

# Spokes Final Response v4 – 15-Dec 2023

## HES Holyrood Park consultation

### Outline Strategic Plan for Holyrood Park

>>

#### How and why you use Holyrood Park

##### 1 What are your main motivations for visiting Holyrood Park?

Select all that apply

Recreation and leisure, Exercise, Nature and wildlife, Historical / archaeological / geological exploration, Events / festivals taking place in the Park

##### 2 How often do you use Holyrood Park?

Members of Spokes visit Holyrood Park every day of the year

##### 3 Which transport method do you usually use in Holyrood Park?

Select all that apply

Walk, Bike

Free text field if you have selected other :

##### 4 How long do you usually spend in Holyrood Park?

1–2 hours

##### 5 Which parts of Holyrood Park do you visit, or have visited, most regularly?

Select all that apply (a map of the Park is available in the 'useful information' section above)

Arthur's Seat, Duddingston Loch, Dunsapie Crag, Dunsapie Loch, Haggis Knowe, Hunter's Bog, Parade Ground, Piper's Walk, Salisbury Crags, St Anthony's Chapel / Well, St Margaret's Loch, St Margaret's Well, The Dasses, The Innocent Railway, The Queen's Drive, The Radical Road, Volunteer's Walk, Whinny Hill

Free text field if you have selected other:

##### 6 How far do you live from Holyrood Park? (If you're not sure, give your best estimate)

Many members of Spokes, who visit Holyrood Park regularly, live within 5 miles of the park

**7 What is your relationship to Edinburgh? Select all that apply**

Work in Edinburgh, Live in Edinburgh

**The Park and Plan**

**8 Have you encountered any of the following issues when using Holyrood Park? Select all that apply**

Difficulty accessing, or closure of, routes and areas of the Park, Safety issues or potential incidents between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles

Free text field if you have selected other:

the cycleway from the Royal Commonwealth Pool entrance roundabout down the hill towards Dynamic Earth has many tree roots growing into it beside the small wood by Galloping Glen - now breaking up tarmac surface on the shared footpath / cycleway – dangerous area for accidents – previous accidents recorded on this section of foot path and cycle way - potentially dangerous for cyclists and a runner fell and was injured here during the Holyrood parkrun. This section of the cycleway and footpath also floods just before you reach the Dynamic Earth - this is dangerous in winter - as it floods blocking a section of cycleway / footpath for about 50m long , which then freezes over and can stay very icy for weeks. I expect the flooding could be reduced with some small investment to add additional drainage / soak away drains - as required

**9 Are any of the above a reason why you do not visit Holyrood Park, or areas within the Park?**

Yes (please tell us more about the issue)

Free text field if you have selected yes:

1 Safety issues from the Park being used as vehicle transit corridor; emissions (exhaust, tyre particles etc); speeds prevent family cycling in the Park.

2 Closure of Radical Road means loss of favourite route for walkers; net the rock faces where falls most likely to occur. risks are less than health gains;

I would visit the park more regularly if most car traffic was removed from the roads in the park

**10 Which of the following should be prioritised? Rank in order of importance 1=top priority, 7=lowest priority**

Which of the following should be prioritised? - Improvements to deteriorating or damaged footpaths:

3

Which of the following should be prioritised? - Restore natural areas of the Park, such as landscapes and habitats:

4

Which of the following should be prioritised? - Restore historic areas of the Park, such as archaeological sites and heritage buildings and places:

5

Which of the following should be prioritised? - Improve access and the reopening of routes and areas of the Park:

1

Which of the following should be prioritised? - Improve safety in relation to risk or incidents pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles:

2

Which of the following should be prioritised? - Improve safety in relation to rockfall, unstable terrain, etc:

6

Which of the following should be prioritised? - Improve safety in relation to issues such as fires, vandalism, anti-social behaviour etc:

7

**11 Based on the above questions, please provide any additional comments**

Free text field for additional comments:

Close the Park to through traffic; vehicles a safety hazard, discourage active travel; health hazard from emissions.

Re-open the Radical Road in the near future, providing rock 'netting' in a few key spots.

Devise and publicise a number of recreational walking and cycling routes around the Park,

**12 The Plan sets out seven Guiding Principles as areas of focus for the Park's future. On a scale of 1 – 5, to what extent do you agree or disagree that these are important and relevant to the Park's future? (1 – Strongly agree; 5 – Strongly disagree)**

**On a scale of 1 – 5, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the Principles of the Plan are important and relevant to the Park's future?**

- Put People First - To serve people by providing accessible greenspace, access to nature, and providing benefits in the face of climate change:

1 - Strongly agree

**On a scale of 1 – 5, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the Principles of the Plan are important and relevant to the Park's future?**

- Sustain the Park's Special Qualities and Values - To sustain, safeguard, and enhance the unique character and special qualities of the Park including its built heritage, nature, and landscape:

2

**On a scale of 1 – 5, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the Principles of the Plan are important and relevant to the Park's future?**

- Strengthen Climate Action & Resilience - To ensure that all future decisions relating to the Park seek to make a positive contribution to climate change mitigation:

1 - Strongly agree

**On a scale of 1 – 5, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the Principles of the Plan are important and relevant to the Park's future?**

- Be Guided by Nature - To ensure all future decisions are founded on letting natural processes lead the way, leading to a changed, but more sustainable landscape:

1 - Strongly agree

**On a scale of 1 – 5, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the Principles of the Plan are important and relevant to the Park's future?**

- Accept Holyrood Park as a Contested Place - To create a space for open and transparent communication and discussion, even in situations when not all parties will accept or welcome certain decisions relating to the Park:

2

**On a scale of 1 – 5, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the Principles of the Plan are important and relevant to the Park's future?**

- Experiment and Learn - To ensure that future management embraces the potential for the Park to become a place for developing, testing, and sharing innovative ideas around the role of urban green space, urban living, climate change, biodiversity, health, and wellbeing:

1 - Strongly agree

**On a scale of 1 – 5, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the Principles of the Plan are important and relevant to the Park's future?**

- Operate Sustainably - To ensure that all decisions contribute to moving towards a Net Zero operational model, increase revenue to support investment, and to reduce subsidy funding requirements:

1 - Strongly agree

**13 Which of the seven Guiding Principles should be prioritised? Rank in order of importance 1 - top priority, 7 - lowest priority**

**Which of the seven Guiding Principles should be prioritised? - Put People First:**

4

**Which of the seven Guiding Principles should be prioritised? - Sustain the Park's Special Qualities and Values:**

5

**Which of the seven Guiding Principles should be prioritised? - Strengthen Climate Action & Resilience:**

1

**Which of the seven Guiding Principles should be prioritised? - Be Guided by Nature:**

6

**Which of the seven Guiding Principles should be prioritised? - Accept Holyrood Park as a Contested Place:**

7

**Which of the seven Guiding Principles should be prioritised? - Experiment and Learn:**

3

**Which of the seven Guiding Principles should be prioritised? - Operate Sustainably:**

2

**14 Please provide a reason for why you chose your top priority**

Free text field for a reason for why you chose your top priority :

Strengthen Climate Action & Resilience: is most important for Spokes members and encouraging active travel on bike and on foot is a very simple way to help the City reach its 'Net Zero' target.

The simplest way to do this is to extend the same 'through route' road closures that are in place on Saturdays and Sundays to the rest of the week Monday to Friday within Holyrood Park

Spokes Members are typically cyclists and walkers (and in many cases motorists!) who live in Edinburgh. They would visit Holyrood Park more often if the Park was closed to vehicles as a through route (reduced air pollution, improved safety); and if (for walking) the Radical Road footpath was re-opened (health benefits are likely to far outweigh risk of rock falls; signage of possible risks is all that's needed)

Although the main purpose of the strategy is to enhance the Park and its uses, the removal of through motor traffic also provides a fantastic safe and enjoyable active-travel connection between Southside / Old Town and East Edinburgh / Easter Road / Duddingston /Portobello etc.

Display boards of walking and cycling routes within the Park could encourage more people to explore the whole Park, not just climb Arthur's Seat and/or not just use the High Road.

**The Future of Holyrood Park**

**15 In future, Holyrood Park should do the following:(select three that you feel are of most importance)**

Provide access to greenspace for local people and visitors, Promote wellness and recreation, Promote environmental education and citizen science (public participation in collaborative projects and research etc)

Free text field if you have selected other:

Extend the same 'through route' road closures that are in place on Saturdays and Sundays to the rest of the week Monday to Friday.

**16 What benefits do you think Holyrood Park should bring to people's lives? Select all that apply**

Improved physical wellbeing through recreational activities and accessible green space, Improved mental wellbeing through recreational activities and accessible green space, Provide a space for outdoor social interactions and activities, Provide access to natural beauty and tranquillity for improved quality of life, Provide cultural enrichment through events and festivities, Provide educational experiences about local history and environment, Provide a sense of community by offering a common space for local people, Increased awareness of environmental and sustainability concerns

Free text field if you have selected other:

**17 Is there anything else that you feel should be included as an area of focus for the Park's future?**

Free text field to answer question:

Extend the same 'through route' road closures that are in place on Saturdays and Sundays to the rest of the week Monday to Friday – so that there is no through motor traffic on all days 24/7.

Replicate the vehicle road closures already in place at the weekend (High Road, Queens Drive, Duddingston Low Road) to all days 24/7, ending motorised through traffic, and maintaining access to car parks at Meadowbank, Duddingston, and Broad Pavement.

Replace some car parking spaces in the car parks within Holyrood Park with cycle racks, including racks suitable for larger cargo bikes, all ability bikes and other non-standard cycles – there is currently a shortage of cycle racks within Holyrood Park and on the edge of Holyrood Park

Changes to existing road closure measures - some of the road barriers are a bit too close together, making it tricky for cyclists on larger bikes like a cargo bike, a tandem bike, a tricycle or an all-ability bike to navigate the barriers. Suitable spacing of 1.5 m should be provided at all barriers, to allow all types of cycle vehicle to pass unrestricted.

Take preventive measures to enable the re-opening of the Radical Road footpath, eg netting where rock falls might occur, rather than deny access with ugly high steelmesh fencing. Put a notice warning public of possible rock fall.

Enable the free Holyrood parkrun to continue on Saturday mornings. It takes place at 9.30am every Saturday and is a great resource for the local community attracting between 400 and 600 runners and walkers every Saturday morning, and each year the Holyrood parkrun provides many health and wellbeing benefits to thousands of local people and visitors.

Enable step-free access from Dumbiedykes Road to Holyrood Park for cyclists and all forms of wheeling. Currently there is a set of steps which prevent easy access for cyclists, people walking with push chairs, wheelchairs and all other forms of wheeling.

**Detailed suggestions for improving access from Dumbiedykes access to Holyrood Park**

A Spokes member has supplied the following detailed suggestion:

**1. Facilitate the link between the Queen’s Park and the shared use cycle and walking pathway which runs quite steeply downhill east of Edinburgh Leisure’s Craggs Sports Centre.** This cycle route is initially a link between the Council streets of St Leonards Hill and Dumbiedykes Road but the aim is to link St Leonards to the Queen’s Park. (It may be of interest to note that this Craggs Cycleway also runs past and gives access to the Craggs Pump Track, used by local children on their bikes.)

**2. Despite this shared use Cycleway being provided, the bottom end finishes in a car parking space.** The parking space is sometimes filled and this obstructs entrance and exit from the cycle route. So, one is usually obliged to divert along the pavement around the car parking spaces, whilst looking for a drop kerb via which to join the Dumbiedykes roadway. If heading to or from the Queen’s Park, staying on the public pavement does have the advantage that one avoids the problem of the two missing drop kerbs, one at the access to/egress from the Queen’s Park and one at the foot of the Craggs Cycleway, but one should not be thus incentivised to cycle along the pavement. From the cycleway, the destination is invariably the Queen’s Park but equally, a rider might be exiting the Queen’s Park here using the well surfaced approach pathway in the Park. **Either way, the cyclist meets the flight of steps between Dumbiedykes pavement level down to the Park path. This is quite a small but formidable barrier to all wheeled users, be they buggy-pushers, wheelchair users or cyclists. With a bit of ramping work, this could be so much more user friendly and could allow continuous cycling between the Queen’s Park and the route by Craggs Sports Centre – a route that leads one to St. Leonards and the Rankeillor Street and Meadows cycle route.**

(Other wheeled users would of course benefit equally from the improved continuous link.)



**18 Do you have any additional comments or concerns about the Outline Strategic Plan for Holyrood Park, or any of the consultation material provided via the link on the questionnaire's welcome page?**

Free text field for additional comments or concerns :

- a. Objective 5, to make active travel the dominant travel mode through and to the Park, largely aligns with our views, but is somewhat ambiguous and could mean different things to different people. We are clear that this should mean the weekend closures (High Road, Queen's Drive, Duddingston Low Road) becoming 24/7 and ending motorised through traffic.
- b. Access to car parks should be maintained at Meadowbank, Duddingston and Broad Pavement. Additionally, all car parks should include Sheffield rack bike parking with spaces designed for larger pedal-powered vehicles such as cargo bikes and handcycles. More disabled parking bays are also required.
- c. Spokes has been pleased to see the growth of the 'Car Free Holyrood' organisation, and generally we very much support their approach and proposals.