

**Project:** Provost's Walk Path Network Upgrade

**Location:** Auchterarder, north of and parallel to the A9, Perthshire, PH3

**Date:** 2016 through 2019

**Client/ Partners**

Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust, Perth and Kinross Council, Sustrans,

**Project type**

Design and supervision of construction of peri-urban all-abilities active travel path infrastructure.

**Items of Interest**

Peri-urban all-abilities active travel paths; partnership project; best practise design; accessibility; placemaking; tree root protection; solar lighting.

## Project Content

Auchterarder's Provost's Walk path network is long established, having its root in the Jubilee Walk established for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust had an ambition to upgrade this network to make it suitable for all-year, all-abilities active travel use. TP&E took on the role of Principal Designer and Site Supervisor on the project.

The work was divided into three phases split over three years and three cycles of funding. The existing paths had largely come about as a result of a path redirection exercise brought about by the creation of the A9 dual

carriageway bypass of Auchterarder forty years ago and run parallel to it. The narrow, unsealed paths were widened to two and a half metres throughout and interception drainage installed to carry surface runoff under the path construction into the existing arrangements for the A9. In all almost three kilometres of sealed surface asphalt concrete path were installed.

Gradients were challenging at many points along the route, access to Jubilee Park in the centre of the network being particularly concerning. A completely new alignment was selected which more closely followed the contours but created a detour. As a result a gabion basket retaining structure leading to a short but high bridge over the Coalbore Burn was installed. The alignment then passed through an impressive stand of tall specimen conifers necessitating extensive use of a free draining cellular containment system for some



sixty metres to provide root protection to these valued trees. Further gradient reduction measures created a meandering alignment through a stand of sycamore to reach the Park. At the west end of the path there was a 2m step to be negotiated to reach the footway of the A824. This was achieved by realigning the route into a neighbouring field and inclining the path gently over 90 metres to reach the road.



Two link paths running north into Auchterarder were widened, drained and given a sealed surface and the cemetery road was reconstructed with a whin dust surface treatment. To increase the utility of the path particularly in the winter months, solar powered stud lights were installed. Scottish designed units intended for Scottish light conditions were used to give the best results.



## Outcomes

Usage of the network has increased markedly. Mobility scooter users are now regularly seen where before their access would have been impossible. The presence of the solar lighting has encouraged evening jogging and running groups on to the path and in autumn users spend some of their own time clearing leaf-fall from the studs, demonstrating their utility.



For many the phase 3 works in the far west of the project have made it possible to use that area for the first time, particularly in the winter following the resolution of major drainage failures as part of the works. Parents with pushchairs are now also seen in this area where before this would not have been possible and younger children on bicycles have been noted as particularly enthusiastic about the provisions.

Felling of trees south of Jubilee Park required for path widening has opened that area up increasing feelings of personal safety for users. Aside from the A9 crossing, the improvements to the Provost's Walk path network have made possible active-travel from Auchterarder town to Gleneagles Railway Station almost entirely off-road on segregated infrastructure.

*Transport Planning and Engineering is a social enterprise engineering consultancy which specialises in designing and managing the delivery of active travel infrastructure in Scotland through working with local authorities and many empowered communities.*

*TP&E is a subsidiary organisation of Scotland's national cycle training, events and promotion charity Cycling Scotland.*

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