NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

THURSDAY 24th NOVEMBER 2011

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY PRIORITISATION

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report outlines the approach of the Rights of Way maintenance team to prioritising network issues.

1.2 The report seeks the views of the LAF on this approach.

2.0 PRIORITY SYSTEM

2.1 There is currently a backlog of maintenance issues on the 6000km network managed by the Rights of way maintenance team. In order to use resource to best effect it is necessary to prioritise the maintenance effort.

2.2 A risk based approach is taken to prioritising individual issues. The model which is currently used is set out in Appendix 1.

2.3 In addition new criteria have been added which clarify how the priority of individual routes within the network may be determined going forward.

2.4 Whilst every issue can be prioritised using the priority model, it is acknowledged that some issues may be more efficiently dealt with as part of a larger programme, which may involve a number of issues with differing priorities. It is proposed that the work programmes outlined are dealt with outside of the priority model.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 It is recommended that members consider this report and comment on the approach to prioritising maintenance issues.

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Public Rights of Way Priority Model

In thinking through an approach to prioritisation it was felt prudent to take a risk management based approach, which resulted in two conclusions:

1. A key consideration when dealing with Issues on the network must be the safety of the user

2. Additionally consideration must be given to the importance of the route to users and the effect of that issue on the route

1. The priority calculation

In order to produce a priority score for every issue it is necessary to record the key aspects which can then be used in a calculation. It is logical to use the CAMS database, the existing record of all network issues.

Using the available functionality of the CAMS database it has been possible to produce a calculation based on the following factors:

Factor No.	Factor Description	Factor Relates To	Priority Score Range
1	Likelihood of an accident	Issue	1-5
2	Potential Severity of the accident	Issue	1-5
3	Route Priority	Route	1-5
4	Effect on route	Route	1-6

The calculation has its base in the standard risk assessment calculation (Risk = Likelihood x Severity) which is then added to the Route based factors:

Priority = Likelihood x Severity + Route Priority + Effect on Route

This calculation returns a range of possible scores between 3 and 36, allowing all issues to be ranked in priority score order

Certain score ranges are linked to 'High, Medium and Low' priorities as an indication for the public. These are as follows:

Score Range	Priority given to the public
1 – 14	Low
15 – 24	Medium
25 and over	High

In the first instance the scored priority list will determine the work of the Ranger teams. However it is acknowledged that in the large area of operation which exists, it is efficient to deal with issues within the same geographical area at the same time, irrespective of priority. Thus a ranger will visit an area to deal with a high priority issue and whilst there will seek to resolve any nearby issues, ensuring that the whole route which was initially visited is as far as possible in a good condition before the ranger moves on.

2. Route Priority

Route priority score is awarded on the basis of Low = 1point, Medium = 3points, High = 5 points. In order to provide clarity and consistency in the priority awarded to individual routes as part of the prioritisation model, the following criteria are proposed:

Priority	Path Characteristics
High	• National Trails • Routes on the approved Promoted Route schedule • Routes providing access to employment & amenities • Routes linking communities • Routes within 1km of a community • Routes giving access to Open Access Land • Multi user paths with a clear public benefit
Medium	• Routes not falling into the High or Low categories
Low	• Cul-de-sac routes with no terminal point of interest • Routes which are duplicated by another route of greater convenience

3. Work Programmes

Whilst all issues can be scored using the model there are groups of issues which can be effectively dealt with as part of work programmes, which seek to maximise efficiency of resource. The following table summarises the proposed work programmes to be dealt with outside of the priority model:

Issue Type	Reason for Work Programme	Suggested approach
Seasonal Undergrowth	Undergrowth affects the network at specific times during the year and can be efficiently managed through a proactive	A proactive cutting programme with all reported undergrowth issues dealt with between April and October as part

	cutting regime which reduces the number of reported issues	of the programme delivered by contractors and volunteers
Ploughing & Cropping	Ploughing and cropping affects the network during specific time windows through the year and a consistent blanket approach to inspection and resolution is possible using the countryside volunteers	Two annual ploughing and cropping inspections (at sowing and peak growth periods) undertaken through the year using Countryside Volunteers supported by information and enforcement letters to landowners
Bridge replacement	Responsibility for the replacement of bridge structures lies with the Highways Asset management team who also provide funding. Priority decisions need to be taken in conjunction with that team	A bridge replacement programme prioritised separately in conjunction with Highways Asset management, backed up by an inspection regime supported by the Countryside Volunteers.
Major Projects	Works which require significant funding and specialist design and procurement input may be best dealt with as part of an annual programme allowing proactive scheduling.	An annual major projects work programme prioritised separately and with works scheduled in advance to maximise design and procurement efficiency.
Signposting	The most efficient use of funding in addressing missing roadside signposts is to bulk together signpost and signpost installation requirements, allowing economies of scale to be realised.	Two signposting programmes undertaken within the year, any new missing signpost reports will be bulked together and dealt with at the next signposting programme, meaning no nmore than 6 months for signposting issues to be resolved

Opportunities for further work programmes will be continuously reviewed.