



Lancashire Rights of Way Improvement Plan

2015 ~ 2025

Consultation Draft



Blackpool Council



Public rights of way and wider access in Lancashire

Contents

1. Overview

1.1	Introduction to public rights of way and wider access in Lancashire	2
1.2	RoWIP purpose and scope	3
1.2.1	The assessment of need	3
1.2.2	The statement of actions	3
1.2.3	The RoWIP process	3
1.2.4	The RoWIP in context	4
1.2.5	The Local Access Forum	5
1.2.6	Strategic Environmental Assessment	5

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.1	Assessment of public rights of way and wider public access in Lancashire	6
2.1.1	Lancashire Overview	6
2.1.2	The extent of the public rights of way network in Lancashire	7
2.1.3	The condition of the public rights of way network in Lancashire	8
2.2	Wider access opportunities considered as part of this plan	9
2.2.1	Promoted routes	9
2.2.2	Access Land ~ open access	10
2.2.3	Permissive/concessionary routes	11
2.2.4	Coastal access	12
2.2.5	Local Parks and open spaces	13
2.2.6	Country parks and picnic sites	14
2.2.7	Roads (including footways and roadside verges)	15
2.3	Assessment of user needs	16
2.3.1	Natural England MENE survey	16
2.3.2	Understanding the needs of different types of users	19
2.3.3	Information about public rights of way and wider access	20
2.3.4	Volunteering	21

3. Our Themes and Actions

3.1	An overview	22
3.2	Delivering our themes and actions	22
3.2.1	Principles we will apply when delivering our themes and actions	22
	Theme 1 ~ Condition and connectivity of the wider access network	23
	Theme 2 ~ Education and information provision	25
	Theme 3 ~ Twenty to thirty minute walks	27
	Theme 4 ~ Multi-user routes	28
	Theme 5 ~ Encourage community involvement in improving wider access	29
	Theme 6 ~ The Definitive Map and other records	30
3.2.2	Implementing the RoWIP	31

Appendix 1: List of consultees	32
---------------------------------------	----

Appendix 2: Wider access

Access Land in Lancashire	34
Country Parks and Woodland Sites Managed by Lancashire County Council	35
Local Parks and Green Spaces in Lancashire	37

n.b. In this document 'Lancashire' refers to the parts of the historical County of Lancashire covered by the administrative areas of Lancashire County Council (LCC), Blackburn with Darwen Council (BwD) and Blackpool Council (BC). This Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) is a joint document of the 3 authorities ~ hence 'our', 'us' or 'we' refers to the 3 authorities.

1.1 Introduction to Public Rights of Way and wider access in Lancashire

Lancashire is blessed with large areas of countryside that can rival that found anywhere else in the country. Much of Lancashire's countryside is criss-crossed by a substantial network of public rights of way (PROW) over which the public have the right to pass and re-pass. The PROW network comprises public footpaths, which are for pedestrian use only; public bridleways for pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists and public byways which can be used by pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists and vehicles (in the case of Byways Open to All Traffic, motorised vehicles.) There are also permissive routes¹, mostly for walkers but some for cyclists and equestrians. In addition to these linear routes are the country parks, picnic sites, other parks, village greens and public open space managed by the county and unitary councils, district councils and other organisations that provide access to green space in Lancashire. For the more adventurous members of the public there is the Access Land² which includes large areas of moorland but also smaller pockets of land, particularly commons.

The PROW network provides a valuable recreational resource for use by our communities and visitors to Lancashire alike. PROWs also offer a sustainable method of travel by promoting use of alternative modes of transport to cars. They contribute towards health and well-being initiatives and play a part in the economic development of Lancashire by improving quality of life for residents and encouraging tourism. As they are free to access and enjoy, they can also promote social inclusion.

¹ A permissive, permitted or concessionary path is not a public right of way, but a path whose use is allowed by the landowner.

² You can access some land across England and Wales without having to use paths - this land is known as 'open access land' or 'access land'. Access land includes mountains, moors, heaths and downs that are privately owned. It also includes common land registered with the local council. Your right to access this land is called the right, or freedom, to roam.

³ Local Authorities are required to keep a 'register of Common Land and Village Greens' as well as details of access land for their areas and are referred to as the 'registration authority'.

Our responsibilities in respect of the PROW network include:

- Signposting and waymarking of footpaths, bridleways and byways;
- Keeping up to date the Definitive Map and Statement which is the legal record of public rights of way;
- Maintaining the surface of a public right of way to a standard appropriate for the purpose for which it is used;
- Maintaining bridges over natural river courses;
- Keeping the public rights of way open and available by ensuring that other partners fulfil their responsibilities.

Our responsibilities in respect of our parks, picnic areas, etc. is generally only that of a landowner but they are considered a valuable part of the access to green space provided by the authorities. We have no maintenance responsibility for parks and other open space owned by other organisations or individuals, except where this is specified in an access agreement with the owners, but we are the Registration Authority for commons and town/village greens and Access Authority³ for access land within our respective areas.

In addition, we are required by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to prepare and publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP), which sets out how we intend to manage and improve our public rights of way network in order to meet the Government's aim of better provision for walkers, cyclists, equestrians and people with mobility problems. The existing guidance 'Rights of Way Improvement Plans: Statutory Guidance to Local Highway Authorities in England' was published in November 2002 and explains the statutory requirement to assess and review Rights of Way Improvement plans not more than 10 years after publication and at intervals of not more than 10 years thereafter.

Defra has confirmed that the existing guidance is still valid and consistent with current objectives. However authorities have been asked to specifically consider access to woodland as well as other land types when reviewing their plans.

1.2 RoWIP Purpose and Scope

This RoWIP consists of a summary of the Assessment as well as a Statement of Action. The assessment sets out the adequacy of the rights of way and wider access network ('the Assessment of Need') and the 'Statement of Action' sets out how we will work with others to address the demands and needs identified in the assessment.

1.2.1 The assessment of need:

- The extent to which local rights of way meet present and future needs of the public,
- The opportunities presented by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the authorities' area with particular emphasis on footpaths, cycle tracks, bridleways and restricted byways
- The accessibility of the local rights of way network to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems

1.2.2 The statement of actions:

- Manage public rights of way
- Secure an improved network of public rights of way
- Improve wider public access

1.2.3 The ROWIP process

Lancashire's first RoWIP was produced in 2005 and was the starting point for the assessment of need when preparing this revised RoWIP. We have analysed the most recent information we have available from relevant condition and user surveys to help us assess the overall condition of the network and the needs of users. We have considered the demand for change to the network indicated by public path orders and definitive map modification orders.

In terms of user need the 2005 RoWIP used evidence from a number of sources including panel discussions with the Lancashire Local Access Forum (LLAF), district councils and all three highways authorities.

There was also information drawn from a number of studies conducted around this time such as 'cycling demand', 'access all areas' and 'assessing demand in relation to countryside access'. Much of this evidence is still valid but has been built on to provide evidence for this revised RoWIP. The key source of evidence utilised is the more recent Natural England Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) study data to provide a valuable insight into current attitudes and trends. We considered the needs of specific users by working closely with the LAF and analysing feedback obtained from cycling and Local Transport Plan (LTP) consultations. In order to assess the accessibility of the network to the blind and partially sighted and people with mobility problems we have consulted widely with user groups such as disabled ramblers and Galloway's blind walking groups. We currently don't know what proportion of the network is currently sufficiently accessible to the majority of disabled users and we are unclear about exact problem areas but overall it appears that there isn't adequate information. Our themes and actions pick this up and aim to address this lack of information.

As well as considering local population projections to help us understand need and demand in the future we have also considered the findings in key research such as the Natural England MENE study and the Rossendale Task and Finish report on PROW as well as local intelligence from our officers.

We also looked at opportunities around wider access via access land, permissive and concessionary routes as well as country parks, parks, picnic sites and coastal access.

Throughout the RoWIP process we have sought input from the three highway authorities and have encouraged the views of district and parish councils, members of the LAF along with other statutory consultees. A full list is provided in Appendix 1

1.2.4 The ROWIP in context

In preparing this RoWIP we have considered the councils' overarching priorities which include:

- To prepare for the future
- To support the most vulnerable
- To boost the Lancashire economy, both creating and protecting jobs

Implementation of the RoWIP can contribute towards our corporate priorities and also help achieve many of the objectives and goals in the following strategies and plans:

- Local Transport Plans (LTP3)

The RoWIP is a daughter document to the LTP's which define the transport goals and priorities for Lancashire. Each Lancashire highway authority has its own LTP and these suggest improvements to the network that will secure safe and convenient access to services, reduction in congestion, more attractive neighbourhoods and carbon reductions combined with the goal of making walking and cycling more safe, convenient and attractive, particularly in the more disadvantaged areas of Lancashire. Improvements to the rights of way network in key locations may offer a real alternative to using the car as well as improving and enhancing neighbourhoods. Actions identified in this RoWIP aim to build on this with a focus on identifying and improving access in key locations across Lancashire and improving provision for cyclists.

- Asset Management Plans.⁴

The asset management plans set out the maintenance priorities for a range of the authorities' assets including public rights of way. They identify how these assets will be maintained, how resources will be allocated and prioritised. These plans will be key in prioritising investment in the rights of way network in the future.

- Health and Wellbeing

Lancashire has a wide variation in levels of income and wealth with pockets of deprivation found across all parts of the area, however there is also abundant green space that is already enjoyed by many people for leisure and relaxation but can be further exploited for health and wellbeing.

The rights of way network has a valuable role to play by providing a free and safe to use network of accessible routes for walking, cycling and other methods of sustainable travel that will enable healthy behaviours. By prioritising and promoting routes in and around the communities which suffer most from health inequalities and involving communities where possible through volunteering in the development and maintenance of the network the service can fully contribute towards addressing the wider determinants of health.

- Economic development

It is widely accepted that a quality rights of way network and access to green space has influenced tourism and economic development. Where benefits can be realised this RoWIP will continue to promote development of the network to take advantage of opportunities as they arise and as resources permit.

- Environmental

Our environmental priorities are closely aligned to facilitating good health and wellbeing and promoting resilient communities by targeting projects and resources to Lancashire's most vulnerable communities. This RoWIP supports these aims by prioritising our efforts in those communities experiencing health inequalities and by increasing provision within the network for the visually impaired and disabled users.

⁴LCC has a TAMP (Transport Asset Management Plan), BC and BwD have HAMPs (Highways Asset Management Plans).

- Equality, Diversity and Cohesion

A key element of the RoWIP is the requirement to consider the specific needs of partially sighted and disabled users in order to improve provision. We consider that the themes and actions identified in this plan all positively contribute towards making an overall improvement to provision for disabled and visually impaired users and actions respond directly to feedback from users. Actions will also be developed to explore how we can better encourage Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups to use the rights of way network as well as developing a strategy to encourage community involvement through volunteering.



1.2.5 The Local Access Forum

Local access forums are independent groups of volunteers established under section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way CROW Act 2000. They are statutory bodies advising on improving access on land and to water for recreation and utility (e.g. routes to school, work and other local amenities) purposes and making the links between improved access and the wide benefits that improve overall quality of life such as health, sustainable transport, economy, accessibility, tourism and enhancing landscapes.

Their role is primarily strategic and intended to achieve a consensus view taking into consideration the needs of both land-managers and access users, statutory implications and wider environmental, social and economic factors to influence and develop plans, policy and broader decision making as opposed to focusing on specific locations/paths.

The Lancashire Local Access Forum (LLAF) was established in 2002 and is the joint forum for the area administered by Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council. The LLAF has played a key role in providing support and advising on the development of this plan and will continue to do so during its lifetime.

1.2.6 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive EC 2001/42/EC requires that all new strategies are assessed for their environmental impact. This plan has undergone an appraisal process and it was felt that the RoWIP has no negative effect on the environment and quality of life for residents and visitors and in fact has many beneficial effects. As a result a SEA was not considered to be necessary for this plan.

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.1 Assessment of Public Rights of Way and Wider Access in Lancashire

2.1.1 Lancashire overview

Population projections for Lancashire reveal that the resident population is expected to increase by around 5% over the twenty five year period up to 2037 resulting in a population of 1.539 million. The analysis by age reveals a predicted decrease in almost all age groups between 0-64 years but with a substantial increase in all age groups from 65 years. The oldest age group of 90 years + is predicted to rise by 229% over the 25 year period. What we do know is that the prevalence of disability rises with all age groups. Currently around 6% of children in the UK are disabled compared to 15% of working age adults and 45% of adults over state pension age. A strategy for older people has been developed for Lancashire which highlights the opportunities and challenges of an aging population which seeks to create an environment where older people feel empowered to live their lives in the way they choose and where skills and expertise are valued. One way in which the public rights of way network can help is by providing free and accessible opportunities for people to access and enjoy local green space, to allow people to walk and take physical exercise as well as space for communities to come together to help tackle issues such as social isolation as well as physical illness which may become more of an issue in an aging population.

We know that there are health inequalities across Lancashire, pockets of deprivation where health and social problems are more prevalent. Access to green space along with a quality environment is known to have positive health benefits for communities and a well maintained rights of way network providing links to these can play an important role in promoting health and wellbeing.

Summary of issues: There are many factors that impact on health and wellbeing with poor access to green space along with social isolation being amongst them. If managed appropriately the rights of way network can contribute positively to addressing these by providing links to quality green space and by promoting community resilience through engaging communities in the process.

Response: Promote the rights of way network to new users, particularly older people and those living in deprived communities. Ensure that there are accessible and easy routes suitable for all ages and abilities close to where people live that provide additional infrastructure like benches to make them more attractive to elderly users. Prioritise maintenance and seek to upgrade routes connecting deprived neighbourhoods to green space and where possible involve communities in the design and delivery of services

Action/s: 1.0 1.8 2.0 5.0

Section 2.1.1 ~ Lancashire overview

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

“Well-being is what makes you want to get up in the morning”

~ Dr Atul Gawande, 2014 Reith Lecture

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.1.2 The extent of the rights of way network in Lancashire

Lancashire has a network of over 6,000 km of public rights of way including 500 km of bridleways and 30 km of byways. However these are not evenly spread across the area, especially bridleways and byways and whilst major rivers influenced the connectivity of the network historically the modern effects of much faster traffic on railways and roads and greatly increased flows on the latter have served to sever parts of the network and reduce the confidence of potential users to actually use the PROW. The historical network in the vicinity of new developments is often no longer fit for purpose both in its connections and construction ~ parents taking children to school cannot push a buggy or keep school uniform clean using a footpath over a stile and across an arable field and the footpath may not start from the housing estate. The three highway authorities have a statutory responsibility for these public rights of way. We also have responsibility for the Definitive Map and Statement which is the legal record⁵ of public rights of way in Lancashire.

As part of this assessment we have analysed the definitive map along with the numbers of definitive map modification orders (DMMO's)⁶ and public path orders (PPO's)⁷ over the last five years.

In total we have been dealing with approximately 80 DMMO's which indicates the number of anomalies in the network and suggests that the current network is not sufficient and that there is still a demand for something different. Similarly in the same time period we have been dealing with approximately 160 PPO's. This indicates that there is a demand to alter the current network in order to accommodate the needs of users and landowners. We are aware that there is a backlog of DMMO's which need to be processed by 2026 in order to ensure their inclusion on the definitive map. This is a priority to ensure that valuable routes are not lost.

Summary of issues: There is an increasing urgency to process DMMO's in a timely fashion to ensure that valuable routes are not lost past the government cut-off date of 2026⁸. There is a pressing need to process PPO's in order to modernise the network with respect to current land use. Severance by rail and major roads can act as a deterrent to use. New developments should be encouraged to include provision for updating the PROW network in condition and alignment.

Response: Improve the efficiency in processing DMMO's to increase the turnaround and prevent loss of routes after 2026. Improve the efficiency in processing PPO's to modernise the network.

Action/s: 1.4 1.5 6.0 6.1 6.2

Section 2.1.2 ~ The extent of public rights of way in Lancashire:

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

⁵The legal record of 'definitive map' is a map prepared by a surveying authority which is a legal record of the public's rights of way in one of four categories (footpath, bridleway, restricted byway or byway open to all traffic).

⁶A definitive map modification order or DMMO is a way of amending the map and statement to ensure it is correct.

⁷A public path order or PPO can create, extinguish or divert a public footpath or bridleway.

⁸The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 set a cut-off date in 2026 for ancient public rights of way to be added to the Definitive Map and Statement where they are not currently recorded or in use.

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.1.3 The condition of the public rights of way network

We have a statutory duty to ensure that all PROW is correctly recorded, signed and available for all legitimate users at all times. We are also required by statute to ensure that all PROW, including the surfaces, are kept free from obstruction and defects. Whilst this is a statutory duty and refers to the entire length of the network it is necessary to prioritise reported defects and issues as they arise to ensure that those which affect the greatest number of people to the greatest extent are dealt with first.

Up until 2008 local authorities were legally required to report on the condition of the network via performance indicator (BVPI 178) and these were compared with those of other English local authorities. BVPI 178 measured the percentage of total length of public rights of way on the Definitive Map that were deemed to be signed and easy to use by members of the public. Signed and easy to use is defined as:-

- signposted or way marked where they leave the road in accordance with the authority's duty under s.27 of the Countryside Act 1968 and to the extent necessary to allow users to follow the path;
- free from unlawful obstructions and other interference, including overhanging vegetation, of the public's right of passage;
- Surface and lawful barriers such as stiles, gates, etc. in a good repair and to a standard necessary to enable the public to use the way without undue inconvenience.

Whilst there was no legal obligation to continue this survey after 2008 many authorities have continued to survey at least 5% (i.e. approx. 280 km) of public rights of way each year since. The information we have regarding network condition in Lancashire since 2008 is shown below:

PROW Condition Surveys 2008/09 ~ 2012/13 PROWs classed as 'easy to use'				
2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/11	2012/13
70%	70%	66%	61%	55%

Our data reveals that overall satisfaction with the rights of way network has declined over the last five years. This is borne out by reports of defects and requests from users via parish councils and various user groups. The poor surface condition and standards of maintenance of routes across the county has been raised consistently as an issue throughout this assessment and this has been picked up in the statement of actions.

Summary of issues: Overall satisfaction of the public rights of way network in terms of being classed as 'easy to use' has fallen consistently over the last five years.

Response: We need to identify key user routes and prioritise our maintenance in order to secure improvements on the most heavily used, or potentially used, routes.

Action/s: 1.2

Section 2.1.3 ~ The condition of the public rights of way network:

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:

www.lancashire.gov.uk

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.2 Wider access opportunities considered as part of this plan:

In addition to the public rights of way network we are also responsible for managing a number of local and long distance promoted routes, conservation areas, access land, parks and other public spaces which all contribute to the overall green space network. The following section provides a summary of the extent, use and condition of these assets along with issues identified.

2.2.1 Promoted routes

There are numerous promoted routes across Lancashire which are wholly or partly on public rights of way. Routes are often circular or themed and may be accompanied by a leaflet to promote them to locals and visitors. We recognise the value of some of these routes in terms of tourism generation but we also recognise that many routes are aimed at attracting experienced ramblers and visitors rather than providing utilitarian function to local residents. Promoted routes also raise expectations from users in terms of the quality of the infrastructure and information. Often communities seek grant funding to promote routes to attract tourism and visitors to their area without necessarily improving the infrastructure to support the potential increase in numbers and this can lead to maintenance issues. Despite these issues we recognise the valuable opportunity that promoted routes can provide in bringing together heritage with the benefits of walking and cycling, particularly close to urban areas and in deprived communities.

Summary of issues: Promoted routes raise expectations with users and whilst some have educational/economic benefits they tend to be targeted at regular walkers and ramblers and may not provide the desired short walks close to urban areas that are likely to attract the most use and have the greatest health benefits.

Response: Rationalise and manage fewer promoted routes and prioritise maintenance on these routes based on health benefits. We encourage anyone thinking of working on a promoted route to work closely with the highway authorities to help to resolve issues and utilise opportunities to secure grants to improve the network for the benefit of all users.

Action/s: 1.3 5.0

Section 2.2.1 ~ Promoted routes:

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk



2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.2.2 Access land ~ open access

The CRoW Act 2000 established the "Right to Roam" and the Access Authorities' role in managing it. We are the Access Authorities for Lancashire and there are over 40,000ha of access land and over 500 access points (appendix 2, table 1 provides details of access land in Lancashire). Access land provides opportunities for informal access to green space, with some close to urban areas. In 2004 a whole suite of information and map-boards was installed with grant aid from Natural England (NE) to inform the public of restrictions and exclusions and to indicate the boundaries of access land and excepted land⁹ with many access points upgraded from stiles to kissing gates at the same time. Access land is shown on LCC's 'Maps and related information online' system referred to as 'MARIO' (see <http://mario.lancashire.gov.uk/agsmario/>) as well as the Natural England website ~ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england> where information about restrictions and closures is also hosted.

Summary of issues: Access and signage points are not well maintained or recorded; there is insufficient information about access points.

Response: Audit and address the existing access signage and points

Action/s: 2.4

Section 2.2.2 ~ Access land ~ open access:
Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk



⁹There are a number of categories of open country, including common land, to which CRoW does not apply, this is known as excepted land. These exceptions include:
land used by the military under the Military Land Acts, land covered by buildings, land within 20 metres of a livestock building unless this land provides a way to CRoW 'access land', land covered by temporary livestock pens, land used as a golf course or racecourse.

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.2.3 Permissive/concessionary routes

Over many years permissive routes have been used to secure additional access adding value to the existing rights of way network.

We have also entered into concessionary agreements for strategically important routes in a number of instances including parts of the West Pennine Link route to the Pennine Bridleway.

Most such routes do not feature on Ordnance Survey (OS) maps because of the lack of surety that they will be in place for the long term. (OS normally require a greater than 10 year term)

Summary of issues: There is a lack of any good quality public information on permissive routes which reduces the opportunities for access

Response: Verify the information held on permissive routes and make it publicly available in the most appropriate way.

Action/s: 2.6

Section 2.2.3 ~ Permissive/concessionary routes:

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk



2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.2.4 Coastal access

The Government is committed to expanding access and enjoyment of the English coastline by allowing people access for the first time in some cases. Part 9 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 aims to improve public access to, and enjoyment of, the English coastline by creating clear and consistent public rights along the coast for open-air recreation on foot. It allows existing coastal access to be secured and improved and new access to be created in places where it did not already exist.

For the first time people will have the right of access around all of England's open coast. This includes ~ where appropriate ~ any land, other than the trail itself, which forms part of the coastal margin and which has public rights of access along the way. This is known as 'spreading room'.

Natural England staff are carrying out this work which is about to start in Lancashire. The Lancashire Coastal Way will form the basis of the trail ~ but there are a number of locations in Lancashire where the new rights will bring significant improvements to coastal access. Jenny Browns Point to Carnforth, Pilling Embankment and the north bank of the Ribble between Lytham and Preston are particular examples.

The Government has recently announced a new timescale for the completion of the Coast Path ~ by 2020

Summary of issues: There is demand for the coastal access and the coastal route work to be progressed in Lancashire.

Response: Assist and encourage Natural England and other partners on coastal access work in Lancashire

Action/s: 1.6

Section 2.2.4 ~ Coastal access:

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.2.5 Local parks and open spaces

There is a wide variety of parks and open space across Lancashire. These range from very large parks with extensive facilities such as Stanley Park in Blackpool to the very small scale parks and areas of green space between houses. These tend to be very close to where people live, usually within walking distance and as such are seen as a valuable asset. Most local parks and green spaces are owned or managed by district or unitary councils and the extent of these types of assets across Lancashire is unknown. What we do know from evidence obtained from the Natural England MENE survey is that good quality green space close to where people live is considered to be very important to the residents of Lancashire and ensuring people are aware of what is available and promoting these facilities is key to encouraging use. For older people parks and open spaces with facilities such as toilets and benches are welcome in providing much needed stopping points and reassurance when physical abilities may be reduced. We recognise the value of these public open spaces and would seek to enhance access to them and protect them.



Appendix 2, table 3 provides some information about local parks in Lancashire and an indication of the wide variety on offer across the area.

Summary of issues: Lack of facilities at some sites may reduce value for certain sections of the population and as such may be underutilised.

Response: Look for opportunities to improve the facilities and condition of parks and open spaces within communities, especially those located in deprived communities/urban areas.

Action/s: 1.9

Section 2.2.5 ~ Local parks and open spaces:
Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the responses proposed?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.2.6 Country parks and picnic sites

The purpose of a country park is to provide somewhere for visitors who do not necessarily want to go out into the wider countryside. Visitors can enjoy a public open space with an informal atmosphere, as opposed to a formal park that might be found in an urban area. For this reason country parks are usually found close to or on the edge of built-up areas, and rarely in the countryside proper, although this is not the case in Lancashire. Sites in Lancashire include Beacon Fell, Witton, Wycoller, Scorton, Crook O'Lune, Yarrow Valley and Wyre Estuary.

We have little information about user numbers although there are car counters at Beacon Fell and Crook o'Lune which suggest that visitor numbers to both sites are in excess of 250 000. Conder Green, Spring Wood, Wycoller and Preston Junction are also popular sites. Visitor satisfaction surveys conducted on the key sites over a number of years consistently demonstrated that over 95% of visitors were satisfied or very satisfied with the sites.

Overall there are over 93 sites in Lancashire occupying over 800 Hectares. Appendix 2, table 2 provides a full list. In terms of public rights of way we consider it important that the network provides good quality links to existing green space wherever possible to encourage use of these sites.

Summary of issues: Many sites in Lancashire are not well connected to urban areas and as such their benefits are not fully utilised, this may also prohibit access particularly from areas of deprivation. Whilst many larger sites are managed effectively and visitors are satisfied there are many smaller sites where there are insufficient resources to manage them.

Response: Seek opportunities to improve links to sites via the public rights of way network. Encourage more volunteers/residents groups to get involved in routine maintenance and management of small sites.

Action/s: 5.1 1.8

Section 2.2.6 ~ Country Parks and picnic sites:

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the responses proposed?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.2.7 Roads

(including footways and roadside verges)

Roads, footways and roadside verges may offer opportunities to link up the public rights of way network and provide valuable connective routes for many types of users, however our knowledge of which routes might provide the most benefits to users and the suitability of routes is limited.

Summary of issues: Footways and roadside verges are not always accessible to all types of users therefore restricting access

Response: Audit and develop a strategy for verges for equestrian and cyclist routes. (Identify those verges that form a link within the access network and seek appropriate maintenance improvements). Provide information to the public on available routes

Action/s: 1.9



Section 2.2.7 ~ Roads (including footways and roadside verges)

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the responses proposed?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.3 Assessment of User need

2.3.1 The Natural England MENE survey 2013

One of the key sources of data used to help assess user demand and need in Lancashire is the National MENE survey conducted by Natural England. This study explores how people use, enjoy and are motivated to protect the natural environment as well as changes in use over time. The key findings of this are shown below:

The MENE survey in 2013 identified that:

- 2.85 billion visits were made to English countryside, coast and open spaces ~ around 67 visits per adult.
- An estimated £21 billion was spent during visits to the natural environment in 2012/13
- Walking remains the most popular activity, undertaken on 76% of all visits
- The proportion of visits to green spaces in towns increased significantly to 43% of all visits ~ similarly there was a significant decrease in the proportion of visits to the countryside from 53% in 2011/12 to 47% in 2012/13.
- 66% of all visits were taken within two miles of home, highlighting the importance of accessible local green space
- People living in the areas of greatest deprivation were least likely to have visited the natural environment in the previous seven days, whilst those living in the least deprived areas were significantly more likely to have made a visit.

In terms of the levels of use of the countryside access network, the MENE survey found that:

The proportion of visits to paths, cycleways and bridleways in Lancashire has increased by 2% between 2011/12 and 2012/13.

In 2012/13 66% of visits were to places within two miles of the respondent's home (73% in Lancashire).

In Lancashire during 2012/13 87% of respondents said spending time out of doors was an important part of their life and 91% agreed that having open green spaces close to where they live is important.



2. Assessment of current provision and need

Type of natural environment that people use ~ 2012/13	England	Lancashire
Path/cycleway/bridleway	16%	15%
Park in a town/city	25%	28%
Another open space in the countryside	11%	13%
A village	6%	3%
Farmland	9%	6%
Woodland	13%	7%
River/lake/canal	9%	10%

Distance people travel to enjoy nature and method of travel to get there ~ 2012/13	England	Lancashire
Less than 1 mile	40%	50%
1-2 miles	26%	23%
3-5 miles	16%	13%
On foot	63%	68%
Car/van	29%	28%
Bicycle	3%	2%

Top 3 motivations for people to access natural space ~ 2012/13	England	Lancashire
Exercise dog	42%	47%
For health or exercise	40%	33%
To relax and unwind	26%	24%

2. Assessment of current provision and need

Reason for not visiting the natural environment more often ~ 2012/13	England	Lancashire
Too busy at home	15%	9%
Too busy at work	24%	11%
Poor health	16%	29%
Old age	12%	23%
Physical disability	8%	9%
Not being interested	5%	10%
Lack of public transport	0%	0%
Concerns about where allowed to go	0%	0%
Lack of suitable places or paths	1%	0%
Lack of information	0%	1%

Summary of issues: MENE data raises the issue of meeting the demand for accessible green space close to urban areas/where people live along with actions to promote and encourage usage by older people and those suffering from poor health and disabilities.

Response: More provision and promotion of easier and more accessible walks close to where people live ~ catering particularly for the elderly and less able.

Action/s: 1.0 2.0

Section 2.3.1 ~ The Natural England MENE survey 2013:

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the response proposed?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

2. Assessment of current provision and need

2.3.2 Understanding the needs of different types of users

The public rights of way and other types of green and open space across Lancashire provide leisure, recreation and functional use for a wide variety of users. We have consulted widely as part of this assessment with local organisations, councils, individuals and user groups to try to understand the vast array of needs. We aim to ensure that our actions do not impact negatively on particular types of users but instead will enhance the network for everyone but particularly for the most vulnerable and in the locations that they want.

Even within user groups there are different levels of need and requirements. Cyclists are not a uniform group of users and range from sporting enthusiasts to commuters, leisure users and families with small children on trikes. Similarly the needs of walkers will vary depending upon fitness, age, purpose of journey ~ whether it's for leisure or for day to day access to services. Long distance ramblers may not be concerned with footpath surface quality whilst other walkers will be put off if surfaces are not maintained to a good standard and free from mud and vegetation. Runners and dog walkers etc. will all have different needs and requirements, some conflicting. The same applies to the visually impaired and disabled users and also to the needs of the very old and young, male and females. We are aware that many users will require additional provision over and above the authorities' statutory duty in order to make the countryside more accessible and enjoyable. Typically this involves making routes as accessible as possible by reducing the numbers of gates and stiles as well as making sure that information about accessible routes is available.

The users with the highest level of need are typically the visually impaired and disabled who require a well maintained, accessible and well signposted network. Users consulted have placed importance on good quality, level path surfaces which are free from overhanging vegetation and wide enough for wheelchairs and motorised scooters.

Users need fewer gates and more stile- free routes supported by good quality information (e.g. length, facilities, gradient's etc). Any new structures on the network should be designed appropriately to take into account the needs of all users. Most cyclists, equestrians and walkers will also benefit from the provision of routes that cater for the widest range of users. Whilst we recognise that sharing routes with faster moving cyclists and riders is necessary to balance the different needs.

Some of our country parks such as Beacon Fell, Witton and Wycoller host "Tramper" scooters ~ off road mobility vehicles that have proved popular with disabled visitors allowing them to experience Lancashire's countryside for the very first time or to re-visit old haunts after illness or infirmity has reduced their mobility. This service is very important and valued by its users but does not fulfil the need to provide better and accessible routes close to where people live.

The needs of horse riders and carriage drivers were originally considered as part of panel discussions for the first RoWIP and through the Bridleway Strategy for Lancashire. The first RoWIP indicated the need to improve provision for equestrians through identifying missing links and opportunities to complete circuits or networks.

Routes which are suitable for cyclists typically have higher pedestrian use too because they are stile-free and the surfaces tend to be of a higher standard and can be used more easily by walkers and those with mobility issues. The cycle network provides a valuable resource for many different types of user across Lancashire and has a great many benefits.

2. Assessment of current provision and need

According to the 2011 Census the BME population accounts for 10% of the population with the majority being Asian/Asian British. In Blackburn with Darwen the BME population is 31% and in Blackpool just 3%. BME groups do not typically travel to the countryside for recreation but promoting access to local parks and urban green space may increase participation within this group.

Summary of issues: Well maintained and signposted multi-user routes are the gold standard for most users. We know from feedback that there are insufficient of these across the county and where they exist may not be adequately connected to the network or adequately accessible from residential areas. We need to address lack of information about routes as well

Response: Overall our aim is to achieve a well maintained network that caters for the widest number of users and with this in mind it is our intention to focus on improving and upgrading specific routes so that they can be enjoyed by even those with the highest level of need. This requires prioritising our improvements on routes that provide the greatest benefit to the widest number of users, typically multi user routes. The proposal is to audit existing network to identify multi user routes and prioritise these for upgrade and maintenance

Action/s: 1.0 1.2 2.0 2.3 4.0 4.1 4.2 4.3

Section 2.3.2 ~ Understanding the needs of different types of users

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

2.3.3 Information about rights of way and wider access

To a large extent, it does not matter how good the provision of green space is unless members of the public know what is there and understand how they can use it. Traditionally the lack of such information has sustained a situation where most users of PROW and other green space are from a fairly narrow band within the spectrum of Lancashire's residents and visitors. Current users have the access opportunities to themselves and the remainder, many of whom could benefit to a greater extent from such access, do not have the awareness, knowledge, confidence or encouragement to take advantage of this fantastic resource.

We know that how people access information has changed considerably since the last RoWIP and new technologies and online solutions are key to this. One of the major ways that Rights of Way and access information is provided to the public in Lancashire is online and via the MARIO geographical information system. This has proved very successful but some recent changes along with gaps in information reduce its usefulness to users. This may be negatively affecting the promotion and use of the network and wider access. Feedback from users via studies such as the Rossendale Task and Finish report and via officers suggests that good information about the rights of way network (such as the suitability of routes for those with mobility issues or information about closures/obstructions etc.) is more important than condition of network. People want good information about routes and providing this, using the most appropriate new technology, has many benefits.

2. Assessment of current provision and need

It is important to recognise that not all users will access information online and there may still be a need to use alternative methods for attracting and engaging with new or more vulnerable users. Awareness about the rights of way service generally could be improved as many people are not familiar with services and functions.

Summary of issues: We need to ensure that information is usable and in the correct format for different types of users. Existing users have expressed concern about the usability and usefulness of MARIO and web based information and this is important but we also need to encourage new users and inform them of the opportunities that the rights of way network can provide for health and exercise.

Response: Identify specific groups we want to target and inform about PROW and wider access and develop appropriate marketing solutions tailored to their specific needs. This includes exploring opportunities for upgrading online systems to meet the needs of users.

Action/s: 2.0 2.1 2.2 2.5

Section 2.3.3 Information about public rights of way and wider access:

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

2.3.4 Volunteering

Communities value their assets and green spaces and often have a wealth of knowledge and ideas as to how they should be managed and developed. Many people already do lots of work through volunteering in their communities and we want to build on this work and encourage further volunteering in helping to develop and manage Lancashire's rights of way network and green space.

Involving communities in the design and delivery of services can be very effective as local people know best about local priorities and issues and resources can be used much more effectively. Volunteering is also known to impact positively on health and wellbeing, from individuals learning new skills, social interaction and feeling connected to their communities. We also recognise that individuals involved in rights of way and access work will need to be coordinated and trained effectively and our themes and actions will explore this further.

Summary of issues: Local authorities cannot work alone to make significant improvement to PROW and access in Lancashire but working with communities and volunteers may begin to address this. In communities experiencing health inequalities volunteering may also promote health and wellbeing and affect community resilience

Response: Encourage volunteering as a way of improving and managing the network and promoting community resilience.

Action/s: 2.7 5.0 5.1

Section 2.3.4 Volunteering:

Do you agree with the summary of issues identified in this section and the proposed response?

Submit your comments online at:
www.lancashire.gov.uk

3. Our themes and actions

3.1 An overview

The themes and actions in this section have been developed following intensive analysis of the assessment of need which has provided the basis of our understanding of what users want. The MENE survey in particular along with feedback from users has been key to this understanding and has significantly influenced the scope and direction of the themes and actions

In developing our themes and actions we have considered the following:.

- Access to and within attractive areas of countryside (e.g. viewpoints, woodlands, etc.)
- Attractive routes to support local tourism, economic regeneration
- Opportunities for cycling, horse riding, driving, walking, other than roads used mainly by motor vehicles.
- Routes from centres of population
- Links which create circular routes and better facilities for users
- Improving routes that provide utilitarian functions ~ e.g. routes to schools, work etc.

3.2 Delivering our themes and actions

Whilst local authorities are responsible for producing their RoWIPs there is no specific requirement to implement it, nor funding available to do so. In practice the statement of actions incorporated in this RoWIP will require further detailed action plans being developed that will identify specific sites and activities in order to deliver the proposed schemes and projects. This plan does not seek to identify priorities or funding sources for actions and these will be needed to enable actions to be delivered.

We anticipate that there will be a number of organisations and individuals who are likely to be involved in the delivery of this plan. Typically the planning and delivery of the actions will include the county, unitary, district, parish and town councils working with land managers, local residents and user groups where appropriate.

3.2.1 Principles we will apply when delivering our themes and actions:

- We will consider the needs of reduced mobility, dexterity and sight impaired when delivering themes
- We will seek opportunities to involve communities and volunteers in designing and delivering actions
- We will prioritise our activities to favour those actions that have the greatest health outcomes (e.g. target deprived and vulnerable communities)

3. Our themes and actions

Theme 1:

Condition and connectivity of the wider access network

Overview: This theme explores how we can improve the overall condition and connectivity of the wider access network for the benefit of all users. Concerns about the condition of the rights of way network have been a consistent issue through the assessment and one which is believed to prevent access by a wide range of users but particularly those with disabilities or impaired vision. Councils have a statutory duty to maintain the whole network but in practice implementing this duty requires some level of order or prioritisation and this theme explores how we might undertake this as well as take action to secure a better connected network.

Aims/objectives: To maintain the public rights of way network and other access by giving priority to those paths identified as being of greatest benefit to the greatest number of people and providing important links in the network.

Why: A more usable network is likely to increase walking, cycling and horse riding amongst the section of the public less confident and familiar with public rights of way, with consequent health benefits. It is also better suited to functional not just recreational use and hence will contribute to a reduction in CO² emissions. A core network in good condition can encourage tourism and improve quality of life for residents.



3. Our themes and actions

Aim	Nº	Action	Timescale
Increase the proportion of the PROW network that is well maintained and appropriate for use by all. (E.g. elderly, disabled and visually impaired users)	1.0	Together with partners identify "stile free" or "easy access" routes (small circuits or linear connections not isolated paths) and promote and prioritise these for maintenance. Pay particular attention to the specific needs of disabled and visually impaired users	2016
Increase the proportion of the PROW network which is unobstructed	1.1	Prioritise enforcement - Continue to address obstructions throughout the network but paying particular attention to identified priority routes	Review annually
Improve maintenance on key promoted routes (those which offer the greatest health benefits to communities)	1.2	Rationalise and manage fewer promoted routes and prioritise maintenance on these routes (based on health benefits)	2017
Ensure more gains and fewer losses through new developments	1.3	Look at existing working practices and identify new processes and procedures to work with planning departments to identify opportunities and threats arising through planning applications	On-going
Improve the safety and connectivity of the network where there are road/railway crossings	1.4	Seek to reduce the number of surface crossings of railway lines. Look at ways of improving the network to divert crossings from across railways and major roads	On-going
Increase support for coastal access and the coastal routes work in order to progress this	1.5	Assist and encourage Natural England and other partners on coastal access work in Lancashire	On-going
Improve facilities on the network such as benches and toilets to encourage use by the elderly, very young or disabled	1.6	Look for opportunities to improve facilities and the condition of parks and green spaces within communities (e.g. additional benches, toilets)	On-going
Connect green spaces better with communities and urban areas	1.7	Seek opportunities to improve links via the public rights of way network	On-going
Improve the condition of footways and roadside verges to make them more accessible	1.8	Audit and develop a strategy for verges for pedestrian, equestrian and cyclists routes. Link with: provide information to the public on available routes	On-going

3. Our themes and actions

Theme 2:

Education and information provision

Overview: We recognise that there are many residents of Lancashire and beyond who do not currently use or may lack awareness of public rights of way and other access. We know from our assessment that there are key groups that we may wish to target. They include BME, young people in urban areas, the elderly and disabled as well as the visually impaired. We want to raise awareness and encourage new users with the associated benefits of health and wellbeing. The actions under this theme aim to target these individuals by looking for new ways to provide information and engage with potential users.

Aims and objectives: To improve and promote the understanding and use of the network, particularly to new users. To raise awareness of opportunities for access to green space in relevant and appropriate ways that meet the needs of potential users.

Why:

- To help improve overall health and wellbeing and particularly to address health inequalities by encouraging exercise by people whose mental and physical health is most likely to benefit and who do not currently access their green space, including young people and those from a background which does not include enjoyment of the countryside.
- To promote sustainable transport by encouraging and enabling non recreational journeys without a car.
- To improve quality of life by reducing conflict and improving the experience of using Lancashire's countryside.
- To increase the economic benefits from tourism.



3. Our themes and actions

Aim	Nº	Action	Timescale
Attract new users to enjoy the PROW network and green space by providing better information which is targeted to the needs of specific groups	2.0	<p>Actively market access to green space</p> <p>Improve public provision of information particularly to new and vulnerable users</p> <p>Identify the specific groups we want to target and explore how we can provide better information tailored to their needs as well as create opportunities for them to get involved</p> <p>E.g. through schools, youth clubs, community groups via health walks etc. (targeting those who do not normally use the network such as ethnic minorities and deprived communities) and by working better with other council services such as education, health and libraries</p>	2016
Utilise web and new technology wherever appropriate to provide better and more accessible information and to target young users	2.1	<p>Explore opportunities for upgrading online systems to meet the needs of users</p> <p>Improve information provided to the public by exploring the use of new technology such as apps, smart phones, facebook, internet</p>	2017
Make people aware of who to contact regarding the management of the PROW network to ensure that issues are identified and dealt with effectively	2.2	Promote the rights of way service wherever possible through our day to day activities to ensure that members of public are better informed about who deals with issues and how to get in touch	On-going
Help users to have confidence in finding and being on PROWs	2.3	Continue with the programme of improving signposting and way-marking including working through local partner groups	On-going
Improve information about access land and signage points	2.4	Audit and improve information about access land, signage and access points. Improve information about access land	2017
Raise awareness of the types of access available in Lancashire	2.5	Improve information available about wider access as well as PROWs	On-going
Improve information about concessionary routes	2.6	Verify the information held on concessionary routes and make it publicly available in the most appropriate way	2018
Ensure that people contacting officers involved in PROW and wider access are given appropriate, accurate, understandable information	2.7	Prepare a good practice/training guide for anyone involved in public rights of way and wider access work. (including understanding the specific needs of disabled and visually impaired users)	2017

3. Our themes and actions

Theme 3:

Twenty to thirty minute walks

Overview: We know from evidence obtained from the MENE study that people want short walks, approximately 1-2 miles from their homes where they can access green space for leisure and health, often with a dog. The Public Rights of Way network can often provide this but the condition of routes or availability of information about them can reduce this potential. We also know that there are certain communities across Lancashire that suffer health inequalities and these are typically in the inner urban areas. We want to target these communities and explore opportunities for enhancing the rights of way network in and near these areas for the benefit of these communities.

Aims and objectives: To improve the opportunities for access to green space for the purpose of exercise and short walks in and around Lancashire's urban areas with the emphasis on short walks by foot.

Why: To encourage exercise particularly by people whose mental and physical health is most likely to benefit and who do not currently use the network, especially but not exclusively in and near communities experiencing health inequalities to encourage the habit of walking.

Aim	Nº	Action	Timescale
Expand the number of good quality short walks in and from residential areas	3.0	Identify the potential for short easy access walks from where people live, particularly those communities experiencing health inequalities Identify missing links or additional links to create new accessible walks	2018
Encourage more people to take short walks in and around the places they live	3.1	Identify and support local walking groups who are delivering health walks and programmes, particularly in and around residential areas	2016

3. Our themes and actions

Theme 4: Multi user routes

Overview: This theme and actions responds to the need to create better provision for disabled and visually impaired users as well as horse riders and cyclists. Multi user routes cater for all users but need to be accompanied by measures to alleviate some of the issues faced by disabled people.

Aims and objectives: Provide and protect a more connected network that provides for the requirements of all users.

Create and promote multi user routes wherever possible as these have the most benefits to a wide range of users.

Shared routes do pose specific problems for disabled, deaf and visually impaired users and this needs to be considered (e.g. markings on routes, can't hear approaching cyclists, overhanging vegetation)

Why: to encourage exercise particularly by people whose health, disability, lack of confidence or other factors precludes use of the general footpath network. Multi-user routes all provide recreational and non-recreational opportunities for cyclists and equestrians for exercise and have the additional benefit of attracting visitors to Lancashire to enjoy good off road facilities often bringing the benefits associated with tourism.

Expected outcomes: Improved quality of life, reduction in transport emissions, improved physical and mental health.

Aim	Nº	Action	Timescale
Improve the overall level of provision of multi user routes	4.0	Identify opportunities to influence provision in new developments and improve existing routes by working better with local planning departments	On-going
Improve connectivity of bridleway network	4.1	Identify missing links and opportunities to provide bridleway links to complete circuits	2017
Improve the multi-user network by seeking external funding for projects	4.2	Work with and support communities/partners to seek external funding to extend and improve the network wherever possible for the benefit of multi users (routes that support walking, cycling and horse riding)	On-going
Design any new structures on the network to take into account the needs of multi users	4.3	Work better with engineering and design teams to ensure that all new structures on routes are designed appropriately	2016

3. Our themes and actions

Theme 5:
Encourage community involvement in improving wider access

Overview: The councils have a statutory duty to maintain and promote the public rights of way network for the benefit for all users and recognise the importance of promoting access to green space generally but we cannot do this on our own. With limited resources available we have to prioritise how we do this and look for new ways of working, one way in which we can do this is to involve local people and partner organisations wherever we can in the development and delivery of services. Involving communities and volunteers in this way increases our ability to deliver relevant improvements to the network and is accompanied by social and physical benefits which impact on individuals including a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

Aims and objectives: To increase the overall level of community involvement in the design and delivery of services and to encourage volunteering for the purpose of improving the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Why: Involving communities in decisions about local service provision increases our ability to deliver relevant improvements to the network and can also result in improved community resilience and its associated health benefits.

Aim	Nº	Action	Timescale
Involve and work with local communities and volunteers to deliver the RoWIP where appropriate	5.0	Develop the Local Delivery Scheme, including a volunteer strategy, with the aim of increasing community involvement whilst supporting the maintenance and improvement of the network	2017
Improve the management and maintenance of sites across Lancashire by encouraging and involving volunteers	5.1	Encourage more volunteers/residents groups to get involved in routine maintenance and management of small sites	On-going

3. Our themes and actions

Theme 6:

The Definitive Map and other records

Overview: This theme seeks to improve the overall quality and accessibility of information relating to public rights of way and wider access as well as ensuring that valuable routes are not lost in the 2026 cut off¹⁰. The rights of way service is responsible for investigating and processing definitive map modification orders where there is evidence that the definitive map and statement is incorrect, this is a statutory duty. This theme builds on this duty and identifies actions that seek to improve the overall quality and speed of the service and improve the information available to the public. Other records covered in this theme include Commons & Town and village greens, list of streets, commons register.

Aims/objectives: To provide an up-to-date and publicly available Definitive Map and Statement for each authority and to improve the overall quality of access information. To keep up-to-date the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way, List of Maintained Streets, Commons Register and lists of other green space and improve the way the information is made available to the public.

Why:

- To provide certainty for public and land managers
- To avoid loss of valuable access.
- To improve the coherency of the PROW network.
- To assist the management of the public rights of way.

Aim	Nº	Action	Timescale
Avoid loss of key routes on the network	6.0	Assist with the Local Access Forum's 'Discovering Lancashire Ways' project to make useful additions to the record	2026
Avoid loss of key routes on the network	6.1	Identify anomalies and omissions to be saved from the cut-off date once the regulations are published	2026
Use a system of priorities for processing DMMO's to prevent loss of valuable routes after 2026	6.2	Process applications for definitive map modification orders to correct the record (statutory duty) in an order prioritised by potential benefit to the public, mitigate liability, assist land management. (review internal processes for dealing with application, process not necessarily in chronological order)	On-going
Improve the quality of other records maintained by the councils including towns & village greens	6.3	Improve the process for dealing with towns & village greens Improve the completeness and accuracy of information of other green space	On-going

¹⁰The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 set a cut-off date in 2026 for ancient public rights of way to be added to the Definitive Map and Statement where they are not currently recorded nor in use.

3. Our themes and actions

3.2.2 Implementing the RoWIP

The production of the RoWIP is the start of the process to improve the rights of way and access network in Lancashire. Many of the actions identified in this plan will require further planning along with the production of full and detailed action plans to achieve effective delivery. No additional financial commitment has been made by the councils to deliver any of the actions in this plan and it is anticipated that any resources that may be required will be met from existing service budgets where available. Implementation will be coordinated and monitored by the councils' officers but will involve input from a variety of individuals and organisations. Some attempt has been made to prioritise actions and this is indicated by the timescales shown. However priorities will be determined by resources available and seizing opportunities as they arise.

Annual progress reports will be prepared by the three councils and presented to the LLAF. The LLAF will give an independent view on progress and priorities to implement RoWIP actions.

Measures will be put in place to monitor improvement work and annual reports will detail and review progress made during the previous year and outline targets for the year ahead where appropriate. Reports should describe and evaluate work completed and highlight lessons learnt such as best practice or key legislative, corporate and processes changes important to the delivery of the RoWIP.

Appendix 1 ~ List of consultees

Organisation

Age UK Lancashire	Hyndburn Gypsy Roma & Traveller Network
Age Concern Central Lancashire	Lancashire GRT Practitioners Network
Lancashire Youth Council	GRT Hyndburn Women's Group
Young Lancashire	Churches Together in Lancashire
East Lancashire Deaf Society	Lancashire Forum of Faiths
Action for Blind People	Gujarat Hindu Society
Disability First	Lancashire Council of Mosques
Lancashire Care	Navajo Consultative Partnership
Galloway's Society for the Blind	Lancashire LGBT Centre Group
Deafway	Rainbow Generation
East Lancashire Learning Disability Board	Chorley & South Ribble POUT ~ Power to be Out
Lancashire Learning Disability Consortium	Issac Hitchin Project Lancashire LGBT
North Lancashire Area Learning Disability Partnership Board	Preston Project VIBE
One Voice	Lancaster PYRO ~ Proud Youth R Out
Disability Equality (NW) Ltd	Penlde LIP ~ Liberated in Pendle
Disability Youth Club	Friends of Dorothy
Sahara in Preston	Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Lancashire Wide Network for Minority Ethnic Women	Community Futures
Preston Domestic Violence Services	Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Fylde Coast Women's Aid	Lancashire Association of Local Council
Preston & Western Lancashire REC	West Pennine Moors
Nguzo Saba centre	Lancashire Visual Impairment Forum
Preston Black History Group	Guide Dogs
Jinnah Development Trust Ltd	OP Forum - Preston
Peoples Enterprise and Empowerment Forum	OP Forum - Chorley
Lancashire Black & Minority Ethnic Pact	OP Forum ~ South Ribble
Pukar Centre	Deafway Forum
Building Bridges in Burnley	VI Forum
Building Bridges in Pendle	Ageing Well Forum
Participation Works NW Ltd	Dual Sensory Loss Forum
Enterprise 4 All	Pensioners Forum
Asian Business Federation	PD North Forum
Preston & District Chinese Community Association	Disability Partnership Forum ~ for Burnley, Pendle,

Appendix 1 ~ List of consultees

Rosendale, Hyndburn & Ribble Valley
Disability Partnership Forum ~ For South Ribble, Chorley,
Preston, West Lancashire
50 + Assembly
Burnley Borough Council
Chorley Borough Council
Hyndburn Borough Council
Fylde Borough Council
Lancaster City Council
Pendle Borough Council
Preston City Council
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Rosendale Borough Council
South Ribble Borough Council
West Lancashire Borough Council
Wyre Borough Council
Blackpool Borough Council
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Bolton Council
Cumbria County Council
Wigan Council
Bury Council

Rochdale Borough Council
Sefton Council
St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council
Knowsley Council
East Riding of Yorkshire Council
North Yorkshire County Council
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Ramblers Association
British Horse Society
British Driving Society
Byway & Bridleways Trust
CTC
Auto Cycle Union
Forestry Commission
Sport England
Open Spaces Society
Natural England
DEFRA
Environment Agency
All Lancashire County Councillors
All Lancashire Parish and Town Councils

Appendix 2 ~ Wider access

Access Land in Lancashire

District	Area (ha)	N° of Access Points
Burnley	2,761	60
Chorley	1,780	37
Fylde	-	-
Hyndburn	350	25
Lancaster	11,600	50
Pendle	2,600	50
Preston	46	2
Ribble Valley	11,250	150
Rosendale	3,424	200
South Ribble	38	-
West Lancashire	-	-
Wyre	1,868	50
Blackburn with Darwen	3,608	-
Blackpool	-	-
Lancashire total	39,325	624

Appendix 2 ~ Wider access

Country Parks and Woodland Sites Managed by Lancashire County Council (Hectares)

Burnley

Hameldon Hill I	(13.55 ha)
Hameldon Hill II	(6.11 ha)
New Laithe, Dunnockshaw	(13.06 ha)
Chatham Hill	(5.48 ha)
Thursden	(5.11 ha)
Molly Wood Lane	(0.31 ha)
Townley	(12.85 ha)
Widow Green Wood	(9.51 ha)
Rowley I & II	(12.36 ha)
Houghton's Farm	(0.68 ha)
Parish Wood	(0.82 ha)
Jinny Spring Wood	(1.00 ha)

Chorley

Houghton House (Transport Ltd)	(2.73 ha)
Healey Nab	(14.03 ha)
Chisnall Hall	(14.81 ha)
Welch Whittle	(13.19 ha)
Adlington	(0.38 ha)
Walton Summit	
Albany Academy	
Withnell Fold	(5.36 ha)

Hyndburn

The Hollins	(3.40 ha)
Warcocks Green	(2.94 ha)
Rushton House Farm	(1.83 ha)
Brocklehurst	(0.70 ha)
Plantation Mill	(2.63 ha)
The Coppice	(9.58 ha)
Abbot Clough	(1.98 ha)
Huncoat I	(5.75 ha)
Huncoat II	(4.50 ha)
Boundary Wood	(3.80 ha)
Whinney Hill I	(8.61 ha)
Whinney Hill II	(6.50 ha)
Fox Hill Bank	
Accrington Baxenden	(25.00 ha)
Martholme	
Heys Lane	

Lancaster

Highfield	(0.81 ha)
Stockabank Wood	(1.85 ha)
Cinderbarrow (Yealand)	
Warton Crag	(6.60 ha)
Crook O' Lune/Caton Trail	(8.85 ha)
Conder Green/Costal Path	(10.61 ha)
Little Crag	(3.60 ha)
Birk Bank	(0.80 ha)
Jubilee Tower	(0.80 ha)
Levens Drive	
Claughton Quarry	(4.50 ha)

Pendle

Barley Bank	(5.37 ha)
Catlow	(8.37 ha)
Wycoller	(142.00 ha)
Raven Rock	(7.03 ha)
Turnhole Clough	(3.70 ha)
Copy House	(0.44 ha)
Bank House	(0.92 ha)
Trawden Road	(1.30 ha)
Crank	(1.94 ha)
Brierfield	(2.68 ha)
Clogger Copse	(1.16 ha)
College Copse	(0.43 ha)
Whitewalls	(0.73 ha)
Winewalls Mill	(1.20 ha)
Quarry Hill Nature Reserve	

Preston

Beacon Fell	(72.65 ha)
Country Park	
Lea Gate	(1.21 ha)
Oxford Street/Avenham Park	

Appendix 2 ~ Wider access

Country Parks and Woodland Sites Managed by Lancashire County Council (Hectares)

Ribble Valley

Billington Moor	10.01
Blackhill	12.45
Spring Wood	16.20
Marles Wood	0.55
Jeffrey Hill	
Barker Brow	0.60

Rossendale

Greenfold	2.61
Sunnybank	1.99
Bottomley Bank	2.50
Horncliffe	5.70
Hall Carr	1.38
Staghills	5.17
Hightown (aka Height Top)	0.99
Thorn Bank	3.37
Scar End Hey	2.23
Facit Quarries	20.06
Shore End	0.47
Old Lane	2.47
Hareholme I & II	1.64
Longholmde I & II	4.46
Tom Lane	2.35
Crow Wood	2.41
Sis Clough	1.72
Greave Clough	5.86
Brandwood	12.12
Bacup Fearn	1.98
Clough Head Quarry	2.96
Landgate Moss	
Helmshore Disused Railway Line	11.03
Troy Quarry	
Lee Quarry	50.00*

South Ribble

Vow Brook (Holehouse Farm)	1.77
Hennel Lane/Carr Wood	2.01
Preston Junction	6.00

West Lancashire

Bickerstaffe	4.80
Mere Brow ~ Holmeswood	

Wyre

Scorton	12.14
Fleetwood	17.50

Appendix 2 ~ Wider access

Local Parks and Green Spaces in Lancashire (Hectares)

Blackburn with Darwen

Ashton Park	(2.21 ha)
Bold Venture Park	
Corporation Park	(18 ha)
Queens Park	(13.35 ha)
River Darwen Parkway & Higher Croft Woods	(55 ha)
Roe Lee Park	(6.88 ha)
Sunnyhurst Woods	(34.40 ha)
Whitehall Park	(6.47 ha)
Witton Country Park	(194.25 ha)

Blackpool

Marton Mere Local Nature Reserve	
Stanley Park	(157.82 ha)
Anchorsholme Park	
Bancroft Park	
Bispham Cliff Tops	
Bispham Recreation Ground	
Boundary Park	
Carr Road	
Cavendish Road Recreation Ground	
Champagne Close Park	
Claremont Park	
Corrib Road Park	
Devonshire Road Rock Gardens	
Doreen Holt Park	
Fylde Memorial Aboretum	
Grange Park	
Highfield Road Park	
Kincraig Fun Zone	
Kingscote Park	
Layton Recreation	
Louie Horrocks Park	
Luton Road Park	
Mereside Park	
Moor Park	
Revoe Park	
Vicarage Road Park	
Watson Road Park	

Burnley

Forest of Burnley	(500 ha)
Inghtenhill Park	
Padiham Memorial Park	
Queens Park	(11.2 ha)
Scott Park	
Thompson park	
Towneley Park	(180 ha)
Byerden Holme Linear Park	
Rowley Lake & Woodland	
Healey Heights	
Grove Lane Wood	
Cemetery Wood	

Chorley

Astley Park	(43 ha)
Blainscough Wood Nature Reserve	
Coronation Recreation Ground	
Duxbury park ~ Yarrow Valley Country Park	(85 ha)
Hic Bibi, Coppull	(8 ha)
Withnell Local Nature Reserve	(4.7 ha)
Settlement Tanks ~ Yarrow Valley Country Park (No access to the public)	
Top Lodge ~ Yarrow Valley Country Park	
Yarrow Valley Country Park	(700 ha)

Fylde

Ashton Gardens	(4 ha)
Fairhaven Lake& Gardens	(19.5 ha)
Lowther Gardens	(5.65 ha)
Pomenade Gardens	

Hyndburn

Oak Hill Park, Accrington	(8.7 ha)
Haworth Park	
Gatty Park, Church	(3 ha)
Milnshaw Park, Accrington	(2.5 ha)
Peel Park & Coppice, Accrington	
Bullough Park, Accrington	(16.7 ha)
Mercer Park, Clayton-Le-Moors	
Memorial Park, Great Harwood	(9.6 ha)
Lowerfold Park, Great Harwood	(2.3 ha)
Cutwood Park, Rishton	(9 ha)
Rhyddings Park, Oswaldtwistle	

Appendix 2 ~ Wider access

Local Parks and Green Spaces in Lancashire (Hectares)

Lancaster

Douglas Park, Heysham Village
Happy Mount Park, Morecambe
Regent Park
Ryelands Park
Palatine Avenue Recreation Ground
Williamson Park (21.85 ha)

Pendle

Alkincoats Park, Colne (7 ha)
Ball Grove Park, Trawden
Local Nature Reserve
Barrowford Park, Barrowford
Heyhead Park, Brierfield
Letcliffe Park, Barnoldswick
Marsden Park
Sough Park
Valley Gardens, Barnoldswick
Victoria Park, Nelson
Victory Park, Barnoldswick
Walverden Park

Preston

Ashton Park
Avenham & Miller Parks
Haslam park
Moor Park
Grange Park
Ribbleton park
Boilton Wood
Fishwick Local Nature Reserve
& Recreation Ground (26 ha)
Grange Valley Nature Reserve

Ribble Valley

John Smiths Park, Longridge

South Ribble

Worden Park (60 ha)
Withy Grove Park
Longton Brickcroft Nature Reserve
Hurst Grange Park

West Lancashire

Beacon Country Park (121.40 ha)
Coronation Park, Ormskirk (8.09 ha)
Ruff Wood, Ormskirk (7.69 ha)
Stanley Coronation Park, Skelmersdale
Tawd Valley Park, Skelmersdale
Abbey Lakes, Up Holland
Chequer Lane Fishing Lake, Up Holland
Cheshire Lines Path
Dean Wood, Up Holland
Fairy Glen, Appley Bridge
Hunters Hill, Hilldale
Platts Lane Lake, Burscough
Richmond Park, Burscough (2.50 ha)

Wyre

Cottam Hall Playing Fields, Poulton-le-Fylde
Jean Stansfield Memorial Park, Poulton-le-Fylde
North Drive Park, Thornton Cleveleys
Tithebarn Park, Poulton-le-Fylde
Jubilee Gardens, Thornton Cleveleys
Rossall Picnic Site, Fleetwood
Wyre Estuary Country Park
Hawthorne Park, Thornton Cleveleys
Kepple Lane Park, Garstang
The Mount, Fleetwood