

## Improving Access to the Rights of Way Network

### Opportunities for Parish Councils

#### Your local rights of way network

1. Identifying the resources you have
2. How much use of the network is there?
3. Are your byways used appropriately?
4. Are routes easily accessible to wheelchairs and pushchairs?
5. Are there simple improvements that could be made?
6. Could any additional byways enhance your community?

**Suggested Action:** Recruiting community members to carry out a physical audit to walk, cycle, or ride the routes.

#### Maintaining Rights of Way

1. The responsibilities of NYCC.
2. The responsibilities of the Parish Council

**Suggested Action:** As part of the physical audit of local rights of way, assess their condition using the tool provided.

#### Opportunities to Improve or Develop

1. Identifying developments
2. How to fund developments

**Suggested Action:** Bring forward suggestions to the Parish Council to:

1. Develop and improve local rights of way in consultation with farmers and landowners to upgrade and re-open paths by undertaking practical work such as vegetation clearance, repairing stiles and waymarking, and replacing inaccessible stiles for wheelchair and pushchair users.
2. Organising events – often in partnership with groups of walkers, riders or cyclists – to promote the safe and appropriate use of byways,
3. Produce information for the community about who can do what on which local rights of way. This especially relates to any illegal use of byways by, for example, motorised vehicles, or horse riding/ cycling on footpaths.
4. Develop guidelines for young people who will be riding bikes or horses on local byways, ensuring that they are fully aware of their responsibilities.
5. Linked to all of the above points – agree a publicity and promotion strategy for parish paths.

#### Problem solving

1. How do local residents report problems?
2. Who will help with problems on local rights of way?
3. Establishing a local path volunteer warden to monitor the use of public paths and liaise with all parties over any problems that may arise.

**Suggested Action:**

1. Highways Authority and National Parks to provide information to parish council members and contact details for noticeboards.
2. ROW department support the establishment of Parish footpath wardens / caretakers.
3. Parishes bring forward suggestions for improvements, and how they might be funded.