

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

23 February 2006

Skipton Pilot Project
Phase 1 Report

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the local access forum with a summary of the results of the Skipton Pilot Project.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 At the local access forum meeting of 4 December 2003, a paper was presented by three members of the local access forum, Max Grant, David Gibson and Rodney Waddilove. The paper suggested a proposed method for the production of a pilot RoWIP in 14 parishes in and around the Skipton area. It detailed a proposed way of assessing the network, the documents which should be consulted, the resource implications and the fact that the action plan should follow best practice which would be set out in the RoWIP exemplars. The paper included maps and a specific 'wish list' of improvements which were mostly narrowly focussed on route creations rather than other improvement areas such as promotion, maintenance and management of the existing network. The proposals also just considered provision for walking.
- 2.2 The next meeting of the local access forum on 18 March 2004 provided a chance for other members to comment upon the paper which was put forward at the previous meeting. This concluded that the pilot project did not account for people with different abilities, horse riders, land interests or other interests and that it was focussed on the wishes of walkers.
- 2.3 Following discussion by local users in the Skipton area, an approach was made to the County Council to undertake a more comprehensive pilot project in that area. This would harness enthusiasm and expertise at a local level and identify the needs and requirements to improve local rights of way in that area.
- 2.4 The Countryside Service made funding available to enable the employment of a Project Co-ordinator for 1 day per week over a fixed term period in order to lead the project and provide administrative and other support to the group of volunteers. The Area Rights of Way Officer for the Southern Area of North Yorkshire was assigned to assist the Project Co-ordinator and volunteers with the pilot exercise and the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Officer prepared a simple project brief for the group.

3.0 THE SKIPTON PILOT PROJECT

AIM OF PILOT

- 3.1 The overall aim of the Skipton pilot project was to identify at the local level, the needs and requirements for improved access to the local rights of way network, that were reasonable, practical, deliverable, economically and technically feasible and environmentally sustainable.

OBJECTIVES

- 3.2 The main objectives of the pilot study were:

1. To identify the condition of the network;
2. To identify how useful the network currently is for users;
3. To consider what the needs of different interest groups and users are in relation to the existing network;
4. To identify what is missing from the network in terms of its definition, management and maintenance and the needs of different interest groups;
5. To identify future priorities for the RoWIP;
6. To identify sources of funding and practical assistance to implement the Plan priorities.

TIMETABLE

- 3.3 Phase One covering objectives (1) to (4) - to be completed by May 2005

Phase Two covering objectives (5) to (6) - to be completed by Nov 2005

Phase One Actual Timetable

TASK	START DATE	FINISH DATE
Define parishes	01.12.04	14.12.04
Recruit Volunteers	14.12.04	31.01.05
Define Survey Form	01.12.04	31.12.04
Obtain current status information: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obtain maps• Obtain current collated survey information• Obtain outstanding claims/anomalies information	14.12.04	30.03.05
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the needs of different user groups• Collate and investigate improvement suggestions	14.12.04	30.04.05
Undertake condition surveys	01.01.05	30.05.05
Analysis of Findings & Completion of Report	01.03.05	30.06.05

Notes:

- Much of the planning procedure examining the viability of a pilot project took place in the two months preceding the study start date
- Most tasks overlapped and the project ran on a rolling programme

METHODOLOGY

3.4 Defining the Parishes

Parishes were selected with Skipton being the central parish with the highest population. Eight additional parishes of varying size between Bradford Metropolitan District Council area and the Yorkshire Dales National Park were chosen with a view to exploring access links between the Bradford area and the Yorkshire Dales, particularly for horse riders and cyclists.

3.5 Recruiting the Volunteers

The Project Co-ordinator made links with local volunteer groups and recruited volunteers, mainly through telephone contact and sometimes through visits. To fully harness local knowledge, the volunteers were mainly selected to undertake surveys in the parish in which they resided. Volunteers were also selected on the basis of their ability to successfully complete the surveys to a tight timescale.

3.6 Agreeing the survey form

Following much discussion it was decided that, in order for NYCC to maintain continuity and to enable the successful transfer of information ultimately to NYCC Countryside Access Management System (CAMS), the project would use the current version of the NYCC survey form, rather than a locally derived format.

3.7 Obtaining map information

Large scale maps (1:10,000) of the parishes which were supplied by the NYCC Area Rights of Way Officer involved in the project.

3.8 Obtaining current survey information

It was considered that as NYCC PROW Area Officers were, as part of their remit, undertaking surveys to feed into the overall RoWIP, this pilot project should avoid duplication of effort. Following discussions between the Project Co-ordinator and the NYCC Area Rights of Way Officer, a decision was taken to concentrate effort on public bridleways and identify what was missing from that network in terms of its definition, management and maintenance. The reason for doing this was that public bridleways are available to the largest number of non-motorised users, i.e. on foot, on

horse back, pedal cycle and disabled apparatus. The decision to give priority to public bridleways does not in any way mean to suggest that this would be any easy option to undertake. Given the potential for conflict that can and does arise between different users who have different needs it may prove necessary to re-evaluate this decision at some time in the future. In the end, the whole of the network was surveyed due to reasons outlined below.

3.9 Data Mapped

The information obtained and mapped included detail of anomalies, claims, UCR's, livery yard information, CPI parishes, disused railways, boundaries of the Traffic Management Strategy area for Skipton, quiet roads, Section 31's, Woodland Trust access, CROW Act open access areas, restricted access and ancient monument sites

3.10 Liaison

The Project Co-ordinator and NYCC PROW Officer made links with the following groups and organisations throughout this pilot project:

- Ramblers Association
- The British Horse Society
- The Craven Bridleways Association
- The Yorkshire Dales National Park
- Bradford Metropolitan District Council
- All Parish Councils for the 9 selected parishes
- Sustrans
- Skipton U3A Footpath Group
- All local riding schools & livery stables in the 9 selected parishes
- Local cycle group representatives
- Cononley Footpath Group
- Bradleys Both Footpath Group

3.11 Undertaking Condition Surveys

The Project Co-ordinator issued each volunteer with an agreed number of survey forms. These were zoned within each parish for ease of use. These survey forms were accompanied by detailed instructions on the method of completion and timescale for their return. Those volunteers requiring more advice on how to complete the forms were visited by the Project Co-ordinator.

Bridleways and routes for potential consideration for upgrade were, wherever possible surveyed by a horse riding volunteer. It is acknowledged that this provided a view from one specific type of user on a multi-user route. Full consultation with other users will therefore need to be undertaken to ensure where ever possible that all comments and

needs are evaluated and accommodated within identified constraints. This will be a challenging undertaking.

3.12 Parish Council Contact

All Parish Councils were made aware of the exercise, in writing, by the Project Co-ordinator.

3.13 Collation of Condition Survey Results

All completed surveys forms were examined by the NYCC PROW Officer and/or Project Co-ordinator. Results were checked and counted for inclusion into report sheets. They were also marked individually on separately held parish maps to enable continued work on either this project or local PROW Area Office work.

3.14 Collation of improvement suggestions

All improvement suggestions, potential new routes or potential upgrades were examined by the NYCC Area ROW Officer and/or Project Co-ordinator. Results were then included into report sheets and marked on separate maps as described above.

3.15 Defining Parishes

It was thought extremely important to include a cross section of parishes to obtain a fairer overall picture of the condition of the public rights of way network. The total number of routes within a parish varied considerably ranging from 8 to 51, with the highest concentration of public rights of way located within the parish of Bradleys Both (although this was not the largest parish by land size). The overall ratio of public bridleways to public footpaths was found to be low. Carleton Parish, for example, has only 6 routes (5 bridleways and 1 road used as a public path (RUPP) available for use by those on horse back. It is therefore no surprise that suggestions have been made to upgrade public footpaths to bridleway status to help facilitate the establishment of a usable and safe network of bridleway routes.

The approach taken by the project to consider a number of specific parishes in 'bite size chunks' enabled good quality detailed work to be undertaken. This in turn enabled an easier understanding of requirements and prioritisation of the proposals to improve the public rights of way network.

3.16 Volunteers

The key here was to obtain, at the start of the study, a pool of local enthusiastic individuals, including walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

It was paramount that these volunteers were supported throughout the study, felt involved and were made aware of how their contribution may help in the future. Personal feedback following their work was thought to be very important. Volunteers were very willing to give time freely and in numerous instances made requests for extra work in order to contribute further to the study.

3.17 Survey Form

The current NYCC survey form was not viewed as 'user friendly' by the group for their particular purpose. Consideration was therefore given to designing an alternative format specifically for this study. Concerns were expressed, however, about transferring information from a new survey form onto CAMS. For this reason, a decision was taken to continue to use the current NYCC form. Feedback has been provided to continually improve the survey form which is continually evolving.

3.18 Obtaining map information

It was thought to be important from the outset to try to obtain as much relevant information as possible, to ensure that any future decisions and actions taken give full consideration to all stakeholders interests, including land managers and users. The majority of the information collated is available and has been obtained through internal contacts by the NYCC Area RoW Officer. The information gathered is by no means definitive, as some data was not actually required at this time and data gathering can be very time consuming.

3.19 Obtaining current survey information

When attempting to obtain all current NYCC survey information on the condition of rights of way in selected parishes, the project encountered a problem. Other than an extremely small percentage of BVPI survey work that had already been completed, it soon became apparent that very little additional information was actually available on the condition of the network.

The NYCC Area RoW officer and Project Co-ordinator therefore made the decision to attempt to undertake surveys on all public rights of way within the selected parishes. For this reason, the project instantly became a much larger undertaking.

3.20 Liaison

Liaison with other organisations during this project was informal but nevertheless proved to be very effective. All neighbouring authorities were keen to discuss links and were appreciative of having been asked for their input at this very early stage. No commitments were made to pursue any specific route/link but they were able to offer suggestions. This is particularly valuable and allowed the Project Co-ordinator and NYCC Area

RoW Officer to concentrate on alternative options. Further discussions are required with interested parties prior to any decision to commit to progress any specific connecting route/link.

3.21 Undertaking condition surveys

It was considered to be important that, in order to obtain quality returns, the requirements of the task were fully explained to those involved. In many cases links through Parish Councils were made to assist the speedy return of survey forms. Much of this study was undertaken during the winter months. Although this was not really considered ideal, it did not hinder the quality or timely nature of the returns. Many individuals undertook surveying work in pairs. Horse riders undertook most of their surveys on foot, as it was thought to be impractical to complete a quality survey whilst handling a horse.

A number of parishes have footpath or bridleway groups and these provided willing assistance. However, this assistance was not always available for all the parishes involved in the pilot, which meant that the NYCC Area RoW Officer had to undertake some of the survey work in these parishes. Where surveys were undertaken by local groups, it often highlighted the fact that they were not as on top of signage and repairs as they perceived that they were.

3.22 Collation of condition survey results

The project achieved a 100% return rate on condition surveys, which was an impressive achievement given the resources available. It was vital to the project, and particularly for NYCC staff involved, to gain as much information from the surveys as possible in relation to the condition of the network. This in turn enabled the strongest possible foundation for making decisions on future priorities for maintenance and improvement planning. Although this phase of the project did not highlight any major issues, it was, however, very time consuming and the effort that was devoted to the task should be fully appreciated.

3.23 Collation of improvement suggestions

Again, this phase of the project did not highlight any major issues. Suggestions were collated from various sources and quality controlled by the Project Co-ordinator and NYCC Area RoW Officer.

3.24 Role of the Project Co-ordinator

The work of the co-ordinator peaked at various times throughout the project which resulted in a rather erratic workload. However a flexible approach to work planning enabled this to be dealt with successfully. On

average the work involved approximately one day per week, but some weeks required an additional commitment, particularly when liaison meetings are required.

Working from home enabled all hours worked to be effective with no time lost through unnecessary travelling. However, keeping in effective telephone contact with volunteers proved to be one area that was occasionally problematic. Calls were often received from volunteers throughout the whole period between 07.30am and 10.30pm, and not necessarily on days on which the co-ordinator was due to be working on the project. If volunteers require support, they do not wish to and should not have to wait until the next time the co-ordinator is working for their query to be answered. Once again, the flexible work pattern adopted played a key role in dealing with this problem.

The key to the success of the whole project was the creation of the post of Project Co-ordinator. The funding committed to the project, over a six month period, enabled a huge amount of work to be completed by the Project Officer and her network of volunteers. Without the direct local support of a Project Co-ordinator, it is believed that the project would not have succeeded. Equally the work of the Project Co-ordinator would not have been successful without the support of a dedicated and experienced NYCC Area RoW Officer, brought in from another NYCC area.

3.25 Parish Findings

Individual parish findings are included in the Appendices.

3.26 Funding

Phase One of this project was allocated £2,000 for a six month period to fund the role of Project Co-ordinator and volunteer expenses were offered in addition. An attempt was made to secure sponsorship funding from a limited number of local private sector companies at the outset of the project but this proved unsuccessful.

All work was completed within the budget available. Phase One was actually completed over a seven month period, due to the large amount of additional footpath surveys that had to be undertaken, as described above. No volunteers claimed any expenses for their time. The fact that the volunteers devoted so much effort to the project at no cost to the County Council is fully appreciated.

Key Recommendations

- 3.27 The following key recommendations coming out of the pilot project have been discussed and these will be taken forward into phase two:

- One improvement project per Parish should be identified to show progress to Parish Councils;
- An improvement prioritisation scheme should be investigated (noting that NYCC are developing this for the County RoWIP);
- The findings and successful areas identified in this project should be included in the final North Yorkshire RoWIP;
- There should be ongoing use of volunteers to undertake works on those routes they have personally surveyed;
- There should be media coverage to publicise the success of Phase One and any ongoing successes;
- Further funding should be investigated from a variety of sources to take forward specific improvements;
- An attempt should be made to project manage one specific proposal on a key multi user route much in need of improvements to retain and repair its surface, and to phase the work in manageable chunks.
- The project should be continued into Phase Two, supported by the Project Co-ordinator and NYCC PROW Officer. (The NYCC PROW Officer will be in attendance at the LAF meeting in order to answer any specific questions from members).

4.0 OVERVIEW OF PILOT PROJECT

STRENGTHS

4.1 The following list summarises the main strengths of the pilot study:

- Successful engagement with local volunteers providing invaluable local knowledge and enthusiasm and a willingness to help implement improvements that are within the capability of volunteers.
- One or two excellent ideas which have been supported by public consultation results and field staff comments including the proposal for a strategic off road multi user route between Addingham and the Yorkshire Dales National Park.
- 100% of the PROW network surveyed in the pilot area through the input of volunteers.
- Valuable volunteer feedback on how to revise the route survey form.

- The direct association of the bridleway network with the local equestrian economy that the network helps to support. This is just one sector of the economy where there is an impact.
- Views from the group at a local level for improving routes available mostly from smaller local communities.
- The study supported the conclusions of the overall RoWIP assessment that there is potential for conflict between users of the rights of way network and other road users. This may increase with increased traffic volumes and development pressures, the low availability of bridleways in the area and their fragmentation by other highways i.e. roads or footpaths, the growth in recreational pursuits and particularly the size of equestrian establishments and local demand.
- The study has shown how random the County BVPI statistic can be. The overall County survey result outside the National Parks in 2005 was 77% ease of use. However there is huge variability with Parish statistics in the pilot area ranging from the very low to 100% ease of use.
- The project showed the need for flexible local support for local volunteers.
- The need to train all volunteers with a standard approach to surveying and survey form completion.

WEAKNESSES

4.2 Although the Pilot Project has provided many valuable benefits, it must be recognised that it does have some shortcomings. The following list summarises some of the weaknesses that have emerged:

- The pilot has provided a condition survey and maps (to be made available for viewing at the meeting) with a 'wish list' of projects, mostly for bridleway network improvements. It recognises that it is weaker in considering the needs of a wider range of users, including people with different abilities and off road cyclists.
- The assessment tends to consider the local rights of way network in isolation, rather than looking at the use of quieter roads, tracks and other public access areas and how these might help serve local needs.
- The exercise tends to lack the perspective of land owners and managers in terms of acknowledging that a balance has to be struck between all stakeholder interests. This is highlighted for example by the fact that upgrades to current footpaths tend to be looked at rather than a possible re-negotiation of routes to achieve a better alignment for all users. The final RoWIP, like any other planning document, has to balance different and sometimes conflicting views, whereas the pilot project tends to represent one view.

- All survey form data were entered into CAMS. However some survey forms were incomplete and others contained too much detail indicating a training need.
- Studies of small areas, such as that covered by the Skipton Pilot, cannot address the wider strategic context of the network as a whole, for which there are a broader range of issues. The RoWIP is a strategic document and looks to provide strategic public benefit.
- The study looked mainly at creating or upgrading routes. A RoWIP is not just concerned with adding routes for particular users, but a much broader range of issues concerned with the existing network, including priorities, maintenance, promotion and management. In reality some of the routes which have been suggested for upgrade or creation may not be suitable for a variety of reasons including, for example, the nature of the terrain, the management of demand versus route degradation and the implications for maintenance liability and multi user management.
- It was unfortunate that, due to the pressure of other priorities, the local rights of way team based in Skipton could not have been involved more directly in the project, bringing the benefit of their local knowledge and expertise. The pilot project highlighted the heavy workload of the team who have to deal with a network totalling 1,886 km with a relatively small complement of staff.
- The pilot, which was originally envisaged as a public / private partnership, was unsuccessful in obtaining external funding or sponsorship support from local businesses.

CONCLUSIONS

- 4.3 The study undertaken by the project team has yielded a huge amount of valuable information on the local rights of way network which will be invaluable in terms of assisting network maintenance and the planning of future improvement needs.
- 4.4 The pilot project has been a superb example of local people coming together and working closely with the County Council to help it deliver its statutory responsibilities for rights of way maintenance and improvement. The efforts of so many local volunteers who have given up many hours of their own time without payment is particularly impressive and I hope members will agree that this should be formally recognised by the LAF.
- 4.5 The pilot exercise clearly showed the need for thorough training before going out to survey in the field. The NYCC Volunteers Co-ordinator is able to provide standard training for all volunteers and more specific training in the completion of condition survey forms. While training can be viewed as onerous by some individuals, a balance has to be struck and quality information returned means quality information disseminated. While the form might be viewed as not being user friendly by some, it has to be recognised that it has to serve the needs of the volunteer, the rights of way professional in undertaking a BVPI survey, the needs of the data in putter and also the Analyst.

- 4.6 The NYCC Volunteers Co-ordinator can provide a level of local support for this type of local initiative. However, he is centrally based and covers the whole of North Yorkshire outside the National Parks. Local projects of this nature clearly benefit from local co-ordination.
- 4.7 This pilot exercise demonstrates the danger that users can view a RoWIP as a wish list for their needs in terms of improved network at a local level. The better maintenance, management and promotion of the current network can easily be ignored in this type of study. In reality a RoWIP is a strategic planning document which sets out overall policies and strategies for improving local rights of way and balances the needs of a number of stakeholders. It is therefore similar to a local planning document in setting out a framework when assessing individual improvement schemes. However individual improvement schemes are not viewed in isolation of strategic priorities and objectives. Some of the creation/upgrade suggestions can be readily deduced from an assessment of maps based upon local demand but they may not represent the views of those who are not members of user groups or others with wider interests.
- 4.8 The pilot has demonstrated the need for wider local consultation, offering a range of proposals. This is something which NYCC Highways North Yorkshire already does in the development of its Cycle Plans and Service Centre Transportation Strategies. Each Strategy or Plan is subject to a local consultation. With the merger of the RoWIP into the LTP, this level of local consultation will become more readily achievable.
- 4.9 This was a pilot exercise and very valuable lessons have been learned. It would not be practical to undertake this level of intensive study across North Yorkshire, due to the timescales and resources involved. The results nevertheless are very valuable and have already been fed into the evolving process of RoWIP preparation

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- a) the report is received for information;
- b) the key recommendations set out in paragraph 3.27 be accepted and used to guide the evolution of the rights of Way Improvement Plan wherever possible;
and
- c) the local access forum extends its thanks to the Project Co-ordinator and the volunteers involved in the study for their efforts and the valuable contribution they have made to the production of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

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Appendix

FINDINGS REPORT BY THE PROJECT OFFICER

Provided by the Project Co-ordinator (edited by the RoWIP Officer)

Findings from the selected parishes (in the following order)

- Bolton Abbey
- Bradleys Both
- Broughton
- Carleton
- Cononley
- Draughton
- Embsay
- Skipton
- Stirton with Thorlby

Parish: Bolton Abbey

Type of route	Total number of routes in parish	Number of routes surveyed in this pilot	Number of routes surveyed for BVPI	Number of routes requiring work	% Easy to use based on work required
Footpath	1	0	1	0	100%
Bridleway	2	2	0	0	100%

Key issues

- The potential for conflict between users of the local rights of way network and road users crossing over the A59.
- Users walk, cycle or ride on the A59 and other busy roads and verges as a result of a rights of way network which is fragmented by roads and other local rights of way which do not have a compatible status. Notable areas include coming from Embsay Railway to Bolton Abbey and from the A59 along the B6160 to the parking area at Bolton Abbey.
- A low availability of circular routes for equestrians and off road cyclists.
- Possible under use of existing access, the status of which requires investigation.

Characteristics of the parish

- The parish falls partly in North Yorkshire County Council and partly in the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority access areas.

- The parish forms part of the Duke of Devonshire Estate. It does not have many local rights of way but does have many permissive footpaths, many of which are circular and lead from a large designated parking area and more informal riverside parking. There are no permissive equestrian/off road cyclist routes. It is understood that this Estate generates a good income and is certainly a major tourist draw.
- The parking area is close to shops, hotels and pub facilities as well as the Abbey and river which are used as a recreation area especially for families. It provides a pleasant stopping off point for visitors as well as a day and evening trip attraction for nearby conurbations in West Yorkshire.
- There is a fairly high local resident equestrian population in or near this parish and there may be the potential for equestrian related tourism in the future given the attractions of the area for visitors.
- It is anticipated that there could potentially be a high latent demand for off road family cycling and general off road cycling given the close proximity in cycling terms of conurbations in West Yorkshire and the fact that more visitors to the Yorkshire Dales National Park are enjoying it by bike whether on or off road. Cycling, like equestrian pursuits is a growth area with real economic potential for local business. The area is currently very popular for on road cycling.
- It is noted that Sustrans are investigating the re-use of the disused railway between Bolton Abbey and Addingham. It is understood that Addingham Parish Council are looking at the impact that additional tourist business could bring from this potential route.

Parish: Bradleys Both

Type of route	Total number of routes in parish	Number of routes surveyed in this pilot	Number of routes surveyed for BVPI	Number of routes requiring work	% Easy to use based on work required
Footpath	47	46	1	23	51%
Bridleway	2	2	0	2	0%
RUPP	2	2	No data	No data	No data

Key issues

- The potential for conflict between users of the local rights of way network and road users (namely the A629), with the requirement for safe off road alternatives and crossings.
- A fragmented network of bridleways.

Characteristics of the parish

- This parish adjoins Bradford Metropolitan District Council, liaison meetings have been held to discuss linkages between North Yorkshire and this neighbouring highway authority.
- A high resident equestrian population in excess of 30 horses in this parish.

Parish: Broughton

Type of route	Total number of routes in parish	Number of routes surveyed in this pilot	Number of routes surveyed for BVPI	Number of routes requiring work	% Easy to use based on work required
Footpath	9	0	9	4	55%
Bridleway	0	0	0	0	N/A

Key issues

- The potential for conflict between users of the local rights of way network and road users of the A59.
- This parish has no bridleways and very few rights of way in general and therefore it acts as a barrier to equestrians and off road cyclists as well as walkers.
- Uncertainty about the status of some access.

Characteristics of the parish

- This parish is predominantly managed by Broughton Hall Estate.

Parish: Carleton

Type of route	Total number of routes in parish	Number of routes surveyed in this pilot	Number of routes surveyed for BVPI	Number of routes requiring work	% Easy to use based on work required
Footpath	31	29	2	15	52%
Bridleway	5	5	0	1	80%
RUPP	1	1	0	No data	No data

Key issues

- Roads becoming increasingly less quiet with increasing population pressures. Roads are inherently narrow, twisty and increasingly used by fast moving vehicles.
- A low amount of circular routes.

- Lack of riverside access along the River Aire between Skipton, Carleton & Stirton. It should be noted that the river is eroding at some points and this would need to be researched further with regard to the Catchment Management Plan for the Aire produced by the Environment Agency.

Characteristics of the parish

- The area is characterised by an increasing resident population with an influx of lifestyle changers from neighbouring urban West Yorkshire for example as well as other areas. This can increase current and will increase future demand for non-motorised access. It has had a detrimental effect on the quietness of minor roads in the area which are becoming less quiet and increasing the potential for conflict with non-motorised user of the network.
- There is some parking in Carleton for people with different abilities and potential to investigate suitable routes from this area.
- Riverside access has been suggested along the River Aire by a number of volunteers.
- A very high resident equestrian population in excess of 35 horses.

Parish: Cononley

Type of route	Total number of routes in parish	Number of routes surveyed in this pilot	Number of routes surveyed for BVPI	Number of routes requiring work	% Easy to use based on work required
Footpath	26	25	1	23	12%
Bridleway	3	3	0	2	33%
BOAT	1	No data	No data	No data	No data

Key issues

- Equestrian fatality and serious injury due to conflict between users of the rights of way network and road users.
- Rights of way that do not link together well.
- There are hard surfaced routes that are not public rights of way that may lend themselves to helping link the network; however these may become heavily used by other people too.
- A level crossing barrier down for considerable periods of time with no adequate access around the crossing.

Characteristics of the parish

- This area, like Carleton has seen an increase in the resident population with lifestyle changers from other areas including West Yorkshire. This may be due to the fact that Cononley has a station enabling commuters to access Leeds and Bradford fairly easily. This is reducing the quietness of minor roads in the area which are

narrow, twisty and increasing the potential for conflict between non-motorised users and other road users. Future development is in danger of reducing the amount of access available to people from their doorsteps if land use planning does not properly consider access as central in development applications.

- An equestrian population in excess of 35, mostly resident riders.

Parish: Draughton

Type of route	Total number of routes in parish	Number of routes surveyed in this pilot	Number of routes surveyed for BVPI	Number of routes requiring work	% Easy to use based on work required
Footpath	18	18	0	6	67%
Bridleway	4	4	0	2	50%
RUPP	1	1	0	1	0%

Key issues

- Roads with the potential for conflict between users of the rights of way network and other road users due to crossing point issues and fragmentation in the local rights of way network which mean the use of roads to join rights of way together.
- Two noted roads where the potential for conflict between road users and users of the network could be high, the A59 and the A65, the main trunk road through the parish.

Characteristics of the parish

- A riding school is located in this parish with a large resident horse population. This provides employment for 8 members of staff, a vet one day a week, a farrier one day a week and it can take visitors overnight (e.g. from events like Skipton horse trials). There is also a livery yard on the Devonshire Estate. There is potential for both of these businesses to benefit from improvements to the bridleway network, particularly into the future as horse tourism and cycling tourism will grow.
- It is noted that there is the potential for conflict when crossing roads between neighbouring Beamsley Parish and Storiths Parish which is in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Highways North Yorkshire have constructed an underpass to link to the bridleway at Bolton Bridge north of the A59 to the quiet road south of the A59 in Beamsley Parish. Consideration is being given regarding a section of the A59 which links two sections of quiet road from Beamsley to the south of the A59 to Storiths north of the A59, two less well used roads. The quieter roads are used by a variety of users and heavily used by on road cyclists travelling from the Ilkley direction (which has a station and cycle shop) to the Yorkshire Dales.

Parish: Embsay with Eastby

Type of route	Total number of routes in parish	Number of routes surveyed in this pilot	Number of routes surveyed for BVPI	Number of routes requiring work	% Easy to use based on work required
Footpath	6	6	0	5	17%
Bridleway	2	2	0	2	0%

Key issues

- Where local rights of way do not join together, use of roads is made where the potential for conflict between modes arises.
- Improved links into and from the Yorkshire Dales National Park.
- There is the potential to improve access in partnership with: local business; the Devonshire Estate and an open farm offering attractions including educational visits and a café in this parish.

Characteristics of the parish

- A parish that falls between the two access authorities of North Yorkshire County Council and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. Meetings have been held with both access authorities.
- The parish is very attractive in landscape terms which mean that some of the terrain is too steep and other areas can be boggy. This is a consideration in access improvements.
- Attractive areas that generate demand for access include Embsay Cragg and Embsay reservoir. The latter provides parking and walking on permissive routes, access to water sports and it is a popular climbing area.

Parish: Skipton

Type of route	Total number of routes in parish	Number of routes surveyed in this pilot	Number of routes surveyed for BVPI	Number of routes requiring work	% Easy to use based on work required
Footpath	35	32	3	23	34%
Bridleway	2	2	0	2	0%

Key issues

- Two roads where there is potential for conflict between users of the rights of way network and road users, the A59 and A65 which are major trunk roads linking the east and west of the country. These act as a barrier for people wishing to travel by non-motorised means to the Yorkshire Dales and for residents of Embsay, Stirton, Broughton and other parishes to the north to access goods and services in Skipton.
- Lack of circular route provision around Skipton, particularly for horse riders and cyclists and other routes that are poorly maintained.
- Under promotion of current access availability.

Characteristics of the parish

- Skipton is one of the 32 market towns in North Yorkshire, classed as such because it offers goods and services including health (hospital), education, food, major employment, recreational attractions and opportunities and other goods and services. In the future it will have a Transportation Strategy for the area prepared by Highways North Yorkshire. The development of this strategy will take in the findings of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for this area and relevant findings from this pilot project.
- It is understood that there may be one spare 26 metre bridge which might be suitable for use in this Parish to cross a trunk route.
- A lack of promotion, particularly of routes that could be used by the less able and families.
- A suggested riverside route along the River Aire, this would need to be considered in the context of the Catchment Management Plan for the River Aire.
- It is noted that improvements in this parish can enable the joining up of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Bradford Metropolitan District Council area via the rest of North Yorkshire.

Parish: Stirton with Thorlby

Type of route	Total number of routes in parish	Number of routes surveyed in this pilot	Number of routes surveyed for BVPI	Number of routes requiring work	% Easy to use based on work required
Footpath	8	8	0	8	0%
Bridleway	0	0	0	0	0%

Key issues

- The potential for conflict between users of the local rights of way network and road users on the A59/65 bypass. This acts as an access barrier to non-motorised users.

- Towpaths which are inaccessible to cyclists and equestrians. It is understood that horses have ended up in this canal in the past however other areas of the country have used post and rail fencing in order to widen access to all non-motorised users. Options should be investigated further with British Waterways, understanding the safety issues and cost implications involved.
- The possibility to promote pubs with access to benefit the local economy, this is true of many areas of North Yorkshire.
- A very short section of bridleway missing of say 1 metre which would enable a 20 mile section of bridleway to be enjoyed.

Characteristics of the parish

- Stirton is a small hamlet with some quiet roads however it is dissected by the A59/65 bypass. It also has a large caravan site at Tam House.
- There is one equestrian centre in this parish which would benefit from any improvement to the bridleway network as well as having a knock on effect on the local economy and potential for future cycling and equestrian tourism.
- There is a noted UCR in this parish which requires some maintenance to enable it to be used by non-motorised users and may lend itself to access for people with different abilities.
- Investigation of links to and improvements to tow paths with British Waterways may present a real opportunity to widen access for people with different abilities and non-motorised users. This would need to be considered in the context of the strategy which British Waterways has regarding access in this area and the ever present requirement for public safety, an overriding consideration.
- Riverside access along the Aire has been requested to be investigated; this would need to tie in with the Catchment Management Plan for the Aire which will be produced by the Environment Agency. Erosion and flood risk present design implications for access routes, particularly in future proofing and in so doing reducing maintenance liability.
- Rylstone, Cracoe and Hetton parishes, all of which are located beyond Stirton parish on the B6265 have pubs which are within easy cycling and riding distance of Skipton. Residents from these three parishes access Skipton in the opposite direction for goods and services, as well as visitors in the area. Improvements should be prioritised in this context as they benefit a large resident and visitor population.

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