

Rights of Way Improvement Plan

2021 - 2031



CONTENTS

1 Executive Summary	2
2 Introduction	3
3 Councils Vision	3
4 Background to Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).....	4
5 North East Lincolnshire's Public Rights of Way Network	5
5.1 People	6
5.2 PROW in NELC	7
Places of Interest	10
5.3 Recreational Paths	11
Wanderlust Way	11
Nev Cole Way.....	11
The Johnson Silver Lincs Way	12
Greenwich Meridian Trail	12
England Coastal Path	13
National Cycle Network Route 1 and 110.....	13
5.4 Performance.....	14
5.5 Structures.....	15
6 Overview of ROWIP1	15
6.1 Goals and Objectives	15
6.2 Review of ROWIP 1	16
6.3 Key Actions (KA) Identified on the ROWIP	16
7 ROWIP 2.....	19
7.1 General Requirements for different Users	20
Walkers	20
Equestrians	20
Cyclists	21
People with Physical and Sensory Disabilities	21
Landowners and Land Managers.....	21
7.2 Assessment of Current use and Demand.....	21
7.3 Results from Questionnaire	22
Landowners and Land Manger Questionnaire Results.....	22
Notable Comments from Landowners	22
7.4 Funding	23
7.5 The Statement of Action	24

1. Executive Summary

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 section 60 requires every Local Highway Authority to prepare and publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan which contains:

a) The Authority's assessment of:

- The extent to which local rights of way meet present and likely future needs of the public;
- The opportunities provided by local rights of way (and in particular by footpaths, cycle tracks bridleways and restricted byways) for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and the enjoyment of their area;
- The accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons or others with mobility problems;

b) A Statement of Action the Authority proposes to take for the management of rights of way, and for securing an improved network of rights of way, with particular regard to the matters dealt with in the assessment and such other material as the Secretary of State may direct.

This Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP2) considers the status of the rights of way network in North East Lincolnshire, including the needs of its users, and how the network could be improved to reflect changing patterns of use, and the changing requirements being placed upon it. It provides an update to the first Rights of Way Improvement Plan published by North East Lincolnshire Council in 2007. This updated plan provides the long-term strategy for how North East Lincolnshire Public Rights of Way network will be managed for the next ten years. The previous Rights of Way Improvement Plan will hereafter be referred to as ROWIP1.

In November 2007, North East Lincolnshire Council produced its first Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP1). This fulfilled requirements under section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000.

The ROWIP is used to:

- inform and guide members of the public, land owners, potential developers and officers at North East Lincolnshire;
- ensure improvements are undertaken which are necessary to improve the access;
- Encourage, more use of the Public Rights of Way Network.

This plan reviews the achievements of ROWIP1, sets out the context for the new plan and takes into account new legislation and guidance, which affects the management of the Public Rights of Way.

The statutory guidance states that the plan itself should not contain information on site specific assessments but draw broader, generic conclusions which focus on the delivery on the ground.

In the Statement of Action the council sets out five themes with a number of supporting tasks. Each supporting task identifies objectives which explain how the theme will be achieved.

The overriding aim of this plan is to identify and complete improvements, which provide best value for our both existing and new users of the rights of way network in North East Lincolnshire.

Before finalising the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, North East Lincolnshire Council published (27th February 2020) the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan Appendix 4 contains a summary of the representations made during this period with any further justification explained and any mitigating measures and modifications which have been included in the final RoWIP.





Public Bridleway 36, Stallingborough

2. Introduction

This Rights of Way Improvement Plan sets out the vision for managing and improving access on the Public Rights of Way network in North East Lincolnshire. Public Rights of Way are highways that allow the public a “right of passage” and are maintained by North East Lincolnshire Council as the Highway Authority for the area. This document is the second version of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for North East Lincolnshire.

Public Rights of Way are an important asset in the daily enjoyment for people who use them for either exercise on bicycle, on foot, on horseback, to walk the dog, to improve their fitness, or to visit local shops or schools and other facilities. They also provide a convenient means of travelling, particularly for short journeys, in both rural and urban areas.

Local authorities are the custodians of the Public Right of Way network. They are an integral part of the complex of recreational and transport facilities within their area.

The Public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire cover a variety of different landscapes and locations, from the Wolds, to running alongside the Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre to the south bank of the Humber.

3. Councils Vision

The ROWIP is a strategic document setting out how the Council intends to deliver improvements to the management and development of the Public Rights of Way network. The Public Rights of Way network is linked to health & wellbeing, road safety, living sustainably, travel planning, and economic well-being.

North East Lincolnshire Council’s priorities are to create ‘Stronger economy and stronger communities’. The council want North East Lincolnshire to be seen as an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest.



Public Footpath 100, Laceby



East Ravendale Public Bridleway 139

4. Background to Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

ROWIPs are intended to be the means by which local highway authorities will identify improvements and manage changes to their local rights of way network in order to meet the Government's aim of better provision for walkers, cyclists, equestrians and people with mobility problems. Therefore, this ROWIP includes the key findings of the assessments to date, together with an action plan detailing proposals for an improved network of rights of way in North East Lincolnshire

The Statement of Action lists the work needed to realise these opportunities and develop an improved Public Right of Way network.

The plan does not override the authority's current statutory duty to maintain Public Rights of Way. The plan is the prime means for the Local Highway Authority to identify and prioritise actions, and plan for the improved management and

development of access to the public rights of way network.

The ROWIP is related to the Local Transport Plan for North East Lincolnshire Council and builds on the statutory duties of the Highway Authority to '...assert and protect the right of the public to use rights of way' (Highways Act 1980 S130) through maintenance of both the Definitive Map and Statement, and the routes themselves.

Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 The Highway Authority is required to make either a new assessment or review their current Rights of Way Plan. This is required not more than ten years after its first publication, and subsequently at intervals of not more than ten years. On such reviews, the Authority should, if it decides to amend the plan, publish it as amended. If there are no amendments, the Authority should publish a report of its decision and its reasons for it.



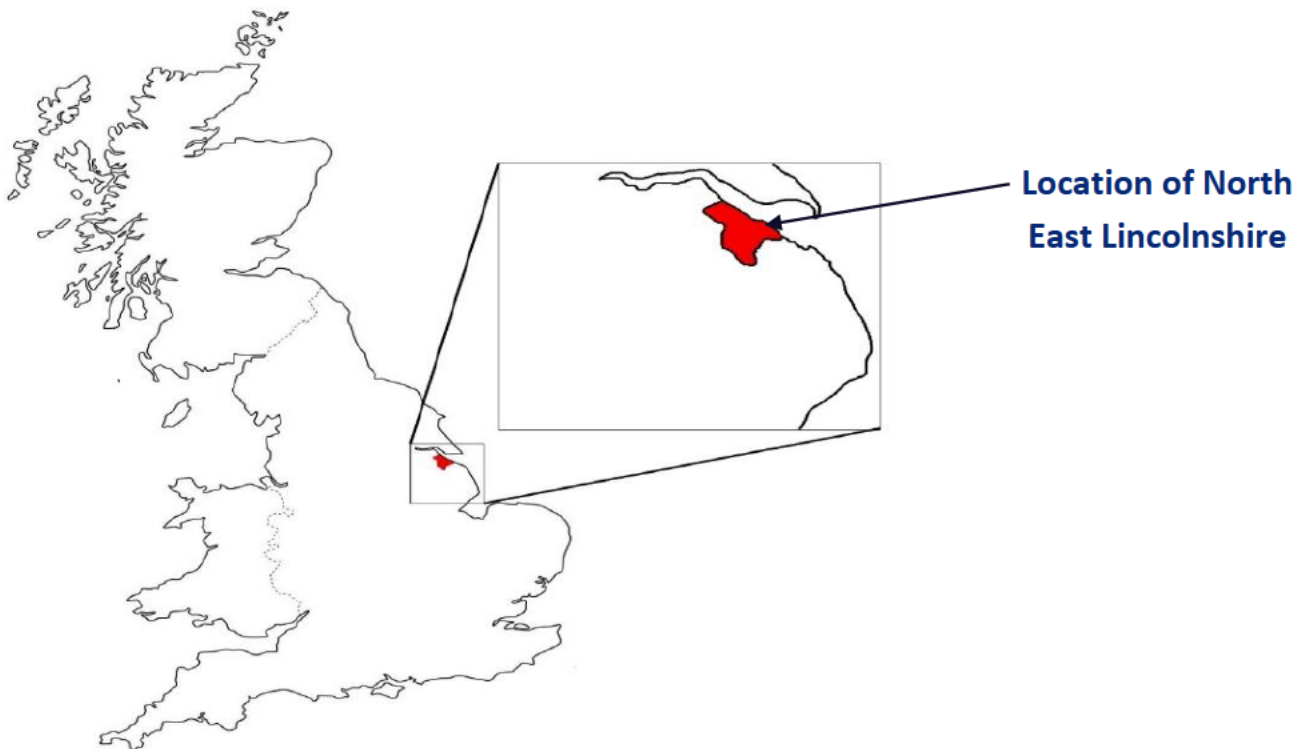
Humberston Public Footpath 50 and Public Bridleway 53 and 50

5. North East Lincolnshire's Public Rights of Way network Place

North East Lincolnshire is located on the east coast of England at the mouth of the River Humber. The River Humber is the UK's emerging 'Energy Estuary' and one of the key gateways to Europe. The area is relatively small; covering just 74 square miles (192sq. km). It attracts over 9 million visitors each year, bringing with them an economy worth £560 million. From Grimsby there are over 40 Million potential visitors within a 3 hour drive¹.

On 1st July 2010 North East Lincolnshire Council commenced a Regeneration Partnership with Balfour Beatty (ENGIE and then Equans). This partnership ended in July 2025

The Local Transport Plan Transport Strategy and associated documents are key elements of the partnership, acknowledging that a well-managed, efficient and safe highway network supports the partnership in the delivery of many of its objectives.



The Council is responsible for the Public Rights of Way in 21 Parishes, and within the urban areas of Grimsby and Cleethorpes. There is a sharp contrast between the character of paths in the urban, suburban and rural area within the boundaries of the authority. Several parishes are situated on the first inclines of the Lincolnshire Wolds chalk escarpment, and offer attractive networks of public footpaths and bridleways with views, tranquility and varied landscapes. Ten percent of the Lincolnshire Wolds is within North East Lincolnshire.

¹<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/tourism-economy-north-east-lincolnshire-force-reckoned/>



5.1 People

North East Lincolnshire is home to 159, 804² people, most of the population live in the urban areas of Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Immingham. The population is mostly White British (95.4%) and other white ethnic groups (1.7%) by ethnicity with no other single ethnic group comprising more than 0.5% of the total.

Over the last decade there has been a small increase in the population of North East Lincolnshire of around 1.1% which compares to a rise of over 8% nationally³.

The projection for 2033, is for an increase in the population of North East Lincolnshire to around 166,300 (+5.3%)⁴. With the increase in population there will be an increase and pressure on the local infrastructure. The Public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire could be used for a sustainable means of travel around the borough.

The English Indices of Deprivation⁵ measure relative deprivation in small areas in England called lower layer super output areas (LSOA). The index of multiple deprivation is the most widely used of these indices and is calculated based on assessments of a range of factors.

Findings from the English Indices of Deprivation 2015 show that North East Lincolnshire has high levels of socio-economic deprivation, particularly within areas of the East Marsh, West Marsh⁶ and South wards. 41 out of the 106 (38.6%).

National research undertaken in 2018⁷ shows the inactivity of the local population, the below table shows the inactivity of neighboring authorities. The inactivity of North East Lincolnshire is higher than the national average.

	National	Humber	Hull	East Riding of Yorkshire	North Lincolnshire	North East Lincolnshire
Physical Inactivity levels	25.7%	30.9%	31.1%	29.6%	32%	32.3%

²Taken from the North East Lincolnshire LTP Transport Strategy, Office for National Statistics, 2015

³ Taken from the North East Lincolnshire LTP Transport Strategy Office for National Statistics, 2015

⁴Taken from the North East Lincolnshire LTP Transport Strategy North East Lincolnshire Informed, 2016

⁵ The English Indices of Deprivation 2015, DCLG

⁶The English Indices of Deprivation 2015, DCLG

⁷<https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives>

5.2 Public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire

North East Lincolnshire's Definitive Map and Statement is the legal record of Public Rights of Way. It records the location and status of each path. There are two kinds of Public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire, these are:

Public Footpath

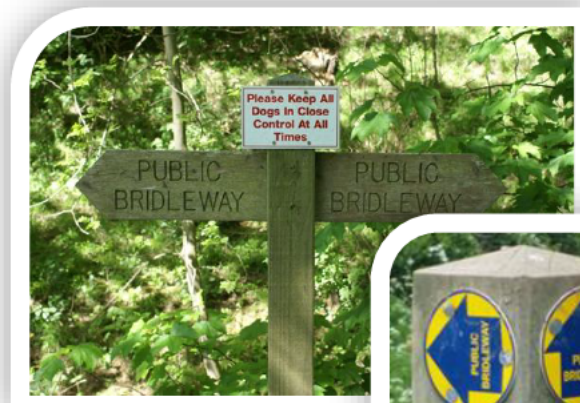
Open to walkers and including the right to use a mobility vehicle. They provide the right to walk with any 'normal accompaniment' (such as dog, pram or a wheelchair).

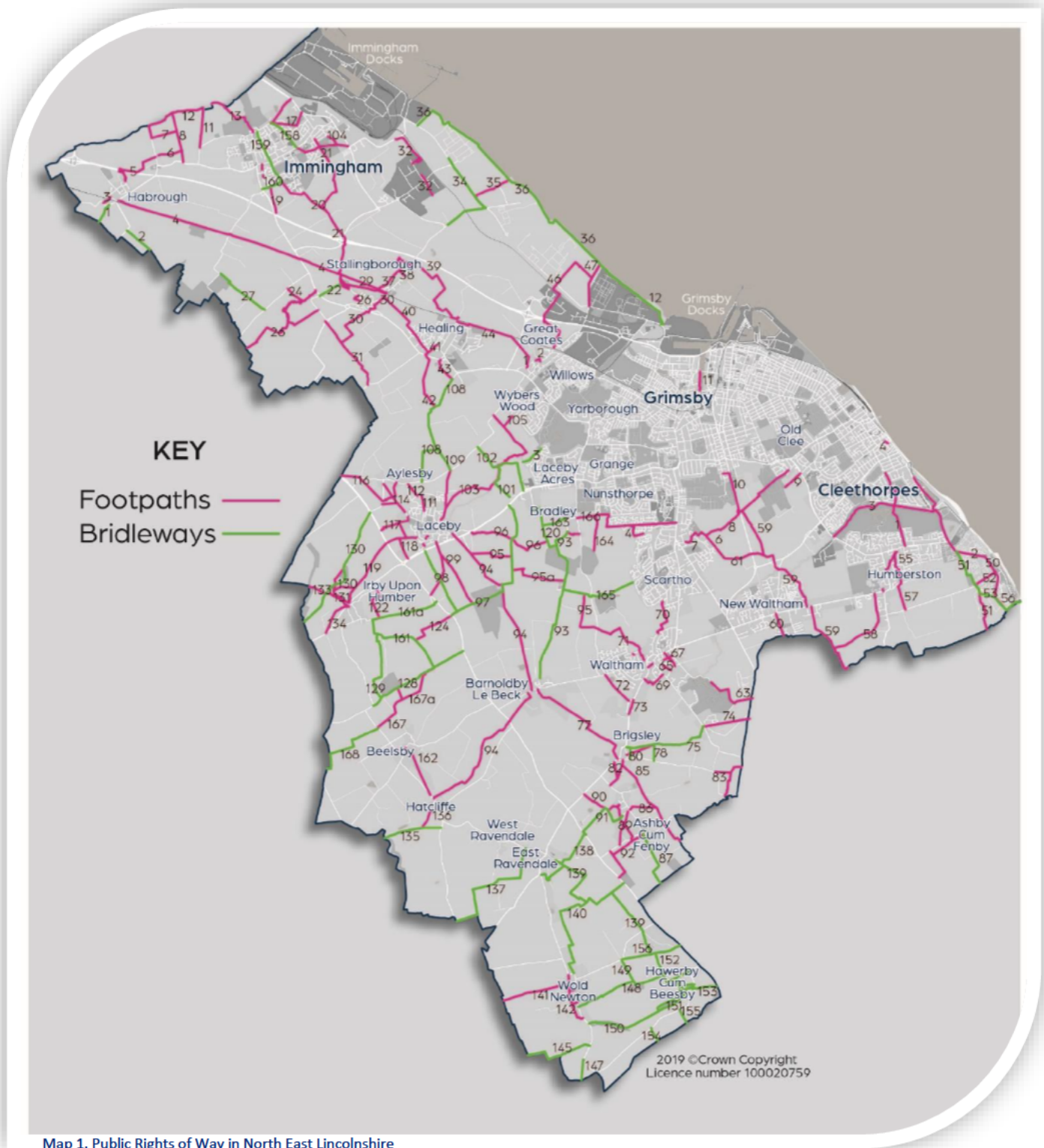


Public Bridleway

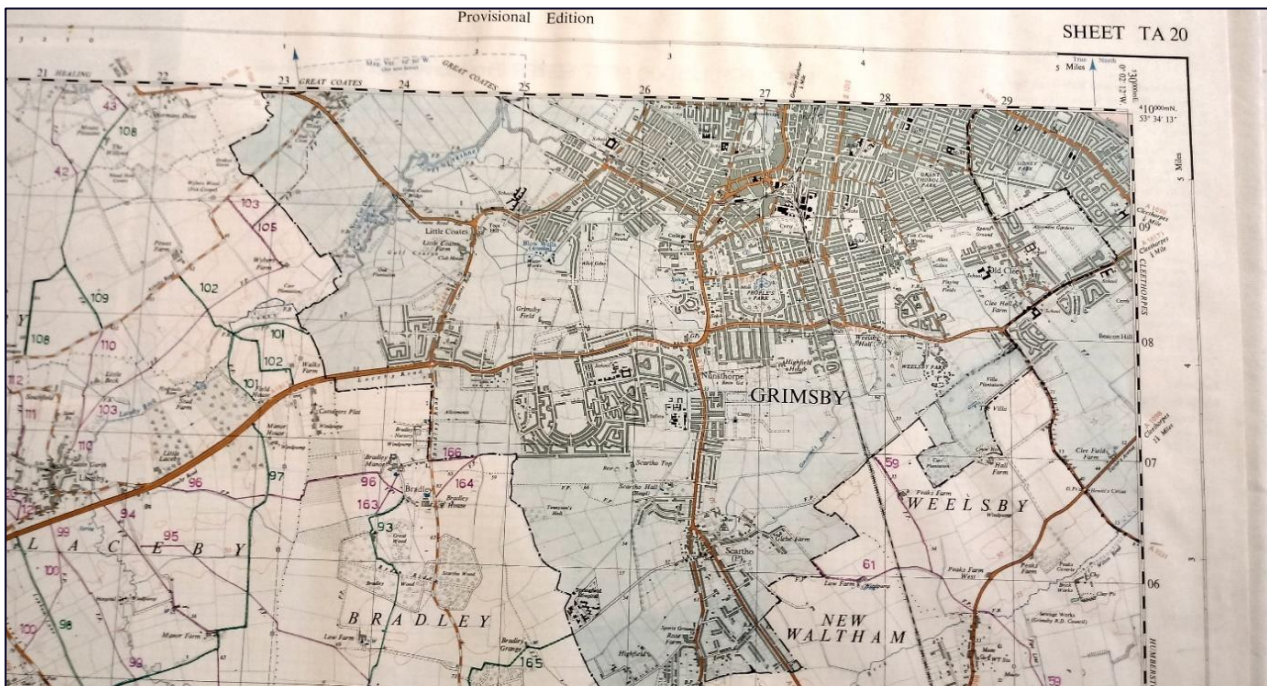
Open to walkers, horse riders, drive animals and cyclists and the right to use a mobility vehicle. There is no right to take a horse drawn vehicle along a bridleway, again they provide the right to walk with any 'normal accompaniment' (e.g. dog, pram or a wheelchair).

There are no Restricted Byways or Byways in North East Lincolnshire. Any carriage drivers, 4x4 drivers or motorcyclists need to use existing Public Highways rather than the Public Rights of Way network.





Map 1. Public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire



Part of the Definitive Map showing the excluded area shaded in blue.

Preparation of the Definitive Map started in the early 1950's after the enactment of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The Map is mainly based on path surveys undertaken by Parish Councils and also using documentary evidence. North East Lincolnshire Council's Definitive Map and Statement, is inherited from the previous Highway Authority, Humberside County Council (abolished April 1996) and subsequently Lindsey County Council (abolished April 1974). The Definitive Map for North East Lincolnshire is often referred to as the Lindsey Map. The base layer is out of date due to the Definitive Map being drawn the latest Ordnance Survey at the time.

The Definitive Map is conclusive evidence of the existence of a Public Right of Way shown on it. However, if a route is not shown, it is not proof that this route does not exist. The Definitive Map is a record which was created by statute to protect the network and to inform the public of the rights available. There are a number of legislative acts that affect Public Rights of Way these include:

- The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949
- The Countryside Act 1968
- The Highways Act 1980
- The Rights of Way Act 1990
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
- The Deregulation Act 2015⁸

The un-surveyed urban areas of Great Grimsby and Cleethorpes were exempt from Public Rights of Way surveys. Under the terms of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, urban areas could, and were, excluded from the survey which led to the production of The Definitive Map and Statement. The excluded urban area is shown on the definitive map in the photograph above.

There are very few Public Rights of Way recorded in Grimsby and Cleethorpes. Approximately 10 Public Rights of Way have been added since the Definitive Map was published.

⁸ The Deregulation Act 2015 received Royal Assent in March 2015.

Since ROWIP 1 there has been an increase in the amount of Public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire. Since 2008 24km have been added to the Definitive Map this will be due to Definitive Map Modification Orders and Public Path Orders.

Right of Way	2008	2018	Changes since last ROWIP
Footpaths	121km (75 miles)	138km (86 miles)	17km (10 miles) added
Bridleways	69km (43 miles)	76km (47 miles)	7km (4 miles) added

The Definitive Map not only has legal importance but is a practical tool which needs to be kept up to date for some of the following reasons:

Members of the Public can check the status and line of Public Rights of Way

- Landowners can manage their land around the limits of Public Rights of Way
- Planning Officers can fulfil their statutory duty to take account of the impact of planning applications on Public Rights of Way.

It is anticipated that the length of Public Rights of Way will be reduced when ROWIP 3 is produced as there are a number of anomalies that run through housing estates, which need to be extinguished.



Public Footpath 167, Beelsby

Places of Interest

There are also a number of places of interest along the public rights of way network in North East Lincolnshire.



Cleethorpes County Park



Weelsby Woods

Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre



Waltham Windmill



Cleethorpes Boating Lake

5.3 Recreational paths

North East Lincolnshire supports a number of recreational promoted paths these are:

Wanderlust Way

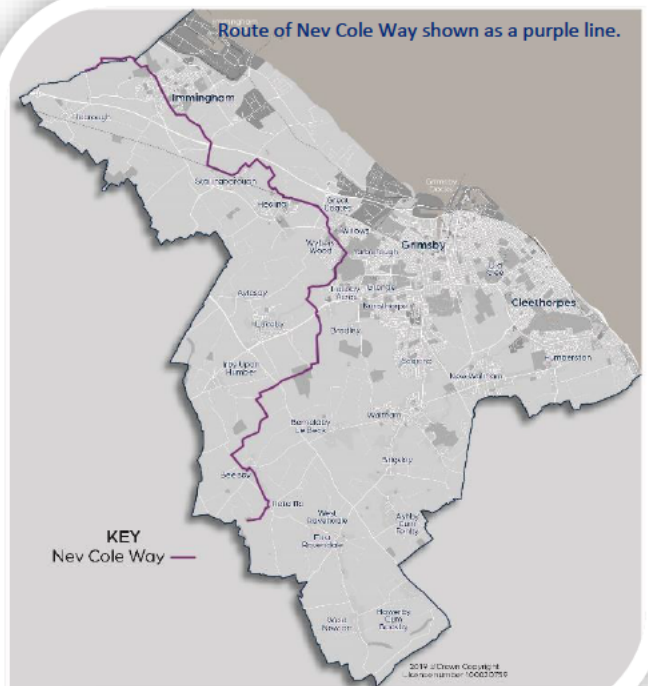
The Wanderlust Way is a 20 mile circular route which passes through attractive small villages and across the woods and farmland of the undulating Lincolnshire Wolds, from where there are views across the mouth of the Humber Estuary. The walk starts and finishes at Bradley Woods. The walk offers a choice of walks from the full 20 mile circular walk to smaller link routes.



Nev Cole Way

The Nev Cole Way is a long distance walk in the north of Lincolnshire which is a tribute to Nev Cole who devised the Wanderlust Rambling Club in 1932.

The route starts at Burton upon Stather, North Lincolnshire and it follows an inland route through a number of villages then around the outskirts of Grimsby where it follows the River Freshney to Nettleton in Lincolnshire.



The Johnson Silver Lincs Way



This walk celebrates the Johnson Silver Jubilee of the Grimsby and Louth Group of the Ramblers Association. The route is a 25 mile waymarked walk from Grimsby

through the Lincolnshire Wolds running through villages of Brigsley, Ashby Cum Fenby and Wold Newton to Louth. The Silver Lincs Way has recently been renamed the "Johnson Silver Lincs Way", after Ted and Joan Johnson who devised the walk. Ted had been Chairman and Joan had been Secretary of the Ramblers group for many years and retired from the posts in 2018.



Greenwich Meridian Trail



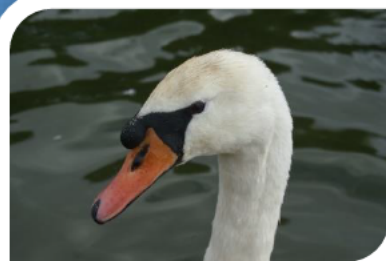
The Greenwich Meridian Trail is a long-distance walk that follows the line of the Prime Meridian. The walk begins at the monument to King George V at Peacehaven in East Sussex and runs 273 miles to Tunsall in East Yorkshire, through North East Lincolnshire. The walk was created in 2009, to coincide with the 125th anniversary of the Greenwich



England Coast Path

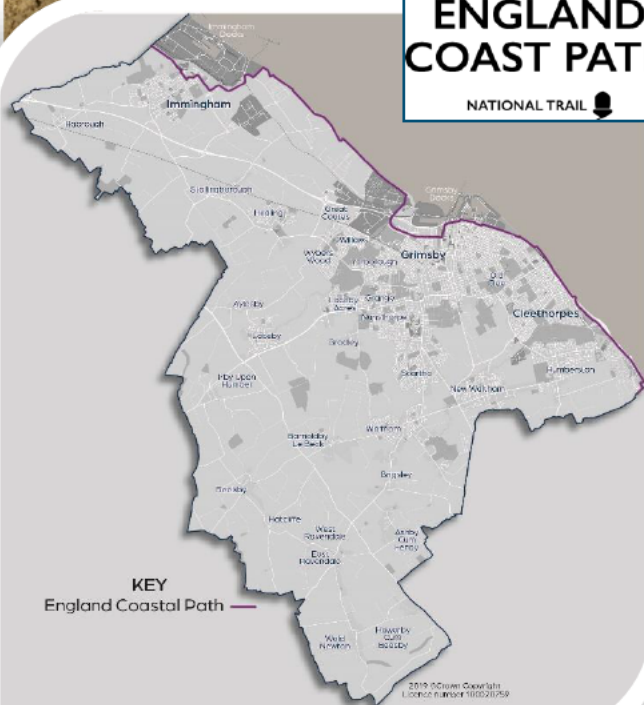
Under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, part of this Act was to give a Right to Coastal Access, giving people for the first time the right of access around all England's open coast.

The England Coast Path will be the longest managed and waymarked coastal path in the world, at around 2,795 miles long. The path will run around the coast of England and will run along part of the Public Rights of Way network. The completion date for the path is 2020.



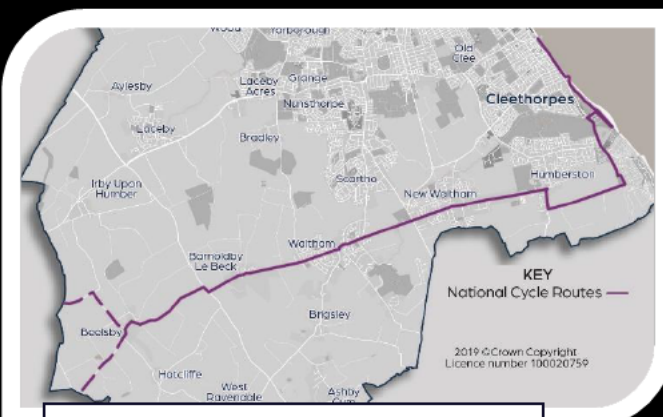
ENGLAND COAST PATH

NATIONAL TRAIL



National Cycle Network Route 1 and 110

The route forms part of the National Cycle Network, developed by Sustrans and briefly runs into North East Lincolnshire. This is a long distance cycle route running from Dover to the Shetland Islands. The section in North East Lincolnshire is part 4 of the route. A branch of the National Cycle Route 1 is National Route 110 from Beelsby to Cleethorpes which runs through Waltham, New Waltham and Humberston. This route is mainly on the highway network but can still be walked.



Location of National Cycle Route 1 and National Cycle Route 110. National Cycle Route 1 shown as a dashed purple line and National Cycle Route 110 shown as a solid purple line.

5.4 Performance

The length of Public Rights of Way network is currently 214km (133miles)(2018) overseen by one full time member of staff and two part time members of staff with a revenue budget of approximately £20,000.

of use of PROW for the last 9, shown in the table below.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
BVPI	89%	91%	76%	82%	86%	90%	83%	85%	89%

The percentage of Rights of Way that are easy to use

Highway Authorities are legally responsible

	Signpost	Waymarking	Bridge	Stile or Gate	Obstructions	Ploughing or Cropping	Surface condition	Total
2010	10	9	4	0	15	2	1	41
2011	13	10	7	2	21	14	3	70
2012	11	11	9	1	18	9	3	62
2013	11	12	9	1	18	9	1	61
2014	15	6	5	1	14	6	4	51
2015	6	5	5	1	10	3	3	33
2016	17	8	4	0	15	5	0	49
2017	13	11	4	5	14	5	0	52
2018	8	2	1	0	11	0	0	22

Reasons for failures between 2010 and 2018

The Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 178 statistics were the Government's official measure of how well highway authorities were fulfilling their duties in maintaining Public Rights of Ways. The Government ceased requesting this information in 2008 however as the methodology was useful in establishing the 'ease of use' North East Lincolnshire Council still continue to use this. The methodology includes the assessment of a range of elements, including: signs, stiles and gates, bridges, surfaces and obstructions.

Each path is surveyed on a 19 month rotation cycle causing it to be inspected in different seasons.

The BVPI is a measurement where the whole footpath or bridleway can fail due to one simple defect, such as absence of a signpost. Over 50% of the network is surveyed each year. Previous surveys results show the ease

for maintaining the surface of the path, including bridges, and keeping the way free of up growth. They have the power to require owners to cut back overhanging growth from the side of a path.



Bradley Woods, Grimsby

5.5 Structures

There are a number of structures found on Public Rights of Way. Structures may indicate the location of the path, carry the right of way over a watercourse, restrict livestock within fields, inhibit unauthorised use of the path, or protect the safety of the public.

There are approximately 1074 structures on the network which include the following:

- Waymarker posts: 296
- Bridges 178
- Signposts 382
- Stiles (horse and pedestrian) 12
- Gates 155
- Barriers (which includes motorbike inhibitors and horse friendly barriers) 16
- Steps 17
- Safety bollards 14
- Hand rails 2
- Cattle grids 2

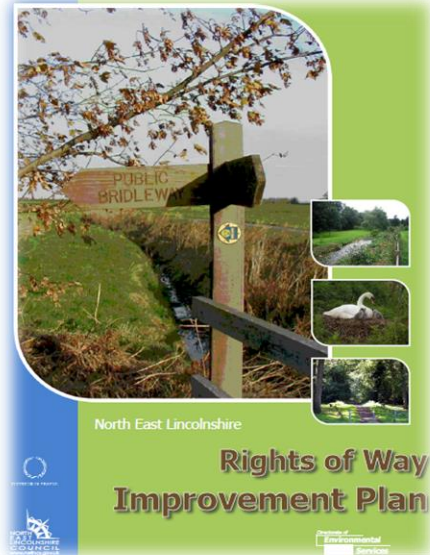
North East Lincolnshire operate a policy of gaps, gates, and stiles. This is the hierarchy used when replacing a limitation such as a stile. The preferred is to have a gap. If the area is grazed by livestock then a gate is the next best approach. If there is no other alternative, a stile will be installed. This is however, the least favoured option.



Stallingborough, Public Footpath 35
and Public Bridleway 36

6 Overview of ROWIP1

North East Lincolnshire Council published its first RoWIP in June 2008. This was in accordance with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.



6.1 Goals and Objectives

The ROWIP1 identified ten goals. Three of these goals were set out in the Milestone statement⁹ and then seven additional ROWIP goals were identified. These were:

DMS – Draft Milestone Statement

RG-ROWIP Goals

DMS1 - Legally defined – all areas covered by the Definitive Map and Statement which correctly records the legal line and statement.

DMS2 - Properly maintained – All Public Rights of Way to be open and available to use.

DMS3 – Well Publicised – To develop and promote a range of routes.

⁹The Milestone Statement was a Countryside Agency initiative to ensure the Public Rights of Way were legally defined, properly maintained, well-publicised public rights of way networks by the year 2000. The Milestone Statement was subsequently superseded by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) which required each highway authority to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).

RG1 - Ensure maximisation of opportunities to develop walking, cycling and equestrian routes which are rich in biodiversity, especially through and around urban centres.

RG2 - Promote pedestrian links within the urban area.

RG3- Improve accessibility to the Public Rights of Way for all sections of the community.

RG4 - Improve community safety through ensuring that access to and from the Public Rights of Way is both safe and practicable.

RG5 - Promote a healthier lifestyle and recreational opportunities.

RG6 - Seek opportunities to provide better facilities for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks to provide circular/linear routes.

RG7 - Improve access for day visitors and tourist activity in rural and urban areas for all.

The Statement of Action produced for ROWIP 1 is the core of the plan. It contains various key actions and supporting tasks which state in broad terms how they will be realised, establishes costs, possible partners and timescales. The actions were identified in the following groups:

- Overcoming the legal deficiencies
- Improving the condition of the network
- Making the Network Safer
- Improving accessibility
- Extending and linking the network to other Authorities and National Trails

6.2 Review of ROWIP 1

The Statement of Action outlined in the first ROWIP identified how North East Lincolnshire Council proposed to manage, and improve the rights of way network.

In ROWIP1 13 key actions were identified. The actions were based on the assessment

stage from the consultation. They were designed to address the Key Issues raised during the assessment stage.



Immingham Public Footpath 13

6.3 Key Actions (KA) identified in Rights of Way Improvement Plan

A considerable number of such improvements were completed during the lifetime of ROWIP1 undertaken by the Council, which are detailed in the table below.

Overcoming Legal Deficiencies		Achievement
KA1	Reduce the number of outstanding legal orders	The outstanding Legal Event Modification Orders were completed.
KA2	Include the urban areas onto the Definitive Map	The excluded area has not been added to the Definitive Map. This action has been transferred to ROWIP 2.
KA3	Resolve anomalies shown on the Definitive Map	The Definitive Map still has numerous anomalies on it and still require resolving. This action has been transferred to ROWIP 2.

Improving the Condition of the Network		Achievement
KA4	Develop guidelines that set out how the authority will manage and maintain the public rights of way network.	Guidance booklets were produced for landowners. An Enforcement Policy and Procedure were created.
KA5	Reduce the number of unnecessary physical barriers along the PROW	56 stiles have been removed since the last ROWIP. Only 12 stiles remain in the area these include horse stiles.
KA6	Address problems of fly tipping, litter, dog fouling and vandalism – including crop damage, trespass (people exceeding their rights) and antisocial behaviour	This has been transferred to ROWIP 2 as it is unclear whether it PROW users are causing the litter. However we will continue to work with the land owners who have issues of anti-social behaviour.
KA7	Improve and develop signage	Signage is continuously being replaced over the last 5 years 238 finger posts or way marker posts have been replaced. This will continue as they are often knocked over.

KA10	Identify routes which cater for people with limited mobility and the visually impaired	This action has been transferred to ROWIP 2.
KA11	Review the network available to different types of users	A number of Public Footpaths and Public Bridleways have been resurfaced increasing the potential for different users to use the ways.
KA12	Promote the wider use of the network in and around North East Lincolnshire for all sections of the population.	A number of leaflets were created which gave details of circular walks and bus time tables these were available at Tourist Information.
Extending and Linking the Network		Achievement
KA13	Develop well maintained routes into the countryside for the use by local people and visitors and take regard of linking communities and recreational / educational / health facilities.	The last 5 years the ease of use surveys have recorded to be in the high 80% and in 2015 the ease of use was 90%.

Making the Network Safer		Achievement
KA 8	Provide safety improvements where the PROW intersects with busy trafficked roads	Public Bridleway 91, Ashby cum Fenby was diverted to create a direct crossing of the A18, where a short section of the Bridleway had previously run along the edge of A18
Improving Accessibility		Achievement
KA9	Identify more routes which have good public transport links	Leaflets were produced with bus information to promote circular and linear walking routes. These were made available at the local tourist office.



Immingham Public Footpath 13

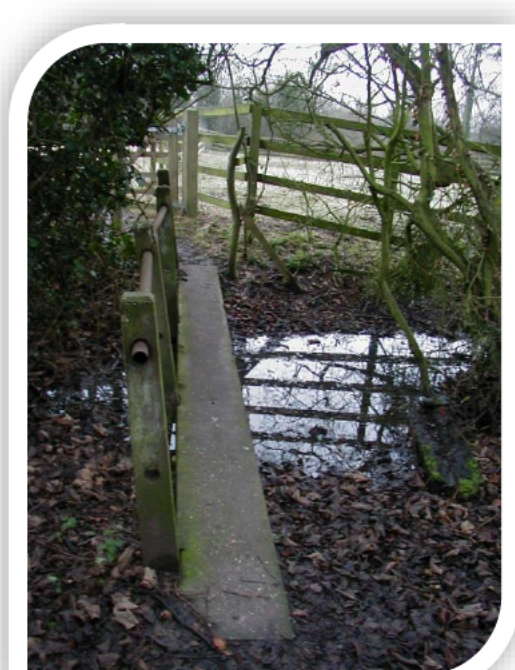
Three examples of improvements are shown below, showing how the surface has been improved and also a bridge replaced with a more suitable bridge that is accessible for all.

Before



Brigsley Public Bridleway 80 in line with KA11 and KA13.

Before

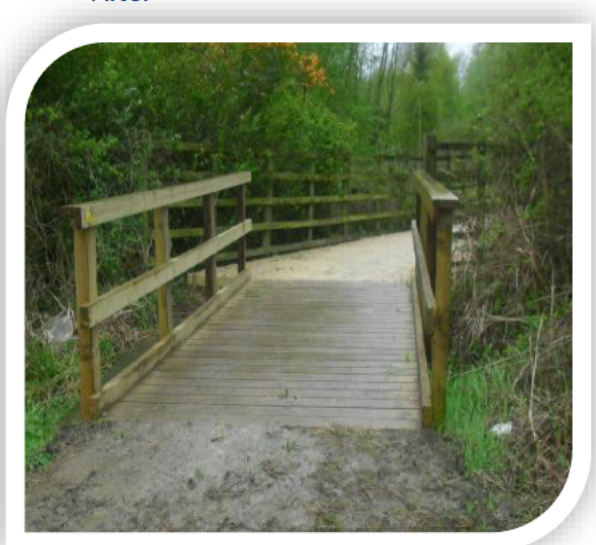


Stallingborough Public Footpath 24 in line with KA5 and KA13.

After



After



Before



Brigsley Public Footpath 77 conforming to KA11 and KA13.

After



7 ROWIP 2

The Council is required, not more than 10 years after first publishing of the ROWIP 1, to either:

- (a) Make a new ROWIP,
 - i. the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public;
 - ii. the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and enjoyment of the authority's area;
 - iii. the accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems; and
 - iv. such other matters relating to local rights of way as the Secretary of State may direct.
- (b) Or review the current plan and decide whether to amend it. The authority shall, if it decides to amend the ROWIP, publish it as amended. If it decides to make no amendments to it, it is required to publish a report of its decision and reasons for it.

A new assessment of the public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire was undertaken, to determine any changes in attitude and use of the network since ROWIP 1 was published.

Public Rights of way are important because they:

- enable everyone to enjoy the beauty and tranquility of the countryside
- provide an excellent resource for learning about the environment
- enable people to get away from increasingly busy roads;
- support tourism and contribute to the local economy;
- provide a convenient means of travelling, particularly for short journeys;
- encourage people to improve their health and fitness by taking exercise.

Rights of Way Improvement Plans are intended to be aspirational. This plan therefore includes a number of proposals for improvements to the rights of way network that are optimistic.

The aim of ROWIP 2 is to consolidate the aspirations of ROWIP 1 and provide a set of objectives for the future taking into account a combination of statutory obligations, customer needs and financial/resource restrictions.

The ROWIP itself does not contain information on site-specific assessments, but draws broader, generic conclusions, which are then the focus of a Statement of Action for the management of local public rights of way, and for securing an improved network of paths.

In preparing the Improvement Plan, the Authority is required to look at how the network can be updated and identify where changes can be made to meet current and likely future needs.

7.1 General requirements for different users

Walkers

Walkers require circular routes of varying length which are easy to follow. These can be walks to work, school, shops, bus stops and to other villages or towns.

Ideally information such as fingerposts and way marking should be clearly available giving the user confidence where to walk. Path surfaces should be well drained and suitable for all weather conditions.

Walkers require a path about 1.4km (0.8mile) to 1.8km⁹ (1.1 mile) in length to undertake a walk of 30 minute duration. The recreational walkers require a further distance of more than 2.4km in length or more which is circular and starting at a village centre, bus stop, railway station or a car park.



Healing Public Footpath 49

For dog owners, the routes close to urban areas are important for exercising their pet. In addition to this, users also expect the provision of dog bins that are emptied regularly.

Equestrians

There is a need to provide attractive, sustainable short routes for hacking and exercising horses. Ideally they should be circular and of 4km in length, these could be targeted to locations where there are high number of horses. Somewhere secure to park a trailer or horse box is required when visiting the area. Surfaces should be well drained and suitable for all weather conditions.

Any gates along the route should be useable with one hand, as the other hand is holding the reins. Again equestrians require information such as fingerposts and way marking clearly available giving the user confidence where to ride.



⁹http://www.teesvalleylocalaccessforum.co.uk/images/NationalConference2017/NE_ROWIP_2017.pdf

Cyclists

Cyclists using Public Rights of Way often seek traffic free routes which are continuous and well-maintained. They generally prefer a smooth surface which is free from limitations such as gates. Crossing of any roads should be safe and avoiding junctions, and there should be somewhere secure to park their vehicle if visiting the area.

Surfaces should be well drained and suitable for all weather conditions.

Information such as fingerposts and way marking should be clearly available giving the user confidence where to ride.

People with Physical and Sensory Disabilities

Local rights of way should be accessible to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems. There should be no physical barriers such as the surface being too muddy, or stiles and steps. Information such as fingerposts and way marking should be clearly available giving the user confidence where to walk. Safe routes are also required to get to these paths.

Landowners and land managers

Landowners and land managers are an important part of the Public Rights of Way network, particularly in the maintenance of vegetation, and furniture.

They suffer from intentional and accidental trespass, gates being left open, theft, dog fouling, uncontrolled dogs, irresponsible parking, litter, impact on habitats, deterrent signs or intimidation, deliberate obstruction, and issues of security.

The Animals Act 1971 added more responsibility to landowners and land managers as they are liable for the behavior of their animals, regardless of any steps they might have taken to prevent injury. Where public access is permitted livestock owners must follow Health and Safety Executive guidance. Difficulties do arise, particularly

where land owned by a livestock keeper is publicly accessible.



7.2 Assessment of current use and demand

To identify changes in use and demand for public rights of way in North East Lincolnshire, a new survey for members of the public and landowners was undertaken in 2018.

A questionnaire was placed on North East Lincolnshire Council's website and paper copies were available from all Council libraries and Customer Access Points from 24 February 2018 to 25 March 2018. The questionnaire aimed to gather the views of a wide cross-section of the community, including those people that do not currently use the public rights of way network.

Not everyone makes use of the local Rights of Way network. It is important to understand why this is the case and whether there are barriers that can be removed to overcome this.

The questionnaire explored people's views on rights of way. It also asked questions regarding how people use the rights of way network, the views and aspirations of the local community, and any issues which currently discourage or prevent use of Public Rights of Way.

In order to identify the demand on the network, two questionnaires were drafted, one aimed at general public and the other landowners. The questionnaires highlighted a number of wide-ranging and specific improvements which were assessed, prioritised and, where appropriate, put into the action plan for implementation.

7.3 Results from Questionnaire

A total of 411 responses to the questionnaire, were received from members of the public. The results are summarised below.

Quite a few walkers mentioned that they are discouraged from using Public Rights of Way due to the damage caused by horses which had churned up the surface. This would be a matter for the land owner as they may have given them permission to ride over their land. At the current time there isn't any enforcement action the Public Rights of Way team can take to discourage this activity other than erecting notices.

The results from the questionnaire can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Landowner and land manager questionnaire results

Thirteen Landowners responded to the Landowner questionnaire, of which nine had a Public Right of Way crossing their land. Nine used the network for their own personal use.

Notable comments from landowners

Six of the landowners that answered the question about problems, said they had all had users of the Public Rights of Way not keeping to the line of the Way.

Five of the responses had issues with quad bikes / motorbikes and trespassing.

The main priority that the land owners identified was Education – to increase the knowledge and awareness of the countryside closely followed by General Maintenance – repairing gates and vegetation clearance.

“We promote PRow and permissive paths across our land but unfortunately some members of the public abuse the privilege - dogs off leads, exploring off the paths and litter”.



Irby upon Humber Public Footpath 131

“We need help in ensuring people stick to the PROW and do not walk across growing crops”.

One question that was set to both the public and the landowners was the following scenario:

“The council has enforcement powers to keep Public Rights of Way open but tends to negotiate the opening up of paths as much as possible before taking enforcement action. This takes up a lot of time and resources”.

By taking enforcement action first, rather than negotiating, it is likely to reduce officer time and resources but could well result in an increased number of prosecutions where there is non-compliance by the land owner”.

64% of the Public and 57% of landowners said that the Public Rights of Way team should negotiate wherever possible to open the obstructed Public Right of Way.

7.4 Funding

The main funding source for the maintenance of PROW is from the Council revenue budget.

Where specific improvements are required, over and above general maintenance of the paths, funding is identified in the Local Transport Plan.

Other sources of funding include: Natural England, Section 106 agreements, Grant funding and Sponsorship funding.



Laceby Public Footpath 100



Humberston Public Bridleway 56

7.5 The Statement of Action

Statutory guidance states that the statement of action should stem from the Council's assessment of the local rights of way. This assessment is based upon the results from the public questionnaire and our own review of the Public Rights of Way network.

All the Themes have a list of Supporting Tasks each supporting task has a number of Objectives to complete the Task all set out in an action plan.

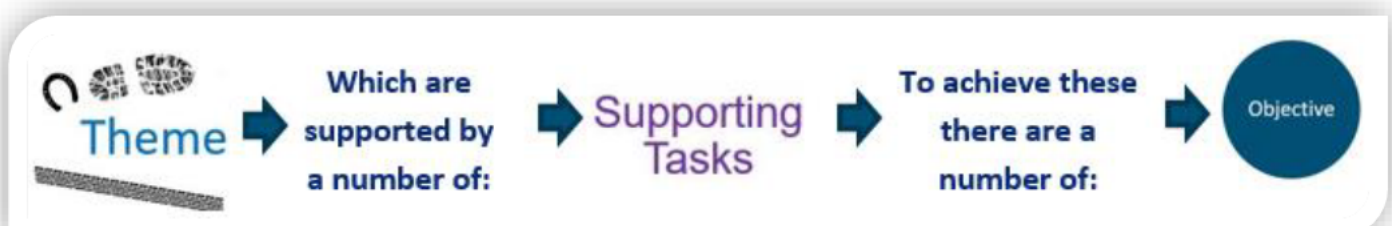
The Statement of Action and its associated action plans is the most important part of the RoWIP as it sets out the list of actions that authorities intend to take to improve the path network and provide greater opportunities for the users of those paths.

The action plan sets out a number of identified improvements, and outlines the strategic actions the Authority will take over the next 10 years for the management and improvement of Public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire.

The Statement of Action for ROWIP 2 has brought together the information and issues collected in the assessment and consultation stages of the plan. The issues are grouped into five action plan themes which are broken down into a Supporting Task with Objectives. The Supporting Tasks are how the Theme will be achieved.

A full list of the action plan is shown in Appendix 2.

A Gantt chart is shown in Appendix 3 showing when objectives are taking place.



Themes

Theme 1

Network Maintenance and Access (NMA)

- Maintain the Public rights of Way Network
- Develop a safe and improved Accessible Network
- Structures on the Network
- Encourage the use of Public Rights of Way
- Improve Accessibility for All
- Work with Planning Department to protect and improve Public Rights of Way

Theme 2

Improve information and access to information (IIA)

- Develop the Public Rights of Way information available on the Councils website to aid access to information
- Promote responsible use of right of way network
- Local Access Forum

Theme 3

Creating Network Links (CNL)

- Improving Connectivity
- Seek Opportunities to increase Bridleway Network
- Carry out an audit and develop a strategy and procedures for improving crossings over busy roads

Theme 4

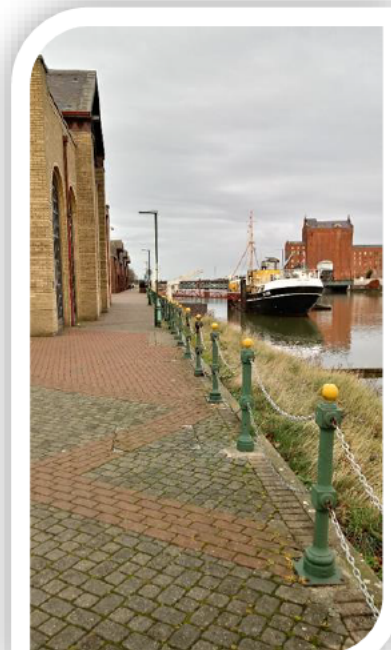
Records (R)

- Keep the Definitive Map up to date
- Consolidate the Definitive Map
- Unrecorded Rights of Way
- Statement of Priorities

Theme 5

Links to other Plans, Strategies and changes in legislation (PPL)

- Links to other plans, strategies and changes in legislation
- Changes in legislation and opportunities



Grimsby Public Footpath 11, alongside Fishing Heritage Centre



= This symbol represents comments received on the questionnaire



Network Maintenance and Access (NMA)

North East Lincolnshire Council has a duty to maintain the Public Right of Way network across the borough for the usual traffic, i.e. for pedestrians on a footpath and for pedestrians and horse riders on a bridleway. Maintenance issues that arise when managing the network include: surfacing, vegetation clearance and installing/repairing stiles, gates and bridges. Enforcement issues are mainly concerned with ploughed paths, obstructed paths and encroachment. Fly tipping and the Illegal use of footpaths and bridleways by motorcyclists and quad bikes are an ever-present problem.

Supporting Task NMA1A.

Maintain the Public Rights of Way Network

Better path condition, stop use by off road motor vehicles mainly motor bikes

Repair stiles and make marking clear

The use of signs informs users of path status, prevents trespass, protects land, improves user experience, and prevents misuse. All Public Rights of Way should have a finger post where it leaves the metalled surface.

An obstruction is classified as anything (including structures, crops and vegetation) that impedes the existing legal access and/or is an offence that could lead to prosecution.

Vegetation control on the Public Rights of Way is a significant task. The Council is responsible

for the surface vegetation growth and has a seasonal vegetation clearance programme to deal with this. Landowners are responsible for cutting back vegetation such as hedges and trees that are overhanging the Public Right of Way, and are also required to reinstate cross field paths within 14 days of ploughing and/or cropping. Headland paths should not be ploughed or cropped.

Where a Public Right of Way crosses an arable field the landowner also has responsibility to keep the path clear from the side growth of trees, hedges and crops. The Council will remind land owners of their responsibilities and take enforcement action where necessary.

Keeping the Public Rights of Way Safe and Clear of Obstructions.

An obstruction is classed as anything (including structures, crops and vegetation) that obstructs the right to pass and repass along the path. The PROW enforcement policy, which includes enforcement of path obstructions, is available on North East Lincolnshire Council's website.



Laceby Public Footpath 100

Public Rights of Way are inspected to make sure crops and ploughing are not causing an obstruction. These inspections are undertaken twice a year in spring and autumn. The Public Rights of Way team work with landowners to secure improvements to Public Rights of Way and ensure their legal obligations are being maintained.

Land managers should be aware that if they breach the legislation relating to Public Rights of Way, they can be reported to the Rural Payments Agency which can affect their Basic Payment Scheme. In all instances the Council will try to resolve any issues through co-operation and negotiation. Reporting to the Rural Payments Agency is only undertaken as a last resort.

The Council maintains an asset database of the PROW network in North East Lincolnshire, which includes information on the condition of the network and the status of resolving complaints. It also takes into account the urgency of each type of report.



Cleethorpes Public Footpath 3

Path Maintenance

The Highway Authority being North East Lincolnshire Council under Section 130 of the Highways Act 1980 has a duty to protect and assert the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of a highway (Public Rights of Way are by definition highways), and Section 41 of the Act places a duty to maintain all highways which are maintained at public expense.

From the questionnaire results many people are discouraged from using public paths due to issues such as; obstructions, overhanging and surface vegetation, drainage and poor path surfacing, litter, graffiti, and dog-mess.



Aylesby Public Footpath 116

Maintenance also needs to be considered with regard to the character of the route, environmental impact, conservation and the use of appropriate and sustainable/recycled materials, in particular those within a rural setting. Annual or regular maintenance regimes are in place where the surface is cut, and in urban locations, an application of herbicide is applied.

The Council must also consider the maintenance of structures on its public rights of way network, which exist to provide stock proofing and to enhance public safety. They include kissing gates, stiles, bridges, defined gaps, and barriers.

Surface improvements will increase access opportunities for those with impaired mobility, in wheelchairs or mobility scooters and sight impairment. The gradient of the Lincolnshire Wolds makes the creation of true 'Easy Access' trails challenging in many parts.

Use of Capital Programme for Network Improvements.

Through the Local Transport Plan, capital funding has been allocated to Rights of Way Improvements. To achieve many of the aspirations within this plan it will be necessary to maximise opportunities for other funding, including joint working with partners, linking into other strategies, and capitalising upon new developments.

Paths are Signposted and Waymarked.

The Countryside Act 1968 Section 27 of places a duty on North East Lincolnshire Council to provide and maintain a signpost wherever a right of way leaves a metalled road. These signposts must indicate the status of the public path. Not only is signage a statutory requirement, but it also has many benefits, it helps people to locate the start of a path, or to make them aware of the existence of a path. They also help encourage usage and gives the user confidence that they are not trespassing.



Immingham Public Bridleway 27

The sign must indicate the status of the right of way. Local authorities are also required to place signs, such as waymarker posts, at other locations to assist people who are unfamiliar with the locality.



Aylesby Public Footpath 116

Action Plan – Maintain the Public Right of Way Network

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
NMA1A/a	Keeping the Public Rights of Way safe and clear of obstructions.	Results from the survey indicate there were a number of reports that paths were obstructed.	Reports received are investigated in an efficient and timely manner. Potential obstructions picked up on the 19 month BVPI survey. Take Enforcement Action where appropriate.	Reports monitored through Highway Asset management software to make sure all reports are investigated and appropriately actioned. 19 month cyclic inspections.	£££	Ongoing Low	Existing PROW Budget
NMA 1A/b	Path maintenance.	Surface improvements are required.	Where required and suitable, paths are re-surfaced with appropriate material.	Monitored through reports and cyclic inspections programme.	££	Ongoing Low	Existing PROW Budget
NMA1A/c	Use of capital programme for network improvements.	Improvements to the Public Rights of Way network which cause a barrier to some users.	Reduce number of outstanding and ongoing structural defects Asset life increased Network made more accessible	Monitored through reports and cyclic inspections programme. Where repairs are identified the location is added to the forward programme for path maintenance	££	Ongoing Medium	Existing PROW Budget and Local Transport Plan.
NMA1A/d	Paths are Signposted and Waymarked.	Comments were received regarding the clarity of signposts and waymark posts.	Ensure that paths are well signposted from the roadside and way marked where possible Full condition inspections undertaken on a 19 month cycle (BVPI survey).	Regular inspections Regular monitoring of customer reports Regular inspections	£	Ongoing Low	Existing PROW Budget
KEY:							
Time scale							
1	To be undertaken in year 1						
2	To be undertaken in year 2						
3	To be undertaken in year 3						
	And so on						
Costs				Resources			
£	Estimated cost less than £5,000 per year			Low	Low labour intensive (existing staff resources)		
££	Estimated cost between £5,000 and £10,000 per year			Medium	Medium labour intensive (some added staff time)		
£££	Estimated cost more than £10,000 per year			High	High labour (Considerable added staff time required)		



Kingsley Grove, Grimsby – Public Space Protection Order

Supporting Task NMA1B/a.
Develop a Safe and Improved Accessible Network

I don't walk & my mobility scooter gets stuck.

The Public Rights of Way network should be safe for all users and better connected. This will increase the users and sustainable transport.

When creating, improving or diverting a Public Right of Way, it should be done to improve connectivity to the network and improve safety when emergence onto or crossing a road is part of the proposal. The development of a safer access network can also be achieved through financial contributions from developers.

There are occasions when there may be anti-social behaviour such as vandalism or drinking taking place on the Public Rights of Way. In which case limitations are placed on the Public Rights of Way network to restrict the use. These restrictions can be used to close a Public Right of Way through a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO). PSPOs replaced Gating Orders and a number of other measures intended to combat anti-social behaviour.

PSPOs are only made once the Authority is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds that the two conditions have been met:

- 1) that activities are taking place which have had, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality; and
- 2) that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature, is unreasonable, and justifies the proposed restrictions.

Action Plan - Develop a Safe and Improved Accessible Network

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
NMA1B/a	Develop a safe and Improved access Network.	People with disabilities would like to use the Public Rights of Way network but are often put off by the surface and unknowing what the conditions are like.	Make more paths suitable for all.	Annually review maintenance programme responding to changes and reports on network condition. Identify opportunities to reduce the level of ad-hoc maintenance in place of scheduled works.	££	Ongoing Low	Existing PROW Budget / LTP
NMA1B/b	Improve Community safety through ensuring that access to and from PROW is safe and practicable.	Linking paths together to improve connectivity.	Where paths are deemed hazardous by a highway engineer, investigate solutions or possible diversions. Extinguishment Order the least preferred option. When appropriate place limitations on Public Rights of Way through Public Space Protection Orders.	Identified through cyclic inspections and reports. PSPOS initiated after evidence of misuse.	£	Ongoing Medium	Existing PROW Budget and LTP
Key:							
Time scale							
1	To be undertaken in year 1						
2	To be undertaken in year 2						
3	To be undertaken in year 3						
	And so on						
Costs				Resources			
£	Estimated cost less than £5,000 per year.			Low	Low labour intensive (existing staff resources)		
££	Estimated cost between £5,000 and £10,000 per year.			Medium	Medium labour intensive (some added staff time)		
£££	Estimated cost more than £10,000 per year			High	High labour intensive (Considerable added staff time required)		

Theme 1
Supporting Task NMA1c.
Structures on the Network

Clearly marked routes, less stiles and more kissing gates, clearly defined paths across fields especially if they have been ploughed.

Continue to comply with British Standards on all new structures and furniture, and where possible, upon replacement of existing structures or furniture. BS 5709-2018 gaps, gates and stiles; order of preference; gap being the preferred option then gate, kissing gate, and then a stile. British Standards are only advisory, and provides specifications for gates and stiles to ensure they cause the minimum inconvenience for users whilst containing livestock.

An elderly person may be perfectly capable of walking but may for example have difficulty negotiating a stile. Similarly, a person with a pushchair is also likely to have limited accessibility to rights of way.

There are thirteen stiles left in North East Lincolnshire this figure includes horse stiles. When the pedestrian stiles come round for renewal or repairs the least restrictive option will be considered. Limitations such as gate will only be installed to prevent the ingress and egress of livestock or hinder the use of unauthorised use such as motorbikes using Public Bridleways in certain circumstances.

When new structures are installed they must meet with the following legislation:

The Equality Act 2010 states the need to take “reasonable” measures to avoid discrimination. Circumstances such as costs, potential benefits to other customers, resources available and practicalities will need to be taken into consideration. Actual accessibility improvements made will depend on various

issues, these will vary from location to location and result in different levels of accessibility and types of improvements. From the perspective of a Public Rights of Way the Equality Act impacts on several areas of work, namely management of structures, the condition and character of the network. In essence local authorities are required to have regard to their obligations under the Equality Act wherever changes or additions to the rights of way network are proposed.

The Highways Act 1980 section 175A requires Highway Authorities to have regard for the needs of disabled people when undertaking works. It is unlawful for providers of services, which includes local authorities to discriminate against disabled person by not providing them a service which would provide to all members of the public.

On bridleways access for the disabled horse rider is taken into account through the provision of gates that are easy to open with one hand without the need to dismount.

As little restriction as possible for potential users whilst meeting the actual agricultural needs of the land owner. The order of preference is gap, gate, kissing gate, stile. A stile should only be installed in exceptional circumstances.

When there is reports of crime which is an ongoing issue it should be looked at to install the least restrictive preventative or deterrent measure an example would be a horse stile with a motor bike inhibitor. There must be evidence of anti-social behaviour if limitations are placed on the Public Right of Way such as Police reports etc.

Action Plan - Structures on the Network

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
NMA1C	Remove stiles and unnecessary structures from the network	Where necessary install preventive measure to stop motorbikes and scooters which damage the Public Rights of Way.	In line with the Gaps, Gates and Stiles policy.	Measured by the number of unauthorised or unnecessary structures that are removed. The numbers will decrease over time until all such structures are removed.	££	3-10 Low	Existing PROW Budget
KEY:							
Time scale							
1	To be undertaken in year 1						
2	To be undertaken in year 2						
3	To be undertaken in year 3						
And so on							
Costs			Resources				
£	Estimated cost less than £5,000 per year.		Low Medium High	Low labour intensive (existing staff resources)			
££	Estimated cost between £5,000 and £10,000 per year.			Medium labour intensive (some added staff time)			
£££	Estimated cost more than £10,000 per year.			High labour intensive (Considerable added staff time required)			

Stiles, gates and other structures on a Public Right of Way are classed as unlawful obstructions unless they are recorded on the definitive statement as a limitation or it can be shown that the way was dedicated with such a structure despite not being recorded on the Definitive Statement or the landowner has been authorised by the Highway Authority under section 147 of the Highways Act 1980.

In authorising a structure, the Authority must have regard to the needs of persons with mobility problems.

When structures are installed legally the Council has a duty to pay 25% of the landowner's costs in providing barrier crossings. The Council tends to buy the stile or gate and ask the landowner to install it. Supplying the furniture means that they will be compliant with BS 5709-2018. The aspiration to make Public Rights of Way as accessible as possible needs to be balanced with ensuring livestock is kept securely within fields or other enclosures.

The Highways Act 1980 allows structures such as gates and stiles for stock control but the Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of disability. The challenge is to satisfy both requirements as reasonably as is practicable.

There have been a recent number of improvements in the design and manufacture of gates, which has resulted in structures, which are reliable, and self-closing, but which are also suitable for access for wheelchairs and mobility vehicles.

Theme 1

Supporting Task NMA1D.

Encourage the use of Public Rights of Way

Join up some routes to make them circular or connect them with public transport better

The importance of regular exercise is well documented. Walking and cycling are very accessible ways for people to increase their activity levels North East Lincolnshire Council.

Improving Public Rights of Way and creating a safe and attractive environment will enable and encourage people to walk, ride and cycle for journeys and/or to use public transport which will reduce carbon emissions.



There have been a number of studies which have demonstrated that contact with the natural environment greatly benefits both physical and mental health¹⁰.

Physical activity improves both mental and physical health. Being physically active can reduce the risk of major chronic diseases. Nationally the levels of physical activity are declining and mental health and physical health are increasing. There are more people overweight than they were 20 years ago¹¹.

The built environment has a major impact on how we travel, if there is an opportunity to make changes in that environment to promote healthier and more active communities it

should be taken. The presence of, and access to, the natural environment can help increase activity and reduce obesity.

Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of many chronic conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, obesity, mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions¹². In England the cost to the NHS of physical inactivity is estimated to be £0.9 billion¹³.

Whether for walking, running or the riding of either bicycles or horses, the benefits of accessing green space have mental and general health benefits. There is a knock on effect that by visiting rural communities there are economic benefits by transferring money from the urban areas to the countryside.



Ashby cum Fenby Public Footpath 94

¹⁰<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/connecting-with-nature-offers-a-new-approach-to-mental-health-care>

[https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Trees-people-and-the-built-environment_Gilchrist.pdf/\\$FILE/Trees-people-and-the-built-environment_Gilchrist.pdf](https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Trees-people-and-the-built-environment_Gilchrist.pdf/$FILE/Trees-people-and-the-built-environment_Gilchrist.pdf)

¹¹https://www.thh.nhs.uk/documents/_Patients/PatientLeaflets/general/Choosing_Health-EasyRead-DoH.pdf

¹² Start Active Stay Active A report in physical activity for health from the four home countries

¹³ Economic costs of physical inactivity

Improved Public Rights of Way provide local path networks that are safe and attractive to use by people of all ages and abilities. Improving the Public Rights of Way network or even paths that link communities will make it easier and more appealing to walk, ride and cycle and hopefully this will lead to:

- Less car dominated environments– safer, less noise/air pollution for people to live and work in and visit– vitalising areas.
- Reduced car use reduces the costs associated with congestion and climate change.
- Local people and visitors able to safely walk/ride are more likely to use and sustain local services – shops, public transport etc.
- Health care savings associated with increased outdoor activity – physical and relaxation.

The University of Cambridge researchers in 2015 concluded that getting everyone to do at least 20 minutes of brisk walking a day would have substantial benefits. This would be beneficial to the NHS at cutting their costs¹⁴. Public Rights of Way offer a free and accessible means of exercise.

Public Rights of Way should maximise opportunities to develop walking, cycling and equestrian route especially through, to and around the urban area. These routes could be to and from tourist attractions and example could be a link from the stables in the outlying villages to Cleethorpes beach.

They are an essential mechanism for linking communities and facilities if we are to reduce motorised transport and the carbon emissions that ensue. The Public Rights of Way network may play a major part in the development of the potential for recreational use of any area. It is essential to create a physical, social, economic, and legal context in which more people will be encouraged to walk more often and to walk further.

Provision of well-maintained verges for horse riders and walkers especially where this provides links between sections of the Public

Rights of Way network. The danger to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders from traffic is very real and it is important to reduce the risks. Access needs to be considered in the context of the Local Transport Plan and with local planning processes. Where new developments are planned with increased traffic implications, their impact on any existing paths or road crossing points should be considered.

By 2025, Department for Transport Cycling Delivery Plan aims to:

- Double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of bicycle stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages;¹⁵
- Increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school from 48% in 2013 to 55%¹⁶.



Band stand in People's Park, Grimsby

¹⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-30812439>

¹⁵ Cycling Delivery Plan DfT October 2014

¹⁶ Cycling Delivery Plan DfT October 2014

Action Plan - Encourage the use of Public Rights of Way

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
NMA1D	Encourage the use of Public Rights of Way	Maps, leaflets and information on the NELC web site was mentioned quite often to encourage people to use Public Rights of Way.	Create a number of leaflets and information on NELC website to promote circular walks.	Create a number of leaflets to be published and available to members of the Public.	£	3-8 Low	Existing PROW Budget / LTP / possible sponsorship

Theme 1 Supporting Task NMA1E Improve Accessibility for All

Make them more wheelchair/scooter friendly

Difficult to navigate in wheelchair as they are only made for the able bodied

Access for All does not have to be for every user these can be classified for different users.

The Equality Act 2010 requires quite rightly that provisions for people with disabilities to be considered equally with that of other path users, whether walking, using a mobility scooter, on horseback or on a cycle.

Not all paths can be Access for All due to the limitations on the path such as steep banks, or areas with poor drainage.

Generally only bridleways offer a greater potential for use by people with restricted mobility than most footpaths. The surface is often made up to a standard suitable for walking and also for mobility scooters.

There is the potential that promoted routes raise expectations with users and whilst some have educational/economic benefits they tend to be targeted at regular walkers and ramblers. These 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. If the short walks around urban areas could be linked to the promoted routes this would have potential health benefits as well as sustainable transport.

In North East Lincolnshire as of August 2016 there are 7460 claimants for Disability Living Allowance, which is approximately 4.70% of the resident population¹⁷. The figures shown in the 2016 Annual Population Survey indicate that 19900 people, 20.3% of the working age (16 to 64) population of North East Lincolnshire, have a known disability¹⁸.

¹⁷<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Equality-Report-2016-2017-FINAL.pdf>

¹⁸<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Equality-Report-2016-2017-FINAL.pdf>

When improving Public Rights of Way or creating new Public Rights of Way, an inclusive approach will be taken from the outset, so that wherever possible the routes will be accessible to horse riders, cyclists, walkers and those with visual and mobility impairments.

Limited mobility also includes elderly and infirm equestrian riders who may be unable to dismount to open gates. With an ever increasing aging population it is clear that the demand for accessible routes will increase.

There are a number of barriers that prevent or discourage access to our countryside by people with disabilities, these include:

- Natural physical barriers such as the nature of the landscape or wet ground or a steep side path
- Man-made physical barriers such as gates, stiles and steps
- The lack of information; transport to the paths;
- Expectations, either one's own or those of others.



Healing Public Footpath 46

Action Plan - Identify parts of the network and routes where surfaces could be upgraded to improve accessibility for all.

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
NMA1E	Identify parts of the network and routes where surfaces could be upgraded to improve accessibility for all.	Nearly a quarter of respondents said they had a disability, long term illness or infirmity.	Identify and prioritise the routes that are could be used for Access for All and promote these.	Create Access for All paths by ROWIP 3.	££	1-6 Low	LTP / Existing PROW Budget

Theme 1

Supporting Task NMA1F

Create circular routes for people with mobility difficulties

Auditing characteristics of a path is essential to identify barriers and what improvements would bring the greatest benefit in enhancing opportunities and experiences for disabled visitors.

Disabled people often value access to the natural environment, but expect to feel vulnerable because of the inherent unpredictability of the landscape.

Provision of better information on access can greatly reduce that sense of unpredictability. Developing an Access for All circular path guide which can be downloadable from the council website. These guides will give descriptions of length, gradient (including side gradient), barriers (gates, steps), and public transport links.



Action Plan - Create circular routes for people with mobility difficulties

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
NMA1F	Create circular routes for people with mobility difficulties	Many of the respondees to the questionnaire said they didn't use Public Rights of Way due to some form of disability or their aids got stuck.	Create circular routes which are specifically designed for those with mobility difficulties.	A number of circular routes created by the publication of ROWIP 3.	£££	1-6 Medium	Existing PROW Budget / LTP

Theme 1

Supporting Task. NMA1G/a

Work with Planning Department to protect and Improve Public Rights of Way

Ensure they are open as priority over construction work.

Public Rights of Way in most cases can be incorporated into new developments as safe and convenient features. It's often possible to keep a distinct path separate from the pavements alongside roads, whether on its existing route or through or around open spaces or woodland or by water features.

Seek additional routes and improvements to existing routes as part of large development sites.

When looking at planning applications there are a number of areas that should be considered. If we are to encourage sustainable travel and improved physical and mental health of the residents, then developments should be designed to encourage, facilitate and where possible link to Public Rights of Way.

Working with Planning Officers to identify Public Rights of Way which link communities, schools, services, public open space etc. that could be upgraded/improved to serve as multi-use routes. Rationalisation of Public Rights of Way will be a key consideration, when changes to the network are proposed through public path orders or development. Future network maintenance will be an important factor when improvements are sought as part of a public path order or development proposal.

Where new developments are planned it is important that improvements to the Public Rights of Way network are considered. Such changes should aim to improve sustainable transport, green infrastructure, recreation, tourism, health and general well-being.

Improvements will normally have beneficial impact on local economies and the aim should be for the improvement rather than maintenance of the existing.

Work with developers and relevant stakeholders to streamline, develop and improve the Public Rights of Way network within and in the vicinity of development. Local mitigation and strategic improvements will be sought through public path orders and where necessary, physical works.

In North East Lincolnshire there is almost one house in four that has a dog¹⁹, when considering planning applications areas for dog walking should be considered and this could increase the use of certain Public Rights of Way. Dog owners are traditionally one of the most frequent, year round users of public rights of way. Owning a dog or the aspiration to do so has a significant influence on the location and type of home their owners will purchase. Developments should take this into account and should incorporate green spaces in to the developments. If green spaces are not possible links, it should be sort to link up with the Public Rights of Way network or green open spaces.

Ways in which the path network can be improved and made safer for walkers, equestrians and cyclists, are better connectivity, improving road crossings, replacing stiles with gates and upgrading footpaths to multi-use paths. Improvements to the network, where appropriate, should be achieved alongside existing maintenance, especially where there are long term asset management benefits (e.g. replacing a stile with a galvanised metal pedestrian gate).

¹⁹<https://www.pfma.org.uk/pet-population-2017>

Development of a safer access network can also be achieved through financial contributions from developers and agricultural-environmental/land management schemes, which do not have a direct cost for the Highway Authority.

Where there is a requirement for a diversion or extinguishment for a path as a result of development, these may be secured by means of a Public Path Order made under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. Developers should not disturb or obstruct a Public Right of Way. A Town and Country Planning Act order cannot be confirmed if the relevant development is substantially complete and developers should ensure that an application for the Public Path Order is made as soon as possible. Developers should be aware that applications that seek to divert existing paths alongside new estate roads will normally be rejected as this is contrary to government guidance in Rights of Way Circular 1/09.



Action Plan - Work with Planning Department to protect and Improve Public Rights of Way.

Objective	Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
NMA1G Work with Planning Department to protect and Improve Public Rights of Way.	Making the Public Rights of Way more accessible came out often in the questionnaire.	Identify and work to implement mitigation and improvements resulting from planning applications which can improve Public Rights of Way and network.	Secure path or network enhancements through development schemes.	£	On-going Low	Existing PROW Budget /Section 106 Agreements

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF mentions that 'Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. The Local Authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks, including National Trails', and that planning should 'actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling' (NPPF, Core Planning Principles). Where practical, particularly within large-scale developments, key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties.

Planning Obligations

These legal agreements require the developer either to contribute financially or in kind to works, in order to mitigate the impact of development within a specified area. These works would be part of an agreement known either as a Section 106 or Section 278. These agreements are legally binding and should be reasonable in planning terms. Funding of this nature has been previously used to contribute towards new infrastructure used on the highway, such as footbridges and pedestrian crossings at no cost to the Local Highways Authority.



Public Bridleway 163, Bradley running through Manor Farm Mews



Barnoldby le Beck Public Footpath 94



Theme 2

Improve Information and Access to Information (IIA)

There were many comments mentioned in the questionnaire for more promotion of the Public Rights of Way. A comment received in the questionnaire was *"free maps of local routes should be available"*. 30% of the feedback given mentioned the need for better information of the Public Rights of Way. Many people mentioned either information on North East Lincolnshire's website, pamphlets / leaflets / mini maps, or an app where this information could be shared.

A Map that's up to date on a Council website would have a huge advantage. There are a huge amount of local running and walking clubs that use these public rights-of-way numerous times each week your information would reach a lot of people and they would benefit from great walks and runs right here on our doorstep.

A complete combined record of public and permissive access would be of much benefit to the public. There is also limited information about easy access paths, e.g. routes without stiles.

Keep up to date the Section 31A Highways Act 1980 register on North East Lincolnshire's website. These record the provision for landowners to register declarations and statements which enable landowners to formally acknowledge public rights across their land. In doing so, they create a presumption that they have no intention to dedicate any further routes across their land.

Theme 2

Supporting Task IIA/1A.

Develop the Public Rights of Way information available on the Council's website to aid access to information

Faults found on the Public Rights of Way network can reported on North East Lincolnshire Councils website. However, there is still more that can be done to improve access to information. Information campaigns can be complementary and effective tools to assist officers with carrying out statutory duties. Permissive paths (informal paths provided by landowners and organisations) can greatly enhance the public rights of way network, but the record of what exists is incomplete.

Comments made on the questionnaire revealed that there remains a lack of awareness of Public Rights of Way. The comments revealed that there are negative perceptions of Public Rights of Way which are either a physical problem or perceived problem. These perceived perceptions undermine the potential for the enjoyment of the Public Rights of Way network. Lack of information was regularly cited as one of the most significant barriers to use of the network.

It is impractical to believe that people who currently do not use the network will suddenly start doing so simply because of promotional material. The reason why they believe there are these barriers needs to identify and to provide a range of suitable information including information on how accessible the route is.

Information leaflets have been produced. The current ones are now out of date and could be updated. Walk guides and trails are often still most easily used in leaflet or booklet form.

Definitive Map Modification Order information is available on the Councils website. Having Public Path Order information available on the Councils Public Rights of Way internet page would be beneficial. This information would be helpful for Members of the Public, Developers, Planning Officers or Parish Councils.

Many users are put off walking through fields that have livestock in them. Alternative routes around livestock are preferred. A system used at Brighton and Hove Council is to show the location of sheep and ponies with grazing maps.

now only shows the fields which are grazed. Showing the locations of livestock would prepare dog walkers and walkers of potential encounters.

Walking through fields of cattle can be nerve wracking.

Action Plan – Develop Public Rights of Way Information

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
IIA/1A	Develop Public Rights of Way information available on the Council's website to aid access to information and problem reporting.	An ongoing trend on the questionnaire was the Council website should show more information regarding Public Rights of Way.	Include information relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Problem reporting •Active/proposed legal orders and path closures •Policy documents •Add Public Path Order information to the web site informing of diversion, extinguishment and creation of paths. 	Land and user information leaflets Provide information electronically on North East Lincolnshire Councils Public Rights of Way pages and ensure it is up-to-date with legal event orders, registers and legal Notices.	£	2-5 Low	Existing PROW Budget
	KEY: Time scale 1 To be undertaken in year 1 2 To be undertaken in year 2 3 To be undertaken in year 3 And so on Costs £ Estimated cost less than £5,000 per year. ££ Estimated cost less than £5,000 and £10,000 per year. £££ Estimated cost more than £10,000 per year. Resources Low Low labour intensive (existing staff resources) Medium Medium labour intensive (some added staff time) High High labour intensive (Considerable added staff time required)						

They previously updated the map regularly to show the sheep and pony locations, however, it

Theme 2

Supporting Task IIAB/1B.

Promote responsible use of Public Rights of Way Network

We promote PRow and permissive paths across our land but unfortunately some members of the public abuse the privilege - dogs off leads, exploring off the paths and litter

From the questionnaire, circular routes in leaflet format was a common comment. The circular paths around the Wolds were often mentioned. It may be possible to produce leaflets in collaboration with Lincolnshire County Council for this area, for walks going through both authority areas.

Create downloadable trail leaflets on the council website, for:

- Current promoted routes
- England Coast Path (National Trial)
- Routes off the England Coastal Path
- Circular paths for all users

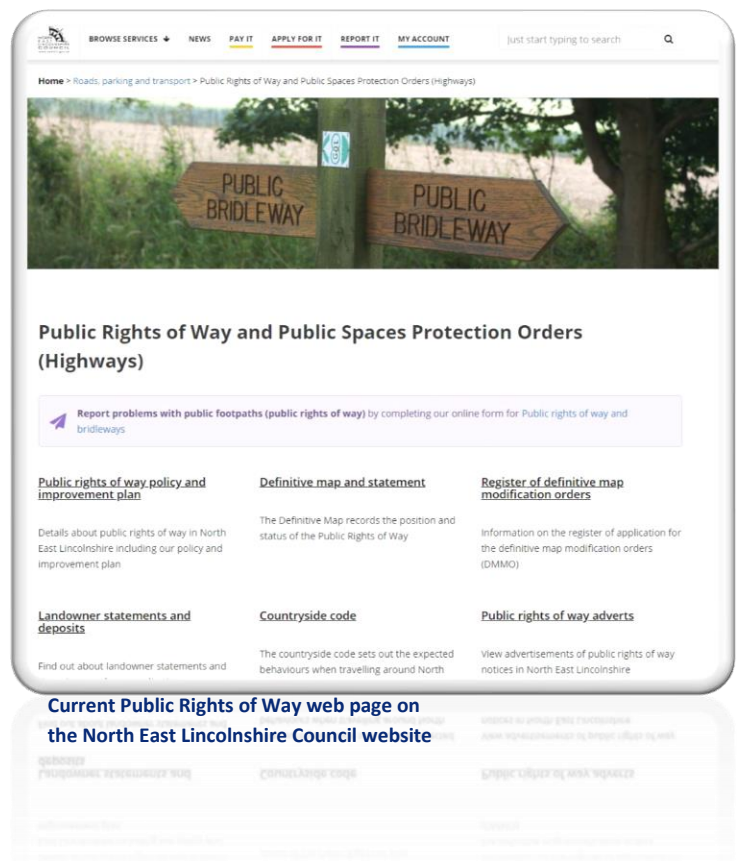
The creation of walk, cycle and horse riding leaflets which are also in electronic form would be beneficial to residents of North East Lincolnshire as this information was requested in the questionnaire. These leaflets could include how suitable each route is to different users.

Raising the strategic profile of the path network and this Improvement Plan will not only increase awareness with other organisations, policy and decision-makers, but will enable better planning and development of communities, with the needs of path users taken into account, and help facilitate external funding or investment in improving the quality and accessibility of paths.

Promotion of the rights of way network is also important to raise the profile of the council's

rights of way service provision, within the council itself and amongst the public, for the reasons below:

- To process Public Path Order applications.
- To process temporary closure of Public Rights of Way applications.
- To maintain an up to date electronic map of public rights of way for display on the county council website.
- To maintain registers detailing each of the following: Modification order applications; Section 31(6) depositions. And to develop registers for public path order applications, as legislation requires.



Current Public Rights of Way web page on the North East Lincolnshire Council website

Action Plan - Promote responsible use

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
IIA1B	Promote responsible use of rights of way network and incorporate this information in to future promotional material.	The main issue raised in the landowner questionnaire was people not sticking to the Public Right of Way and trespassing.	Create promotional material such as circular routes which incorporate responsible use of the Public Rights of Way.	Information displayed on the Councils website promoting responsible use.	£	4-9 years Low	Capital programme

Theme 2

Supporting Task 1D.

Local Access Forum

The Lincolnshire Local Access Forum (LAF) is a valued statutory advisory body in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council set up under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Its main remit is to advise the council on the improvement of access in its area', though it also has a role in advising Natural England and a range of other bodies.

The Forum is a useful sounding board to use when setting priorities for implementation of the ROWIP and monitoring reviewing progress.

At each meeting a report is submitted for the progress of the Definitive Map Modification Order and Public Path Order cases.

The LAF is an advisory body established under Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to provide independent advice on the improvement of public access land.

LAFs can provide advice on a range of issues including:

- Management of rights of way
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans
- Alley gating
- Discovering Lost Ways
- Recreational access
- Access to inland water
- Access by different types of user and by all sections of society
- Land use planning
- Planning applications / Local Development Frameworks
- National policy development

Action Plan - Local Access Forum

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
IIA1C	Local Access Forum	Continue to be a supporting authority of the Mid Lincolnshire Local (Countryside) Access Forum.	Participate and engage at LAF meetings	Continue submitting quarterly reports to the LAF and attend meetings.	£	Ongoing Low	Highway Budget



Theme 3

Creating Network Links (CNL)

Creating or upgrading links between existing routes would increase the value of the network and potentially increase the use. Creating a better linked Network would be safer and healthier for the user and potentially assist with sustainable transport to work, school, shops and connecting towns and villages.

Theme 3

Supporting Task CNL1A

Improving Connectivity

Make them more accessible, better sign posts and keep them useable

We need to ensure that in the planning of our communities, access to basic amenities and services is not dependent on car ownership but is always available to those on foot, bicycle, wheelchair and public transport.

By providing opportunities for children to walk or cycle to school safely will subsequently provide an opportunity for exercise, and can help to establish good habits which will be continued into later life. With children walking or cycling to school this will reduce the traffic pressures on the roads close to the school, with both safety and environmental benefits. Public Rights of Way may form important parts of these routes and we will work closely with partners in the delivery of such schemes. Working with School travel plans could be beneficial.

The process to create new paths can be long and expensive; therefore opportunities to extend the network through the planning process will be investigated, as well as through liaison with landowners. One landowner on the

questionnaire said they would like more Public Rights of Way on their land.



Healing Public Footpath 46

Under Section 25 of Highways Act 1980 the Council may enter into agreements with landowners to create routes over their land. This is a cost effective way of achieving improvements to the network provided agreement can be reached with the landowner.



Habrough Public Footpath 4

Action Plan – Improve connectivity

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
CNL1A	Improve connectivity	A recurring topic which kept being mentioned was for better accessibility and linking paths.	Promote creation orders and agreements to create links between existing paths or to improve popular walking, and riding routes. Either to schools, places of work or shops.	A number of paths creating a better connectivity in the Borough.	££	5-8 Medium	Existing PROW Budget
KEY:							
Time scale							
1		To be undertaken in year 1					
2		To be undertaken in year 2					
3		To be undertaken in year 3					
		And so on					
Costs			Resources				
£	Estimated cost less than £5,000 per year.	Low		Low labour intensive (existing staff resources)			
££	Estimated cost between £5,000 and £10,000 per year.	Medium		Medium labour intensive (some added staff time)			
£££	Estimated cost more than £10,000 per year.	High		High labour intensive (Considerable added staff time required)			

Theme 3

Supporting Task CNL1B

Seek Opportunities to increase Bridleway Network

The Bridleway network is poorly maintained and fragmented often needing to use busy roads to.

The last British Equestrian Trade Association National Equestrian Survey (2010-2011) showed that at least 3.5million people have ridden a horse in the last 12 months. In 2010 eight percent of riders considered themselves disabled²⁰. The

Highways Road Accident database shows there have been six road traffic accidents involving horses in North East Lincolnshire. Four which resulting in slight injuries and two with serious injuries between 2000 and February 2018.

The current figures from the British Horse Society's horse accidents website which launched in 2010, have received over 2,000 reports of road incidents involving horses that been reported to the charity. Of these, 38 caused rider deaths, and 222 resulted in a horse dying from their injuries or being put to sleep. Over 60% of incidents involving horses on the roads happen between 10am and 3pm, with accidents most commonly occurring in June²¹.

²⁰Equestrian Statistics, The British Horse Society

²¹ <http://www.bhs.org.uk/safety-and-accidents/horse-accidents>

In North East Lincolnshire since 2004 there have been 10 incidents regarding horses these include 7 road accidents, 1 spooked by a bird scarer or gas gun and 2 dog attacks²².

In the area the equestrian business is highly lucrative. There are a number of well-known stables which could be linked to the Public Bridleway network and other destinations.

The Public Bridleways are poorly linked and joining them would be beneficial to residents and visitors to the area, these could be linked to the Country Parks and other attractions.

Horse riding can also be tied in with the needs of people with mobility problems. Exploring the countryside on a horse can give a much greater scope for people who have mobility limitations. Improvements in the bridleway network lie primarily with providing new links for horse riders to use safer off-road routes.

Action Plan - Increase Public Bridleways

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
CNL1B	Increase Public Bridleways	Quite regularly it was raised that there was not enough Public Bridleways and that they were poorly linked.	Undertake a feasibility study to see if there is possible to upgrade some Public Footpaths to Public Bridleways Work with local user groups to look at either up grading Public Footpaths to Bridleways or negotiate with local land owners to see if they are willing to create Public Bridleways.	Increase in length of the public Bridleway network in ROWIP3.	££	5-10 Medium	Existing PROW Budget



²²<http://www.bhs.org.uk/safety-and-accidents/horse-accidents/view-incident-map>

Theme 3

Supporting Task CNL1C

Investigate crossings over busy roads

Some bridleways are only accessible if you first negotiate dangerous roads i.e. A16.

Work will be undertaken to make the Rights of Way safer where they link to busy roads. For example where the joining path causes pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists to walk along grass verges of busy roads to the opposite, the council will look at creating an opposite link. It's not suitable for the opposite link to be accessed by walking or riding along a grass verge to access it. There are a number of Public Bridleways that are opposite a Public Footpath and the continuing journey cannot be continued on the Public Right of Way network.



Where Public Bridleways cross busy roads and where appropriate, Pegasus crossings should be considered.

Action Plan – investigate crossings over busy roads

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
CNL1C	Investigate crossings over busy roads.	Comments from the questionnaire noted that it is often hazardous to access some Public Rights of Way.	Liaise with colleagues in Road Safety to promote the need to facilitate improvements on a specific case by case basis.	A number of paths to be improved by ROWIP 3 making crossings safer.	££	3-7 Medium	Highways Budget



Theme 4 Records (R)

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949 required Surveying Authorities to produce Definitive Maps and Statements for their areas. Some parts were excluded from these compulsory surveys, although Local Authorities could produce a map for these areas if they wished.

The Definitive Map should be available online and easily accessible.



The Definitive Map, held at North East Lincolnshire Archives

The Definitive Map and Statement are essential to the management and use of the Public Rights of Way, it is the legal record of the location and status of each recorded public right of way. North East Lincolnshire's current Definitive Map and Statement was published at a scale of 1:25000 with a base layer dated 1959-1967. Any amendment or modification to the Definitive Map requires a legal order. The process for making orders is a lengthy one.

The Definitive Map and Statement for North East Lincolnshire is held at North East

Lincolnshire Archive Office in Grimsby. The Definitive Map is dated 1953 and provides conclusive evidence of the status and the position of the Public Rights of Way.

Theme 4

Supporting Task 1A

Keep the Definitive Map and Statement up to date

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 enables the Authority to make Orders to modify the Definitive Map if the submitted evidence is sufficiently strong to support the making of an Order. Many of these claims are submitted by members of the public. Our role is to objectively determine the validity of any claims and assess the evidence submitted in support of them.

When creating, improving or diverting a Public Right of Way, we will endeavor to improve the connectivity of the network and improve safety if required.

When improving Public Rights of Way or creating new Public Rights of Way, an inclusive approach will be taken from the outset, so that wherever possible the routes will be accessible to horse riders, cyclists, walkers and those with visual and mobility impairments.

Public Path Orders (PPO)

Public Path Orders change the Definitive Map by means of a creation, diversion or extinguishment of the public right of way. The power to make Public Path Orders is at the discretion of the Council. The Council will only exercise its discretion to make an order if it is satisfied that the order is capable of being confirmed (i.e. it believes the legislative tests are met) and it is reasonable to do so with reference to the criteria. There is a charge for these applications.

Before an application is processed for diverting a Public Right of Way we must be satisfied that:

- It is in the interest of either the public, the owner, lease holder or occupier of the land.
- The new route must terminate at another point on the same path or a highway connected with it.
- The new route must be substantially as convenient for the public.
- There will not be a negative effect on public enjoyment of the path or way as a whole.
- Any work needed to bring the condition of new routes up to an acceptable standard will normally be required of the applicant.

The Council does not generally support applications for extinguishment orders unless it is part of a wider package with compensating public benefit or safety reasons. It is not possible to extinguish a path by blocking it or preventing the use it still exists in law until a formal extinguishment Order is made.

Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs)

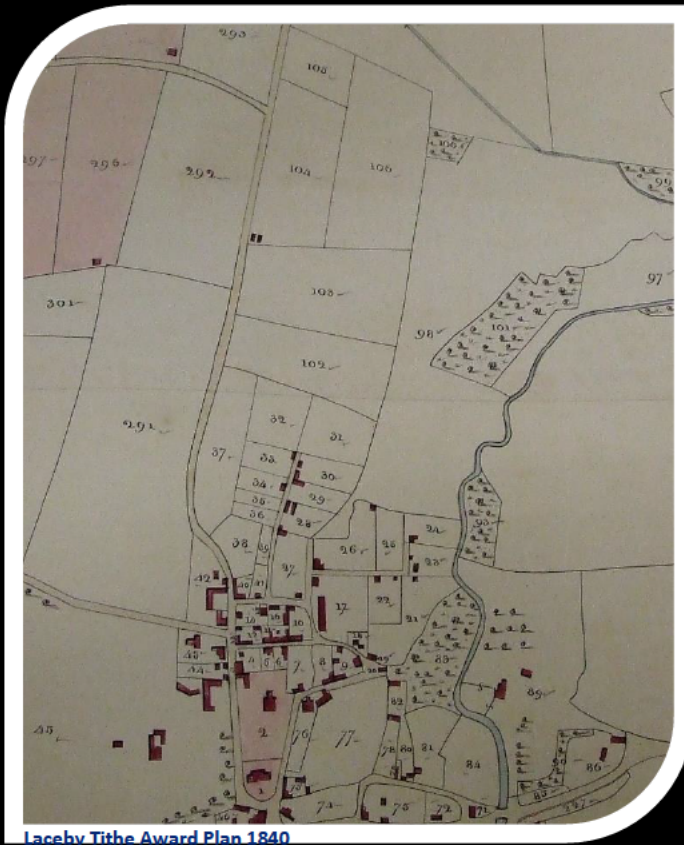
Definitive Map Modification Orders can only be made by the surveying authority. North East Lincolnshire Council have a range of discretionary functions including Public Path Orders in particular change the network through extinguishments, creations and diversions.

Anybody can apply for a modification order provided they have evidence in support of the change. This could be in the form of historic records (until 2026) or statements from members of the public who have used the route regularly for many years. Applications are explored thoroughly and evidence is collated such as historic documents and interviews carried out with users. Where there is sufficient evidence that a path exists then the Council has a legal duty to make an order and add it to the Definitive Map.

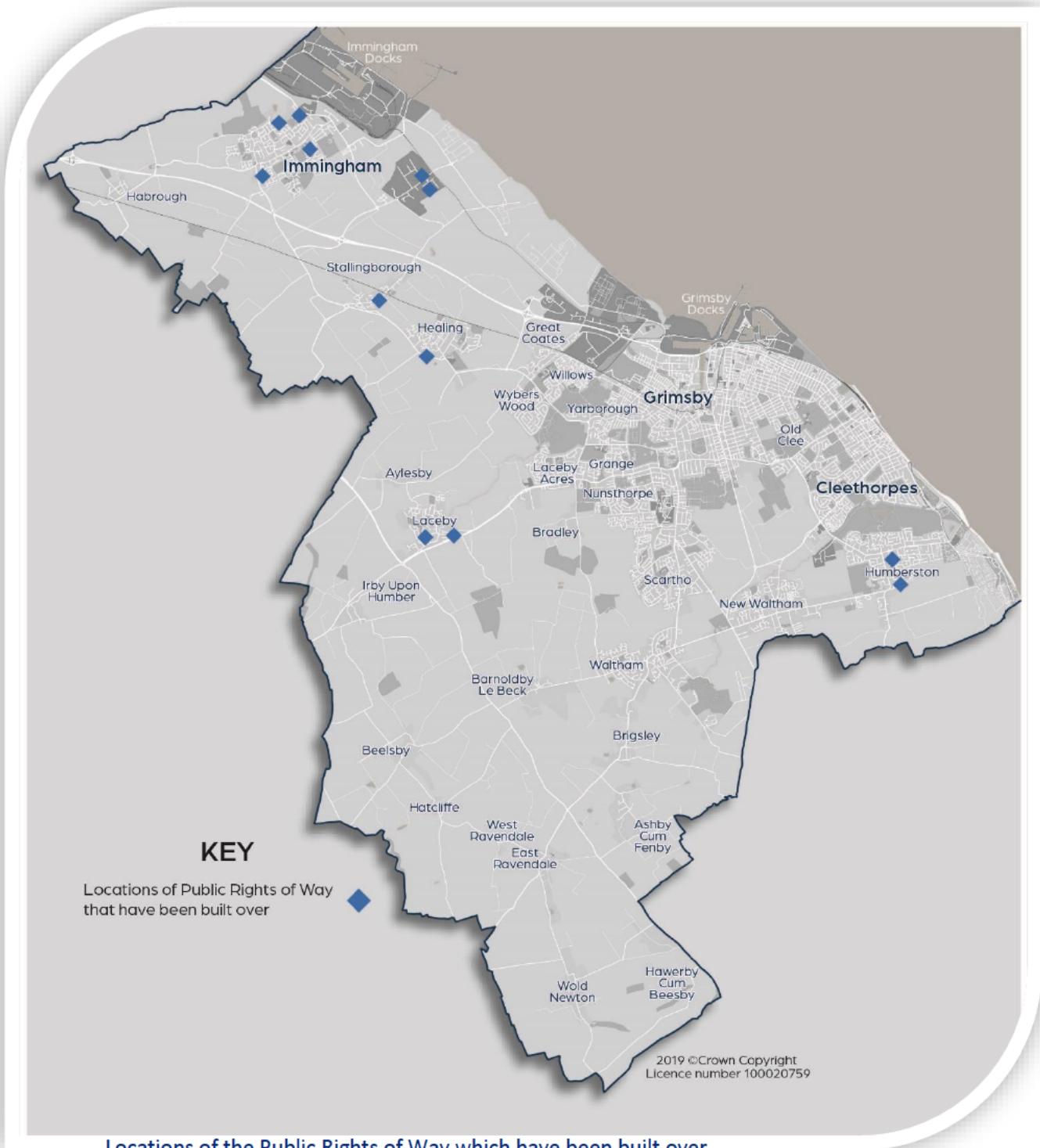
The inconsistencies and anomalies on the Definitive Map when resolved, are likely to

reduce the length of Public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire.

There are eighty seven anomalies identified where the line on the ground and the line on the Definitive Map do not match. Examples of these anomalies could be that the path shown on the Definitive Map is one side of a hedge, however on the ground it is walked on the other. Alternatively, the Public Right of Way may have been extinguished and no Order can be found to show this, or there is a missing link between the right of way and the highway.



Laceby Tithe Award Plan 1840



Locations of the Public Rights of Way which have been built over

Action Plan - The Definitive Map and Statement up to date

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
R1A/a	Keep the Definitive Map and Statement up to date which is the legal record of public rights of way.	This is a Statutory obligation to keep the Definitive Map under review.	Process Definitive Map Modification Orders and Public Path Order applications in an expedient manner.	Paths added or extinguished on the Definitive Map and Statement.	£	6-10 Low	Existing PROW Budget
R1A/b	Public Path Orders and Definitive Map Modification Orders to ratify and make improvements to the network for users		Opportunities to resolve long standing issues on network including minor obstructions or anomalies can be resolved. Where benefits for users are clear, promote the funding of orders to facilitate change.	Public Path Orders and Definitive Map Modification Orders are dealt with promptly and from a balanced perspective.	£	Ongoing Medium	Existing PROW Budget
R1A/c	Resolve anomalies		Remove anomalies from the Definitive Map many of these going through properties.	Anomalies resolved by the ROWIP3.	££	Ongoing High	Existing PROW Budget
KEY:							
Timescale							
1	To be undertaken in year 1						
2	To be undertaken in year 2						
3	To be undertaken in year 3						
	And so on						
Costs			Resources				
£	Estimated cost less than £5,000 per year.		Low	Low labour intensive (existing staff resources)			
££	Estimated cost between £5,000 and £10,000 per year.		Medium	Medium labour intensive (some added staff time)			
£££	Estimated cost more than £10,000 per year.		High	High labour intensive (Considerable added staff time required)			

Theme 4

Supporting Task R1B

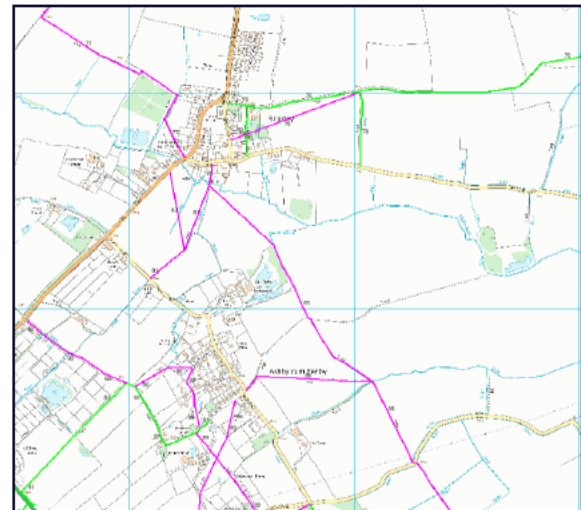
Consolidate the Definitive Map

Reviewing the Definitive Map and correcting the resulting anomalies will inevitably generate many legal orders.

The drawings that make up the base layer map of the Definitive Map are all dated between 1959-1967. Updating the Definitive Map will create an up to date base layer map. The new Definitive Map may be digitised rather than a paper copy. The relevant date would be the date that the data is saved.



Extract of the Definitive Map



Digitised Working Copy of the same area

For many authorities, consolidating the map has been a project requiring considerable resources. In part, the barrier is the assumption that the map must be complete and perfect before it can be published. It is a snap shot in time and will continue to be reviewed, changed and improved.

Action Plan - Consolidate the Definitive Map

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
R1B	Consolidate the Definitive Map and include the excluded areas of Grimsby and Cleethorpes	The Definitive Map has not been consolidated since its creation.	Resolve anomalies shown on Definitive Map. Include the urban area to the Definitive Map.	Consolidate the Definitive Map by ROWIP 3.	£	3-10 years High	Existing PROW Budget

Theme 4

Supporting Task R1C

Unrecorded Rights of Way

These paths will need to be identified and through examination of historic documentation and for each path to be surveyed to establish its physical characteristics. The historic research will be done to determine if there is documentary evidence to support the inclusion of the path on the Definitive Map and Statement.

There is a legal principle "Once a highway, always a highway". All Public Rights of Way are highways, so that once a right of way exists it remains in existence unless and until it is lawfully closed or diverted. Such a closure or diversion can arise only out of legal action by either a local authority, a magistrates' court or a government department, or through an Act of Parliament.

However the introduction of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act introduced a deadline for claims to be made regarding unrecorded rights of way which were in existence before 1949. If they are not recorded by 2026, these rights of way will be lost.

There will be exemptions for paths in certain circumstances, and there is power for the Secretary of State to make exceptions for ways which are the subject of modification orders or applications at the 'cut-off date'. After 2026 it will no longer be possible to record additional historic ways on definitive maps as byways open to all traffic, although unrecorded vehicular rights will not be extinguished.

There may be a way that has always been a public right of way, but for some reason has been lost to recent memory. It has, therefore, not been recorded on the Definitive Map but a record of it may, nonetheless, still exist in historical documents such as Inclosure Awards, Tithe Apportionments or Finance Act Maps. Inspecting these documents for unrecorded Public Rights of Way will be time consuming.

Claims to add paths to the Definitive Map through user evidence will still be possible after the 2026 if they have been used for more than twenty years or more, equally claims to upgrade an existing route can be made on this basis.

Action Plan - Unrecorded rights of way

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
R1C	Unrecorded rights of way	National legislation has given a time limit to add any lost ways to the Definitive Map and Statement.	If not recorded by 2026, these rights of way will be lost.	Recording of new Public Rights of Way taken forward to ROWIP3.	£	3-8 Medium	Existing PROW Budget

Theme 4

Supporting Task RD1

Statement of Priorities

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 placed a duty on this authority to keep the Definitive Map and Statement for North East Lincolnshire under continual review. The purpose of the Statement of Priorities is to set out, in priority order, the issues which the Council will address in discharge of its duty with respect to the Definitive Map and Statement. The implementation of the Statement of Priorities will be carried out via the everyday work of the Public Rights of Way team.

The Council aims to process uncontested applications for Public Path Orders and Definitive Map Modification Orders (claims) within 1 year of receipt. Having a set out priority of what is likely to be worked on in the following year concentrates the work undertaken.

Action Plan - Statement of Priorities

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
RD1	Statement of Priorities	Ensure that DMMOs and PPOs are prioritised and dealt with within a reasonable timescale.	Publish a report between 1 year and 18 months to go to Planning Committee for recommendation.	Reports regularly submitted to Planning Committee.	£	Ongoing Low	Non required



Theme 5

Links to other plans, strategies and changes in legislation (PPL)

Theme 5

Supporting Task PPL1A.

Links to other plans, strategies and changes in legislation.

An important element of the Improvement Plan is how it fits in with other local policies and plans. These plans cover a wide area of subjects such as health, quality of life, citizenship, sustainable transport and economic development.

Although only a few policies are linked directly to Public rights of way there are many which are relevant in the wider context of access to the countryside for health and leisure purposes.

Raising the strategic profile of the path network and this Improvement Plan will not only increase awareness with other organisations, policy and decision-makers; but will enable better planning and development of neighborhoods, with the needs of path users taken into account, and help facilitate external funding or investment in improving the quality and accessibility of paths.

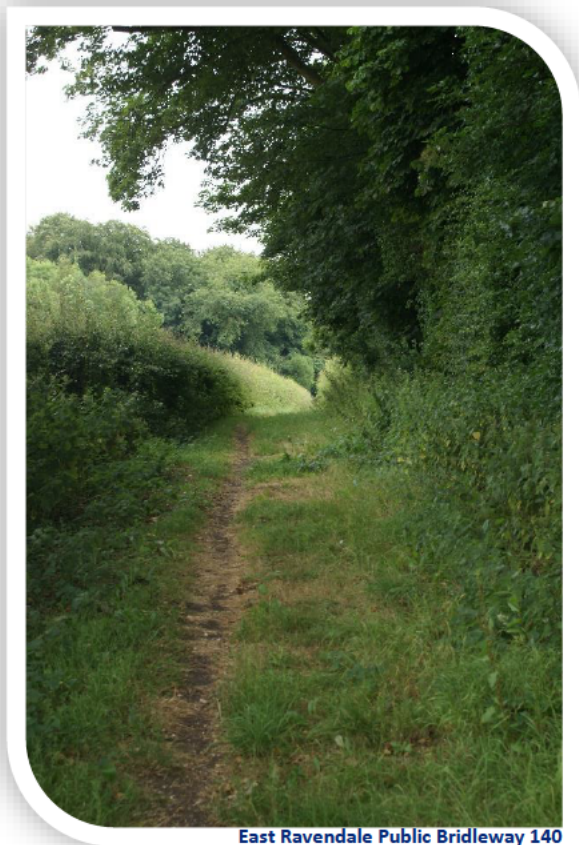
Along with other strategies and policies being followed by the Council and its partners, this Plan is intended to support the future well-being of North East Lincolnshire's communities.

The following key documents are particularly important.

Of particular relevance to the ROWIP are:

- The Council Plan
- The Local Plan
- The Development and Growth Plan
- The Transport Plan
- The Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Plan

- The Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- The National Planning Policy Framework



East Ravendale Public Bridleway 140

Action Plan – Links with other policies and plans

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
PPL1A	Link with other policies and plans.	To succeed in making the Rights of Way Improvement Plan successful it needs to stand with other policies.	Apply the objectives set out in the ROWIP	ROWIP2 used as guidance regarding the production of other plans and policies.	£	Ongoing Low	Non required
KEY:							
Time scale							
1	To be undertaken in year 1						
2	To be undertaken in year 2						
3	To be undertaken in year 3						
	And so on						
Costs				Resources			
£	Estimated cost less than £5,000 per year			Low	Low labour intensive (existing staff resources)		
££	Estimated cost between £5,000 and £10,000 per year			Medium	Medium labour intensive (some added staff time)		
£££	Estimated cost more than £10,000 per year			High	High labour (Considerable added staff time required)		

Policies and Plans which the ROWIP will work alongside

Local Transport Plan (LTP)

There are many shared aims and links between Local Transport Plans and Rights of Way Improvement Plans which can serve to strengthen and facilitate the long term sustainability of Public Rights of Way and the delivery of sustainable transport objectives. Joined up implementation plans can secure more direct and integrated funding and delivery.

Public Rights of Way are perceived as an integrated part of these transport objectives. They can also contribute to improved access to the natural environment and for recreation purposes.

The RoWIP supports the North East Lincolnshire Councils Local Transport Plan which defines the transport goals and priorities for North East Lincolnshire. The LTP suggests 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.

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 RoWIP2 aim to build on this with a focus on identifying and improving access in key locations and improving provision for cyclists. The LTP acknowledges that North East Lincolnshire currently suffers from peak hour traffic congestion, yet has the potential, drive, and ambition to grow further.

The Delivery Plan is focused on supporting the Council's objectives of creating a stronger local economy and supporting stronger local communities. To do this the Local Transport Plan is based around eight local transport challenges²³.

- Enable sustainable growth through effective transport provision.
- Improve journey times and reliability by reducing congestion.
- Support regeneration and employment by connecting people to education, training and jobs.
- Enable disadvantaged groups or people living in disadvantaged areas to connect with employment, health, social and leisure opportunities.
- Improve the health of individuals by encouraging and enabling more physically active travel modes.
- Provide safe access and reduce the risk of loss, death or injury from transport collisions or crime.
- Improve the journey experience on the local transport network.
- Ensuring that transport projects contribute to environmental excellence, including managing air quality and reducing transport related greenhouse gas emissions.

The plan also identifies road safety, traffic, public transport and active travel projects that help improve accessibility, reduce road traffic collisions, encourage healthy travel modes and enhance our local natural and built environments.

School Travel Plans

Thirty-five of the responses used or had used Public Rights of Way to get to school. With these results it shows that Public Rights of Way are an important resource to for children to get to school.

School travel plans are an important part of the LTP and incorporates measures to make safer routes to schools the key issues are: Safe and sustainable access to school and other educational sites, disproportional impact on congestion due to journeys occurring in the

morning peak and safety around the school gate.

Public Rights of Way improvements can contribute considerably to creating safer routes to schools.

North East Lincolnshire School Travel Plans aim to encourage pupils, parents and staff to use sustainable methods to get to and from school. There are a number of benefits by using more sustainable methods to get to school such as:

- Less cars and congestion and therefore less pollution around the school site.
- Reduction in absenteeism. Pupils and staff who walk or cycle to school tend to be fitter, healthier and more productive in the classroom.
- Safer walking and cycling routes around the school.
- Provide the opportunity to build healthy exercise into daily life.
- Reduced commute time.
- Reduced carbon footprint.
- Minimise the impact of travel on the environment, improve local air quality and reduce harmful emissions.

Local Plan 2017

The Local Plan is a key planning document which will guide the changing use of land in the borough and define the purpose to which it is put in the future. The Plan has three central themes:

1. Building the economy we need.
2. Building the homes we need.
3. Building the places we need.

It also sets out the Council's approach to accommodating the future requirements in relation to the demands on the Borough's mineral resource and waste needs.

²³LTP Delivery Plan 2016

The Plan sets out the Council's vision and strategy for development, including why, where and how the Borough will grow. The Plan is a policy for growth and aims to ensure North East Lincolnshire becomes a sustainable location in which people can live, work, and enjoy their recreation, both now and in the future. Public Rights of Way are stated in Policy 40 for Developing Green Infrastructure.

Policy 40, 1 states:

“Proposals that would result in the loss or reduction in quality or existing public rights of way (PROWs) will not be permitted unless acceptable equivalent alternative provision is made.

Where diversions are proposed, these should be convenient and attractive to users and not increase disturbance on protected wildlife sites”.

Neighbourhood Development Plans

The Localism Act 2011 provided new powers for Parish Councils and community forums to prepare land use planning documents. Neighbourhood Plans can be prepared by town/parish councils or Neighbourhood Forums where town or parish councils do not exist.

Communities can shape development in their areas through the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans (often referred to simply as Neighbourhood Plans). They must meet conditions set out in the legislation, including the need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Neighbourhood Development Plans as policies that focus on local planning and give communities the opportunity to become involved in their future. Once adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan and will be used to make decisions on planning applications.

Reference to the Public Rights of Way should be recognised as they are an important link between communities, health and recreational purposes.

The National Planning Policy Framework

There are a number of useful references to pedestrian access and paths in the NPPF and it's a good idea to get involved with the preparation of the Local Plan to make sure it contains policies which seek to protect paths and improve pedestrian routes.

Paragraph 35 of the NPPF says that “developments should be located and designed where practical to create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate creating home zones”.

Paragraph 69 of the NPPF says that “Planning policies and decisions ... should aim to achieve places which promote ... safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.”

If included in Local Plans these policies can be very important when objecting to planning applications.

The Government Rights of Way circular 01/09 firmly supports the view by saying that any alternative route should avoid the use of estate roads wherever possible, with preference given to the use of made up estate paths through landscaped or open space areas, away from vehicular traffic.

Public Rights of Way form an important component of sustainable transport links and should be protected or enhanced.

Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018–2023

The objective of AONB Management Plans is to ensure both consistency and continuity of management over time, conserving and enhancing these nationally important landscapes for their use and enjoyment over future generations. The production of five yearly management plans is a statutory duty for all local authorities that have AONBs, or part of an AONB, within their administrative boundaries and one plan must be produced in partnership with other local authorities and relevant statutory bodies.

The Plan is broken down in to a number of themes. Public Rights of Way are acknowledged within the plan that there is an extensive network within the AONB and the existence of a number of long distance paths.

Within this document, Theme 3 which is discovering the Wolds shows the primary purpose of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB designation is the protection and enhancement of the area's natural beauty and to actively promote the area for the purposes of recreation and tourism.

One of the objectives is to support and encourage the development of an integrated and well maintained public rights of way network, maximising the opportunities for achieving access for all. The action is to engage positively to help support and promote permissive and official public rights of way improvements to help enhance the network.

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

The Humber Local Enterprise Partnership is at the forefront driving growth and prosperity. It is a partnership of business, education, and the four Humber local authorities who work together to promote and develop the area surrounding the Humber Estuary. LEPs are voluntary partnerships between local authorities and businesses set up in 2011 by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to help determine local economic priorities and

lead economic growth and job creation within the local area.

Theme 5

Aim PPL1b

Changes in Legislation and Opportunities

Public Rights of Way are affected by many different legislations. Within them are many opportunities that could benefit the Public Rights of Way in North East Lincolnshire. An example is the England Coastal Path and the potential for branching paths off this nationally promoted route.



Cleethorpes

Action Plan - Changes in legislation and opportunities

Objective		Conclusion from research	Action	Monitoring	Costs	Time scale and Resources	Funding
PPL1B	Changes in legislation and opportunities	Changes in legislation could have a knock on effect how Public Rights of Way are dealt with.	Keep ahead of changes in legislation and opportunities.	Any changes will be set out in the process and procedures of Public Rights of Way.	£	Ongoing Low	Existing PROW Budget / Natural England

Potential Opportunities

The Deregulation Act 2015

The Act provides measures aimed at reforming the procedures for recording and making changes to Public Rights of Way network.

The relevant sections are 20-26 which draw up a number of measures to simplify, speed up and reduce the costs and administration associated with Public Rights of Way procedures. Sections 20-26 of the Act are as follows:

- 20. Recording rights of way: additional protection
- 21. Unrecorded rights of way: protection from extinguishment
- 22. Conversion of public rights of way to private rights of way
- 23. Applications by owners etc. for public path orders
- 24. Extension of powers to authorise erection of gates at owner's request
- 25. Applications for certain orders under Highways Act 1980: cost recovery
- 26. Public rights of way: procedure.

Within these sections are a multitude of changes in procedures and processes which intend to act as a package of legislative reforms. The processes through which the content of the Act will be delivered will be set out in regulations.

There is no timetable to when these regulations are likely to be published, and consequently no date for the implementation of the requirements of the Deregulation Act can be set.

England Coast Path

The England Coast Path will be the longest managed and

waymarked coastal path in the world, the total length will be 4,500km. Natural England the national body behind setting up this route, 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.

The Coast Path in North East Lincolnshire will be almost 25km in length running between Manby Road, Immingham and the Humber Mouth Yacht Club in Humberston.

At the current time the coastal path is for use by pedestrians. As the path runs alongside a number of highways, using the coastal path would be suitable for higher rights such as cyclists and equestrians. Where appropriate the route could be upgraded to a cycle path which will involve additional funding to make the width of the path suitable for cycles.



The completion date for the whole path is 2020. The majority of the path in North East Lincolnshire will access the existing Public Rights of Way and Highway network. The areas around the ports are excluded land, and the route has been diverted around these.

The England Coast Path is a linear route. There are attractions that could be promoted close to the route, such as the Fishing Heritage Museum, Grimsby; the Pilgrim Fathers Memorial, Immingham; the sandy beaches in Cleethorpes; Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway, and further afield into the Lincolnshire Wolds.

Climate Change

Improving the Public Rights of Way can be important in helping to address climate change. The government is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the UK economy by at least 80% on 1990 levels by 2050. Changes to transport and how we travel (making greater use of Public Rights of Ways) will need to happen if we are to make a substantial contribution to this target. The Department for Transport is encouraging Local Authorities to help mitigate climate change by developing more sustainable transport systems, facilitating behavior change and reducing the need to travel.

North East Lincolnshire Council responded by joining Climate Local. Set up by the Local Government Association, its focus is on energy and climate change.

Climate Local supports Councils to reduce carbon emissions and increase resilience to a changing climate. The initiative is the only one of its type in England and is the successor to the old Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. Climate Local supports local authorities in the following ways:

- Provides a platform owned and led by councils, to promote activity on climate change and demonstrate leadership locally and nationally.
- Supports local authorities to share good practice and identify other authorities

undertaking similar initiatives, to support joint working and the sharing of experience and ideas.

- Provides practical tools and advice to councils on climate change issues.
- Raises the profile of carbon reduction and adaptation nationally²⁴.

Public Rights of Way can help with the focus of being more sustainable and using resources wisely. Many of the items used for the upkeep of the Public rights of Way are sustainable. The timber for the Finger posts and Waymark posts are from sustainable sources and are certified FSC suppliers. The majority of bridges are also wooden, the wood sourced from sustainable sources. The gates installed are often galvanised steel for extended asset life, and lower maintenance costs.

Where appropriate the Public Rights of Way team will install recycled plastic wood. The use of this material in areas that are shaded and damp will prolong the life of the asset in comparison to the use of traditional wooden products. Recycled plastic as an alternative to wood has many benefits: it does not rot, insects will not eat it, and it removes plastic waste from landfills. The life expectancy for a timber bridge is 15 years, whereas plastic wood can last decades.

Green Spaces Strategy 2016 – 2021

North East Lincolnshire has an excellent range of quality green spaces which provide places where people of all ages can relax, play, enjoy nature and take part in recreation activities as well as sports. These green spaces greatly add to people's satisfaction with their local area and they help to bring communities together.

²⁴<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/environment-and-community-safety/climate-change/>

It is the Council's responsibility to maintain and improve the existing network of our high quality open spaces to ensure that those that live, work and visit the borough experience the wide range of positive benefits associated with health and well-being, quality of life, and the cohesive communities that green and open space can provide. Green spaces are an integral and essential part of everyday life and contribute to the health and well-being of everyone living and working within the Borough of North East Lincolnshire. Research has shown that 91% of people believe that public parks and open spaces improve their quality of life (CABE & MORI 2004). Well used and maintained green spaces make a significant and valuable contribution to people's quality of life, provide spaces for wildlife and enhance the environment of our town, parishes and rural areas.

Pedal and Stride to Economic Growth

This programme promotes sustainable travel with an emphasis on supporting cycling, walking, local bus services and delivering a platform to ensure the long-term viability of these methods of travel.

North East Lincolnshire's economy has strong prospects for growth with major opportunities in offshore wind, port and logistics and other sectors. The Council's Local Plan aims to create almost 9,000 jobs by 2032, with growth focused on the South Humber Bank Enterprise Zone.

'Pedal and Stride to Economic Growth' will connect our most deprived communities with areas of economic opportunity. The programme promotes sustainable travel with an emphasis on supporting cycling, walking, local bus services and delivering a platform to ensure the long-term viability of these initiatives.

Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival

This is an annual walking festival which is usually runs over 16 days. The majority of paths used for the festival are in the Lincolnshire in the Wolds, however there two walking routes in North East Lincolnshire.



Irby upon Humber Public Footpath 131 and Public Bridleway 131

Covid-19 2020

The pandemic in 2020 showed an increase in people using the Public Rights of Way network. The Public Rights of Way during this time had been utilized more than any time in the last 70 years. People used them access of means to for an hour's exercise exploring the countryside. During this time, several surveys by the Public Rights of Way team were cancelled due to the amount of people walking the paths.

The Covid virus can stay on structures for 72 hours, having less restrictions such as gates and stiles is seen as beneficial to users and reducing the risk of potential transfer to other users.