

THE STRAWBERRY LINE ASSOCIATION

www.thestrawberryline.org.uk
(Working group of the Strawberry Line Society
Registered Charity No. 284005)



1 Portway
Wells
Somerset
BA5 2BA

28 April 2017

Dear County Council candidate,

We the undersigned are writing to all local candidates in the forthcoming County Council elections to ask whether they will commit themselves to support for the extension of the Strawberry Line from Cheddar, through Wells, and on to Shepton Mallet (for more information on the project, please visit www.thestrawberryline.org.uk).

The Strawberry Line Association recently received unanimous endorsement for this project at a full session of Somerset County Council (SCC) after over 5,000 signatures were collected in support. It is now time to build on this evidence of goodwill from SCC to deliver this vital asset to the region and invest in sustainable travel.

In order to move forward with the project we need action from SCC similar to that demonstrated by North Somerset Council, who recently announced plans to extend the Strawberry Line from Yatton to Clevedon.

North Somerset are not only backing the path in principle, but are also committing to:

- Assisting with negotiations with landowners *and* developers
- Reviewing their local transport plan to include sustainable travel
- Dedicating staff time to take forward this highly popular initiative
- Using powers for a bridleway creation order if needed

By announcing these measures, North Somerset Council is signalling that it means business, and as a result the path is due to open in 2019.

As you can see from the map on the website, this now means the missing link of the trail is the route in and out of the City of Wells. Benefits of the line include better health for residents (and therefore a reduced strain on the NHS), reduced traffic congestion and, crucially, increased income for local businesses from the growth in tourism.

We are not asking for the County Council to fund the development of the line; it can be paid for by third-party grants if only the County Council takes action to unlock these potential sources of funding. For example North Somerset County Council, which operates under the same financial circumstances as we do, has committed a Sustainable Travel & Road Safety Manager and two Green Spaces Officers to promote this kind of development.

We are keen to know whether you will commit yourself to supporting a similar active approach if (re-)elected as a County councillor, and if so, which concrete steps you would take to ensure that SCC delivers what it has unanimously endorsed?

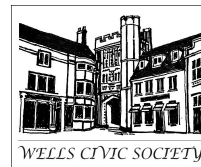
Thank you for your time. You can either reply by email (see below), post, or by commenting under the post relating to this letter on our popular Facebook page. In any case, all responses will be shared via social media and our mailing list, as well as on the website. We look forward to reading your reply.

With best wishes,

Richard Jones
Strawberry Line Association
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Angela Terry
Sustainable Wells



Chris Winter
Wells Civic Society



Angela Bennett
St Joseph and St Theresa's School



Robert Powell
Wells Chamber of Commerce & Tourism



Lisa Marner
Rockers & Rollers Day Nursery



Merryn Kidd
The Bishop's Palace



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