.

Linking the river restoration proposals with wider wildlife and biodiversity issues was also important for many respondents who highlighted the opportunity for the restoration project to improve people's knowledge and understanding of their local environment.

### 3. INCORPORATING FEEDBACK INTO THE DETAILED DESIGN PHASE

Consultation Key Issue	River Leven Restoration Project	Wider Leven Connectivity Project
<b>Industrial legacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure designs are sympathetic to the area's heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Where possible include interpretation of the area's industrial legacy as part of final designs</li> </ul>
<b>Antisocial behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Clean up the river where required i.e. remove old cars dumped in the river</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Consider litter bins are part of over-arching designs</li> <li>– Consider materials used for installations (i.e. seating) to reduce risk of potential damage</li> </ul>
<b>Poaching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure designs to improve fish passage at Kirkland and Burn Mill take poaching into account, reducing (where possible) reduce opportunities for poaching, ensuring the works do not increase risk of such activity</li> <li>– Consider video monitoring of the river</li> </ul>	
<b>Wildlife</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ecological surveys to consider control of invasive non-native species such as Mink</li> <li>– Opportunities to increase number of trees to be included as part of final designs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Interpretation of wildlife in the area and opportunities for public to record and feedback wildlife they have seen</li> </ul>
<b>Access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Consider access for kayakers (maintaining existing communication links with the Scottish Canoe Association)</li> <li>– Ensure designs consider need for better access and paths for all (linking in with Connectivity Project)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Consider opportunities for a Park Run when designing access routes</li> <li>– Include accessible viewing platforms and seating areas</li> </ul>