

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

NORTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held at the Council Offices King Street, Pateley Bridge, on Thursday, 24 November 2005.

PRESENT:-

Derek Welford in the Chair.

North Yorkshire County Council: County Councillors Eric Broadbent and Michael S Knaggs.

Other Members: Diane Baines, Leo Crone, David Currie, Edward Dennison, Edward Flexman, John Goss, Nigel Graham, Stephen Ramsden, Judith Radcliffe and Thomas Wheelwright.

Officers: Sarah Glover, Chris Jones, Keith Watkins and Jane Wilkinson.

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor John Fort BEM, and David Gibson.

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

24. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 August 2005, having been printed and circulated be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the following amendments:-

- That the names of Nigel Graham and Edward Flexman be deleted from the list of those named as being present at the meeting.
- Minute No 23 – Date and Time of Next Meeting – the Chairman stated that what he had requested was that in future meeting dates are not altered to accommodate the availability of Officers and/or Members.

25. MATTERS ARISING

Minute No 17 – Management and Maintenance of the Green Lane Network

County Councillor Michael S Knaggs reported that the North York Moors National Park Authority had recently granted a licence authorising the use of green lanes in Dalby Forest for recreational purposes. Thomas Wheelwright stated that the Chief Constable for North Yorkshire had recently been quoted as saying that limited resources meant that the Police are unable to enforce traffic regulation orders in rural and urban areas.

Leo Crone related the details of a recent police enforcement operation in Settle regarding the illegal use of green lanes which had yielded poor results but had been costly to organise. He advocated that Police resources should target at those green lanes subject to Traffic Regulation Orders. On behalf of the user group he

represented he stated he was happy to assist the Police by providing information so as to improve the effectiveness of their future operations.

Members suggested holding a joint meeting with the two other Local Access Forums in North Yorkshire and inviting the Police to attend. The meeting would consider the enforcement of the illegal use of green lanes in North Yorkshire. Inviting representatives from the two other Local Access Forums in the County would help ensure the consistency of the management of green lanes.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That a letter be sent to the Secretary of the North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's Local Access Forums and to North Yorkshire Police inviting them to participate in a joint local access forum meeting to consider enforcement of the illegal use of green lanes in North Yorkshire.
- (ii) That an item on the role of recreational vehicles in the countryside be referred to a future meeting of the Forum.

26. PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS

The Head of Committee Services reported that he had received no indications of any public questions or statements prior to the meeting.

27. RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Officer updating Members with progress since the last meeting regarding preparation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for North Yorkshire.

Members were requested to reply to the letter of invitation they had been sent in respect of the workshops to be held on 9 January 2006.

Members commented that the language used in the draft Humanby Service Centre report was not user friendly and invited officers to use plain English so as to make Service Centre reports easier to understand. They also suggested that the content was strengthened so as to form the basis of successful applications for grant aid and that this was discussed further at the workshops on 9 January 2006. Whilst at present the draft service centre report did contain key issues it was unfocused and failed to reach any conclusions. The draft report also made no specific reference to consideration having been given to people with disabilities.

Members suggested that the format of final Service Centre reports should be a series of bullet points that identified those access needs that would create the biggest difference/improvement in terms of the capital outlay expended and that priorities were established on 9 January by the steering group.

Members also requested that at the workshops on 9 January 2006 officers indicate a timetable for when the routes referred to in the Service Centre reports would be accessible.

Members were in support of the event to be held on 9 January 2006 and looked forward to discussing the content of Service Centre reports in further detail.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That Members of the Local Access Forum together with representatives from the District Councils and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in North Yorkshire and neighbouring highway authorities be invited to attend an all day series of workshops on 9 January 2006 to review Service Centre reports for the Rights of Way Improvement Plans for North Yorkshire.
- (ii) That the comments made by Members at the meeting regarding the content and format of Service Centre reports are referred to the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Officer.
- (iii) That the content of the report be noted.

28. RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN – RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ROWIP) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Officer informing Members of the creation of funds to support the delivery of Rights of Way Improvement Plans.

Members sought clarification of the process whereby funds were received from the Countryside Agency and how they were prioritised by the County Council. The RoWIP Officer agreed to investigate and report back to forum members.

Members were advised that in conjunction with the National Parks a GIS Audit of all Rights of Way in North Yorkshire had been undertaken with regard to looking in more detail at routes which are available to people with different abilities. The Audit had identified the gradient on each route and therefore provided a starting point to do a more detailed physical audit to identify other routes which could be improved which may not have been considered in the RoWIP assessment. This information would assist in route promotion and information for users.

Members suggested that individual user groups are contacted and invited to identify those routes most in need of improvement. The Rights of Way Officer agreed to undertake this work. He also confirmed that the resource of the Volunteer Task Force would also be utilised to identify those routes in need of improvement.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the content of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the RoWIP Officer contacts all stakeholders including users, land interests, and volunteers regarding the Draft RoWIP, inviting them to comment and provide suggestions for local route improvements.

29. OPEN ACCESS VOLUNTEERS

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Access Officer summarising feedback from volunteers and progress made developing the Open Access Volunteer Service.

Members congratulated the Access Officer on the production of a clear, concise and informative report.

In response to a question from Leo Crone, Chris Jones reported that he had no immediate plans to produce maps and leaflets promoting the use of open access land. The limited literature he currently produced referred the public to material

produced by the Countryside Agency. A number of self guide books had been published recently and he had organised and planned a programme of guided walks.

Members referred to Appendix 2 of the report and the actions identified by volunteers and asked whether missing/damaged signs and furniture were replaced on a like for like basis. Members were advised that it was County Council policy to replace stiles with gates in appropriate circumstances.

Stephen Ramsden related his personal experiences of people using independent guide books and suggested that the situation should be monitored. Recently he had encountered several members of the public on his land who whilst in possession of such books had nevertheless lost their way. He urged the use of Ordnance Survey maps at all time and asked if the County Council could give consideration to educating the public in this regard.

Members commended the work carried out by the volunteers who had proved an invaluable asset.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the content of the report be noted.

30. COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY CONSULTATION EXTENSION OF ACCESS MANAGEMENT GRANT SCHEME

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Access Officer on a consultation request received from the Countryside Agency regarding the future of the Access Management Grant Scheme.

Members considered the suggested response set out in the report and made the following comments. That the second bullet point in paragraph 5.2 be amended so as to reflect that it is possible for a landowner to grant permission to local people to walk their dogs on access land where an exclusion exists. That a further bullet point be included as follows “the on going maintenance/upkeep of safety fencing” and that paragraph 5.5 be amended by deleting the following words “if numbers of people using open access land increase next year, some areas may need attention”.

RESOLVED –

That the comments set out in Section 5 of the report be used as the basis of a response to the Countryside Agency subject to incorporating the comments made by Members of the Local Access Forum at the meeting.

31. COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY CONSULTATION PROPOSAL FOR A LONG TERM DIRECTION – ACCESS LAND AT RAISTHORPE ESTATE

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Access Officer briefing the Forum on an application for exclusion to access land at the Raisthorpe Estate, South of Malton, North Yorkshire.

Despite have some reservations about the possible “snowballing” effect consent would have on the numbers of future applications submitted Members nevertheless agreed the suggested response as set out in Section 4 of the report.

RESOLVED –

That the comments as set out in Section 4 of the report be agreed and be sent to the Countryside Agency as the response of the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum to the application for exclusion to access land at the Raisthorpe Estate, Malton.

32. **REVIEW OF THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Head of the Countryside Service on the effectiveness of the Local Access Forum and suggesting options for change.

Members remarked on the poor attendance levels by Members of the public at Forum meetings which could be viewed as an indicator in itself.

Members considered the current operation of the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum against the check list of good and poor practice contained in table 7.1 of the research report and made the following additional comments.

Paragraph Number	LAF MEMBER COMMENTS
1.8	That in future a training/induction day for new members is organised following their appointment.
3.4	That officers facilitate meetings with specific interest groups and LAF members.
4.2	That the recently introduced practice of holding agenda/briefing meetings with the chair/vice chair continues.
4.4	That a regular item be placed on the agenda of all NYCC Area Committees informing them of the items discussed at LAF meetings that are relevant to their area.
4.7	That neighbouring LAFS are informed of the meeting dates of the NYLAF and that there is greater liaison/coordination between the three LAFS in North Yorkshire.
4.8	That the NYLAF develop its own identity as an independent advisory body to the appointing authority (NYCC). The use of its own letter headed paper would help achieve this.
5. Chairmanship	That there is confusion regarding the role of the Forum due to the existence and overlapping remit with the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group. NYCC officers control the LAF agenda which is reactionary. Members agreed that in future the Chair should have more control/participation in the selection of agenda items. All members of the Forum were encouraged to have their say. The length of the agenda and volume of supporting papers was on occasions a burden.

6.1	That further consideration is given to the establishment of a budget for the LAF and in particular the need for a special responsibility allowance for the chairman.
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RESOLVED –

- (i) That a report is submitted to the next meeting of the Forum summarising the modifications that had been put in place.
- (ii) That a further review of the operation of the Local Access Forum is undertaken in November 2006.

33. DEFRA CONSULTATION RELATING TO THE AMENDMENT OF THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUMS (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2002

CONSIDERED –

Report of the Head of the Countryside Service formulating a response on behalf of the Forum to the DEFRA consultation paper on amendment of the Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2002.

RESOLVED –

That the comments as set out in Section 4 of the report are endorsed by the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum and are submitted to DEFRA as the response of the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum to the consultation paper.

34. GEOCACHING

The Forum received a presentation from Jon Beavan, Chairman of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Local Access Forum on the new rapidly growing recreational activity of geocaching. He described the management issues surrounding this new activity and suggested that the Forum may like to consider providing advice on these issues to their appointing authority. Due to the popularity of geocaching some local authorities had taken the step of organising their own trails as a means of encouraging the public to access the countryside. In his opinion appointing authorities should:-

- (i) Recognise and acknowledge geocaching as a recreational activity.
- (ii) Ensure that the geocaching website and relevant trails and cache locations within the area of the appointing authority are monitored regularly.
- (iii) That a pro-active approach is adopted regarding the contacting of “cache owners”.
- (iv) That local landowners are made aware of the activity.

Whilst acknowledging the difficulties, Members recognised the potential educational benefits the activity presented as well as potential business opportunities to landowners. The Chairman thanked Jon Beavan for an excellent and informative presentation. County Councillor Mike Knaggs suggested that a report/presentation on geocaching be referred to the County Council’s Area Committee’s.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the content of the presentation be noted.
- (ii) That Officers at North Yorkshire County Council are made aware of geocaching and take steps to monitor and manage the activity within North Yorkshire.

35. ORDERS RELATING TO PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Access and Public Rights of Way Manager on diversion applications in the vicinity of farmyards and the role of the Ramblers Association.

Members thanked Keith Watkins for producing the report.

Members debated at length the role of the Local Access Forum and agreed that as an advisory body the Forum could only provide the County Council with advice from a position of knowledge. Members stated that they would find it very useful if they could be provided with regular information regarding what the County Council was doing on rights of way. In particular Members were interested in statistical information on the number of stiles repaired/replaced, numbers of complaints, diversions and creation applications received together with relevant performance indicator information.

Keith Watkins stated that the Department did not have the resources available nor was the information requested readily accessible so as to be able officers to comply with the request. Members stressed that they did not want copious amounts of detailed information on individual applications/complaints received merely an overview so as to be able to identify hot spots and problem areas.

The Chairman stated that the Forum was keen to see what was happening on the ground. The Forum received regular progress reports on the Rights of Way Improvement Plan but that it was impossible for Members to retrieve from this what actual improvements had been made and the process whereby works had been identified, prioritised and completed. With the development/establishment of the Open Access Volunteers Programme Keith Watkins was confident that this was an area that would improve in the future. He emphasised that an analysis of the type of statistical information requested by Members was dealt with by the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group. Members were confused at the over-lap/duplication of the role and remit between the Local Access Forum and the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group. Members requested sight of the statistical information produced for the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group and any other available information that the Access and Public Rights of Way Manager considered relevant and that it be referred to the next meeting for Members to take a view on whether the Forum wanted to receive regular reports of this type.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That a report containing performance management type information on Countryside Services be referred to the next meeting of the Forum.
- (ii) That the content of the report be noted.

36. LOCAL ACCESS FORWARD PLAN

Members received the draft future Work Programme for the Forum.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum Forward Plan be noted and approved bearing in mind the comments made by Members earlier in the meeting.

37. ACCESS NEWSLETTER ISSUE NO 14 DEFRA

The Access Newsletter issue No 14 was received and its content noted.

38. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chairman noted that the date of the next meeting was February 2006 and in view of the possibility of bad weather at that time of year suggested that the venue for the meeting be County Hall, Northallerton.

RESOLVED –

That the following meeting dates of the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum are agreed as follows:-

- Thursday, 23 February 2006 – County Hall, Northallerton at 1.00 pm
- Thursday 18 May 2006 – Commencing at 1.00 pm venue to be agreed.
- Thursday 17 August 2006 – Commencing at 1.00 pm venue to be agreed.
- Thursday 16 November 2006 – Commencing at 1.00 pm venue to be agreed.

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

23 February 2006

Rights of Way Improvement Plan
Progress Report

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a progress report with regard to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for North Yorkshire.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Local access forums are required to provide input into the production of Rights of Way Improvement Plans (RoWIPs). There are three local access forums in North Yorkshire, one for North Yorkshire outside the National Park Authority areas and one each for both the North York Moors National Park and Yorkshire Dales National Park.
- 2.2 One Rights of Way Improvement Plan is being prepared for the whole of the County which will be gradually merged into the Local Transport Plan for North Yorkshire. This is a progress report regarding the preparation of the RoWIP.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 In 2004 a public consultation exercise was undertaken in order to establish stakeholder views about improvements to the local rights of way network.
- 3.2 In early 2005 a draft RoWIP statement was submitted as part of the Local Transport Plan for North Yorkshire. During the rest of 2005 a methodology was researched and developed and subsequently implemented for assessing local rights of way across the whole of North Yorkshire.
- 3.3 The assessment was undertaken for the rights of way network by splitting the county into 30 key service centres and the rest of the county into 28 landscape character areas. Service centres were chosen as the Local Transport Plan for North Yorkshire is in the process of developing transport improvements through Service Centre Transportation Strategies and the RoWIP will merge with the LTP. The assessment looked at the availability of local rights of way for people with different abilities, walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- 3.4 In terms of service centres, this involved looking at what was available from the doorstep as well as accessibility between the service centre and the immediate peripheral communities that it serves. For the rest of the

County, which was divided into discrete landscape character areas, the study looked at areas of demand such as availability from smaller settlements or honey-pots, from train stations, bus corridors and canal jetties as well as from car parks where there was no public transport provision. The assessment also looked beyond the County at surrounding areas, particularly where urban areas lie immediately outside the County as this does have an impact on future access planning. The assessment also took on board the four shared priorities of the LTP, safety, accessibility, environmental quality and congestion, looking in particular at the safety of users of the local rights of way network.

- 3.5 This culminated in a 200 page research assessment report which was distributed to steering group and local access forum members in December 2005. All members should have received this report. A separate county level assessment will be made for horse & carriage driving and the considerations provided by the statutory guidance in assessing lawful vehicular use of the local rights of way network. This has to take into consideration recent changes in the way that National Parks will be able to manage vehicular use of the local rights of way network in the future.
- 3.6 A wider steering group meeting was held on 9 January 2006 to review the assessment report. All field officers were invited to attend this event, having played such an instrumental role in providing information for the assessment. This included Rangers from the National Parks and Area Rights of Way staff from the County Council, the first time all field staff from the three authorities had been together for such an event. All local access forum members were invited to attend from the three LAFs in North Yorkshire. Regular steering group members attended with Officers from District/ Borough Councils, AONB Officers and other access authority staff. Staff from surrounding highway authorities were invited to attend as well as representatives from Defra (Environmental Stewardship policy), the Countryside Agency and Highways North Yorkshire, who provided advice and support in finalising the assessment with regard to shared priorities, passenger transport, Service Centre Transportation Plans and Cycle Plans. There were also additional staff from the NYCC Planning Policy Unit who are preparing the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment for the Plan. Just over 100 people were in attendance.
- 3.7 The event started with an introduction from County Councillor John Fort, the chair of the steering group, an overview from Simon Smales, Assistant Director, Planning & Countryside Unit at NYCC and a general introduction to the day from the RoWIP Officer.
- 3.8 People were then allocated to workshop groups. There were seven workshop groups in total for both the morning and afternoon session. These corresponded to District Council boundaries. In the morning, groups focused on the service centre assessments for their respective

District Council area. In the afternoon, a review was undertaken of landscape character areas. The event closed at approximately 3.30pm with a closing address from County Councillor John Fort.

- 3.9 The workshops looked at whether the key access issues which were contained in the RoWIP assessment pack for each service centre or landscape character area were a true reflection of all issues for that centre or area. Where groups felt that there were additional issues, these were added. The groups were asked to prioritise the top three issues for each centre or area. The RoWIP Officer asked workshop groups to look particularly at promotion, education, training and softer issues which were not fully explored in preparing the assessment.
- 3.10 Each group had an experienced facilitator. Facilitators included District Council Officers, County Council Officers, National Park Officers and AONB Officers who were briefed beforehand and did a very good job.
- 3.11 The priorities and additional comments have been added to a spreadsheet containing the key issues. The workshop was not designed to go into detail but to concentrate on the broad strategies for the service centre or landscape character area; however some detail was provided during workshop discussions. This will be added to the spatial database which holds improvement ideas and suggestions from the public. However this level of detail will not be included in the Plan.
- 3.12 The technical group met in late January to agree how this information is to be presented in the final report. The assessment is rather lengthy and it will need to be edited to ensure that the final document remains strategic, concise and accessible to a wide audience. The assessment was done in some detail in order to show the thoroughness of the process. It is anticipated that the top access issues will be represented by broad and concise local strategies for improving local rights of way.
- 3.13 Overall strategies will be expanded with regard to improving local rights of way across North Yorkshire and will be supplemented by local strategies to provide a local focus in a fairly large County. The local strategies in turn will lead to detailed and specific projects which can be delivered in the future. In this way there will be a cascade from strategic policies to local strategies and then to detailed projects. The strategic and local strategies will be reflected in a Statement of Action. This is a strategic project plan which will form a chapter of the RoWIP. The City of York RoWIP and the Hampshire County Council RoWIP provide examples of how this has been developed by other authorities.
- 3.14 Work has been started on writing the remainder of the RoWIP. Three chapters have been drafted so far. At this stage, it is thought there will be approximately twelve chapters, although this will be agreed at the next technical group meeting. Chapters will vary in length and complexity.

OTHER PROGRESS

- 3.15 Members will recall that a draft RoWIP position statement was submitted for inclusion in the Local Transport Plan in January 2005. This followed analysis of the initial public consultation results from 2004 and three steering group meetings which were held between September and December 2004 in order to agree the submission. The final Local Transport Plan is to be produced by March 2006 and therefore a revised position statement was required for the RoWIP to bring it up to date at March 2006. Very minor alterations were made to the draft position statement to incorporate progress made during 2005.
- 3.16 A tender document has been submitted in order to find a suitable publisher for the RoWIP. It is anticipated that there will be two available formats for the draft and final RoWIP, though this has to be finalised. One proposed format is a user friendly 20 page RoWIP pamphlet containing clear, concise text and illustrations which is easily understood and can be made available to a wide audience. This will detail overall strategies and top local priorities and explain what the RoWIP is all about. The statutory RoWIP document will be in a different format which will probably be similar to the Local Transport Plan. Being a more technical document, it will be more bulky with Appendices.
- 3.17 At this stage, it is envisaged that a first draft of the RoWIP will be available by mid summer and it is hoped to bring this to the LAF at its meeting in August, prior to approval by the County Council's Executive, as a basis for consultation. If this timescale does not prove to be feasible, a special meeting of the LAF will be convened to seek their approval.
- 3.18 The RoWIP Officer has been in contact with the Countryside Agency in order to set up a meeting regarding the RoWIP grant funding. This is likely to take place in February 2006. As this grant funds projects up to 50% of their cost, some work is required in preparing projects for funding and delivery. The development of the Statement of Action is key to this process as it identifies partners and funders, timescales, risks and outcomes. The job description for the existing post of Mapping and Information Officer has been re-drafted to focus on the next stage of implementation. A 'new' post of Project Development Officer will be advertised in the near future to help take this work forward.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- a) This report is received for information.

Contact Officer:

Angela Flowers

PROW Improvement Plan Officer

01609 532774

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.

Author:

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Skipton Pilot Project

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

23 February 2006

OPEN ACCESS UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.2 The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress of Open Access in North Yorkshire.

2.0 Background

2.1 The whole of North Yorkshire has now gone 'live' for open access. The last area to be commenced was in the south of the county at the end of last year. We are currently in the second year of the Countryside Agency's Access Management Grant Scheme. The scheme was due to finish at the end of this financial year but there has now been an extension to the scheme for another year.

3.0 Access Management Grant Scheme

3.1 We were awarded a grant of £48,835 for the current financial year. The grant is made up of four different elements: infrastructure work; fire planning; volunteer expenses; and leaflets.

3.2 Infrastructure work mainly consisted of installing information points. New information points have been installed in the Forest of Bowland AONB and on Skipwith Common as well as individual locations around the county.

3.3 In terms of fire planning, we have been working with the Fire Service and the Mooland Association to update the information held by the Fire Service and to fill in gaps where there is no information currently available. This work is under way and will be completed before next summer. We are also in the process of producing an educational leaflet specifically aimed at moorland visitors to highlight the devastation that moorland fires can cause and tell people how they can help prevent them. We are also looking at the cost/benefit of providing fire beaters at certain locations to help tackle fires if they break out.

3.4 The grant for volunteer expenses is being used to support ongoing service costs and a small expansion.

3.5 We have produced a special edition leaflet with the Nidderdale AONB focusing on Open Access and have also updated the Countryside Service leaflet 'Open Access in North Yorkshire'.

3.6 We will soon be putting a bid together for next financial year. It is envisaged that the main element of the bid will be funding to support the volunteer service.

4.0 Open Access Volunteers

- 4.1 The access volunteers continue to provide an excellent service. There has not been a weekend yet when no volunteers have been out patrolling. We have grown the service by recruiting 10 more volunteers. Existing volunteers are training the new volunteers along side more formal classroom training.
- 4.2 Through the feedback we get from each patrol, we are developing a picture of how the new access rights are being received by the public. There is still little evidence of people using the rights in any significant numbers and there has been a reduction in walkers over the winter season. There have been a few isolated incidents of dogs in restricted areas. These incidents have been mainly dealt with by the volunteers and on more than one occasion the dogs and walkers have been local. The most reported incidences are of off-road bikes on bridleways and footpaths. Appendix 1 lists other issues reported by the volunteers.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 It is recommended that this report be received for information.

Author of report

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Description	Grid Reference	Date reported	Notes	Action
Camper van parking over night	SE156637	25/09/2005	Registration noted E298XDN	Informed the estate
Style in need of repair	SE140560	24/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Footpath needing waymarking	SE087730 to 099727	24/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Suggested a information point at car park to crags	SE178506	18/09/2005		Noted
Fly tipping at access point		17/09/2005	HBC already been out	Suggested some signs at car park to HBC
ROW obstructed by locked gate	SE118548	17/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Rubbish left in shelter	SE066773	15/09/2005		Removed by volunteers
50% off tea and cakes for access volunteers at Woodale Farm Tea Shop	SE073772	11/09/2005		Inform other volunteers!
Footpath hard to follow	SE195746 to 192752	04/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Path needs bracken clearing	SE639163	04/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Fly tipping at access point	SE178506	30/10/2005	On going issue	Talking to HBC
Footpath hard to follow	SE195746 to 192752	30/10/2005	Already reported	Route been formally surveyed, improvements due to start early 2006
Access point used to tip root vegetables	SE113638	29/10/2005		Access point moved to Miners Arms
Footpath needing waymarking	SE148798 to 143778	29/10/2005		Informed Skipton
Damaged culvert	SE038772	16/10/2005		Informed Skipton
Broken bench	SE056766	08/10/2005		Informed Yorkshire Water
Litter at car park	SE169553	27/11/2005		Picked up by volunteer
Damaged fingerpost	SE043782	20/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Damaged stile	SE152642	20/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Out of date closure notices	SE156643	13/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Ladder stile needing repair	SE552132	13/11/2005		Mended
Footpath hard to follow	SE195746 to 192752	13/11/2005	Already reported	Route been formally surveyed, improvements due to start early 2006

Broken stile	SE133554	12/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Broken stile	SE143564	12/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Fly tipping at access point	SE156637	06/11/2005		Informed HBC
Access sign removed	SE128593	31/12/2005		Reported to the police
Burnt out car	SE114596	31/12/2005		Informed estate
Broken finger posts	SE044783	18/12/2005	Already reported	Informed Skipton
Stile missing	SE111632	11/12/2005		Informed Skipton
Stile missing	SE109622	12/12/2005		Informed Skipton

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

23 February 2006

Use of Access Land for Training Racehorses

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek the Local Access Forum's views on issues relating to the training of racehorses on access land.

2.0 Background

2.1 This report is concerned with interpretation of a section of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. There is a section in the Act that lists "excepted land". Excepted land is land that has been mapped as open access but is not available to the public for access. Within this list is "land habitually used for the training of racehorses". There is a sub section that explains that this land is only excepted "between dawn and midday and any other time the land is used for training". There is also a section that gives access authorities the power to remove signs that are misleading and the power to enter land to erect signs or remove them. The legislation can be found: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>

3.0 Questions raised by the Ramblers Association

3.1 An approach has been made by a local member of the Ramblers Association concerning open access land at Thixendale in the Yorkshire Wolds, where a land manager erected notices at the entry points to a parcel of access land reading 'Excepted Land No Access'. The land is used for the training of racehorses and therefore would appear to fall within the definition of 'excepted land' set out above. The land manager has agreed to change the signs but he has concerns about the safety of the access land due to it being used as a gallop. The land manager is also a farmer and it is often the case that he does not get onto the gallops until the afternoon. This is the time when people have access onto the land if they are not aware horses are being galloped. The following questions have been raised by the Ramblers Association:

1. "What is a racehorse and what is training? No general racehorse training activity has been seen at the site. Horses do graze on the land and there are a number of jumps in it. Mr Brader does not appear to hold a trainers licence nor does anyone else within 10 miles. I would suggest that a racehorse is a horse registered with the appropriate authority to take part in flat racing, steeple chasing or hurdling. I would query whether point-to-point horses should be included and show jumping and dressage horses should definitely be excluded. As far as I am aware anyone training racehorses must be registered with the Jockey Club and have their own premises. Training would seem to exclude breaking in and schooling, which would not take place on open land, but to comprise gallops, normally on fixed routes, and jumping over racecourse type jumps.

I have not read the reports of the debates but I would have thought that the reason for the exclusion was to protect walkers from suddenly being confronted by a string of racehorses galloping at speed. If horses are merely grazing on the access land they are not being trained and form no more danger than cows in a similar situation.

2. Can the landowner just declare an exception because of racehorses or are the Access Authority/CA/Defra able to ask him to prove that there are racehorses in training. Trainers often use different areas for summer and winter training in which case the exception would not apply for all the year. If the agencies cannot get proof that there are racehorses in training it would be open to walkers to exercise their rights, ignore the notices and see if the landowner takes any action.
3. S 19 of CROW gives the power to erect notices and to consult and S40 (2)(c) gives the power to enter on land to erect a notice. To me this reads as being able to erect notices on land without the owners consent or giving them a power to dictate the wording. I appreciate that you will normally try and obtain agreement about both matters but at the end of the day surely you have to take the final decision. Would you agree that all notices regarding access should bear the access symbol?
4. How long can the Access Authority wait to take any necessary action before Mr Brader decides to make a formal application for a restriction order bearing in mind that this may be a delaying ploy?
5. Correct notices should be erected on all accesses to the excepted land and notices confirming unrestricted access should be put up on the nearby unrestricted access land. I would suggest that to assist the public the notice should give more information about the reason for the morning restriction. What has happened at other racehorse training grounds such as Middleham?"

4.0 Responses to questions

4.1 We have looked into the questions raised by the Ramblers Association and in consultation with other organisations have attempted to answer them.

1. There is no definition of what a racehorse is within the act and so it is open to interpretation. We have been to visit the tenant farmer who manages the land in question. As part of his business the family train and race point-to-point racehorses and are registered with Whetherby's. We have visited the gallops and have seen evidence that horses are trained there. As such we are satisfied that horses are galloped in the dale and we have no reason to disagree with the land manager. Further information supplied by the Jockey Club would suggest that the training of horses for point-to-point should also fall within the definition of racehorse training.

2. In the act there is no requirement for the access authority or any other authority to check each parcel of land that has been declared as land used for the training of racehorses. An individual or organisation could argue against the land manager's declaration through the courts.
3. We have used the following wording on the notices:

CAUTION

RACEHORSES IN TRAINING

THERE IS NO RIGHT OF ACCESS ON THIS LAND
BETWEEN DAWN AND MIDDAY AND AT ANY OTHER
TIME WHEN RACEHORSES ARE IN TRAINING.

We eventually used this wording for two reasons. Firstly it was suggested to us by the Countryside Agency when we had a similar issue at the gallops in Middleham. If it is accepted that the land at Thixendale is used in a similar way for the training of racehorses, then there is a need for the message to be consistent at both sites. Secondly, the wording has been discussed and agreed with the landowner. Advice given by DEFRA is that such issues should wherever possible be resolved by agreement. For these reasons we are inclined to keep on using his wording. The original misleading signs have been removed and replaced with factual signs, phrased within the terms of the legislation. It is accepted that the signs do need to have the open access symbol along side the sign, so people can associate the wording with the access legislation. For this reason, symbols have now been erected at the sites.

4. The land manager has serious concerns about the safety of jockeys, horses and walkers. He is proposing to apply to the Countryside Agency for seasonal restrictions. If he is successful, the signage will have to be changed to reflect the new circumstances.
5. We agree that notices need to be sited at two other access points to the same block of land so that it is clear which area is affected.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the action taken by the County Council, the response set out above to the questions raised by the Ramblers Association, and to concur that the action taken is appropriate in the circumstances.

Author of Report

Chris Jones
Access Officer
01423 712950

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

23 February 2006

Ranger Service on Barden Fell

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.2 The purpose of this report is to explain a forthcoming extension to the area covered by the Open Access Volunteer Service in relation to Barden Fell and to seek views from the LAF on the options available for future wardening.

2.0 Background

2.1 Barden Fell and Barden Moor are part of the Bolton Abbey Estate and cover some 14,000 acres of mainly open moorland owned by the Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement. In 1968 the then West Riding County Council negotiated an Access Agreement under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 with the estate which enabled public access to defined areas of open country on either side of the Wharfe Valley north of Bolton Abbey. Bolton Moor lies to the west of the River Wharfe and Bolton Fell to the east. Approximately 49% of the Barden Fell block lies outside the National Park.

2.2 In 1974, following the re-organisation of local government, responsibility for this agreement passed to the Yorkshire Dales National Park, as the majority of the land fell within the National Park. The access provisions granted under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act are very similar to those under the CROW Act 2000, although there are some important differences. The main difference is that the estate has more control over when access to the land can be closed. Members should note that the Agreement land has been mapped as open access land and will be managed under CROW Act legislation when the existing agreement expires in 2018.

2.3 Under the Agreement, there is a requirement for the local authority to warden the area on behalf of the estate and this responsibility passed to the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP) with the Agreement in 1974. Since 1989, however, the County Council has made an annual payment to YDNP to support the cost of wardening that section of the Agreement land that falls outside the National Park.

2.4 As the County Council has now developed its own Open Access Volunteer Service, there is now the capacity to warden the areas outside the National Park independently. It is therefore proposed to introduce new wardening arrangements for the forthcoming season. Discussions have been held with YDNP to agree how the transfer can take place and how future co-ordination can be achieved.

2.5 Attached to the report is a map illustrating the Barden Fell showing the access area and the National Park/AONB boundary.

3.0 Wardening Options

- 3.1 YDNP currently warden the Moor and Fell as two separate blocks. It is within the Barden Fell area that there is access land outside the National Park. This area covers Kex Gill Moor, Rocking Moor and The Great Stray. When the County Council takes over responsibility for wardening this area, there are two options available.
- 3.2 Option 1 – We could brief willing volunteers to patrol only the section outside the National Park. This would replace the need for the YDNP volunteers to patrol this area and satisfy the terms of the access agreement.
- 3.3 The benefits of this approach would be that, once the volunteers are trained, we can patrol this area independently and it would neatly define the responsibilities between the National Park and the County Council. However the area of land outside the National Park tends to be less popular with walkers and receives relatively few visitors. There is a risk that the volunteers might find these patrols unrewarding and we could be in a situation where we find it hard to attract people to patrol this area. This would cause a problem as there would still be a requirement under the access agreement to patrol this land.
- 3.4 Option 2 – We could treat the Fell as a whole block and work jointly with the YDNP to satisfy the wardening requirement. Under this arrangement, our volunteers would work along side the existing National Park volunteers to warden Barden Fell as a single block.
- 3.5 The YDNP rotas for wardening Barden Fell in 2006 are almost complete, so for the first year we would use our volunteers to fill in any gaps in the rota and provide extra cover when needed. In subsequent years the rota would be available for all volunteers to bid for at the same time.
- 3.6 The benefits of this approach are that the volunteers would be part of an existing team and would benefit from the experience already gained by existing volunteers. They would also get the opportunity to patrol land outside their normal area, including areas that are very popular such as Simon's Seat. The main disadvantage of this option is that we would be patrolling an area larger than we need to under the terms of the agreement, potentially requiring a bigger resource input.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The two options both provide workable solutions with positive and negative aspects. On balance, it is felt that the Option 2 would be preferable for the following reasons.
1. It would give our volunteers the ability to patrol new areas and would provide the opportunity for networking with other like-minded volunteers.
 2. It would provide the opportunity of working with the National Park, sharing our experiences, which could be beneficial to both parties.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 It is recommended that future arrangements for wardening the area of Barden Fell outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park be negotiated on the basis of an integrated NYCC/YDNP partnership, in line with Option 2 in paragraph 4.1 above

Author of Report

Chris Jones
Access Officer
01423 712950

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

23 February 2006

Information on Public Rights of Way

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the provision of information on PROW to inform the work of the Local Access Forum

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the last meeting of the Local Access Forum on 24 November 2005, members considered a report on orders relating to public rights of way and the role of the LAF. This led to a discussion on the level of information that might be made available to enable the LAF to more fully understand what was happening 'on the ground'. Reference was also made to the work of the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group as this already received regular progress reports on specific issues. Officers were asked to report back on the statistical information already produced for the Liaison Group and any other relevant information to enable the LAF to take a view on whether it wished to receive regular reports of this type.

3.0 INFORMATION CURRENTLY COMPILED

- 3.1 The Countryside Service already compiles information on a range of work areas to assist with performance management, using a variety of national and local indicators. These are summarised in its annual Service Plan. Those indicators related specifically to public rights of way include:

Best Value Performance Indicators

- The percentage of footpaths and public rights of way that are easy to use by the public (**national BVPI 178**) – data included *for the whole County*, including the National Parks).

Council Plan Key Performance Indicators

- Resolve 800 problems on the public rights of way network each quarter (**local indicator ENV2**).
- Ensure that at least 75% of public rights of way are easy to use by 2006 (**local indicator ENV3**) – data included *for the area outside the National Parks only*

Countryside Service Local Performance Indicators

- The number of Definitive Map Modification Orders sent to Head of Legal Services – target 40 per year

3.2 Progress against targets is monitored annually (or quarterly where this is possible). During 2006/2007 the Countryside Service will be publishing the first of a regular series of Annual Reports. This will include end of year data on actual performance against the indicators listed above, as well as a range of additional statistics aimed at demonstrating improvements in a much wider range of work areas. It has yet to be decided exactly what measures this might include but it may well provide an opportunity to increase the range of information regularly monitored and therefore to address the desire of the Local Access Forum for more detailed information on the service. This Annual Report will be compiled at the end of the financial year. It will be reported to the County Council's Environment and Heritage Overview on Scrutiny Committee on 5 July 2006 and, following approval by the Executive, will be published during August. The Annual Report will therefore be available at the Local Access Forum meeting on 17 August and for each subsequent annual summer meeting, thereby providing a useful opportunity for the LAF to consider service performance at regular intervals.

3.3 Members also asked for details of information currently reported to the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group. The Liaison Group meets on a quarterly basis and has representatives from the following bodies:

- Ramblers Association
- Trail Riders Fellowship,
- British Horse Society
- National Federation of Bridleways Association,
- Cycle Tourist Club
- All Wheel Drive Club
- Land Access Recreation Association
- Country Landowners Association,
- National Farmers Union
- Yorkshire Rural Community Council
- Open Spaces Society
- National Trust
- NYCC Executive Member (Chair)
- NYCC Countryside Service Officers

Unlike the Local Access Forum, representatives are nominated by their particular user groups and are able to formally represent their views. The Liaison Group provides a valuable opportunity to meet regularly with user groups which have an interest in public rights of way to facilitate a two-way exchange of views and flow of information.

3.4 The Liaison Group receives reports on a range of issues. Some of the more regular items include:

- An annual budget update (see Appendix 1)
- Progress with Definitive Map Modification Orders (see Appendix 2)

- Bridge Maintenance (see Appendix 3)
- Updates on the Countryside Volunteer Service (the LAF receives more specific information on the open access element of this)
- Updates on progress with the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (very similar to the comparable LAF report)
- Updates and improvements on the County Council's written policies on such issues as Definitive Map Modification Orders, Ploughing and Cropping, Stiles and Gates, Diversion Orders, Obstructions and Maintenance. Most of these policies pre-date the formation of the LAF and work is ongoing on a comprehensive review. These will be reported to the LAF for their views as and when they are produced.

3.5 Members will appreciate that there is a degree of overlap between the work of the Liaison Group and that of the LAF, although the two bodies have quite different remits. It is intended to undertake a review of the relationship between the two groups over the next few months with a view to streamlining procedures and avoiding any duplication of effort. The outcome will be reported to a future meeting of the LAF.

3.6 Much valuable data is input to the County Council's Countryside Access Management System (CAMS) which is the main database for recording reports of deficiencies in the network and improvements that have been made. Until recently it has been difficult to produce output from the database quickly and efficiently and this has meant that in the past there have been constraints on what information could be provided within the limited staff resources available. The CAMS software has recently been upgraded, however, and it is hoped that in future it will be possible to produce outputs in the format needed much more easily than in the past. An additional difficulty is that the person responsible for maintaining and operating the CAMS system has recently retired. Recruitment to this post is underway. A new Access and Rights of Way Manager will also be taking up post in early April. It is hoped these new appointments will provide an opportunity to re-evaluate how performance management can be improved using a wider range of measures and that this data can then be fed into the work of the Local Access Forum to enable it to provide advice from a more informed position.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The production of an Annual Report on the work of the Countryside Service will provide a regular opportunity to monitor future service delivery and the level of information included within this report is expected to increase over time. Additional data on specific elements of the service is already provided to the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group and could be copied to the LAF if this would be helpful, although duplication needs to be avoided. The overlap between the work of the two groups is being reviewed to see if improvements can be made.

4.2 In addition to the above, it is hoped that in future the Countryside Service will be in a position to produce more detailed information on outputs which can be fed into the work of the LAF. It would be helpful as part of this evolving work if the LAF could indicate a few priority areas where more information would be particularly useful and every effort will then be made to see if this is would be feasible.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- a) The report be received for information
- b) Members consider what specific type of information they feel would be useful to receive to support the work of the Local Access Forum, bearing in mind the data that is already available and the constraints on the service.

Contact Officer:

John Edwards

Head of Countryside Services

01609 532452

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY LIAISON GROUP

15 September 2005

Public Rights of Way Budget

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide details of current budget provision and expenditure on PROW in North Yorkshire outside the National Parks.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 A budget report was provided to the Liaison Group at its meeting in September 2004 summarising information on the previous year's out-turn against budget and the current year's budget. The Group requested a similar report in future years.

3.0 EXPENDITURE IN 2004/2005

3.1 Expenditure by the Area Rights of Way Officers on maintenance of the network in 2004/2005 amounted to £257.8k against a budget allocation of £214.8k. The increased spend was met from elsewhere within the PROW budget, e.g. the CROW Act. In addition, specific funding was allocated to the Howardian Hills AONB to complete the final year of the long running improvement programme. This attracted external funding from the Countryside Agency, giving a final spend of £27.3k. A further £72.9 was committed to maintenance works through the Community Paths Initiative. £156.4k of the LPSA allocation was committed, the balance rolling forward into the current year. In addition £12.2k of the CROW Act budget was committed, the balance being used to support an increased spend on maintenance, to help meet the LPSA target.

4.0 BUDGET ALLOCATION IN 2005/2006

4.1 The base budget available for maintenance of the network in 2005/2006 amounts to £241.3k. This compares to £214.8k in 2004/2005, an increase of 12.3%. In line with normal practice, a core budget of £30-50k has been allocated to each area team, with the balance held centrally to be allocated in the autumn depending on demand.

4.2 The Howardian Hills AONB improvement programme has now been completed with the result that the entire network has been upgraded to a high standard. Following the successful establishment of the Countryside Volunteer programme and the appointment of Countryside Rangers in each

area office, the Community Paths Initiative has now been discontinued. The project budget has been re-allocated to support the cost of the Rangers.

- 4.3 The CROW Act budget has been increased from £41.8k to £92.8k, an increase of 122%. This is being used for a variety of purposes including the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, the countryside volunteer programme and open access. Any balance will be directed towards maintenance of the network, although it is unclear at this stage how much this is likely to be.
- 4.4 The budget for the final year of the LPSA programme amounts to £142.7k, comprising the annual allocation of £112k with a carry forward from 2004/2005 of £30.7k. Of the total sum, £80k has been divided equally between the four area teams for works related directly to improving the network. This must be fully committed by the end of November 2005 and therefore is being given priority by area staff. The balance of the LPSA funding is being used to support the Countryside Volunteer programme and other support costs directly related to improving the network.
- 4.5 In addition to the above, £70k of new funding has been allocated to the Countryside Service in 2005/2006 to deliver Best Value improvements. This is being used in line with the recommendations included in the Action Plan and is being targeted particularly at supporting staff costs in the Rights of Way and Countryside Management Sections.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the report be received for information

Contact Officer:
John Edwards
Head of Countryside Services
01609 532452

Public Rights of Way	2004/2005	2004/2005	2005/2006
'Project' Expenditure ¹	Out-turn ²	Budget	Budget
	£k	£k	£k
Area 1 Maintenance	37.4	30	30
Area 2 Maintenance	65.3	38	30
Area 3 Maintenance	79.2	50	50
Area 4 Maintenance	56.1	30	30
Central Maintenance ³	19.8	66.8	101.3
Total Area Maintenance	257.8	214.8	241.3
Howardian Hills PROW	27.3	20	
Community Paths Initiative	72.9	70.4	
Total Other Maintenance	100.2	90.4	
CROW Act	12.2	41.8	92.8
LPSA	156.4	187.1	142.7
Total Miscellaneous	168.6	228.9	235.5
TOTAL ALL PROJECTS	526.6	534.1	476.8
Best Value Growth ⁴	130	130	70

¹ Excluding staffing and related expenditure and income

² Includes income from partner bodies eg Countryside Agency

³ Maintenance budget initially held centrally and then divided up between areas depending upon demand

⁴ Largely related to staffing

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY LIAISON GROUP

15 December 2005

County Public Rights of Way
Definitive Map Modification Order Applications - an Update

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update to Members on the progress with the processing of Definitive Map Modification Order applications since the last meeting, and provide an overview of the year.

2.0 RECENT DETERMINATIONS

2.1 Nine applications have been completely determined since the last meeting;

- i) 00/01 Hambleton Stokesley Levenside (BOAT)
 - Application withdrawn following a Creation Order for a FP.
- ii) Harrogate Markington with Wallerthwaite Hincks Hall (BW)
 - Creation Agreement negotiated to circumvent a MO application being made.
- iii) 04/03 Ryedale Thornton Le Clay Off Low Street (FP)
 - Modification Order was confirmed unopposed.
- iv) 86/06 Ryedale Ganton Potter Brompton Plantation (BW)
 - File closed due to insufficient information on the file.
- v) 93/13 Ryedale Wharram Tunnel Plantation (FP)
 - File closed after consultation.
- vi) 92/19 Scarborough Osgodby Osgodby Reservoir (FP)
 - Creation Agreement made to resolve MO application.
- vii) 92/13 Selby Hemingbrough Mill Lane to Landing Ln (FP)
 - File closed due to insufficient information on the file.

viii) 00/04 Selby North Duffield Hall Fm to Park Fm (FP)

- Following the public inquiry in August the Inspector decided not to confirm the Order.

ix) 92/04 Selby Beal East Ings Lane (FP)

- File closed after consultation.

3.0 APPLICATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY AREA COMMITTEES

3.1 Four applications are to be considered at Area Committees within the next couple of months.

i) 04/10 Harrogate Marton-cum-Grafton Main St to Back Ln (FP)

- to be reported to the next Area Committee to recommend forwarding to the Secretary of State for determination.

ii) 01/09 Harrogate Stonebeck Up Scarhouse Dam (BOAT)

- to be reported to the next Area Committee to recommend forwarding to the Secretary of State for determination.

iii) 04/04 Harrogate Bishop Thornton Shaw Mills (BW)

- to be reported to the next Area Committee to recommend an Order be made.

iv) 98/03 Selby Great Heck Booty Lane (FP)

- to be reported to the next Area Committee to recommend forwarding to the Secretary of State for determination.

4.0 NEW APPLICATIONS

4.1 We have received 11 new applications for DMMOs since the last meeting:-

i) 05/10 Harrogate Stonebeck Up Carle Fell Road (BOAT)

ii) 05/11 Harrogate Colsterdale Agra Moor (BOAT)

iii) 05/12 Harrogate Harrogate Borough Bilton Lane (BW)

iv) 05/13 Harrogate Laverton Wetshod Lane (BOAT)

v) 05/15 Richmondshire West Appleton Stripe Lane (BW)

vi)	05/16 Craven	Coniston Cold	Stainton Cotes (BOAT)
vii)	05/17 Craven	Giggleswick	Craven Ridge (BOAT)
viii)	05/18 Craven	Gargrave	Mark House Lane (BOAT)
ix)	05/19 Craven	Coniston Cold	Nr Newton Hall (BOAT)
x)	05/20 Harrogate	Masham	Black Bull Yard (FP)
xi)	05/21 Hambleton	Dalton	Back Lane (BOAT)

The extraordinary number of new applications for BOATS (or upgrades to BOATs) reflects the current concerns about the imminent implementations under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Bill (which would introduce a cut-off date restricting the creation of new vehicular rights of way). Despite the national serious concerns about local authorities being swamped with applications leading up to the 2026 cut off date, up to now we had not had a particular increase in BOAT applications. Since the writing of this report there should have been a Parliamentary decision as to the future of applications for BOATs. We can expect further numerous BOAT applications unless the NERC Bill implements an immediate cut off date.

4.2 21 new applications have been received this year; 6 of those are for a footpath, 4 for a bridleway, and 11 for BOATs (or upgrades to BOATs).

5.0 APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED IN 2005

5.1 28 applications have been considered and resolved this year, as listed and attached in Appendix 1. A further 43 are under investigation.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 That Members note the report.

Presenter of the Report :- Penny Noake
 Author of the Report :- Penny Noake
 Definitive Map Officer
 (01609) 532245

1 December 2005

North Yorkshire County Council

DMMO Applications Resolved During 2005

Ref no	District	Parish	File No	Location	
99/05	Craven	Carleton	R1/10E	VICARS ROW TO BECKSIDE	To Add a
				Footpath	
87/09	Craven	Giggleswick	R1/21B	TEMS SIDE & BUCK Lane	To Add a
				Footpath	
97/01	Craven	Sutton-in-Craven	R1/39G	HOLME BRIDGE TO THE HAWTHORNS	To Add a
				Footpath	
99/19	Hambleton	Maunby	R2/98A	OLD RAILWAY BRIDGE	To Add a
				BOAT	
99/22	Hambleton	Seamer	R2/126A	BY VILLAGE HALL TO FP 3	To Add a
				Footpath	
00/01	Hambleton	Stokesley	R2/140A	LEVENSIDE TO ROSEHILL DRIVE	To Add a
				BOAT	
78/01	Harrogate	Grewelthorpe	R3/52B	POND TO KIRBY MALZEARD ROAD	To Add a
				Footpath	
	Harrogate	Harrogate Borough	AD3/54	Harlow Moor Ward, Pinewoods Plantation	To Add a
				Footpath	
04/05	Harrogate	Hartwith cum Winsley	R3/55D	Knox Lane, Low Laithe.	To Add a
				Bridleway	
04/12	Harrogate	Hutton Conyers	A3/61	Pillmore Lane, Hutton Conyers	To Add a
				Bridleway	
	Harrogate	Markington with	AD3/121	Hincks Hall to High Cayton Hall	To Upgrade
				a Footpath to	
		Wallerthwaite			Bridleway
86/05	Ryedale	Ampleforth	R5/6A	BACK LANE	To Add a
				BOAT	
86/06	Ryedale	Ganton	R5/37A	POTTER BROMPTON PLANTATION	To Add a
				Bridleway	
92/23	Ryedale	Pickering	R5/73F	RED YATTS LANE TO TOFTS DRAIN	To Add a
				BOAT	
94/12	Ryedale	Terrington with	R5/94B	TERRINGTON - HOV. SEE R5/63B	To Add a
				Bridleway	
		Wigganthurpe			
04/03	Ryedale	Thornton le Clay	R5/96A	Judy Lane	To Add a
				Footpath	

93/13 Footpath	Ryedale	Wharram	R5/108A	TUNNEL PLANTATION	To Add a
02/18 Footpath	Scarborough	Filey	R6/8G	Ravine to Cliff Top	To Add a
99/17 Footpath	Scarborough	Newby and Scalby	R6/16C	SCALBY MILLS TO JACKSON BAY	To Add a
92/19 Footpath	Scarborough	Scarborough	R6/19F	OSGODBY RES TO KNOX LANE	To Add a
00/10 Footpath	Selby	Barlby	R7/5D	CHURCH LANE	To Add a
92/04 Footpath	Selby	Beal	R7/7A	EAST INGS LANE	To Add a
Footpath	Selby	Grimston	R7/63A	SEAVY CARR WOOD	To Add a
92/13 Footpath	Selby	Hemingbrough	R7/35A	MILL LANE TO LANDING LANE	To Add a
00/04 Footpath	Selby	North Duffield	R7/51B	HALL FARM TO PARK FARM	To Add a
93/09 Bridleway	Selby	Saxton cum Scarthingwell	R7/55B	SCARTHINGWELL PARK	To Add a
89/06 Footpath	Selby	Sherburn in Elmet	R7/57B	MOORLANE TO FP 36	To Add a
95/26 Footpath	Selby	South Milford	R7/59B	HIGH ST TO WEST FIELD LANE	To Add a

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY LIAISON GROUP

9 December 2004

Bridge Maintenance Priorities

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide members with details of progress made with dealing with bridge maintenance issues since the last meeting and to provide information on an initial prioritisation of bridges in need of urgent repair on the public rights of way network.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the last meeting of the Liaison Group on 9 December 2004, details were provided of all known damaged or missing bridge crossings on the public rights of way network using data available in the CAMS system. It was stressed that this had been compiled from 'reports' from members of the public and there was no way of assessing how comprehensive it was without a full survey of the network. Members were asked to comment on the information available and to provide any additional information they might have available to update the list.

3.0 RECENT PROGRESS

- 3.1 Some very helpful feedback has been provided by members since the last meeting and a number of additional defective structures have been added to the database and input to CAMS.
- 3.2 The issue of maintenance of public rights of way bridges was raised at the Environmental Services Management Team during September. The scale of the problem facing the authority was recognised. A range of issues were discussed including the need for an accurate asset register, a rolling bridge inspection regime using specialist engineering expertise and a dedicated budget. Possible alternative options were considered for managing the bridge maintenance programme.
- 3.3 As a means of moving the issue forward, as a first step the Countryside Service was asked to identify those structures which were considered to be in most urgent need of repair in terms of such factors as their potential cost, their degree of urgency and their importance to the network. These would then be subject to a detailed engineering inspection and an estimated cost for repair or replacement would be provided. This would provide a firmer basis for deciding what action could be taken in the short term to address the

problem within the resources available. It was recognised that the potential cost was beyond the scope of the basic rights of way maintenance budget

- 3.4 In the longer term, it was agreed that a co-ordinated programme would be needed to address the scale of the problem involved and that this would need dedicated funding. The County Council is currently preparing its bid for the next round of Local Transport Plan funding (LTP2) and it is proposed to include an element in this to cover public rights of way bridge issues. It is unclear at this stage what form this bid will take but it was considered to offer the most realistic potential for attracting additional resources on the scale required.

4.0 INITIAL PRIORITIES

- 4.1 The results of the initial prioritisation exercise referred to in paragraph 3.3 are included in the appendix. This is based on recommendations made by the Area Rights of Way Officers. It must be stressed that these are not the only priorities but merely a first attempt at identifying where any additional resources could be used to greatest effect. Some of the bridges involve difficult engineering and legal problems which have prevented progress for a number of years. Even if it is possible to find additional resources, it may therefore still not be easy to move forward quickly.
- 4.2 These initial priorities have been submitted to the County Council's bridge engineer with a request that the bridges concerned be inspected and an estimate given of the cost of repair or replacement. In some of the more difficult cases, this work has already been undertaken. When the engineering report has been received, the issue will then be referred back to the Departmental Management Team to consider what scope there might be for making early progress with implementation.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the report be received for information.

Contact Officer:
John Edwards
Head of Countryside Services
01609 532452

INITIAL PRIORITY BRIDGEWORKS ON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK

Parish	Location	Works Required	Importance
Area 1			
Hutton Rudby	NZ 475053 Potto Slack	Remove old bridge and replace with lightweight structure - 12 metre span	Very popular local walk close to village.
Middleton-on-Leven	NZ 464099 River Leven	3 separate bridges in close proximity, 2 suffering from erosion/slippage. Replace (6m span), repair and re-use. Access difficult	Popular circular walk close to Middlesborough on edge of village involving riverside and woodland.
Great Busby	NZ 526051 East of Cote Hill Farm	Remove old bridge which is too short and replace with 6-7 metre wood bridge. Access reasonable	Very popular walk on edge of National Park between Carlton and Kirkby villages.
Area 2			
Edstone	SE 701826 Cowdyke Wath, River Dove	No existing crossing - new bridge required - 10 metre span. Good access for construction	Will dramatically improve the network for bridleway users within an area that is very poor.
Harome	SE 632821 Rye House, River Rye	No existing crossing - new bridge required - 15-20 metre span. Good access for construction.	To link the PROW network on either side of the River Rye for bridleway users.
Welburn	SE 675859 Hodge Beck, Kirkdale	Usable but in a bad state of repair. Repair or replace. Good access for construction.	Very old bridge well used by the public. Important link to PROW in National Park.
Area 3			
Bewerley	SE 152637 Ravens Nest, Fosse Gill	Existing bridge in poor condition. Difficult steep access.	On footpath in a popular area of the AONB
Clapham-cum-Newby	SD 718676 Skew Bridge, River Wenning	Existing bridge in poor condition. Either repair existing or replace with a new bridge - similar cost?	Key river crossing in a popular area close to the National Park.
Markington with Wallerthwaite	SE 305649 Wormald Green	No bridge exists although the remains of the abutments can be visible - originally adjacent to or possibly an integral part of the railway bridge across the beck. Good access next to road.	Close to several villages in a popular area near Ripon
Goldsborough	SE 368559 Goldsborough Mill, River Nidd	Closed to horseriders following safety audit since approx Aug 2002. Repair or replace.	Key river crossing on bridleway network on edge of Knaresborough
Area 4			

Linton/Newton-on-Ouse	SE 513614 River Kyle, Linton	Existing brick arch crossing in poor condition but of historical interest - retain and replace with new bridge - already purchased and in storage.	
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NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

23 February 2006

Review of the Local Access Forum

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To summarise modifications that have been put in place to address the recommendations made at the last meeting concerning improvements to the operation of the Local Access Forum.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the last meeting of the Local Access Forum on 24 November 2005, members debated a range of possible improvements that could be made to the work of the Local Access Forum to make it more effective, following an analysis of good and poor practice produced by a Countryside Agency research report. A number of specific comments and suggestions were made. Members requested a report to the next meeting summarising the modifications that it would be possible to put in place to address the issues raised.

3.0 PROPOSED CHANGES

- 3.1 The comments and suggestions made by the LAF at the last meeting are summarised below, together with a summary of the action that has been taken.

3.2 LAF Comment: That in future a training/induction day for new members is organised following their appointment.

- 3.3 Action: A training day will be held for new members of the LAF following each annual recruitment cycle and before the first meeting of the new LAF. This year, training will take place towards the end of April on a date to be agreed. The induction will aim to cover the following range of issues:

- the purpose, functions and composition of the LAF;
- the LAF agenda and the conduct of business;
- the work of the Countryside Service;
- the Definitive Map and Statement of PROW;
- the Rights of Way Improvement Plan;
- Open Access; and
- the Countryside Volunteer Service.

3.4 LAF Comment: That officers facilitate meetings with specific interest groups and LAF members

3.5 Action: Subject to the availability of time and resources, staff from the Countryside Service will aim to facilitate any meetings needed to further the work of the LAF. It is hoped that the work of the LAF will evolve from being largely reactive to a more pro-active approach, driven by the interests and requirements of the LAF itself. The LAF Forward Plan has now been introduced as a standard agenda item, providing an opportunity for members to give advance notice of issues and topics that they wish to debate at some stage in the future. Given such notice, NYCC officers will aim to facilitate debates on specific topics, invite speakers covering particular issues or convene meetings with particular interest groups outside the main meetings of the LAF, if any of these actions will help to further its business.

3.6 LAF Comment: That the recently introduced practice of holding agenda / briefing meetings with the chair / vice-chair continues

3.7 Action: The Chair and Vice-Chair are now routinely invited to the following meetings:

- A mid-cycle briefing between each quarterly LAF meeting to discuss any access related issues that might have arisen since the last meeting, to consider the Forward Plan and to agree items for the next scheduled meeting of the LAF.
- An agenda briefing during the week prior to each LAF meeting to run through the reports on the agenda and answer any questions.

As well as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, briefing meetings are normally attended by the LAF Secretary, the Head of Countryside Services and the Access and PROW Manager. It is hoped that this new procedure will provide a more regular opportunity for contact with NYCC staff and will enable the Chair and Vice-Chair to keep up to date with emerging issues.

3.8 LAF Comment: That a regular item be placed on the agenda of all NYCC Area Committees informing them of the items discussed at LAF meetings that are relevant to their area.

3.9 Action: Arrangements have been made to place minutes of LAF meetings on the agenda of all NYCC Area Committee meetings.

3.10 LAF Comment: That neighbouring LAFs are informed of the meeting dates of the NYLAF and that there is greater liaison / co-ordination between the three LAFs in North Yorkshire

- 3.11 Action: Copies of future North Yorkshire LAF agendas and minutes will be sent to the Secretaries of the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors LAFs and a reciprocal arrangement will be requested. These will be copied electronically to North Yorkshire LAF members as they are received. Consideration will be given to extending this procedure to other adjoining LAFs, particularly those covering urban areas. Wherever relevant, the 'North Yorkshire family of LAFs' will be encouraged to attend joint events such as those organised to consider the evolving Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- 3.12 **LAF Comment: That the NYLAF develop its own identity as an independent advisory body to the appointing body (NYCC). The use of its own letter headed paper would help to achieve this**
- 3.13 Action: All future agendas and correspondence connected to the meetings of the LAF together with its annual Report will use a plain 'anonymous' style to help re-inforce its independent status. Papers will therefore no longer carry the NYCC logo. The current agenda adopts such an approach but further consideration will be given to developing a more individualistic 'house style' which can in future be more readily identified with the work of the LAF.
- 3.14 **LAF Comment: That there is confusion regarding the role of the Forum due to the existence and overlapping remit with the Public Rights of Way Liaison Group.**
- 3.15 Action: A review is currently being undertaken of the remit of the PROW Liaison Group with the objective of simplifying procedures and reducing any duplication of business with the work of the LAF. Further details of the work of the Liaison Group are contained in the separate report on the agenda concerning information on public rights of way. The outcome of this review will be reported to a future meeting.
- 3.16 **LAF Comment: NYCC officers control the LAF agenda which is reactionary. Members agreed that in future the Chair should have more control / participation in the selection of agenda items**
- 3.17 Action: The revised procedures, outlined in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.7 above, effectively enable the LAF to determine its own agenda and members are encouraged to use this new approach to drive future agendas. The LAF Forward Plan encourages members to discuss any potential agenda items with the Chairman between meetings of the LAF to give officers advance warning of any items arising.
- 3.18 **LAF Comment: The length of the agenda and the volume of supporting papers was on occasion a burden**
- 3.19 Action: Again, the revised procedures outlined in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.7 above, will enable the LAF Chairman to ensure that future business is

planned more effectively. This will provide scope for avoiding excessively long agendas at any one meeting.

3.20 **LAF Comment: That further consideration be given to the establishment of a budget for the LAF and in particular the need for a special responsibility allowance for the Chairman.**

3.21 Action: The LAF Annual Report will in future provide a summary of all expenditure incurred by the LAF in conducting its business. The main items of expenditure include hire of meeting venues, transport for site meeting, catering, members' expenses, recruitment advertising and the annual report. For the forthcoming 2005/2006 Annual Report, an attempt will be made to itemise expenditure under all of these headings, although it may be difficult to disaggregate some items retrospectively. In future, a 'ring-fenced' Countryside Service budget will ensure that financial provision is clearly identified and Committee Services will keep separate accounts of expenditure on LAF business. Members are asked to note in particular that all future claims for expenses should be submitted through the LAF Secretary to enable these to be recorded before they are processed. The need for a Chairman's special responsibility allowance will be kept under review but the view of the current Chairman is that the current level of business does not warrant such provision being made.

CONCLUSION

3.22 It is hoped that the measures taken above will help to make the LAF more effective and more responsive to future needs. Current arrangements will be monitored and an update report brought to the November 2006 meeting to provide another opportunity to improve effectiveness.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

a) This report is received for information.

Contact Officer:

John Edwards

Head of Countryside Services

01609 532452

**NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
FORWARD PLAN**

Members are asked to consider future agenda items in advance and to discuss these with the Chair prior to each meeting of the LAF. The LAF will then agree a Forward Plan at each meeting covering a rolling two year period.

4 APRIL 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Interviews
18 MAY 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report 2005/2006 – Approval Prior to Publication • Open Access Update • Rights of Way Improvement Plan Update • Site Visit – Open Access Issues – Nidderdale AONB
MAY/JUNE 2007 (date to be arranged)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation on Draft Green Lanes Policy – joint meeting with Yorkshire Dales LAF and North York Moors LAF
17 AUGUST 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Consultation Prior to Approval of Draft Plan • Open Access Update • Site Visit – Rights of Way Issues – Howardian Hills AONB
16 NOVEMBER 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Access Update • Rights of Way Improvement Plan Update • Local Access Forum – Review of Effectiveness
FEBRUARY 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Consideration of Consultation Responses • Open Access Update
APRIL 2007
Recruitment Interviews
MAY 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of Way Improvement Plan Update • Open Access Update • Annual Report 2006/2007 – Approval Prior to Publication • Site Visit – Open Access Issues
AUGUST 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Consultation Prior to Approval of Final Plan • Open Access Update • Site Visit – Rights of Way Issues
NOVEMBER 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Receipt of Final Plan • Open Access Update
FEBRUARY 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of Way Improvement Plan Update • Open Access Update