

North Yorkshire LAF Summary of Draft Recommendations arising from Waymarking Review

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

Nick Abbey
Dick Brew
Cllr David Jeffels
David Lepper

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

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

Draft Review Recommendations:

The draft recommendations arising from the review are listed below:

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

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

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

Report Recommendation:

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

Supporting Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Detailed Review Findings & Advice

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

Appendix 3 – Oxfordshire Paths – How to Guide

Appendix 4 – Cheshire Policy on PROW Issue Prioritisation