

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In respect of the proposed recommendations:

Recommendation 3

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

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

Recommendation 4

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

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

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

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

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

Recommendation 10

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

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

Recommendation 17

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

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

Recommendation 19

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