

**Durham**  
County Council



# Paths for People

Rights of Way Improvement Plan  
for County Durham 2011-2014

Our plans to develop a high quality path network fit  
for 21st Century travel, recreation and enjoyment.



# Welcome to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for County Durham.

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## Foreword





## Foreword

There is no doubt that in the first few years of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2 (ROWIP2) period we will all be facing a difficult economic climate. As household budgets shrink and costs rise, hard choices will inevitably be required about spending on travel and leisure activities.

The Access and Rights of Way (AROW) Network, free to all users, is an invaluable resource for the residents of the County and visitors, offering opportunities to travel, explore, understand and enjoy our countryside whilst also contributing to the physical and mental well-being of those who take advantage of what it has to offer. At a time when public sector budgets are being reduced it is encouraging that increased emphasis is being placed on outdoor recreation, as a way of increasing participation in physical activity, and on the AROW network as a viable transport medium to encourage active travel.

The enhancement of the AROW infrastructure and the innovative ideas to encourage its use over the next three years contained in this plan has the potential to make a major contribution to the well-being of communities. It is incumbent upon all of the stakeholders to ensure that the Network realises its potential.

The Local Access Forum for Durham County is delighted to commend the plan to you. We look forward to working with you as part of a true partnership in implementing the proposals.

Geoff Hughes

Chair, County Durham Local Access Forum



**LOCAL ACCESS  
FORUM** County Durham





## Introduction



In Nov 2007, Durham County Council (We) produced our first Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). This fulfilled requirements under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) Act 2000 and provided a unique opportunity for us to examine and revise our management of the network by taking into consideration the public's modern day needs and demands.

We used the opportunity to raise the profile of our work by producing an aspirational plan which helped secure funding, encourage partnership working and generate a greater appreciation and understanding of access management and the access and rights of way (AROW) network.

This plan ***Paths for People*** (ROWIP2), will briefly review ROWIP1, set out the context for ROWIP2 and will then detail themes and projects with actions to be delivered in the Implementation Plan (2011-2014).

We are still passionate about delivering a path network which contributes to quality of life and enables people to lead healthy active lives and we will encourage input from stakeholders and work with partners to ensure we get it right. As such, ROWIP2 expands on the policies and good practice developed previously and includes new ideas to reflect what we have learnt and

achieved through ROWIP1. The plan will build on the background information, community surveys and policy context as well as the network origins and issues set out in ROWIP1.

***Paths for People*** is our plan to develop a high quality path network fit for 21st Century travel, recreation and enjoyment. We will improve routes for walking, cycling and horseriding and will work with landowners to provide accessible and attractive routes available to the widest audience possible. We will prioritise resources to focus on key access routes rather than address the whole network (including 3,500km of public rights of way). We will improve paths which serve specific purposes and fulfil greatest demand such as important utility and recreation paths around communities and key tourism routes. We will also create vital links between and within access networks to provide a more comprehensive network where need is justified.





## 2.1

# Review of ROWIP1

We had many successes through the implementation of the first ROWIP, notably we -

- succeeded at taking a more modern, planned and strategic approach to considering how to fulfil access requirements using creation agreements, creating permissive access and cycle tracks
- won 2 National Awards; one from Natural England for “Best Contribution to Quality of Life” and for the ROWIP Officer an IPROW “Right Way” Award
- maintained strong relationships with landowners
- sustained a strong involvement with the County Durham Local Access Forum (CDLAF)
- invested in community led projects and schemes and developed a new Adopt-A-Promoted-Route Scheme
- piloted the Durham Access Prioritisation Project - now recognised as an exemplar project of good working practice
- created new partnerships and links with sport, health and tourism
- published the consolidated new digital Definitive Map online
- introduced the Countryside Access Management System (CAMS) - an electronic database and management system
- sustained our excellent relationship with the Local Transport Plan (LTP) team and were quoted as an example of good practice in Natural England’s LTP and ROWIP integration guidance.



### 2.1.1 What ROWIP1 delivered

Since the publication of ROWIP1 in Nov 2007, we have implemented as much of the action plan as possible. A Final Report of ROWIP1 will be produced which will explore achievements against the Action Plan and will be available on the ROWIP pages of the website ([www.durham.gov.uk/prow](http://www.durham.gov.uk/prow)).

In summary, we have directly made at least 40kms of the path network easier to use. To achieve this, we have spent approximately £794,000 of LTP2 funds and accessed £106,000 of additional funds from a variety of other sources to support individual projects (NB: This does not include in-kind match funding or value added to other large scale projects which have benefitted from pooling ROWIP resources with others). We have also worked with, trained and supported volunteers to carry out works with funding to buy equipment, training and insurance and to promote improved routes through guided walks and celebration events.

Many of the actions relied on working in partnership and seeking external funding and the ROWIP provided substantial evidence of need to progress projects such as the Mineral Valleys Project, Parish Paths Partnership (P3) and Open Access as well as to support core access and rights of way work.

The breadth of content of ROWIP1 and choice of delivery actions allowed us flexibility in what we



were able to deliver as it was not prescriptive, or reliant on funding for a few specific projects, instead it covered a wide range of actions that we could prioritise and act on when funding was available.

Whilst support for delivery predominantly came from LTP2, (and it is anticipated that as the documents are now integrated support through LTP3 will continue) additional funds will continue to be sought from other sources. LTP2 capital funds have enabled us to carry out high quality improvements to the path network and from Nov 2007 to Dec 2010 we have installed 93 structures on public rights of way (prow) including 11 streetlights, 4 stiles, 6 bridges, 37 gates, 9 fingerposts, 4 interpretive panels, 2 chicanes and we surfaced 16kms of the access network including railway paths and public rights of way, a new 1.5km multi-user route and a new cycle track with LTP funding.

In addition to physical improvements, ROWIP1 allowed us an opportunity to take stock and review working practises. It stimulated thought and over the implementation period we have developed new and better ways of working that have modernised our approach. We have worked with others to develop case studies and examples of good practise that we have shared

with others through reports, published material, presentations and on-line information and through work directly with the public and groups at meetings and events.

### 2.1.2 Improvements for Communities

A high quality path network is vital to the fabric of communities in County Durham. Paths provide people with access to employment, key services such as schools and shops, opportunities to exercise and socialise and the natural environment.

During the production of ROWIP1 and throughout the delivery period, we consulted communities and invited suggestions for path improvements. We received 143 suggestions, of which 39 were suitable for inclusion in the capital works programme for improvements which was described in the previous section. We have carried out 8 of the requests for improvements, amounting to almost 14kms of the network.

These high quality improvements have knock-on benefits to the wider network as they not only make the improved path more accessible to more users but also open up access to connecting paths. Some paths are “shortcuts” which provide attractive alternatives to the road. For example, by landscaping, draining and surfacing 1,000 metres of the very well-used footpath between Spennymoor and Ferryhill we were able to open up all 2,450 metres of the path. This means that the investment created twice the benefits to users. Also, the path provides an excellent alternative to the road route which would be a kilometre longer and a less attractive option. The improvements mean that more people can now enjoy a convenient and attractive shortcut from where they live to key services in a neighbouring town.

Also, by improving 270 metres of the surface of a footpath in Wolsingham, we upgraded a vital link to the village centre for residents and consequently also opened up access to a further 500 metres of connecting path network.







Our work with communities and volunteers is a vital part of access management. Many suggestions for network improvements come from walking, cycling and riding groups, Parish and Town Councils and volunteer groups. Not only do volunteers and communities help with practical works but they are often local champions for the network encouraging use and participation from others in maintenance, improvement and promotion works such as guided walks. We will continue to support and enable volunteers and work in partnership with groups on the planning and design of improvements.

We have now devised a method for mapping and prioritising suggested improvements, using a standard set of criteria including achievability, cost and how it fulfils LTP and ROWIP objectives. So, from now on, any suggestions received from communities can be fed into this system and improvements will be prioritised. We continue to welcome suggestions from Parish and Town Councils and community groups and will work together to plan and implement those improvements which score highly.

### 2.1.3 Looking Ahead

During economic constriction, it is an opportune time to raise the profile of access management and present the case strongly for developing

routes for affordable, green and active travel and recreation. The development of high quality routes to accommodate short utility trips and longer recreational routes from urban centres were key areas which ROWIP1 supported and will continue to receive even greater investment in the implementation of ROWIP2. In comparative terms, the investment required in the access network is much less than in other infrastructure, such as roads and the returns are far greater\*. We will maximise opportunities to contribute to sustainable travel and leisure options to benefit local residents and encourage investment through tourism.

With the increased pressure on rail and road networks in the County identified in LTP3, it is crucial that walking and cycling are seen as real alternatives to the car. We will work with developers to ensure that growth areas create new, and develop existing, routes for walking and cycling as a priority. Routes need to inspire confidence in users and enable sustained lifestyle changes through good design and maintenance and we will work with developers to ensure that access on foot and cycle is attractive, convenient and safe.

Through the prioritisation of improvements and through partnership working we will continue to develop efficient ways of working to ensure investments are justified and will assist in the maintenance of a high quality network.

### 2.1.4 Participation

ROWIP1 gave us an opportunity to examine how we can address needs and demands on the network. We have been exploring and developing ways to monitor and assess participation so we can deliver the type of network which enables the most people to use it. We will be collecting information on levels of use through automatic and manual people counts

\*The average cost of constructing a mile of motorway is £29.9 million, a mile of dual carriageway £16.2 million, and single carriageway £10.6 million. In comparison, £200,000 would fund a mile of a traffic-free walking and cycling greenway (Sustrans Spring Edition, The Hub, 2010).





and through people profiling. We started this work as part of the Access Prioritisation Project and have been able to create snapshots of amount and type of use within a two hour window at specific locations within the study areas through people surveys. Users were profiled into age and type of use (utility or recreation) and from this we can build up an interesting picture of participation. In Durham City, our busiest survey site was on the riverbanks by Kingfisher Bridge with 84 people passing in 2 hours. In Seaham, our busiest site was Noses Point with 49 users. The results overwhelmingly showed that users in Seaham were predominantly recreational, in contrast to Durham where users were more evenly split between utility and recreational. The details of these surveys and results are available in the final report of the Access Prioritisation Project for Durham and Seaham (visit [www.durham.gov.uk/prow](http://www.durham.gov.uk/prow) and follow the link to the ROWIP page).

This work will enable us to better plan improvements to create a more modern and useful network that people enjoy using and looking after.

## 2.2 ROWIP2

Paths for People is a 3 year strategy with an implementation plan which outlines specific projects which bundle objectives and actions into deliverable packages. The plan considers the whole Access and Rights of Way Network (AROW)\* as previously described in ROWIP1 but will concentrate on the aspects of the network that can be developed and improved within a strategic framework and will prioritise improvements which have a proven evidence base.

We will continue to have due regard for the Equality Act 2010 and our policies to meet legal requirements and treat people fairly by considering equality of opportunity for all users. We will work with landowners and communities on inclusive design of access features to ensure that the least restrictive access option to path improvements, appropriate to landscape setting, is adopted and that information is accessible and made available through signage, online and through publications.

We will continue to have due regard for our duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to protect sensitive habitats and biodiversity in managing and improving access. We will work with others to meet legal requirements and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity in any improvement works.

As with ROWIP1 we will deal with public path orders in the spirit of the legislation. For diversions (Highways Act 10980) we will generally accept that an application to move a path away from the living or working area of a property is in the applicant's interests.

\*Although the ROWIP focuses on the Public Rights of Way Network, we recognise that this is one element within the wider access network. As such, the ROWIP is an opportunity to strategically plan and manage the access network and so it covers all elements whether they are PROW, railway paths, permissive paths, promoted routes, cycle routes, Open Access or Coastal Access Land and looks at how the different elements can work together to fulfil access needs.





## Context



## 3.1 Context

Durham County Council is a unitary authority which provides services for a 500,000 population. Delivery is through 5 front-line services.

As the Highway Authority, Durham County Council has a duty to assert and protect the public's right to use the 3,500km of public path network and also has a statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The

ROWIP offers an opportunity to take a coordinated approach to integrate with other plans, policies and strategies.

The ROWIP links many areas of work such as sport, health, physical activity, leisure, tourism, accessibility, environment, economic regeneration, planning and development and transport. The adjacent diagram shows how the plan links to other local authority plans and strategies.





The ROWIP can help deliver on the 5 key SCS priorities for change;

- ✓ Altogether Wealthier
- ✓ Altogether Better for Children and Young People
- ✓ Altogether Healthier
- ✓ Altogether Greener
- ✓ Altogether Safer

The ROWIP can help deliver on the 5 Regeneration Statement objectives;

- ✓ Thriving Durham City
- ✓ Vibrant and Successful Towns
- ✓ Competitive and Successful People
- ✓ Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Rural Communities
- ✓ A Top Location for Business

The ROWIP fits within the Authority's broader strategic framework and is influenced by overarching plans and ambitions for the County. In particular, the Regeneration Statement which has a vision to drive regeneration and economic prosperity, the Local Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and County Durham Plan will guide the County's strategic direction. The SCS, produced by the County Durham Partnership in 2010, introduced the vision for an "Altogether Better" Durham.

The plan also contributes to the County Durham Plan's Infrastructure Delivery Plan which sets out specific requirements for existing and new infrastructure.

The ROWIP can assist the delivery of the spatial, social, health and economic aspirations of these strategies through -

- the prioritisation of high quality improvements on path networks around major centres
- creating active travel opportunities for workforces
- supporting sustainable tourism opportunities
- by promoting the County as an attractive and green location for investment through a high quality path network as part of its green infrastructure
- by enabling more people to be healthy, happy and confident through an active lifestyle in an attractive and vibrant County
- and through the sustenance of a high quality environment.

## 3.2 Durham County Council's Local Transport Plan 3

ROWIP2 is a vital mechanism for delivering on LTP3 objectives and the plans shared aims. In particular, walking and cycling are identified as a common intervention benefiting all 6 LTP3 goals, listed below, through providing/improving walking and cycling routes/facilities and prioritising management of PROW in/around major settlements and key routes the ROWIP can deliver on -

- ✓ a stronger economy through regeneration
- ✓ reduce our carbon output
- ✓ safer and healthier travel
- ✓ better accessibility to services
- ✓ improve quality of life and a healthy natural environment
- ✓ maintain the transport asset.

LTP3 includes 4 specific policies for ROWIP2, these are Policy 7 Attitude Change, Policy 15 Walking, Policy 16 Cycling and Policy 31 Security. The plan also includes "improve accessibility on rights of way" as a priority for the first 3 years of delivery.



### 3.3

## County Durham's Cycling Strategy

This strategy will build on the Interim Cycling Strategy and will be produced by November 2011.



### 3.4

## Other plans

**Other plans and strategies of relevance are:**

- Area Action Plans
- County Durham Low Carbon Strategy
- Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2012
- County Durham Physical Activity Strategy
- County Durham Sport and Leisure Strategy
- Durham Biodiversity Action Plan 2007
- DCC's Countryside Strategy (to be published 2012)
- DCC's Green Infrastructure Strategy (to be published 2011)
- Durham Heritage Coast Management Plan
- Landscape partnerships management plans: Limestone Landscapes and the proposed Heart of Teesdale
- North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan
- Parish and Locality Plans.





# **Vision, Objectives, Commitment and Opportunities**





## 4.1 Our Vision

Our Vision for the access network over the next ten years is to deliver an access network fit for the 21st Century.

## 4.2 ROWIP2 Objectives

The objectives have been derived from the ambitions and aims of the influential documents described in the previous section.

- 1. Improve access infrastructure**
- 2. Contribute to a prosperous economy**
- 3. Promote good health**
- 4. Promote a high quality environment**
- 5. Influence travel choices**
- 6. Inspire active, confident and responsible communities.**

## 4.3 ROWIP2 Opportunities

The following 4 sections of ROWIP2 are titled after the main opportunities we have for delivering the objectives. These are:

- 1. Delivering a High Quality and Sustainable Access Infrastructure**
- 2. Influencing Development and Contributing to Economic Regeneration**
- 3. Promoting Quality of Life and Healthy Happy Communities**
- 4. Engaging Partnerships and Involving Communities**

Within each section is a list of policies which set out our approach to fulfilling these opportunities. There are 15 policies in total and these are tabled in the Implementation Plan (section 6, page 25). The policies will be addressed through specific measurable actions which will be delivered through core rights of way work and through 9 projects. The projects are a





mechanism for bundling actions up so they deliver on more than one objective. This approach was very effective in the implementation of ROWIP1.

### 4.3.1 Delivering a High Quality and Sustainable Access Infrastructure

We will strive to manage the network so that it fulfils its potential and is an available and enjoyable resource. Good management includes maintenance which is crucial to making the most of the network, fulfilling investment in improvements and encouraging people to use and enjoy paths. Enforcing the Highway Law is also a vital area of work and we will fulfil our duties to protect and assert the public's right to use paths. Alongside this, we will deliver high quality improvements to the network and working practices to enable sustainable, effective and efficient use of resources. The following policies demonstrate how we will do this:-

1. **Protect and maintain the network:** ensure the rights of the public are protected and asserted, secure an appropriate annual budget for maintenance, register and protect unrecorded routes
2. **Modernise the network:** create new paths where there's a need, ensure permissive access agreements are useful additions to the network, improve existing routes
3. **Prioritise improvements:** provide evidence based action plans for all main towns and villages through the Access Prioritisation Project
4. **Influence travel and lifestyle choices:** provide and promote well designed and high quality active travel routes, understand the user through the installation of automatic counters and carry out user surveys and manual counts to capture information on participation levels and profile users, incorporate access into Green Infrastructure Strategy and install distance and destination signs as part of improvement schemes



5. **Improve coastal access:** work with Natural England to improve access on the Durham Coast as part of a 'lead stretch' for implementation 2011-2016.

### 4.3.2 Influencing Development and Contributing to Economic Regeneration

Access plays a significant role in supporting a vibrant economy by providing routes for sustainable travel and tourism, linking valuable green infrastructure and enhancing quality of life.

1. **Protect and improve paths around development:** revise guidance document for planners, ensure paths are provided and improved as part of development, identify opportunities to secure access on County Council land prior to sale, ensure section 106 agreements or the community levy are utilised to benefit the network, ensure conflicts between developments and rights of way are minimised
2. **Identify and improve gateway sites to public green spaces:** deliver improvements to key entry points
3. **Deliver improvements to specific recreational routes which contribute to economic regeneration:** create new and improve existing routes which support sustainable tourism, implement a programme of inspection, improvement and promotion on key sustainable tourism routes and include links with public transport and to small businesses and Destination Development Plans.



### 4.3.3 Promoting Quality of Life and Healthy Happy Communities

The contribution paths make to healthy active lifestyles, social cohesion and pride in place cannot be over-emphasised. Paths provide opportunities for daily exercise in natural green spaces, affordable green routes to work and increase a sense of community, all of which can enhance quality of life and improve health. It is vital that promotional and community engagement work is incorporated into improvements to enable well-informed confident users of the network.

- 1. Encourage the use of access and rights of way as part of active recreation through improvement and promotion to benefit health and wellbeing:** support events that use the access network to promote healthy active lifestyles
- 2. Develop a method of enabling sustainable behaviour change towards active travel:** pilot a sustainable behaviour change project
- 3. Encourage responsible use of the network:** produce online maps of the walking and riding networks (including unclassified roads where appropriate), improve on-line promotion of self-guided walks and rides and provide information to existing promotional websites
- 4. Enhance the natural environment, including geodiversity and biodiversity, as part of improvement schemes:** adhere to legislation on protected species and incorporate enhancements.

### 4.3.4 Engaging Partnerships and Involving Communities

Working with partner organisations and communities is vital to the delivery of Paths for People. Partnership working continues to be important to secure understanding of and investment in the access network across a broad range of agendas such as health, tourism and physical activity. We will build on existing partnerships and create new links where value can be added. Community involvement continues to be a main focus for us and we will support communities by enabling management and encouraging use of the network.

- 1. Continue to support and enable communities and volunteers to assist in access management:** deliver through the Parish Paths Partnership and DVCRS AAP/AAPR schemes and through work on Access Prioritisation with Parish and Town Councils and AAPs
- 2. Maintain and develop partnerships which can secure resources, support improvements and sustain use of the network:** prioritise Walking for Health and guided walk and ride routes for maintenance and improvement, maintain self-guided promoted routes through AAPR scheme and P3
- 3. Work with landowners to manage access across private land:** promote 25% grants, promote good working practice by distributing guidance on access management.







## Conclusion



## Conclusion

Paths for People is our plan to develop and deliver a high quality path network fit for 21st Century travel, recreation and enjoyment.

The plan follows on from ROWIP1 but is now integrated with LTP3. It continues to promote the vital contribution that the access and rights of way network makes to wider economic, health, environmental and social agendas and corporate goals. ROWIP2 focuses on paths which serve specific strategic purposes such as those which provide important utility and recreational routes around the main towns and villages of the County, and those which offer opportunities for sustainable tourism and physical activity.





The background image shows two equestrians on horses. The equestrian on the left is wearing a high-visibility orange vest over a light-colored shirt and a black helmet. The equestrian on the right is wearing a dark blue jacket and a black helmet. A circular inset on the right side of the image shows a close-up of the equestrian in the blue jacket. The entire image has a yellowish tint.

## **Implementation Plan 2011-2014**



## 6.1 Path Projects

As previously described, ROWIP2 will be implemented through the policies and actions set out either through core Access and Rights of Way work or through projects. These will either be new projects or existing projects which can be further developed. We think this is an effective way of delivering the objectives as the projects will often address several policies at once.

### The projects are:

- Access Prioritisation
- Accessible Structure Zones
- Active Miles
- Cycle Super Routes
- Gateways
- Green Exercise
- Greenways
- Promotion & Information
- Sustainable Behaviour Change Pilot.



## 6.2 Path Project Details

### ● Access Prioritisation

This innovative project, developed and trialled during 2009 and 2010, helps us proactively manage the network by creating evidence-based prioritised plans for path improvements. We will continue to develop the project and will:

1. establish the project as the new measure to assessing the quality of the network (replacing BVPI 178)
2. establish which elements of the project can be delivered in-house and which require extra resource
3. audit key settlements over the 3 years of the plan
4. expand the project to include monitoring and evaluation through installation of people counters and carrying out manual counts

5. expand the project to include marketing and promotion of improved routes and encourage use through partner working.

### ● Accessible Structure Zones

We will carry out targeted surveys and replacement programmes (stile and gates) in 6 Parishes throughout the life of the Implementation Plan to make the paths more accessible and attractive in these areas. If successful we will seek to roll out the system across the County. This project aims to transform paths in areas of greatest need, whether this is because the paths are unsupported by P3 groups, Access Prioritisation improvements or because the paths are well used or there is demand for easier access. We will adopt the “least



restrictive” access options that are appropriate to the landscape setting. We will support volunteers to carry out the path surveys and draw up a list of priority routes for improvement based on a standard list of criteria. This will help focus resources into the “most important local paths” and will assist us in developing a more strategic approach to network improvements.

- **Active Miles** is an active travel project which will deliver strategically planned, high quality 1 mile walk and 5 mile cycle routes for travel, recreation and health around key settlements. This project will be delivered in tandem with the Cycling Strategy. This fits in with the Change for Life 2012 campaign (20mins to walk one mile, and 12 mins to cycle 2 miles).

- **Cycle Super Routes**

New super cycle highways will be implemented in tandem with the Cycling Strategy and will provide high quality routes to enable an increase in all types of cycling. More detail will follow in the Cycling Strategy due to be published by November 2011.

- **Gateways**

We will develop a project which identifies and improves key access points into greenspaces and the countryside through smart design of entrance features, crossing points, signage and interpretive material to ensure people feel safe, welcome, confident and informed when using these paths so that they are able to enjoy their experience.

- **Green Exercise**

We will continue to work with the East Durham Green Exercise Partnership (EDGE) to deliver the partnership aims;

to encourage and enable people in Easington District to participate in organised or self led Green Exercise Activities, in order to reduce health inequalities and increase well-being;

to inspire behavioural change to enable participation;

to influence the design, quality and availability of green spaces to encourage participation.

We plan to roll out the work to other areas in the County once it is piloted in East Durham.

- **Greenways**

We will develop a strategic network of Greenways which are attractive, accessible multi-user routes. We have initiated this with the creation of the route at Witton le Wear and will look to develop a wider network when funds are available. Greenways can be;

Greenways to... Health / Travel / Fitness / Visit / Fun / Adventure / Play and the routes can be promoted on a local basis to maximise the opportunities they offer.

The project aims to influence transport choices and provide high quality routes for commuters and for recreational use which can potentially attract visitors. These routes will be newly created routes or improvements to existing public rights of way. They will be high quality and attractive in design with a strong emphasis on the incorporation of environmental enhancements for biodiversity.

We will involve relevant user groups such as Surestart, disability, pushchair groups, equestrian, walking and cycling groups and individuals, community groups and Parish Councils to ensure the routes are adopted locally and reflect local needs.

We will ensure links to local businesses are included in plans i.e. liveries, cafes for walkers and cyclists etc.

- **Promotion & Information**

We want to improve the information we make available to the public. We will develop the online Definitive Map to include options for adding the wider path network (such as Railway



Paths and permissive routes) and will create accessible online maps and downloads.

- **Sustainable Behaviour Change Pilot**

We will deliver a project which achieves long-term behaviour change to active travel through a pilot project to work with a target community on a specific behaviour type using the established Community-Based Social Marketing approach. This is a tried and tested technique which works through a specific process to identify and address barriers to change. We will carry out the pilot “to encourage more staff to travel sustainably to work at County Hall” with learning and financial support from the North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership and the National Social Marketing Centre.

## 6.3 Implementation Plan Key

**Policy:**

Our approach to delivering the Opportunities

**Action:**

The specific task to be delivered

**PI (Performance Indicator):**

The measure we will use to report progress

**Project:**

As detailed in previous section

**Lead:**

The team / partners involved in delivery

**Objectives:**

The ROWIP Objectives addressed

**Timeframe:**

The timeframe for delivery

Yr1 = quick wins, deliverable by Dec 2012

Yr2/3 = actions deliverable before 2014

**CI (Continual Improvements)** = ongoing throughout and beyond the life of the plan.

**Cost:**

-£ = no additional cost, will use existing staff resource, may lead to efficiency savings

£ = up to £10,000

££ = £10-100,000

£££ = £100-300,000

££££ = more than £300,000.

## 6.4 Monitoring

We will measure the achievements of ROWIP2 by assessing the numbers of actions delivered and performance indicators reached in annual action plans and a final report in 2014/5.

The CDLAF will act as an independent critical friend to assess progress against the Implementation Plan through regular updates and reporting at LAF meetings.

We will use new methods for assessing the success of the plan through evaluating data on participation levels (use of the network) and on the numbers of priority path improvements delivered.

## 6.5 Funding

We have used the Implementation Plan to produce an Action Plan with costings for Year 1 and will do so for each financial year.

Funding for Year 1 will be predominantly from LTP3 and partnership projects such as Limestone Landscapes and this has already been secured.

## 6.6 Implementation Plan

On the following 4 pages:



Opportunities							
1. Delivering a High Quality and Sustainable Access Infrastructure							
Policy	Action	Delivery					
		PI	Project	Lead & partners	Objectives	Priority	Cost
1. Protect and maintain the network	1. Ensure the rights of the public are protected and asserted	Number of enforcement cases successfully completed		AROW, landowners	All	CI	-£
	2. Secure an appropriate annual budget for maintenance	Agree annual maintenance budget		AROW, Transport	All	CI	£££
	3. Register and protect unrecorded rights	Number of paths registered		AROW	All	CI	£
2. Modernise the network	4. Create new paths where there's a need	Create 2 new paths	Greenways Access Prioritisation	AROW, landowners	All	CI	£££
	5. Ensure permissive access agreements are useful additions to the network	Number of permissive links checked and created	Access Prioritisation	AROW, Natural England, landowners	All	CI	£
	6. Improve existing routes	Number of paths improved	Access Prioritisation Greenways Active Miles Accessibility Target Areas Green Exercise	AROW, EDGE, LL, Countryside, landowners, EDGE, LL	All	CI	£££
3. Prioritise improvements	7. Provide evidence based action plans for main towns and villages through the Access Prioritisation Project	Number of action plans created and implemented	Access Prioritisation	AROW, Natural England, Planning, developers, landowners, external assistance, EDGE, LL	All	Yr1	£££
4. Influence travel and lifestyle choices	8. Understand the user through the installation of automatic counters and carry out user surveys and manual counts to capture information on participation levels and profile of users	Number of counters installed and profiles undertaken	Access Prioritisation Active Miles Promotion & Information	AROW, Traffic	All, esp 5	Yr1	££
	9. Incorporate into Green Infrastructure	Policy included in GI Strategy Number of link improvements	Greenways Access Prioritisation Gateways	Planning, GI, AROW, EDGE, LL	3, 4, 6	Yr1	££
	10. Provide and promote well designed, high quality Active Travel routes	Number of Active Travel routes created and promoted	Active Miles Promotion & Information Greenways	AROW, Transport, landowners	All, esp 5	Yr2/3	££££
5. Improve coastal access	11. Work with Natural England to improve access on the Durham Coast as part of a 'lead stretch' for implementation 2011-2016	Miles of coastal access improved		Natural England, DHCP, AROW, Countryside, landowners	1, 4, 6	Yr2/3	-£



Opportunities							
2. Influencing Development and Contributing to Economic Regeneration							
Policy	Action	Delivery					
		PI	Project	Lead & partners	Objectives	Priority	Cost
1.Protect and improve paths around development	12. Revise guidance document for planners	Revised document produced		AROW, Planning	All, esp 1 and 5	CI	-£
	13. Ensure paths are provided and improved as part of development	Number of paths improved	Access Prioritisation Active Miles Gateways Greenways Promotion and Information	AROW, developers	All	CI	-£
	14. Identify opportunities to secure access on County Council land prior to sale	Number of paths protected, improved or created	Access Prioritisation Greenways	AROW, CDLAF, Assets	All	Yr2/3	-£
2.Identify and improve gateway sites	15. Deliver improvements to key entry points	Number of gateways improved	Access Prioritisation Gateways Green Exercise	AROW, landowners	1, 6	Yr2/3	£
3.Deliver improvements which contribute to economic regeneration	16. Create new and improve existing routes which support sustainable tourism	Number of routes created / improved	Promotion & Information Greenways	AROW, Visit County Durham, Countryside, landowners	2,6	Yr2/3	£££
	17. Implement a programme of inspection, improvement and promotion on key sustainable tourism routes and include links with public transport and to small businesses and Destination Development Plans	Inspection programme introduced	Greenways Access Prioritisation Promotion & Information	AROW, P3, DVCRS, Transport, Visit County Durham	2,6	Yr2/3	££



Opportunities							
3. Promoting Quality of Life and Healthy Happy Communities							
Policy	Action	Delivery					
		PI	Project	Lead & partners	Objectives	Priority	Cost
1.Encourage the use of access and rights of way as part of active recreation through improvement and promotion to benefit health and wellbeing	18. Support events that use the access network to promote healthy active lifestyles	Number of events supported	Promotion & Information  Sustainable Behaviour Change Pilot  Green Exercise	AROW, EDGE, LL, CDLAF, Sport and Leisure, local groups and clubs	2,6	CI	£
2.Develop a method of enabling sustainable behaviour change towards active travel	19. Pilot a sustainable behaviour change project	Project undertaken	Sustainable Behaviour Change Pilot  Active Miles  Promotion & Information  Gateways  Greenways  Green Exercise	AROW, Transport, NCSM & NEIEP	2, 3, 5, 6	Yr1	££
3.Encourage responsible use of the network	20. Produce online maps of the walking and riding networks	Online maps produced	Sustainable Behaviour Change Pilot  Active Miles  Promotion & Information  Gateways  Greenways  Green Exercise	AROW, Transport, Countryside, walking and riding groups	3,4,5,6	Yr2/3	£
	21. Improve promotion of self-guided walks, rides	Online promotion of self-guided walks	Sustainable Behaviour Change Pilot  Promotion & Information  Green Exercise	AROW, Countryside, walking and riding groups, CDLAF	3,4,5,6	Yr2/3	£
	22. Provide information to existing promotional websites	Number of websites contacted	Promotion & Information	AROW, key stakeholders	3, 4, 5, 6	Yr2/3	-£
4.Enhance the natural environment, including geodiversity and biodiversity, as part of improvement schemes	23. Adhere to legislation on protected species and incorporate enhancements	Number of ecological assessments carried out  Number of schemes delivering improvements for biodiversity and geodiversity	All	AROW, Ecology, GI, Countryside, EDGE, LL	3, 4, 6	CI	£



Opportunities							
4. Engaging Partnerships and Involving Communities							
Policy	Action	Delivery					
		PI	Project	Lead & partners	Objectives	Priority	Cost
1.Continue to support and enable communities and volunteers to assist in access management	24. Deliver through the Parish Paths Partnership and DVCRS AAP/AAPR schemes and through work on Access Prioritisation with Parish and Town Councils and AAPs	Number of P3 Groups and AAP/AAPR	Promotion & Information	AROW, P3, DVCRS, Countryside	1, 4, 6	CI	££
2.Maintain and develop partnerships which can secure resources, support improvements and sustain use of the network	25. Prioritise Walking for Health and guided walk and ride routes for maintenance and improvement	Routes mapped and added to annual maintenance list	Promotion & Information  Active Miles  Greenways  Green Exercise	AROW, Natural England, Sport and Leisure, CSNs, P3	1, 3, 4, 6	Yr1	-£
	26. Maintain self-guided promoted routes though AAPR scheme and P3	Percentage of routes surveyed and maintained	Promotion & Information	AROW, P3, DVCRS, Countryside	1, 4, 6	CI	-£
3.Work with landowners to manage access across private land	27. Encourage take up of 25% grants – produce form and promote with landowners	Form produced and distributed to landowners. Number of applications.	Promotion & Information	AROW, CDLAF	1	Yr1	£
	28. Promote good working practice by distributing guidance on access management	Number of Guidance leaflets distributed	Promotion & Information	AROW	1	Yr2/3	-£





## Appendices



## 7.1 National Indicators of most relevance are;

<b>NI 6</b>	Participation in regular volunteering
<b>NI 8</b>	Adult participation in sport
<b>NI 167</b>	Congestion - average journey time per mile during the morning peak
<b>NI 175</b>	Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling
<b>NI 186</b>	Per capita reductions in carbon emissions in the LA area
<b>NI 188</b>	Adapting to climate change*
<b>NI 197</b>	Improved local biodiversity - active management of local sites
<b>NI 198</b>	Children travelling to school, mode of transport usually used.

\*A Risk Assessment on the impacts of extreme weather and a changing climate on public rights of way and greenways has been completed to help work towards NI 188. Increasing need for maintenance is a recurring potential consequence of the risks identified.

## 7.2 Bibliography

In addition to the literature referenced in ROWIP1;

- **Natural England - No Charge?** Valuing the Natural Environment 2009
- **DfT Delivering Sustainable Low Carbon Travel:** An Essential Guide for Authorities Nov 2009
- *LGiU Natural England; Walk This Way* - recognising value in active health prevention March 2010
- **DCC's Local Transport Plan 3**
- *Doug McKenzie-Mohr and William Smith; Fostering Sustainable Behavior* - an introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing
- *Sustrans; The Hub* Spring Edition 2010

## 7.3 Proposed Partners for Delivery

The ROWIP will require joint working with many service areas within DCC to ensure opportunities are maximised. We will also work with many partner organisations including user groups, landowners and managers, other associations and organisations, partnerships, Defra, Natural England, neighbouring highway authorities and Parish and Town Councils.

## 7.4 Glossary

AAP	Area Action Partnership	DVCRS	Durham Voluntary Countryside Ranger Service
AaP	Adopt a Path	EDGE	East Durham Green Exercise Partnership
AAPR	Adopt a Promoted Route	GI	Green Infrastructure
AROW	Access and Rights of Way	LL	Limestone Landscapes
ATMaP	Area Tourism Management Plan	LTP	Local Transport Plan
CBSM	Community-Based Social Marketing	NEIEP	North East Efficiency and Improvement Partnership
CDLAF	County Durham Local Access Forum	NERO	North East Rover Owners Club
CROW	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	P3	Parish Paths Partnership
C'side	DCC Countryside Service	ROWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan
DCC	Durham County Council	RED	Regeneration and Economic Development



## 7.5 List of Consultees

### USER GROUPS

Byways and Bridleways Trust  
British Horse Society  
Cyclists' Touring Club  
Durham Mountain Sports  
Land Access Recreation Association  
Open Spaces Society

British Canoe Union  
Council for the Protection of Rural England  
Durham City Cycling Forum  
Durham University Mountaineering Club  
NERO  
Ramblers

### LANDOWNERS / MANAGERS

Church Commissioners  
Croxdale Estates  
Forest Enterprise  
Mortham Estates  
National Trust  
Scargill Estates  
Strathmore Estates  
Trustees of Lord Crewe  
Woodland Trust

Country Land and Business Association  
Durham University  
Lambton Estate  
National Farmers Union  
Raby Estates  
Smiths Gore  
The Moorland Association  
Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Service

### OTHER GROUPS / ASSOCIATIONS / ORGANISATIONS

BLIND Life  
County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust  
Disability North  
Environment Agency  
Groundwork Trust  
Sport England  
Teesdale Disability Access Forum

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers  
County Durham Environment Trust  
Durham Wildlife Trust  
Gateway Wheelers  
Living Streets  
Sustrans  
Youth Hostel Association

### PARTNERSHIPS

Area Action Partnerships  
County Durham Local Access Forum  
Durham Heritage Coast  
Durham Voluntary Countryside Ranger Service (DVCRS)  
East Durham Green Exercise Partnership  
Limestone Landscapes  
Parish Paths Partnership Groups

Barnard Castle Vision  
County Durham Sport  
Durham City Vision  
Durham's Ramblers Liaison Group  
Heart of Teesdale  
North Pennines AONB  
Visit County Durham

### GOVERNMENT

Department of Farming and Rural Affairs  
Neighbouring Highway Authorities  
Town Councils

Natural England  
Parish Councils

Photographs courtesy of Durham Heritage Coast Partnership, NHS, Sport England and Durham County Council.



The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) is a statutory document that enables Highway Authorities to create a more modern access and rights of way network.

We have created a plan which contributes to wider agendas including the environment, physical activity, health, social inclusion and sustainable travel.

The access and rights of way network provides more than 3,650kms of opportunities for walking, cycling and riding for travel, recreation and enjoyment across County Durham.

Improvements to the access and rights of way network will help to;

- ✓ provide sustainable means of travel to work, school and key services and reduce the reliance on cars
- ✓ contribute to the quality of people's lives, their fitness, health and wellbeing
- ✓ increase accessibility and opportunities to enjoy tourist destinations and the countryside
- ✓ enhance the environment.

For more information contact Victoria Lloyd  
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