

CITY OF BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

APRIL 2007

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1.1 PROCESS OF PRODUCING A ROWIP

1.1.0 The Rights of Way Network

The public rights of way network consists of linear routes over which the public have a permanent right to travel, on foot, horseback, pedal cycle non-motorised vehicle or motor vehicle. The recorded status of individual routes determines the type of rights available to the public as follows:

Public footpaths – routes for people to follow on foot only

Public bridleways – routes for people riding or leading horses or with pedal bikes.

Byways open to all traffic (BOATs) - carriageways over which the right of way is on foot, on horseback and for all vehicular traffic (including mechanically propelled vehicles, but which are used mainly for the purposes for which footpaths and bridleways are used (i.e. by walkers and horse riders).

Restricted byways – carriageways over which the right of way is for all types of traffic except mechanically propelled vehicles. These routes can therefore be used by horse drawn vehicles but not by cars or motorbikes.

The majority of the public rights of way network in the Bradford district consists of footpaths and bridleways.

Other public access - In addition to routes with permanent public rights, the network is supplemented by permissive

routes, public roads and their footways, cycle tracks, and canal towpaths. Public rights and permissive access on foot and, in some cases, on horseback also exist on areas of land such as registered common land, open country, and village greens. Further details of the extent of the various categories of public access in the Bradford area are in Section 1.3.

1.1.1 What is a ROWIP?

Bradford, like every local highway authority, is required to publish a Rights Of Way Improvement Plan covering the entire district. This has to be done by November 2007. In drawing up the plan, we are required to:

- Assess the extent to which rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public.
- Assess the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and the enjoyment of their area.
- Assess the accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially-sighted people and others with mobility issues.

The ROWIP will also include a statement of the action we propose to take for the management of local rights of way and for securing an improved network of local rights of way.

1.1.2 Why does it have to be done?

ROWIPs are intended to be the prime means by which local highway authorities will identify the changes to be made in respect of the management of, and improvement to, their local rights of way network, in order to meet the government's aim of better provision for walkers, cyclists, equestrians and people with mobility problems.

This Draft ROWIP will be put out to statutory consultation for a period of twelve weeks to all interested parties. The final Improvement Plan will then be produced which will guide the direction of Bradford Council's Rights of Way Section for the next ten years.

1.1.3 How has it been produced?

An assessment of the needs of people with a range of expectations, needs and abilities is crucial to the development of an effective Improvement Plan. To this end, a wide ranging consultation with the public, community groups and parish councils, Councillors, Bradford District Council departments, neighbouring local authorities, user groups, landowners and the Local Access Forum was carried out.

An assessment of the information held by the Rights of Way Section was also made.

ROWIPs will form one element of the suite of Local Authority plans and strategies. Related plans which have been referred to for complimentary themes include the Local Transport Plan, Corporate Plan, Walking Strategy, Woodland Strategy and the Walking for Health project. Revised Unitary Development Plan.

1.2 STRATEGIC BACKGROUND

1.2.1 Introduction

The production of a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) cannot take place in isolation. In order to maximise its impact, it must relate to and link with a number of other national, regional and local strategies and initiatives.

Here, the principal relevant strategies which influence the ROWIP are outlined.

1.2.2 West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP)

As the key strategic framework for the ROWIP, the LTP sets out key transport related policy and proposals over West Yorkshire over a five-year period. Within the LTP there are a number of themes which are of relevance to the ROWIP – these include non-motorised transport/reducing congestion, health, recreation and safety. The Government have indicated that they view the LTP as the main source for funding of ROWIP improvements. The West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan can be found on the internet at <http://www.wyltp.com>

LTP2 covers the period 2006-2011 and was published in March 2006. The documents set out a number of Transport Objectives which also serve to set a context for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. These objectives include:

- **General:** to support the growth of local economies, contribute to an enhanced quality of life within the communities and reduce the adverse impact of car-based travel
- **Delivering accessibility:** to improve access to jobs, education and other services particularly by public transport, walking and cycling.
- **Tackling congestion:** to encourage a greater proportion of journeys by public transport, cycling and walking
- **Air quality and vehicle emissions:** to reduce transport emissions of air pollutants, greenhouse gases and noise
- **Effective asset management:** to improve the condition of, and manage the use of, the highway and public transport infrastructure in order to meet the needs of current and future transport users (including maintenance of rights of way)

There are clearly strong links between the LTP and the ROWIP – which will serve as a key delivery mechanism for a number of these LTP objectives. Specific rights of way objectives, agreed as a “high level statement” between the five West Yorkshire metropolitan authorities within the LTP are:

- Protect, improve and extend the rights of way networks as an important means of access to the countryside for recreation and for health
- Enhance opportunities for safe and sustainable travel, both for recreation and for access to work, schools and services
- Improve accessibility of rights of way for all members of our communities and provide appropriate publicity
- Ensure that the condition of the rights of way network enhances the appearance and amenity of the natural and built environment and our local heritage
- Ensure that the rights of way network contributes to the enhancement of economic opportunities

1.2.3 Greenways

An emerging strategic approach to the development of a Greenway network within the District is another key policy area to which the ROWIP relates. The ROWIP will, in part, address some of these aspirations as part of an integrated transport network. Greenways are defined as continuous, multi-purpose corridors providing safe and attractive recreational opportunities and commuter access, generally in an open space setting.

The ROWIP will assist in identifying suitable corridors where such an aspiration might take place, as well as routes and open spaces which could contribute to such Greenways.

Such an approach is currently being considered for Airedale and the Worth Valley.

1.2.4 Corporate Plan

This is the key strategic framework for City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, which sets out the Council's Mission, Vision and Values for the period 2004-2007. It identifies a number of priorities:

- Educating and supporting children.
- Creating a More Prosperous District
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Improving the Environment
- Healthier communities and choice for older people.
- Improving customer services.

Management and development aspirations relating to the rights of way network relate principally to the highlighted priorities – in recognising the role that access to open spaces and the countryside can play in regeneration and economic terms, and also in contributing to a better quality local environment.

The ROWIP will also contribute to the other priorities – in terms of young people and education by making the network available to young people either through encouraging physical activity such as walking, or by using the local environment and

an educational resource. Managing the rights of way network in a way which reduces crime and thus creates a safer district is also an important issue. Social care for vulnerable people embraces the health agenda, walking and physical activity is widely recognised as having a significant part to play in increasing physical and mental health and well-being. The role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in managing the network and providing up to date information at the customer interface is also an area that will be considered within the ROWIP.

The Corporate Plan also considers the Council's performance in terms of Best Value Performance Indicators – BVPI 178 relates to ease of use of the rights of way network and is monitored through the Corporate Plan.

1.2.5 Airedale Masterplan

Commissioned through the Airedale Partnership, the Airedale Masterplan recognises the accessibility of the Aire valley as a key element. It promotes Airedale as a “connected corridor” which provides the opportunity to access the landscape through a network of footpaths and cycleways that flow out from the town centres and their transport interchanges. Many of the short and medium-term aspirations set out in the Airedale Masterplan would appear to correspond with ROWIP aspirations, some of which may be addressed through the integral Action Plan. (see chapter 6)

Examples include the River Aire Project, which aims to increase and improve access along the river and canal corridor and improve linkages between them.

1.2.6 Corporate Play Strategy: “All to Play For”

The Bradford District's Strategy for Children's Play, produced in partnership with SureStart, Betterplay and Dr Barnardo's, sets out broad objectives aimed, amongst others, at removing barriers to access to play. In rights of way terms, this translates into consideration of such issues as:

- Lack of accessible play spaces – parks and playgrounds that are accessible, inclusive, well-maintained, secure and fun
- Recognition that play and physical activity impacts on health
- The need for children and young people to be able to access all parts of the District
- Recognition that parks, playgrounds and the wider environment all form part of the overall play provision within the District

The Play Strategy aims, through a series of annual Action Plans to encourage and support developments which attempt to achieve these objectives.

1.2.7 Open Spaces Survey

An initiative, undertaken during 2005/6 within the Council's Plans and Performance Service, as an audit of all open spaces within the District (excluding agricultural land). It is an attempt to gain a better understanding of the value of open spaces in terms of their accessibility, how they serve and are viewed by the local community, as well as other considerations such as nature conservation or recreational value. Such areas obviously link to the public rights of way network and form part of the wider access asset within the District. Some of the findings of this survey will usefully inform the ROWIP process.

1.2.8 Walking for Health

The health agenda is a key focus for physical activity such as walking. The public rights of way network has a significant role to play in facilitating such activity, whether it be through self-motivated activity or guided walking. A number of Walking for Health initiatives operate within the District funded through the NHS Trusts. The public rights of way network forms an important element in the success of these initiatives and in providing a cost-free facility for exercise and activity. Information about such facilities and the benefits of using them are key issues for the ROWIP.

1.2.9 Woodland Strategy

Produced in 2001, the Woodland Strategy sets out policies for the upkeep of existing woodland within the Bradford District, new planting on public and private land and the management of trees in relation to development control. The Council owns and manages substantial areas of publicly accessible woodland and this woodland estate contributes to the wider access network.

All Council owned woodland is managed on a multi-use basis which includes amenity, recreation and wildlife. The woodland resource is recognised as a valuable contribution to the access network within the Bradford District.

1.2.10 Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

The Council's Unitary Development Plan, and its recent replacement (the RUDP), sets out the Council's land use strategy policies and is the prime consideration when the Council makes decisions on planning applications.

Amongst the range of policies within the plan, those relating to transport movement deal with protecting routes. The Council, in this plan, recognises the value of walking and cycling as a mode of transport. It states that developments should not obstruct or cut across established footpaths, bridleways or cycle routes, unless alternative provision is made.

In addition, the Council seeks to maximise access improvements through planning agreements (such as Section 106 Agreements) relating to new development proposals.

1.2.14 Local Development Framework (LDF)

A Local Development Framework will replace the current Replacement Unitary Development Plan in due course. The Council is currently deciding its priorities under this new regime and is seeking guidance on which existing RUDP policies will be carried forward into the new plan, and which ones will be revisited and re-written.

The Council's Countryside and Rights of Way team will ensure that ROWIP related policies are taken account of in the new LDF.

1.2.11 Keighley Physical Activity Action Plan

This Plan promotes physical activity in Keighley through a number of proposals and action points.

Amongst these are proposals to develop a Keighley "Walkways" project to create a network of accessible, safe, waymarked and clearly mapped walking routes in the town and surrounding areas. These would link with "Safe Routes to School", "Walking Buses", existing "Take the Bus for a Walk" and "Keighley Historic Trails" initiatives, as well as existing routes such as the Worth Way, the Railway Children Walk and the Keighley & Craven Way.

1.2.12 Disability Discrimination Act guidance

One of the key principles of the ROWIP is to ensure that the District's rights of way network is available to as wide a range of users as possible. People with mobility issues or other disabilities should be able to access and utilise this network; indeed the Disability Discrimination Act requires that this is the case.

Access and countryside recreation agencies are developing guidance which assists landowners and local authorities to address this. The Countryside Agency commissioned guidance from the Sensory Trust and this ROWIP embraces such guidance.

1.2.13 Walking Strategy

The Council is currently working on the development of a Walking Strategy which draws together the current activities and initiatives within the District that contribute to the promotion and uptake of walking.

As well as the ROWIP, these include the development of Greenways, Walking for Health Initiatives, safe routes to schools and green travel plans. As well as the health benefits of encouraging a "modal shift" away from motorised transport, such a strategy would contribute to wider transport objectives such as tackling congestion, reducing pollution and equality of provision.

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1.3 CURRENT NETWORK

The Bradford Metropolitan District covers an area of approximately 200 square miles (518 square kilometres).

Linear Access:

1.3.1 Public Rights of Way

Within the District there are 687 miles (1,100kms) of public rights of way, made up of 5,123 individual path links. A path link is defined as the length of path between a junction with another path or road.

Not all of the District is subject to a definitive map (the legal record of public rights of way). The former County Borough of Bradford was originally excluded from definitive map coverage and many routes on our records for that area are awaiting legal orders to formally record them on a definitive map. This means that approximately 162 miles (260kms) of the total network is non-definitive, whilst 525 miles (845kms) is included on the definitive map. In practice this does not mean that the paths within this area are unprotected. The Countryside and Rights of Way Service maintains files on the 162 miles of non-definitive routes and, as public rights are believed to exist on these, the Service protects them as it would a definitive route.

The status, for users, of public rights of way in Bradford District is broken down as follows:

Status	Miles	Kms	% of total network
Public footpath (walkers only)	634	1020	92
Public bridleway (walkers, horse riders, cyclists)	46	75	7
Byway Open to All Traffic (walkers, horse riders, cyclists, motorised vehicles)	7	11	1

1.3.2 Permissive routes

A limited number of permissive routes, negotiated by agreement with landowners (but which can be withdrawn at any time), exist within the District. These tend to provide multi-user routes, such as a permissive bridleway through Scholebrook Farm at Tong which links the local bridleway network with Black Carr Woods. There are also permissive bridleways on Council owned land at Myrtle Park, Bingley, Prince of Wales Park, Bingley St. Ives Estate and Harden Moor.

The best example of this within the Bradford District is land owned by Yorkshire Water where additional access provision has been made. One example being the conduit route opened up for cyclists, walkers and horse-riders across Yorkshire Water owned land between Thornton Moor and Haworth Moor.

1.3.3 Leeds-Liverpool canal towpath

The Leeds-Liverpool canal towpath forms a key element in the linear access provision through the District. It runs for approximately 17miles (28kms) from Kildwick in the north-west to Apperley Bridge in the east. British Waterways, who are responsible for the towpath, have obligations under the British Waterways Act 1995, to preserve for the public, freedom of access to towing paths and open land. This effectively provides an additional linear access opportunity to walkers and cyclists.

1.3.4 Road and footway access

Public rights of way and other routes form part of a wider linear access network, which also includes the roads and footways (or pavements) within the District. Although principally utilised by motor vehicles, the District's roads, particularly the quieter urban and rural ones, can form important links for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Similarly, footways alongside roads provide additional walking

routes, particularly through the urban and semi-urban parts of the District.

A total of 1,187 miles (1911kms) of road network¹ exists within the District, broken down into trunk roads (12 miles/20kms); principal roads (86 miles/138 kms); non-principal roads (125 miles/201kms) and unclassified roads (964 miles/1552kms). There are a number of unsurfaced roads in the district which provide an extra resource for rights of way users.

Footways are classified according to their location and levels of use. Thus, town centre, heavily used footways, would be regarded as Category 1, whereas footways in suburban or rural settings off the main roads would be Category 3 or 4. The breakdown for footways across the District is as follows:

Category	Miles	Kms
1	47	75.5
2	39	63.5
3 & 4	1636	2634

Other Access Opportunities:

In addition to the linear access network, the Bradford District has a significant proportion of access land. These are areas, either publicly or privately owned, where there are rights of access for the public.

¹ Source: Department of Transport figures 2004

1.3.5 Registered common land

All the common land within the District is “urban common” which means that it is subject to Section 193 of the Law of Property Act 1925. This confers a right of access to the public on foot and horseback (but not cycles unless on a bridleway) for “air and exercise”, as well as certain common rights for grazing livestock attached to specific properties.

Significant areas of urban common exist within the District including Ilkley Moor, Baildon Moor, Black Moor, Brow Moor, Haworth Moor and parts of Keighley Moor; plus smaller pockets such as Goitstock Woods near Harden. These areas make up approximately 15.2 square miles (24.5 square kilometres).

1.3.6 Open Country

In September 2004 a new statutory right of access to “open country” commenced in the Bradford District, introduced through Part 1 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This confers a right of access, on foot, to “mountain, moor, heath and downland” as defined by the Countryside Agency. In the Bradford District, some 20.8 square miles (33.5 sq.kms) of additional land was mapped as open country and subsequently opened up for walkers – over and above the existing urban commons.

These new access areas include moorland areas west of the Worth Valley, such as Stanbury Moor and the moors above Airedale (Bradup, Morton, Bingley and Hawksworth Moors). They also includes smaller pockets of land such as Catstones Moor near Bingley.

1.3.7 Village Greens

Village greens form local additional site-based access provision within the District. Similar to common land, they provide some rights of access to the public, which may vary from place to place. There are 18 registered village greens within the District which total approximately 130 acres (54 hectares).

1.3.8 Other access areas

Some land owned and managed by the Council which is neither common land nor open country is also available for public access. This includes significant areas of Council owned woodland, parks and recreation grounds to which access is available, sometimes restricted to certain types of user and subject to certain limitations through bye-laws.

Within the Bradford District there are a number of areas to which access is available by permission of the landowner. This falls into the category of non-statutory access land and includes areas where landowners have allowed additional access over and above their statutory obligations.

1.3.9 Stewardship access

Another form of non-statutory access provision is that associated with Environmental Stewardship or other agri-environment schemes promoted by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). As part of the Government's move towards increasingly linking agricultural support to farmers with environmental benefits, such schemes offer additional payments for extra access provision on private farmland.

A register of such access is kept within the Countryside and Rights of Way Service offices and can also be inspected on the DEFRA website (<http://countrywalks.defra.gov.uk>).

In the District, two such schemes have been negotiated which provide minor but welcome additional access. The two sites are at Holme House Woods near Keighley, where a short stretch of linear access has been created between woodland (owned by the Woodland Trust) and a nearby public footpath. At Westfield Farm near Haworth two linear routes and a small access area have been created under the Stewardship scheme.

1.3.10 Additional dedicated land

Section 16 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 contains provision for additional land to be dedicated for access (over and above "open country") by the landowners. This may include woodland, riverside and other land. It also allows for a wider range of people to enjoy open country other than walkers (such as horse riders).

Chapter 2

CONSULTATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

2.1 CONSULTATION PROCESS AND ASSESSMENT OF THE NETWORK

2.1.1 Introduction

In order to develop a realistic plan for the improvement of the rights of way network, it is necessary to investigate the views and experiences of those involved in using, managing and promoting the network. The views of those who rarely or never use public rights of way are also important in establishing what actions would encourage increased use of the network. Our consultation aimed to involve a wide range of people in a variety of ways. The following methods of consultation were used:

2.1.2 Questionnaire

A simple questionnaire was devised to investigate what consultees considered to be the most important issues for improvement. The format of the questionnaire ensured that the responses could be collated and analysed consistently but also gave an opportunity for respondents to include comments in their own words. A copy of the text of the questionnaire is in Appendix 4.

The questionnaire was widely promoted to ensure wide coverage of respondents from sectors of the community who

may not normally have any contact with the Countryside and Rights of Way Service by:

- Incorporating the questions in the October 2004 edition of the Council's regular "Speak Out" questionnaire. This is sent out to a panel of people representing a cross section of the community of Bradford Council residents, thus ensuring that the views of all interests in the community are proportionately represented.
- Developing a page on the CROW Service website giving information about the ROWIP process which also linked to an electronic version of the questionnaire.
- Email to all Council staff and Councillors alerting them to the website and questionnaire.
- Holding a stand at Bingley and Keighley Agricultural Shows, where information on the ROWIP and other access and rights of way issues were available together with copies of the questionnaire.

10,000 copies of a simple one page flier promoting the ROWIP process and inviting involvement were distributed to:

- regular consultees,
- farmers and other landowners,
- horse riding establishments,
- Parish Town and Community Councils,
- approximately 800 special interest groups,
- Neighbourhood Forum meetings throughout Bradford.

2.1.3 Focus Groups

Consultation letters and fliers invited respondents to register their interest in taking part in focus groups.

Four focus group meetings for members of the public were held and involved people from sections of the community and organisations with whom the Rights of Way Section do not usually have contact, and representatives of organisations we regularly consult, e.g. the Ramblers.

The aim of the meetings was to identify good and positive aspects of the rights of way network in it's current state and to give participants the opportunity to suggest options for improvements. This covered aspects of policy, strategic management of the network, problems relating to conflicts of use, specific suggestions for improvements to individual routes and ideas for new route provision.

2.1.4 Local Access Forum

The local access forum is a statutory consultee in the preparation of the ROWIP. The West Yorkshire Pennine Local Access Forum covers the Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees Districts and it's membership includes representatives of walkers, horse riders, cyclists, motorised users, landowners, farmers and moorland managers and members with contacts in youth groups, health promotion and tourism.

This Forum was consulted early in the preparation process.

2.1.5 Adjoining Highway Authorities

Bradford adjoins five other highway authority areas: Kirklees, Calderdale, Lancashire, North Yorkshire and Leeds. The rights of way network in one authority is in many cases continuous at the boundaries with that of adjacent authorities and there can be many mutual issues in need of resolution. It is necessary to locate any areas of anomalies where, for example, the recorded status of a route changes at the district boundary or where there is a need for improved provision linking areas in one authority with those in and adjacent authority.

Although relevant officers have regular contact across the district boundaries, as part of the ROWIP consultation process each neighbouring authority was formally contacted and given

the opportunity to comment on any cross-boundary issues and to contribute to the Bradford ROWIP. Maps of the recorded rights of way in the Bradford District, in the vicinity of the boundaries were sent with consultation letters to facilitate identification of areas for improvement. In a number of cases meetings were held with relevant officers in adjacent authorities to explore mutual issues in more detail.

2.1.6 Additional research

Further assessment of the needs of particular user groups, was carried out through targeted research and discussion with specialist groups and individuals, including the Morley Street Resource Centre and the Council's Equalities Service Policy Officers. A trawl of specialist websites was also carried out including those of key interest groups such as the Ramblers, Cyclist Touring Club, British Horse Society, Land Access and Recreation Association, Green Lane Association, National Farmers Union and the British Horse Society.

Officers from Bradford involved in the production of the ROWIP attended regional meetings of officers carrying out the same work in other authorities. These provided an opportunity to share best practice and resolve common issues.

2.1.7 Assessment of the existing network

Office records relating to the existing recorded rights of way network were consulted, to locate any obvious gaps for particular groups of users and identify any key issues already recorded in the Rights of Way Section. The records include:

- The current working copy of the Modified Definitive Map and Statement and office records of paths in the non-definitive areas.
- Maps of Open Access land.
- Promoted Routes.
- Highway Records.
- Requests for changes to the status of rights of way recorded at the last full (but abandoned –see 4.5.2) review of the definitive map.
- Applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders.
- Anomalies identified by officers, users and landowners, including locations where recorded paths are culs de sacs or where the recorded line appears to be different to that which has been used for many years.

- Evidence submitted by user organisations regarding potential status changes, including information relating to potential “Lost Ways”.
- The results of a previous Full Network Survey. This incorporates large amounts of detail about the physical condition of each recorded path in the district, accessibility to those with limited mobility, and the location and condition of furniture such as stiles, gates and bridges.

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Chapter 3

CONSULTATION RESULTS

3.1 CONSULTATION RESULTS

3.1.1 Questionnaires

A total of 1,494 people responded to the Speak Out survey and a further 189 people responded to the on-line questionnaire. 82% of the Speak Out respondents had used public paths in the past two years, as had 75% of web-based respondents. In addition to the response to questions about prioritisation of improvements and facilities, many of the respondents to both the Speak Out and online questionnaires gave comments in their own words in response to the questions “What would encourage you to use paths more?” or “Is there anything that stops you using paths?”

In addition over 335 individual written, email and telephone responses were received during the consultation period.

3.1.2 Questionnaire results - Prioritisation of improvements

In both the web-based questionnaire and the Speak Out survey respondents were asked for their views on how important they considered various types of improvement to the rights of way network, and what facilities they would rate as being most important. Respondents were asked to allocate a priority to categories of improvements and facilities on a scale from “Not at All Important” to “Very Important”. A summary of the results of these is shown in Graph 1.

In general the results demonstrate that the most important improvements for those who responded are to enhance the

existing path network and to increase the accessibility of the countryside both in the immediate vicinity of the respondents' homes and further away.

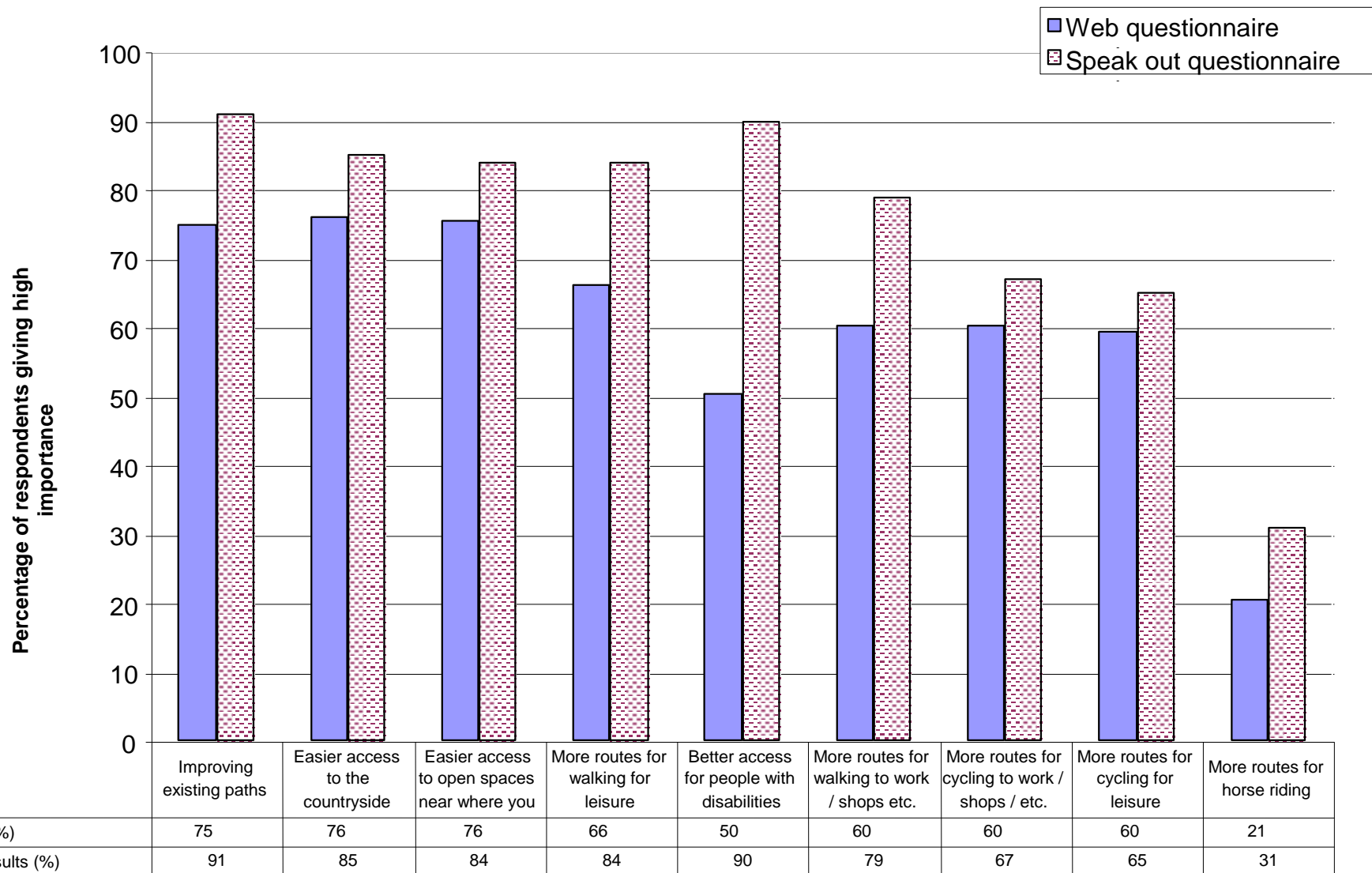
Less important to these respondents is the need to increase provision of new routes, especially for horse-riding. However, this lower demand may be at least in part a reflection of the lower percentage of horse riders compared with other users responding to the consultation. Other aspects of our research have revealed clear demands for increasing bridleway provision in particular parts of the District.

3.1.3 Questionnaire results- facilities

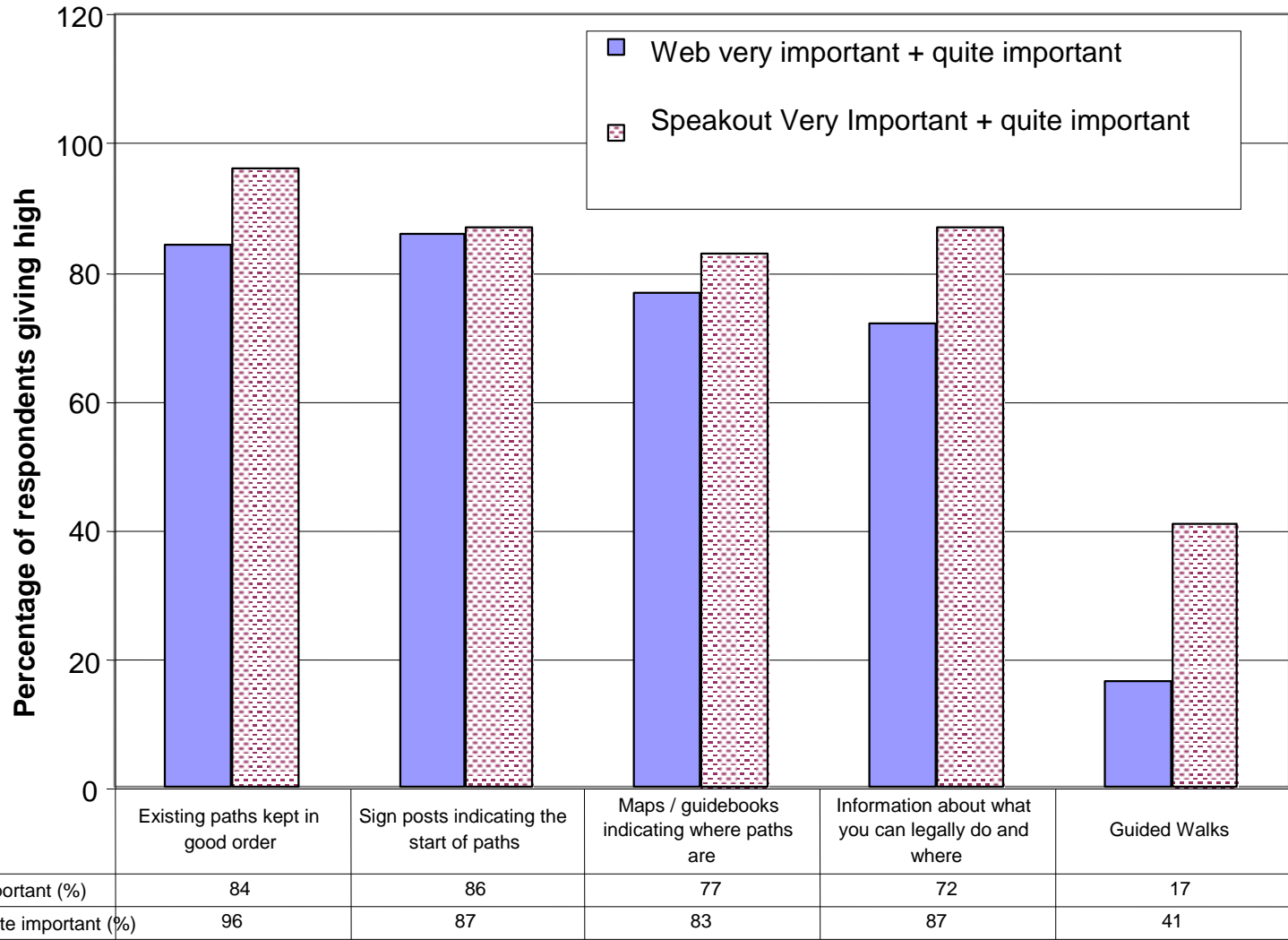
The results of the question about facilities for both the Speak Out and web questionnaire are shown in Graph 2. These clearly indicate that the most important facilities for users are paths in good condition, with clear signposting.

The results of these questionnaires are broadly similar to those arising from a Speak Out survey carried out during the preparation of the Milestones Statement and Management Plan in 1999. A notable exception is an apparent reduced demand for new routes for walking. However the demand for new routes for cycling and for horse riding is almost identical to the earlier survey and the general priorities of maintaining routes and providing an increased level of information about them remains constant.

Graph 1 - Priorities for improvements



Graph 2 - Web and Speakout Facilities



3.1.4 What would encourage more use of the rights of way network?

Both questionnaires asked those who already use paths “What would encourage you to use them more” or, for those who did not already use them, “What stops you using paths?” In addition, many of the responses received during the

consultation period included comments which could be seen as priorities for improvement. All of these responses are summarised in the Table below. Again this emphasises the demand for clean, well maintained paths which can be easily identified and followed.

<u>RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN REQUESTS FOR IMPROVEMENTS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE AND WRITTEN RESPONSES</u>					
	Email and written responses	Speak Out what would encourage to use more?	Speak Out - What stops you using paths?	Total Requests	Percentage of responses
Maintenance of existing routes including surface, vegetation, litter and dog fouling issues	91	380	338	809	42.27%
More information about routes, at start of routes and along the route	139	312	70	521	27.22%
Route provision including more bridleways, better access for all abilities and routes for local journeys	89	56	96	241	12.59%
Enhancements including lighting, personal safety issues, dog stiles and all weather routes	15	65	133	213	11.13%
Complaints and requests referring to specific paths	118			118	6.17%
Others	12			12	0.63%
	464	813	637	1914	

3.1.5 West Yorkshire Pennine Local Access Forum

The Forum (WYPLAF) provided guidance to its three appointing authorities early in the ROWIP preparation process.

Their comments are reproduced in full in Appendix 1.

3.1.6 Focus Groups

Four focus groups were held in February and March 2005, bringing together approximately 30 people with a wide variety of interests varying from regular walkers to local historians, people involved in promoting walking for health, landowners, parish councillors and motorised users.

All the groups identified positive points about the existing rights of way network and issues where improvement is needed, both in general, strategic and policy terms, as well as through a map based exercise to identify specific missing links in the network. Finally all the groups identified their five top priorities for inclusion in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

3.1.7 Positive aspects of the existing network

Good points identified ranged from recognising the positive practical work carried out by the Countryside and Rights of

Way Service, (CROW) to the general value of good signposting and waymarking. Many users of the network identified recent improvements in information such as the self-guided walks published on the CROW website and guided walks organised by this service and others. Some landowners appreciate positive contact with the majority of users, some of whom help by reporting problems.

3.1.8 Issues to address

A wide range of issues to address were identified as summarised below:

3.1.8.1 Route Provision

This included the accuracy and accessibility of the definitive map, accessibility of paths to users of all abilities, signposting and information about the character of routes and facilities such as public toilets and public transport.

Maintenance of the existing network was identified as an important area for improvement with suggestions for greater voluntary involvement in monitoring and maintaining paths.

Deficiencies in the current network were identified in particular areas, especially a lack of bridleways in the Queensbury to Shibden area and suggestions were made for the promotion of circular bridleway routes.

3.1.8.2 Misuse of the network

Issues of misuse of the network were identified by both landowners and users. Of particular concern was the misuse of rights of way and agricultural land by dog walkers, especially fouling, disturbance of wildlife and livestock and the use of fields for allowing dogs to run loose and chase sticks etc. A need was identified for greater education of dog owners on their rights and responsibilities.

Other areas of conflict identified included damage and disturbance caused by mountain bikers, especially when they attempt to use footpaths, and by motorised users. Litter and the dumping of garden rubbish were also identified by several members of the groups.

3.1.8.3 Policy issues

There were a number of suggestions for changes in the Council's policies on managing public rights of way. These included suggestions for developing new and improved links, with relevant organisations and communities, to jointly promote use of the network, and ideas to encourage volunteer maintenance and path adoption schemes.

Improved consideration of rights of way issues during the planning process was highlighted.

There were comments that some recorded paths serve no useful purpose. Landowners would like to see more consideration for closing or diverting such paths.

3.1.8.4 Improvements to Information and Promotion

Improved signposting and waymarking was encouraged and a need was identified for more information on signs, such as destinations, path number and length or time of walks.

Improvements to other sources of information were also suggested including better access to the Definitive Map, more self guided walks and rides, Global Positioning System (GPS) routes and better publicity for resources which already exist.

Better promotion of paths with easy access for all users, including those that are wheelchair or buggy friendly, was encouraged.

Information for users other than walkers was considered to be lacking, together with information on routes other than public rights of way, for example, towpaths and permissive routes.

In addition to information about the routes themselves, there was considered to be a need for more advisory information such as signs asking people to keep to the path and guidance on the responsible use of paths and the countryside by dog walkers dogs.

Top Priorities from Focus Groups

The overall top priorities identified by the focus groups were:

Maintain existing paths:

- Keep them in good condition.
- Have them adequately signed and waymarked.
- Prioritise promoted and long-distance routes.

Improvements needed:

- Join up fragmented networks, especially bridleways.
- Make them as accessible as possible.

Information:

- At start of route, i.e. on the signpost.
- For all users about where they can go.
- Information about accessibility.
- Provided in various formats, such as leaflets, library based resources and through the Internet.
- Rights and responsibilities for both users (walkers, cyclists, dog owners, horse riders, vehicular users) and landowners/occupiers.

Partnership working:

- With user groups, local groups, other Council Departments, other Agencies.
- With landowners and managers

3.1.13 Summary of all consultation results

The consultations undertaken in the preparation of this draft ROWIP have resulted in participation from a wide variety of individuals and organisations. The use of the Speak Out Panel and of fliers distributed via Neighbourhood Forum networks resulted in comments being received from people who regularly use rights of way for a variety of purposes and from those who consider that they never use public rights of

way, together with greater contact with landowners and managers. This has provided us with a range of opinions from the wider population of Bradford in addition to those who are members of more formal rights of way user groups.

The general conclusion from all the results is that, in order to improve the rights of way network to meet the present and likely future needs of users, the Council should:

- **Maintain existing paths in a better and cleaner condition.** See Policies 4.3 and 4.4
- **Improve signposting and waymarking.** See Policy 4.1
- **Provide more information about the location, character and accessibility of routes, and make this information as accessible as possible.** See Policy 4.1
- **Provide new routes where the network is fragmented, especially for bridleway users.** See Section 3.10 and Action Plan.
- **Provide information about rights and responsibilities for users of all types and also for landowners/occupiers.** See Section 3.8 and Policy 4.1.
- **Work more closely in partnership with user groups, local organisations, other sections of the Council, external agencies, and landowners and land managers.** See Policies 4.8 and 4.9

3.2 WHAT DO WALKERS WANT?

3.2.1 Introduction

Consultations with people who use the public rights of way network principally for walking have produced a number of general priorities.

These include:

- Better signage and information – such as signs at the start of paths, including destination information and distances where possible and more waymarking on route.
- A well-maintained network, with priority given to promoted routes. This includes national and local routes and the routes promoted on the Council's website.
- Easier access to open spaces near to home and to the wider countryside.
- More published information – either through the Service's web-site or leaflet (e.g. self-guided trails) utilising lesser used routes.
- Better access to the Definitive Map and maps showing local routes.
- Better information about the character and condition of routes to inform own decisions.
- When footpaths are upgraded for horse riders and cyclists the condition of the route for walkers must not be compromised.

When asked about the factors which put people off from using the network, these were generally the negatives of those listed above, such as:

- Litter/dog mess/poorly maintained paths
- Overgrown/muddy paths
- Personal safety factors
- Lack of disabled access/difficulties with pushchairs
- Lack of signs and information

3.2.2 What we already do

A considerable amount of effort is already devoted to the management of the network for walkers (see also the Current Resources section).

Some examples of current provision are:

- Year-round maintenance, clearance and drainage programme on rural rights of way using in-house dedicated works team, plus volunteers and contractors.
- Urban paths maintenance through the Council's Street Scene visible services team.
- Annual programme of placing new and replacement signposts on public rights of way to fulfil our statutory duties.

- Promotion of walking routes and production of self-guided walking trails available through the CROW Service web-page.
- Regular liaison with walking representatives
- Specific footpath improvements – including riverside footpaths along the Aire.
- Updating of the Definitive Map
- Use current best practice when constructing or advising landowners on gaps, gates and stiles on footpaths.

3.2.3 Adequacy at present

The Bradford District is fortunate to have a well-developed network of public rights of way all of which are legally available to walkers. Public footpaths are available solely to walkers – and these make up over 90% of the 664 miles (1070kms) of public rights of way in the District (611 miles/984 kms). Walkers are, therefore, currently well-served in terms of the size of the network and the amount which is available to them.

In practical terms, however, there are some issues which mean that actually using parts of this network can present some difficulties. These can be summarised as follows:

- Ease of use: is a path open, signed and well-surfaced? Current Best Value sample surveys indicate that only about 60% of the network meet these criteria.

- Maintenance of the network – current resources available to maintain the whole network to an acceptable standard are not sufficient and the quality of maintenance on some routes can suffer.
- Strategic gaps in the network – although the network is extensive, there are some parts of the District which suffer from a lack of key links.
- Lack of legal definition – the Definitive Map which is the legal record of public rights of way and the basis upon which they are protected, is not complete across the whole District. The map, where it does exist, is increasingly out of date. Until recently, the former County Borough of Bradford had no Definitive Map and there are still few formally recorded routes in that area. This means that protecting routes from obstruction, extinguishment etc. or even locating them on maps, is more difficult.

3.2.4 Improvements for Action Plan:

- Prioritise maintenance and adopt a whole path approach so that the three “ease of use” indicators are addressed when work is carried out on paths (obstruction, surface and signage)
- Offer practical assistance to landowners to ensure speedy removal of obstructions/ furniture in disrepair. As a minimum, offer the statutory 25% contribution.

- Identify and address strategic gaps by seeking either creation orders or landowners' dedication of routes – particularly in relation to access to open country areas, where some funding to assist the process might be available.
- Continue to protect “non-definitive” paths where there is evidence that they have public rights, whilst progressing a comprehensive Definitive Map for the whole District.
- Use regeneration-linked initiatives such as the Airedale Masterplan, Greenway Corridors and development related agreements (Section 106 agreements) to maximise the benefits to the local public rights of way network – and increase its role and status as a key factor in regeneration.

3.3 WHAT DO CYCLISTS WANT?

3.3.1 Introduction

Results of consultations and research indicate that there is a demand for quality cycling routes for both leisure use and every day journeys such as to work or shops. There are very different needs for these two types of journey. Slightly higher priority was given by respondents for more routes for cycling for regular journeys than for leisure use.

Individual comments received during the written consultations and the focus group meetings indicate that cyclists particularly want:

- More opportunities for safer off-road cycling
- Some footpaths opened to cyclists, where achievable
- More information about where cycling is possible
- Information about the character and difficulty of routes – e.g. those which are suitable for mountain bikes and those which are suitable for beginners
- Priority for spending given to quality surfaced routes to cater for users of wheelchairs, pushchairs and people who are mobility impaired as well as cyclists.
- Linked-up routes and improved key road crossings to ensure safe continuity of the network
- The Council to take the lead by opening up more cycle routes on Council owned land
- Guided rides and promotion of routes for cyclists.

Several suggestions of routes for improvement and development were received. These are identified on maps.

A few points of conflict with cyclists were also raised by other respondents, including damage to fences and stiles caused by mountain bikers apparently believing that they have a right to use routes currently recorded as footpaths, and misuse of land by mountain bikers leaving recorded linear routes.

3.3.2 Cyclists Touring Club

The CTC is the main organisation representing the interests of cyclists in rural and urban situations. They believe that there is currently a considerable suppressed demand for off-road cycling and that ROWIPs have the potential to facilitate:

- Improved off-road cycling provision
- Improved knowledge about the existence and quality of provision
- Improved ease of access to this provision

3.3.3 LTP2

A cycling strategy has been developed for the second West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan to encourage cycling and to ensure a comprehensive approach to the promotion of cycling as a sustainable mode of transport.

The three main sections of the strategy are:

- Providing a cycle friendly infrastructure that enables cyclists to reach all destinations safely and conveniently.
- Encouraging cycle use.
- Improving education.

3.3.4 What we already do

- Work on new multi-user paths in conjunction with Sustrans and other Council Departments e.g. Great Northern Trail.

3.3.5 Adequacy at present

- Mostly fragmented network currently linked by busy roads.
- Few traffic free, surfaced routes but more planned.
- Reasonable mountain bike routes in parts of the District e.g. Upper Worth Valley, parts of Bingley.

3.3.6 Improvements for Action Plan

Our priorities will be to work with partners and stakeholders to:

- Identify and promote circular cycling and multi-user routes, on and off-road;
- Identify and seek to resolve missing links from potential circular cycling routes.
- Identify and promote safe link routes (Unsurfaced County Roads and roadside verge paths) and road crossings for bridleways and cycle routes to combat network fragmentation with funding provided through LTP.
- Identify and develop routes on council owned land and access land to provide/link traffic free cycling opportunities.
- Publicise routes suitable for cycling on and off road, surfaced and unsurfaced, and feed this into any future cycling strategies.
- All improvements will be designed to limit unauthorised access for motor vehicles.

3.4 WHAT DO HORSE RIDERS WANT?

3.4.1 Introduction

Consultation responses and additional research indicate that horse riders have similar priorities to other groups of user in that they want:

- More information about the availability and character of local routes.
- More bridleways to avoid hazardous roads.
- Maintenance of routes to an adequate standard, including the cutting back of vegetation to prevent obstruction and danger for riders.
- Clear signposting of bridleways.
- Conversion of more footpaths to bridleways.
- More bridleway provision in specific areas, e.g. the Queensbury area.
- Consideration of riders' needs when carrying out surfacing and other works on roads which are used by horses in particular the avoidance of surface dressing types which can cause horses to slip such as Stone Mastic Asphalt.
- Consideration of the needs of riders when vehicular use is introduced or increased on private access routes which are also public bridleways.
- Any gates on bridleways should be suitable for users and action needs to be taken on unauthorised gates and other obstructions.

- When bridleways are improved for cyclists the condition of the route for horse riders must not be compromised. (BHS national issue).
- Mounting blocks provided where they would be useful.

A number of specific suggestions were made for routes that could be improved or created to enhance provision. These are identified on maps.

User Statement from consultation: "Having to use the roads is a nightmare – driver's ignorance is frightening."

3.4.2 LTP2

Research carried out in the preparation for the second West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan has identified a number of national and local road safety issues of concern to horse riders. These are detailed at pages 90 to 92 of LTP2 <http://www.wyltp.com>. The result of this work has led to the following objectives and strategies being included in the plan;

Objectives

- To reduce the casualty rate for riders and horses
- To develop safe routes which help riders to gain access to more rural areas.

3.4.2 LTP2 continued

Strategy

- Improving and extending the 'rights of way' network and publicising its availability
- Providing safe crossing places and facilities along side roads where appropriate
- Encouraging all riders to take their Riding and Road Safety Tests
- Making other road users aware of the needs of horse riders.

3.4.3 What we already do

- Long distance (Pennine Bridleway) link path. Resulting in improved bridleways in the Cullingworth and Oxenhope areas.
- Work on new multi-user paths in conjunction with Sustrans.
- Work in conjunction with St. Ives management team on equestrian issues at this honey-pot site.
- Consider the needs of equestrians when developing cycle routes.
- Make sure maintenance of bridleways includes ensuring safe head clearance for horse riders.
- Investigate claims for bridleways when application is received under s53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Where an upgrade in legal status is confirmed, work promptly to improve the physical state.
- Work with Yorkshire Water to facilitate access to their land.

3.4.4 Adequacy at present

- Mostly fragmented network, currently linked by busy roads.
- Reasonable network in parts of the District e.g. Upper Worth Valley, parts of Bingley.
- Sparse network in the north of district (Ilkley, Addingham, Silsden, Keighley), Queensbury and much of the rural parts of the Former Bradford Borough.

3.4.5 Improvements for Action Plan

- Short (10 miles) circular route development.
- Safe link routes (using Unmade County Roads, Urban Commons and roadside verge paths) and road crossings for bridleways to combat network fragmentation.
- Improve links into the network of bridleways and quiet roads e.g. to the Shibden Valley from Queensbury (links in with Calderdale's ROWIP plans).
- Investigate possibility of developing a bridleway across Rombalds Moor in partnership with Natural England and Bingley Moor Estate.
- Develop and implement a policy on gates.
- Work with colleagues in Highways to fulfil duties regarding the safety and accommodation of ridden horses.
- Adopt BHS guidance on surfacing bridleways.

3.5 WHAT DO MOTORISED USERS OF BYWAYS WANT?

3.5.1 Introduction

The main issue appears to be a lack of information regarding routes for motorised users on the rights of way network. Currently, in Bradford, there are no routes legally defined as RUPPs or BOATs. There are, however, several Unclassified County Roads that have presumed, but not proven, vehicular rights because they are part of the general Highway Network. Some of these routes are currently signposted with a 'Public Right of Way' sign.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 has removed unrecorded motorised users' rights on routes not already recorded on the Definitive Map (with some exceptions).

User Statement from consultation: "No maintenance is the preferred option on green lanes."

Suggestions from motorised users were:

- Supplying user groups with leaflets or maps of where they can go.
- Signage on routes suitable for all status users.
- Guided rides for motorcyclists.
- Clarify legal rights for motorised users.

- The routes that are currently available need to remain open.

3.5.2 What we already do

- Sign post some routes as 'Public Right of Way' where route is on the Councils' Street List but not recorded as a Public Right of Way on the Definitive Map.
- Investigate claims for BOATs (that may be exempt for NERC provisions) when an application is received under s53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

3.5.3 Adequacy at present

- Fragmentation of the network is less of an issue for motorised users.
- There is a network of routes available, however, at present, it is poorly defined and poorly promoted.

3.5.4 Improvements for Action Plan:

- Waymark relevant unsurfaced routes recorded in the Street List, but not on Definitive Map, as public right of way (this also asserts the rights of other users to be using the path).

3.6 NEEDS OF USERS WITH DISABILITIES

3.6.1 Introduction

There are many different kinds of disability. Therefore, it is important not to generalise or make assumptions. Some disabilities may be permanent, others temporary or progressive. However, the health benefits of physical activity such as walking, for people with any kind of disability are often greater than for able bodied people.

Other users, such as the elderly and parents or carers with young children can also benefit from efforts to make routes more widely accessible.

It is also important to consider that users with disabilities may fall into any category of user; they may be walkers, cyclists, and horse riders or motorised users for example. Cycling, riding and driving may allow people much greater freedom and access to the countryside.

Any promotion needs to take into account the different needs of people with different disabilities and include the professionals who are already involved in order to maximise the opportunities for participation.

However, it is possible to identify some key areas to consider with regards to rights of way when meeting the needs of users who have a disability.

3.6.2 Visual Impairment.

Research into this area has given us the following information:

- There is an unmet need for suitable routes for people with visual impairment. Requests are made to the Morley Street Resource Centre for details of groups who can lead visually impaired walkers or for information about routes that have suitable modifications.
- If suitable routes were identified, it could be possible for a Rehabilitation Officer (Morley Street Resource Centre, Bradford Council) to train people to either walk it themselves or go with a companion.
- The condition of a path is very important – surface, gates etc. It should be accessible by public transport, as it is less likely that a visually impaired person will be driving. Seating at regular intervals along a path would also be useful.
- Many visually impaired people use a cane when walking. Suitable paths must be free of obstacles on the ground which could ‘snag’ a cane, or that a cane could go under, leading a person into an obstruction.

- Signage is very important – contrast is a key factor. Traditional waymarks (yellow arrow on white background) have very poor contrast and are difficult to see. Consistency of placing of signs and waymarks would also help (e.g. always on the left), particularly for people with problems with their field of vision, who may find it difficult to ‘sweep’ around looking for signs – this may be possible in a more controlled environment of designated routes, but may be difficult to achieve everywhere.
- Large print instructions may be useful for some people, or using interpretative material such as tactile maps or Braille. OS maps may be difficult for some people to use given the type size and colours used.
- Many visually impaired people use the Internet. The Councils Internet site could be used as a means to provide more information about rights of way.
- Audiotapes can be a very useful medium for visually impaired people. If describing a walk, the use of more visual landmarks, information about sounds and scents, and any tactile interest along the route can add to the interest of the walk. Changes in surface can be interesting, sounds like running water, birdsong etc. The RNIB may be able to give advice about how to produce this kind of material.

- Remove or modify existing furniture where possible if it is not easy to use or has become redundant.
- Tandems can be a useful way for people with visual impairment to enjoy cycle routes.

3.6.3 What we already do.

- If requested, many of our documents can be made available in large print, Braille or on audiotape.
- Provide information about our services on the Internet.
- Some of our guided walks may be suitable, but this would need to be checked in advance.

3.6.4 Improvements for Action Plan

- Devise a route(s) modified to suit visually impaired people, trying to accommodate as wide a spectrum of abilities as possible. It should be accessible by public transport, have sound, trip free surfaces, consistent waymarking, tapping rails at bottom of gates etc. It would be necessary to work in conjunction with professionals in this field to ensure effective design and accessible promotion.

- Redesign waymarks to improve contrast. Try and be more consistent with how and where we waymark and signpost. There are certain limitations to this; the colours (yellow for footpath, blue for bridleway and red for byway), as these are nationally recognised.
- Think creatively about interpretive material produced by the CROW Service, for example: self-guided walks available in large print, audio trail/tactile maps, recorded walks available to download as mp3 files.
- Get feedback on accessibility of our web site and take account of this when adding material.
- Facilitate walking groups that might be able to take VIP's on some walks.
- Work with the Morley Street Resource Centre staff to take some of these ideas forward.

3.6.5 Mobility Impairment.

This can cover a vast array of both permanent and temporary conditions. Improvements could also benefit people who have become slightly less mobile with age, or that are accompanied by small children and thus may struggle with stiles or uneven ground.

There may be a need for routes that can be used by buggies or wheelchair users. Generally speaking, the requirement for wheelchair users has traditionally been associated with smooth surfaces and removal of path furniture; however, this should not automatically be considered as the only way ahead. Many of the powered buggies can tackle rougher surfaces and gradients than previously and many disabled ramblers seek a more challenging and exciting time out in the countryside.

As well as surface standards there are other broad requirements, which include: resting places, toilet facilities, good surfaces, dropped kerbs, transport either via public transport or, if by car, there being adequate disabled car parking spaces. Information about these facilities, or lack of them is crucially important. Knowledge about what to expect on a path allows people to decide for themselves if the route is suitable for their needs and requirements.

For people within the broad spectrum of mobility impairment, there are those who have some form of physical difficulty but who do not require a wheelchair or buggy. They may, however, prefer paths with gates rather than stiles, or stiles that are easier to use, i.e. have handrails, lower steps, etc.

There is no single solution to all of the needs of this group. Creative and appropriate ideas should be considered for each site.

3.6.6 What we already do.

- We have, on many occasions, responded to requests for modifications to paths to enable them to be more accessible. This has included changes to path surfaces, addition of ramps, removal of redundant stiles, alterations to barriers and provision of handrails.
- As a general rule, where possible and appropriate, we seek to remove restrictions on a path; for example, replacement of stiles with gates or the removal of redundant barriers.
- A number of improvements have been made to a path in Ilkley to make it more accessible. This is now publicised as an 'easy going' route
- Any requests for new gates and stiles are scrutinised carefully. Where the need is justified, we will ensure that the new structures do not make the path any more difficult to use.
- Remove or modify existing furniture, where possible, if it is not easy to use or has become redundant.
- Devise a number of dedicated routes that have been modified to suit people with severe mobility impairment. Take advice from experts as to what would be needed. But, as a minimum, it would need to be accessible by

public transport, have protected disabled parking places, good quality and aesthetically appropriate surfaces, consistent waymarking, resting areas, viewpoints to places of interest and accessible toilets.

- Check how accessible our web site is and be aware of this when putting more material on it.
- Help try and facilitate some walking groups that might be able to take people with restricted mobility issues on some walks.
- Ask people what they want – continue with consultation in this area, have an ongoing involvement with groups who are already set up to have dialogue with the Council and be responsive as well as pro-active.

3.6.7 Improvements for Action Plan

- Apply a 'least restrictive option' policy when installing new furniture on a path. Where possible and appropriate remove existing stiles and gates to make path easier to use. Try and promote this policy and champion this approach with colleagues in other areas with the aim of ensuring that they follow these principles too.

- Have more information about what to expect to find on a path available more easily – e.g. signposts, leaflets, website.
- We have a significant amount of data collected from a full network survey carried out approximately 5 years ago. This could be used to identify places where routes need minor improvements to increase their accessibility.

3.6.8 Hearing Impairment.

This is a less obvious form of impairment and may or may not restrict a person from their physical enjoyment of a route.

Hearing loss may be linked to balance, where this occurs the physical condition of a path could be more of an issue.

Another possible issue for people who use sign language, would be asking for directions or assistance, as communication could be difficult. This could be a deterrent to going into the countryside alone.

3.6.9 What we already do.

- Most of our services are available to people with hearing impairment. However, someone wanting to go

on a 'walk and talk' guided walk would need to contact the Service in advance if they needed to have an interpreter present.

- Information about self guided walks and the other services provided are available on the Internet.
- The Council has a Minicom system that enables two-way communication.

3.6.10 Improvements for Action Plan

- As well as the general principles put forward before (least restrictive option, good surfacing, accessible furniture etc) the availability of good information is important. Information both about where paths are and what to expect, but also good information on the ground to help people find their way.

3.6.11 Mental Health Issues and Learning Difficulties.

These two topics are being put together as our responses to each group are similar; we are aware that these two issues are quite discrete and are not same.

Mental ill health can be long or short term and can take many different forms. People may not have physical restrictions on

their mobility, but there may be other factors that prevent them from getting out.

Motivation can be a real problem and for some people who require medication, this can sometimes have unpleasant side effects such as weight gain. Getting outdoors may help by providing fresh air and exercise; being in pleasant surroundings has been proven to have a beneficial effect on well-being.

Taking part in organised walking means that there is no pressure to devise a walk or follow a map and may provide some social contact that can be enjoyed by the participants.

Learning difficulties is a term often used to cover the effect of a broad range of disabilities, syndromes and behaviour. It may be due to an illness, birth defect, injury or a genetic condition. It is difficult to categorise and define in a few short sentences.

This is an area that we need to do more research on and speak to health professionals to see if there is more we could be doing to improve the accessibility of the countryside and rights of way network to this group of people.

3.6.12 What we already do.

- The Guided Walks programme is open to anyone to come along. Few of the activities need to be pre-booked.

- We work with the Primary Care Trusts (PCT's) with their 'Walking for Health' schemes, some of these provide opportunities for people with mental illness to take part in organised groups which often include an element of walking or physical activity.
- Find out where existing walking groups are working and ensure that the routes they use are adequately signed and maintained.
- Link with Bradford Social Services who organise walks for people with learning difficulties – often out of Bradford – to provide information about more local opportunities.

3.6.13 Improvements for Action Plan

- Provide information about the guided and self guided walks in places where they may be picked up, such as hospitals, surgeries, information centres.
- Research to find out if there is more we could be doing. Contact service providers and organisations that work with people with learning disabilities and people with mental health issues.

3.7 ENCOURAGING NEW USERS

3.7.1 Introduction

“Non-users” of the rights of way network are a difficult group to identify and consult as, by definition, they rarely have any contact with the Rights of Way Section. However, “non-users” are potential future users of the network and it would be useful to identify reasons why some people choose not to use the rights of way network and to work to assist those who would like to walk or ride on non-vehicular routes.

18% of respondents to the Speak Out questionnaire and 25% of web-based respondents claimed not to have used public rights of way in the past 2 years. This may be higher than the actual figure for “non-users” as people may walk on local urban snickets and routes through public land such as parks without realising that these are part of the public rights of way network. Research by the Countryside Agency has identified certain groups as being under-represented among countryside users.

These include:

- people with disabilities
- black and minority ethnic groups
- people from inner cities
- those with low incomes.

It is widely recognised that an active life-style has significant benefits for health. The provision of a well-maintained local rights of way network provides a quality resource at no cost to the user, for those who do not own a car and an alternative to car transport for those who would not normally walk or cycle for local journeys or for recreation. However, new users need to have sufficient information to help them identify and confidently use routes. This information needs to be available in a format and location easily accessible to the under-represented groups.

Within the Health Authorities covering the Bradford area, Walking for Health Co-ordinators promote the health benefits of walking and encourage the activity, particularly amongst those sectors of the community who lead sedentary lifestyles or who are at risk from conditions, such as heart disease, obesity, diabetes, stress and cancer. Some of these conditions are associated, although not exclusively, with low-income, inner city and Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) populations, who are generally under-represented in walking terms - particularly for leisure purposes. The aim of the walking for health initiative is, therefore, to target such populations and make specific provision in the local neighbourhood and further a field to encourage walking both as a means for getting around the local area and as a low-cost leisure pursuit.

3.7.2 How Adequate Is The Network For Potential New Users?

Not everyone wants to use the rights of way network. However, in addition to those who identified themselves as “non-users” in questionnaire responses, others indicated that they would use the rights of way network more if certain types of improvements were implemented.

Key suggested improvements to aid confidence in using the rights of way network include:

- Better information about the location, character and condition of the network. In particular, people with specific needs, including those with mobility restrictions or those accompanied by toddlers or prams would welcome more information about accessible routes
- Confidence in finding and following a route
- Confidence that routes would not be obstructed
- Routes in a reasonable condition.
- Improvements to personal safety and comfort such as lighting, visibility and cleanliness of routes.
- Encouraging confidence in making the first outing on the rights of way network is essential. This can be achieved by providing easy to follow instructions for appropriate short local walks and/or by involving experienced walk leaders to encourage activity.
- People from some minority ethnic groups have no cultural tradition of walking or riding for recreation and

therefore do not feel confident or welcome in the countryside. Again, clear and appropriately targeted information is important to overcoming these barriers.

3.7.3 What we already do

The Council has worked in partnership with Walking for Health Co-ordinators, appointed by the Health Authority and others involved in the promotion of activity, to identify ways of promoting walking for health reasons. This has included:

- Guided walks for people not confident to start walking alone.
- “Bus Walks” leaflets linking walk routes of various lengths to the existing public transport network to encourage use by people who do not own cars.
- Self-guided walks of various lengths are published on the Countryside and Rights of Way web pages. These include “Down Your Way” walks promoted as easy access to the Countryside for all the family.
- Signposting and way marking programme.
- Targeted signposting and waymarking in specific areas such as the fringes of Keighley town centre to encourage walking to facilities such as the railway station and colleges.
- Include further routes in web walks with clear information about accessibility.
- Increase involvement with community groups.

- Work with Walking for Health Co-ordinators to access walk leaders and other health professionals to make them aware of opportunities.
- Provide advice to group leaders and schools/ extended school teams.
- Work with colleagues in other sections of the Council such as Parks and Sport promotion to provide and promote improved links between town and countryside.
- Promote active use of our countryside access sites, picnic areas etc.
- Provide high quality multi user routes (similar to Sustrans standard).

3.7.4 Improvements for Action Plan

- Work with colleagues in Transport Planning to promote and develop routes for use in daily journeys such as routes to school, colleges and employment and links to public transport.
- Raise awareness of the rights of way network and it's benefits/attractions – particularly through links with the voluntary, community and faith sectors for promotion activity, and through existing Local Access Forums.
- Provide accessible and understandable information about accessibility – this should to be consistent, clear (pictorial) and in plain, everyday language.

3.8 WHAT DO LANDOWNERS AND LAND MANAGERS WANT

3.8.1 Introduction

All public rights of way cross land which is owned by an individual, a company or another organisation. In some cases, the land may be owned by the Council, for example, some woodlands, parks, moorland and tenanted countryside. However, the majority of land crossed by public rights of way is owned by others. This varies from householders who may own adjacent land over which a snicket runs, to owners of large areas of agricultural land and development sites. The ownership of land crossed by public rights of way can bring conflict between the needs of the owner to manage the land economically and the rights of the public.

3.8.2 What the consultation has shown us

We received questionnaire responses from landowners, managers and their professional representatives and several volunteered for involvement in focus groups where their comments were discussed in greater detail.

In general, most landowners accept and often welcome public use of rights of way across their land. There is a general perception that recreational use of the rights of way network has increased in recent years. Although this is not often seen as a problem, a number of common issues were highlighted which demonstrate a need for changes to the way the network is managed and promoted. The main points raised were:

- Signposting and waymarking of rights of way is generally valuable and should be increased to remove any uncertainty about the direction and status of routes and to help prevent trespass away from a linear route.
- There are too many cases where the route on the Definitive Map is not useable, and appears to have never been useable, paths which are cul-de-sacs or change status. Other paths are redundant or only existed originally as a link between farms. Some rationalisation of the network is needed but this is difficult and takes a long time to legally divert or close a right of way. The Council should consider applications to change routes in these circumstances, to create more appropriate links and a more effective network.
- Having large numbers of paths on one area of land can restrict farming activities. Safety and security can be compromised, as it is more difficult to challenge possible poachers or other offenders if they are on a public right of way. Landowners would like the Council to consider applications to divert or extinguish routes in such circumstances.
- There is a need to educate and inform users about their responsibilities and the problems which can be caused by inconsiderate use and misuse.

Particular user-related problems experienced by land owners and land managers include:

- Misuse by mountain bikers who apparently disregard the status of footpaths.
- Mountain bikers who leave the route of the footpath or bridleway.
- Dog walkers who allow dogs to leave the line of the path.
- Dog walkers who throw sticks and other objects and do not remove them from fields.
- Dog walkers who do not remove dog fouling from the land.
- Dog walkers who allow dogs to chase livestock or disturb wildlife

Such misuse can damage crops and cause serious health and safety dangers for farmers and their livestock. Farmers are legally permitted to shoot dogs that are worrying their livestock.

3.8.3 What we do now

- We work with many landowners across the district to maintain the rights of way network in a condition appropriate to the status and level of use required.
- We assist landowners with the construction of stiles and gates where these are essential and balance the needs of stock control and public access.
- We provide signposts where paths leave metalled roads and work with landowners and voluntary groups

to provide waymarking along some routes.

- We have a positive working relationship with representatives of the National Farmers Union, the Country Land and Business Association and the Moorland Association through their membership of the Bradford Rights of Way Forum and the West Yorkshire Pennine Local Access Forum.
- We work with the Council's Dog Wardens Service to take action where there are persistent dog related problems

3.8.4 Improvements for Action Plan

- Improve signposting and waymarking at the start and along the route of paths. Where appropriate include more informative and educational signs or restrictive barriers at the start of paths (see Promotion Policy 4.1)
- Progress action on Definitive Map anomalies to resolve issues of uncertain status.
- Explore ways of providing information on rights and responsibilities to members of the public who may come into conflict with landowners and other users. Concentrate specifically on mountain bikers and dog owners.

3.9 CROSS BOUNDARY ISSUES

3.9.1 Introduction

A letter was sent out to all neighbouring highway authorities (Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, North Yorkshire and Lancashire) inviting them to comment on various cross boundary issues that we are aware of. A paper copy of the digitised version of the Definitive Map for the Bradford district was sent out at the same time.

To date we have received a detailed e-mail response from North Yorkshire and have held meetings with officers from Calderdale and Leeds. The main points that have been highlighted are:

3.9.2 Calderdale

- Improvement of bridleway links from the Queensbury area (very poor bridleway network) to Shibden Valley (good bridleway network).
- Improvement of bridleway links from the Wainstalls area (poor bridleway network) to the Oxenhope area (good bridleway network).
- Need for clarity of route status where Calderdale's definitive area meets Bradford's non-definitive area e.g.

Sowden Lane, Royds Hall Lane, High Fernley Road area, Judy Woods towards Norwood Green.

- Possibilities for Bradford's rights of way to link in with Calderdale's circular routes around towns proposals.
- A way forward for dealing with a boundary obstruction at Strines Beck, Queensbury has been proposed.

3.9.3 Leeds

- Linking in the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Objectives to establish a framework so that cross boundary issues can be discussed and acted upon in relation to the rights of way and the development of circular trails in West Leeds, plus the Apperley Bridge, and Greengates areas of Bradford.
- Continuation of non Definitive footpath along the route of the dismantled railway north east of Menston.
- Missing footbridge on boundary path Ilkley 67 linking in to obstructed, dead end path Otley 55. (Identified at consultation, new bridge installed by October 2006).

- Proposed new bridleway around High Royds Hospital south of Menston.
- DMMO application to add/upgrade bridleway from Bradford Boundary along Aireborough 6.
- Claimed path from Mill Lane in Leeds to path Bingley 94 (partially in Bradford).
- Mapping anomaly on Leeds side where Bingley 94 is not connected to Aireborough 12/123.
- Mapped line of Baildon 15 appears to be on wrong side of wall (which is also boundary). Stile and walked line are on Leeds side.
- Cliffe Drive/Cragg Wood Drive thought to have at least bridleway rights. Stops at Apperley Lane/Bradford Boundary.
- Parkin Lane on Bradford side leads into Calverley Cutting recorded as a BOAT but subject to a Traffic Regulation Order.
- Pudsey 6 is a BOAT that stops at Bradford boundary. Route links into Carr Bottom Road and on to Bradford North 144.
- Promoted routes crossing boundary e.g. Pudsey Link.

- DMMO application linking Morley 14 with Tong 12.
- Ford work needed at Black Carr.
- Bridleway Bridge needed at Keeper Lane.

3.9.4 North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC)

- A boundary zone copy of the definitive map at the NYCC side of the highway boundary on GIS has been provided to allow comparison of networks and highlight any anomalies.
- North Yorkshire have written a general policy that will look at upgrading routes to bridleway status where appropriate. This would be especially appropriate where there is a footpath on one side of any boundary and a bridleway on the other and there is a strategic need to upgrade.
- North Yorkshire are noting dead ends as they come to light. A policy relating to findings that people prefer circular routes is being used in order to look critically at dead ends in the future. Many do legitimately go to an attractive location.
- With regard to use and demand, there are many demand issues that are generated from Bradford area, being a large conurbation, which impact North Yorkshire. North Yorkshire has been holding a ROWIP pilot in the Skipton

area. This comprises nine parish council areas linking the south boundary of NYCC to the Dales National Park. North Yorkshire has provided Bradford with a copy of the results

- A major cross boundary issue is the crossing of the River Wharfe at Burley-in-Wharfedale. Again, this links to cross border issues regarding high density settlements on the Bradford side and a lack of connection in some cases on the NYCC side. This is particularly highlighted at the Burley crossing which involves several complex issues.
- Awareness of the Addingham to Bolton Abbey plans from Sustrans.

3.9.5 Lancashire

- Cross boundary Open Country wardening scheme is being piloted. A review of this pilot will be undertaken.

3.9.6 Kirklees

- Spenborough 22 finishes at the Bradford/Kirklees boundary. No continuation is recorded in the Bradford District, although the Rights of Way Section has opened a new file, Bradford South 633. Needs a bridge over the beck.
- Parts of Spenborough 1 and Spenborough 27 are now in Bradford District as a result of boundary changes.

3.10 NEW PROVISION REQUESTED.

Specific requests for path improvements, new footpaths, new bridleways and new cycleways have been mapped and a table of these requests compiled. A copy of the map will be available on the CROW Service web pages.

These requests came from all strands of the consultation and have been mapped and recorded where there was sufficient information given to identify a specific route. If more than one person suggested the same idea, this has been noted.

Requests have been grouped into four categories

- Specific physical path (footpath and bridleway) improvements were requested in 95 different locations.
- New footpaths were suggested in 22 different locations.
- New bridleways were suggested in 78 different locations.
- New cycleways were suggested in 14 different locations.

Path improvements ideas and requests varied from minor work, to major structural projects, and include requests for signing and waymarking.

Requests relating to new bridleways brought forward a great deal of detailed information.

Many submissions were in relation to routes where the status needs to be clarified (by means of a DMMO or other legal process).

There were other suggested routes that would require footpaths to be upgraded to bridleways, and ideas for new routes where no rights currently exist. A number of areas were identified as generally lacking bridleway provision. Several new cycleways were also suggested and there were also general calls for more routes for cyclists.

The response to this aspect of the consultation has been excellent. However, these ideas will now have to be prioritised, as it will not be possible to fulfil all of these requests, even within the 10-year lifespan of this Plan. See Chapter 6 for detail of how requests have been prioritised.

The Action Plan lists these prioritised projects and the approximate order in which we will seek to implement them.

Chapter 4

CHANGING THE WAY WE WORK – POLICY STATEMENTS

4.1 POLICY STATEMENT : PROMOTION

4.1.1 Introduction

An important part of the management of the public rights of way network and access areas is promoting the opportunities that such resources offer to as wide a range of people as possible. Promotion is a crucial tool in raising awareness and is particularly important in reaching non-users.

4.1.2 What we do now

The main areas of activity in terms of promotion can be summarised as:

- Signing and waymarking public rights of way on-site
- Production of self-guided walk leaflets – printed and web-based
- Production of guides to access areas – web-based
- Year round programme of guided walks
- Attendance at agricultural shows
- Working with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups in Bradford South
- South Pennine-wide promotion through the Heritage, Education and Access Network (HEAN) – part of Pennine Prospects.

- Working with the Ordnance Survey and with private guide publishers
- Giving talks and presentations to local interest groups
- Working with inner-city communities and young people to raise awareness about local countryside. Use a community development approach to reach such “under-represented” sectors of the community.
- Ensure that any information produced by the Service complies with Disability Discrimination Guidance – particularly any specific guidance produced by the Sensory Trust in partnership with Natural England.
- Improving promoted routes by working with user groups

4.1.3 What the consultations have shown us

Consultation showed that users and non-users regard quality information as one of the key elements of a well developed, useable rights of way network.

Information emerged as one of the top priorities across the consultation groups. Specifically, the consultees wanted:

- Information at the start of routes (i.e. signs with destination/distances).
- A range of information for all users about accessibility of the network.
- Information provided in various formats (leaflets, library based, web-based).
- Information about the rights and responsibilities for users and landowners.
- Continue with a programme of talks, presentations and information aimed at raising awareness of the rights and responsibilities in using Bradford's countryside. Particular attention will be paid to dog owners.

4.1.4 Improvements for Action Plan

- Continue signposting programmes on rights of way and include additional destination information on roadside signs where appropriate.
- Work with landowning and other agencies – such as Country Land and Business Association (CLA), Moorland Association, National Farmers Union (NFU), Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and Natural England to produce better information about rights of way and responsibilities aimed at landowners.

- Ensure that any access information produced by the CROW Service is integrated with the public transport systems.
- Review the range of information available about use of the network – particularly focusing on it's effectiveness in informing about accessibility of sites and routes. This is one of the key ways in which better information can enable users to decide for themselves whether a route or site is suitable.
- Expand the range of web-based information both about the Service's rights of way and access activities and the access and rights of way network. This will include self-guided trails, countryside site information and promotional leaflets showing bridleway routes. A map of the public rights of way network has been made available through the web-site.
- Take opportunities to raise awareness regionally through the South Pennines HEAN network
- Utilise the local and regional media through press releases and other news items to promote the rights of way network, access opportunities and the public's rights and responsibilities in the District. This will also raise the profile of the CROW Service.

4.2 POLICY STATEMENT – ACCESSIBILITY

4.2.1 Introduction

The Council is required to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) (DDA) with regard to service delivery. This ensures that people with disabilities are given due consideration with regard to service delivery and, where necessary, alterations or alternatives are provided.

4.2.2 What we do now

We are striving to ensure we are DDA compliant. In practical terms this translates into a number of measures:

- Where a new barrier is requested and is permitted, it must be of a design that is the least restrictive possible. This means that a gap is preferred to a gate and a gate is preferred to a stile.
- Where repairs or improvements are made to an existing structure, again, we will try to ensure it is as least restrictive as possible.
- Where possible, redundant or unnecessary stiles or gates are removed.

- Documents relating to legal changes to a path are available in a number of formats, such as large print, audio, Braille, etc.
- Self-guided walks and information about guided walks include details about surface, gradient and accessibility.

4.2.3 What the consultations have shown us

Consultations have revealed two main areas that we need to improve on.

- The provision of information about conditions on existing paths, for example stiles, gradients, surface condition, seating or rest areas, toilets, etc.
- Minor improvements to existing paths to make more of them more accessible.

Please see Sections 3.6 and 3.7 for more detailed consideration of specific needs.

4.2.4 Adequacy of the current network

- There are very few paths that have been fully assessed and made as accessible as possible.
- There are many paths that are accessible, but information about these paths is sketchy and not fully available to the public.
- There are also many paths that are limited, in terms of accessibility, by barriers that could be easily removed or altered.
- There is insufficient information easily available to allow people to make their own minds up about where they could go.
- Much of the network cannot be made fully accessible; there are some physical constraints that cannot be realistically overcome. It would be inappropriate to engineer solutions on all paths. Funding is also a limiting factor.

4.2.5 Issues Identified for Further Development

- Much of the information that people need, in order to make decisions about whether or not a route will be suitable for them, is either not readily available, or is in a format that is not be easy to share. The Rights of

Way Section does have an extensive store of information, in a database, that would help officers to identify routes where relatively minor improvements could increase accessibility. This information will be analysed and paths that could provide meaningful routes to, for example, beauty spots or picnic areas, will be prioritised.

- The consultation also highlighted the need for facilities for people with more severe disabilities requiring a more engineered environment. This might be better served by more intensively adapting and interpreting a small number of sites.
- Some of our services are unintentionally aimed at able bodied people without sight or hearing problems. Changes that could be made include; the provision of interpreters for deaf people on the 'walk and talk' routes, guided walks that are wheelchair friendly, or that could be attended by a person with visual impairment.
- Other suggestions, for people with visual impairment, include the provision of tactile maps, or self-guided walks with audiotapes of interesting features that could be used by a person walking, perhaps with a companion or dog, or independently.

- We will respond to the results of the consultation on this document to decide where to concentrate our efforts and available resources. It may be work that we can undertake ourselves, or it may be something that would be better achieved by working in partnership with others.
- Install suitable gates and mounting blocks for horse riders who are disabled where appropriate.

4.3 POLICY STATEMENT : MAINTENANCE OF RIGHTS OF WAY

4.3.1 Introduction

The Highways Act 1980 (Section 41) imposes a duty on the Council, as highway authority, to maintain those highways which are maintainable at the public expense. This includes public rights of way.

4.3.2 What we do now

The responsibility for maintaining the public rights of way network lies principally with the Council's Highways Maintenance service. In the rural parts of the District, this responsibility is devolved to the Countryside and Rights of Way Service. The CROW Service also takes responsibility for promoted routes, even where they run through urban areas.

In urban parts of the District, maintenance works are referred to the appropriate Highways Maintenance engineers who inspect the route and prioritise any works to be implemented through Street Scene, the Council's in-house contractor for such works. The entire budget for urban highways maintenance works is devolved to Street Scene and any such activity is funded through this central pot.

In rural parts of the District, the CROW Service's practical maintenance team undertake routine maintenance jobs.

The CROW team have a dedicated budget of £28,000 per annum to fund rural maintenance works

These include signing, waymarking, drainage, vegetation clearance and surfacing.

The team also routinely repair and replace path furniture (gates, stiles etc.) although this is legally the responsibility of landowners with the highway authority obliged to contribute to the cost. This approach has been proven to be a cost effective way of opening up the network, working in partnership with landowners and ensuring consistency of standards. Section 146 of the Highways Act 1980 provides further information.

4.3.3 What the consultations have shown us

Consultations have shown that a well-maintained and signed network is one of the top priorities for most users of public rights of way. The majority of consultees considered that this should take priority over other improvements to the network.

4.3.4 Improvements for Action Plan:

- Seek opportunities to expand the current staff resource within the practical maintenance team.
- Adopt a “whole path” approach to routine maintenance so that all elements are considered when undertaking maintenance works on paths (i.e. signing, surface condition, drainage and obstruction).
- Where appropriate, involve volunteer groups to assist with maintenance works – including Business in the Community.
- Consider contracting out of specific routine maintenance works, such as vegetation clearance so that the full-time practical team is freed up to concentrate on other works.
- Use complaints, rights of way surgery input and Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) survey information to inform the reactive maintenance works programmes.

4.4 POLICY STATEMENT – OBSTRUCTIONS AND NUISANCES

4.4.1 Introduction

The Council has a duty to assert and protect public rights of way and to ensure that, as far as possible, they are free of obstructions. An obstruction or nuisance can vary from a landowner occasionally challenging path users, to a new housing development or factory constructed on the line of a path without any formal diversion or extinguishment orders. An unauthorised gate or stile is also an obstruction.

In an ideal world the public rights of way network would be fully open and available for use at all times. However, obstructions do occur, sometimes due to lack of knowledge and sometimes as wilful attempts to deny public access.

4.4.2 Adequacy of the network at present

All recorded public rights of way in the District were surveyed in the late 1990s and all obstructions at that time were recorded. This identified approximately 450 locations where a path was completely obstructed by problems such as missing boundary crossings, buildings, tipping or animals etc. These “long-term” obstructions are recorded on a database.

Many of these have been resolved but there is still a significant number of obstructed paths where re-opening would be of benefit to the network.

Resources for resolving long-term obstructions have been limited for many years, resulting in a backlog of such issues, which cannot all be resolved immediately with current resources.

4.4.3 What we do now

- Much of the work of the Rights of Way Section is directed towards protecting the network and preventing obstructions. This includes:
 - Sharing up to date information on Rights of Way with Planning Officers.
 - Monitoring the weekly lists of planning applications to identify any affecting recorded public paths.
 - Commenting on planning applications to ensure that applicants are aware of the existence of public rights of way and the options for incorporating existing routes on their site.
 - Providing informative responses to the Rights of Way question on Local Land Charges Searches.
 - Responding to other enquiries from landowners, potential purchasers and developers to ensure that they are aware of the existence and

implications of any public rights of way through their land.

- New obstructions and nuisances are investigated as soon as possible after receipt.
- New obstructions are recorded on individual path files. There is no database recording or monitoring progress in resolving them.
- A general process for responding to obstruction and nuisance reports has been discussed with Bradford Rights of Way Forum.
- Timescales and exact procedures vary depending on the type of obstruction, the legal powers available for enforcement and the attitude and level of cooperation from the landowner.
- We recognise that we cannot deal with all obstructions immediately reports are received. A draft scheme of prioritisation for action on new obstructions was discussed at the Bradford Rights of Way Forum in January 2005. This would give highest priority to resolving problems where reopening a completely blocked path would have strategic network benefits and/or remove a major safety hazard.
- Section 63 of the CROW Act gives members of the public the right to serve notice on the Council

requesting the removal of certain types of obstruction from public rights of way. The Council must respond appropriately within prescribed timescales. To date, no such notices have been received by this Council.

4.4.4 What the consultations and research have shown us

Path users want to be confident that, when they use a path they will be able to use the entire route without undue obstruction, hindrance or harassment.

People reporting obstructions or nuisances expect a rapid response and feedback as the issue is progressed.

Owners of land with paths obstructed for many years, feel that, given the Council's neglect of action on these problems, the Council should contribute to the solution, either by carrying out works to resolve the problem or by looking favourably on applications for legal changes to the routes.

4.4.5 Improvements for Action Plan

There is no "one size fits all" solution to obstructions and nuisances on public rights of way; however, the general process is similar for most obstructions, with variations depending on the type of problem and attitude of the landowner. The overall aim of our approach to obstructions and nuisances will be to prevent deterioration of the network

by responding efficiently to new problems while systematically reducing the backlog of long-term obstructions.

To achieve the greatest possible improvement of the rights of way network we will:

4.4.6 For new obstructions

- Develop a database to record and monitor progress on all reported obstructions and nuisances.
- Develop and publish the flowchart of action previously discussed with the Bradford Rights of Way Forum so that all involved are aware of the stages of the process.
- Adopt a prioritisation policy that gives priority for action to those obstructions which cause the most disruption to the network or reduce the strategic value of a route.
- Give landowners an opportunity to remedy the situation in the first instance, but be prepared to take formal enforcement action if the problem persists to ensure that recent obstructions do not become long-term obstructions.
- Inform complainants of realistic timescales for resolution of each problem and aim to keep them informed of progress.

- Co-operate with the Defra to use the cross-compliance procedures to resolve obstruction problems where negotiation for the removal of obstructions has failed.

4.4.7 For obstructions which are recorded as existing at the time of the full network survey

- Update the full network survey database, taking into account resolved obstructions. Continue to update as further problems are resolved, to obtain a realistic view of the level of problems in the district.
- Develop a prioritised programme for resolving long-term obstructions, using a prioritisation matrix. Consult and feedback on this programme with the Bradford Rights of Way Forum annually.
- Identify additional resources to facilitate reopening priority routes. This may involve the Council funding or carrying out some works that would normally be the landowner's responsibility as a one-off gesture to facilitate the reopening of a long-obstructed route of high potential strategic value.
- Acknowledge that the most appropriate resolution for some long-term obstructions may be by legal order to change the path route rather than enforcing the removal of long-standing buildings or other structures etc.

4.5 POLICY STATEMENT – DEFINITIVE MAP

4.5.1 Introduction

The Council is required by legislation to prepare, and keep up to date, a definitive map and statement of public rights of way and to keep these available for public inspection. The definitive map and statement formally record the existence and status of public rights as footpaths, bridleways, byways open to all traffic and restricted byways. The inclusion of a route on the map is proof in law that it exists as a public right of way, of at least the recorded status. However, it is possible that other routes exist or that rights other than those recorded also exist – for example, that a route recorded as a footpath actually has unrecorded bridleway rights over it.

Members of the public may apply to the Council for an order to be made to change the definitive map by adding, upgrading, downgrading or deleting a route, based on evidence of long-term use or historical documentation.

The CROW Act has set a cut off date of January 2026 at which any public right of way for which there is historical evidence only will be automatically extinguished if it is not recorded on a definitive map. The NERC Act has amended this date for applications to add routes of byway status and created a much earlier cut-off date for applications for this category of route. It is no longer possible to make new applications to add routes to the map as byways. With very few exceptions, routes which could previously have been

added as byways open to all traffic may now be added only as restricted byways.

This policy statement sets out how we currently manage the maintenance and updating of the definitive map and how we propose to improve on this.

This policy statement will form Bradford Council's Statement of Priorities as recommended in Department of the Environment Circular 2/93

What we do now

4.5.2 The Former West Yorkshire Modified Definitive Map

The Modified Definitive Map for the Bradford section of the former West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council area covers the whole district, except the central area of Keighley and the former County Borough of Bradford. The map has a Relevant Date of 30th April 1985 and was created after a Review of the 1952 Definitive Map was abandoned, as directed by the Secretary of State. The terms of the abandonment of the review stated that only changes to the map which were not contested could be included in the newly published map. There are, therefore, a significant number of

contested issues resulting from this review, which have still to be resolved.

Individual applications to change the map are processed in chronological order of receipt, except where delay in processing a more recent application would result in permanent physical loss of the route or undue delay to economic development.

In October 1999 there were 16 outstanding applications to modify the Definitive Map with an average waiting time of 8 years. We aimed to determine four applications per year until 2005 and to investigate additional resources to accelerate this work.

Since 1999 we have streamlined the decision making process and have appointed a Definitive Map Officer, increasing significantly the staff time available for definitive map work.

Between October 1999 and September 2005, 28 further complete applications were received, 17 applications were determined and we had reduced the average waiting time from eight years to under five years.

For all applications, officers within the Rights of Way Section must carry out research and consultations prior to writing a formal report for determination.

When a determination is made to make an order, further officer time is spent instructing Legal Services, posting and

maintaining notices on site, negotiating with objectors and, if necessary, preparing paperwork for submission to the Secretary of State for final decision. This may involve a public local inquiry to hear evidence and objections.

The average time spent in recent years for the complete process for a successful order to add a path to the Definitive Map has been approximately 120 hours spread over about 2 years from commencement of work on the application.

We currently aim to determine at least 5 applications per year.

In addition to the formal applications for changes in the Definitive Map, members of the public have, over the years, submitted varying quantities of evidence to support changes of status or the addition of new routes without completing the formal consultation process. This information is kept on file, but, while priority is given to formal applications, no action can be taken to investigate these issues in detail.

4.5.3 Central Keighley and the County Borough of Bradford

When the County Council of the West Riding of Yorkshire prepared the first definitive map under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (NPACA), they chose to exclude an area identified as the Central Business District of Keighley. In addition the former County Borough of Bradford chose not to prepare a definitive map of their area.

Although paths in both areas are generally well used by the public and most are maintained by the Council, they are not formally recorded and would not be easily identifiable to anyone unfamiliar to the area as they would not appear on Ordnance Survey maps as public rights of way.

Protection of the routes from encroachment and developments is more difficult in the absence of a formal conclusive definitive record. A number of the paths which would be considered for inclusion on a definitive map for the former County Borough area already have problems of obstruction and encroachment which can not be resolved until the status of the path is formally proven.

Central Keighley

The Central Keighley area covers approximately 1.8 km² and contains at least 10 public footpaths.

In March 2006, a blank map and statement for the Central Keighley Area was prepared and approved to which one path has been added by Legal Event Order, resulting in the blank map and statement becoming The Definitive Map and Statement for Central Keighley.

Modification Orders for a further 3 routes have been made and confirmed, adding a further 1km of path to the Definitive Map for Central Keighley.

The County Borough of Bradford Area

The former County Borough area covers over 94km² and office records show that there are potentially 1300 paths amounting to over 260km of public rights of way. Much of the area is urban but there are also large areas of urban fringe and relatively rural countryside.

A definitive map for a small part of this area, around Tong, was prepared prior to the production of the West Yorkshire Modified Definitive Map in 1985, but the remaining part of the former County Borough remained unmapped.

A blank map and statement for the excluded part of the Former County Borough of Bradford was approved in September 2006 and the first Legal Event Order to add seven paths to this map has been made.

Research commenced in the early 1990's into eight groups of paths in the former County Borough area. These groups will now be progressed and appropriate orders made to add them to the Bradford Definitive Map.

A method of prioritising the remainder of the 1300 paths for investigation is being developed, based on the perceived urgency of protection of individual routes.

4.5.4 For The Whole District

Applications for modification orders for all parts of the district are entered into the Register of Modification Order Applications as required under Section 53 of the CROW Act.

The Register is available via the CROW Service web pages and in paper form in the Rights of Way Office.

4.5.5 What the consultations and research have shown **US**

Users and landowners expect a definitive map for the whole district that accurately reflects the location and status of public rights of way. They also want the information to be kept up to date and to be easily available for inspection.

Research into office records and analysis of the Modified Definitive Map has shown that there are a large number of issues that require investigation and possible legal change, to correct the map. This includes up to 600 anomalies where the status or alignment of a route does not reflect that available on the ground. In addition there are at least 200 cases of disputed status arising from the abandoned review which resulted in the production of the Definitive Map in 1985. Many of these issues, when investigated will result in orders to modify the map

Improvements for Action Plan

4.5.6 Whole district

- Response to formal applications. Give priority to applications where there is a potential strategic value resulting from the application, or lack of action could result in permanent loss of a route.
- Other applications will be programmed in chronological order of receipt.
- Initiate investigation of potential Definitive Map changes, without having received a formal application, in cases where potential significant strategic benefit has been identified through the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. For example investigate the status of possible unrecorded bridleways.
- Create a comprehensive list of all routes where there has been suggestion of anomaly, incorrect status, new routes to be added or items outstanding from the abandoned review and prioritise these for potential action as and when resources allow.
- Review the way in which investigations, research and reporting on applications is carried out to identify any further ways of speeding up the process, thus reducing the average waiting time.

4.5.7 Former Excluded Areas

To continue to progress the completion of definitive maps for Central Keighley and the former County Borough of Bradford, we will:

- Thoroughly check office records for routes believed to be public in the Bradford and Central Keighley areas.
- Review work carried out by consultants to prepare evidential order to add paths at Thornton Cemetery and make and advertise orders to add paths to the Bradford Definitive map.
- Continue investigation into seven other groups of paths commenced in the 1990s and make orders to add appropriate paths to the Bradford map
- Develop a prioritised scheme for systematically adding paths to the Bradford and Central Keighley maps to ensure that all paths on our records are fully researched and recorded as soon as possible and no later than 2026.
- When processing formal applications to add paths to these maps, consider incorporating neighbouring unrecorded routes in the same order process.

4.6 POLICY STATEMENT – PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

4.6.1 Introduction

Landowners and developers may apply to the Council for an order to divert or close the route of a public right of way for a variety of reasons. The Council's powers include:

4.6.2 Under the Highways Act 1980 to a divert path:

- In the interests of the landowner.
- In the interests of users.
- For crime prevention in certain designated areas and school grounds.
- For nature conservation in certain cases.

4.6.3 Under the Highways Act 1980 to close a path:

- If it can be proven that it is not needed for public use.
- For crime prevention in certain designated areas and school grounds.

4.6.4 Under Highways Act 1980 to create new paths or to create higher rights over existing paths: (e.g. creating bridleway rights over an existing footpath)

- By Creation Agreement - where the landowner and other interested parties are in agreement with the proposals. Compensation may be payable to affected landowners
- By Creation Order – where the landowner cannot be traced or where no agreement can be reached.

4.6.5 Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

- To divert or close paths to enable a valid planning permission to be implemented.

Good Practice guidance for all such applications requires officers to investigate and to consult various statutory and local consultees before a formal decision is taken on whether or not to make the order.

If an order is made, there is a formal advertising period, during which representations and objections may be made. Officers will negotiate with objectors but, if objections are not

withdrawn and the applicant still wishes to proceed with the proposal, it must be referred to the Secretary of State for final determination. This involves officers preparing the Council's case for submission to the Secretary of State, subsequent written representations and, possibly, attending a local hearing or public inquiry.

The CROW Act will require the Council to keep publicly accessible registers of certain applications for orders received, to record progress and to reach key stages in the process within set timescales.

What we do now

4.6.6 Diversions and extinguishments

- On average, 14 applications are received per year.
- These are generally investigated in order of receipt.
- Officer time and advertising costs are recharged to the applicant at the end of the process.
- Most of the time spent on these orders is in staff overtime, charged to applicants at standard rates. This policy was introduced over 10 years ago as it was thought that most orders are primarily for the benefit of the applicant and that, as the process is a power rather than a duty, processing applications should not detract from officers' duties of asserting and protecting the network.
- Applications often have to wait several months in a "queue" before officer time is available to commence processing.
- Delays in commencing work on an application cause frustration for applicants and may delay economic development of benefit to the local community and district.
- Delays increase the chance of development obstructing the path without the benefit of an order, which leads to a greater chance of objections and more officer time spent resolving the obstruction before the diversion can be progressed.
- A single application can generally take between 5 and 40 hours of officer time, over a minimum of 6 months and an average of over 12 months, depending on the level of objections.
- At the pre-order consultation stage we currently, only consult organisations identified on a standard consultation list before deciding whether or not to make an order. We only advertise on site when an order is made. This sometimes results in objections at the latter

stage, which could have been resolved at the pre-order stage.

- All work on an application is invoiced at the end of the process, often over 12 months after the application and many months after the first expenditure of time by officers.
- CROW Act changes to order making legislation will establish a duty to keep a register of certain applications.
- The CROW Act will also create a right to apply for certain orders and a right to appeal if a decision is not made within 4 months of receipt of an application.
- See Crime Reduction Policy (Policy Statement 4.7), for our approach to requests for diversions and closures for crime prevention and school security purposes.

4.6.7 Creations

- Creation Orders and Agreements have rarely been used in the past, for a variety of reasons. However, in recent years we have successfully used these powers to secure new and added rights on routes to be promoted as part of the Calder-Aire link to the Pennine Bridleway.

- Normally, the legal, administrative and advertising costs of an order and of any compensation payable to the landowner must be paid by the Council.

4.6.8 What consultations and research have shown us

- Landowners and developers would like speedier decisions on their applications.
- Landowners and occupiers would like sympathetic consideration of applications to divert or close paths which are duplicated by others, serve no apparent purpose or are cul-de-sacs.
- Landowners and occupiers would like sympathetic consideration of applications to divert paths as an alternative to enforcement action to resolve problems caused by longstanding substantial obstructions – for example situations where the Council has been aware of the problem for many years but has taken no formal action.
- Path users want the opportunity to comment on applications at an early stage.

4.6.9 Improvements for Action Plan

- Investigate ways of speeding up the process and identify resources to ensure that new applications can be commenced as soon as possible after receipt.
- Develop a prioritisation system to ensure that the most urgent applications are processed in reasonable timescales.
- Aim for determination of all applications within 4 months of receipt.
- Consider path orders where there would be a strategic benefit of changing the network by removing duplicate or cul-de-sac paths or resolving problems of longstanding substantial obstructions.
- Consult local people via Neighbourhood Forums and/or site notices at the pre-order stage to gain a more realistic view of the level of objection at an early stage.
- Continue to recharge officer time and advertising costs to applicants.
- Consider reductions to the costs charged, where significant benefits for users of the network would result from orders where there is no motive for the landowner to apply.
- Implement registers of applications and review the process for relevant orders as CROW Act provisions are brought in to force.
- Seek funding for, and prepare, Creation Agreements or, as a last resort Creation Orders, where there would be significant strategic benefit to the network from the increased public rights.
- Aim to exceed network losses with gains.

4.7 POLICY STATEMENT: CRIME RELATED ISSUES

4.7.1 Introduction

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 17) required local authorities to consider the impact that their services have on crime and disorder. Preventing crime and disorder should be a core part of the Local Authority's business and be integrated or mainstreamed in to all services, policies, administration, financial planning and decision-making wherever appropriate.

Since 2003 over 116 requests for closure of public rights of way for crime related reasons have been received by the Countryside and Rights of Way Service.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 gave highway authorities a power to consider the closure of public rights of way, if it could be shown that there is a clear relationship between the existence of the right of way and high local crime levels.

The use of this power needs to be balanced against the duty to assert and protect public rights of way.

The Act requires that, before such closures can take place, the area around the path must be a designated crime area – which requires an application to Secretary of State. A number of local authorities have made such applications, including Bradford, and have successfully designated crime areas. In Bradford a part of Little Horton former Priority Policing Area

was designated and one path has been extinguished for reasons of high crime.

As part of the considerations, the Act requires the local authority to show that options, other than closure, have at least, been considered. Therefore, the CROW Act powers are the **last** resort in a hierarchical series of possible actions and considerations in response to reports of criminal or anti-social activity associated with a public right of way;

- 1) No action needed / possible.
- 2) Police / Anti-Social Behaviour Team Involvement / Environmental Improvements (e.g. better lighting)
- 3) Suitability of Gating Order (public rights retained, path can be opened at certain times of day/order revoked when problem abated).
- 4) CROW Act closure in designated areas – permanent deletion of Public Right of Way.

4.7.2 What we do now

One officer in the CROW team has responsibility, as part of their overall role, to deal with such requests. Each request is recorded, including details of location and, crucially, evidence of crime. An indication is also recorded of factors, such as availability of a reasonable alternative route, strength of local support for the closure and whether it would be actually possible to physically close the route on the ground. These records assist in assessment of the position of the request in relation to the hierarchy of options for action.

When reports of misuse of a public path are received landowners are advised to keep a record of incidents and report them to the police on a regular basis.

Implementation of the crime closure power is complex and the Council has only closed one path using this power. There are two main issues:

- Gathering the crime statistics and evidence which shows a clear link between the existence of the path and high crime levels.
- Lack of clarity about funding of closures.

In 2006, the Council allocated a one-off budget of £100,000 to fund “alleygating” schemes. This was targeted at routes that had private access only. Routes that required a legal order to close were not considered for this funding.

Recent changes to legislation, contained within the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, allow for closure of public rights of way using Gating Orders. This would make temporary closures (such as during night-time) a possibility and would not require the designation of crime areas. The Council has made two gating orders, covering five routes, to date.

The Council also employs a number of Anti-Social Behaviour officers. Many requests for path closure appear to be as a result of anti-social behaviour rather than more serious crime. Approaches from the Anti-Social Behaviour Team could help resolve some of these issues.

4.7.3 What the consultations have shown us

Only one specific comment was made during the ROWIP consultations relating to the use of the crime closure power. This was a plea to make easier the extinguishment of rights of way in urban settings, when they are a source of crime and harassment for people living alongside them.

Other discussions about this have taken place in the Bradford Rights of Way Forum and the West Yorkshire Pennine Local Access Forum. The general tone of these discussions has been that forum members urge the Council to be very

circumspect in its use of this power and consider options such as improving routes first rather than resorting to closures.

4.7.4 Improvements for Action Plan

- Where appropriate seek environmental improvements or Anti-social Behaviour Team involvement before considering restriction of public rights.
- In view of the time consuming nature of the CROW Act powers, high level of proof of crime needed, and the alternative approaches available, we do not propose to

apply for designation of any further crime areas, unless the current register of requests includes a strong case for doing so and other alternatives have been considered.

- If a legal order is necessary, the CROW Service will concentrate on applying the powers to remove the public rights only. It is unlikely that CROW Service resources will be available to carry out detailed research of crime statistics or arrange the physical closure of a route.

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4.8 POLICY STATEMENT : PARTNERSHIP WORKING

4.8.1 Introduction

The CROW Service has a long tradition of working in partnership with other agencies, sectors, organisations and individuals. The benefits that can accrue to the local public rights of way network through working in such a way are evident from a number of joint projects.

More generally, the sense of sharing objectives jointly with user groups and landowners, through the existing Rights of Way Forum and Local Access Forum also makes for more supportive and effective working.

True partnerships require commitment and, sometimes, compromise, but they generate a range of advantages, such as:

- More effective, joined-up working.
- Greater level of understanding of issues.
- Wider range of expertise and skills to draw on.
- Better chance of successful funding bids.
- Strategic approach more likely.
- Mutual support and trust amongst partners.
- Develops track record of delivery with partner agencies and organisations.

For these reasons, the CROW Service is committed to partnership working on rights of way matters, wherever appropriate.

4.8.2 What we do now

The Service is working in partnership on a number of current projects:

- River Aire corridor access improvements – a cross-sector (public, private, voluntary) project in partnership with British Waterways, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Bradford Motor Education Project, Newmason Developments, ND Marstons, funded by Bradford Vision – the local strategic partnership for the District.
- Pennine Bridleway feeder link route – in partnership with Natural England, local landowners and the Council's Parks and Landscape Services.
- Work with voluntary partners on path maintenance e.g. Cullingworth Paths Association, Countryside Service Volunteers and Corporate Volunteers.

- Great North Trail – partnership which is creating a multi-user route along the Cullingworth disused railway, with local community groups and Sustrans.

4.8.3 What the consultations have shown us

Consultations showed that there was an interest from groups external to the Council, particularly local user groups, in being better connected. This applied between groups themselves and with the Council.

4.8.4 What we will do

The CROW Service will continue to work with partner organisations, groups and agencies to enhance and promote the public rights of way network, in particular:

- Develop and continue relationships with the voluntary sector, including “Friends of” groups and charities etc to promote and develop rights of way use.
- Pennine Prospects: the new Rural Regeneration Company which replaces the Standing Conference of South Pennine Authorities (SCOSPA). The CROW Service will be represented on officer groups as part of this company - specifically those which deal with

access, open country and biodiversity issues in the South Pennine Area.

- Local Strategic Partnership (Bradford Vision) – continue to work with the Environment Partnership of Bradford Vision in delivering Neighbourhood Renewal funded riverside access projects and future NRF funded access projects.
- Develop links with other Council Services, such as the Play Team, to promote and develop appropriate routes for specific users.
- Country Land and Business Association (CLA) – explore opportunities to work with the regional staff in contacts with landowners, specifically related to progressing Definitive Map issues.
- Further strengthen the partnerships that already exist between the Service and major landowners within the District to further enhance access provision – key amongst these are Yorkshire Water, the Bingley Moor Estate and Tilhill Forestry.
- Natural England – The CROW Service will continue this partnership to conclude the creation of the Pennine Bridleway Link route and to manage access to open country, including Integrated Access Management and will develop ways of linking the ROWIP to NE objectives.

4.9 POLICY STATEMENT – STAKEHOLDER LIAISON

4.9.1 Introduction

It is important that officers in the Rights of Way Section have a positive working relationship with all who have an interest in the use, promotion and management of public rights of way.

4.9.2 What we do now

There are many ways in which we consult with users and landowners and receive feedback on our proposals or information about new problems in the network at a regional, local and individual level.

Regional liaison.

4.9.3 The West Yorkshire Pennine Local Access Forum (WYPLAF)

A statutory body set up under the CROW Act to advise Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees Councils and Natural England on issues relating to the provision and improvement of countryside access and public rights of way. The forum membership is a balanced representation of recreational users, land managers and other interests, such as nature conservation, health promotion, transport and business. A District Councillor from each of the three authorities sits on the forum.

Officers of the Countryside and Rights of Way Service attend the forum, give presentations and consult the members on relevant issues.

Local liaison

4.9.4 Bradford Rights of Way Forum

Set up in 1999 to create an opportunity for officers of the Countryside and Rights of Way Sections of the Council to meet and discuss policy and strategic issues relating to public rights of way and countryside access. The forum consists mainly of rights of way users representing walking, horse riding and cycling interests. There is also representation from the National Farmers Union and Country Land and Business Association at most meetings. This forum meets three times a year in Bradford.

4.9.5 Bradford Rights of Way Surgeries.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Service also hold Surgeries, usually three times per year in Shipley, to enable members of rights of way user groups to discuss issues relating to individual problems on public rights of way in more detail than is possible at the more formal Rights of Way Forum.

4.9.6 Consultation on proposed changes to paths.

The Rights of Way Section consults local representatives of relevant organisations, parish councils and ward councillors before determining applications to add, change or close public rights of way. This consultation is usually in two stages – the first before determining whether to make an order and the second, formal stage at the time that the order is made. For the first stage we currently only consult the specified groups and statutory undertakers included on our consultation address list.

At the second stage wider public consultation is carried out involving notices on site and in the press, in addition to formal consultation with groups and statutory undertakers. This often results in the receipt of comments and objections that were not aired at the earlier stage.

4.9.7 Individual liaison

Residents, landowners and businesses throughout the district regularly contact officers of the Rights of Way Section by telephone, letter and email. Our website contains information about the management and promotion of rights of way and contact details for relevant officers.

An information sheet describing our activities and responsibilities with contact details is available from our office and at Jacob's Well reception.

4.9.8 What the consultations and research have shown

The wide-ranging consultation for the preparation of this plan resulted in contact with a number of people who had no previous contact with the Rights of Way Section. Some of these volunteered to attend focus groups and others sent written comments indicating that they had previously been unaware of whom to contact regarding rights of way issues.

People affected by potential legal changes to the network would like to be consulted at the earliest possible opportunity.

There is a problem, for both the Local Access Forum and the Bradford Rights of Way Forum, in recruiting members with interests outside the “mainstream” of countryside access users – for example motorised users, ethnic minority interests and mobility interests are continually under-represented.

4.9.9 Improvements for Action Plan

- Continue formal liaison through the West Yorkshire Pennine Local Access Forum, Bradford Rights of Way Forum, and Rights of Way Surgeries.
- Aim to increase the diversity of interests represented on the Local Access Forum and Bradford Rights of Way Forum.
- Seek to improve early local consultation on proposed changes to paths – see section 4.6.

4.10 POLICY STATEMENT – PLANNING APPLICATIONS AFFECTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

4.10.1 Introduction

Approximately 5% of planning applications received by the Council have a potential impact on public rights of way. The effects can include:

- Development of site adjacent to a path which affects the boundaries of the path
- Development of a site crossed by a path – could change the character of the path or necessitate a diversion or stopping up of the path.
- Development of a site that provides opportunities for enhancement of the network within or near the site.
- Development of a site where there are no currently recorded public rights of way, which triggers a claim for a route used by the public to be recorded.
- Development which increases vehicular use of the access to a site or surrounding roads, reducing their suitability for non-motorised users.

The degree of impact on the availability and enjoyment of the rights of way network will vary between applications and it is essential that Rights of Way Officers have an opportunity to assess the potential impact and advise on measures necessary to protect and enhance the network at an early stage in the process.

4.10.2 What we do now

- The Planning Offices at Bradford Keighley and Shipley receive planning applications and compile a weekly list of all applications received
- Copies of the full weekly list are sent to the Rights of Way Section and other Council Services.
- Government guidance and regulations state that all developments affecting a public right of way must be advertised in a local newspaper and by posting a notice on site.
- Officers in the Planning Service check all applications for various constraints including the existence of public rights of way. Any sites that are adjacent to, or crossed by, recorded

public rights of way are listed in the weekly “Green List” and identified in subsequent press advertisement as affecting public rights of way.

- A copy of the Green List is sent to the Rights of Way Section and subsequently shared with rights of way user groups.
- Planning officers send a consultation memo to Rights of Way Officers for all applications identified on the Green List. Rights of Way Officers receive approximately 260 such consultations from planning officers per year. The Rights of Way Officer assesses the impact on the path and comments accordingly.
- A further check is carried out by colleagues in Highways Development control who vet the weekly list of applications and, where any recorded path crosses or abuts the site, send a standard letter, on behalf of the Rights of Way Section, to the developer, informing them of the existence of the path and advising them of steps to take to protect the rights of path users.
- In addition to specific site-relevant comments, a standard list of requirements is included in the response.
- A pilot scheme has commenced with the Bradford Planning Office where applications are automatically vetted against a copy of the digitised rights of way records.

- A Decision Matrix is being developed to enable vetting officers in the Planning Offices to identify the types of applications which may have an impact on the rights of way network.
- The Replacement Unitary Development Plan, which was adopted by the Council in October 2005, contains a number of Policies with the aim of avoiding negative impacts on rights of way users and encouraging enhancement of the network, where developments are permitted. These include Transport and Movement Policy TM2, TM8, TM9, TM10 and TM10A and the Design Policy Statements D6 and D7. (see Appendix 2).
- Where the proposed development would need a legal order to move or close a public right of way, the Rights of Way Officers’ will advise on the procedure to be followed.
- No action is taken to consult on any potential diversion unless a formal application and agreement to pay the Council’s costs is received from the developer.
- An advisory leaflet aimed at developers, explaining their responsibilities regarding public rights of way has been drafted.

4.10.3 What the consultations and research have shown

- Users of the rights of way network and quiet roads would like to see greater consideration of their needs when planning applications are considered.
- Users would like to see closer liaison between planners and Rights of Way officers at an early stage in developments.
- User groups would like the opportunity to comment on the potential impact of developments at an early stage.
- Where a planning application may necessitate a closure or diversion of a right of way this is not always apparent to regular users of the route until a public path order is advertised – often many months after the planning application. Ideally local consultation, highlighting the effects of the proposal on the right of way should take place at an early stage.
- There is some demand for a design guide including details of required minimum widths, acceptable surface treatments and structures should be produced to enable developers to easily identify the Council's needs.
- There may be opportunities for formal agreements under the provisions of Section 106 of TCPA 1990 to achieve enhancements to the rights of way network beyond the boundaries of the development site.
-

4.10.4 Improvements for Action Plan

- Liaise with the Council's Development Services, at an appropriate level, to review and develop procedures, including the sharing of electronic information, and to ensure that comments made by rights of way officers are meaningful, relevant and communicated to applicants.
- Complete development of the advisory leaflet for developers and ensure it is widely available.
- Establish ways of ensuring that planning applications involving potential closure or diversion of rights of way are brought to the attention of all relevant users and groups at the earliest possible stage.
- Secure rights of way improvements through planning obligations under Section 106 Agreements or other means.

Chapter 5

RESOURCES FOR RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT

5.1 CURRENT RESOURCES

5.1.1 Introduction

Responsibility for management of the public rights of way network in the Bradford District lies within the Department of Regeneration of the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Service has responsibility for the legal management of the public rights of way network, maintenance of the promoted and rural network and management of council owned countryside access areas and nature reserves. In addition, as the access authority, as defined under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Service also manages the new right of access to open country.

Maintenance of the urban public rights of way network lies with the Highways Maintenance service.

5.1.2 Staff resources:

The Countryside and Rights of Way Service employs 17.5 staff. Staff involved principally in access management is broken down as follows:

- 1 Rights of Way Manager
- 1 Definitive Map Officer
- 1 Strategic Routes Officer

- 3.5 Area Rights of Way Officers
- 3 Countryside Officers *
- 3 Countryside Project Workers*²

In addition, the Highways Maintenance service employs a number of Area Highways Engineers whose responsibility is the maintenance of the urban rights of way network, through the Council's "Street Scene" visible services arm.

5.1.3 Revenue resources:

Countryside and Rights of Way Service:

Revenue resources available to the Countryside and Rights of Way Service for all of its activity currently total £624,700. The proportion of this overall budget allocated to management of access is broken down as set out in the table below:

Item	Budget
Staff	£276,190 (inc. on-costs)
Maintenance of rural network	£28,300
Access site management	£25,000 (approx)
Promotion of access (inc guided walks)	£10,000 (approx)
TOTAL	£339,490

² The majority of the time of these officers is dedicated to access work

This excludes ancillary costs such as vehicles and travel, protective clothing, equipment etc.

Future Service Planning for the Countryside and Rights of Way Service will identify opportunities for increasing the resource or altering the operational structure as appropriate, in order to maximise its effectiveness for managing access.

Highways Maintenance:

The Highways Maintenance unit has dedicated Area Highways Engineers whose responsibility includes maintenance of the urban public rights of way network. The Bradford District is split into Bradford North (operating out of Errington House at Crossflatts) and Bradford South (from Flockton House, Bradford). Practical maintenance works are devolved to the Council's in-house visible service contractor "Street Scene", in the urban areas. All highways maintenance budgets are also devolved to Street Scene – it is not possible to identify the specific amount which is dedicated to urban public rights of way.

5.1.4 Capital resources:

In addition to the revenue funding outlined above, capital funds are also available for improvements and development of the public rights of way network. The primary source of capital funding is the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP).

Local Transport Plan (LTP)

The Local Transport Plan provides the strategic framework within which the Rights of Way Improvement Plan sits. It also identifies specific capital funding for the works identified within the ROWIP.

LTP2 for 2006-2011 includes an initial provision of £595,000 over the five years of the Plan for ROWIP activity in Bradford. This Action Plan allocates LTP funding over the five year programme to priority projects which will achieve, or support, the overall LTP objectives.

5.1.5 Other funding sources:

A number of additional sources of funding for rights of way and access improvements have been identified and utilised.

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF):

A river corridor access improvement project focused on the River Aire between Bingley and Esholt is currently underway. Neighbourhood Renewal Funding totalling £30,000 has been dedicated for access improvements, particularly riverside footpaths and links between the rights of way network and the Leeds – Liverpool canal towpath.

A further round of NRF funding is to be announced and bids will be made to continue the River Aire access project and undertake new access related projects, if appropriate.

Access Management Grant Scheme (AMGS):

The Countryside Agency's Access Management Grant Scheme was available to assist access authorities in managing the new right of access to open country. This includes both provision of new infrastructure and information to facilitate this access, and provision of new routes to access land.

To date the CROW Service has been granted £26,000 of AMGS funding and made an additional two bids for further funding under this programme. With the merging, in 2006, of the Countryside Agency into the new Natural England combined agency, the AMGS was frozen. The CROW Service will continue to work with Natural England to maximise funding for open country. It will also lobby, independently and through the Local Access Forum, for future funding provision for this important resource.

Natural England:

Project related funding is occasionally available through Natural England for access works. Historic examples are the Pennine Bridleway Feeder route that runs from Bingley to Calderdale to link with the Pennine Bridleway proper (the Calder-Aire link). To date approximately £180,000 has been funded by the Agency towards this project. Similarly, restoration of the Pennine Way through Bradford was funded by the Agency, including the annual maintenance cost.

At present, future funding arrangements for access related work through Natural England are unclear. The Council is, however, continuing to work closely with Natural England and

is currently discussing an integrated access pilot scheme based on Ilkley/Rombalds Moor.

Section 106 agreements:

Regeneration and development proposals offer the opportunity to enhance local rights of way networks through Section 106 agreements – so named after the relevant section of the Town and Country Planning Act. These are made between the planning authority and the developer, who agrees to provide some public amenity or benefit in the locale of the development. Such agreements have been used to create or enhance access routes in the District and can have significant benefits for local networks.

Agri-environment schemes:

Natural England's agri-environment schemes can include provisions for access improvements. The Council has signed up for Higher Level Stewardship schemes at sites in the Aire Valley and at Harden Moor. The inclusion of Ilkley Moor in a HLS scheme is also currently being negotiated.

South Pennine regional funding:

Bradford Council is an active partner in Pennine Prospects – the South Pennine Rural Regeneration Company. The Countryside and Rights of Way Manager currently chairs Pennine Prospect's Access and Visitor Management Working Group. Through this arena, the Council will ensure that the Bradford District benefits from any regional projects or funding relating to access improvement.

Chapter 6

ACTION PLAN

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6 ACTION PLAN

Consultations prior to the production of this Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan resulted in suggestions for over 260 potential improvements to the rights of way network. The suggestions fall into two broad categories

- Improvements to existing routes which would enable wider use and promotion of those routes
- Improvements by the creation of new routes or the upgrading of existing routes to a higher status

The suggested improvements have been prioritised using three groups of criteria:

- Factors influencing desirability of the proposal.
- Does it meet any of the six priorities in the Bradford Council Corporate Plan?
- Does it meet the strategic criteria for rights of way improvements identified in Appendix H of the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan for 2006 to 2011? (See Section 1.2.2 of main ROWIP).

Details of the specific criteria considered are in Appendix 3 of the main ROWIP document.

The resulting Action Plans are available as separate documents.

This prioritisation has resulted in:

- An Action Plan for Rights of Way Improvements for 2006/2010
- A Provisional list of further improvements for post 2010.
- An Action Plan of potential New Provision, from 2007.
- Large scale projects beyond the scope of current funds.
- Key Policy Statements outlining changes to working methods to facilitate improvement of the network.

The priorities for 2008 and beyond are provisional at present as it is recognised that an implementation plan must be dynamic enough to incorporate new high priority suggestions received during the life of the plan. In addition, the availability of funding other than the LTP could influence the achievability of projects that meet specific funding criteria.

All new suggestions received during the life of this plan will be entered into the prioritisation process and confirmed Action Plans for each year will be produced annually. The large scale projects will be reviewed again after 2010, or earlier if more funding becomes available. To implement such projects with current resources would severely compromise our ability to carry out any other improvements

7.0 GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION USED	SHORT FOR	MEANING
AMGS	Access Management Grant Scheme	Countryside Agency funded grant scheme for improving public use of Access Land
BHS	British Horse Society	Represents horse riding interests
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic	A group of people under represented as countryside users
BOAT	Byway Open to All Traffic	A route recorded on the Definitive Map for use mainly by pedestrians, horses and cyclists but also available to motorised users
BVPI	Best Value Performance Indicator	A method of monitoring how well a local authority is performing it's duties
BW	Bridleway	A route recorded on the Definitive Map for walkers, horse riders and cyclists
The Council	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council	Local Authority (including highway authority) for the Bradford area
CLA	Country Land and Business Association	Organisation that protects the interests owners of land, property and business by campaigning for a thriving rural economy
CROW Act	The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	The most recent legislation affecting the Countryside and Rights of Way Service. Legislated for Open Access Land and Rights of Way Improvement Plans (amongst other provisions)
CROW Service	The Countryside and Rights of Way Service of Bradford Council	Aims to protect, enhance, promote and inform responsible public enjoyment of Bradford's natural environment and rights of way network. Also referred to as 'we' and 'us' in the text.
CTC	Cyclists Touring Club	Represents cycling interests.
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act 1995	Places a duty on all service providers to make their facilities available for all.
DEFRA	Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs.	A central government department.

DMMO	Definitive Map Modification Order	A process whereby unrecorded public routes can be legally recorded.
ELS	Entry Level Stewardship	Basic level subsidies payable to landowners who keep their land in good agricultural environmental condition.
FP	Footpath	A route recorded on the Definitive Map for walkers only.
GAEC	Good Agricultural Environmental Conditions	Conditions that a farmer must keep land in to be eligible for subsidy payments.
GIS	Geographical Information System	A computer based mapping system. GIS blend map production, image presentation and statistical analysis capabilities into a powerful analytical tool that can be applied to a variety of problems.
GPS	Global Positioning System	A system of satellites, computers, and receivers that is able to determine the position of a receiver on Earth to an accurate degree.
HEAN	Heritage Education and Access Network	Project based in Rochdale but spreading across the South Pennines
HLS	Higher Level Stewardship	Enhanced subsidies payable to landowners who keep their land in good agricultural environmental condition.
ICT	Information and Communication Technology	Computing and communications facilities and features that support the work of the Council and the CROW team.
LARA	Land Access and Recreation Association	One of the main organisations representing motorised users of public rights of way.
LTP	Local Transport Plan	The main strategic document for improvements to the local (West Yorkshire) transport network. Highlighted as the main source for funding ROWIP action plans.
NE	Natural England	Government body formed in 2006, bringing together the functions of English Nature, the Countryside Agency and the Rural Development Service.
NFU	National Farmers Union	An organisation representing farmers and growers in England and Wales.
NPA	National Park Authority	Body responsible for many Local Authority duties (e.g. planning, access management) within the National Parks.
NPACA 1949	National Parks and Access	The Act that brought in the duty to record public rights of way on the

	to the Countryside Act	Definitive Map.
NRF	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	Central Government funding to enable England's most deprived areas to improve services.
NYCC	North Yorkshire County Council	Neighbouring Local Authority to the north of Bradford.
ORPA	Other Routes with Public Access	Routes shown with green dots on Ordnance Survey Explorer maps – have public rights of some sort but not recorded on Definitive Map at present.
RAIN	Rural Advice and Information Network	A DEFRA information site which is aimed at farmers and landowners in the Yorkshire and Humber region.
RDS	Rural Development Service	Part of Natural England
RPA	Rural Payments Agency	An Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). RPA is a major delivery body for Defra, providing a range of services in support of the department's objectives. Key services include making rural payments, carrying out rural inspections, and livestock tracing.
ROWIP	Rights Of Way Improvement Plan	The prime means by which local highway authorities will identify the changes to be made in respect of the management of and improvement to their local rights of way network in order to meet the government's aim of better provision for walkers, cyclists, equestrians and people with mobility problems.
RUPP	Road Used as a Public Path	A route recorded on the Definitive Map for use mainly by pedestrians, horses and cyclists but also available to motorised users.
SCOSPA	Standing Conference Of South Pennine Authorities	Former regional organisation made up of partnership between all the local authorities in the South Pennines. Now known as Pennine Prospects, a rural regeneration company whose role is to implement projects that benefit the whole of the South Pennine area.
Sustrans	Sustainable Transport	Charity promoting sustainable transport, often through developing off road cycle and multi user routes
WYPLAF	West Yorkshire Pennine Local Access Forum	Statutory advisory body involved in rights of way covering Kirklees, Calderdale and Bradford Districts

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APPENDIX 1 - GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ROWIPs : THE WYPLAF PROPOSALS TO AUTHORITIES

This document sets out the views of WYPLAF as to issues it feels that the local authorities might usefully address as part of their Plan. In general, these are stated as broad objectives and we hope that the relevant officers within each authority might find these useful when devising that area's plan. Whilst the lists are reasonably extensive, they are by no means exhaustive, and one must not rule out other options to improve RoW and access. Where individual LAF members have proposals for a specific improvement based on their special knowledge of an area, these will be provided direct to the appropriate officer for that area.

WYPLAF assumes that all definitive RoW are open, as that is a legal requirement placed on Highway Authorities. However, it is noted that the condition of some routes would benefit from improvement. Attention is also drawn to the requirement under 1968 Countryside Act s.27(2) that a sign shall normally be provided where a RoW leaves a metalled road, plus the provision for installing signs elsewhere as required.

GENERAL ISSUES

The following points represent aspects of RoW improvement work which the Forum believes are at the core of CRoW Act's intentions, which have real relevance to our area, and which are common to virtually all RoW. These are not shown in any order of priority as all are considered important. The Forum also accepts that needs and priorities may well vary across different parts of the three authorities.

- 1 Authorities should consult widely with relevant parties regarding their perceptions of problems and needs.
- 2 Improve signing and waymarking - e.g. to show destinations and distances, provide signs at more path junctions away from roadsides, and by putting in waymarking where a RoW is difficult to follow.
- 3 Seek to provide 'missing links' in the RoW networks which, if made available, could significantly improve the countryside as a recreational facility for all potential users.
- 4 See if continuity can be established on cul-de-sac RoW, and on those where status changes mid route.
- 5 Aim to get *de facto* and permissive routes onto the definitive maps, as these have already shown that they are valuable to the public.
- 6 Explore the situation regarding routes believed by users to have RoW status of a particular category, but not included as such on definitive maps.
- 7 Produce good general information about access – particularly facilities not now on OS maps, and facilities for sectors of the public where provision for their particular needs is currently at a low level.

- 8 Work to obtain safer crossings of busy roads for all categories of user, and add safe linking sections where RoW do not terminate opposite one another.
- 9 Look for opportunities to enable quieter, rural roads to be used safely and pleasurably by non-vehicular users - possibly involving speed control/ traffic control measures, and/or provision of new/ better footways.
- 10 Encourage users to check that they are entitled to use the routes they plan to travel, and that they use rights of way responsibly.
- 11 Consider whether certain specific path diversions could produce benefits for both users and landholders.
- 12 Work with other bodies regarding facilities for many special categories of user including: families with young children, disabled persons, and those who do not now take significant exercise.
- 13 Explore opportunities for improving the path environment, including the problems of: dog fouling, litter, and overgrowth/ undergrowth.
- 14 Work towards the creation of improved user statistics upon which future measures can be based.
- 15 Seek to set up a better reporting and prioritisation system for achieving action on RoWs with problems.

FOR WALKERS

- 1 Ensure new Part I CRoW Act access land links to existing path networks (note s.58 of CROW Act).
- 2 Identify all Unmade County Roads, plus Stewardship (and similar) access land, and publicise them.
- 3 Work towards better public transport facilities to the countryside.

FOR EQUESTRIANS

- 1 Identify and publicise all existing facilities including Unmade County Roads, and Urban Common (s.193) land with usable routes.
- 2 Explore possibilities for the provision of highway verge paths for horses (1980 HA s.71(1)).
- 3 Seek opportunities for equestrian access in CRoW Act Part 1 land (s.7 of Sched. 2, and s.16 of the Act).
- 4 Seek other opportunities to increase the extent of the bridleway network in the countryside - especially where that can provide circular routes

FOR CYCLISTS

- 1 Identify and publicise Unmade County Roads and cycle tracks (currently often not shown on maps).
- 2 Seek opportunities for cycle access in CRoW Act Part 1 land (s.7 of Schedule 2, and s.16 of the Act).
- 3 Seek opportunities to increase the extent of the bridleway network in the countryside - especially where that can provide circular routes
- 4 Seek to improve bike carrying facilities on buses and trains.

FOR THE BLIND AND DISABLED PEOPLE

1. Improve the accessibility of RoW to blind and partially-sighted persons and others with mobility problems.
2. Work with other relevant bodies to encourage use of RoW by those who do not take significant exercise at present, but whose overall health might benefit from pleasant physical activity in the form of walking.
3. Seek opportunities to provide improved facilities for wheelchair users and parents with pushchairs
4. Appreciate that whilst mobility disability and visual disability are highlighted in CRoW Act s.60, more access opportunities could be created for those with many other forms of impairment by modest improvements to RoW infrastructure.

LANDOWNER / FARMER ISSUES

- 1 Identify problems resulting from access and seek solutions together - Highway Authority, user bodies and landholder.
- 2 Work to overcome user problems by education and use of informal visitor management methods.
- 3 Landowners/ farmers should be encouraged to make RoW routes easier to follow.
- 4 Increase awareness that it is in their interests to ensure stiles / gates on RoW are appropriate to the situation and in serviceable condition.

CONCLUSION

The Access Forum believes that the first Rights of Way Improvement Plan in any Highway Authority area is particularly important as it sets the tone for future work in access improvements for many years to come. It is natural that Councils will be concerned as to cost implications, but the statutory Improvement Plan is not *per se* an undertaking that all the projects will be achieved in the short term. However, it is a measure of the needs of the area and, as such, is a useful tool in the constant striving to get improved outside funding for such work.

The Forum suggests that informal recreation in our more rural areas is a major recreational resource and should rank alongside swimming pools, sports arenas and leisure centres when spending issues are being considered. Published statistics relating to countryside areas with access shows that 121 million day visits were made to the countryside in Yorkshire and Humberside in 1998. Between 1993 and 2000 such visits had increased by 50%, though Foot and Mouth caused a dip later. Nonetheless, it is suggested that these are impressive figures and have a bearing on public health and tourism statistics also.

As these Improvement Plans are being evolved at broadly the same time as the new Access Land under Part 1 of CROW Act comes into being, the importance of this work is further heightened. The three districts combined will then have 19,925 hectares of land available for access on foot, or about 17½% of their total areas. Only 7 large counties and 8 National Parks (out of over 160 Access Authorities) will have more open access land than our three Districts. It is therefore most important that this should be integrated with other forms of access.

That facility under Part 1 of the Act refers only to walkers initially and the undoubted needs of other types of access users should not be sidelined because of this notable increase in facilities for walkers. In many parts of our Districts, the RoW facilities for equestrians, cyclists and disabled people of various categories leaves much to be desired. Our comments on the preceding pages have suggested the general areas of activities which apply to all forms of access, but we have additionally focussed on the special needs of particular groups.

The membership of WYPLAF constitutes a considerable body of experience and has contacts stretching even further. This is at the disposal of the District Councils and their staff and it is hoped that there will be a mutually beneficial interchange of ideas and proposals over the period when the Improvement plans are being prepared.

The Forum looks forward to the finished Plan being presented and having the opportunity to comment further at that stage.

APPENDIX 2 - RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM REPLACEMENT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE BRADFORD DISTRICT ADOPTED OCTOBER 2005.

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is the statutory Development Plan that the Council produces to fulfil its obligations under the 1990 Planning Act. The Plan is a land use strategy for the District and is the prime consideration when the Council makes decisions on planning applications. It includes policies to guide development, and proposals for the use of land, to ensure that the needs of the district's population for homes, jobs, shopping, recreation etc. can be met.

The following extracts cover the UDP policies quoted in the Bradford Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan Policy Statement 4.10.

The full Replacement Unitary Development Plan can be viewed on the Councils Website at <http://gis.bradford.gov.uk/rudp> or can be purchased from CBMDC, Department of Transportation Design and Planning, 3rd Floor, Jacob's Well Bradford BD1 5RW.

FROM CHAPTER 8 – TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT:

IMPACT OF TRAFFIC AND ITS MITIGATION POLICY TM2

Planning permission for new development or change of use will not be granted unless:

- (1) The council is satisfied that the proposal does not adversely affect existing and proposed transport infrastructure or services, including public transport and walking and cycling facilities, in the vicinity of the site, or the local environment; or**
- (2) Improvements considered necessary by the council to overcome any adverse impact of the proposal will be secured by agreement or undertaken as part of the development.**

VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

New pedestrian and cycle links

The importance of walking and cycling as modes of transport is highlighted at a local level by the publication of the West Yorkshire Walking and Cycling Strategies as an integral part of the Local Transport Plan, and at a national level by the Government's draft 'Developing a Strategy for Walking', National Cycling Strategy and the Integrated Transport White Paper.

POLICY TM8

The council will require the provision, where appropriate, of new pedestrian and cycle links through development sites and open spaces, especially where these will provide links to existing routes.

This policy confirms and reinforces the Design Policies D6 and D7 and as such it should be read in conjunction with those policies.

These modes of transport are also growing in importance as health and leisure activities. The Council thus seeks to take action to encourage and support these activities through expansion of existing networks by providing new links wherever possible. Development sites and open spaces provide the opportunity for linking new and existing pedestrian and cycle routes.

Development proposals should make adequate provision for pedestrian and cycle movement in the vicinity of the development. Infrastructure provided for pedestrians and cyclists should also provide good links to the surrounding footpath and road network. Reallocation of road space to pedestrians and cyclists and road calming measures may be desirable, while good standards of lighting and surfacing are essential to provide a safe walking environment. Where appropriate, the Council will seek contributions to off-site facilities or infrastructure through planning obligations.

Protection of Routes

The Council recognises the value of walking and cycling as a mode of transport. Because routes should be direct, developments should not obstruct or cut across established footpaths, bridleways or cycle routes, unless suitable alternative provision is made (also refer to Policies D6 and D7).

POLICY TM9

Developments that will adversely affect existing footpaths, bridleways, rights of way or cycle routes, will

not be permitted, unless an acceptable alternative route is made available.

People need to feel secure when using such routes so developments should maintain or enhance the safety and attractiveness of such routes by the provision of good sight lines and a spacious and inviting environment. It must also be borne in mind that even a small diversion could add considerably to the pedestrian's time and that there may be unsafe features along alternative routes.

The Council believes that rights of way must be maintained and preferably enhanced when development proposals are considered. Diversions using estate roads will be discouraged, as will narrow paths between high fences which pay insufficient regard to public amenity and safety; preference will be given to the formation of corridors providing through routes within developments.

Consent is needed by order (financed by the developer) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to block or divert a public right of way. The Council maintains a 'definitive map' of public rights of way, but in addition to this are unrecorded rights of way that have been in use by the public for many years.

The National and Local Cycle Network

The Council is committed to making a contribution to both national and local cycle networks and looks to working in partnership with developers to do this.

POLICY TM10

The national and local cycle network and associated links as shown on the proposals map will be implemented. Developments should facilitate or incorporate the network and associated links.

Major developments will be expected to contribute towards the construction and improvement of the national and local cycle network and links to it, where such facilities would service the development by sustainable modes.

The National and Local Cycle Network is part of a system of traffic-free routes, traffic-calmed routes and minor roads for cyclists, walkers and where appropriate horse riders.

The policy particularly applies to development proposals that are likely to have an impact on cyclists. Major developments should include spur routes to complement the Network, while in some instances reallocation of road space may be appropriate in providing a route for the cycle network. Where appropriate, the Council will seek contributions to off-site facilities or infrastructure through planning obligations.

Other Road Users

POLICY TM10A

In determining planning applications, the council will consider the potential impact on other road users (such as horse riders and motor cyclists) and will seek provision of suitable facilities where necessary.

In addition to pedestrians and cyclists, some other road users, such as horse riders and motor cyclists, are also vulnerable to

motor vehicles. Where a development is likely to have an impact on the safety and amenity of these road users, the Council will expect to see the inclusion of features that will maintain or improve their safety and amenity within the design of the development. Where appropriate, the Council will seek contributions to the off-site facilities or infrastructure through planning obligations.

FROM CHAPTER 9 - DESIGN

Meeting the Needs of Pedestrians and Cyclists Through Design

The success of places depends on ease of movement, in particular how easy it is to get to and move through a place.

A well designed built environment has an effective network of connected spaces and routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. New development needs to be clearly linked to existing routes and movement patterns. New connections should give people maximum choice in how to make their journeys, with a presumption in favour of walking, cycling and public transport.

Walking and cycling are healthy, environmentally friendly alternative modes of travel to the car, in particular for short journeys. For longer journeys they provide the potential for transfer of trips to public transport.

It is important that the needs of pedestrians are paid particular attention in the design, location and access arrangements in new development, to ensure that walking is promoted as the prime means of access. The availability of

safe, secure and direct walking routes greatly encourages the demand for travel by this mode. Therefore:

POLICY D6

Development proposals including environmental improvements, highway improvements and traffic management schemes, should incorporate appropriate facilities to meet the need of pedestrians and people with special needs. In particular the design of development proposals should take into account the following:

- (1) pedestrian links should have priority over other links including those for cycles and cars as appropriate to the development;**
- (2) the layout of the development so that car parks do not deter pedestrian access and use;**
- (3) the provision of adequate and safe pedestrian facilities within the development and safe access onto existing pedestrian links and network of routes;**
- (4) ensuring existing pedestrian links are not severed nor their safety or amenity harmed unless suitable alternative provision are provided by the developer.**

To encourage greater number of trips by foot, there is a need to provide attractive, safe and convenient routes both on the existing network and within new developments. The design of the pedestrian environment should seek to connect the key services and facilities people want to use, with direct, well lit and safe routes, which are clearly identifiable. In developing infrastructure for pedestrians, special attention

will be paid to people with mobility difficulties to ensure that the benefits are accessible to all users.

Cycling has a clear potential to substitute for short car trips, particularly those under 8 kilometres, and to form part of a longer journey by public transport. The Council is working to encourage cycling as a sustainable mode of travel and will pursue the opportunities offered by new development to improve cycle facilities and promote cycle use. Therefore:

POLICY D7 Development proposals including environmental improvements, highway improvements and traffic management schemes, should incorporate appropriate facilities to meet the needs of cyclists. In particular the design of development proposals should take into account the following:

- (1) provision of safe convenient direct and coherent cycle routes and priority measures as appropriate to the development;**
- (2) provision of convenient and securely located cycle parking or storage facilities in appropriate new developments including those in town centres, at transport interchanges, educational institutions and public car parks**
- (3) development proposals should not sever existing or planned cycle links, to other parts of the cycle network or reduce their safety or amenity unless acceptable suitable alternative provision is made.**

APPENDIX 3 – FACTORS USED IN PRIORITISATION OF SUGGESTED RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENTS

Factors influencing Desirability of Proposal

Publicity and Promotion

Is it an existing promoted route? – National, Local, Council leaflet etc.

Is it a development of a promoted route?

Increasing use of the Network

Will it enable multi-user access?

Will it provide a missing network link?

Will it widen access opportunities (including mobility)

Additional Factors

Is the proposal a priority in other plans or strategies?

Have there been multiple requests?

Does it meet any of the six priorities in the Bradford Council Corporate Plan?

- Educating and supporting children.
- Creating a more prosperous District.
- Safer and stronger communities.
- Improving the environment.
- Healthier communities and choice for older people.
- Improving customer services.

Does the proposal meet key ROWIP objectives of LTP?

- Protect, improve and extend the rights of way networks as an important means of access to the countryside for recreation and for health.

- Enhance opportunities for safe and sustainable travel, both for recreation and for access to work, schools and services.
- Improve accessibility of rights of way for all members of our communities and provide appropriate publicity.
- Ensure that the condition of the rights of way network enhances appearance & amenity of the natural & built environment & local heritage.
- Ensure that the rights of way network contributes to the enhancement of economic opportunities.

Additional Factors Influencing Programming of High Scoring Projects

- Is there a time-limited opportunity?
- Are there any limitations to achievability?
- Cost - Low up to £500
 - Medium £500 to £5,000
 - High £5,000 to £25,000
 - Very High over £25,000
- Estimated Timescale – years

APPENDIX 4 - TEXT OF CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The Countryside and Rights of Way Section

Bradford Councils Countryside and Rights of Way Service aims to protect, enhance, promote and inform responsible public enjoyment of Bradford's natural environment and rights of way network.

The Countryside of Bradford covers over 140 square miles (375 square km) and includes some of the finest and most distinctive landscapes in the region.

Bradford District also has a well-developed network of over 1000km of public rights of way for the public to enjoy the natural environment and access local facilities by foot, on horseback or cycle.

The government has asked all Local Authorities to produce an action plan saying how they are going to improve the footpath and bridleway network. To help the Council produce this plan, we are asking you to tell us what improvements and facilities are the most important to you.

Q1. Please rate these improvements in order of importance to you, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Not important at all and 5 = Very Important

Easier access to open spaces near where you live

More routes for cycling for leisure

Easier access to the countryside

More routes for walking for leisure

Better access for people with disabilities

More routes for horse riding

Concentrate on improving existing paths

More routes for cycling to work/shops/school

More routes for walking to work/shops/school

Q2. Please rate these facilities in order of importance to you.

on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Not important at all and 5 = Very Important

Guided walks

Sign posts indicating start of paths

Existing paths kept in good order

Maps/guidebooks indicating where paths are

Information about what you can legally do and where

Q3. Have you used public paths (footpaths or bridleways) in the last 2 years?

Q4. If yes, what would encourage you to use them more?
(leave blank space for answer)

Q5. If no, why not? What stops you? *(leave blank space for answer)*