

ood evening

You asked about this scheme when I visited earlier this year. I hope this announcement is welcome.

Take care

Bill

From: Andrew Doyle <andrew.doyle@somerset.gov.uk>

Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2023 4:28 pm

Subject: News release: Funding means next phase of A39 active travel route could be delivered



Press release

For immediate release

Funding means next phase of A39 active travel route could be delivered

Somerset Council has received £1.5m in external funding which could be used to deliver the next phase of a cycling and walking route on the A39 between Carhampton and Minehead.

The ring-fenced grant from Active Travel England could see the route completed if the scheme can be feasibly delivered with minimal disruption. The money was awarded in recognition of the scheme's primary aim in providing increased active travel opportunities for local people.

A condition of receiving the grant is that the money can only be used on cycling, walking and wheeling schemes agreed with Active Travel England that have the potential to help more people to choose active travel.

The project would be a huge benefit for school pupils in Carhampton where at the moment there is no dedicated cycling provision. The existing shared path has restricted width due to vegetation encroachments. Somerset Council is exploring whether the scheme can be delivered whilst avoiding the traffic disruption seen during earlier phases closer to Minehead.

Somerset Council's Lead Member for Transport and Digital, Councillor Mike Rigby said: "Our team is looking what is possible and looking at ways of getting this done that will cause minimal impact to residents and road users.

"Exploratory work has been undertaken to assess the current conditions and width of the existing path by clearing away vegetation and encroachments to determine the viability of recovering width over longer sections of the route.

"Initial investigations have had positive results, and the team are now considering working methodology for undertaking clearance work from Carhampton through to Dunster efficiently with minimum disruption to the travelling public.

"It's possible some of the public may wonder why we are spending money during the current financial emergency. To reiterate, this is Government money, directly from Active Travel England, and can only be used on improving active travel routes – we cannot use it on other services during the current financial emergency.

"It's important that where we can the Council continues to invest in infrastructure and sustainable methods of travel."

ENDS