

## **Agenda**

**Meeting:** North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

**Members:** Will Scarlett (Chair), Patricia Coulson (Vice-Chair), Stephen Clark, Rachel Connolly, Mark Cunliffe-Lister, Naomi Guthrie, Roma Haigh, Samantha Perks, Martin Reynolds, Belinda Ryan, John Toogood, Robert Heseltine and David Jeffels.

**Date:** Wednesday, 29 January 2025

**Time:** 10.00 am

**Venue:** Project Room B, Ground Floor, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AD

This meeting is being held as an in-person meeting. Members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting as observers for all those items taken in open session. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer whose contact details are below if you would like to find out more.

You may also be interested in [subscribing to updates](#) about this or any other North Yorkshire Council committee.

Recording is allowed at Council, committee and sub-committee meetings which are open to the public, please give due regard to the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at public meetings, a copy of which is available to download below. Anyone wishing to record is asked to contact, prior to the start of the meeting, the Democratic Services Officer whose contact details are below. We ask that any recording is clearly visible to anyone at the meeting and that it is non-disruptive.

### **Business**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 September 2024**

**(Pages 5 - 14)**

**3. Declarations of Interest**

All Members are invited to declare at this point any interests they have in items appearing on this agenda, including the nature of those interests.

**4. Public Participation**

Members of the public may ask questions or make statements at this meeting if they have given notice to Dawn Drury of Democratic Services and supplied the text (contact details below) by midday on Friday 24 January 2025, 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 instruct anyone who may be taking a recording to cease while you speak.

- 5. Secretary's Update Report** (Pages 15 - 18)  
Purpose: To update LAF members on developments since the last meeting.
- 6. LAF Sub-Group and individual Project Updates** (Pages 19 - 22)  
Purpose: An opportunity for LAF members to update the Forum on LAF representative project activity since the last meeting.
- 7. NY Local Access Forum - Draft Revised Terms of Reference** (Pages 23 - 30)  
To consider, agree and adopt the revised Terms of Reference put forward by the LAF Terms of Reference Sub-Group. (Document shown with the amendments requested at the September 2024 meeting highlighted for ease of reading).
- 8. Natural England - Coast to Coast National Trail**  
The Senior Officer, People, Landscapes, Access and Nature to attend, to provide a verbal update to Members.
- 9. Natural England - Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELM's)**  
The Senior Specialist: Public Access, Recreation and Rights of Way to attend, to provide a verbal update to Members.
- 10. Rights of Way Improvement Plan** (Pages 31 - 34)  
Item as requested by Members at the meeting in September 2024. The RoW Improvement Plan briefing paper outlines the current position and thoughts on its future development. Officers would welcome Members views on the topic and any strategic advice that may help to inform NYC's approach going forward.
- 11. Consultation response on the proposal to designate a new Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)** (Pages 35 - 42)  
Members are asked to note the response to Natural England's proposals to designate a new Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); and to consider any additional pressures within the Countryside Access Service resource that creation of the Wolds AONB may incur.
- 12. NYLAF Forward Plan Programme** (Pages 43 - 50)  
To consider the proposals set out within the report and adopt a forward plan for future LAF meetings.
- 13. Any Other Items**  
Any other items which the Chair agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances

#### Contact Details

Enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Dawn Drury Tel: 01757 292065 or e-mail: [dawn.drury@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.drury@northyorks.gov.uk) or [democraticservices.central.gov.uk](http://democraticservices.central.gov.uk)

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Barry Khan  
Assistance Chief Executive  
(Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall  
Northallerton

21 January 2025

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## North Yorkshire County Council

### North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

Minutes of the public meeting held on Wednesday, 25 September 2024 commencing at 10.00 am.

Patricia Coulson in the Chair, plus Rachel Connolly, Roma Haigh, Samantha Perks, Robert Heseltine, Stephen Clark, Martin Reynolds, John Toogood and George Jabbour.

Officers present: Ian Kelly - Head of Countryside Access Services, Tris Terry, Local Nature Recovery Strategy Project Manager, Martin Grainger – Head of Development Management, and Dawn Drury - Democratic Services Officer.

Other Attendees: Christopher Dunn – Public Speaker and Bruce Cutts - Senior Officer, People Landscapes Access and Nature (attended remotely).

Apologies: Will Scarlett, Belinda Ryan, Naomi Guthrie, David Jeffels and Mark Cunliffe-Lister

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#### Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

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The Chair offered a vote of thanks on behalf of the Forum to David Lepper and Jeremy Dunford who had both recently resigned from the LAF, and stated that their expertise, common sense approach and their contribution to the Forum would be greatly missed.

The Chair then welcomed the three new LAF Members present at the meeting; this was then followed by a brief introduction by each Member.

#### 14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Will Scarlett, Belinda Ryan, Naomi Guthrie, Mark Cunliffe-Lister and Councillor David Jeffels. Councillor George Jabbour acted as substitute for Councillor Jeffels.

#### 15 Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 May 2024

**Resolved** - That the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2024 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 16 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 17 Public Participation

There was one public question from Mr Christopher Dunn, as follows:

*Please provide a copy for all LAF 'members' on 25th September 2024 of this Killinghall Definitive map, this map was issued to me on 01/11/22 by NYC.*

*I am thankful for R Allan for providing map and all NYC PROW mapping staff who have been always helpful and obliging.*

*I note the following re this Killinghall map.*

- 1.No legend/key displayed, not possible to determine meaning of symbols thereon.*
- 2.No Drawing number, issue number, change column, creation date.*
- 3.No mention thereon or on any NYC PROW paper or online system of necessary Definitive PROW statements created same time as map !952?*
- 4.'Real'/' Actual'/' Working'/'Legal' NYC PROW Definitive maps apparently exist with perhaps post it notes/pencil/margin 'notes' thereon.*

*Will this LAF express their concern that NYC definitive maps are not up to date; not complete; unnumbered; and generally, do not comply with long established Draughting procedures especially when formal legal extinguishments, diversion; or additions are made?*

In response, the Chair advised Mr Dunn that the Forum dealt with issues at a strategic level, whilst day to day operational issues were overseen by officers of NYC, and therefore asked Ian Kelly, Head of Countryside Access Service to provide a response to Mr Dunn's question.

Ian Kelly thanked Mr Dunn for his public statement and explained that Mr Dunn had previously raised concerns and expressed his views about the accuracy of the Definitive Map and Statement in a formal complaint to the Council, which had also been the subject of a Public Question put to the LAF meeting by Mr Dunn on 22 May 2024.

Mr Kelly stated that he was sorry that Mr Dunn remained dissatisfied, however he was not able to comment on a matter that had been the subject of a complaint which had previously been responded to.

Mr Kelly did, however, acknowledge and thank Mr Dunn for his comments about members of his team, who had done, and would continue to assist with any new queries and concerns that Mr Dunn may have about the Service.

The Chair thanked Mr Dunn for attending the meeting and encouraged him to make use of the Corporate Complaints process to raise any future concerns.

## **18 Secretary's Update Report**

Considered –

The report of the Secretary, which updated Members on any developments since the last meeting.

In terms of the recent NYLAF recruitment campaign, Members heard that 15 applications had been received, all of a very high calibre with candidates from varying backgrounds and with different interests which helped to provide further expertise to the Forum. Eight of the candidates had been shortlisted for interview, with four new Forum Members being appointed; three unsuccessful candidates had all requested to be placed on a reserve list should any vacancies arise in the near future.

During the recruitment process a statement had been received from one of the applicants in relation to the provision of cycle paths and ease of access on footpaths and bridleways. Mr Kelly had provided Members with comments on the points raised in advance of the meeting, these were discussed and a response agreed.

Members were reminded that they had **Page 6** separate item for the Local Transport Plan

on the Forward Plan for this meeting, a short update was included within the secretary's update as the Transport Planning Team had nothing further to report at this time. It was highlighted that should Members wish to; the item could be deferred to the next meeting.

In terms of the correspondence sent out on the Forums behalf by the secretary, as per the amended terms of reference, a log of the correspondence sent from April 2024 to September 2024 had been included at appendix A to the report; Members confirmed that they were satisfied with the information contained therein.

Members queried who had responsibility for the upkeep of stiles and gates on bridleways, Mr Kelly advised that they were the responsibility of the relevant landowner. It was noted that if reports of defective gates or blocked routes were received, officers would contact the landowner in the first instance, and if the issue was not resolved the Council would either take legal action or repair the structure and re-charge the cost to the landowner.

**Resolved – That**

- i. The update be noted.
- ii. The Secretary provide the NYLAF applicant with the agreed response to their statement.

**19 LAF Sub-Group and Individual Updates**

Considered –

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

The Chair highlighted that there were two vacant liaison representative posts shown within the table at paragraph 2.1 of the report: one for National Landscapes and one for the Discovering Lost Ways 2026 Project and the former Harrogate district. Discussion took place around the projects and filling the two posts.

Mr Kelly advised that the deadline for the Discovering Lost Ways 2026 Project had been extended to January 2031, therefore Members took the decision to remove the project, at this time.

In terms of National Landscapes (NL), formerly known as Area's of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Mr Kelly informed Members that the Howardian Hills NL and Nidderdale NL were hosted by North Yorkshire Council, with Council officers managing the rights of way network on a day-to-day basis, however both NL's were autonomous with their own governing body.

Councillor Jabbour went on to provide a detailed update as he was the Chair of the Howardian Hills National Landscapes Joint Advisory Committee. Members heard that the name change from AONB to NL had taken place a year ago and was a branding exercise to ensure that the status of National Landscapes was comparable with the National Parks. The key change to the remit of NL was to place additional duties on Local Authorities to seek to further the purposes of National Landscapes in North Yorkshire.

Members queried that as the Council managed the rights of way network on behalf of NL was there a need for a LAF liaison representative, Mr Kelly replied that taking into account his past experience he did not feel that there was a need for a representative as the Council and NLs worked in partnership, therefore Members agreed to remove National Landscapes from the table.

Mr Kelly drew Members attention to a **Page 7** proposal for a new Natural England Yorkshire Wolds

AONB which was due to go out to public consultation, Councillor Jabbour stated that he felt the Forum should participate in the consultation as the Members insight would be invaluable. Stephen Clark volunteered to research and draft a response on behalf of the Forum for the consultation, to which Members agreed.

The Chair informed Members that she and Councillor Jeffels had attended the Yorkshire, Humber and North Lincolnshire (YH&NL) Regional Access Forum on the 4 September 2024, the meeting had provided a lively discussion on subjects to include landlocked access areas, right to roam and the associated concerns from the farming community and the National Farmers Union, a presentation from the Green Lanes Environmental Action Group (GLEAM) around the damage caused by 4x4 vehicles, and an update from Sustrans which included the cinder track from Burniston to Cloughton.

**Resolved - That**

- i. The additional information provided at the meeting be noted, alongside the written updates provided in the report.
- ii. The Discovering Lost Ways 2026 Project be removed from the table of nominated representatives.
- iii. National Landscapes be removed from the table of nominated representatives.
- iv. Stephen Clark research and draft a response on behalf of the Forum for the Natural England proposed Yorkshire Wolds AONB.

**20 NY Local Access Forum - Draft Revised Terms of Reference**

Samantha Perks presented the draft revised Terms of Reference (TOR) for the NYLAF.

It was noted that the TOR had been to the last meeting of the Forum when further amendments had been requested, these changes had been made and the amended document now formed part of the agenda pack for discussion, agreement and adoption.

Members considered the updated TOR and requested that the following be amended:

- 8.5, the amount of notice that a member of the public must give to register to speak at a meeting should read three working days, and not one, as per the Council's Constitution.
- At Annex B, page 29, add a heading – "Principles on which we operate", and remove the word appropriate at the first bullet point and replace with "practicable".
- At Annex B, page 30, the heading be amended from District Councils, to read North Yorkshire Council, and on the first line, District will, to be replaced with "areas may".

**Resolved – That:**

- i. Members noted the report.
- ii. The amendments listed above be made to the draft TOR.
- iii. The Terms of Reference item be added to the Forward Plan for the January 2025 meeting.

**21 Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for North Yorkshire and York**

The Chair introduced Tris Terry, Local Nature Recovery Strategy Project Manager.

Mr Terry presented a detailed power-point presentation to Members which provided them with an overview of the background, context and objectives of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for North Yorkshire and York, an update on current progress with the



preparation of the strategy, along with an overview of the work undertaken to date which highlighted the following:

- The LNRS was a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies established by clauses 104 to 108 of the Environment Act 2021.
- NYC was appointed as the responsible authority for the development of the LNRS for North Yorkshire and York (North Yorkshire Council and City of York Council administrative area). There were also four supporting authorities aiding with the development of the strategy: North York Moors National Park Authority, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, City of York Council and Natural England.
- Each Strategy would, for the area that it covered: agree priorities for nature's recovery, map the most valuable existing areas for nature, and map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals.
- Looked at core areas of existing good habitat with a high biodiversity value with the aim of expanding the areas then creating new stepping stones of habitat between those core areas which would allow species to move more easily between the areas.
- Provide public community access to the nature spaces, if appropriate to do so.
- Agree priorities for nature's recovery working with regional stakeholders and experts on what the most important things that should be done are.
- Map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat.
- Identify co-benefits such as carbon storage, climate change adaptation and mitigation, flood alleviation, access to nature and health and wellbeing.
- A public consultation ran from November 2023 to February 2024, asking for the public's views on nature: 550 responses were received.
- Held 11 workshops with land managers and farmers across the County in February 2024.
- Produced a shortlist of 38 nature recovery priorities for North Yorkshire and York.
- A draft consultation document for the LNRS to be ready for January 2025, a statutory public consultation on the draft strategy has been programmed from April 2025 to the end of May 2025. A copy of the publication draft would then go back out to public consultation in July 2025.
- NYC were aiming to publish the first iteration of the LNRS in September 2025.

Upon the conclusion of the presentation, Mr Terry responded to Member questions on various matters raised to include funding figures and how success would be measured.

Councillor Jabbour thanked the officers for the events, seminars and workshops that had been organised with Councillors and landowners and praised them for their engagement with the local communities.

It was confirmed that the LNRS was non-binding. Its objective was to set out high-level strategic priorities and measures (practical actions) to support nature recovery across North Yorkshire and York, but the LNRS did not obligate anyone (including NYC) to carry these out. The intention was that the LNRS would help to guide and direct where actions to support nature should be taken (and what the most beneficial actions would be) but it did not commit anyone, either NYC or individual landowners, to actually undertake those actions. Decisions to carry out particular actions in particular locations would be entirely voluntary.

The Chair thanked Mr Terry for attending.

**Resolved –**

That the report be noted.

Bruce Cutts, Senior Officer, People Landscapes Access and Nature, Natural England joined the meeting via MS Teams to provide an update on progress on the Coast to Coast Path National Trail.

Members heard that as part of the Wider Benefits workstream officers had produced a Sustainable Engagement report and an Accessibility Audit, and these would be shared with external parties in due course. Work was also ongoing around engaging with communities and businesses; however, this strand of work was subject to budget discussions.

Mr Cutts outlined the work that was currently underway to build baseline data to quantify the number of users on the Coast to Coast Trail. There were a number of people counters out on the route, and with the aid of DEFRA colleagues, officers were looking at mobile phone data mainly through Strava and some passive GPS data, this focused on where people were on the trail and how they were using it. In addition to this, officers were conducting face to face interviews on the route and self-registration surveys were available for users.

Members were informed that another element of the Wider Benefit project was the Nature Recovery project which would enhance the users experience while walking on the Coast to Coast. There were several of these projects to include:

- The B-Line project, a network of flower-rich insect superhighways designed to reconnect landscapes, enabling pollinators and other wildlife to move freely.
- The Eden Rivers Trust, Grisedale Beck follows the line of the Coast to Coast path and since 2021 the Trust has worked to re-meander a lower section of Grisedale Beck, creating a second channel and new wetland habitat whilst slowing the progress of surface water into the village of Patterdale below.
- Forestry England had felled and thinned over 2.1 ha at Gillerthwaite Longhouses, this had opened the Trail corridor and created greater visibility of the twin walled longhouses as well as glimpses of mountains and valley floors.
- West Cumbria Rivers Trust had focussed on the preservation and protection of salmon and other freshwater fish species, with a series of surveys planned to record past and present areas of their complex lifecycle.
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Cycle had concentrated their efforts on sustainable visits to some of their reserves by providing bicycle hoops for up to 8 bikes, installed near the entrance to encourage responsible use of the reserve.

Members were shown photographs of some of the works the technical working group had undertaken which included the building of new footbridges and erecting waymarking finger posts.

Finally, Mr Cutts provided the latest update, on behalf of DEFRA colleagues, on the work being done to develop a safe solution to the Coast to Coast, A19 crossing. A business case was being developed for the A19 project, a technical construction report had been produced and the options had been through an initial assessment. Defra were preparing to conduct stakeholder engagement on the options being explored and would look to engage with as many stakeholders as possible to gather views from individuals and groups who may be affected. Members were informed that the LAF's input would be sought on the A19 project.

Rachel Connolly thanked Mr Cutts for an excellent presentation, and queried, one of the photographs within the presentation had shown a detour on the A19, was the alternative route intended to be for multi-user or just for pedestrians. Mr Cutts advised that the temporary route had been made by the adoption of existing network paths, it focused very much on pedestrian access where it was a public footpath. There were no plans to make the path multi-user as it was a short time diversion and there were alternative routes, although mainly by road.

It was highlighted that one of the principles of the LAF was that all new access should be for the highest possible use by everybody. Mr Cutts agreed that this was a principle that

Natural England followed, however this was not a new access, it was the adoption of an existing network path to provide a functional way around to avoid the A19 at this stage.

The matter of a representative from the LAF to attend future Coast to Coast Path National Trail External Stakeholder Group meetings and receive one-to-one updates from an officer from Natural England, following the resignation of David Lepper was raised. Mr Cutts explained that the meeting took place once a quarter and was an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute on how the route was being developed; that Member could then cascade a summary of the information learned down to the Forum as a whole. Members discussed the role and appointed Martin Reynolds as the LAF representative to attend future Coast to Coast National Trail External Stakeholder Group meetings.

The Chair thanked Mr Cutts for attending.

**Resolved – That**

- i. The update be noted.
- ii. Martin Reynolds be appointed to attend future Coast to Coast National Trail External Stakeholder Group meetings on behalf of the LAF.

## **23 Yorkshire Water Woodland Management Plan**

The Chair introduced the item and explained that the LAF had been approached by Fountains Forestry Ltd, the appointed service providers for Woodland and Tree Management for Yorkshire Water Services Limited, regarding a new Woodland Management Plan for the region. The Plan outlined woodland management activities, including felling and restocking proposals, for the next ten years.

Fountains Forestry Ltd had invited statutory bodies to provide feedback on the proposals to establish any likely sensitivities, constraints or opportunities that could influence the future design, development, and management of the woodland, the deadline for which was 30 September 2024.

A link to the felling operations plan and restocking plans had been provided, along with a feedback form. Rachel Connolly had started to formulate a response on behalf of the Forum at appendix 1, along with a list of the sites identified in the North Yorkshire area at appendix 2.

Mrs Connolly drew attention to question 4 and welcomed suggestions on an answer for that particular question. Members considered all the information and agreed the suggested answers at appendix 1, and at question 4 agreed the wording “the long term outcome beneficial to users and the wildlife” be added to the response.

The Chair and Roma Haigh thanked Mrs Connolly for disseminating the information and formulating the suggested answers contained within the agenda pack for Members consideration, which would allow the LAF to respond to the consultation within the required deadline.

**Resolved:** That the agreed response, as above, be submitted to Fountains Forestry UK Ltd.

## **24 Update on the re-structure of the Planning Teams following Local Government Review**

Martin Grainger, Head of Development Management attended the meeting to provide a verbal update on the re-structure of the Planning Service for North Yorkshire following the

local government review (LGR).

He showed slides which introduced the new Planning Services Leadership Team headed by the Assistant Director for Planning, Trevor Watson, and explained which of the five Heads of Service had responsibility for what area of the Planning Service. In terms of his role as Head of Development Management, his remit included the teams for Planning and Planning Enforcement.

Members noted that the planning teams had been divided into three areas, East, West and Central. The East team covered the constituency areas of Scarborough and Whitby and Thirsk and Malton, West covered Richmond and Skipton and Ripon; with Central covering Harrogate and Knaresborough and Selby and Ainsty.

Since vesting day, the Planning Leadership team had concentrated their efforts on the Council being safe and legal in its processes, continuing the ongoing Planning Committee work, and looked at best practice and how the Planning teams worked with other Services within the Council. A staffing re-structure had been undertaken, with recruitment still ongoing, and Members heard that when at full capacity approximately 120 Planning officers would report to Mr Grainger.

Forum members discussed with him issues around the planning notifications that they did or did not receive from some areas of the County and stated that they would like to see a consistent approach across the whole of North Yorkshire.

Mr Grainger thanked the Members for the “blueprint” report based on the East Riding of Yorkshire Council’s method of Local Plan organisation and their treatment of access, and the review report of Rights of Way and the Planning process, which had been sent to the Assistant Director for Planning following LGR. He commented that the research the Members had done and the reports they had produced had been excellent and encouraging for the Planning Service. To take that forward he offered to meet with the authors of the reports to explore some of the points further, and also to gain a better understanding of the work of the Forum and how best to engage with them. Rachel Connolly and Pat Coulson offered to meet with Mr Grainger on behalf of the Forum and provide feedback to the Members.

**Resolved:** That

- i. The update be noted.
- ii. Pat Coulson and Rachel Connolly would contact Martin Grainger to arrange a meeting to discuss the reports sent to the Assistant Director for Planning.

## **25 Any Other Items**

There were no other items.

## **26 Forward Plan**

Considered –

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

It was noted that officers from Network Rail and Natural England (ELM’s) had been approached but had been unable to attend this meeting to provide updates, as per the Forward Plan, therefore it was requested that the two items be deferred to January 2025.

As had been discussed at agenda item 5, Members requested that the Local Transport Plan item be deferred to January 2025. Ian explained that Public Transport now sat under the remit of the Mayor for the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (Y&NYCA), and Councillor Jabbour further advised that the funding that was received from the government by the CA gave the Mayor the ability to invest in Active Travel to improve cycling and walking.

The Chair highlighted that the attendance of the new bridge engineer had been added to the Forward Plan for the January 2025 meeting, however as the officer had not been long in post, and the subject of bridges were part of the Annual Countryside Access Service (CAS) report, it was felt that this should be removed.

Following a discussion around the Forward Plan, it was agreed that a sub-group be formed to look at the Forward Plan and explore relevant items to be added to the Plan for the year 2025/26. It was further agreed that the sub-group would consist of the following Forum members: Roma Haigh, Stephen Clark and John Toogood.

**Resolved - That**

- i. The Forward Plan be updated in line with the discussions at the meeting as follows:
  - Network Rail Update, Natural England – Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELM's) and the Local Transport Plan be deferred to January 2025.
- ii. NYLAF Terms of Reference be added to January 2025
- iii. The attendance of the bridge engineer at the January 2025 meeting to be removed.
- iv. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan be added to the Forward Plan for the January 2025 meeting.
- v. A sub-group be formed to look at the Forward Plan to consist of Roma Haigh, Stephen Clark and John Toogood.

The meeting concluded at 12.37 pm.

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## North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

29 January 2025

### 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 Future of the Selby Local Plan

- 2.1 A report of the Corporate Director of Community Development was taken to the Development Plan Committee and the Selby & Ainsty Area Committee both of which took place on the 17 January 2025. The report set out the current position in relation to the preparation of the Selby Local Plan, taking into account matters including feedback from the additional public consultation held earlier this year, implications of the recently published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), changes to legislation and updated instructions from Government to the Planning Inspectorate relating to the consideration of submitted local plans.
- 2.2 Members views were sought on the recommendation to cease work on the preparation of the Selby Local Plan and, where possible, to use the evidence base and work undertaken to date to feed into the new local plan for North Yorkshire.
- 2.3 Members heard that a decision to cease work on the Local Plan for the former Selby district area would assist in expediting progress on the wider North Yorkshire Local Plan that would help to deliver four of the five key themes of place and environment, economy, health and wellbeing and people in the Council's plan.
- 2.4 A number of questions were asked in relation to how any decision by the Executive to halt development of the Selby Local Plan would affect the area and what policies would apply in assessing planning applications. Discussion then took place on the issue of land supply, and how housing targets would be allocated to different areas under the North Yorkshire Local Plan. It was also asked whether housing targets should be allocated across the whole county, rather than being disaggregated along former district and borough boundaries.
- 2.5 Members resolved that the Executive recommends to Full Council that:
- 1) Work on the emerging Selby Local Plan was ceased.
  - 2) The Council works proactively to bring forward sites within the Selby area to seek to maintain land supply, using those sites identified within the draft Selby Local Plan as the starting point for discussions with site promoters/developers.
  - 3) The Council continues to promote the regeneration of Tadcaster, working with key stakeholders to support the delivery of sites and to bring derelict buildings back into use and work to ensure that evidence in respect of delivery is secured as we move through the preparation of the North Yorkshire Local Plan.
- 2.6 The comments and recommendations on the report made by the Development Plan Committee and the Selby & Ainsty Area Committee will now go on to the meeting of the

Executive on the 4 February 2025 for consideration, before the Executive make a final recommendation to Full Council on the 26 February 2025.

- 2.7 The agenda pack for the Selby & Ainsty Area Committee meeting on the 17 January 2025 can be found here: [Agenda for Selby and Ainsty Area Committee on Friday, 17 January 2025, 1.00 pm | North Yorkshire Council](#). The minutes of the meeting will also be available through this link, once published.

### **3.0 Historic Public Rights of Way Recording – Repeal of the 2031 Cut-off Date**

Members may have heard the announcement made by the Government on Boxing Day that it is intended to repeal the 2031 cut-off date for recording historic public rights of way. The cut-off date, originally set for 2026 by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, was repealed by the previous government and then subsequently reinstated with an extension to 2031. The cut-off date would have meant that no further DMMO applications based on historic documentary evidence could be submitted after that date. The current government has not set a timescale for the repeal of the 2031 cut-off date but intends to do so when parliamentary time allows.

The announcement can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-steps-in-to-save-historic-rights-of-way-from-being-lost-to-the-nation>

### **4.0 Discretionary Restriction Notices**

- 4.1 There has been no notifications received of discretionary '28 day' restrictions under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and three notices of discretionary dog restrictions, since the last Forum meeting.

### **5.0 Formal Responses sent by the secretary on behalf of the NYLAF**

- 5.1 A record of all formal LAF correspondence submitted to Section 94 bodies by the Secretary on the NYLAF's behalf can be seen at appendix A to the report.

### **6.0 Report Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Local Access Forum is recommended to note the report.

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

Report Author: Dawn Drury, Secretary to the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum



**APPENDIX A**

Letter to

<b>Date</b>	<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Application</b>	<b>Subject</b>	
07/10/24	Nyasha Mapanga Plan enquiries Richmond	ZD24/00467/FULL	Change of use to mixed use of agricultural and equestrian with siting of temporary dwelling to assist with equestrian operation	RC
14/10/24	Jonathan Smith Plan enquiries Richmond	ZD24/00527/EIASCR	Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Request for a Ground Mounted Solar Farm on land south of Tunstall, Richmond DL10 7QZ	PC
08/11/24	Caroline Walton	ZD24/00522/DIS	Discharge of condition 15 requiring applicants to submit details to the planning office of the play area on this 240 housing estate north of the A6136, Catterick Garrison, including a committed management plan for the future of the LEAP.	RC
09/12/24	All Strategic Planning Committee Members ahead of the meeting on 10 December 24	19/00473/FUL	Full Planning Permission for Motorway Service Area at the land East of Junction 52 on the A1(M) At Catterick. To highlight the need for a bridleway in the sec 106, rather than a footpath, as per the agenda report.	RC/ WS

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## North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

29 January 2025

### Updates from Sub-Groups & Individual Members

#### Report of the Secretary

#### 1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 An opportunity for LAF members to update the Forum on their 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 old District/Borough Council planning teams. 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 A66
Roma Haigh	Ryedale District A19
NYC - Councillor David Jeffels	Scarborough District Regional Access Forum
Naomi Guthrie	Selby District
Vacant	Harrogate District

#### 3.0 Liaison Updates

- 3.1 This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Forum to be updated on any such activity since the previous meeting.
- 3.2 There has been one written update which can be seen at Appendix 1. Other Members are asked to provide verbal updates at this meeting.
- 3.3 The response to Natural England's proposals to designate a new Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) researched and drafted by Stephen Clark can be seen at agenda item 11.

#### **4.0 Sub-Group Updates**

- 4.1 It was agreed that the Planning sub-group would continue its work to help inform the service review.
- 4.2 The sub-group set up to review the LAF Terms of Reference have provided a document with the recommendations made at the meeting held in September 2024, and these can be seen at agenda item 7.
- 4.3 The Forward Plan sub-group have produced a set of proposals for the LAF Forward Plan for Members consideration which can be seen at agenda item 12.

#### **5.0 Recommendations**

- 5.1 That the Forum:
  - i) Considers and notes the written and verbal updates provided at the meeting and agrees any further actions required

BARRY KHAN  
Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON

Report Author: Dawn Drury, Secretary to North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

**Update provided by Rachel Connelly on Sec 94(4) reports.**

**District Planning**

Referrals are patchy and although it had been hoped to have a consistent communication system in place following a meeting with Martin Grainger, nothing has changed. It is very disconcerting how little weight is given by planners to existing legislation to protect the rights of the public on their paths. This needs discussing.

RC

**Update provided by Rachel Connelly and Pat Coulson following a meeting with Martin Grainger, Head of Development Management.**

----- Forwarded Message -----

**Subject:** Engagement with the Local Access Forum

**Date:** Fri, 1 Nov 2024 08:08:42 +0000

Dear Mr. Grainger

Thank you for your time on Tuesday which we hope will lead to a more productive engagement with the LAF. We were encouraged to hear you have worked on rights of way advice to the planning departments and look forward to receiving a copy of what you are going to circulate which we can share with our members.

However, rights of ways are only a part of our Access remit to sec 94(4) bodies which includes the two aspects we discussed: The planning side where we would expect to be consulted on major developments and those affecting rights of way. At the moment the Forum is advising on any application which fails to reflect Best Practice such as providing Public Open Space, play areas in the right places, or giving sufficient thought to sustainable transport opportunities. A pre-app tick list is going to eliminate many of our issues and lead to better-designed development thereby reducing the need for adjusted or rejected plans. Until that is implemented and there is a more 'access awareness' at the early stage please could David Clothier direct planning officers to ensure the Forum is consulted on all larger developments as well as those with rights of way near them, bearing in mind that we work to guidance in the NPPF, local plan policies, the 1980 Highway Act and NYC guidance. We see the Forum's role as adding strength to planning officers rather than as a challenge to their competence, recognising the massive work load they

face. Maybe the Forum could help by sending you a few points that could be included in the proposed pre-app check.

The other way in which NYC should be engaging with the Forum is in policymaking and the lack of consultation over cycling and Active Travel projects was mentioned. NYC's Interim Guidance on residential development 2015 has been under review for a while but, again, the Forum hasn't been asked if there is any constructive advice they could offer. We should also like to be kept in the loop for progress on the development of the county Local Plan. You told us that Linda Marfitt is heading this and it would be good to know if the work the Forum put in so far has helped shape her views. The Forum are keen to be kept up-to-date and included in this big challenge. We stress that the Forum cannot be proactive and advise (as required by the Secretary of State) unless consulted when we do our best to be constructive, informed and inclusive.

Thank you for the helpful offer to be a critical friend which the Forum will take up in the future, and we would welcome your suggestion of participation in Team meetings of development managers.

Kind regards from Rachel Connolly and Pat Coulson  
on behalf of the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

## Terms of Reference for the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

The Local Access Forum for the county of North Yorkshire shall be known as the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum (herein referred to as 'NYLAF').

Local Access Forums (LAFs) are advisory bodies established under sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW). LAFs are established by local highway authorities. North Yorkshire Council is the Appointing Authority for the NYLAF (herein referred to as 'the Appointing Authority').

In 2007 Defra published the Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007 (herein referred to as 'the Regulations'). These came into force on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2007 with additional Guidance from the Secretary of State and form the basis of the Terms of Reference of the Local Access Forum for North Yorkshire.

### 1. Geographical Coverage

- 1.1 NYLAF covers the county of North Yorkshire, including the Howardian Hills National Landscapes, the Nidderdale National Landscapes and a small section of the Forest of Bowland National Landscapes
- 1.2 It excludes the area of the administrative unitary authority of the City of York, the North York Moors National Park & the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

### 2. Role

- 2.1 The primary purpose of the Forum is to provide advice to a range of organisations specified in the CROW Act 2000 and in supplementary regulations and guidance. Specifically to:

'advise its appointing authority and other specified bodies (listed in Annex A) as to the improvement of public access to land<sup>1</sup> in the area, for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area, and as to such other matters as may be prescribed.

- 2.2 In carrying out its functions, a local access forum shall have regard to:

- a) the needs of land management,
- b) the desirability of conserving the natural beauty of the area for which it is established, including the flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features of the area, and
- c) guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State. (94 (6)).

- 2.3 NYLAF shall

- a) Set its own priorities depending on local issues, as well as providing a local input to consultation and draft policy documents.
- b) Provide advice to the Appointing Authority and other authorities on the improvement of public access to land, including promotion of, within the County

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<sup>1</sup> 'Land' includes land covered by water

for the purpose of travel, open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area or any other lawful purpose.

- c) Respond to consultations by Government Departments and Agencies on Access land registered common land and other open country.
- d) Advise the Appointing Authority on the management of the Rights of Way network through the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for the County.
- e) Comment on the Appointing Authority's and access strategies with a view to developing additional opportunities for open air recreation and public access to land.
- f) Seek representation on and offer advice to other bodies working to similar aims.
- g) Advise Natural England on the operation of open access restrictions, management and mapping.
- h) Advise on the opportunities afforded to NYLAF through engagement with Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs); and other matters relating to the provision of access and opportunities for the enjoyment of the natural environment.

### **3 Responsibilities**

- 3.1 In carrying out its function, NYLAF will have regard to biodiversity, wildlife management, the flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features of the area and the needs and interests of landowners, land managers, user groups and the public at large.
- 3.2 NYLAF will respect local circumstances as well as environmental, social, economic and educational interests.
- 3.3 NYLAF will take into account statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State whilst operating within the Countryside and Rights of Way Act and regulations made thereafter.

### **4 Funding**

- 4.1 The Appointing Authority is responsible for the costs of running NYLAF. This includes paying for:
  - a) The provision of a secretary for NYLAF
  - b) Members expenses – travel, subsistence, and childcare
  - c) The publication of NYLAF's annual report
  - d) Recruitment of new members

### **5 Membership of NYLAF**

- 5.1 NYLAF shall consist of a maximum of 13 members.
- 5.2 Based on a membership of 13, the maximum number of members of NYLAF who may also be members of the Appointing Authority is two.



- 5.3 The process for the appointment of members should be fair and transparent, following the Appointing Authority's policies on social inclusion and diversity.
- 5.4 Members will be appointed for a period up to three years - there is no limit to the number of times a member can be appointed.
- 5.5 Individual members will represent a field of interest rather than a particular organisation of which they might also be a member. A reasonable balance of members representing different interests should be maintained where possible. These will be representative of:
- a) Users of rights of way and open access land
  - b) Owners and occupiers of land
  - c) Any other interests especially relevant to the authority's area, such as tourism, nature and heritage conservation, coastal issues, health, public transport or community safety
- 5.6 A member may resign by notice in writing.
- 5.7 The Appointing Authority may terminate the appointment of a member if:
- a) Without consent they fail to attend meetings for a year; or
  - b) Fail to declare an interest they have in a matter to be considered by NYLAF; or
  - c) If the Appointing Authority is satisfied that they have become a member of a local authority in the area covered by NYLAF and as a result paragraph 5.2 has not been complied with.

## **6 Chair & Vice Chair**

- 6.1 The Chair and Vice Chair will be drawn from NYLAF members. They will be elected by two ballots. Whenever possible the Chair and Vice Chair should represent different categories of interest. Members of the Appointing Authority will not be eligible for either position.
- 6.2 The appointment to these posts will be renewed on an annual basis, at the first meeting of the municipal year, held in May. In the event that either post become vacant during the period of appointment. NYLAF may decide that both posts should be filled afresh.
- 6.3 Where neither the Chair nor Vice Chair are able to attend a meeting, NYLAF may choose to elect a member to Chair that meeting only.

## **7 Meeting of the Forum**

- 7.1 Meetings are to be held at least three times a year.
- 7.2 The meetings shall be deemed to be quorate with half the existing membership, but not less than five.
- 7.3 Members who have a personal interest, whether direct or indirect, in a matter to be discussed by NYLAF should disclose that interest at the meeting. A personal interest is defined as one which might affect a member's wellbeing, financial

position or business, or that of a relative or friend, to a greater extent than that of other inhabitants of the area. Personal interests will be recorded in the Minutes but will not necessarily prohibit that member from taking part in the discussion of that item.

- 7.4 Copies of the agenda for each meeting and any reports will be made available for inspection by the public at County Hall and on the Appointing Authority's website at least five clear working days before the meeting or as soon as possible if a meeting is convened at short notice.
- 7.5 The papers and minutes of each meeting will be made available for inspection by the public at County Hall and on the Appointing Authority's website for a period of two years after the meeting.
- 7.6 The Chair may, with the permission of NYLAF, vary the order of business to that set out on the agenda and include an item of Any Other Business if required.
- 7.7 Voting shall be by show of hands and all decisions shall be decided by a majority of the Members present. In the event of an equal number of votes the Chair may exercise a second or casting vote.

## **8 Public Access to Meetings**

- 8.1 The meetings will be open to the public, but people may be excluded if necessary to prevent disorderly conduct or misbehaviour.
- 8.2 Members of the public wishing to speak at the meeting must inform the Appointing Authority at least **three** working days before the meeting is held. Maximum 3 minutes speaking.
- 8.3 Observers may at the discretion of the Chair, attend and take part in the discussion but cannot vote or take part in decision-making.

## **9 Secretary**

- 9.1 The Appointing Authority will nominate an officer to act as the interface with NYLAF and fulfil the responsibilities of a secretary.
- 9.2 The Secretary will, in conjunction with the Chair, be responsible for the overall administration of NYLAF, including organising the meetings, drafting the minutes, publishing the draft annual report, and liaising with neighbouring Forums and the Appointing Authority.

## **10 Annual Report**

- 10.1 NYLAF shall produce an annual report on its work which the Appointing Authority will publish and make available online.

## **11 Sub-groups and Working Groups**

- 11.1 NYLAF may approve the creation of sub-groups and working groups (herein referred to as sub-groups) to assist with the work of NYLAF. Sub-groups will be

created and disbanded when appropriate for a specific piece of work, as agreed by NYLAF. A sub-group may appoint a Chair only for the purposes of representing the sub-group at NYLAF meetings and administration.

11.2 NYLAF as an official body supersedes all work of the sub-groups.

11.3 Sub-groups meetings will be held informally without the need for a published agenda or minutes. A sub-group may produce a report of their meetings to NYLAF and all work undertaken by a sub-group must be approved at the NYLAF.

11.4 The administration and logistics of sub-groups will be arranged by the sub-group itself.

## **12 Communication**

12.1 All communications received and sent by NYLAF must be noted and/or approved by NYLAF members. Correspondence having been agreed, should be sent by the Secretary on behalf of NYLAF. The Secretary will record a list of communications sent (email/letter) and will include such list in the Secretary's report.

12.2 The timing of requests for advice or consultations may not always correspond with NYLAF's meeting cycle. Liaison with the Appointing Authority in preparing the forward work programme and setting meeting dates should minimise this. NYLAF may also anticipate the need for advice and plan ahead by developing (and keeping under review) a generic 'position statement' setting out advice on broad principles or key issues which can be used, when appropriate, for responding when advice is required between NYLAF meeting – see advice and principles at Annex B.

12.3 The Chair may discuss the handling of issues with other NYLAF members by telephone, email, social media etc. Depending on the importance of the issues raised the Chair may decide that:

- a) The issue should be added to the agenda of the next NYLAF meeting.
- b) Previous advice or a pre-agreed position statement provides adequate or interim advice.
- c) A formal response has to be provided before the next formal meeting.

12.4 In the event that communication as described in paragraph 11.1 is required, the Chair must seek general approval from other NYLAF members before sending any communication and must take into account all interests of NYLAF as outlined in paragraph 5.5. Any communication sent in this manner must still be noted at a meeting of NYLAF.

12.5 Chairs of sub-groups may write to third parties on routine matters e.g. seeking information, booking venues, inviting guests, but must not offer the views of NYLAF.

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually. Next to be reviewed May 2026

**Specified Bodies to which the CROW Act 2000 & Supplementary Regulations and Guidance Refer**

- The Appointing Authority(ies) (a Highway Authority or National Park Authority)
- Any County, Unitary, District or Borough Council within the area of the Forum
- The Secretary of State i.e. any Government department with a Secretary of State e.g. Defra and MoD, as well as 'executive agencies' such as the Planning Inspectorate and Highways England
- Natural England
- The Forestry Commission
- English Heritage
- Sports England (the English Sports Council)
- National Landscapes Conservation Boards
- Parish & Town Councils
- Police

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# NORTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

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## Principles on which the Local Access Forum operate

Local Access Forums perform a statutory function and all section 94(4) bodies are required under section 94(5) of the CROW Act 2000 to 'have regard in carrying out their functions to any relevant advice given to them' by a Forum. Reflecting the directives given to forums, the North Yorkshire LAF has drawn up a set of principles which now underpin their work and advice.

- Any new access should be at the highest rights **practicable** for non-motorised users.
- All rights of way should be maintained to the standard required and, where needed, upgraded physically and legally to a higher standard
- The Forum will work to see rights of way developed to redress the fragmentation of the network, connect communities and improve links to places of demand
- The Forum will work to develop more access opportunities to include the widest possible range of users, especially families, children, minority groups and the less able
- The Forum seeks the establishment of an annual budget to fund the fulfilling of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP)
- Whilst the creation of all access is welcome, the Forum stresses that permissive (temporary) access does not equate with the public benefit of definitive (permanent) access
- The Forum wishes to raise awareness of how different users can enjoy responsible sharing of routes where appropriate, whilst supporting challenges to illegal use
- The Forum recognises the establishment and challenges of new initiatives such as coastal access, access to water, access to woodland and the dedication of land for public access

The above may be summarised simply as:

**The Forum seeks to maximise every opportunity for improved access, providing safer journeys for the widest range of users practicable.**

The Forum welcomes consultation from all section 94(4) bodies or others who feel they might benefit from discussion with them. For further information please contact the chair through the Secretary to the Forum – Dawn Drury, at North Yorkshire Council either by telephone on 01757 292065 or by email at:

[dawn.drury@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.drury@northyorks.gov.uk)

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# NORTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

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## Advice to **North Yorkshire Council** as Sec.94 (4) bodies

Whilst each **area may** have different priorities within its Local Plan, the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum, in accordance with its statutory remit under sec. 94(5) of the CROW Act 2000, recommends the following points, which it hopes will be reflected by every District Council:

- The Forum advises that Good Practice in planning matters will incorporate connections for non-motorised users to local services and the rights of way network whenever possible. Such routes should be multi-user, if practicable, to encourage sustainable travel.
- That new sites provide informal as well as formal green space.
- That Local Plans reflect the objectives of NYCC's Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the Local Transport Plan.
- That Councils identify popular rights of way so they can put measures in places to enhance them and ensure their sustainability.
- That Councils seek opportunities to remedy missing links in a fragmented network to encourage healthy and sustainable travel.
- Councils should take advantage of Community Infrastructure Levy, Sec.106 arrangements, minerals tax and wind farm contribution to invest in initiatives and improvements for access.
- That Councils recognise the value of strong partnership with NYCC's rights of way department to promote the benefits accruing from a useful network of public paths.

These can be loosely summarised in the advice 'that all planning applications, should be considered from the Access point of view, to ensure opportunities for access are included'. Once missed, it is unlikely they can be added at a future date.

In addition, as Local Access Forums are directed to be inclusive in approach, which avoids discrimination and provides Best Value in access provision, we strongly advise that all new paths should be for the widest range of users, as in this way it encourages sustainable travel and supports safer and healthier journeys for as many as practicable.

The Forum welcomes engagement. Contact can either be made through your named LAF member or through the LAF Secretary – Dawn Drury, at North Yorkshire Council either by telephone on 01757 292065 or by email at: [dawn.drury@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.drury@northyorks.gov.uk)

## The North Yorkshire Council

### Local Access Forum

29 January 2025

#### North Yorkshire Council - Rights of Way Improvement Plan Briefing

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 introduced the requirement for Highway Authorities to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) which is to be reviewed on a 10-year basis. North Yorkshire Council's current ROWIP is due for review in 2027. The Council can determine to continue with the existing ROWIP or produce a new one.

North Yorkshire County Council's first ROWIP published in 2007 ran to 147 pages and took two full time members of staff 5 years to compile. It contained a significant amount of research into the existing PROW network and the challenges and opportunities associated with improving it. Extensive public engagement was carried out which identified 1005 potential improvement projects. At the time NYCC made significant funding available to maintain and improve the PROW network following the 2001 foot and mouth outbreak when closing the network brought into sharp focus the economic benefit it brings to rural areas.

In contrast the current North Yorkshire Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan, which covers 2017 to 2027, is contained within the North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2016-2045 (Theme 3m Public Rights of Way, <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/your-council/council-plan-constitution-and-strategies/strategies-plans-and-policies/local-transport-plan>) and runs to five pages which mainly focuses on our core statutory function to maintain the PROW network. This reflects the very different political and financial position in 2017 when Government austerity measures resulted in a 40% cut to NYCC's PROW budget. The restructure of the NYCC PROW teams that followed refocused the service on delivery of its core statutory duty with no capacity to deliver improvements. Clearly in this context it would not have been possible to deliver the aspirations of the 2007 ROWIP or commission a similarly in-depth revised version which is why NYCC determined that the PROW pages of the 2016 LTP would serve as the 2017-27 ROWIP.

While the financial position for NYC's Countryside Access Service (CAS) has improved since 2017, the resource we have available still means we can only look to maintain rather than improve the PROW network. That is not to say significant improvements haven't taken place on the network over the last ten years and will continue to do so for the next, with CAS playing a key role in the delivery of significant improvements to countryside access such as the King Charles III England Coast Path and the Malton to Pickering Cycleway. But projects such as these need to be led and funded by other teams within the Council or external partners.

Over this time other plans and projects, outlined below, have also been developed across North Yorkshire that take forward many of the generic themes and specific projects from the 2007 ROWIP. Most of these plans have been open to public consultation in the same way that a ROWIP would be. As things stand CAS does not feel that diverting significant resource from our core service delivery to produce a separate ROWIP of the scale of the 2007 version would represent good value for the public purse and that the LTP remains the best place for our ROWIP.

With the advent of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) will be produced which gives us the opportunity to review and potentially expand on the PROW themes of the current LTP. We welcome input from the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum for the views of all user groups and stakeholders on what should be the Authority's key commitments when it comes to managing, and where possible improving, the PROW network for the next ten years.

### **North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2016-2045. Theme 3m Public Rights of Way**

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/63761%20LTP4%20Full%20-%20accessible.pdf>

Key Commitments:

- Ensure maintenance of Rights of Way outside the National Parks is taken care of by our countryside access officers, area rangers and a team of countryside volunteers;
- work with the Local Access Forum to improve public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation, and the enjoyment of the area, whilst considering the needs of both the users of those Rights of Way, and land owners or occupiers over which a right of way exists.
- consider funding works on Rights of Way from LTP money when those works make a significant contribution to the LTP objectives;
- record all identified Rights of Way on the Definitive Map together with the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Park Authorities;

Significant cross over into other LTP themes: Road Safety, Environment and Climate Change, Healthier Travel, Planning and New Developments and Walking and Cycling as well as with other Council plans.

### **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP)s:**

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/major-transport-schemes-and-plans/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plans-lcwips>

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans are a long-term strategic approach to identifying cycling, walking and wheeling improvements at a local level. There is currently no specific Government funding allocated for the implementation of LCWIPs, but the creation of the Combined Authority has potential to allow more regional transport funding to be released to facilitate these plans and the LCWIPS mean that the Council has a series of bid ready projects ready to submit for funding. Additionally, having the plan in place with network plans for each area allows the council to be in a much better position to request S106 funding from developers towards new active travel infrastructure.

The key outputs of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan are:

- a cycle and walking network plan identifying preferred routes
- a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements of future investment
- a report setting out the narrative behind the prioritisation of routes

Published LCWIPs: Scarborough; Skipton; Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet; Northallerton; and Harrogate and Knaresborough.

Under development / to be published: Malton and Norton; Ripon; Catterick and Catterick Garrison; Thirsk; Whitby. North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales National Park Active Travel Plans.



### **Local Authority and National Park Local Plans:**

Contain objectives, policies and proposals that provide guidance to developers, local communities, members of the planning authorities, stakeholders and planning officers about the type and nature of development that will be permitted in the area. Mostly contain generic and strategic guidance but may also contain aspirations for specific projects, for example the Hawes to Garsdale Head multi-user trail. A new local plan is under development for North Yorkshire Council which will be open to public consultation, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority intends to publish the final draft of its 2025-40 local plan early this year for final representation from interested parties with the North York Moors National Park Local Plan due for review in 2035.

### **National Parks and National Landscapes Management Plans**

Set out the vision for the protected landscapes and describe the objectives, policies, and goals that authorities, other public bodies and stakeholders will pursue to achieve it. It also highlights the key priorities for action to address the challenges faced by protected landscapes. Like local plans, management plans tend to focus on broad principles and objectives but can also include specific projects such as the Nidderdale Greenway.

Review dates:

Howardian Hills 2024 (ongoing)

Nidderdale 2024 (ongoing)

North York Moors 2027

Yorkshire Dales 2030

Yorkshire Wolds: to develop if designated.

### **Questions for consideration:**

1. Taken as a whole, do these plans sufficiently capture rights of way improvement aspirations?
2. Are there other key commitments we should consider including in the ROWIP: e.g. accessibility and inclusion, encouraging development that respects and improves the network, community empowerment and engagement, promoting tourism, access to nature?
3. Should we identify specific themes or geographic areas for improvement e.g. development of old railway lines, connections between urban areas, accessible walking for health routes in and around urban areas and working in partnership with National Parks and National Landscapes.
4. How will any future legislation to improve access to rivers impact on the work of CAS and the National Parks?
5. Traditionally transport plans and funding tend to be utility rather than recreation focused and therefore favour urban or urban fringe schemes. Whilst guidance is still awaited from the Department of Transport (DfT), it is likely that the forthcoming LTP will put more emphasis on recreational travel. But are there rural / recreational aspirations that are missing from the current plans?

6. Many long-standing issues on the PROW network are complex and often a combination of anomalies with the original Definitive Map or major obstructions due to development (housing, industry, quarries etc). Should there be more focus and resource to resolve these as well as dealing with new service requests to resolve maintenance and enforcement issues on the network? This has the potential to make more network available for the public to enjoy.
7. There is no capacity within CAS to compile a revised ROWIP and as such would need to be contracted out to consultants. Would this represent good value?
8. Following public consultation, the original 2007 ROWIP identified 1005 improvement requests from the public to improve, upgrade or create new PROW. Many ideas were from individuals with no evidence of significant public benefit. Since 2017 CAS has not had funding to deliver these schemes but some have been delivered by partnership working with other teams or organisations (e.g. KCIII England Coast Path). Is this information still relevant? What should we do with it?
9. The original 2007 ROWIP undertook significantly more analysis of PROW provision across the County and looked at opportunities and challenges in improving the network in much more depth than the current LTP. While utilising the best research and data available at the time we now know much more about how the network is actually used by walkers and cyclists from Strava Data etc than we did in 2007. There is not the resource to produce a similarly in-depth plan, but are there any key themes captured in the original plan that are missing from the current plan or that should be revisited now we know more about how the network is used?
10. How does our approach compare with author authorities ROWIPs? For example, Durham County Council's ROWIP has strategic and delivery elements, but it is evident that they have a rights of way improvement budget to deliver specific schemes whereas NYC does not. It should also be recognised that Durham owns a significantly more extensive network of railway paths and country parks than North Yorkshire. These are managed by a ranger service which also provides the capacity to undertake community engagement work to promote responsible countryside access in a similar way to how the ranger teams operate in our national parks. <https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/3679/Rights-of-Way-Improvement-Plan>
11. Despite the intended abandonment of the 2031 cut off for claims based on historic evidence to add or upgrade public rights of way on the definitive map, the huge increase in applications due to the intended cut off has created a significant increase in workload for NYC's Definitive Map Team. Without a corresponding significant increase in resource, it is unlikely the focus for DMT for the next ten years can be anything other than working through the definitive map modification order caseload and processing path orders which are in the interests of the landowner. But should there still be an aspiration in the ROWIP to undertake public interest diversions or creations to improve the network?

Briefing Author:

ANDY BROWN

Principal PROW Officer

## North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

29 January 2025

### Approval by Correspondence of Proposed Response to Consultation on Designation of Yorkshire Wolds as an AONB

Report of Committee Member: Stephen Clark

#### 1.0 Purpose of the Report

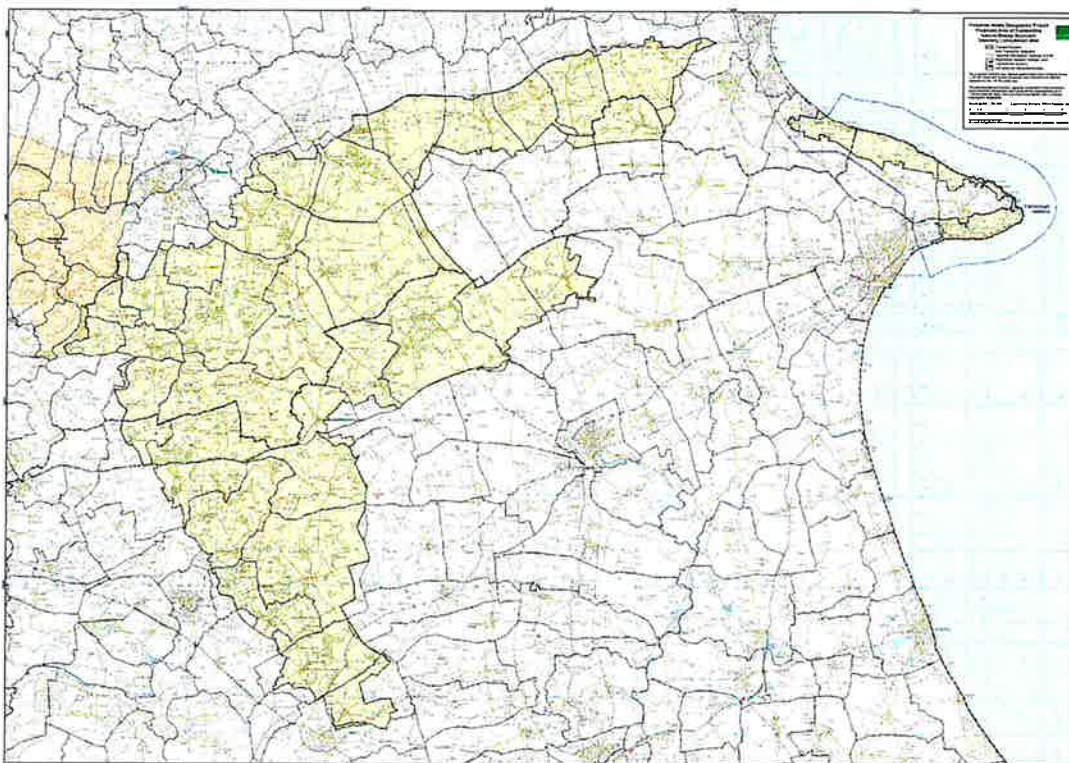
**To note:** This report sets out our agreement by correspondence to a response to Natural England's proposals to designate a new Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (Paras 6.3 to 6.5.). The formal NYLAF response is attached as an Appendix.

**To consider:** Separately it is suggested that a short discussion takes place at the January Forum meeting about addressing any additional pressures within North Yorkshire Council that creation of the Wolds AONB will put on the Countryside Access Service (Para 6.6).

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 One of Natural England's responsibilities is to decide whether an area should be given special status and protection by designating it as a National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance an area's natural beauty. AONBs are designated via powers in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000.
- 2.2 For many years there has been a desire for a new Yorkshire Wolds AONB to include areas covered by local landscape designations and areas of wider countryside.
- 2.3 In June 2021 the then Secretary of State, George Eustace (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)) announced that Natural England "will be taking forward the government's commitment to designate additional landscapes and is currently considering the designation of four new areas". This included the possible designation of a new Yorkshire Wolds AONB. A public consultation on this was launched on 8 October - see [here](#) for the full consultation and supporting documents. The consultation ends on 13 January 2025.
- 2.4 Formal assessments to determine which landscapes meet the legal requirements for inclusion in an AONB have now been completed and proposals have been developed to designate specific areas.

2.5 The purpose of the consultation is to seek views on whether the Yorkshire Wolds have the qualities required for designation as AONB, whether they should be designated, and if so, where the boundary should be. (AONBs were recently rebranded as “National Landscapes”, however when designating Natural England still legally designates an AONB. The proposed AONB consists of two areas covering (i) the Inland Wolds and (ii) a Coastal Area centred on Flamborough Head, as shown on the map below.



Map showing proposed AONB (green). Note the larger area has around its margin, in clockwise direction from the north, the towns of Malton, Scarborough, Driffild, Market Weighton and Pocklington. The coastal area lies between Scarbrough and Bridlington. The brown area is Howardian Hills AONB. Black lines are parish boundaries. A web version of this map is [here](#).

### 3.0 What are Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty?

- 3.1 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are designated for the **purpose of conserving and enhancing their natural beauty**. Designation as AONB means giving an area special legal protection.
- 3.2 The criteria upon which any designation is made includes whether the area has outstanding natural beauty, whether designation is likely to lead to conservation and enhancement of that beauty, and where the boundary should be drawn.
- 3.3 Section 89 (2) of the CRoW Act 2000, places a duty on relevant local authorities to prepare and publish a plan for the management of an

AONB and for the carrying out of functions in relation to it and a further duty to review the plan at “intervals of not more than five years”.

- 3.4 Most AONBs have a management team. The AONB team for the Yorkshire Wolds would comprise East Riding of Yorkshire Council and North Yorkshire Council. Individual posts within the AONB team would include an AONB Manager, and may also typically include project officers offering advice and grants to farmers, landowners and community groups.
- 3.5 Planning and development control in the AONB would remain the responsibility of the two local authorities.

#### **4.0 Practical implications of Designation as an AONB**

- 4.1 Designation as AONB would provide formal statutory recognition of the national importance of the natural beauty of the Yorkshire Wolds, and provide the basis for a more coordinated and integrated approach to management which would give specific focus and priority to the natural beauty of the area.
- 4.2 The benefits can be summarised as follows:
  - **Statutory application of an AONB Management Plan** across the proposed area, which sets out the area's special qualities and a focused action plan for the AONB Team and wider partnership, to provide for integrated management in order to achieve the AONB purpose of conservation and enhancement of natural beauty.
  - **An AONB Team with specialist skills and expertise.**
  - **Formal inclusion of the East Riding and North Yorkshire Councils** on the AONB Partnership.
  - **A statutory duty on other public bodies** to seek to further the purposes of the AONB.
  - **Additional recognition in planning terms** through the application of NPPF provisions relating to AONBs, inclusion of relevant policies in Local Plans related to the delivery of the AONB purposes, and withdrawal of some Permitted Development Rights.
  - **Long term funding for conservation work from Defra** with contributions from relevant local authorities, and access to additional sources of funding not available to non-designated landscapes.

#### **5.0 Assessment of public access in the proposed Yorkshire Wolds AONB**

- 5.1 Around half of the land area in the Inland part of the proposed AONB is in North Yorkshire. Only about 20% of the Coastal area is in North Yorkshire.

- 5.2 The density of public rights of way in the proposed AONB area is lower than in other areas in North Yorkshire. There are a number of circular walks (e.g. see National Trails website), but in some parts of the Wolds the rights of way make it more difficult to make circular walks without making use of public roads.
- 5.3 The Wolds have relatively small areas of Access Land, however in the North Yorkshire area the Access Land covers many of the picturesque Wolds dales.
- 5.4 The National Trails “Yorkshire Wolds Way” passes through the proposed “Inland” area of designation. The North Yorkshire section of the National Trail runs from near Fridaythorpe along the north edge of the Wolds overlooking the Derwent Valley, towards Filey.

## 6.0 Responding to the Wolds Designation Consultation as NYLAF

- 6.1 The role of Local Access Forums was defined in section 94 of the Countryside Right of Way Act (2000), and the Local Access Forum Regulations (2007). The primary objective of Forums is to seek improvements to public access for the purposes of (1) open-air recreation and enjoyment, and (2) utility or functional access, for example using rights of way to access public amenities.
- 6.2 A response was formulated by correspondence between forum members in November and December. Our response was agreed by email in December based on the points set out below.
- 6.3 The primary purpose of the creation of a Wolds AONB is to **conserve and enhance the natural beauty** of the area. Furthermore the creation of an AONB will bring a more co-ordinated approach to the management and planning of the area. Our response is therefore based on two themes:
  - 6.3.1 **That the NYLAF broadly welcomes the creation of a Yorkshire Wolds AONB on the grounds that it is likely to lead to improvements in open-air recreation.** It was not proposed that we would comment specifically on the exact boundary of the AONB, as we have not the resources to undertake a review of the proposed boundary, and arguably we are not well placed to judge the application of the formal criteria used in the assessment of the case for the AONB.
  - 6.3.2 **That we argued very strongly for the inclusion of NYLAF in both informal discussion and consultation in the development of the proposed AONB Management Plan, with the aim of promoting and securing improvements to rights of way and public access.** One of the main reasons for



conserving a beautiful area is so that people can enjoy it – and to do that they need to be able to access it easily.

6.3.3 Furthermore we asked that the Management Plan, in due course, should specifically review how access can be improved to the AONB in order that the public can appreciate its beauty and enjoy outdoor recreation. It is important that in reviewing improved access to the Yorkshire Wolds that consideration should be given to:

- New access routes where it may be possible to create these. It is suggested that the Wolds has a relatively low density of public rights of way when compared to neighbouring areas (and very little access land), and that the creation of circular “walks” in particular could be a specific objective;
- An improved quality of access, for example removing conflicts between users of rights of way and public highways;
- Improvements in access that allow people with impaired or restricted mobility to better access the countryside (where realistically achievable).
- Improvements in how people from neighbouring areas can get to the Wolds countryside. This might including development of public transport options, sustainable access into the Wolds, or the development of sites to which people can drive and park in order to “go for a walk”.

6.4 Our final response based on the principles above (para 6.3) is set out in the Appendix. (I agreed with the team leading the consultation that a cover letter will be considered as a part of our formal response. I also added comments based on the cover letter to an online consultation portal.)

6.5 In discussion on the drafting of our response Forum members pointed out that the creation of new duties for NYC to support the new AONB might lead to resources being diverted from existing activities. One specific concern would be around additional pressures on the Countryside Access Service (CAS). This point is made in our response, and asks that Defra and Natural England consider their funding of any new pressures.

6.6 Furthermore it is also suggested that the resourcing within NYC of the AONB is discussed at the NY Local Access Forum meeting in January. One possible outcome from that discussion might be a formal letter to NYC asking that consideration is given of the resourcing of these new pressures on the Countryside Access Service as part of the Council’s budgeting process for 2026/7 next autumn. If we were to agree to this it is suggested that the benefits associated with any new resources would support the tourism, economic and well-being agendas of NYC.

**APPENDIX: Response to consultation on Proposal to designate a new  
Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

**Yorks Wolds Consultation**  
Natural England  
PO Box 295  
Holmfirth, HD9 9FS

Email to: [YorksWoldsDesignationProject@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:YorksWoldsDesignationProject@naturalengland.org.uk)

**North Yorkshire Local Access Forum**

c/o Dawn Drury  
Democratic Services  
North Yorkshire Council  
County Hall,  
Northallerton, DL7 8AD

**30 December 2024**

**Response to consultation on Proposal to designate a new Yorkshire Wolds  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

**From: North Yorkshire Local Access Forum**

The role of Local Access Forums was defined in section 94 of the Countryside Rights of Way Act (2000), and the Local Access Forum Regulations (2007). The North Yorkshire Local Access Forum covers the area of North Yorkshire Council, with the exception of the areas within the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Parks.

The primary objective of Local Access Forums in England is to seek improvements to public access for the purposes of (1) open-air recreation and enjoyment, and (2) utility or functional access, for example using rights of way to access public amenities.

This letter forms the main part of our response to the consultation on the Yorkshire Wolds AONB designation. I have also populated the on-line response form using my own name (below) and postcode given above.

The primary purpose of the creation of a Yorkshire Wolds AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. The NY Local Access Forum expects that the creation of an AONB will bring a more co-ordinated approach to the management and planning of the area. Our response to the consultation has two thrusts.

6



### Creation of Yorkshire Wolds AONB

**NYLAF broadly welcomes the creation of a Yorkshire Wolds AONB on the grounds that it is likely to lead to improvements in open-air recreation.** We neither have the resources or remit to comment specifically on the exact boundary of the AONB, nor are we able to comment on the application of the formal criteria used in the assessment of the case for the AONB.

### Operation of Yorkshire Wolds AONB

One of the main reasons for conserving beautiful areas is so that people can enjoy them. **It is vital that therefore that NYLAF is included from the outset in the development of the proposed AONB Management Plan, particularly at the informal stages.** Our aims in this will be to promote and secure improvements to rights of way and public access, where these can be achieved in balance with other relevant local objectives.

The Management Plan, in due course, should specifically review how access can be improved to, and within, the AONB in order that the public can appreciate its beauty and enjoy outdoor recreation. It is important that in reviewing improved access to the Wolds that consideration should be given to:

- New access routes where it may be possible to create these. It is suggested that some parts of the Wolds have a relatively low density of public rights of way when compared to neighbouring areas (and very little “access land”), and that the creation of circular “walks” in particular could be a specific objective of the AONB and Management Plan.
- An improved quality of access, for example removing conflicts between users of rights of way and public highways. Currently many public rights of way in the Wolds end abruptly on public highways.
- Improvements in access that allow people with impaired or restricted mobility to better access the countryside (where realistically achievable).
- Improvements in how people from neighbouring areas, towns and cities, can get to the Wolds countryside. This might including development of public transport options, sustainable access into the Wolds, or the development of sites to which people can drive and park in order to “go for a walk”. Again we would expect that a Management Plan for the AONB will consider these issues, in order that the beauty of the area can be appreciated by a wide range of the public.
- We recognise that achieving improvements such as those listed above, will in many cases, require the co-operation of local landowners and others.

### Resourcing a Yorkshire Wolds AONB

The Local Access Forum would be concerned if the creation of new duties for NYC to support the new AONB might lead to resources being diverted from existing

activities. We ask the Natural England and Defra give consideration to their funding of any new pressures on the Local Authorities. One specific concern would be around additional pressures on the North Yorkshire Council Countryside Access Service (CAS).

We hope you will be able to take these matters into consideration, and in due course we would like to understand how we might be involved in the development of the plans for the AONB.

Regards

Stephen Clark (Forum Member)  
On behalf of the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

## North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

29 January 2025

### Proposals for managing NYLAF meeting agendas for 2025 and 2026

Report of Committee Members: Stephen Clark, John Toogood and Roma Haigh

#### 1.0 Purpose of the Report

This report sets out proposals for what NYLAF might consider in its meeting agendas for the next two years (see also attached draft calendar).

The Forum is asked **to agree** a draft programme, noting that it can be reviewed over time.

The Forum is asked **to consider** how to assign activities to sub-groups and individuals. Initial actions will often include making new contacts and defining the best timescales for NYLAF's action.

**To consider and agree** how the Forum should engage with North Yorkshire Council in carrying out this programme. The programme potentially includes a range of Council functions including tourism, leisure, environment, planning, transport and highways.

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This paper sets out some thoughts for what the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum (NYLAF) should cover in its future meetings.
- 1.2 John, Roma and Stephen have met several times since the last Forum meeting and have developed these thoughts together. This draft paper has also benefitted from constructive inputs from Ian Kelly and Dawn Drury of the Council's Countryside Access and Governance teams respectively. Unless stated explicitly the views expressed here are those of the Forum members only.
- 1.3 Key considerations have been:
  - 1.3.1 The NYLAF should focus on its primary objectives as set out following the Countryside Rights of Way Act (2000). Those include seeking improvements to public access for the purposes of (1) open-air recreation and enjoyment, and (2) utility or functional access (e.g. the use of rights of way to access public amenities and workplaces).

- 1.3.2 Our resources are limited. We set for ourselves the goal of wanting to make a difference by focussing on strategic items.
- 1.3.3 North Yorkshire Council's Countryside Access Service (CAS) is the main point of reference for NYLAF in the Council. Given their good work, we should in general seek to complement their work, rather than overlap with them.
- 1.3.4 We should also provide guidance and challenge to North Yorkshire Council (NYC) at large, as well as other organisations, with a view to seeking to improve access to the countryside. Within the Council this might include bringing NYLAF's agenda to the attention of the Highways Network Strategy teams (e.g. para 2.6); Planning (e.g. paras 2.7 and 2.8); Parks and Grounds (responsible for various cycling routes and green spaces/assets across NY); Tourism and Public Health (e.g. para 2.3).
- 1.3.5 In developing a draft programme we have developed a list of issues we thought we should cover in the next two years (section 2). The Appendix includes a draft programme.
- 1.3.6 The programme should be reviewed after each 4-monthly meeting. We should also review the programme as part of a wider review of our own effectiveness each year (para 2.13).

## 2.0 Proposals for content of future programme

### 2.1 Review of Rights of Way Improvement Plan

- *Purpose.* There is a statutory duty on NYC to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP), and for this to be reviewed at least every ten years. A discussion should be scheduled to consider where we can best assist NYC to review its ROWIP.
- *Possible Outcomes.* Small number of actions where NYLAF can support CAS and NYC in reviewing its ROWIP.
- *Timing and priority.* A precis of the current ROWIP will be presented to the January 2025 meeting for discussion. We can then review the timing of any actions NYLAF might take to support the work.

### 2.2 Countryside Access Service (CAS) Annual Report.

- *Purpose.* To review the annual report of the CAS. To understand where NYLAF can support the work of CAS, and to flag any areas of concern. To support CAS in setting priorities and defining policies where the NYLAF input may help in better managing scarce CAS resources.
- *Possible Outcomes.* Small number of actions where NYLAF can support CAS.

- *Timing and priority.* The CAS annual report for the year 23-24 was tabled at the last meeting. It is proposed that the annual CAS report is presented and discussed in May each year.

### 2.3 Rights of way network and the North Yorkshire tourism, culture and leisure agendas.

- *Purpose.* Given the undoubted importance of the rights of way network to tourism, culture and leisure in Yorkshire can more be done to exploit this to the benefit of the network and the North Yorkshire economy?
- *Possible Outcomes.* Proposals for better integrating the rights of way network into tourism, culture and leisure initiatives. Where appropriate better support the Countryside Access Service to further tourism and leisure initiatives.
- *Timing and priority.* We thought we should do this soon, especially given the new impetus towards the marketing of Yorkshire as a tourism destination. It is proposed that NYLAF talks with the departments responsible for tourism, culture and leisure to prepare for a possible discussion at the NYLAF May meeting. We should also determine if there are any relevant milestones in respect to tourism, culture and leisure agendas.

### 2.4 Nidderdale and Howardian Hills National Landscape management plans for 2025-30

- *Purpose.* To formulate inputs to these two National Landscape management plans, both of which are due for consultation around May 2025.
- *Possible Outcomes.* To formulate response to any formal consultation.
- *Timing and priority.* A discussion is scheduled for the May meeting.

### 2.5 Potential Yorkshire Wolds National Landscape

- *Purpose.* To follow up on actions following NYLAF's response to the consultation on a possible Yorkshire Wolds AONB.
- *Possible Outcomes.* NYLAF involvement in development of an action plan, including in helping to support making the case for adequate resourcing of such plans.
- *Timing and priority.* Timing dependent on outcomes of Defra consultation.

### 2.6 Access to the Public Rights of Way network

- *Purpose.* How to improve "ease of access" to the public rights of way network, including by car (including car parking), public transport and active travel (e.g. "how do you get to the start of a day on Yorkshire's public rights of way?").
- *Possible Outcomes.* Proposals for improving public access onto/into the rights of way network.
- *Timing and priority.* We thought we should do this early in our future programme – and the draft plan suggests September. We

should determine if there are any relevant milestones in the NYC forward calendar relating to transport policy, active travel policy and highways. Note also this area might be too much to cover in one session. The development of plans in this area will also be subject to the Mayoral Combined Authority agenda.

## 2.7 Input to Local Plan

- *Purpose.* To make a strategic input to the development of (a) the Local Plan, and (b) planning policy more generally in North Yorkshire.
- *Possible Outcomes.* To ensure the rights of way network is properly considered especially in NYC's local plan.
- *Timing and priority.* To be determined in conjunction with NYC Planning department. No specific dates included in programme at this point.

## 2.8 Planning applications, decisions and interventions

- *Purpose.* NYLAF to discuss and formulate responses to any major planning applications. To note smaller planning decisions, as well as a number of larger applications, are also discussed and responded to by correspondence between meetings.
- *Possible Outcomes.* (1) To ensure right of way network is properly considered especially in major planning applications, and for NYLAF to take prominent role in making representations on them. (2) To consider further development of an overarching set of guidelines in relation to how planning applications should take account of, and support, the public rights of way network. (To note relevant work in this area has been developed by East Riding Council and the Institute of Public Rights of Way.)
- *Timing and priority.* Outcome (1) Major planning applications: To be determined in line with known pipeline of expected major applications, which we should aim to get from Planning department. No specific dates included in appendix at this point. Outcome (2) Planning Guidelines: It is suggested we have further discussion on this before our May meeting.

## 2.9 Policy development

- *Purpose.* During our work we may encounter areas where the NYLAF could develop a helpful policy position on certain issues (the specific case of guidance for planning considerations above is one such area). It is not proposed that we develop a forward agenda on such areas at this point, but that we are prepared to be reactive should issues arise.
- *Possible Outcomes.* Development of formal policy positions as required, where it is clear such positions will help others improve the public rights of way network, and the public's enjoyment of it.
- *Timing and priority.* Reactive to issues as they arise.

- 2.10 Public education about Countryside.
- *Purpose.* To consider whether more can be done to educate those using the public rights of way network in North Yorkshire about its usage, including around the “countryside code”.
  - *Possible Outcomes.* Proposals for inclusion of advice in “advertising materials” aimed at tourists and others making use of the network.
  - *Timing and priority.* We were not confident that we could make a significant difference in this area, but thought the item should be included in the later part of the 2026 programme (Sept 26).
- 2.11 Review of Best Practices in Local Access Forums in England
- *Purpose.* To review what we can learn from other Access Forums in England to improve our effectiveness.
  - *Possible Outcomes.* Proposals for the future programme, and for new streams of activity.
  - *Timing and priority.* This has a synergy with the item about reviewing our own effectiveness (see 2.13 below). We thought this work should precede the proposals to review our own effectiveness. The attached programme proposes September 25. John agreed to contact the East Yorks Council Forum, and Stephen the Cumbria/Lakes forum.
- 2.12 Review of NYLAF works with Stakeholders
- *Purpose.* To review our relationships (or not) with stakeholders who share an interest in the public rights of way network, and to explore where we can better work together. Could include stakeholders such as Ramblers, Cycling UK, National Farmers Union, Trail Riders’ Fellowship, Country Land and Business Association or the British Horse Society.
  - *Possible Outcomes.* Common agendas with relevant stakeholders, where there is mutual benefit.
  - *Timing and priority.* We felt this would take some preparation – but could be achieved for a discussion in September 2025.
- 2.13 Review of effectiveness of NYLAF and review of future programme
- *Purpose.* To consider where we have made a difference over the previous year, and how we can improve. This should include a review of the reputation and profile of NYLAF, and its effectiveness in influencing real decisions.
  - *Possible Outcomes.* Proposals for the future programme, and for new streams of activity.
  - *Timing and priority.* We thought we should do this annually, starting in Jan 2026 (see point 2.11 about best practice above).

### **3.0 Standing Items**

- 3.1 The Standing Items for meetings include:
- Review of Minutes
  - Matters Arising
  - Public Questions and Statements
  - NYLAF Secretary's Report
  - Regular updates from area representatives and major project representatives (if any). NB: Major projects include the C2C National Trail work, and the A66 project.
  - Review of agenda for next meeting and forward plan
- 3.2 Statutory items on the forward plan also include the election of Chair and Vice Chair (at the May meeting).

### **4.0 Discussion and way forward**

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Forum discusses the proposed content of the programme, and the timing of items especially for the next two meetings. The proposed programme is set out in the Appendix.
- 4.2 It is also proposed that either (a) an individual or pair take responsibility for preparing each agenda item for discussion, or that (b) a sub-committee is established for more complex or long-standing issues. This can build on established roles in the Forum. If the Forum is content with this proposal it is suggested that "expressions of interest" are communicated with the Chair/authors of this paper at or after the January NYLAF meeting. Discussions after that can then establish a set of proposed responsibilities for future agenda items.
- 4.3 If we are to make progress it is essential that there is good quality engagement between the Forum and those responsible in North Yorkshire Council for areas including tourism, leisure, planning, environment, transport and highways. It is suggested that we discuss the best ways to give profile to our agenda with a range of key Council departments.



## APPENDIX: DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR NYLAF 2025-26

Meeting	Proposed item  (Figures in brackets refer to section in paper)	Lead individual(s) or sub-committee
<b>2025</b>		
29 Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of future programme (this paper).</li> <li>• Rights of Way Improvement Plan (2.1).</li> <li>• Consultation on Yorkshire Wolds AONB (2.5).</li> </ul>	
28 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countryside Access Service report for 24-25 (2.2).</li> <li>• Rights of way network and North Yorkshire tourism, culture and leisure activities (2.3).</li> <li>• Howardian Hills/Nidderdale mgmt. plans (2.4).</li> <li>• Election of Chair and Vice Chair.</li> </ul>	
24 Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rights of way network, highways, transport policy (including active travel) (2.6).</li> <li>• Review of Best Practices in Local Access Forums in England (2.11).</li> <li>• Review of NYLAF works with Stakeholders (2.12),</li> </ul>	
<b>2026</b>		
21 Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of effectiveness of NYLAF and review of future programme (2.13).</li> </ul>	
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countryside Access Service report for 25-26 (2.2).</li> <li>• Election of Chair and Vice Chair.</li> </ul>	
Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public education on countryside and access (2.10).</li> </ul>	
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Minutes</li> <li>• Matters Arising</li> <li>• Public Questions and Statements</li> <li>• NYLAF Secretary's Report</li> <li>• Regular updates from area and major project representatives (if needed).</li> <li>• Agenda for next meeting and forward plan</li> </ul>	
Items to be added when timescales are clearer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next steps on Wolds AONB consultation (2.5).</li> <li>• Local Transport Plan / Active Travel Strategy (2.6).</li> <li>• Input to NYC Local Plan development (2.7).</li> <li>• Major planning interventions (2.8).</li> <li>• Emerging requirements for policies, strategies or operational position statements (2.9).</li> </ul>	

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