



Agenda

- Meeting:** North Yorkshire Local Access Forum
- To:** Councillors Paul Sherwood (Chair), Will Scarlett (Vice-Chair), Abbey, Dick Brew, Rachel Connolly, Roma Haigh, Lampkin, David Lepper, Kath Topping, Winterburn, Robert Heseltine and David Jeffels.
- Date:** Wednesday, 25th January 2023
- Time:** 10.00 am
- Venue:** Brierley Room, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AD

This meeting is being held as an in-person meeting and in public. The government position is that of learning to live with COVID-19, removing domestic restrictions while encouraging safer behaviours through public health advice. In view of this, hand cleanser and masks will be available for attendees upon request. The committee room will be well ventilated and attendees encouraged to avoid bottlenecks and maintain an element of social distancing. Please contact the named supporting officer for the committee, if you have any queries or concerns about the management of the meeting and the approach to COVID-19 safety.

Please do not attend if on the day you have COVID-19 symptoms or have had a recent positive Lateral Flow Test.

Further details of the government strategy (Living with COVID-19 Plan) is available here – <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-sets-out-how-to-live-safely-with-covid-19>

Business

1. **Introductions & Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 September 2022** (Pages 3 - 8)
3. **Public Questions & Statements**

Members of the public may ask questions or make statements at this meeting if they have given notice to Melanie Carr of Democratic Services (*see contact details at bottom of page*) by midday on Friday 20 January 2023, three working days before the day of the meeting. Each speaker should limit themselves to 3 minutes on any item. Members of the public, who have given notice, will be invited to speak:

 - At this point in the meeting if their questions/statements relate to matters which are not otherwise on the Agenda (subject to an overall time limit of 30 minutes);
 - When the relevant Agenda item is being considered if they wish to speak on a matter which is on the Agenda for this meeting;
 - If you are exercising your right to speak at this meeting, but do not wish to be

recorded, please inform the Chairman who will ask anyone who may be taking a recording to cease while you speak.

4. **Attendance of National Farmers Union Representative**
Purpose: To understand the views of landowners on access rights and access related issues
5. **Local Government Reorganisation - Verbal Update**
6. **Secretary's Update Report** (Pages 9 - 18)
Purpose: To update LAF members on developments since the last meeting.
7. **District Council Liaison & LAF Sub-Group Updates** (Pages 19 - 54)
Purpose: An opportunity for LAF members to update the Forum on District Council liaison and LAF Sub-Group activity since the last meeting.
8. **Work Programme** (Pages 55 - 56)
Purpose: To consider, develop and adopt a work programme for future LAF meetings.
9. **Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances.**

Contact Details

Enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Melanie Carr Tel: 01609 533849 or e-mail:

Melanie.carr1@northyorks.gov.uk

Website: www.northyorks.gov.uk

Barry Khan
Assistance Chief Executive
(Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall
Northallerton

17 January 2023

North Yorkshire County Council

North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Wednesday, 28th September 2022 commencing at 10.00 am.

Paul Sherwood in the Chair, plus County Councillors Will Scarlett, Nick Abbey, Dick Brew, Rachel Connolly, Roma Haigh, Graham Lampkin, David Lepper, Kath Topping, Julia Winterburn, Cllr Robert Heseltine and Cllr David Jeffels.

Officers present: Ian Kelly and Arrietty Heath.

Apologies: Kath Topping

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

11 Introductions & Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed the attendance of three new members of the Forum, and confirmed apologies had been received from Kath Topping.

12 Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 June 2022

Resolved - That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2022 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to a number of typo corrections identified by the Chair at the meeting as follows:

Minute 6 - paragraph 1 should have read '....the Tontine and Black Swan Junctions'.

Minute 7 – 7th bullet point should have read De-regulation and not Re-regulation.

Minute 8 – paragraph 2 should have read '....Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)'

13 Public Questions & Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

14 Secretary's Update Report

Considered –

The report of the Secretary, which updated on developments since the last meeting. Attention was drawn to the update on the Local Transport Plan provided by Louise Neale, Transport Planning Team Leader.

The Chair confirmed the next meeting of the Regional Forum would be held on 8 March 2023.

Resolved – That the update be noted.

15 Local Government Review - Verbal Update

Karl Battersby, Corporate Director for Business & Environmental Services provided a detailed verbal update on the ongoing work in regard to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). He confirmed that progress on delivery was good with no red flags, and went on to highlight:

- The recent appointment of a Chief Executive Officer and the imminent publication of his new Council structure, together with the ongoing formal process to appoint his management board and Assistant Directors;
- The ongoing preparations for day one and the challenge of being safe and legal as from vesting day, with 6,500 items on the list;
- The 17 different officer work streams in place alongside 7 member working groups;
- That as of day 1, the existing planning departments across the county would still be in place;
- New branding would be agreed and introduced in stages;
- Post day 1, work would be required to identify service efficiencies and improvements, with the aim of achieving consistency across the county;
- The ongoing staff roadshows on TUPE and the work to evaluate job roles and terms and conditions of employment across all the District / Borough Councils;
- The significant staffing difficulties in some service areas, e.g. Planning, and the ongoing work to evaluate jobs in those service areas most effected, to enable recruitment to commence;
- The importance of retaining the good staff in District / Borough Councils;
- Consideration of the future of the Highways teams and the areas they covered;
- Consideration of the future work of the Area Constituency Committees ensuring they maximise localism opportunities;
- The review of all Local Authority real estate across the county ensuring it was the right size and fit for purpose;
- The development of an economic strategy for the whole county, and other key policies e.g. an Affordable Housing Policy;
- The intention to have a Main Planning Committee that could meet in the locality of a major planning application;
- A devolution deal would bring £18m a year and see the election of a combined Mayor and PFCC role;

Members noted the expectation that there would be improved coordination between the Planning, Highways and Countryside Access Service team, once those services were all under the control of one Authority. The also noted the opportunities it would bring for significant savings and improved localism.

County Councillor David Jeffels drew attention to the ongoing 'Let's Talk' initiative to communicate the LGR aims and priorities and the ongoing work to deliver them. He also suggested that it would be helpful if a mobile unit could travel around villages rather than expecting villagers to attend a 'Let's Talk' session at a distant Council building.

Finally, Karl Battersby confirmed the timeframe for completion of the necessary changes to services and service delivery post vesting day would depend on the issues to be addressed. For example, he suggested an indicative time for introducing a new comprehensive waste collection regime would be 3 years. He also noted that central Government decisions on key national issues would also affect the timescale for changes.

The Chair thanked Karl Battersby and Forum members noted the update.

16 Countryside Access Service - Waymarking Overview

Arrietty Heath, Volunteer Co-ordinator introduced her written update on how the Countryside Access Service currently responded to requests for waymarking from landowners, Parish Councils and the public. She also sought the Forum's advice on how the process might be modified to streamline the process, in the hope of identifying a clear set of principles to ensure consistency across the network, as well as ensuring the best use of the limited resources available, both financial and staffing.

Arrietty Heath showed examples of the types of waymarkers used, and confirmed there was no legal standard of waymarkers. She also confirmed the Authority had no statutory obligation to waymark, but it was required to consider whether it would be appropriate.

Forum members discussed the pros and cons of waymarking and whether the introduction of a hierarchy of types of routes should be introduced in order to prioritise the requests for waymarking.

David Lepper drew attention to a particular route where the waymarking was incomplete. Arrietty Heath confirmed that volunteers were used to walk routes to identify where the use of waymarkers could be appropriately used, and that to aid them in their work they had access to the definitive map.

Forum members agreed to set up a Task Group to consider whether a more stringent approach to responding to waymarking requests would be the best way forward and noted the suggested caveats and questions to be considered, as listed in the update report. It was agreed the Task Group should also carry out some benchmarking with other areas nationally.

The Chair thanked Arrietty for her report and it was

Resolved – That:

- i. The update on waymarking be noted;
- ii. A Task Group be set up, made up of Nick Abbey, David Lepper, Dick Brew and Cllr David Jeffels to carry out a review of the best approach to responding to waymarking requests;
- ii. The Task Group provide a draft report for the Forum's consideration at its next meeting in January 2023;

17 District Council & LAF Project - Verbal Updates

Considered –

The report of the Secretary giving LAF members the opportunity to update the Forum on District Council liaison and other LAF representative project activity since the last meeting.

The Chair confirmed he had received no further information on the progression of the A66 works.

Roma Haigh confirmed that the Yorkshire Wolds Way would be celebrating its anniversary on 2 October 2022.

Will Scarlett confirmed he had attended two online meetings of the Rural Taskforce and would circulate two presentations and a feedback paper in due course.

It was noted that Rachel Connolly had circulated a written update ahead of the meeting that

had not been included in the update report. In regard to the A1 she confirmed some grass cutting has been undertaken along the local access roads to provide safer margins for NMUs, but not as much as had been agreed through Public Inquiry. Also, that other defects have yet to be addressed.

In regard to the A66, she confirmed a consultancy firm had been employed in 2020 to carry out research into NMu crossings on the A66 west of the dualing scheme, and at a report had recently been published that confirmed there was a need for crossings that NMUs felt safe to use, and it recognised the lack of them. She noted that National Highways had confirmed it did not intend to make major changes but would cut back foliage and check on the surfaces of the crossings and spend the money on places where there was a greater demand for walking and cycling. Overall she expressed her view that the highly selective report was disappointing for the volunteers who took part in the surveys and workshop and offered to write to National Highways to respond to their findings.

In regard to Richmond District Council, Rachel Connolly confirmed she had responded to several planning, without receiving any feedback. She expressed her view that this was unsatisfactory, but noted that officers were not permitted to speak to the public and it is impossible to assess if the Forum's advice had made a difference.

In regard to Hambleton District Council she noted the Forum had been consulted on a few planning applications since the last meeting and that she had received a suggestion for a Memorandum of Understanding between the Authority and the Forum, to prevent the recurrence of a recent issue concerning a major development with a right of way through it that the Forum had not been made aware of.

Forum members discussed the benefits of having a Memorandum of Understanding in place and whether the introduction of such a document with one of the District Councils was appropriate and necessary at this time in light of LGR. Members acknowledged that Planning Authorities had no statutory obligation to liaise with Local Access Forums on planning applications, rather it was the Forums right to offer its advice. They were pleased to note Hambleton District Council's willingness to work with the Forum to introduce a Memorandum of Understanding, and recognised that if developed it could be beneficial to the future working relationship between the Forum, and the Planning Department and the Countryside Access Service of the new Authority. It was therefore agreed that:

- The work on the draft Memorandum of Understanding should continue with the support of Rachel Connolly and Will Scarlet. Mike Leah, Assistant Director for Travel, Environmental and Countryside also offered to support the process.
- The final draft of the Memorandum be signed off by the full Forum before being issued to Hambleton District Council.

Resolved - That the update information provided at the meeting be noted.

18 Work Programme

Considered –

Members considered the Forward Plan provided at Appendix 1 to the report, and invited members to identify any additional items of business to be added.

It was agreed that the following items of future business be added to the work Programme

25 January 2023

Waymarking Working Group Report
ELMs Scheme Update
Overview of Highway Design Guide

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OFFICIAL

24 May 2023

Network Rail Update
Update on LTP5

Resolved - That the Work Programme document be updated as above.

The meeting concluded at 12.05 pm.

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North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

25 January 2023

Secretary's Update Report

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update members of the Local Access Forum on developments since the last meeting of NYLAF.

2.0 Local Development Plans

- 2.1 One of the key areas of involvement for the Forum is to ensure appropriate engagement in the preparation of Local Development Plans. Set out in the table below is a summary of the current position in relation to each District Council area, and in relation to the Minerals and Waste Joint Plan. The information is taken from the websites of the relevant authorities and since the last Forum meeting there have been three updates to those websites, in the case of Craven, Ryedale and Scarborough. The rest of the information below remains the same as detailed in the last report.

Authority	Status
Craven	<p>In Craven, the Plan was adopted in November 2019 and a provisional date of October 2023 was set for the publication of results of a formal review of the Craven Local Plan, in order to meet the Government's requirement for a review to be completed 5 years after its adoption i.e. by Nov 2024.</p> <p>Craven District Council formally adopted its Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 13th December 2022. On the same date it also formally adopted its Flood Risk and Water Management Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – both can be viewed at: www.cravendc.gov.uk/planning/spatial-planning/spds-and-information</p>
Hambleton	<p>The Hambleton Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate) for examination on 31 March 2020.</p> <p>The estimated timetable for progressing to the adoption of the Plan was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Estimated examination period March 2020 to February 2021• Receipt of inspector's report March 2021• Estimated date of adoption April 2021 <p>The Council's website has no further updates.</p>
Harrogate	<p>The council formally adopted its Local Plan with new settlement policies on 9 December 2020.</p>
Richmondshire	<p>The Local Plan 2018-2035 will be a single document and comprise of a review of the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy 2012-2028 and will provide site allocations, area strategy for Catterick Garrison, land use designations, revised Development Limits for settlements identified in</p>

	<p>the settlement hierarchy and detailed development policies. It will include an updated and revised Proposals Map.</p> <p>Examination Hearings took place in Spring 2021, followed by a 'Preferred Options' consultation which ran for 8 weeks from 28 May 2021 until 23 July 2021. The Council is now preparing the Pre-Submission Draft (Regulation 19). This is the final stage of the process before submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>The Pre-Submission consultation was held in winter 2021.</p>
Ryedale	<p>Ryedale District Council have progressed their review of their Local Plan which covers the period 2012- 2027 and have reached a stage where 'key decisions' are beginning to emerge. a consultation is now underway to gain views on the proposed policy approaches they are considering. The consultation commenced on 10th January 2023 and will run for six weeks to 21st February 2023. The consultation document can be viewed on the Council's website at:</p> <p>https://www.ryedale.gov.uk/information/review-of-the-local-plan/our-consultations-on-the-plan-review/key-decisions/</p>
Scarborough	<p>The Scarborough Borough Council Local Plan is being published for consultation in draft form and will cover policies and development allocations for the Borough, excluding the North York Moors National Park area. The formal consultation exercise commences on 13 January 2023 and will run for six weeks to 24 February 2023. A copy of the Local Plan together with supporting documents can be viewed and commented upon at the Council's online portal:</p> <p>https://scarborough-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/</p>
Selby	<p>A new Local Development Scheme for the period 2019 to 2023 came into effect on 17 September 2019. The scheme identified which Local Plan documents the Council would progress over the next four years, together with the programme for their preparation, and key consultation milestones.</p> <p>In line with the Scheme, a six-week consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options ended 6 March 2020, and a six week consultation for the Preferred Options Local Plan 2021 concluded on 12 March 2021.</p> <p>A Local Plan Evidence Base Consultation took place between 3 September 2021 and 15 October 2021.</p>
Minerals and Waste Joint Plan	<p>The Minerals and Waste Joint Plan, prepared by North Yorkshire County Council, City of York Council and North York Moors National Park Authority, was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. Elizabeth Ord LLB (Hons) LLM MA DipTUS was appointed as the Planning Inspector to undertake the Examination and public hearings were held between 27th February and 13th April 2018, and 24th and 25th January 2019.</p> <p>Through the Examination several policies and supporting text in the Minerals and Waste Joint Plan were identified where a Main Modification was required to address concerns identified by the Inspector or other representations to the Joint Plan, or to reflect changes in evidence or national planning policy and a schedule was prepared for consultation.</p>

	<p>The Main Modification consultation started on Wednesday 21st July 2021 and closed on Wednesday 15th September 2021.</p> <p>All previous documents and evidence reports that underpin the Minerals and Waste Joint Plan, can be viewed online at: www.northyorks.gov.uk/examination.</p> <p>The Examination is a continuous process running from the date of submission through to the receipt of the appointed Planning Inspector's Report. The representations provided relating to the Schedule of Main Modifications consultation will be considered by the Inspector while she is writing her report.</p>
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3.0 Highways Updates

3.1 Highways Design Guide

At this point in time, two chapters from this guidance, are published, namely the 'Commuted Sums' chapter and the 'Drainage and SuDs' chapter - see: [Road adoption | North Yorkshire County Council](#)

3.2 Work to progress other chapters of the Design Guidance, (which includes chapters on the likes of street character types; junction and road geometry; visibility splays; emergency services requirements; refuse collection services requirements; parking standards etc) is currently in abeyance due to resources/workload and in addition to this, the Department for Transport has yet to release Manual for Streets (3), which will form national guidance in respect to residential housing layouts and which all Local Highway Authorities will need to embrace within their own guidance documentation.

3.3 NYCC is therefore awaiting the release of MfS3 before undertaking further work on its emerging guidance document to ensure that national best practice is fully replicated.

3.4 In the meantime, the Design Guide will remain a standing item on future Highways and Transportation updates to the LAF and the Forum's views will be sought when further progress is made on the document.

3.5 A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project's Development Consent Order (DCO)

National Highways wrote to the Examining Authority on 16 December 2022 which was published on the Planning Inspectorate's website on 21 December 2022. It provided notice of their intention to propose 34 changes to their DCO.

3.6 They intend launching a public consultation on the changes on Saturday 28 January 2023, where stakeholders and the public will be invited to have their say on their proposals. The feedback will be submitted to the Examining Authority, who will make the final decision on whether any of those changes can be made.

3.7 A59 Kexgill Project

NYCC are currently waiting for the Department for Transport (DfT) to approve the project's Full Business Case, which has been delayed due to recent government ministerial changes, however the announcement is expected soon in the Early New Year period now. In the meantime, we are progressing with advance works development procedures prior to main start, allowing site clearance of surface level vegetation to commence within programmed ecology working windows during February / March.

3.8 Local Transport Plan (LTP) Update

Planning is underway for the rewrite of the NYCC LTP. The LTP will contain a Strategic Transport Plan for York and North Yorkshire backed up by Local Transport Delivery Plans for each of the Unitary Council areas.

- 3.9 Both City of York (CoY) and NYCC are planning some LTP consultation in spring 2023 with NYCC looking to consult on transport priorities as part of the 'Let's Talk...' series of engagements that are being carried out, and CoY are planning on consulting on its Local Transport Strategy. There will be targeted engagement with key stakeholders, including with the LAF, to ensure their views are captured. This would all then be brought together in co-ordinated consultation activity by both authorities later in 2023 on the content of the plan. The aim is to have a final draft of the document in advance of Mayoral elections in May 2024.

4.0 Coast to Coast National Trail Route

- 4.1 Natural England has provided the following brief update on the Coast to Coast route stretching from St Bees in Cumbria to Robin Hoods Bay in the North York Moors National Park:

- Meetings have now been held with all 5 partner authorities to discuss work programming and priorities over next 2-3 years. Where partner authorities asked for new staff posts, they are now on with recruiting to these.
- Governance is in place with an overarching Programme Board which meets quarterly and monthly working group meetings between NE and partner authorities to plot and steer practical delivery.
- NE has supplied detailed worksheets (based on the submission to the Secretary of State) to partners to facilitate work planning and monitoring of progress and budget.
- We are continuing to discuss options for the A19 crossing with National Highways and Defra. This includes looking at potential diversions that may be required to promote a safe route while our preferred option of a bridge capable of accommodating horse riders and cyclists is pursued.
- NE has a small team in place to oversee and steer delivery of the core project, of the wider benefits work and a pilot project to test sustainable engagement with local communities and businesses. The team consists of Hazel Thomas as Programme Manager, Bruce Cutts as Project Manager overseeing delivery of establishment works and the monthly working group, Steve Westwood Technical Lead and Case officer for C2CP and Neil Coles who is Project Manager for our Wider Benefits and Sustainable Engagement work.
- Once Neil is in post (Feb 2023) he will be responsible initially setting up a project plan to cover our 3 years of implementation until Oct 2025. This will include looking at how best to engage with local partners and stakeholders to ensure that the work to realise the wider benefits of C2CP becoming a national trail draws on the knowledge of, and meets the needs of local stakeholders. We would be very happy to cover an item at a future LAF meeting in May to share how this work has progressed.

- 4.2 Background information on Coast to Coast has been provided by David Lepper – see Annex A.

5.0 Regional Forum

- 5.1 The next meeting of the Regional Forum will be held on Wednesday 8th March 2023 at Leeds Civic Hall.

6.0 Discretionary Restriction Notices

- 6.1 There have been no notifications received of discretionary '28 day' restrictions under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, or any withdrawals of a discretionary restriction under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, since the last Forum meeting.

7.0 Report Recommendations

- 7.1 The Local Access Forum is recommended to note the report:

BARRY KHAN
Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)
County Hall, NORTHALLERTON

Report Author: Melanie Carr, Secretary to North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

Annex A - Coast to Coast Bridleway Proposal Considerations and Observations

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Coast to Coast Bridleway Proposal Considerations and Observations

Introduction

I have been invited as a member of the North Yorkshire LAF to sit in as “an observer” on your Yorkshire Dales Access Forum meeting on Wednesday 7th December 2022. I have previously commented on the proposed Coast to Coast National Trail consultation through the NYLAF forum. I have walked most of the Coast to Coast over 25 years ago, and the section in the NYLAF area across the Vale of Mowbray some 4 years ago. I am a keen long distance walker, having completed some 15 different Recreational Paths across the country over a 30 year period. My partner was a horse-rider who I sometimes accompanied on foot in the vicinity of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail, so I am aware of some of the issues from a rider’s perspective. I previously worked for the Countryside Commission, Countryside Agency and Natural England before taking early retirement.

Extracts From Introduction to Wainwright’s A Coast to Coast Walk

“It is an enjoyable **walk** across England entirely on existing rights of way or over ground where access is traditionally free for all”

“Surely there cannot be a finer itinerary for a **long distance walk**! For sustained beauty, variety and interest it puts the Pennine Way to shame”

“The route has a bias in favour of high ground rather than low”

Cycling and horse-riding additions context

Defra and Natural England are to reconsult on plans for the new National Trail, the Coast to Coast Wainwright Trail, which could make it accessible for people cycling and horse-riding after Cycling UK and the British Horse Society **threatened legal action** on not being originally consulted.

Existing alternatives

There is already a **Sea to Sea or C2C long distance cycling route**, established and promoted from 1992 which goes from Whitehaven or Workington on the Irish Sea coast across to Sunderland or Tynemouth on the North Sea coast. I observed that this was popular and well used by groups of cyclists when I stayed in the North Pennines some 10 years ago.

As far as I am personally aware there is **no corresponding horse riding route in existence** that has been created or promoted officially.

Cyclists and Horse-riders needs

A long distance walker will typically want to use facilities within a 2 ½ mile or 4km distance from the route ie no more than an hours walking time.

Cyclists and horse-riders can readily cover more ground within an hour from a route, so their corridor of search and use of facilities will typically be wider, usually perhaps 6 miles or 10 km from the official route.

Cyclists will need a dry secure place (a barn, shed or garage) where a group of at least half a dozen bikes can be parked and stored overnight.

Information on local cycle shops and repair facilities for issues more serious than a puncture repair need to be researched and provided.

Details of any transport that will be willing and able to collect and carry a cycle is required. This is for those who cannot complete the whole route. Options need to be researched and promoted.

Horse-riders will require stabling/livery options for overnight stops.

Information on local farriers along the route with emergency telephone numbers, if for instance a horse loses a shoe, will be helpful. Similarly contact details for vets who deal with horses in case of any health or accident incidents will be useful.

Locations to safely park horse lorries and boxes with agreement of local landowners that can be publicised and promoted.

Local agricultural suppliers or farmers along the route that can provide horse feed and equipment should also be researched and promoted.

Providing BHS contacts for advice and information on riding in the local area will be useful

Other issues

Realistically a braided route for cyclists and horse-riders that sometimes shares but often parallels the National Trail footpath will be likely to be the most practical solution.

Four issues may be of particular concern to cyclists and horse-riders compared to walkers:

1. The **minimum width required will be greater** than a simple footpath for walkers. There may be pinch points that these users cannot navigate. Stiles, Gates and Gaps through walls and hedges, and bridges or stepping stones across rivers that accommodate only walkers are examples.
2. The **ground conditions** in terms of **how smooth or rugged the surface and terrain** is, and also the **underlying drainage on soggy ground** may make some of the proposed footpath route unsuitable for cyclists and horse-riders. In such instances alternatives need to be provided, to avoid the ground surface becoming a quagmire or badly rutted and poached making it unattractive and in the worst cases unusable.
3. Quiet roads, byways, and unsurfaced unclassified roads maybe ideal for cyclists and horse-riders as a more pleasant alternative to footpaths. **Busy roads with fast moving traffic to travel along or cross should be avoided where possible, particularly for horses** who can be more unpredictable when faced with traffic hazards.
4. The busy **A19 crossing** with fast and heavy traffic is a particular concern. Ideally a separate bridge is required for walkers to get over this dangerous road. If this bridge also has to

accommodate cyclists and horse-riders it will have to be wider, avoid steps and be safe due to these users safety and convenience needs. This will increase the technical needs and costs accordingly. The alternative will be for cyclists and horse-riders who can more readily divert a further distance to use other existing safer crossings of the A19, with just walkers using the footbridge. Any decision on this A19 crossing could have significant cost implications. This needs to be directly addressed early on now. I understand there is a Feasibility Study looking at the options. **The LAF's and user groups should be involved and consulted on this at an early a stage as possible for their advice and views**, not be presented with a fait accompli.

There needs to be a **Code of Conduct or Good Practice between users** if this is going to be a shared route on the ground at some locations for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders. This should encourage kind and considerate behaviour between different users that encounter each other. Horses in particular can be vulnerable to surprise if cyclists approach fast and quiet from behind with no warning and make them start, possibly unseating the rider.

David Lepper
North Yorkshire LAF Member

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North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

25 January 2023

District Council and Updates from Sub-Groups

Report of the Secretary

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 An opportunity for LAF members to update the Forum on District Council liaison and other LAF representative project activity since the last meeting.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The LAF operates an agreed list of nominated representatives willing to act as the first point of liaison with the constituent District Councils in relation to planning and other relevant matters. Individual LAF members are also nominated from time to time to take a lead on specific projects that the LAF has an interest in or in representing the LAF on other partnership bodies. Both are represented in the table below:

Name	Representation
Will Scarlett	Craven District
Rachel Connelly	Hambleton District Richmondshire District A1
Roma Haigh	Ryedale District A19
Paul Sherwood	Regional Access Forum A66
County Councillor David Jeffels	Scarborough District Regional Access Forum
Dick Brew	NYCC Countryside Access Service User Group
David Lepper	Protected Landscapes
Vacant	2026 Harrogate District

- 2.2 This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Forum to be updated on activity since the previous meeting.

3.0 District Council Liaison

- 3.1 The following updates have been provided by Rachel Connolly:

- A66 Upgrading: The Public Enquiry has taken place with no objections or changes to the proposed design on the section through 'our patch'. Further design consultation is expected which needs watching in case budget constraints result in reducing NMU provision.
- Hambleton District Council: Few consultations since last meeting
- Richmond District Council: Some consultation responses with one notable gain in achieving connection upgrades to an industrial development, on the grounds of NMU safety and active travel. It begs the question why wasn't this picked up by RDC or highways?
- A1: Still waiting for safety hazards to be rectified with phone calls and emails unanswered. National Highways seem unaccountable to anyone. NYCC highways experiencing similar frustration with National Highways and have also been reluctant to engage. It is a long time since the A1 was upgraded, so this reflects a lack of interest to look after the needs of those who travel without a car.
- Bedale By-pass: Waiting for the NMU route along the eastern section of the Bedale bypass to be signed off by Michael Leahy.

3.2 Other nominated representatives are invited to report verbally on any other district liaison activity undertaken since the last meeting.

4.0 Sub-Group Updates

4.1 The Sub-Group set up to carry out a review on Wayfinding, has now completed its review and their final report is attached at Annex A, together with its associated appendices.

4.2 The review has generated a number of recommendations asset out in the report, which the full Forum is asked to consider, in order that they may amended if necessary and agreed prior to be formally submitted to North Yorkshire County Council for consideration and adoption.

4.3 As part of the Wayfinding Review, the issue of Recreational Paths arose, on which David Lepper has produced a discussion paper for the Forum's consideration – as shown at Annex B.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 That the Forum:

- i) Notes the District Council Liaison updates;
- ii) Considers, revises where appropriate, and agrees the draft recommendations arising from the Wayfinding Sub-Group review as detailed in Annex A, so that they may be formally submitted to North Yorkshire County Council.

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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">iii) Consider and comment on the Recreational Paths discussion paper at Annex B.iv) Agree any further actions required |
|---|

BARRY KHAN

Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall

NORTHALLERTON

Report Author: Melanie Carr, Secretary to North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

Annexes:

Annex A – Wayfinding Sub-Group Review Final Report

Annex B – Recreational Paths Discussion Paper

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North Yorkshire LAF Summary of Draft Recommendations arising from Waymarking Review

In response to a request from NYCC Countryside Access Services the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum set up a sub-group to carry out a review on Wayfinding. The sub-group was made up of the following Forum members:

Nick Abbey
Dick Brew
Cllr David Jeffels
David Lepper

The wider context and justification for the draft recommendations listed below is presented in Appendix 1 attached.

In order to inform the work of the Sub-Group, CAS provided some early feedback on the review findings and draft recommendations, as detailed in Appendix 2 attached.

Draft Review Recommendations:

The draft recommendations arising from the review are listed below:

1. Good quality waymarks should be used that will be durable to the effects of ultraviolet and weathering and not go brittle. Ideally these should be environmentally friendly and malleable.
2. Where standard waymark discs may be difficult to view from a distance then consideration should be given to providing 2 metre high posts painted with an appropriately coloured top to make these routes more obvious from a distance. Yellow denotes Footpaths; Blue for Bridleways; Plum for Restricted Byways; Red for Byways Open to All Traffic; and Black for Byway.
3. Some Local Authorities do employ a waymarking strategy, the Yorkshire Dales National Park example is provided as an Appendix to the Strategic Review and Advice Paper.
4. A priority hierarchy of routes to be waymarked is: 1. National Trails; 2. Recreational Paths (Routes) as shown on Ordnance Survey Maps; 3. Routes around farm and commercial buildings, domestic dwellings and gardens; 4. Routes that may pose a safety or trespass hazard if users stray from the definitive line; 5. Routes to popular destinations such as viewpoints, historic sites and nature conservation areas; 6. Inter-village routes; 7. Other promoted circular routes in published guide books and leaflets; 8. No through routes (Dead Ends) to be clearly signed as such; 9. The rest of the Public Rights of Way network. 10. Unsealed Unclassified Roads (UUR) (Black Arrow) To be included in the PROW Waymarking Strategy.
5. Routes should still be waymarked where they do not provide circular or interconnecting links.
6. Dead End routes should clearly be signed and waymarked as such on the ground.
7. Third party Other Promoted Routes come out as the 7th priority in the hierarchy for waymarking above. Sponsors and promoters of such routes may be asked to contribute

financially; or by seeking their “in kind” support installing waymarks along their route. “If you don’t ask you don’t get”.

8. All waymarking requests should be logged and considered, even a single report from just one customer, with weight given to multiple requests.
9. It would help if on the reporting system any previous requests at the same location for waymarking could be fed back to any new reporter.
10. Waymark requests should usually only be considered where the usual agreed criteria for their provision apply. Three exceptions are: a) in the vicinity of farms & houses where additional waymarks may be justified; b) if there are any hazardous safety issues to be avoided; c) where an obvious path leads off from a route on the ground which is not a public right of way to avoid trespass. Those making the request should be asked to give reasons for additional waymarking falling outside this framework.
11. There needs to be effective consultation and communication on routes which cross the North Yorkshire LAF border into adjoining highway authorities, such as the two adjacent National Parks, to ensure a consistent approach is utilised on such links. Similarly with other adjoining Highway Authorities.
12. Waymarks Installation: To be cost effective, efficient and achievable, waymarking should be carried out by: a) NYCC Countryside volunteers; b) Path Keeper Groups; c) Parish Council Volunteers (Lengthsmen); d) NYCC PROW Officers. Volunteers to be suitably trained, directed and supervised.
13. Existing Path Keeper Groups may be encouraged to tackle adjoining areas once they have brought waymarking up to a satisfactory standard in their own Parish or area that they cover.
14. Additional Path Keeper groups should be established and supported as an efficient and cost effective way to improve waymarking and involve local people in positive action on the ground looking after their “patch”.
15. Parish Councils may be approached separately to help improve waymarking in their area where it is deficient.
16. The number of waymarking posts and discs and their locations should be recorded centrally.
17. Ideally waymark posts and discs records should be linked to the Definitive Map and Statement and definitely be recorded on CAMS.
18. It will be helpful to annually record the total number of waymarks and waymark posts replaced, together with the number of waymark requests that are still outstanding.
19. The UUR network is not covered by the new PROW reporting system which came into operation on Friday 4th November 2022. It appears that UUR waymarking currently falls through the cracks and is not covered. This needs to be addressed if it is an oversight.

Report Recommendation:

The Sub-Group asks that the Forum consider, amend if required and agree the draft Recommendations above, so that they may be formally submitted to North Yorkshire County Council for consideration and adoption.

Supporting Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Detailed Review Findings & Advice

Appendix 2 – Early Feedback from CAS & Sub-Group Responses

Appendix 3 – Oxfordshire Paths – How to Guide

Appendix 4 – Cheshire Policy on PROW Issue Prioritisation

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North Yorkshire Local Access Forum Waymarking Strategic Review - Findings and Advice

Introduction

At the NYLAF meeting on Wednesday 28th September 2022 Agenda Item 6 was a Paper produced from Countryside Access Service on **Waymarking**. At that meeting it was agreed to set up a subgroup consisting of David Lepper, Dick Brew, Nick Abbey and Cllr David Jeffels to provide an overview with some strategic advice on how to best proceed with future Waymarking priorities.

Back to basics, from the Natural England booklet “Waymarking public rights of way”. The term waymarking means marking objects along a public right of way. It complements signposting which shows where a right of way leaves the metalled road and indicates its initial direction.

Waymarking enables users, especially those unfamiliar with the area, to follow a path accurately and confidently at points where they might otherwise have difficulty.

Waymarking benefits not only users of rights of way but also farmers and landowners. It increases users’ enjoyment of the countryside and prevents unintentional trespass. Carrying out waymarking is a simple and very practical way in which a parish council, local group, or individual landowner or occupier can help to look after the rights of way in their area.

This simply outlines the national context, however waymarking is not always a precise science. There are local variations of “In House style” between Highway Authorities and sometimes not always a single right or wrong solution. There may be different ways of interpretation and implementation, with local distinctiveness and good practice agreed and implemented. To get it right and consistent to satisfy both users and land managers can be an art that requires some common-sense local flexibility. Things are not always black and white, but also yellow, blue, purple or red, with words, lettering, or symbols added as local agreed variations on some waymarking arrows.

One common observation is that some older installed waymarks have now become badly faded with the effects of ultraviolet light and weathering. Some of the poorer quality plastic waymarks also seem to become very brittle and prone to breaking. It is also helpful to have waymarks with a bit of flexibility that can be attached flush to a rounded post without breaking.

Recommendation is that good quality waymarks should be used that might initially cost a bit more but will be durable and stand the test of time, so representing better value for money longer term.

Leicestershire County Council includes taller waymark posts, 2 metres or so high, with bright yellow painted tops, so if a stile or gate in a hedge becomes overgrown, obscuring a low level standard waymark, these taller yellow tops can be seen from some distance away across the far side of a field. On promoted Recreational Paths in Northamptonshire taller white top painted posts, or larger dustbin lid size circular discs are similarly used in some locations where the route otherwise might not be that obvious with normal size waymarks from a distance. These are 2 examples of useful practical additional variations on top of the normal waymarking discs adopted by other Highway Authorities. A similar approach could be adopted locally where it would be

helpful, for instance across the opposite side of larger fields where a standard waymarking disc cannot be readily observed.

Size and cost of waymarking programme

The Countryside Access Service record the rights of way in their area on the Definitive Map. This includes details of rights of way furniture like bridges, stiles and gates. Waymarking posts and waymark discs are separately recorded on the rights of way CAMS Countryside Access Management System but are not legally required to be recorded on the Definitive Map. At 8th November 2022 there were 2598 waymarks recorded on CAMS, but there are actually many more, probably in the region of 6,000 up to 9,000+, as many are not on the system. Landowners, Parish Councils and Path Keeper groups were given bundles of waymarks to use locally whose precise locations are not recorded. There are 1865 Waymark Posts recorded on CAMS, which again is suspected to be on the low side.

Every year approximately 920 Waymarks and about 10 Waymark Posts are replaced. Waymarks cost around £1 each, and where installed by a volunteer the typical issue cost will be £30. A Waymark Post costs about £25 and installation is about £100. All new waymarks are the usual plastic disc form, but there is a retained stock of old style metal waymarks that are occasionally used to directly replace missing or damaged metal waymarks on furniture. CAS are wanting to explore the use of alternative materials including recycled products in future.

Recommendation: We feel it will be helpful to assess and deal with waymarking on a strategic planned basis by knowing the total resource base involved, the usual annual replacement or upgrade programme, with an estimate of the costs, involved. It currently costs around £8,000 to deal with the number of annual requests received, and it is estimated it will cost around £40,000 to resolve all the backlog of issues (27% of the annual maintenance budget).

Recreational Paths

National Trails on the rights of way network are the equivalent of motorways on the road network, signposted and maintained to the highest standard and instantly recognised and known and trusted by users. The simple instantly recognised black and white Acorn symbol works well and has become a unique iconic Waymark. National Trails should be the Rolls Royce end of the waymarking spectrum, the gold standard, and are supported accordingly by separate additional national funding from Natural England to be installed and maintained.

The next tier in the hierarchy of rights of way are Recreational Paths, whose routes are separately named and shown on the reverse of all the OS Explorer Maps. So, for example on the Ripon and Boroughbridge OS Map 299 there are four Recreational Paths named with routes outlined: Foss Walk; Knaresborough Round; Nidderdale Way; and Ripon Rowel Walk. Anyone who lives in this area, and tourists who visit the area, and buy and use the OS Explorer Map are likely to be attracted to try out and use the Recreational Paths shown, one step down from National Trails. There are likely to be separate guidebooks on sale in local shops and local Tourist Information Centres, or if out of print an Online version that can be used and followed. It seems sensible with their separate promotion and high profile that these Recreational Paths should be treated as the next priority after National Trails to waymark to a high standard. They are the “shop window” for

both local people and visitors to the area, and the old adage, “You never get a second chance to make a first impression” is appropriate. It is proposed that these routes should be waymarked to a high and consistent standard. (A member of the group who has walked both the Ripon Rowel Walk and the Foss Walk over the last few years reports that the waymarking is currently rather variable, and this should be a priority to address to bring up to an acceptable high standard.)

In other areas some recreational paths have been created by the County Council Countryside or Rights of Way Team, for instance in Northamptonshire the Nene Way, Grafton Way and Knightley Way. In our area some routes including the Foss Walk and Ripon Rowel Walk have been established many years ago by an individual or group, with a separate printed Walk Guide, but presumably originally in collaboration and agreement with Countryside Access Services. It would make sense for CAS to support volunteers to bring waymarking on such paths back up to a high standard, where it has lapsed into poor condition over the intervening years. CAS could also suggest that the original out of print guides are reviewed and updated as there have been various changes over the last 25 years plus to the landscape with features such as new wind turbines and solar panels being installed and large landmark trees that may have disappeared. The group is aware of recent examples of updating such routes. For example, the “Todmorden Walkers are Welcome” group reviewed the 20 year plus Todmorden Centenary Way. This included revising the text and the route on the ground where necessary, working closely with support from the local Todmorden Town Council and the Calderdale Countryside Service. Over a three year period a splendidly updated series of weatherproof maps and overarching Todmorden Centenary Way booklet were produced and launched.

Other Promoted Circular Routes

There are a variety of other circular walks across the NYLAF area that have been published as books and leaflets or are available on Parish and District Councils and AONB’s websites online. For example, at Easingwold Tourist Information Centre there are now some 25 Circular walks leaflets covering a ten mile radius in the surrounding countryside produced by a Town Councillor at a very reasonable price. There are also various books that can be bought such as Pub Walks in North Yorkshire by Leonard Markham, plus various walks guide books by Paul Hannon such as Nidderdale and Ripon; and Howardian Hills and the Vale of York which provide a range of fine tried and tested enjoyable walks across North Yorkshire which are popular and enjoyable.

Recommendation is that such published and promoted circular walks, the next level down from Recreational Paths above, should be a further priority for being waymarked. People/groups who have been responsible for producing these publications could also be asked if they will be willing to make a financial contribution to keep the waymarking up to date and in good condition for their users to enjoy. This may not be successful, but “If you don’t ask you don’t get”.

Intervillage Paths and Paths to points of interest such as viewpoints, historic and nature conservation sites

People often like to walk with a specific destination in mind. This might be to a viewpoint such as a Trig Point on a hilltop, or a lake, coastal, riverside or waterfall view. This may be a simple return walk from a town, village, bus stop or car park area. Similar popular single link journeys may be to

destinations like Woodlands, Nature Reserves, Historic Houses and Parklands. These typically are known loved destinations that have a short simple walk that links them.

People also like to walk from one village or town to another, then maybe taking in a pub, café or ice cream stop, enjoying the countryside, and putting money into the local service economy. After a walk you may typically be hungry, thirsty, wanting a comfortable sit down and looking for suitable refreshment opportunities, perhaps buying a postcard or a small gift. These types or routes are not always circular, but are destination walks in their own right and should be waymarked as a higher priority than the wider network which may not have such obvious destinations.

Specific Problem Locations

Sometimes routes pass through farmyard buildings, or also close around domestic homes and through peoples' gardens. This can create a fear of invading peoples' privacy, or if it is a convoluted route of inadvertently going the wrong way. Sometimes in such situations the routes have been diverted around or away from such buildings. This could be through official NYCC approved diversions, but other times from the landowner's initiative informally that may need to be checked and sanctioned. This can be particularly helpful to avoid users coming into very close contact with farm machinery, farm animals and agricultural operations around farm buildings in enclosed spaces like busy farmyards.

Recommendation: To create certainty and avoid conflict or upset with farmers and homeowners waymarking in these close proximity situations should be given a high priority and be more frequently used to be clear and unambiguous. This will be helpful to those who live and work in the countryside as well as those seeking recreational enjoyment.

The rights of way network is not always logical, sometimes there are defined routes that come to an unexpected and illogical dead end with perhaps open countryside such as a field beyond. Sometimes a farmer or landowner puts up a homemade sign, Private, or Keep Out, and these signs may be vandalised, destroyed, or ignored. Recreational users maybe unclear whether they can still proceed, and local farmers get upset and sometimes angry as people are technically trespassing.

Recommendation: Having an official right of way "Dead end" sign installed in such locations will be helpful to both recreational users and land managers to clarify any ambiguity. These situations are relatively few and far between. If reports are submitted highlighting this as a live issue of concern, then these signs should definitely be installed as a priority to reduce any local conflict and misunderstanding that has arisen.

Links to National Parks & Adjoining Highway Authorities

We have the two National Parks, the Yorkshire Dales, and the North York Moors, with much of the NYLAF area sandwiched between them. There needs to be effective consultation and communication on routes which cross between our area into the two National Parks, so that waymarking on such links is systematic and joined up in its approach. One of the criticisms levelled at the current Coast to Coast Recreational Path before it hopefully becomes a National Trail is the poor waymarking in places. National Parks may feel waymarking across high wild open country is

an imposition on the natural beauty of the area, and so may be deliberately stingy in waymarking provision, doing the bare minimum. In contrast around the moorland tops of Calderdale the CROWS (Community Rights of Way Service) policy is to waymark moorland paths that say curve less obviously around a hillside, so that you can see the next waymark post from the current one, so that you will not get lost. In this challenging high Pennine terrain where the weather can often be inclement limiting visibility, this is an alternative approach that has much to commend it. It hopefully avoids many call outs to Calderdale Mountain Rescue Service where walkers have lost their way, then panic and may have an accident.

The rest of the network

Special cases have been identified and prioritised above on higher priority needs for waymarking. This leaves the remainder of the network still to be tackled. The way forward for this wider network may be to use the 20 or so Parish Path Keeper Groups currently signed up to initially focus on waymarking their own patch first. Once this has been achieved, could they be encouraged to do the same for neighbouring Parishes? Once such a group is trained up and has some practical experience under their belt, then this must be one of the most cost effective and hassle-free ways of getting more waymarking achieved. There could also be a separate parallel approach made to Parish and Town Councils to ask if they are willing and able to participate. The pinch point may be the current staff resources in the CAS Team on promoting and serving Path Keeper Groups. If this is the position, could additional staff time be sought for this activity under the new North Yorkshire Council organisation? This approach both highlights great collaborative working with the local grass roots community and it also represents excellent value for money.

Going back to the 1990's during Countryside Commission days, they supported Highway Authorities such as Leicestershire County Council on a Waymark 2000 initiative to try and get all their waymarks up to date and other rights of way furniture in good condition by the year 2000. This was done in three ways. One was paying commercial contractors to blitz a Parish or Group of Parishes to bring all their rights of way up to scratch. The second was Parish Path Partnerships to use local volunteers to get the work done, with training and support. In effect a variation on the Path Keeper Scheme CAS now operate. A third strand was to pay farmers and land managers to do some work on rights of way on their patch through an agreed annual contract, such as mowing and topping headland paths to keep them user friendly and stop hedgerow scrub and brambles, nettles and thistles spreading out and making the paths unusable. Admittedly that was in a time when available grants and Local Authority finances were in a much healthier position.

Weight of reporting and geographical proximity

It has been asked if two or more customers report the same problem with finding their way should that increase its priority to be dealt with? The problem at the moment is that individuals who take the time and effort to report such issues have no way under the current reporting system of knowing whether they are the first, or one of many people to have flagged up such an issue.

Ideally an open transparent reporting system should highlight whether the same issue has already been reported and noted by others (and how many others). If several people have reported the same concern, it should certainly increase the priority for it to be dealt with, demonstrating there is more significant local demand. If only one individual takes the time and effort to report a

waymarking issue, it should still be logged, not be overlooked or dismissed, but it is likely to be a lower priority. It also makes sense if a local Path Keeper group or a member of the Countryside Access Services is going to go out to install or replace waymarks, to do several in the same proximity at the same time will be more efficient and effective in employing precious staff resources, rather than deal with a single case in splendid isolation.

Waymarks should be installed wherever reassurance on the correct way to proceed is required on the ground. This is largely a common-sense approach. If there are one or more potential issues at the same point that could cause confusion and raise uncertainty on the way forwards, such as change of direction; route crosses a non PROW; a junction of multiple paths; or a cross field path, then an appropriate waymark should be provided.

Recommendation Sometimes a waymark can be valuable on the grounds of safety, or to avoid a possible trespass where that might be an issue, say a path leading off that is not a right of way. There does need to be a justification for such additional waymarks over and above usual requirements.

Local distinctiveness and additional information

Waymarks and Signposts work together in tandem. It has previously been highlighted that some named Recreational Paths have a non-standard distinctive waymark, incorporating a logo or a form of words that make it stand out clearly. Once you get your eye in following such a route, it makes it far easier to stick to the correct way, rather than going off at a tangent following other standard waymarks. Similarly, signposts vary with the information they display. Some may simply indicate whether it is a footpath, or bridleway or byway. Some have a named location that the route leads to, some will include a distance in miles or kilometres. There are also a range of materials and styles, cast aluminium or metal signs on metal posts (some of these may become collectors' items), wooden routed signs, even stone carved signs in walls. All part of our country's rich tapestry of variety and experience. For higher profile destinations that are popular, trying to have a systematic signage and waymark presentation along a route is desirable. For other more local routes that are not likely to be used by tourists or those unfamiliar with the area having an assortment of different styles of signs that have probably been installed and replaced at different times over many years is not an issue of any real concern.

Others' Waymarking Practice

North York Moors National Park

In terms of where and when waymarks are used it is on a case by case basis depending on location, priority of the path, landowner agreement and the judgement of our Rangers. Most infrastructure items will be waymarked, as would sections that are known to cause confusion on popular routes following liaison with the landowner.

Ben Jackson Head of Ranger Services

Yorkshire Dales National Park Waymarking Recreational Routes - Criteria for way marking of long distance routes

National Trails The Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway are recognised and promoted as National Trails by Natural England. All National Trails will be waymarked to an agreed standard.

Regional importance Routes which are long enough that they are completed over several days and which attract significant numbers of visitors to the National Park will be considered favourably. For routes which have sections in neighbouring authorities, the support of those authorities will also be a factor taken into account. **Permanence Routes** must be expected to last (i.e. to be actively inspected and promoted) for a minimum of 5 years. Routes which have been in existence for less than five years would only be waymarked in exceptional circumstances. **Length of route** Routes designed to be completed in the course of a day will not normally be waymarked as long distance walks. This would not prevent shorter routes being waymarked for other reasons, such as with the Red Squirrel Trail, and short routes aimed at increasing participation etc. **Responsibility** There must be a specific group or organisation prepared to take responsibility for inspections and publicity material. **Public access** The route must be available for all members of the public to use. This could include routes with a permissive access agreement provided that sufficient longevity can be guaranteed.

The following additional factors will be considered favourably:

- economic benefit to the area,
- heritage, scenic or ecological interest,
- routes benefitting the local community as well as visitors
- routes that promote the use of public transport and green businesses

Publicity material must be:

- clear to read,
- easily available,
- give clear advice on minimising the impact on the area, and
- be kept up to date.

Material that provides additional information to promote greater understanding of the area will be seen positively. **Route alignment** The route must be checked by the National Park Authority for legal status and issues, and agreed in advance in the case of new routes. Where promoted routes use permissive paths, agreement from the landowner should be made available in writing and should confirm that permission is granted for a minimum of five years. **Road safety** Road sections and crossings, where they are not already approved, need to have been safely audited by the relevant highway authority.

Yorkshire Dales National Park Waymarking Guidance

Waymarking (arrows and fingerposts) Other than a fingerpost indicating where a right of way leaves a metalled road (a statutory requirement) any other waymarking depends on location and landowner permission:

- From settlements in the main Dales and around buildings, waymarking will be used extensively to orientate visitors, and give them confidence, in their surroundings.
- In rural lowland areas and tributary dales, away from buildings, waymarking will be used to avoid disturbance to land management and will be unobtrusive within the surroundings.
- In open upland areas, the use of waymarks will be used only out of necessity or where required as an aid to navigation on promoted routes, with the aim of ensuring that any signs of human activity are minimal.
- Open Access Symbol - The provision of open access signage will be the minimum necessary to make clear to the public the boundaries of access land and the location of access rights.

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Early Feedback from CAS on the papers prepared by the Sub-Group, followed by the Sub-Group's draft responses (*in italics*) on 29 December 2023

In our paper, under the section Questions for consideration (5.3.2 and 5.3.5), we asked the LAF to explore the idea of whether or not certain routes should be more or less heavily waymarked. From what has been written, it is assumed that the LAF's position is that the very minimum level of waymarking for all routes would be the four existing criteria (i.e. change of direction; ROW crossing or meeting a non-ROW; junction of multiple paths; and cross-field paths) with exceptions as noted under your recommendation 10 (more on that below). Please can you confirm whether this is a correct assumption?

Sub-Group Response - We have not followed your Categorisation of Paths in Category A, but rather looked at the issue from a fresh perspective, and outlined the Priorities for Waymarking under Recommendation 4. The four existing criteria you quote should be the minimum level for all routes. National Trails and Recreational Routes shown on Ordnance Survey Maps should be waymarked to the highest (rather than minimal standard) and will typically have the National Trail Acorn, and/or Waymarks incorporating additional readily identifiable information such as wording or logos as well as the appropriate Waymark arrow, depending on the status of the link ahead. Often supporting signposts accompanying the waymarks will also have the route named with wording on the fingerpost and possibly also the next destination with distance listed, to help raise the profile and awareness of the routes concerned.

From a practical point of view, and recognising that not everything can be done at once, the priority we have ascribed can relate to the speed with which the Council responds to complaints/suggestions made by members of the public – i.e. that the higher priority routes would receive more prompt attention. Similarly, we are not saying that all routes should be inspected shortly and brought up to the minimum standard – but those we have identified should be seen as a higher priority in any programming exercise.

Linked to this, in the supplementary paper you allude to the idea of a 'high standard' of waymarking for National Trails and Recreational Paths. The paper mentions that the standard along the Ripon Rowel is variable for example. Can you clarify what you mean by this, and what would constitute a high standard as opposed to the usual standard? Does this mean more prolific waymarking over and above the four existing criteria noted above, and does this relate to the 'quality' of the waymark i.e. faded or chipped? Please confirm and elaborate if necessary.

Sub-Group Response - It has been clearly stated in the supporting paper that the LAF believes Recreational Routes specifically named and shown on the reverse of OS Explorer Maps should be treated as the next priority level below National Trails. There are anomalies. The current Coast to Coast path pioneered by Wainwright is NOT listed on OS Maps yet is probably one of the most popular long distance walking routes in the country, having far more daily and annual users than most of the officially designated National Trails. In some areas it is well waymarked, in other areas its waymarking is poor. It is a pending National Trail, so these particular issues should be resolved in due course. Some sections of Recreational Paths listed on OS Maps have been found to be variable in their waymarking, with some sections poorly waymarked and with faded or more infrequent waymarks. From experience, this applies to both the Foss Walk and the Ripon Rowel Walk which have been found wanting in places on waymarking. In some cases additional

waymarks would have helped; in others waymarking was faded, or standard waymarking had been used rather than waymarking designed for the specific route, (which would have made it clearly stand out from other rights of way links that may cross the route and which just use standard waymark arrows}, rather than requiring additional route embellishments. I hope this confirms and elaborates the issues encountered.

Other promoted routes in books and leaflets NOT shown on OS maps are much more variable and would typically have just the standard Waymarks designating the status of the link ahead.

Also in your supplementary paper, you recommend the use of good quality waymarks – do you have any manufacturer details in mind or specific products that we can look into?

Sub Group Response - We do not have specific recommendations for suppliers of good quality waymarks, but there are many encountered on the ground that have either become badly faded and become almost illegible, or become brittle, chipped and cracked. There are a range of suppliers, and other Highway Authorities could be consulted on which waymarks they find good quality, durable, and fairly priced.

In respect of the proposed recommendations:

Recommendation 3

Can you clarify that only YDNPA have a waymarking strategy / policy? I am interested to note which other Authorities you consulted in order that we may contact them directly to assist with benchmarking as necessary. If you have any written feedback or information (positive or negative) that would be helpful too.

Sub-Group Response - The Yorkshire Dales National Park responded to a specific request with details of their Waymarking Strategy. We have not exhaustively trawled many other Highway Authorities, but from an internet search, most have a Rights of Way Improvement Plan with a helpful section on Waymarking, rather than a separate standalone Waymarking Strategy. As examples, the LAF felt that the attached documents used by Oxfordshire and Cheshire East were helpful.

Recommendation 4

Priorities 4, 5 and 7 – whilst laudable, these are either ambiguous, subjective, open to interpretation and/or difficult to quantify, especially from a desk top exercise when assessing how the service would address new requests for waymarking from customers and/or review the existing backlog.

Sub-Group Response - We recognise the problems but feel that it would be useful to see if we could jointly work up some guidance so that these suggested priorities could be adopted.

Priority 4 - If there are hazards such as cliffs or a quarry or deep water along a side off path route, or a landowner has reported several people inadvertently trespassing along a route across their land which is not a right of way, this would justify clarification on the ground. These cases should be unusual exceptions.

Priority 5 - Such destinations are partly a matter of using common sense, or any data that is available showing the extent of the use of a particular path. Some will have car parks and viewpoints, or their specific names highlighted on Ordnance Survey Maps, or entrance signs on the ground to Nature Reserves, waterfalls or beauty spots.

Priority 7 - We agree it is difficult to be fully aware of all promoted routes in published books and leaflets. Some are officially produced by Parish or Town Councils, such as at Easingwold with 20 plus local walks leaflets produced. We presume they will have consulted you before their publication, and if so, and NYCC approved the routes in some way, this could give them a priority for attention over other routes which were not consulted upon? For other routes such as Ripon Rowel and Foss Walk, the original hard copy booklet is out of print and 20 plus years old, and it would be good if the individuals/groups responsible for them could be asked to update and reprint them. If they become too moribund and outdated on the ground, with no one obviously responsible, then alternatively perhaps after consultation with yourself, they should be removed as named Recreational Routes from future updates of the Ordnance Survey Maps.

Recommendation 10

Exception 'c) where an obvious path leads off from a route on the ground which is not a public right of way to avoid trespass' – this is covered by the second of the four criteria 'where a PROW crosses a non-PROW'.

Sub-Group Response - See 4.4 above. It is additional clarification in specific unusual circumstances, it will not often need to be used. It is part duplication, but also part additional clarification in specific cases.

Recommendation 17

The Statement is a record of landowner entitlements / limitations on a public right of way. There is no legal basis nor requirement for the inclusion of waymarking on the Definitive Map and Statement and as such and the Authority has no intention of recording waymarks on the Definitive Map and Statement.

Sub-Group Response - We accept Waymarks will NOT be recorded on the Definitive Map or Statement, but seek clarification will they be logged on their recording on your CAMS system you control?

Recommendation 19

Sub-Group Comment - The position of UUR's has been ambiguous. They did not appear on your posted online version of rights of way but are shown on OS Map. It is all rather counter intuitive, confusing, far from clear, and created problems in reporting under the previous system. Hopefully this will be clarified and work better under the recently revised rights of way reporting system. We have not tested this out yet.

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Paths – a simple 'how to' guide

for parish councils, individual volunteers and interested people

The Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum has asked us to provide a simple guide about a range of scenarios common on the public rights of way network and which local people can do something about.

Local communities and individuals have always been involved in their local public rights of way (paths). They recognise the value of these paths and already do much work to keep them open. The Covid-19 lockdown made it even clearer that a good network of paths is vital in maintaining physical and mental health.

Normally, a path network can support our health through walking and riding, the local economy through tourism and keeping leisure spending local, provide opportunities for socialising, and contribute towards a more sustainable transport system where paths are used for journeys to school, work or the shops.

Thank you for your support in caring for this amazing resource

Scenarios:

1. Surface vegetation
2. Hedges growing over paths
3. Boggy paths
4. Unusable stiles
5. Locked gates
6. Barbed wire
7. Waymarking
8. Broken bridges
9. Fallen trees and branches
10. Paths through arable fields

Glossary of Terms

Published by:

Oxfordshire County Council Public Rights of Way Strategy
Planning & Growth Directorate

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess

May 2020

Scenario 1: Excessive vegetation growing from the surface of a path

<i>What is the standard?</i>	Paths should be reasonably easy to use – ideally with any vegetation below knee height, with an acceptable height depending on whether it's grass or nettles, etc.
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	OCC is usually responsible for natural vegetation growing out of the surface of the path, but not crops. See scenario 10 for crops.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Include priority paths in your open space/play areas mowing/strimming contracts. Report impassable paths to OCC using photos where possible.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	Some people clear paths at the end of their gardens using home mowers and trimmers. This benefits users but householders choosing to do this should note that they will not have public liability insurance for this and so could be liable for damages if anyone was injured as a result.
<i>What can local workgroups do?</i>	With training, insurance and equipment local people can join organised groups that keep paths clear and easy to use. These can be organised by parish councils or the local Ramblers
<i>Things to consider</i>	Glass, stones and other debris hidden by vegetation can become injurious when struck by mower/trimmer. Long vegetation may obscure holes and other hazards. Avoid damaging fencing especially when strimming.

Scenario 2: Overgrowth – trees and shrubs growing from the side or above the path

<i>What is the standard?</i>	Vegetation should not narrow the path or restrict access
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	Landowner - sometimes there can be more than one, e.g. a path on the boundary of two fields.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Include priority paths in your open space/play areas hedge-cutting contracts. Contact the farmer directly and request that they cut the hedge back. Report impassable paths to OCC using photos where possible.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	Path users may carry secateurs to trim small items of overgrowth they encounter on their journey. Some people choose to use saws or powered tools which benefits users, but they should not do this as they carry no public liability insurance and could be liable for damages if anyone was injured or property was damaged as a result of their actions.
<i>What can local workgroups do?</i>	With training, insurance and equipment local people can join groups that keep paths clear and easy to use.
<i>Things to consider</i>	Wasps may nest in path hedges. Trees and shrubs at the side of paths should not be cut back in bird-breeding season (March to October). Thorny cuttings especially blackthorn can cause injuries and punctures if left on the surface of the path.

Scenario 3: Boggy sections of path – short sections of deeper mud and mires

<i>What is the standard?</i>	Users should dress for the weather and environment, including appropriate footwear. Muddy sections over 8"/20cm deep are not adequate.
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	OCC looks after the surface, but drainage ditches are normally the responsibility of the landowner.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Contact the farmer directly to clear ditches. Report impassable paths to OCC using photos where possible.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	You can take a small diversion around an impassable section of path. Do not put woodchip, branches or stones into the bog section as they can develop into greater problems. Use secateurs to trim short bypass route.
<i>What can local workgroups do?</i>	With training, insurance and equipment local people can join groups that can clear ditches and dig grips, or bring in some stone for surfacing. If material is brought onto the path this normally needs landowner or OCC involvement in order to check suitability or arrange storage and access.
<i>Things to consider</i>	Boggy paths are usually caused by drainage failure and lack of sun and wind drying. Removing overgrowth will speed up drying out. Adding woodchip and other materials often makes the problem worse. Stone containing flint or other sharp material should never be used on paths used by horses. Paths cannot normally be widened outside of the legal width (recorded in Definitive Map and Statement) without agreement.

Scenario 4: Unusable stile

<i>What is the standard?</i>	Stiles should be steady, firm and easy to step over. There shouldn't be barbed wire on any part. Hedges should not encroach.
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	Landowners. They provide and maintain stiles as these are part of the fence which retains their livestock.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Contact the farmer directly to ask her/him to fix stiles. Report unusable stiles to OCC using photos where possible.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	If a very wobbly/broken step presents an immediate hazard you may remove part of the step to leave a hurdle if it makes the thing temporarily safer - but you cannot remove the rest of the structure as it is there to prevent livestock escaping. In all cases take before/after photos or videos and report the problem.
<i>What can local workgroups do?</i>	With training, insurance and equipment local people can join organised groups that can replace stiles with gates and make access easier.
<i>Things to consider</i>	A hammer and nails shouldn't normally be carried on paths so if the stile is really loose and unsafe it is better to report it as a hazard. Often the wobble is caused by ground settlement and poor construction so simply re-nailing the tread will not fix it.

Scenario 5: Locked gate – padlocked or even just hard tied or hard to open	
<i>What is the standard?</i>	Gates for path users must not be locked or otherwise secured so that it is impossible/very hard to open them. This includes dropped hinges.
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	Landowners. They provide and maintain gates as these are part of the fence which retains their livestock.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Contact the farmer directly to unlock, re-hang or replace gates. Report problem gates to OCC using photos where possible.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	You can try to negotiate a problem gate - for example by climbing over it, and you can also abate the nuisance - for example by untying the thing which is fastening the gate. However, the gate must not be left open and your action should be reported soonest. If you have to climb over a locked gate try and climb at the hinge end, not the catch end.
<i>What can local workgroups do?</i>	As farm gates are the landowner or farmer's responsibility this isn't really something for local work groups.
<i>Things to consider</i>	Make sure the gate is the legal route for the path and not the farmer's bypass structure that is lawful and necessary for them to secure.

Scenario 6: Barbed wire – alongside and close to path or across path	
<i>What is the standard?</i>	No barbed wire should run across a path. Where it crosses or connects to stiles the barbs should be removed or the barbs sheathed. Along the path side, users should not be able/likely to come in contact with the barbs - so either plain wire should be used, or the barbed wire should run on the field side of the fence with plain wire on the path side.
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	Landowners are responsible for all aspects of fencing.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Contact the farmer directly to remove or replace fencing. Report problem barbed wire to OCC using photos where possible.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	You can take a small diversion around the obstructed section. You can also abate the nuisance – for example by covering the barbed wire with hosepipe, tubing or plastic sheeting. You cannot cut the wire if it will leave the field unenclosed/insecure, but you may remove the barbs.
<i>What can local workgroups do?</i>	Local groups will often only re-attach fencing to new gates they install, and barbed wire will not normally be used.
<i>Things to consider</i>	Some barbed wire is installed under very high tension and there is a risk of severe injury if this type of fence is cut.

Scenario 7: Waymarking – showing the route that a path takes

<i>What is the standard?</i>	Paths should be indicated by plastic discs or painted arrows where the route isn't obvious. Waymarks may be nailed onto freestanding posts, gates or stiles, and in some areas may be painted on trees.
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	OCC should sign all paths from roadside and waymark where needed. Local communities, farmers and volunteer groups often waymark paths in their areas of interest.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Identify paths that would benefit from waymarking and discuss this with OCC.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	Use secateurs and hand tools to clear around signs and posts so they are visible through the season. Clean sign faces as needed.
<i>What can local workgroups do?</i>	Local groups can often replace waymarking discs or painted arrows when doing other work nearby. Installing waymarker posts can be done where there's no suitable structure, with prior OCC approval.
<i>Things to consider</i>	Waymarker discs shouldn't be fixed into trees or attached to structures like signs or buildings etc., where permission hasn't been given. Don't use wet wipes for sign cleaning as they contain plastic – use a damp cloth instead.

Scenario 8: Broken bridge – handrails, treads missing or damaged, or whole bridge loose or rotten

<i>What is the standard?</i>	Bridges and other crossings should be solid, stable and suitable for all users.
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	OCC is responsible for bridging natural watercourses. Landowners are responsible for bridging paths over drainage ditches and other artificial watercourses.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Contact the farmer directly to fix farm bridges. Report bridge problems to OCC using photos where possible.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	You can take a small diversion around an impassable section. Tree branches, an unsecured plank or large stones put into the watercourse do not provide safe crossing solutions.
<i>What can local workgroups do?</i>	With training, insurance and equipment local people can join groups that can, along with specialist OCC officers, replace smaller bridge structures like sleeper and kit bridges.
<i>Things to consider</i>	Often visible damage may be an indication of a greater underlying problem or that the bridge's lifespan has been exceeded. This needs to be assessed so reporting with photos is the best route to a solution.

Scenario 9: Trees and branches – fallen or low-hanging over all or part of a path

<i>What is the standard?</i>	Paths should be unobstructed by fallen trees and branches. There should be a minimum of 2.5m (8ft) headroom on footpaths and 3m (10ft) on bridleways.
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	Landowners are responsible for trees growing over paths from their land. The highway authority manages trees on roads and paths.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Contact the farmer directly to remove fallen or potentially hazardous trees and branches. Report problem trees to OCC using photos.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	You can take a small diversion around a fallen tree. Branches and smaller fallen trees may be moved to the side of a path to maintain some level of passage. Small hand tools can be used to trim up the larger fallen trees to allow passage when the trees are too large to move.
<i>What can local workgroups do?</i>	With training, insurance and equipment local people can join organised groups that can work on larger trees and branches.
<i>Things to consider</i>	Fallen trees and large branches held up by neighbouring trees, fences etc. (hung up) should not be tackled – report the issue with photos.

Scenario 10: Field edge and cross-field paths through arable land

<i>What is the standard?</i>	Paths should not have growing crops on them. When ploughed/drilled or when crops grow on the path they need to be reinstated. At all times the path should be distinct and reasonably level.
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	Farmers are responsible for all arable cultivations and cropping operations.
<i>What can local councils do?</i>	Photo-record all field edge paths and undisturbed cross field paths to establish a baseline condition. Contact the farmer directly to request reinstatement. Report impassable paths to OCC using photos.
<i>What can local people do?</i>	You can take a small diversion around a non-reinstated field. If an alternative route is signed this is permissive and the right to cross the field remains. Do not use other field edge margins as these are usually provided as wildlife habitats or chemical buffers as a condition of farm payments.
<i>Things to consider</i>	Widths may vary across a field and along a headland (field edge). Headland paths should not be disturbed and all restricted byway and byways whether cross field or headland must normally not be ploughed.

Finding out more and taking next steps using these links

- The full version of the [Parish Path Guide to Improving Rights of Way](#)
- The Oxfordshire Ramblers work with OCC public rights of way and organise [Parish Path Wardens](#) who are local volunteers who check and report on their local paths – and also undertake some minor works. Here you can also find out about work parties.
- Other groups include the [Chilterns Society Path Maintenance Volunteers](#) and the [Cotswolds Volunteer Wardens](#)
- The Oxfordshire County Council [path issue reporting tool](#) can be found at All issues are assessed by the OCC Countryside Access Team
- Oxfordshire County Council is [working together with local communities](#) to manage highway matters. Find out more from the Highways Volunteer Coordination Team and in the guidance at_
- **Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum's** webpages can be found at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ocaf

Grant funding for access improvement projects



The Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment has supported a large number of community-led access projects for many years with grants of up to £5,000, with more sometimes available for exceptional schemes. Full details of eligibility and example projects available from:

<https://www.trustforoxfordshire.org.uk>

Glossary of terms

Types of public right of way	
Footpath - Public Footpath	A highway over which the right of way is on foot only. Normally waymarked with yellow arrows.
Bridleway - Public Bridleway	A highway over which the public have a right of way on foot and a right of way on horseback or leading a horse, but with or without a right to drive animals of any description along it. Bicycles may also be ridden on bridleways. Normally waymarked with blue arrows.
Restricted Byway	A highway open to all traffic except mechanically propelled vehicles. Normally waymarked with purple arrows.
BOAT - Byway Open to All Traffic	A highway over which the public have a right of way for vehicular and all other kinds of traffic, but which is used by the public mainly for the purpose for which footpaths and bridleways are used. Normally waymarked with red arrows.
Other terms	
Finger post	A signpost placed where a public right of way leaves a metalled road. Shows the status, direction, and where appropriate the destination and distance.
Green lane	A common term with no legal meaning. A physical description of an unsurfaced track, often enclosed by hedges. The land may be a public right of way or may carry no public rights at all.
Highway Authority	The body responsible for the maintaining of highways and keeping them free of obstructions. In Oxfordshire it is the County Council.
Legal width	Some paths have their lawful width recorded within the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS) if created under a specific piece of legislation. Paths without a recorded width may have an historic width much greater than the walked line. OCC may be able to assist if there are questions about width and the DMS has not yielded any information.
Livestock	Any animal known to be aggressive, and dairy bulls over 10 months old must not be kept in a field crossed by a path. The following can normally be kept in a field crossed by a path: Beef bulls over 10 months old, provided it is running with heifers or cows; and cows, heifers, steers and calves. Caution needs to be exercised in fields where there are cows with calves at foot as they may react defensively when they detect dogs. If needed, users should release dogs from leads if approached.
LAF Local Access Forum	The countryside access advisory body established by the County Council under the CRow Act 2000. Comprised of volunteers including land managers, users and other relevant interested parties. Oxfordshire's LAF is known as the Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum (OCAF).
ORPA - Other Route with Public Access	A non-statutory designation route shown by the Ordnance Survey (OS) on Landranger and Explorer maps. It normally includes unsurfaced unclassified roads.

Path	In this document a shorthand term for all public rights of way and other linear access routes.
Permissive path	A path made available through the goodwill of the landowner. It may be withdrawn at any time and the public have no permanent rights over it. Permissive Paths are not usually shown on the Definitive Map and Statement or Ordnance Survey maps.
Priority path	In this document a term for paths that the community or parish council may consider important. These could include paths used to get to local shops and services, paths to other villages, circular dog walking routes, paths to the best viewpoints, or paths forming part of a promoted route etc.
Private right of way	A right of way for an individual or any group other than the public at large.
PRoW - Public right of way	A right of passage by the public over the highway for the purpose of passing and re-passing and for incidental reasonable purposes.
Reinstatement timings (of path through arable field)	Where a path is lawfully disturbed, the line of the path and a reasonable path surface should be restored within 14 days of the first cultivation and within 24 hours of subsequent cultivations. Farmers are encouraged to carry out this work at the end of a field's cultivation whilst the machinery is on site in order to minimise impacts on users and follow-up action by OCC.
RoWIP - Rights of Way Improvement Plan	A statutory plan that assesses access and sets out an authority's ambitions to manage and improve this access. Find Oxfordshire's at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/rowip .
Waymark	A means of showing the route of a public right of way. Oxfordshire uses round plastic discs with the status of the route and an arrow to show direction. Usually mounted on a wooden post or attached to stiles, gates and bridges. In the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty most waymarking takes the form of white painted arrows.

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PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY POLICY

Title: Prioritisation system for different categories of maintenance & enforcement issues on public rights of way

Adopted at: Public Rights of Way Committee

Adopted on: 1st March 2010

This policy sets out a prioritisation system for responding to different categories of complaints on the public rights of way network to enable officers to prioritise problem reports received.

Priority 1	<p>Public Safety Issues Examples: any issue with potential to cause injury; dangerous bridges, bulls & other dangerous animals, dangerous structures.</p> <p>This category of issue will be investigated/responded to in 24-72 hours from receipt of complaint.</p>
Priority 2	<p>Obstructions and statutory duties Examples: physical obstructions which prevent the public from using a path, serious disturbance to path surface, encroachment, intimidation, misleading signs, badly overgrown vegetation. Missing fingerposts.</p> <p>This category of issue will be investigated/responded to in 2-4 weeks from receipt of complaint.</p>
Priority 3	<p>Maintenance issues and minor compliance issues Examples: improving stiles/gates, drainage problems, surfacing improvements, waymarking.</p> <p>This category of issue will be investigated/responded to in 4-6 weeks from receipt of complaint.</p>
Priority 4	<p>Non-statutory requests/enquiries Examples: requests for additional signing, improvements not covered by higher priorities.</p> <p>This category of issue will be dealt with at the discretion of the relevant officer. In some cases, suggestions for improvements will be referred to the Countryside Access Development Officer for inclusion on list of Rights of Way Improvement Plan suggestions.</p>

N.B. The timescales given here are for an officer to look at the problem, not to issue the work to fix it or to temporarily close the path. Work timescales are dependent on urgency, contractor availability and resources.

For full details of the policy, see the [minutes of the Public Rights of Way Committee of 1st March 2010](#).

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Recreational Paths Discussion Paper

The North Yorkshire Local Access Forum was asked to review Waymarking policy and practice by the NYCC Countryside Access Service to help guide them on future prioritisation. In that review “official” Recreational Paths as shown on Ordnance Survey Explorer Maps came out as the second highest priority after National Trails.

Recreational Paths are routes separately named and shown on the reverse of all the OS Explorer Maps. So, for example on the Ripon and Boroughbridge OS Map 299 there are four Recreational Paths named with routes outlined: Foss Walk; Knaresborough Round; Nidderdale Way; and Ripon Rowel Walk. Anyone who lives in this area, and tourists who visit the area, and buy and use the OS Explorer Map are likely to be attracted to try out and use the Recreational Paths shown, one step down from National Trails. There are likely to be separate guidebooks on sale in local shops and local Tourist Information Centres, or if out of print an Online version that can be used and followed. It seems sensible with their separate promotion and high profile that these Recreational Paths should be treated as the next priority after National Trails to waymark to a high standard. They are the “shop window” for both local people and visitors to the area, and the old adage, “You never get a second chance to make a first impression” is appropriate. It is proposed that these routes should be waymarked to a high and consistent standard. (A member of the group who has walked both the Ripon Rowel Walk and the Foss Walk over the last few years reports that their waymarking is currently rather variable, and this should be a priority to address to bring up to an acceptable high standard.)

In other areas some Recreational Paths have been created by the County Council Countryside or Rights of Way Team, for instance in Northamptonshire the Nene Way, Grafton Way and Knightley Way. In our area some routes including the Foss Walk and Ripon Rowel Walk have been established many years ago by an individual or voluntary group, with a separate printed Walk Guide produced and published. This will originally have been in collaboration and agreement with NYCC Countryside Access Services. It would make sense for CAS to support volunteers to bring waymarking on such paths back up to a high standard, where it has lapsed into poor condition over the intervening years. CAS could also suggest that the original out of print guides are reviewed and updated as there have been various changes over the last 25 years plus to the landscape with features such as new wind turbines and solar panels being created together with new housing and other development added to the landscape. Conversely other features such as large landmark trees that may have been referred to may have disappeared. Important services originally listed in these walk guides may have been reduced or completely disappeared. For example public transport bus routes and operators may have changed, sometimes no longer being available or significantly reduced. Local services like village shops, post offices and pubs may also have closed or operate on reduced days and so no longer be available to walkers.

Where Recreational Paths are 20 plus years old, the original guidebook information will be dated, there may have been official diversions to parts of the route, and development, essential services and available facilities may have changed the landscape and functionality of walking the original route.

Recommendation : Where Recreational Paths as shown on Ordnance Survey Maps are 10 years or more old since original publication and promotion both the supporting literature, typically a

Guidebook, perhaps with a supporting separate map leaflet, should be reviewed and updated, with the mapped route on the ground being amended and reported back to Ordnance Survey, to keep it functional and current, to be useful and relevant to future walkers choosing to follow the route. The signposting and waymarking should be reviewed on the ground and be improved if necessary to maintain a high standard throughout. Typically distinctive unique branded waymarks should be used along the route, to make it easy to follow and stand out from any other rights of way that may cross it.

If the original author or voluntary group are still available, willing and able, they should be asked to carry out a comprehensive update. From experience elsewhere, this maybe a significant task that will take up time, effort and resources but be a worthwhile undertaking. If the originators are no longer available to carry out such a review, other relevant interest groups should be approached, such as Walkers are Welcome or the Ramblers Association or local Rights of Way Volunteer groups.

There are recent good practice examples elsewhere of updating such routes. For example, the “Todmorden Walkers are Welcome” group reviewed the 20 year plus Todmorden Centenary Way. This included revising the text and the route on the ground where necessary, working closely with support from the local Todmorden Town Council, Community Rights of Way Service (CROWS) and the Calderdale Council Countryside Service. Over a three year period a splendidly updated series of weatherproof maps and overarching Todmorden Centenary Way booklet were produced and launched, revitalising this Recreational Path, making it fit for purpose again.

Recommendation: If a previously listed and promoted Recreational Path shown on Ordnance Survey Maps becomes badly out of date, lacking good waymarking and signposting on the ground, if no group can be found to review and update it, then it should be removed from future Ordnance Survey Maps as no longer being available or suitable for promotion.

Appendix Extract from Ordnance Survey website on recreational Routes

Recreational route



These are routes created by local authorities, Government agencies or volunteer organisations. They mainly follow existing rights of way and are signposted typically by whichever organisation created the route. If the route is also an existing right of way, it will be maintained by a local authority. Any sections that are not part of existing rights of way may be maintained by the

corresponding organisation. Local authorities give us permission to show these routes, but they may not actively promote the routes or give them priority over other rights of way.

Recreational routes are shown on both OS map series with diamonds (green on 1:25000, pink on 1:50000). Note 1:50000 only shows those that are over 40km in length.

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North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

25 January 2023

Forward Plan Report

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To consider, develop and adopt a Forward Plan of items of business for future meetings.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The 'Guidance on Local Access Forums in England' published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) strongly recommends that forums prepare a forward work programme which sets out the forum's priorities and special areas of interest.
- 2.2 This can play an important role in helping the forum to:
- Ensure a focus on issues which are the most relevant for the area
 - Clarify the issues on which the County Council or other section 94(4) bodies would benefit from receiving advice
 - Timetable when specific matters are likely to be considered
 - Inform the public about the forum's work
 - Identify training needs
 - Review effectiveness and prepare an annual report.

3.0 Forward Plan

- 3.1 The Forward Plan is attached at Appendix A, which lists the agreed meeting dates for the coming municipal year.
- 3.2 The Forum meets three times a calendar year but may choose to agree further meeting dates (based on need), and may set up sub-groups to progress specific pieces of work outside of the formal meetings.
- 3.3 The remaining meeting date for this municipal year is 24 May 2023.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 Forum members are asked to note the dates of future meeting in 2022/23 and agree the work programme for those meetings, taking into account the discussions and suggestions made at this meeting.

BARRY KHAN
Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)
County Hall
NORTHALLERTON

Report Author: Melanie Carr, Secretary to North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

NORTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Forward Plan 2022/23

Date of Meeting	
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes • Matters Arising • Public Questions and Statements • Consultations • Secretary's Update Report • District Council Liaison Updates • Forward Plan
26 January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance of Natural England Representative - Review of new Land Management Scheme • Active Travel Update • UUR Draft Position Statement
1 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance of a Network Rail Representative • An update on the Coast to Coast National Trail from Natural England • A presentation from National Highways on their proposed A19 Safety Improvements; • An update on the Definitive Map team
28 September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Update on Local Government Reorganisation • Waymarking Overview Paper
25 January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance of National Farmers Union Representative – To discuss landowners views on access rights and access related issues • LGR – Verbal Update • Waymarking Working Group Report • Highways Design Guide Update • Local Transport Plan Update • Coast to Coast National Trail Route Update • Recreational Paths Discussion Paper
24 May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance of North Yorkshire Moors National Park Ranger – To discuss disability issues • ELMs Scheme Update • Network Rail Update
Suggested Future Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of Way Improvement Plan • In-depth discussion on Reinstatement • Draft NYCC Active Travel Strategy