

Healthy Streets - Portsdown Road

Welcome

During the period of social distancing, and as we work towards recovery, Hampshire County Council has created better spaces for walking and cycling in and around our towns to enable social distancing for safe, essential journeys and exercise.

The County Council is now considering a number of walking and cycling improvements across the county. Subject to feedback, central government funding will be used to provide a range of measures across Hampshire to create better spaces for walking and cycling in local communities.



The survey will be open from noon 19 July 2021
and
closes just before midnight on 15 August 2021

[Please click on this link to access the survey](#)

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Background

In summer 2020, as part of our Emergency Active Travel Fund programme, barriers were installed at Portsdown Road to prevent motor vehicles from travelling along the street, while maintaining access for walking and cycling.

The primary purpose of this, and other emergency schemes across Hampshire, was in response to COVID-19. On Portsdown Road, it enabled social distancing north of the railway bridge, where the pavement is raised above the road with steep steps and is narrow so that people could not step into the road to pass each other.

On 17 June 2021, a decision was made by Hampshire County Council to remove all temporary emergency schemes aimed at social distancing across Hampshire when the move to Step 4 of the Government's COVID-19 roadmap comes into effect (anticipated to be 19 July 2021).

Following the emergency measures, Government announced a future programme of funding to support active travel to help people live healthier lives, and to tackle our Climate Emergency. The funding will be used to provide a range of measures to create better spaces for walking and cycling in local communities.



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Background – Scheme Overview

The scheme was initially identified through a draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) developed for the Fareham Borough, and from suggestions on our open-source Hants Covid Travel Map launched in spring 2020. An LCWIP is an evidence-based plan for future walking and cycling routes, developed with input from local stakeholders.

The aim of the scheme is to provide a safer route for people walking to the local schools, the supermarket and trading estate, and green space at the castle; and for people cycling between Fareham and Portsmouth. At present, there is no footway under the railway bridge, and there is no space to provide one. Disabled people, or people with buggies are required to walk around 100m in the carriageway, or take much longer alternative routes.

The objectives of this scheme are to:

- Provide an environment where people feel safe and welcome;
- Enable greater levels of walking and cycling
- Provide an accessible environment for disabled people and people pushing buggies.

The emergency schemes were a temporary measure to address COVID-19, and allowed us to collect feedback once the scheme was in place, but we were not able to consult widely before they were put in place.

We are now looking at whether new designs would support more people in active travel, and want to ensure that we hear from local residents, businesses and other stakeholders about this new scheme early on.



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What is proposed?

A modal filter is proposed at this location.

There are already other examples of modal filters in Portchester; for example on Hamilton Road (a barrier) and Rockingham Way (bollards). Modal filters are any measure that allows passage of some modes, but not others. They are also sometimes known as 'point closures'.

On Portsdown Road, the modal filter for the temporary scheme was formed of plastic barriers. A modal filter stops motor vehicles from travelling through, whilst keeping access for people walking, cycling, scooting, pushing a buggy or using a mobility scooter or wheelchair. Modal filters can provide safer, quieter and more direct routes to support uptake in walking and cycling.

Residents and their visitors would be able to drive to Portsdown Road for access, but not through it.



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Scheme Proposal



We would ensure the space between planter and bollard would be wide enough for double buggies, mobility scooters, and adapted cycles.

Emergency services and maintenance vehicles would have keys to provide access by removing the bollard. We would make sure there was enough room for them to pass through the scheme. It is not anticipated that emergency services would require access, and no issues have been raised by them during the temporary scheme

The proposal would be enforced by an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, in place for up to 18 months, depending on regular review and feedback. Using an ETRO, we can run the scheme as an experiment – there is a six-month period when the public can see for themselves the impact of the scheme and the Council can fully monitor its impacts. At the end of the six-month period, we can review the data and feedback and decide whether to confirm, cancel or extend the ETRO for up to 12 months longer to allow further consultation and monitoring.

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Benefits of the proposed scheme

- Without a footway under the railway bridge, people walking and cycling previously shared space with people driving, and visibility could be difficult for everyone. The modal filter makes moving through the railway tunnel safer.
- Local services and amenities such as the supermarket and the green space at Portchester Castle are more accessible for people who want to walk for local journeys;
- In this location, the filter provides an improved route for children walking and cycling to school between the north and south of the village, and between Paulsgrove and Portchester. It also provides a quieter route for people walking towards Portchester train station.
- Because of the steps to the footway on the northern side of the railway bridge, the modal filter provides a shorter, safer and accessible route for people with buggies or who have a physical disability. It takes around 3 minutes to walk from the junction of Portsdown Road and Kelvin Grove to Southampton Road, compared with longer alternative routes, such as Connaught Lane or Hill Road/Station Road – which both take around 14 minutes to walk.
- A quieter environment for residents and people travelling through, with cleaner air.
- Offers an alternative route for cycling between Portchester and Portsmouth, avoiding the Castle Street Roundabout, with a controlled crossing across the A27.

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Evidence Base – before the temporary scheme

Due to the emergency timing of the temporary scheme, we were unable to gather as much baseline data as we normally would. However, in the days before the temporary scheme was put in place, in Portsdown Road we:

- Counted the number of motor vehicles: A daily average of 1,941 motor vehicles was recorded travelling north and south along the road.
- Measured the speed of motor vehicles: Average speeds were within the 30mph limit, but over 120 vehicles a day were recorded exceeding this limit.
- Counted the number of people walking and cycling: Before the scheme was put installed, around 200 people walking, and 30 people cycling, travelled up and down Portsdown Road between 7am and 7pm each day (east-west data was not captured at the time).

Once the temporary scheme went in, we measured traffic queues on Hill Road, numbers of people walking and cycling on Portsdown Road, and turning at the junction of Kelvin Grove and Portsdown Road. *See the next slide for more information.*

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Evidence Base – during the temporary scheme

We heard that through feedback that:

- It was taking residents south of the railway bridge longer to travel towards Fareham with the modal filter in place. To test that, we measured this through multiple timed drives, and the results showed that the journey south takes less than one minute longer on average, than the journey north via Kelvin Grove. We are seeking funding from the Department for Transport to review opening the right turn onto the A27 Southampton Road, should the scheme go ahead.
- Queue lengths at Hill Road had been impacted. Whilst we do not have “before” data, we surveyed queue lengths on a weekday in June 2021 on the southbound approach to the traffic lights. This survey demonstrated the majority of the time, any queues that built up on Hill Road cleared through a single green light phase. On 6 of 71 occasions (mostly between 08:35 and 08:50) the queue took slightly longer to clear, which suggests that the queues reflect rush hour, rather than the temporary scheme.
- There are alternative routes for walking and cycling. Whilst Connaught Lane and Hill Road routes are available, they take much longer to walk (at least 13 minutes compared to 3 minutes). Connaught Lane is not overlooked by residents, meaning it can feel isolated to some people.
- More people were walking and cycling. To test that, we carried out survey counts. They showed almost 50% increases in walking and cycling between August (before the scheme) and October (with the scheme). Even surveys repeated in very bad weather in June 2021 showed an increase, although smaller, in both walking and cycling.
- Traffic on Kelvin Grove may have increased. Whilst we do not have “before” data, surveys undertaken during the temporary scheme showed that an average of 37 motor vehicles travel through the junction of Kelvin Grove and Portsdown Road, and a maximum of 4 u-turns occurred, in peak hours.
- When the temporary scheme has been removed, we will capture any missing data to help us assess the impact of a future scheme.

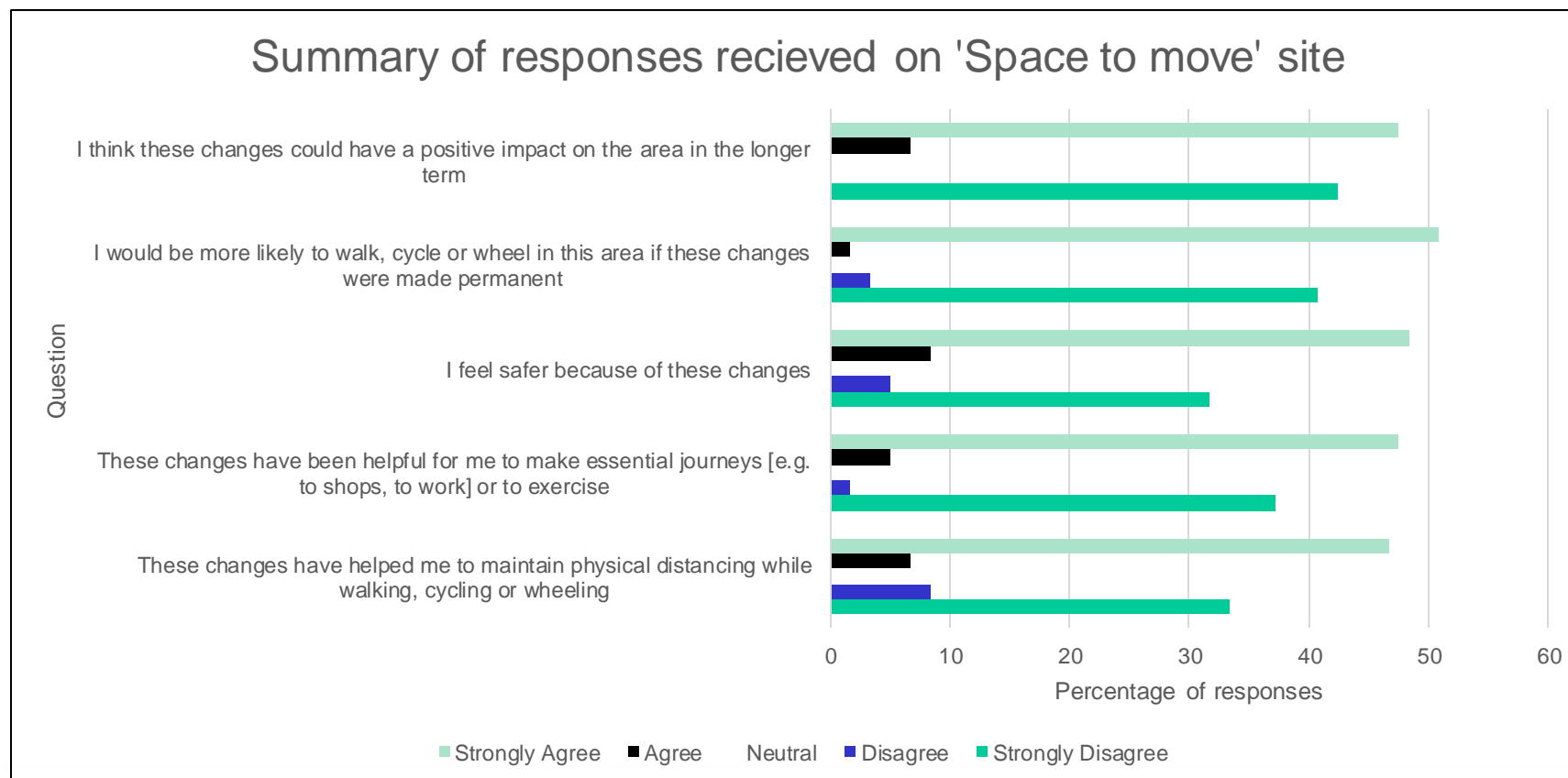
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Feedback to the Temporary Scheme

A survey was open for comments during the temporary scheme in 2020/21. This was advertised on Portsdown Road for the duration of the scheme with posters and QR codes.

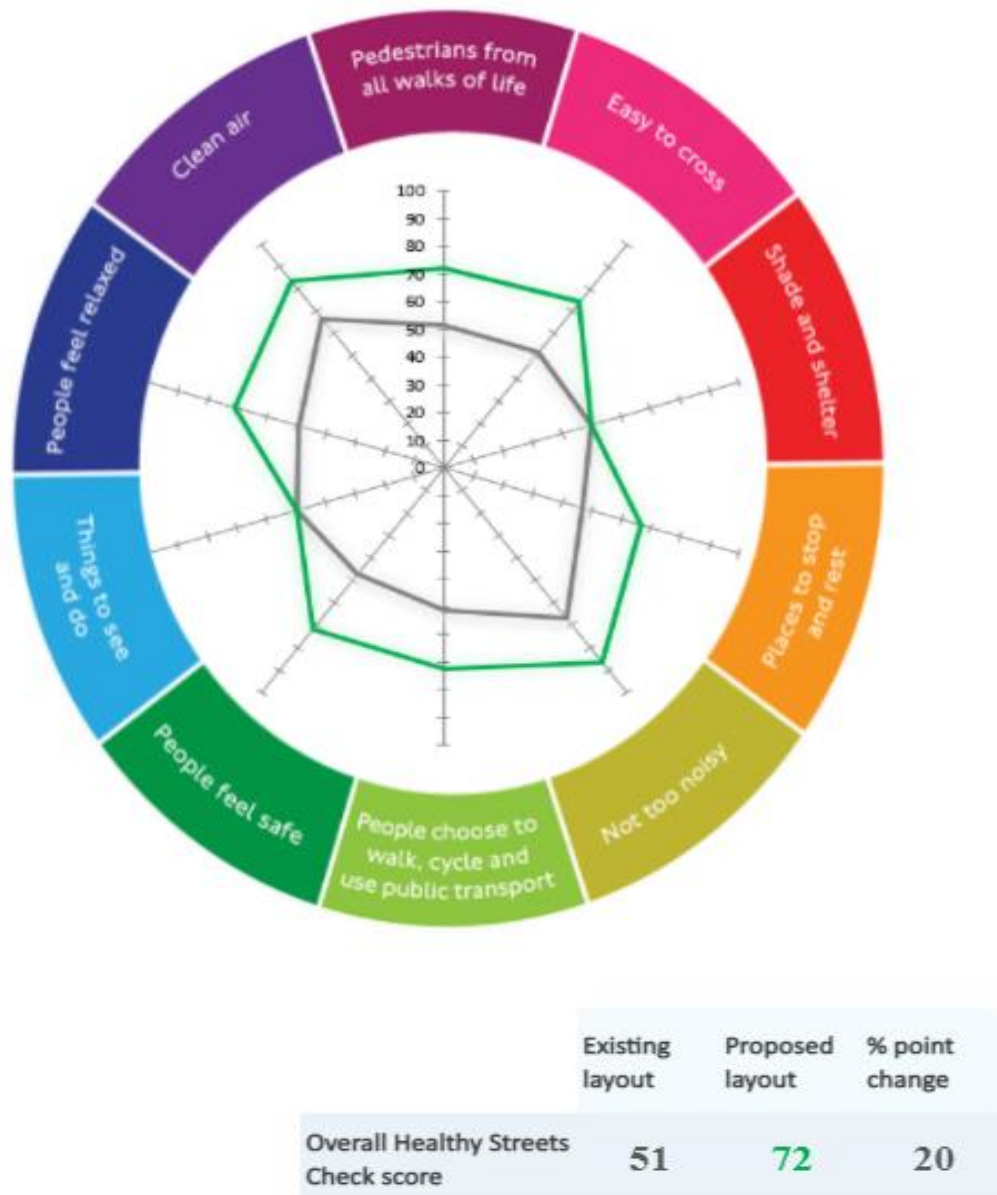
It showed split opinions:

- 60 comments received via Sustrans' 'Space to move' site
- 50% stated that they felt 'Very Happy' about the changes to Portsdown Road
- 40% stated that they felt 'Very Unhappy' about the changes to Portsdown Road
- Through correspondence, some people told us that they were unhappy to have to drive longer around the modal filter; others told us they felt much safer walking in the new environment



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Healthy Streets Audit Results



A “Healthy Streets” audit considers the experience of people using streets against 10 different indicators - such as noise, shade, ability to cross, and feeling safe.

We have compared how Portsdown Road scores against these indicators, both as a road with all traffic allowed (labelled "existing layout" in black) and with a modal filter to prevent through traffic (labelled as "proposed layout" in green).

With the modal filter in place, there are significant improvements for eight of the ten indicators, with the road scoring particularly well against the indicators of people feeling safe, relaxed and people being able to choose to walk and cycle.

More information on Healthy Streets is available at: <https://www.healthystreets.com/>

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Frequently Asked Questions

Can I still park on the road?

Yes you can, there are no changes to parking availability on the road.

Will Network Rail still be able to maintain the bridge?

Yes, we have been in contact with Network Rail and they are happy with the proposals.

With the modal filter in place, how long does it take to drive around?

Through our timed drives analysis, travelling from north of the modal filter to the Castle St Roundabout takes just over 2 minutes and travelling south of the railway bridge (turning in Hamilton Road) takes just over 3 minutes. If this scheme goes ahead, we will look to enable a right turn onto Southampton Road from the Portsdown Road junction.

Who is responsible for Portsdown Road?

Portsdown Road runs along the boundary of Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth City Council with approximately half of the road included within each Council's area. However, HCC is responsible for maintaining the entire length of road.

Will it be swept and cleared?

The road will still be maintained as usual, with the maintenance schedule not changing.

Why can't we introduce a one-way system instead?

One-way systems are known for increasing traffic speeds and in this location would not meet the aims of providing a safer space for walking and cycling, or improve accessibility for disabled people.

Will emergency services still have access?

Yes, emergency services will still be able to access all properties. The fire engines from Kelvin Grove fire station do not use the tunnel due to the low height of the bridge. No issues were raised by emergency services in relation to the temporary scheme in 2020/21.

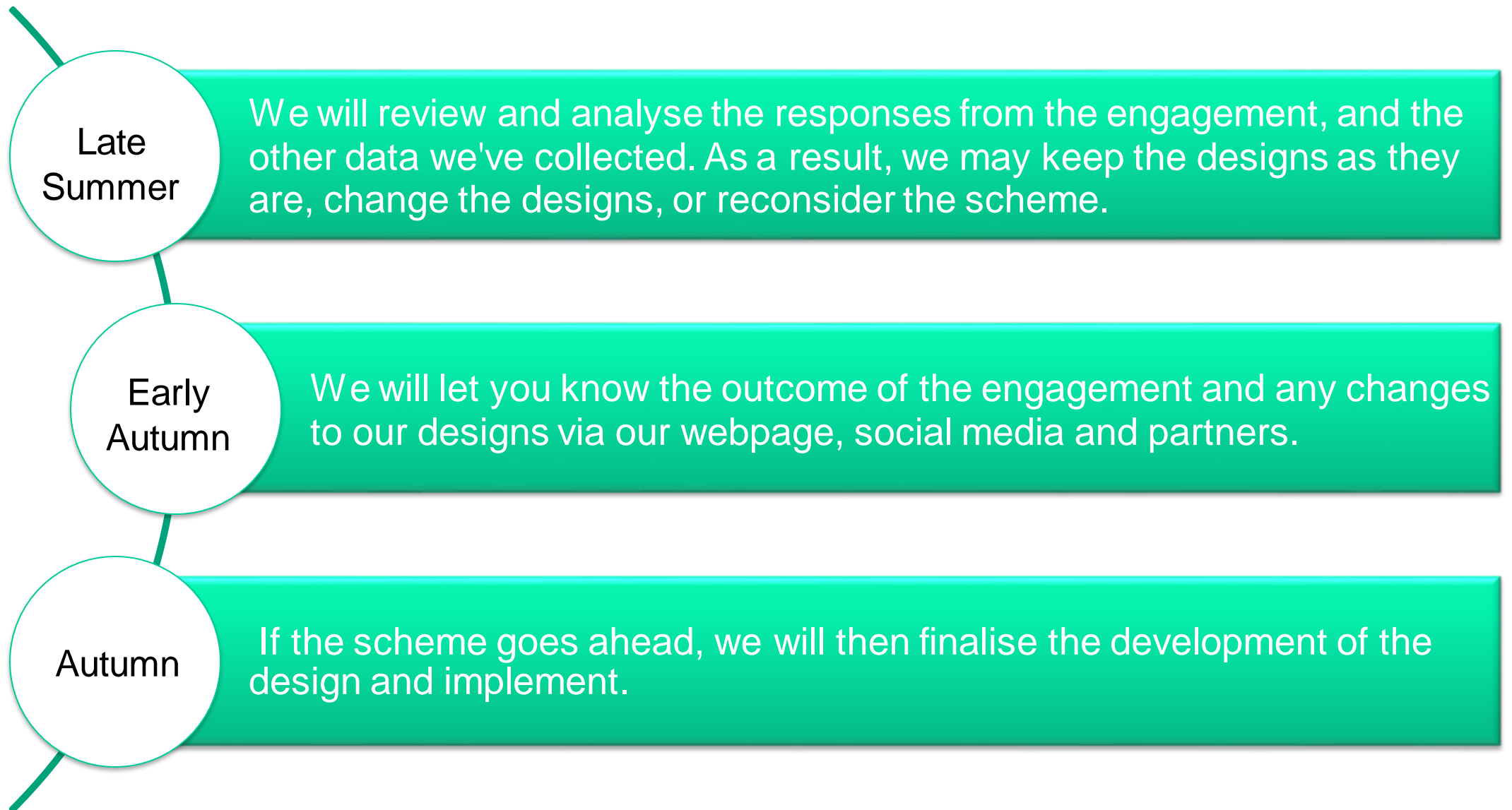
When would the scheme be implemented?

The new modal filter would likely not be implemented before Autumn 2021, depending on the feedback we receive for these proposals.

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Next Steps

What happens next?



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Thank you

Thank you...

for taking the time to view the plans and provide feedback.

[Please click on this link to access the survey](#)

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