

# Northumberland

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan

### 2025-2035



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# Northumberland Rights of Way Improvement Plan

## Contents

Glossary and Definitions	ii
Executive Summary	vi
Introduction	1
Writing the ROWIP	4
Scope of the ROWIP	7
Needs Analysis	9
Map 1: Northumberland Trails and Destinations	15
Map 2: Northumberland Public Rights of Way	16
Vision	17
Strategic Alignment	21
Action	25
Delivery Plan	46
Resources	53
Measuring Success	56
Conclusion	62
Appendix: Review of 2006-2016 ROWIP Actions	1







# Glossary and Definitions

*URLs / web links used in this Glossary and throughout the ROWIP were correct at the time of writing (January 2025) but may change within the 10 year lifespan of this document.*

Access land	Areas of land where there is a public right of access on foot. Access land may also have PROW within it.
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now known as National Landscapes)
BOAT	Byway Open to All Traffic: a PROW which may be used by any kind of transport including cars and motorised vehicles such as trail bikes but which is used mainly for the purposes for which footpaths and bridleways are used. A BOAT may not have a surface suitable for ordinary motor traffic. BOATs are waymarked in red.
Bridleway	PROW which may be used by people on foot or using wheelchairs/mobility scooters, horse riders and cyclists. Bridleways are waymarked in blue.
Cycle Track	PROW for all types of pedal cycles (not mopeds), with or without a right of access on foot. Cycle Tracks do not have to be shown on a Definitive Map and there are no designated Cycle Tracks in Northumberland.
CROW Act 2000	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
DMS	Definitive Map & Statement: A legal record of PROW in England & Wales which is continuously updated. The DMS for Northumberland, which includes a register of definitive map modification order applications can be accessed <a href="#">here</a> .
DMMO	Definitive Map Modification Order: a legal order which allows the Definitive Map to be amended.
DRT	Disused Railway Track



FixMyStreet	NCC platform for reporting local problems ( <a href="https://fix.northumberland.gov.uk">https://fix.northumberland.gov.uk</a> ).
Footpath	PROW which may be used on foot or by people using wheelchairs or mobility scooters. Footpaths are waymarked in yellow.
GLASS	Green Lane Association
JLAF	Joint Local Access Forum: a statutory advisory body created under the CROW Act 2000 and made up of appointed volunteers who have relevant interests with respect to public access and PROW. Find out more about the Northumberland JLAF <a href="#">here</a> .
KCIIIIECP	King Charles III England Coast Path
LCWIP	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan: a ten year plan for investing in walking and cycling within a defined area, part of a national strategy to make walking and cycling the preferred mode of transport for most people on short trips.
List of Streets	A list of highways maintainable at public expense. Councils are required to keep a List of Streets under Section 36 (6) of the Highways Act 1980.
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MENE	Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: 2009-19 survey by Natural England about outdoor recreation, pro-environmental behaviours and attitudes towards/engagement with the natural environment.
Miles Without Stiles	An initiative to provide well-surfaced, easy access routes without stiles, steps or steep gradients in National Parks across Britain.
NCN	National Cycle Network
NCC	Northumberland County Council
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NNPA	Northumberland National Park Authority
NWL	Northumbria Water Limited
OS	Ordnance Survey

Permissive Path	A path where the landowner has granted permission for public use. A permissive path is not a PROW and some permissive paths fall out of the scope of this ROWIP.
PPO	Public Path Order (usually creation, diversion or closure)
Protected Landscapes	National Parks and National Landscapes are collectively known as Protected Landscapes
PROW	Public Right(s) of Way: a linear route(s) where the public has a legal right of access.
Restricted byway	PROW which may be used by people on foot or using wheelchairs/mobility scooters, horseback and any transport without a motor (e.g. bicycle and horse-drawn vehicles). Restricted byways are waymarked in purple.
ROWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan: a statutory ten-year plan required by the CROW Act 2000.
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TTRO	Temporary Traffic Regulation Order
TRF	Trail Riders Fellowship
UCR	Unclassified County Road

## Reporting problems with Public Rights of Way in Northumberland

Members of the public can report problems with PROW in Northumberland via the NCC [FixMyStreet](#) platform. You can also view other reports and see updates.

To report a problem:

1. Visit <https://fix.northumberland.gov.uk>
2. Enter a Northumberland postcode or street name and area (if you don't know the postcode for a PROW you can enter any Northumberland postcode and then navigate to the PROW location using the map)
3. Locate the problem on a map
4. Enter details of the problem
5. Confirm the report and NCC will investigate



Click here to go  
to FixMyStreet



Buggy walk on the KCIIECP at Blyth (© Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust)

# Executive Summary

Our vision is for a well-managed, accessible, safe and interconnected network of Public Rights of Way and countryside access for all users.

The Northumberland ROWIP is a statutory document which is required by law. It sets out how Northumberland County Council will identify, prioritise and plan improvements across the PROW network for the next ten years, working towards a vision which is shared with our partners and local stakeholders. Nine policies and associated actions are presented, focusing on maintenance, recording, accessibility, information, connectivity, communities, tourism, partnership and climate change. These form our strategy for the next ten years and will be delivered through a rolling three-year Delivery Plan to be developed in consultation with the JLAF and community stakeholders.

## Summary of ROWIP policies:

1. Ensure the PROW network is well **maintained** and, where possible, **enhanced**
2. Ensure the PROW network is accurately **recorded**
3. Make the PROW network more **accessible** to a wider range of users
4. Provide **information** about the PROW network for residents and visitors
5. Improve **connectivity** of the network for all users
6. Work with **communities** to maximise the benefits of the PROW network
7. Enhance Northumberland's **tourism** offer by providing sustainable access to a rich natural and cultural landscape
8. Work in **partnership** to maximise the potential of the PROW network
9. Recognise and respond to the impacts of **climate change** on the PROW network



As part of our Environment Policy, we will seek to strengthen our green infrastructure, to encourage more people and a wider range of people to explore Northumberland's rich natural and cultural heritage and to reduce carbon emissions by using the PROW network to access services, recreation, settlements and destinations. Across the network we plan to improve access and accessibility to provide more opportunities for residents and visitors to benefit from experiences in our great outdoors.

We intend to strengthen relationships with our partners, landowners and other stakeholders to create and take advantage of more opportunities to improve maintenance and increase access to our PROW. The PROW network has the potential to contribute to Northumberland's health, economic, inequalities and climate change agendas. By working in partnership, we can ensure that more stakeholders recognise the opportunities provided by our rural and urban greenspaces.

We will manage the PROW network so that it:

- ▶ Enables residents and visitors to access, explore and enjoy Northumberland's landscapes, countryside and green/blue spaces
- ▶ Provides access to towns, villages, services, destinations and activities
- ▶ Helps to address inequalities in access to countryside and greenspace
- ▶ Supports people's physical and mental wellbeing
- ▶ Contributes to the visitor and wider economies
- ▶ Increases opportunities for car-free travel
- ▶ Conserves the rich heritage of routes in Northumberland, some of which have been used for centuries

This ROWIP acknowledges and responds to changes over the last ten years including the increasing need to make access more equitable across an urban and rural landscape and the urgent need to respond to, mitigate for and adapt to a changing climate. It also takes into account the changing landscape of digital communications and opportunities to engage with new technologies to raise awareness and improve engagement with the PROW network.





Wall Town Crag (© Northumberland National Park)



# Introduction

Northumberland is the fifth largest and one of the most rural counties in England. Much of the county is characterised by sparsely populated upland or coastal areas encompassing three Protected Landscapes where communities are dependent on farming, fishing, forestry and tourism economies. Across much of the county, market towns and villages provide a focal hub for access into the countryside. The south-east of the county, characterised by more substantial urban settlements that have developed around the Northumberland coalfield, brings a mix of more urban access demands alongside gateway links to rural areas.

Whether in a rural or an urban landscape, our PROW are essential for both purposeful journeys and recreation. An accessible PROW network supports local residents, communities and visitors. It connects people and communities, providing routes to and between services,

school, employment, recreation, tourism destinations and our towns and villages. In itself, it provides opportunities for activities which support physical and mental wellbeing. It increases access to urban and rural green/blue space<sup>1</sup> and it makes car-free travel possible.

Our extensive and varied PROW network comprises more than 3,340 miles (5,375km) of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways which, together with permissive access routes and access land, provide:

- ▶ Opportunities for physical, recreational and sporting activity
- ▶ Opportunities to enhance individual wellbeing and health
- ▶ Opportunities to explore, enjoy and learn about our landscape, culture, nature and communities
- ▶ Access to services, school and work without using a car
- ▶ Support for the tourism industry and local businesses
- ▶ A local educational and cultural resource

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<sup>1</sup> By green and blue space we mean urban/rural areas such as parks, woodlands, forests, meadows, lakes, rivers, beaches where the predominant landscape feature is vegetation or surface water. These spaces are increasingly recognised for their health benefits (particularly in residential areas) as well as for nature. PROW often provide access to and through these areas (although not all green/blue spaces will have PROW).



This is Northumberland's second Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)<sup>2</sup>. A summary of progress against the 95 actions included in the 2006-2016 ROWIP is appended and, where still relevant, outstanding actions from this Plan will be addressed through the new PROW Delivery Plans (see pages 46-51).

There have been many changes since the publication of the first ROWIP. Demands and expectations for public access have increased, legislation has developed, technology has advanced and resources have reduced. This Plan reflects these changes and the new dynamic of managing and improving access in the forthcoming years. It is a ten-year long-term plan, brought together in consultation with local partners and stakeholders in alignment with the Local Authority's strategic vision and values, which sets out a vision for improving Northumberland's PROW network.

The focus of this ROWIP is to improve and enhance opportunities for access and enable more people to get more benefit and enjoyment from the network, whether on foot, wheels or horse. The PROW network can be an important factor in

tackling some aspects of inequality and a driver for some areas of economic growth so improvements made within the term of this ROWIP will have long-term effects for many aspects of Northumberland life.

In line with current statutory guidance, the new ROWIP is more strategic than the previous one. It presents a ten-year vision for Northumberland's PROW which will be delivered through nine policies and associated long-term strategic actions. The new ROWIP will be supported by a dynamic PROW Delivery Plan which will define the specific shorter-term actions needed to achieve the ROWIP policies.

The last ROWIP facilitated 10+ years of partnership working with Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA), parish councils and members of the Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF). These partnerships continue to support NCC to manage, enhance and promote PROW and have informed the content of the new ROWIP. It is through partnership collaborations that we have been able to identify changes in our local environment, landscape and communities to ensure that the PROW network continues to meet local needs and opportunities.

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<sup>2</sup> Previous plan: Northumberland ROWIP 2006-2016



In particular, this new ROWIP

(i) acknowledges the role that PROW must play in addressing inequalities in access to greenspace and supporting wellbeing, (ii) places increased emphasis on the need to improve connectivity within the network, and (iii) highlights the increasing impact of severe weather events and climate change on our PROW network. Enhancements on the ground to improve access and usability, together with the accurate recording of PROW through the Definitive Map & Statement are core to the new ROWIP as they were previously.

The ROWIP will:

- ▶ Inform how activities are prioritised and/or how resources are allocated
- ▶ Guide decision making about PROW
- ▶ Assist with making a case for funding to support PROW for the benefit of communities, tourism, climate change, nature/cultural engagement and other local priorities
- ▶ Inform local planning decisions, conditions, guidance and advice
- ▶ Drive and inform partnership working

The ROWIP 2025-35 is aligned to the NCC Corporate Plan and other local strategies (see pages 21-23).



# Writing the ROWIP

All Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility, under the CROW Act 2000, to provide a ROWIP explaining how improvements to the local PROW network will provide a better experience for walkers, cyclists, horse riders, horse and carriage drivers, people with restricted mobility and people using motorised vehicles.

It is also a requirement of the CROW Act that the ROWIP is informed by consultation with interested parties including highway authorities whose areas adjoin the authority area, parish councils, National Park Authorities, Natural England and Local Access Forums.

Consultation towards this ROWIP began in 2022 when members of the JLAF collected feedback from the public at summer shows. Since then, the NCC PROW team has worked on reviewing the first ROWIP and developing a new ROWIP, in consultation with the JLAF (objectives and priorities were presented to the JLAF

## Developing the 2025-35 ROWIP:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>2022</b> ▶            | JLAF consultation at Northumberland County and Bellingham Shows                     |
| <b>2022-23</b> ▶         | Review of ROWIP 1 by NCC Officers and JLAF  |
| <b>Oct 23 - Apr 24</b> ▶ | New plan developed and proposed in consultation with JLAF Task & Finish group       |
| <b>Jun 24</b> ▶          | Draft ROWIP approved by NCC PROW committee  |
| <b>Jul-Oct 24</b> ▶      | Public consultation (12-week statutory consultation period)                         |
| <b>Nov 24 - Jan 25</b> ▶ | Review of consultation comments/feedback including facilitated discussion with JLAF |
| <b>Feb 25</b> ▶          | Final ROWIP 2025-35 presented to NCC PROW committee                                 |
| <b>Mar 25</b> ▶          | Final ROWIP submitted to cabinet for approval                                       |
| <b>Apr 25</b> ▶          | ROWIP adopted   |



prior to public consultation).

In July 2024 a draft ROWIP was published which, in line with national guidance, presented strategic actions for the next ten years. This was made available to the public for a statutory consultation period of 12 weeks (26/07/24 - 18/10/24) and, during this period, the draft was available on the NCC website and NCC social media. It was also sent directly to key stakeholders<sup>3</sup>.

A total of 148 responses were received via the NCC consultation platform as well as email comments, social media (Facebook) feedback and discussion at a facilitated meeting of the JLAF. Comments were received from invited consultees and individuals who are local residents, landowners or representatives of other interested groups.

Overall, feedback was positive and consultees agreed with the proposed objectives and policies. Comments from

consultees have been discussed and, where appropriate, incorporated into the ROWIP and/or PROW Delivery Plans.

In writing this ROWIP, NCC has worked closely with the Northumberland JLAF which is an advisory body. Their role (as described in the CROW Act) is to advise as to the improvement of public access to land in the area, for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area, and as to such other matters as may be prescribed. Interested stakeholders and members of the public can find out more about the JLAF, including how to get involved, [here](#).

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<sup>3</sup> The following organisations were invited to respond to the ROWIP consultation: North Tyneside Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, Durham County Council, Cumberland Council, Westmorland and Furness Council, Scottish Borders Council, Northumberland National Park Authority, North Pennines National Landscape Partnership, Northumberland Coast National Landscape Partnership, Natural England, Sustrans, National Trust, National Trails UK, all Northumberland town, parish and community Councils, Northumberland Joint Local Access Forum, The Ramblers, British Horse Society, Cycling UK, Byways and Bridleways Trust, Trail Riders Fellowship, Green Lane Association, Country Landowners Association, National Farmers Union, Disabled Ramblers, Open Spaces Society, Northumberland Rivers Trust, Tyne Rivers Trust, Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Prudhoe Path Force, Kielder Partnership.



## Our Land (excerpt from the NCC Corporate Plan 2023-2026)

"Northumberland is England's northernmost county, stretching from the Scottish Border in the north and to Tyneside and County Durham in the south.

Northumberland is a county of stunning contrasts. From ancient castles to high-tech industry, from pristine beaches to wild countryside - Northumberland has something for everyone.

It's a huge space. The county is the largest unitary authority by geographic coverage with the greatest area of Green Belt of any Local Planning Authority. With an area of 1,936 square miles (5,013 km<sup>2</sup>) and a population of 323,820 (2020), Northumberland is the least densely populated of the North-East region's 12 local authority areas and the sixth most sparsely populated in England.

The different parts of the county have distinct characteristics, from urban to rural, coastal to upland and well-connected to remote.

These are the contrasts that make Northumberland so special, whether it's a place to live, work or visit. It's easy to see why the county is one of the UK's top tourist destinations.

The south-east of the county is the most densely populated, with the three largest

towns, Blyth, Cramlington and Ashington.

These act as main employment centres, drawing from a wider area than just south-east Northumberland.

Beyond the south-east, the county's main settlements are located along the Tyne Valley corridor and along the coast. Morpeth, Hexham, Prudhoe, Berwick and Alnwick are the main market towns, all of which have significant rural hinterlands.

Almost 97% of the county's land area is classed as rural, with just under half of the population living in this area and over half of the population living in 3% of the land area, mainly in the south-east of the county."



**97%**  
of its area classed as  
rural, the county is  
sparsely populated  
with 64 people  
per km<sup>2</sup>



# Scope of the ROWIP

The ROWIP 2025-35 relates to statutory PROW in Northumberland. These are paths designated as public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic (BOATs). Definitions for each designation are provided on page ii-iv. PROW are highways, which are subject to the same legal protection as any other public highway.

PROW provide a path or other route by which the public can pass at all times. They may be on land which is in private ownership but, nevertheless, there is a legal right for the public to use that route on foot or by other means depending on the designation.

Permissive paths, roadside pavements and routes which are not managed by NCC and not designated as public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways or BOATs are outside the scope of this ROWIP. Routes and trails that primarily use the road network rather than PROW are also not within the scope of this

ROWIP. Although cycle tracks also fall within the definition for PROW as set out in the CROW Act 2000, there are no routes designated as cycle tracks within Northumberland and, therefore, these are not referred to in this document.

The primary purpose of the ROWIP is to set out actions for managing, maintaining and improving PROW to facilitate their use by residents of and visitors to Northumberland. It also recognises that PROW have the potential to contribute to other NCC priorities and, where possible, actions to achieve this are also identified.

The ROWIP is a statutory document which will be delivered by NCC working in partnership with other agencies including Northumberland National Park Authority, Northumberland Coast National Landscape, North Pennines National Landscape and Forestry England.







King Charles III England Coast Path at Howick (© Katherine Williams)



# Needs Analysis

The Northumberland PROW network comprises:

- ▶ 3,340 miles (5,375km) of PROW - 63% footpaths, 27% bridleways, 3% restricted byways and 8% byways
- ▶ Three National Trails which cross the county (Hadrian's Wall Path, Pennine Way and KCIIECP)
- ▶ Many important regional long-distance trails which are wholly or substantially within the county (including Isaac's Tea Trail, Northumberland Coast Path, St Oswald's Way, St Cuthbert's Way, The Sandstone Way, Tyne River Trail, Tyne & Wear Heritage Way)
- ▶ Five National Cycle Route Trails (Pennine Cycleway, Hadrian's Way Cycleway, Coast and Castles Route, Sea to Sea Cycle Route and Reivers Cycle Route)
- ▶ Numerous locally promoted walking and riding trails and short walks
- ▶ Significant strategic access routes within areas of green space linking communities and recreation sites

This is a green network of footpaths, bridleways, byways and restricted byways which, together with other access routes, connect services (including public transport services), settlements and destinations and provide opportunities for recreation and exercise. PROW provide a legal right of access over land in both public and private ownership and they facilitate access to and through urban and rural areas which include urban parks, country parks, coastal plain, upland moors, woodland, lowland valleys, beaches, river corridors, forestry and historic landscapes. The PROW network is important to both residents and visitors.

Monitoring suggests that around half of Northumberland PROW do not meet a standard where they would be considered easy to use and that ease of use has been declining in the last ten years. We also recognise that Northumberland PROWs are fragmented in places, with gaps where users cannot complete a meaningful journey (particularly in the bridleway network and where routes are intercepted by major transport links).

The significance of green infrastructure is recognised in Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework (2023) which highlights the value of greenspace and



countryside for nature, for people, for communities and for landscapes. During the Covid pandemic, the value of green/blue spaces and countryside access in preventing ill health and supporting wellbeing came to the fore, as did inequalities in the availability of such sites.

This is particularly relevant in the south east of the county where there are higher levels of poverty and disadvantage than in the rest of Northumberland.

**"The differences between the most deprived and least deprived areas can be stark, from the number of children receiving free school meals and educational attainment through to unemployment levels"**

NCC Corporate Plan 2023-26

Approximately 12% of Northumberland's population live in one of the 10% most deprived areas of England and, in these areas, there is higher unemployment, lower income, higher childhood poverty and shorter life expectancy than the rest of the county or national averages<sup>4</sup>.

Natural England's MENE survey (2009-2019)<sup>5</sup> identified that most people's experience of nature is close to home highlighting that, although visits to urban greenspaces almost doubled over the period of the survey, engagement is unequal, with income, ethnicity and old age all identified as barriers to accessing nature and greenspace. It recommended that "promoting people's access to nature should be an aim in itself because of the benefits it provides for society," and that "time spent in the natural world provides large benefits to the economy."

The MENE survey also identified that most people travelled to greenspaces and other nature destinations by foot, highlighting the importance of accessible Rights of Way to enable more people to make use of greenspaces in their vicinity.

The PROW network in Northumberland must provide opportunities for more people (residents and visitors) to access our rich natural environment and it must ensure that this is equitable across our county by contributing to the government's recent commitment to

<sup>4</sup> Northumberland County Council Corporate Plan 2023-26

<sup>5</sup> Natural England (2022) Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE)



**“We will work across government to fulfil a new and ambitious commitment that everyone should live within 15 minutes walk of a green or blue space”**

DEFRA Environmental Improvement Plan 2023

ensure that everyone lives within a 15-minute walk of green and blue spaces<sup>6</sup>.

Our PROW network must provide routes for all types of user including:

- ▶ Walkers
- ▶ Horse riders
- ▶ Horse drawn vehicles
- ▶ Cyclists
- ▶ People with dogs
- ▶ Runners
- ▶ Drivers or riders of motorised vehicles
- ▶ Disabled people including those who use a wheelchair, mobility scooter or any other mobility aid
- ▶ People who are blind or partially sighted
- ▶ Families or groups with young children including people pushing a pram or pushchair

It must connect users to green spaces, services, public transport hubs and other destinations as well as linking our towns and villages. It must facilitate active transport (purposeful journeys without the use of a car/other motorised vehicle) and it must also support recreational journeys including walking, running, riding and cycling individually and in groups.

We must also acknowledge that not all PROW can be appropriate for all types of user. Some usage will be limited by the legal path designations whilst, on other routes, access by some users may be limited by the gradient or surface of a path. Ecological and historic sensitivities must also be considered and the improvement of the PROW network must not be to the detriment of our local biodiversity or cultural landscape. Whilst it is NCC's intention that the PROW network will facilitate greater access to the countryside and greenspaces for people

**“Promoting people's access to nature should be an aim in itself because of the benefits it provides for society”**

Natural England MENE survey, 2009-19

<sup>6</sup> DEFRA (2023) Environmental Improvement Plan



**“Northumberland County Council will work towards improving access to the countryside for a wider range of users, in particular people without a car and those with disabilities. The Council will work towards policies and procedures that make opportunities to enjoy the countryside available to all residents and visitors, so that physical and intellectual capabilities, income level, gender, age or race should not be a barrier to participation.”**

### NCC Statement of Intent on Access for All

without a car and those with disabilities, it will not be possible or appropriate to make all routes equally accessible.

Local consultation, led by the Northumberland JLAF in 2022, has provided some further insight about user needs. It highlighted ‘honey pot sites’ which are already well used and well known, including Rothbury, North Northumberland Coast and the Tyne Valley areas. Most people who took part in the consultation said they use the PROW network for walking short to medium distances of up to 10 miles and

that they enjoy the views, beautiful scenery and peace and quiet that Northumberland has to offer. Issues identified included the need to promote less well-known areas and routes, to manage expectations with regard to facilities and for suitable parking areas, (carparks and lay-bys) to be made available. There was also support for opening up Disused Railway Tracks (DRTs) as multi-use green routes.

We also recognise the need to improve awareness of the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS), which is a legal record of all PROW, and to identify new ways to communicate information and promote our PROW network to residents and visitors.

The ROWIP must also seek to improve the PROW network in a way that both increases resilience or responds to the impacts of climate change and supports people to use more climate-friendly means of transport. Increasingly severe weather events are creating short- or long-term barriers in the Northumberland PROW network with fallen trees, increased erosion and flooding leaving paths impassable. Over the next ten years there is a need to ensure there is sufficient capacity or resource to respond to these



events and also to begin to build resilience into areas of the PROW network which are particularly susceptible. In the same way, management of the PROW network should also contribute to national and local targets for nature recovery; this means taking opportunities as they arise to enhance nature and ensuring that the management of PROW does not damage nature or compromise its recovery.

Working in partnership with Protected Landscapes, landowners and other groups will be key to maximising opportunities for nature and climate change.

Within the PROW network there are areas where, within the next ten years, investment will be needed. In particular, these are:

- ▶ Areas where accessibility improvements will significantly enhance the user experience
- ▶ Areas where provision and connectivity of paths can be improved
- ▶ Routes of strategic significance (including National Trails and promoted regional routes)
- ▶ Routes which provide connections between and within communities
- ▶ Improvements which will facilitate active transport by enabling safer,

connected journeys on foot, horse and bicycle

- ▶ Routes popular for short and long leisure trips (with high footfall/usage)
- ▶ Paths and routes which are at risk of damage from erosion, flooding, waterlogging, treefall or other issues arising from climate change

There is a need for us to work together with our partners, landowners and other stakeholders to achieve maximum benefit from existing resources and to seek new opportunities to reverse declining trends in path conditions and to realise the potential of our PROW network for the benefit of the people who live in and visit our county.







Bridleway at Greenrigg near Alnwick (© Ingrid Hardy)



This map illustrates the Northumberland National Park and its surrounding regions, including Northumberland, County Durham, and parts of Scotland, Westmorland and Furness, and Cumbria. The map features a detailed legend in the top left corner, a scale of 1:450,000, and a north arrow in the top right corner.

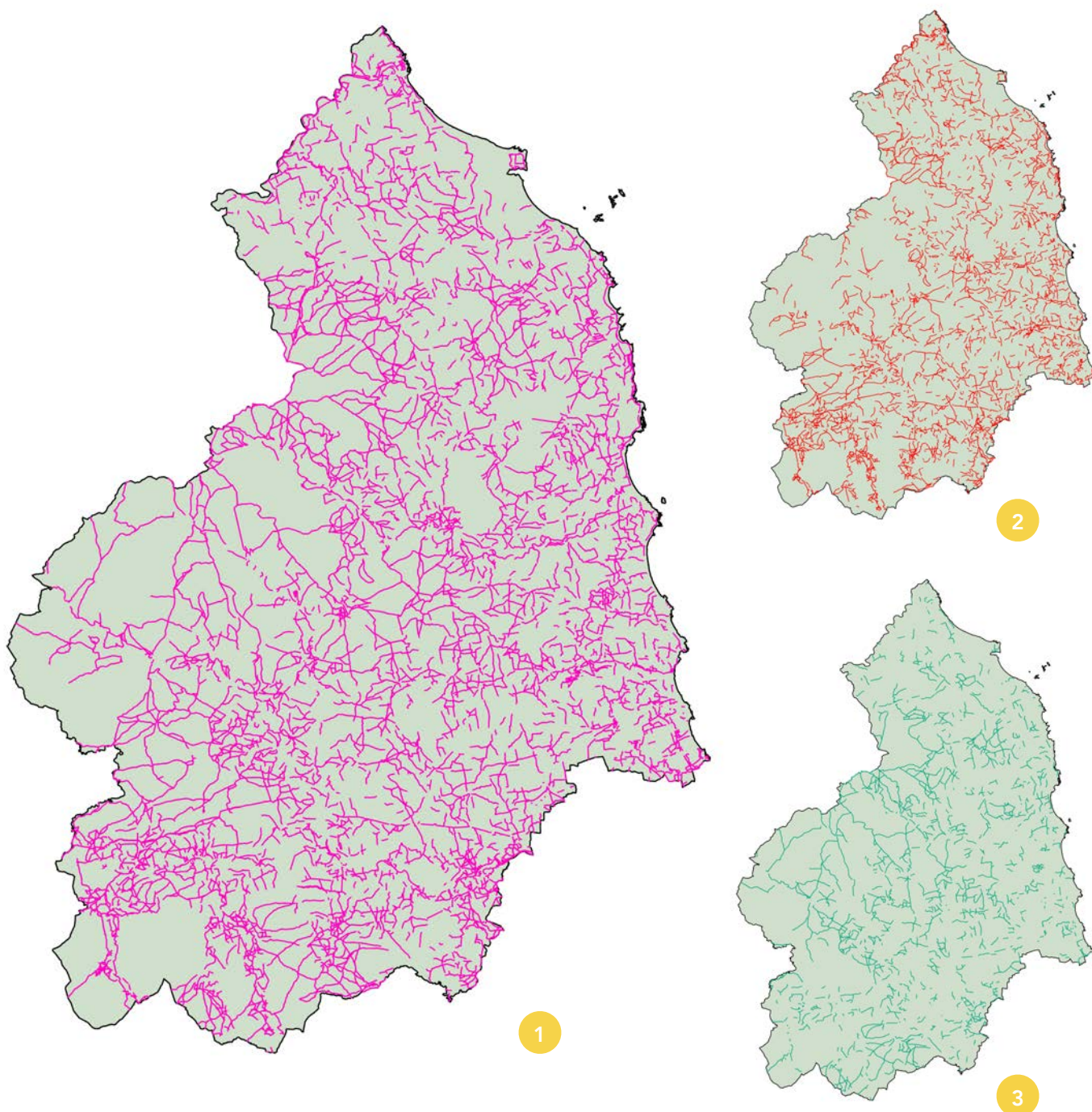
**Legend:**

- National Trails (dashed purple line)
- King Charles III England Coast Path (dashed red line)
- Other Trails (dashed green line)
- Northumberland Coast Path (dashed blue line)
- Northumberland National Park (orange shaded area)
- National Landscapes (yellow shaded area)
- Main Settlements (black dot)
- Main Roads (solid purple line)
- Main Rivers (solid blue line)
- Kielder Water (light blue area)
- Points of Interest:
  - Country Park (green circle with a cross)
  - Visitor Centre (black square)
  - Hill (black triangle)
  - Castle (red cross)
  - English Heritage Sites (red square with a cross)
  - National Trust Sites (green square with a cross)

**Key Features and Locations:**

- Trails:** National Trails include the Hadrian's Wall Path, St. Oswald's Way, and the River Tyne Trail. Other trails include the Kielder Forest Lakeside Way, the South Tyne Trail, and the Isaacs Tea Trail.
- Roads:** Major roads shown include the A1, A69, A696, and A697.
- Rivers:** The Great Ouse, Tyne, and Ure are prominent.
- Settlements:** Key towns include Berwick-upon-Tweed, Alnwick, Rothbury, Morpeth, Blyth, and Newcastle upon Tyne.
- Landmarks:** The Cheviot, Kielder Castle, and the Kielder Water are notable features.
- Geography:** The map shows the Scottish Borders to the north and the North Sea to the east.

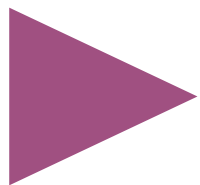
## Map 2: Northumberland Public Rights of Way



- ① All Public Rights of Way
- ② Public Footpaths
- ③ Public Bridleways, Restricted Byways and Byways



# Vision



Our vision is for a well-managed, accessible, safe and interconnected network of Public Rights Of Way and countryside access for all users

The PROW network in Northumberland will deliver seven objectives which are to:

- 1 Enable residents and visitors to access, explore and enjoy Northumberland's landscapes, countryside and green spaces
- 2 Provide access to towns, villages, services, destinations and activities
- 3 Help to address inequalities in access to countryside and greenspace
- 4 Support people's physical and mental wellbeing
- 5 Contribute to the visitor and wider economies
- 6 Increase opportunities for car-free travel
- 7 Conserve the rich heritage of routes in Northumberland, some of which have been used for centuries

A well-managed network of Public Rights Of Way and other routes will facilitate equitable access to Northumberland's countryside, greenspaces and local services (including connecting/increasing access to public transport routes). It will enhance local communities, contribute to local economies and support enjoyment, inspiration and health benefits to users. It will enable more people to get around the county for both purposeful and recreational journeys and to explore, enjoy and learn about our landscape, countryside, culture and communities.

**This will contribute to the NCC vision for Northumberland: a land of great opportunities.**

The Northumberland PROW network is important to both residents and visitors, providing a green network of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways which, together with other access routes,





Brynn Hauxwell, first wheelchair user to complete the Hadrian's Wall Path (National Trail) in 2022 (© Northumberland National Park)



connect services, public transport routes, settlements and destinations and provide opportunities for recreation and exercise.

The Covid pandemic has highlighted the value of green infrastructure with people across the UK seeking opportunities to spend time in the great outdoors, including increased visitors to Protected Landscapes, beaches and urban greenspace in Northumberland and the rest of the country. At the same time, inequalities in availability of greenspace exist with people who live in the most economically deprived areas having less access to good quality greenspace and those who are at the greatest risk of poor physical and mental health having the least opportunity to benefit from access to high quality green space.<sup>7</sup>

Through the ROWIP we have an opportunity to co-ordinate efforts to improve access across our urban and rural landscape. Working in partnership, we must ensure that delivery of the plan is equitable, working across our communities, supporting different types of users and connecting destinations, services and routes in our Protected

Landscapes, in the more densely populated urban communities and everywhere in between. This will bring benefits to individuals, communities and the county as a whole.

For the next ten years we will continue to strengthen and promote our green infrastructure, to encourage more people and a wider range of people to reduce carbon emissions by using the PROW network for purposeful and recreational journeys. We will also work towards increasing resilience in our PROW network to cope with the disruption caused by severe weather events and coastal erosion.

Above all, the goal of this ROWIP is that, by 2035, our residents and visitors will be able to travel around and explore all aspects of our county using a PROW network which is better managed, more accessible, better connected and which feels safer than it does currently.

The ROWIP vision and objectives will be delivered through nine strategic policies and associated actions. It will be delivered in partnership by NCC, NNPA, North Pennines National Landscape,

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<sup>7</sup> Public Health England (2020), Improving Access to Greenspace  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f202e0de90e071a5a924316/Improving\\_access\\_to\\_greenspace\\_2020\\_review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f202e0de90e071a5a924316/Improving_access_to_greenspace_2020_review.pdf)



Northumberland Coast National  
Landscape, Forestry England, Natural  
England, town and parish councils,  
landowners and volunteer groups, and will  
support local strategies for walking and  
cycling, destination management, climate  
change action, landscape management  
and physical activity, amongst others. By  
working together we can maximise the  
potential of and add value to the PROW  
network for all users.



# Strategic Alignment

This section will briefly provide a national, regional and local perspective, identifying the partner and local authority policies and services across planning, transport, environmental management, leisure and recreation, culture and the arts which will both support green infrastructure and be supported by it.

## National significance

- ▶ The **CROW Act 2000** also sets out a requirement to maintain the Definitive Map & Statement.
  - ▶ **Natural England's Green Infrastructure Principles 2023** for developing stronger green infrastructure policy and delivery. These are reflected in the Vision, Objectives and Policies of this ROWIP.
  - ▶ **DEFRA Environmental Improvement Plan 2023** sets an ambitious target for everyone to live within a fifteen-minute walk of green or blue space. It also provides a commitment to invest in active travel, with a vision for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be cycled or walked by 2030.
- ▶ The ROWIP is a statutory document required by the **CROW Act 2000**.

## Natural England's Green Infrastructure Principles (2023)

### Benefits Principles

- ▶ Nature rich beautiful places
- ▶ Active and healthy places
- ▶ Thriving and positive places
- ▶ Improved water management
- ▶ Resilient and climate positive places

### Descriptive Principles

- ▶ Multifunctional
- ▶ Varied
- ▶ Connected
- ▶ Accessible
- ▶ Responds to local character

### Process Principles

- ▶ Partnership and vision
- ▶ Evidence
- ▶ Plan strategically
- ▶ Design
- ▶ Managed, valued and evaluated



- **Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework 2024** sets out the need to increase engagement with the natural environment in our Protected Landscapes and also identifies that meeting the potential of Protected Landscapes is only possible with active participation from a wide range of stakeholders.

## Regional Connections

Northumberland PROW (including three National Trails) continue across county boundaries into neighbouring Local Authorities Cumberland, Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside and Westmorland and Furness. In the north of the county, routes cross over the border into Scotland.

Our PROW network has the potential to contribute to developing tourism and green economies across the region as well as supporting the health and wellbeing agenda. The new North East Combined Authority is championing the region as an outstanding place to live, work, visit and invest, with a vision to create a better way of life which includes connecting communities and improving wellbeing for all. In Northumberland, the PROW can help to deliver North East Combined

Authority portfolios on Transport; Culture, Creative Tourism and Sport; and Environment, Coastal and Rural.

The North East Transport Plan (2021-35) includes major improvements to regional walking, wheeling and cycle routes, amongst other activities. The North East Active Travel Strategy aims to increase active travel in the region by 45%.

The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal sets out objectives to Enable Infrastructure, Improve Places and Encourage Green Growth which are also directly relevant to PROW.

## Northumberland County Council Strategies

The Northumberland ROWIP will contribute to and be supported by:

- NCC Corporate Plan 2023-26
- Northumberland Local Plan
- Climate Change Action Plan 2024-26
- Northumberland Cultural Strategy
- Northumberland Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Northumberland Physical Activity Strategy
- Statement of Intent on Access for All
- Local Active Travel Schemes



## NCC Corporate Plan 2023-26:

### Achieving value for money

- ▶ Residents receive the best customer service
- ▶ Working better, more efficiently

### Tackling inequalities

- ▶ Empowered and resilient communities
- ▶ All adults living well, regardless of age, illness or disability

### Driving economic growth

- ▶ Thriving places and culture
- ▶ Skilled and aspirational people

### Delivering our Climate Change Action Plan to be carbon neutral by 2030

- ▶ Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)
- ▶ NCC Environment Policy Statement 2023

## Local Stakeholder Strategies

Relevant stakeholder strategies in the county are:

- ▶ Northumberland National Park Authority Management Plan
- ▶ Northumberland Coast National Landscape Management Plan

- ▶ North Pennines National Landscape Management Plan
- ▶ Kielder Water & Forest Park Strategic Development Plan
- ▶ Our Way - Northumberland Walking & Cycling Strategy
- ▶ Forestry England Growing the Future: 2021-26
- ▶ Northumberland Destination Management Plan 2022-32







Active Northumberland Wellbeing Walk near Hexham (© Lisa Scott)



# Action

The ROWIP will be delivered through strategic policies and actions which are set out below. In addition, annual delivery plans will set out shorter-term and more specific actions aligned to needs and opportunities which may vary from year to year. It is important to note that all policy actions identified in this plan are subject to the availability of funding.

## Policy 1: Ensure the PROW network is well maintained and, where possible, enhanced

The first priority for the ROWIP is to maintain and, where possible, enhance the network of PROW and other routes. 'Ease of use' of paths has declined in the last 10 years and we will seek to reverse this over the period of this ROWIP.

We will:

- a. Improve maintenance of the PROW network, seeking to ensure that paths are maintained in a condition appropriate for their location and with

consideration of the expectation and demand of users

- b. Take appropriate action to address routes which have become impassable or unsafe
- c. Maintain and improve PROW signage
- d. Facilitate legitimate use of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways, byways and other routes in line with legislation
- e. Train and support volunteers to monitor and help maintain routes with high utility value (e.g. national trail, route to school, path to public transport links)

Through these actions it is intended that, by 2035, the network of footpaths, bridleways, byways and other routes in Northumberland will be in better condition than it is now (to be monitored through 'Ease of Use' indicators summarised on pages 56-60). It will be important that improvements are targeted across the county to benefit local residents and visitors and that all types of path/user are given appropriate consideration.

User safety is an important factor when considering PROW maintenance and enhancement activities. This would



## Case study: Enhancing footpaths in Berwick

This popular footpath on the north bank of the River Tweed, between New Road and the Plantation, was identified by Berwick Ramblers as a route that had become difficult to use for many people. The surface had degraded making the path uneven and often muddy.

In 2021/22, with funding through the LTP and a contribution from Berwick Ramblers, over half a mile of path surface was enhanced and drainage improved.

A local walker commented, *"what was always a pleasant but sometimes slippery and muddy route has been made much safer and easier to walk and the 'serpentine' stretch up the hill at the beginning is excellent."*

The path now forms part of an easy-to-use circular walk from Berwick upon Tweed.

Before and after  
path improvement works

include taking into account road/rail crossings; farmyards, active forestry sites and commercial premises; and the potential for conflicting use, misuse and illegal use.

Data collected since 2002 indicates that key performance indicators for the usability of PROW have declined in recent years. We will continue to monitor this by assessing a random sample of the county's PROW annually, aiming to reverse the trend by 2035.

This ROWIP recognises that the great majority of PROW cross land under active management by farmers and landowners who make significant efforts to accommodate and maintain them. NCC



will continue to work with and support landowners and land managers in the management and maintenance of PROW.

More people must be involved in reporting and recording issues and aware of how to do this. At the time of writing, concerns can be reported via the NCC [FixMyStreet](#) platform. However, increased awareness/use of the reporting system will inevitably lead to more maintenance needs being identified and it is therefore a priority, if resources become available, to increase capacity to meet these anticipated demands.

We will also improve information available to both PROW users and landowners to promote responsible use of PROW (including sharing the Countryside Code - see Policy 4).

## **Policy 2: Ensure the PROW network is accurately recorded**

NCC will continue to provide up to date and accurate information relating to our PROW network. We will:

- a. Maintain the Definitive Map & Statement
- b. Maintain a register of claims
- c. Maintain the List of Streets
- d. Register, evaluate and process DMMO applications in a chronological order based on submission date, unless strategic benefits to the network or other legal factors dictate otherwise. We will give higher priority to claims based on user evidence, particularly where the public is being prevented from using a route.
- e. Register and process PPO applications in a timely manner and in accordance with the requirements of any future legislation that may be enabled.
- f. Support diversion proposals where there is a net benefit for access.

Maintaining the Definitive Map and recording any changes to it is a statutory requirement and central to a PROW network which is well maintained and well used. It is therefore a priority to monitor level of demand and to resource the service accordingly, particularly in light of any future legislative change that may add to the overall demands on both the Definitive Map and Countryside teams.



**Access the Definitive Map & Statement here**





## Case Study: Recording 'lost ways'

Sue Rogers, British Horse Society representative and JLAF member, has been recording ancient routes to ensure they are included in the DMS.

*"As someone who has always enjoyed exploring the countryside, map in hand and preferably on horseback, it was the signal for merging my interest in local history with my desire to get to know the less well-known corners of the Northumbrian countryside."*

Sue has researched routes on foot, horseback and in the local record office, revealing historical routes and 'lost ways' which were missing from the public record (or where access rights had not been fully recorded) and therefore at risk of being extinguished. Sue's diligence, supported by landowners and Parish Councils, has improved the record of PROW in Northumberland. In Sue's own words, *"local history gives flavour to landscape."*

Giving an insight into her research, she explains, *"It all started with Scots Pines! Did you know that clumps of these old trees were the blue motorway signs of past centuries? Placed close to fords or on high points where an ancient trackway passed through a gap in the hills, they guided drovers or other travellers on their way. They aided safe travel through remote and dangerous terrain and could indicate places for overnight shelter."*

If these paths, which may have been trodden for centuries but, for whatever reason, have not been mapped, are not recorded now they could be lost forever. Researching these routes is helping to provide the documentary evidence that NCC's Definitive Map team need to update the DMS and ensure the routes are included in the public record. Anyone can submit evidence as Sue has done to support this process and ensure ancient but as yet unrecorded rights are not lost.





### Policy 3: Make the PROW network more accessible to a wider range of users

NCC recognises the need to improve access to the PROW network in order to deliver our ROWIP objectives. We will:

- a. Ensure new PROW and infrastructure improvements result in the least restrictive options for use, having regard to the Equality Act 2010 as well as any constraints of the natural environment and land management objectives
- b. Take opportunities, when they arise, to improve PROW provision in areas which are poorly served by the existing path network
- c. Prioritise works to improve accessibility where they are:
  - (i) Close to towns and villages
  - (ii) On National Trails, promoted routes or access routes to visitor destinations/sites
  - (iii) Close to public transport routes which connect to settlements and/or destinations
- d. Adopt a *Miles Without Stiles* approach to improve access opportunities from village and town hubs

- e. Improve more routes for multi-access use where opportunities arise and the route is appropriate

By 2035, our plan is that a wider range of users, in particular people without a car and those with disabilities, will be able to access and explore Northumberland's countryside and green/blue spaces. We want our PROW network to be accessible to a wide range of users including those who use mobility aids (wheelchairs or walking aids), people with pushchairs/prams, users who are visually impaired, dog walkers, cyclists and equestrians.

Everyone should be able to access, enjoy and experience our natural and cultural landscape and it is an ambition of this ROWIP that physical and intellectual capabilities, income level, gender, age or race should not be a barrier to this. In particular, we will prioritise replacing stiles with gates, improving path surfaces, cutting back/maintaining overgrowing vegetation, ensuring easy access to paths from disabled parking areas, and creating new accessible routes where this is appropriate. Where possible we will identify opportunities to connect the PROW network with public transport routes.



The impact on users with protected characteristics is always considered when any PROW improvements are proposed and we will seek to support initiatives which improve access for groups which are under-represented in the countryside and green spaces (this includes ensuring that promotional activities and communications are inclusive). We will also consider access needs of the designated path users (according to the path designation) and the landscape character (for example, avoiding urban street furniture in a rural landscape).

The Northumberland JLAF's new 'rails to trails' initiative supports and advises on the conversion of DRTs as traffic-free shared-use greenways. These have potential to provide multi-use routes, linking urban and rural communities and bringing our industrial heritage back into use. Where new routes can be agreed and delivered, the County Council will work with stakeholders to make necessary Orders and carry out establishment works.

We will seek to provide the least restrictive access whilst maintaining

### Case Study: Gates for Stiles in the South Tyne Valley

Sometimes the barriers to access for users come in the form of familiar structures such as stiles that are limiting to those with restricted mobility. Working with the agreement of numerous landowners in the South Tyne Valley, a series of access improvements have been carried out on promoted and strategic routes since 2019. With a focus on the Pennine Way and Isaac's Tea Trail, and the paths linking to them, over 15 stiles have been replaced with self-closing wicket gates, or removed entirely, making some sections of these well used routes completely stile free.



landscape character and protecting our rich natural and historical environment. Working with other NCC departments, our partners and local stakeholders, we will engage with communities, user groups and communities of interest, to better understand their needs. We will identify new opportunities to improve accessibility through PROW maintenance, signage, improving information and linking to public transport networks. User safety will also be a consideration for access (including assessing the different needs of a wide range of users on the same route).

We will ensure that accessibility is a driver for change when making decisions about improvements to the PROW network.

#### **Policy 4: Provide information about the PROW network for residents and visitors**

The PROW network can only achieve its full potential if local people and visitors can easily access information about it.

We will:

- a. Provide accessible information about the PROW network, promoted routes,

local trails and other paths, different types of path designation and seasonal restrictions via the internet, social media and printed material and embrace new methods of providing this as they become available.

- b. Improve the availability of information on permissive and other access routes not shown on the Definitive Map
- c. Provide information about off-road routes in order to help promote car-free journeys and travel
- d. Utilise NCC and partner news outlets (including digital and social media) to provide information about published routes and other routes/trails and to keep the public up-to-date with any changes to the PROW network
- e. Improve links and share information with partner organisations who promote recreational access and tourism
- f. Adopt a 'Miles Without Stiles' approach in order to deliver more accessible path focused on villages and towns

Information and communications have developed significantly since the previous ROWIP. It is important that we utilise the



most up-to-date means of sharing information to engage a wider range of people in accessing the PROW network. This will include providing printed information at visitor destinations, hot spots and within communities, improving the PROW information available on the NCC website and social media, and sharing information via partner and community sites. It is expected that, by 2035, there will be new platforms (particularly in the digital sphere) available and we will seek to understand and utilise these as much as we can.

We will ensure that the NCC website and other platforms include information about different types of PROW, responsible use of the countryside and consideration for other users and landowners (including being proactive in promoting the Countryside Code via our digital and community networks).

We recognise that more (and more frequent) information and updates about the DMS could be provided to make people aware that it exists and how to access it. We will make best use of NCC information channels to share updates about path closures or other changing situations. We will also support Parish Councils and others to understand where

they can find the most up to date information to inform their own communications.

Facilitating access to information is as important as access to the PROW network and we will ensure we consider access needs for people with disabilities when we provide information. This includes providing information in alternative formats, ensuring digital information is accessible with a screen reader and providing alternative text descriptions for images.

As with other areas of the ROWIP, working in partnership will add value to our communications. There is already a wealth of information made available via partner agencies, parish councils, volunteer groups and others and NCC will support and take advantage of this wherever possible. Through this ROWIP we will also strengthen links with other statutory bodies and departments. This will include providing PROW information via the county's tourism networks; targeting information through health settings (so that those who will most benefit can access our countryside and green spaces); and working with those who support communities to increase awareness of local PROW.





## Case Study: Promoting the Reiver Trails at Kielder

The promotion of new trails for off-road cycling is the focus of a project between Forestry England, NCC, Kielder Water & Forest Park and NNPA.

Branded and waymarked gravel trails linking the National Park and Kielder through the Wark and Kielder Forest areas are being developed. The routes will be provided as pdf downloads and GPX files and will be promoted via social media channels and organisational websites. Hard copies will also be made available to pick up in key visitor areas.

Alex MacLennan, Recreation, Public Affairs Manager Northumberland for Forestry England, explains, *"These trails will allow more people to make use of some exceptional forest trails. With new clearly identifiable branding and signage, coupled with detailed digital and conventional mapping, these routes are going to be much easier to follow. This is important as these are areas where navigation can be challenging! The trails will also enable visitors to connect better with local rural communities for local services while they are in the area."*





## Policy 5: Improve connectivity of the network for all users

A high quality PROW network must be well connected to facilitate both recreational and purposeful journeys. The Northumberland ROWIP will:

- Enhance connectivity by addressing missing links and gaps<sup>8</sup> in the network where opportunities arise
- Take advantage of opportunities to improve (or establish) public access to areas of open access land
- Take opportunities when considering DMMO claims to establish meaningful connections to other parts of the network
- Challenge planning applications where development will fragment or reduce connectivity in the PROW network.

Connectivity has consistently been raised as a concern through the JLAF and consultation. This includes connecting routes within the PROW network, creating new PROW or changing path designation where there is a gap, providing safe

crossing across the A1, mainline railway and other major transport links, maintaining PROWs which connect settlements or destinations, enabling access and exit from National Trails, and ensuring connectivity across national borders and county boundaries. NCC will support and engage with Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) where PROW are involved and, where resources allow, we will seek to create PROWs that have been identified in LCWIPs. Disused Railway Tracks (DRTs) may provide opportunities for new routes which will improve connectivity.

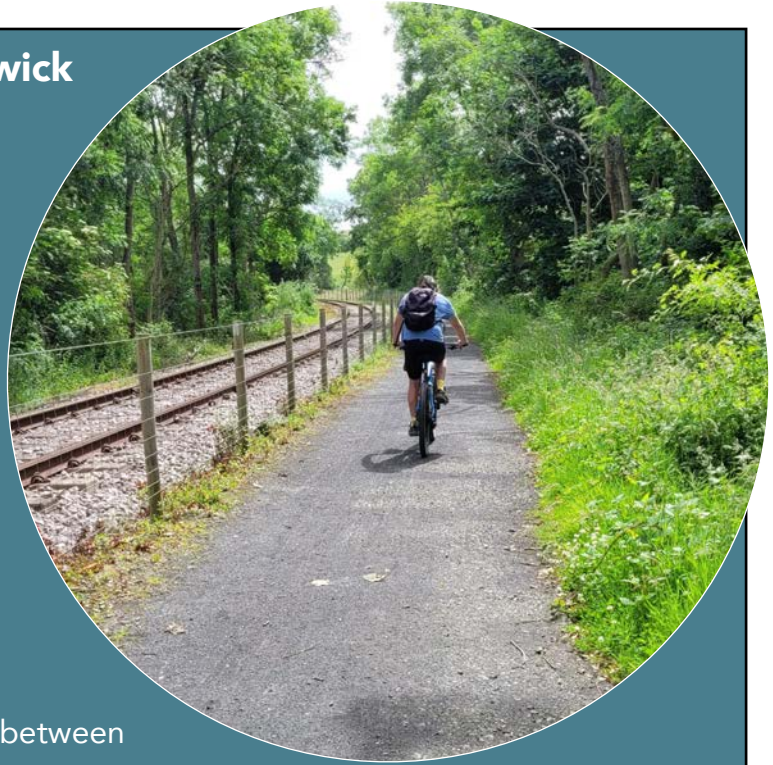
With more than 3,000 miles of PROW, effective mapping and recording is essential for the successful implementation of this policy.

<sup>8</sup> By 'gap' we mean a break in a route so that a user cannot complete a meaningful journey (such as where a bridleway is broken by a short stretch of footpath creating a gap for horse riders and cyclists or where a path is intercepted by a major transport link with no safe crossing point)



## Case Study: Connecting Alnwick to the rail network

In 2020 a new cycle route was opened between Lionheart Station in Alnwick and Greenrigg near Alnmouth where it joins the local road network which connects to the coastal cycle route. This new route, which runs alongside the Aln Valley Railway, provides an alternative to cycling along the busy A1068, giving cyclists (and other users) a safe route between Alnwick and Alnmouth railway station and facilitating car-free commutes into Newcastle or Edinburgh or for days out at Alnmouth or the surrounding coastal area.



Councillor Glen Sanderson, Leader of Council, said, *"The County Council has made climate change a key priority and amongst a number of new initiatives we think it's important to place more focus on improving and investing in walking and cycling which not only improves health but also reduces car use. We were delighted to work with the Aln Valley Railway Trust to provide this route."*

The route is well used by people on wheels, horseback and on foot. The development of this route from Greenrigg on towards Alnmouth is now being progressed.





## Policy 6: Work with communities to maximise the benefits of the PROW network

We want the Northumberland PROW network to provide valued local routes for local people and user groups who use them most and have the greatest attachment to them. We will:

- a. Improve and enhance traffic free Rights of Way networks around communities to increase use of sustainable transport for accessing work, schools and services, and to support public health and wellbeing
- b. Empower local communities to become custodians of their local network by facilitating and supporting community/volunteer engagement in PROW management, maintenance and improvement activities
- c. Work with planners to ensure PROW are protected and respected in new housing developments and identify opportunities for new/enhanced routes linking developments with local amenities

- d. Work with and support town, parish and community councils to get the most from their PROW network
- e. Support local community volunteering groups/activities to assist with surveying and maintenance of PROW which will enhance the local network and enable more local people and others to benefit from looking after, using and enjoying our PROW

We will provide a safe, green network of routes which enable car-free journeys to school, work, other services and for recreation. This includes promoting/ maintaining routes which provide access to or connect public transport services.

We will work with local communities and communities of interest (e.g. user groups or groups of people with protected characteristics) to understand needs and identify opportunities where PROW can be improved. We will celebrate and promote best practice so that it can be replicated in other areas.

We recognise the important role that parish/town councils and other partners/ stakeholders play in supporting PROW (for example, supporting/facilitating volunteering, identifying gaps in the PROW network, engaging landowners,



developing and distributing parish information). We will continue to support parish/town councils to establish PROW Action Groups or local Paths Officer roles where this is appropriate/identified as a need locally.

We also want local people to be more involved in looking after their PROW and we will encourage voluntary/community groups (including parish/town councils) and special interest groups to develop opportunities which are led by local people and users.

We will support community PROW projects which could include, for example, path maintenance or enhancements, volunteering programmes, guided trails and information, increasing engagement and enjoyment of PROW. These projects will form part of the Delivery Plan as and when resources are identified and we will look to identify external funding opportunities to facilitate local engagement and volunteering, particularly where this will deliver wellbeing benefits to those involved through improving access to nature, increasing physical activity, reducing isolation, supporting new skills and enhancing community cohesion.


## Case study: Acklington parish footpath volunteers

Since forming in 2019, the Acklington Parish Council Rights Of Way volunteers have made a huge impact on their local path network. With support from the NCC Area Countryside Officer the group surveyed their parish network and identified a range of works required to bring paths up to a higher standard. With ongoing support, the volunteers have expanded their skills and activities, becoming trained in the use of path maintenance equipment and establishing a regular programme of work within the parish. From repairing structures to replacing waymarkers and keeping summer vegetation in check, they are playing a vital role in keeping paths well maintained and accessible, providing many hours of work that could not be undertaken otherwise.

The community now has access to well-maintained routes on their doorstep and the volunteers are enjoying the physical, social and mental wellbeing benefits of their involvement.



We recognise the role of landowners in maintaining and managing PROW. We will work with communities to ensure that the relevant landowners are engaged in planning and implementing works and we will encourage landowners to support their community where they can.



### Policy 7: Enhance Northumberland's tourism offer by providing sustainable access to a rich natural and cultural landscape

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Northumberland is a spectacular landscape with a rich cultural and natural history. Our PROW network facilitates access to the landscape, providing opportunities for local residents and visitors to explore and experience all that it has to offer. We will:

- a. Support initiatives which will increase the value of walking, horse riding and cycling to the rural economy of Northumberland
- b. Maximise the value of partner contributions to the management and enhancement of National Trails

- c. Work in partnership to enhance access on regionally promoted routes and to tourism destinations

10 million people visit Northumberland every year. Our PROW network provides opportunities to explore a landscape which encompasses one National Park, two National Landscapes, three National Trails, one International Dark Skies Park, England's largest forest, more than 70 castles, over 60 miles of coast, nine National Nature Reserves, 23 Local Nature Reserves, more than 1000 scheduled ancient monuments and numerous other sites of interest.

Visit Northumberland has identified the quality of our landscape and countryside and our heritage culture as important attributes for tourism. They report that nature, space and landscapes are important factors for people choosing a destination to visit.<sup>9</sup> However, we also recognise the impact that additional visitors can have on our natural and cultural landscapes and our local communities. We will work with our partners to ensure that any activities promoting PROW are supported by information about responsible use of the

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<sup>9</sup> Visitor Survey 2021 cited in Northumberland Destination Management Plan





## Case Study: King Charles III England Coast Path

The Northumberland stretch of the King Charles III England Coast Path provides a 100km easy-to-follow walking trail starting just north of Berwick-Upon-Tweed, England's most northern town, and completing a continuous path to Bridlington in East Yorkshire.

The Northumberland stretch, which largely follows the very popular Northumberland Coast Path (Cresswell to Berwick-upon-Tweed) which opened in 2006, takes in stunning beaches, often backed by rolling dunes, internationally important inter-tidal mudflats and geological diversity. More than half of the route is within the Northumberland Coast National Landscape. The KCIIIIECP in Northumberland has improved signage and access, helping more visitors to enjoy the beauty, wildlife and heritage of our coast.

The King Charles III England Coast Path will be the country's longest National Trail. It will encourage and enable more people (and a wider range of users) to access and enjoy our coastal landscape.



countryside and respect for other users, landowners and the people that live there. Well maintained and accessible PROW in less popular areas also have the potential to provide alternative destinations which could relieve pressure on honeypot sites.

The PROW network is an integral part of Northumberland's visitor offer and a significant contributor to the local tourism economy, providing access to destinations and enabling outdoor activities including walking and cycling. We will advocate for PROW improvements within a



Regenerative Tourism approach  
(improving facilities for local people as  
well as for tourists and visitors).



## Policy 8: Work in partnership to maximise the potential of the PROW network

We will continue to work in partnership with all the key stakeholders who have an interest in the PROW network to add value to what NCC can achieve in isolation. This will include working with Northumberland National Park Authority, Northumberland Coast National Landscape, North Pennines National Landscape, Forestry England, Natural England, Visit Northumberland, Highways England and other teams within NCC to maximise capacity and resources in our Protected Landscapes and continuing to engage with parish councils, statutory bodies, JLAF members, neighbouring highways authorities and other partners to ensure that, across the county, resources are directed to areas where they can provide most benefit. In particular, we will:

- a. Work with landowners to secure improvements to PROW and ensure that legal obligations for keeping routes unobstructed and for maintaining infrastructure are fulfilled.
- b. Support and encourage active involvement by local communities, volunteers and communities of interest to facilitate management, maintenance and monitoring of local path networks.
- c. Work with partner organisations to maximise any opportunities available through grant funding or other revenue schemes to enhance provision and improve accessibility.
- d. Work with tourism partners to promote PROW as part of our rich natural and cultural landscape.
- e. Engage with health sector partners to highlight the value of PROW in facilitating access to green and blue spaces and the associated wellbeing benefits.
- f. Where development impacts the PROW network, work with NCC Planning to assert, protect and (wherever possible) enhance PROW.
- g. Work with neighbouring highway authorities (Cumberland, Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Westmorland and Furness



## Working in partnership to improve walking access in Redesdale

NCC was a partner in the Revitalising Redesdale Landscape Partnership led by Natural England which secured £1.8 million over five years from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to celebrate Redesdale's rich cultural heritage and to protect and enhance the area's landscape and wildlife from 2018 to 2022. This funding supported a wide range of heritage activities, including a project to enhance walking and cycling routes in the Redesdale area.

As a result of the Revitalising Redesdale funding, this project improved paths, gates, way marking, signage and stiles on a number of PROW in order to make routes more visible and more accessible. Six new self-guided walk leaflets with 18 walks were also produced.

None of this would have been possible without external funding and partnership support.



and Scottish Borders) on matters relating to cross-border routes and trails.

h. Ensure PROW maintenance and, enhancement, as well as the provision of new routes, respects the needs to protect

habitats, species and cultural landscape features.

NCC will continue to liaise with the JLAF to monitor the progress of the ROWIP and to maximise the potential and value of new opportunities which will be incorporated into Delivery Plans. We will promote best practice from within Northumberland and beyond, seeking to realise new ambitions and deliver to the highest quality possible, within available resources.

It is likely that, within the lifetime of this plan, currently unknown partnerships and new opportunities will arise that will benefit the PROW network and increase the resources available to enhance and





improve it. We must be aware of a changing landscape of opportunities and build capacity to respond to any potential new schemes, initiatives and partnerships.

### **Policy 9: Recognise and respond to the impacts of climate change on the PROW network**

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Over the next ten years we must increase our ability to respond to damage in the PROW network caused by our changing climate. We will:

- a. Act on advice from partners and specialists to future proof our PROW network by providing sustainable solutions to the problems arising from climate change (including riverbank erosion and risks to bridges and other structures over watercourses).
- b. Utilise 'roll back' (the provision whereby the KCIIIECP can be moved without the need to seek direction from the Secretary of State) to move sections of the coast path subject to erosion.
- c. Where possible and practicable reduce negative impacts of capital works undertaken (including reducing

emissions by using electric vehicles, equipment and machinery, minimising and disposing of waste responsibly, considering environmental impact when procuring materials and equipment).

- d. Work with partners in landscapes that are vulnerable to damage from heavy path usage to ensure that appropriate path maintenance and improvement techniques are used to reduce the impact on fragile environments.

The impacts of climate change on our PROW are, arguably, the biggest change since the last ROWIP. Severe weather events are becoming more frequent and NCC and our partners are increasingly having to repair paths which have been blocked by fallen trees or flood debris, or where the surface is eroding due to flooding, high river levels or surface water. Riverside, coastal and floodplain paths are particularly at risk from rivers in full spate and rising sea levels (the KCIIIECP is the only national trail where there are measures in place to allow paths to be moved inland to mitigate for rollback). Upland and forested areas are vulnerable to damage caused by surface water and fallen trees.



In 2021, Storm Arwen left extensive damage across the county with thousands of trees brought down as a result of high winds. Many PROW and other routes were blocked with some forestry paths remaining closed long into 2022 or later. The legacy of Storm Arwen remains across large parts of Northumberland, with many smaller woodlands still devastated, whilst subsequent storms continue to bring down more trees where they have become weakened or exposed by previous events.

Heavy and persistent rainfall resulting in flash flooding and damage to path surfaces and riverbanks is also becoming a more frequent occurrence in many areas.

We must build capacity to respond to damage caused by severe weather events as well as to keep up with increased maintenance needs caused by ongoing/increasing path erosion. This will involve exploring opportunities to improve the resilience of the PROW network, perhaps by reinforcing riverbanks in some areas, upgrading path surfaces or rerouting paths which are particularly vulnerable. We acknowledge the increasing urgency (and likely escalating costs) to protect coastal and riverside routes from rollback/

erosion and the need to identify resources to support this.

Delivery Plans will identify paths/routes where there is a need for a diversion or additional capital works to reduce damage from flooding, erosion, fallen trees or other concerns. Wherever possible we will explore and promote initiatives for 'green engineering' to address waterlogging or erosion along watercourses and steep banks.

At the same time, we also recognise the role that PROW play in promoting sustainable transport and reducing carbon emissions. Through delivery of this ROWIP we are aiming to facilitate active transport (contributing to Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)) and enable more people to make choices that reduce their carbon footprint (see policies 3, 4, 5 and 6).



## Case Study: Hareshaw Linn

In May 2023, a localised period of heavy rainfall around Bellingham resulted in torrents of water cascading down the Hareshaw Burn. Amongst other flooding and damage in the immediate area, the footpath to Hareshaw Linn was severely damaged by landslips, bankside collapses and path surface washouts resulting in the closure of the path for two months.

Repairs to the path involved removal of tonnes of debris from landslips, the re-routing and building of a 50m section of the path away from a riverbank collapse and the reconstruction of 200m of damaged path surface. Fortunately, the footbridges on the Hareshaw Linn path that had previously been renewed with more robust and sustainable structures, survived the torrent. The path may still be subject to damage in similar circumstances, but implementing resilient solutions will hopefully minimise future problems.







Rothbury footpath during Storm Babet in 2023 (© Neil Armstrong)



# Delivery Plan

The Delivery Planning process began in 2024 and will continue throughout the term of this ROWIP to allow activities to be defined for each policy area, depending on the needs, opportunities and resources available.

A rolling three-year Delivery Plan will be agreed setting out annual actions and targets including priorities for core activity, partnership working and the LTP (informing plans, strategies and bids which will draw down additional resources). The Delivery Plan will be developed in partnership and informed by the JLAF and ongoing consultation with parish councils, communities and other stakeholders. This will provide measurable outputs and outcomes to be delivered and monitored by NCC and other authorities (e.g. NNPA, National Landscapes where actions relate to Protected Landscapes) with ongoing support from the JLAF to ensure that the ROWIP will achieve its vision over its ten-year lifespan.

The first Delivery Plan (2025-29) is summarised below. The list of projects and work areas included is not exhaustive and will be dependent on resources. Projects may be subject to amendment.

Implementation of the projects identified below will contribute to achieving the ROWIP vision for a well-managed, accessible, safe and interconnected network of Public Rights Of Way and countryside access for all users.

Progress on the Delivery Plan will be reported annually and, at the same time, agreed actions will be reviewed to reflect new proposals, completed projects and any changes to timescales on existing schemes.



Delivery Actions	Policy Action	Target outcome	Partners/ stakeholders	2025 -26	2026 -27	2027 -28	2028 -29
Facilitate volunteer groups to enhance the network	1e, 6b, 6e, 8b	100 volunteer days per year	Parish councils, town councils & user groups	○	○	○	○
Improve accessibility along the Hadrian's Wall Path	3a, 3c(ii), 7b, 8c	Replace 10 stiles with gates by 2028	Natural England, NNPA, landowners, Historic England, English Heritage	○	○	○	
Improve accessibility along the Pennine Way	3a, 3c(ii), 7b, 8c	Replace 10 stiles with gates by 2028	Natural England, NNPA, North Pennines National Landscape, landowners	○	○	○	
Improve accessibility on promoted regional routes	1a, 3c, 3d, 7c	Replace 10 stiles with gates by 2028	NNPA, North Pennines & Northumberland Coast National Landscapes, landowners	○	○	○	
Implement rolling programme of signage enhancement	1c	Install 50 ROW signposts per year	NNPA, North Pennines & Northumberland Coast National Landscapes, landowners	○	○	○	○
Investigate options for eroding riverbank sections on R Tyne near Wylam and Heddon on the Wall	8a, 9,	Protected or realigned path completed	Landowners, Environment Agency	○	○		
Enhance accessibility to Whittle Dene	1a, 1b, 3c(i), 3d, 8b,	Complete path surface improvements and landslip stabilisation	Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust, parish councils	○	○	○	
Improve bridleway links at Meggie's Burn, Blyth	3b, 3c(iii), 5a,	Provide surface improvements and establish new bridleway links	User groups	○			
Enhance access to new stations on Northumberland line	3c(i), 6a,	Provide surface improvements		○	○		
Upgrade Acomb ROW and bridleway link	3b, 3c(i), 5a, 6a, 6d	Upgrade status of footpath to provide new bridleway link to Acomb village	Landowners/tenants, Acomb Parish Council	○	○		





Delivery Actions	Policy Action	Target/ outcome	Partners/ stakeholders	2025 -26	2026 -27	2027 -28	2028 -29
Haydon Spa	1b, 5a, 8a, 8c,	Re-establish footpath access	Landowners, Haydon Parish Council	○	○		
Potland Burn (former opencast site)	3b, 3c, 5a, 8a,	Establish network improvements on reinstated open cast site	Landowners, user groups PC's	○	○	○	○
Process DMMO applications	2a, 2d, 5c	15 applications per year		○	○	○	○
Improve access to partner information from NCC rights of way web links	4a, 4b, 4d, 4e	Direct link to NNPA, National Landscapes, Forestry England & others	NNPA, Northumberland Coast and North Pennines National Landscapes, Forestry England	○	○	○	
Host link to promoted walks leaflets	4a	Create online library of walks leaflets		○	○	○	
Protect riverbank on the West Allen	1b, 9a, 9d	Complete works to provide sustainable riverside route(s)	North Pennines National Landscape, landowners, parish councils	○			
Protect riverbank on the S Tyne	1b, 9a, 9d	Sustainable riverside route(s)	North Pennines National Landscape, landowners, parish councils	○			
Enhance path from Ellington to Lynton	3b, 3c, 5a, 8a,	Status Upgrade, surface improvement and realignment	Landowners, user groups, parish councils	○	○	○	
Ovington Bridleway 20	3c(i), 3e, 6a, 6d, 8a, 9,	Create surface improvement for link to school	Landowners, parish councils	○	○		
Improve Slaley byways (Blanchland Road)	1a, 1b, 6b, 8a, 8b,	Complete surface improvements on the Baybridge Road	NCC Highways, landowners	○			
Improve Slaley byways (Low Lead Road)	1a, 1b, 6b, 8a, 8b,	Implement surface improvement works	NCC Highways, user groups, landowners		○		
Allendale 74 Holmes Wood diversion and works	1b, 8g, 9a	Confirm and establish new route for footpath			○	○	



Delivery Actions	Policy Action	Target/ outcome	Partners/ stakeholders	2025 -26	2026 -27	2027 -28	2028 -29
Allendale 26 Catton riverbank diversion and works	1b, 8g, 9a	Confirm and establish new route for footpath			○	○	
Tweed Trail development	1b, 3a, 3c(ii), 7a, 7c, 8b, 8c, 8g, 9a	Work with Tweed Forum to progress Tweed Trail establishment to Berwick-upon-Tweed	Tweed Forum	○	○	○	
Lakeside Way access improvements	1c, 3a, 3c, 6a, 7a, 7b, 7c, 8c, 9a	Create improved infrastructure and accessibility on the Lakeside Way	NWL, Forestry England, parish councils	○	○		
Lakeside Way north shore alignments	1c, 3a, 3c, 6a, 7a, 7b, 7c, 8c, 9a	Improved infrastructure and accessibility on the Lakeside Way	NWL, Forestry England, parish councils		○	○	
South Tyne Trail accessibility improvements	1c, 3a, 3c, 6a, 7a, 7b, 7c, 8c	Improved infrastructure and accessibility on the South Tyne Trail	Landowners, Sustrans	○	○	○	
West Chevington	1a, 1c, 1d, 3a, 3b, 3c(i)3d, 5a, 6a, 6e, 8a,	Establish improved ROW network on former opencast site	Landowners, parish councils, user groups	○	○	○	
Maiden Hall	1a, 1c, 1d, 3a, 3b, 3c(i)3d, 5a, 6a, 8a,	Establish improved ROW network on former opencast site	Landowners, parish councils, user groups		○	○	
Shotton	1a, 1c, 1d, 3a, 3b, 3c(i)3d, 5a, 6a, 8a,	Establish improved ROW network on former opencast site	Landowners, parish councils, user groups	○	○		
B6318 Teppermore crossing	1a, 1d, 3c(ii)&(iii), 5a, 7b, 7c,	Improved bridleway crossing	Landowners, NNPA	○			
Hadrian's Wall Path roadside safety improvements	3c(ii) 7b, 7c,	Safer roadside sections of National Trail	Highways, NNPA	○	○	○	○



Delivery Actions	Policy Action	Target/ outcome	Partners/ stakeholders	2025 -26	2026 -27	2027 -28	2028 -29
Kielder FP 3 upgrade	1b, 1c, 1d, 3a, 5a, 7c, 8a, 8c,	Upgraded and accessible bridleway link to Lakeside Way	Forestry England, parish councils, user groups	⊙			
Hott Chain Bridge - feasibility and design	1a, 8g,	Complete investigations, feasibility and design works		⊙			
Hott Chain Bridge - refurbishment	1a, 8g,	Complete bridge refurbishment works			⊙	⊙	
SE Northumberland permissive bridleways signage	1c, 3b,3c(iii), 4b, 6a	SE area Permissive bridleway links clearly signed	User groups	⊙	⊙	⊙	
Stannington BR 23 - riverbank repairs	1b, 9a, 9d.	Reconstruct section of riverbank collapse		⊙	⊙		
Greenleighton bridleway loop	1a, 1d, 3a, 3c, 5b, 8a, 8g, 9a	Replacement bridges for route connectivity	NWL, National Trust, landowners, user groups	⊙	⊙		
Kielder loop - Falstone FP 11 & Kielder FP 9 link and status upgrade	1a, 3a, 3c, 5a, 5b, 7a, 7c, 8a, 8g, 9a	Establishment of 15 mile circular bridleway loop	Forestry England, parish councils, user groups		⊙	⊙	
Extend information on SE Northumberland permissive paths onto digital mapping	4a, 4c	Develop digital mapping of permissive access routes		⊙	⊙	⊙	
Swarland Woods accessibility improvements	1d, 3a, 3c(i), 3d, 6a, 6d	Establish accessible path link	Forestry England, parish councils, user groups	⊙	⊙		
Blanchland riverside accessibility improvements	1d, 3a, 3c(i), 3d, 6a, 8a, 8c, 8g, 9a, 9d	Improved accessibility along Blanchland riverside	Landowners, parish councils, North Pennines National Landscape		⊙	⊙	
Develop Miles Without Stiles database	3d, 4f	Develop database of paths that fulfil Miles Without Stiles criteria	User groups, JLAF	⊙	⊙	⊙	
Cramlington SW quarter development - linking path improvements	5a, 5d, 6a, 6c, 6d, 8f,	Enhanced links from new housing development		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Improve access by replacing stiles with gates across the county	3a, 3c(i), 3d, 6a, 8a	Replace 15 stiles with gates or gaps per year	Landowners, user groups, parish councils	⊙	⊙	⊙	





Delivery Actions	Policy Action	Target/ outcome	Partners/ stakeholders	2025 -26	2026 -27	2027 -28	2028 -29
Alwinton FP 57 - realignment	1b, 8g, 9a	Re-establish footpath link	NNPA, Ministry of Defence, landowners	○	○		
Compile and maintain a register of missing links to help identify priority locations for potential network enhancement opportunities	3b, 5b, 5c, 6a, 6c, 8a	Create register of missing links	JLAF, user groups	○	○	○	
Monitor roll-back locations on the KCIIECP	9b	Create register of rollback locations	Natural England, Northumberland Coast National Landscape	○	○	○	
Create and maintain a register of paths at risk from climate change events	9c, 9d	Create register of at risk paths	JLAF, NNPA, Northumberland Coast and North pennines National Landscapes	○	○	○	
Improve information on TTROs, particularly with regard to byways and UCRs	4a, 4b, 4c, 4e	Strategy for providing appropriate information about byways and unsurfaced UCR availability	NCC Highways, User Groups, NNPA, landowners	○	○	○	
Improve information available on the Definitive Map working copy regarding claims status and determination	2b, 4a,	Information about the progress and outcomes of claims available ovia online mapping		○	○	○	
Improve provision of PROW information on County Council website	4a, 4b, 4c, 4e	Enhanced rights of way information pages on NCC website		○	○	○	
Compile and maintain a register of PROW crossings of the A1 with options for future access improvements	3a, 3b, 3c, 5a, 5c, 8c,	Create register of locations and potential options for improvement	Highways Agency, NCC Highways, JLAF, User Groups, parish councils	○	○	○	





Stepping stones over the River Aln (© Katherine Williams)



# Resources

This ROWIP sets out policies and priority actions for PROW improvements over the next ten years. Achieving the full potential of the ROWIP will depend on the ability of the Council to respond to the anticipated growth in PROW requests, reports and complaints as well as DMMO/PPO applications and claims as awareness and usage of the PROW network and supporting systems increases. Improving our systems and processes and securing the necessary resources to support delivery of the ROWIP will be key priorities for NCC and we must seek to identify and capitalise on any funding opportunities as they arise.

It is not possible to predict all potential funding opportunities over this period and it is likely that new prospects will arise that we are not currently aware of. It is essential that the PROW team has adequate resources to respond to new opportunities, build connections within the Local Authority, and realise the full potential of local partnerships to add value to what they are able to achieve in isolation. Annual Delivery Plans will seek

to make best use of available resources including identifying and responding to any new funding opportunities as they arise. We will work in partnership with parish councils, Northumberland National Park Authority, our two National Landscapes, representative bodies for user groups and other partners to identify potential projects and to apply for funding or otherwise identify resources for activities which support this ROWIP (this may include partnership funding schemes such as National Lottery initiatives or wider landscape programmes where a PROW project is a small part of a larger project). In particular, we recognise the potential for PROW to deliver multiple benefits for our landscape and our communities and this could inform how ROWIP actions are resourced.

At the time of writing, potential sources of additional resource include:

- Increasing capacity through partnership, working with NNPA, Northumberland Coast National Landscape, North Pennines National Landscape, parish councils and landowners to identify resources which can contribute to ROWIP priorities





- ▶ Using the ROWIP (and subsequent Delivery Plans) to inform the LTP to draw down additional resources
- ▶ Working with planners to secure Section 106 funding for new and improved PROW as part of new planning applications
- ▶ Working with communities to maximise the potential of volunteers
- ▶ Identifying opportunities to support activities that mitigate the impact of climate change or increase access to car-free travel
- ▶ Ensuring access to PROW is included within new NCC and partner initiatives that, for example, improve visitor destinations, support people to be more physically active or create spaces which support wellbeing and reduce loneliness
- ▶ Identifying new partnership opportunities for external funding
- ▶ Exploring funding through representative bodies for different user groups





Ridlees Road, Coquetdale (© Greg Villalobos)

# Measuring Success

This section will briefly set out how we will understand whether the ROWIP has been implemented successfully.

Since 1998 annual monitoring of a random sample of paths has assessed three different performance indicators which together provide an assessment of ease of use. Monitoring is carried out by PROW Officers who assess whether a path is:

- ▶ Signposted/waymarked
- ▶ Free from unlawful obstructions
- ▶ In good repair (surface and barriers)

The PROW team will continue to monitor these on an annual basis, taking into account seasonal variations in access conditions and seeking to reverse the trend of decline which has been observed across all indicators in the last ten years.

Other measures will be defined through the Delivery Planning process as different activities are identified to deliver policy actions.

It is not possible to measure the health and wellbeing impact of PROW or to attribute any impact directly to the provision of PROW. However, a wealth of evidence exists which demonstrates that access to green/blue space and walking, cycling and other activities which PROW facilitate, significantly benefits both physical and mental health (particularly in areas of high population density and/or deprivation where there is more likely to be inequalities in access to green/blue space and the wellbeing benefits this provides). Even though the health and wellbeing benefits of PROW in Northumberland are not directly monitored, it should be assumed that they exist (and this should be taken into consideration when making decisions about where best to deploy resources to support health and wellbeing).

The JLAF, alongside other agencies, will play an important role in supporting NCC to understand the impact that ROWIP activities are achieving. JLAF partners and other agencies will particularly be able to provide insight into user experiences, landowner engagement, gaps in the PROW network and any routes which have deteriorated due to severe weather events or other causes. We have the





opportunity to work in partnership with the JLAF to collect qualitative feedback from PROW users at consultation events, visitor sites and via partner projects.

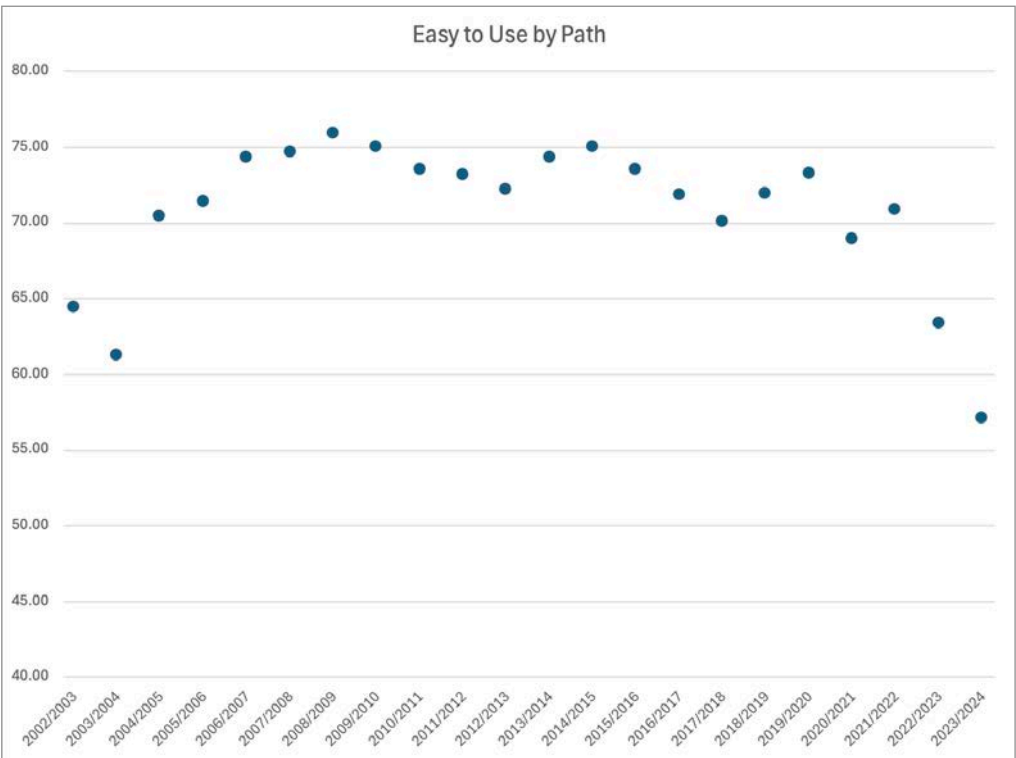
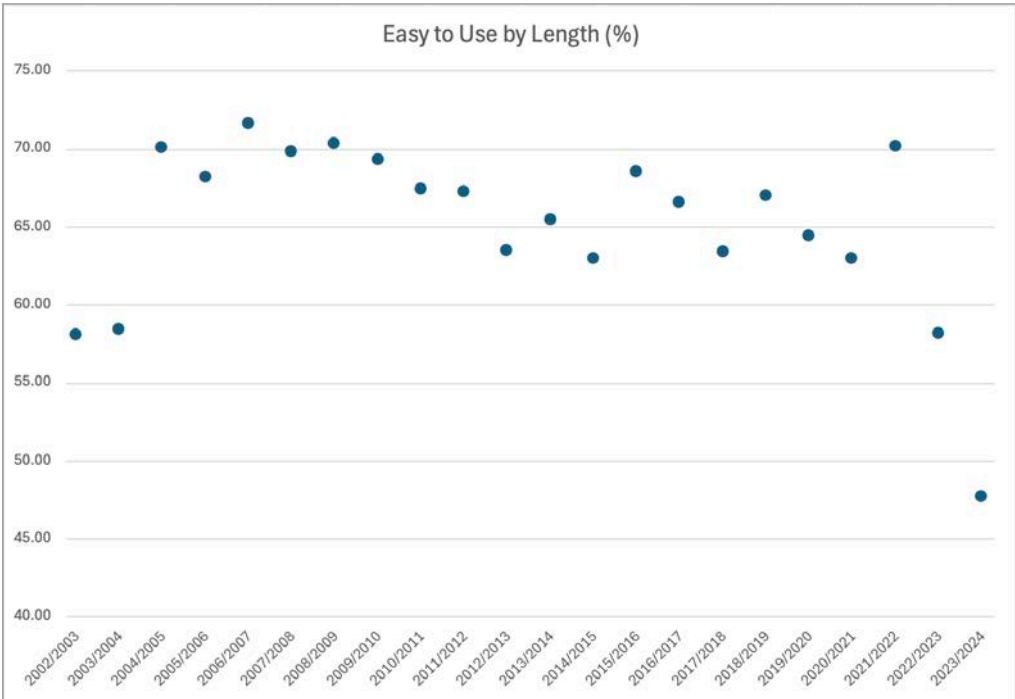
Delivery of policies 6, 7 and 8 will improve relationships with communities and other stakeholders and this, in turn, will establish feedback channels which will inform our monitoring. An annual monitoring summary report will be presented to the NCC PROW Committee and the JLAF.

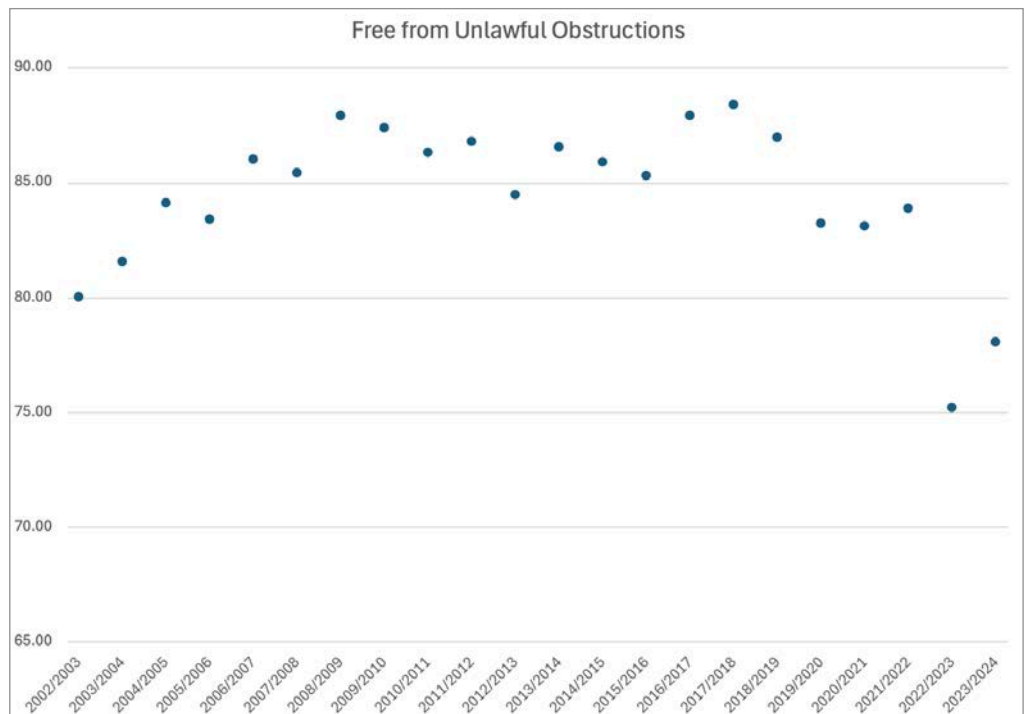
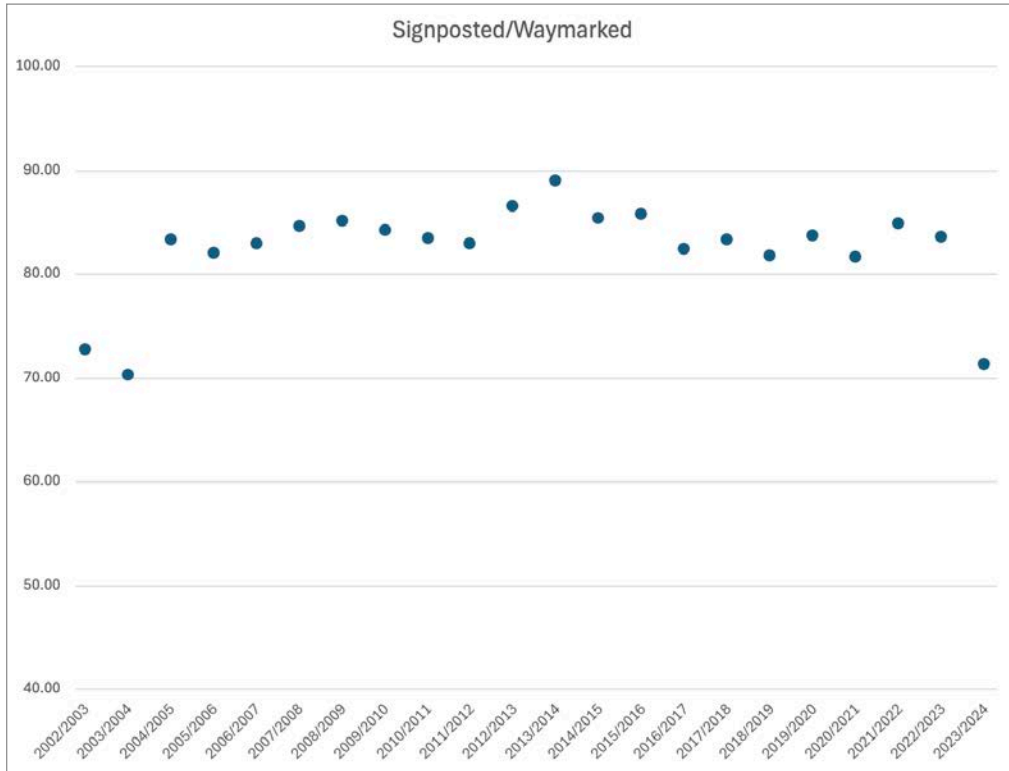
The ROWIP will be reviewed in 2034-5 as the next phase of PROW improvements is planned. Interim reviews will be carried out by PROW Officers and presented to the NCC PROW Committee and the JLAF in 2029-30 and 2032-33.



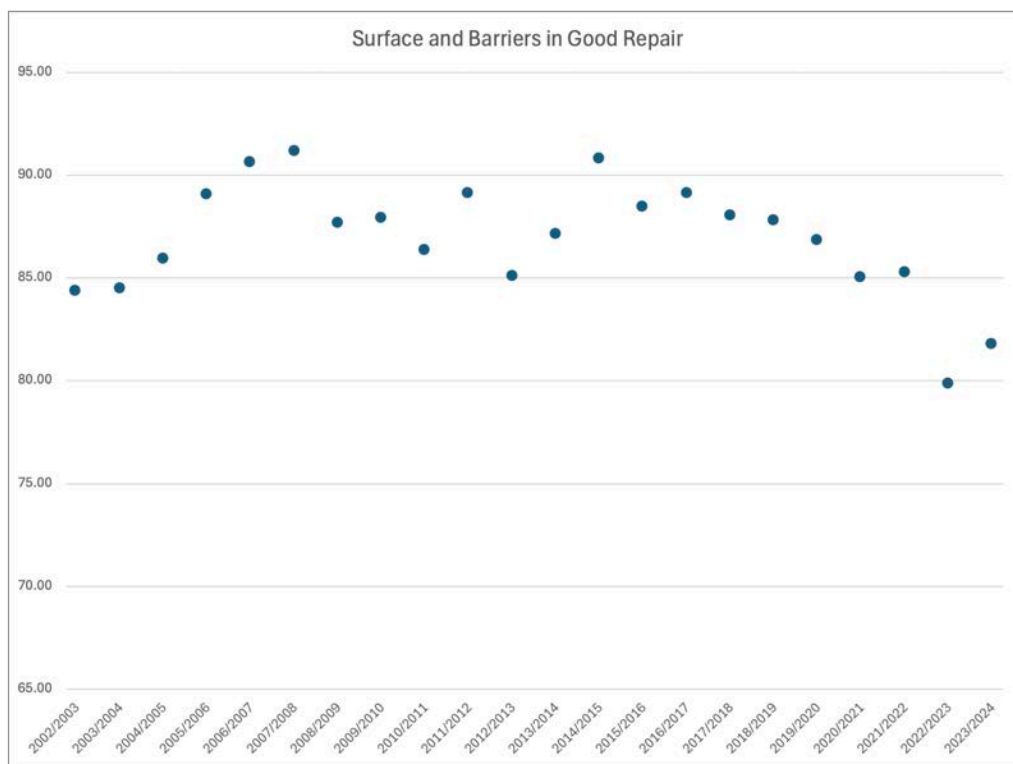
# Annual monitoring of PROW

## Performance Indicators since 2002













Path maintenance at Simonside (© Northumberland National Park)



# Conclusion

This ROWIP presents a strategy for managing, protecting, enhancing, connecting and improving access to the PROW network in Northumberland.

Being able to access the countryside and urban greenspace is essential for people's wellbeing and this ROWIP sets out actions to improve access and equity of access to the PROW network for all users. Our PROW are also a vital part of our cultural landscape and, as such, play an important role in the tourism economy.

This ROWIP proposes actions which respond to the challenges and opportunities we are facing in the 2020s. In particular, it acknowledges the impact that climate change is having on our PROW network and the role that our green infrastructure can play in promoting active travel. It also recognises new opportunities provided by digital technology to broaden access, improve engagement and provide information, and it acknowledges that development in this area will continue during the period of the ROWIP. It is therefore necessary for Delivery Plans to be responsive and

flexible to allow the PROW team to take best advantage of all the resources and opportunities available.

We recognise the importance of reversing trends observed in our monitoring, to improve 'ease of use' across the PROW network and ensure it continues to deliver multiple benefits, contributing to NCC commitments for health, community, climate change and economy.

At the heart of the ROWIP are our partnerships and communities. By working with volunteer groups, parish councils, user groups and other community stakeholders we can better understand local needs, inform delivery planning and add value to our actions. Working with partners internal and external to the Local Authority will enable us to maximise the potential of available resources to deliver a PROW network that supports wider strategic agendas in the county, for the benefit of our residents and visitors.







## Appendix: Review of 2006-2016 ROWIP Actions

Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
1	Identify specific opportunities for network improvements in Northumberland	Ongoing as part of general PROW work programmes
2	Identify opportunities for network improvements to the bridleway network in consultation with horse riding and cycling user groups.	See refs 6, 11, 12, 13, 28, 34, 52, 53, 56, 68, 71
3	Take opportunities to enhance the existing rights of way network through diversions, the creation of new paths and dedications which serve public benefit.	49 PPOs and 87 Modification Orders confirmed
4	Undertake a feasibility study for the development of a quiet lanes and greenways project.	No progress
5	Take opportunities to improve the existing bridleway network and work with the North Pennines AONB Partnership and Durham and Cumbria County Councils to establish and promote a "pack pony trail" in the North Pennines AONB.	Pack Pony Trail created between Blanchland and Slaley
6	Take opportunities to improve the bridleway network in Mid Northumberland and in particular assess the opportunities available through use of the former Wannie and North Tyne railway lines.	Footpath upgraded to bridleway at Cocklaw Walls Capheaton FP11 (Shaft Craggs) upgraded to bridleway No progress on North Tyne railway line Feasibility study looking at land assembly or creation of PROW along the Wannie Line in 2002 concluded there was little chance of securing sufficient landowner/tenant support.
7	Opportunities may exist for bridleway improvements using the former Berwick-St Boswells and Cornhill – Alnwick Railway Lines.	No progress
8	Take opportunities to improve the bridleway network within the Sandstone Hills and Till, Tweed and Coquet Valleys to ensure better links with settlements and facilities.	Sandstone Way established 2015
9	Undertake an audit of missing links and develop an action plan for the creation of new rights of way in priority locations.	Missing links project undertaken with JLAF
10	Prepare a schedule of network improvements and develop a costed action programme and priorities for implementation.	£170,000 LTP funding committed annually for PROW improvements; much of this allocation committed to repairing flood damaged routes.



Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
11	Continue to identify and progress opportunities for network improvements as part of rights of way management duties of countryside staff.	<p>Footpath upgraded to bridleway between Akeld and Commonburn House</p> <p>Acomb FP24 - missing link created</p> <p>Nafferton Farm bridleway link completed (2009)</p> <p>Permissive bridleway routes agreed and waymarked at Choppington Woods and East Cramlington LNR</p> <p>Progressing footpath to bridleway upgrade Ovington to Overdene</p> <p>Footpath creation at Deadwater Fell</p> <p>Bridleway creation Cramlington to Seghill</p>
12	Dedicate the parts of the South Tyne Trail owned by the County Council as public bridleway and undertake appropriate surface and infrastructure improvements.	<p>Surface improvements to enhance accessibility between Featherstone and Slaggyford (2008) and Pennine Way footpath link to trail at Slaggyford (2010-16).</p> <p>Rationalisation and improvements to gates on the trail.</p>
13	Assess the options for developing a route from Rothbury to Thropton and discuss with the National Trust the establishment of improved path access to Craggside.	Rothbury to Lady's Bridge bridleway improvement work.
14	Identify required improvements to the rights of way network which will enhance linkages by foot, horse and bicycle to other access and recreational opportunities.	See ref 11
15	Publish a regularly updated working copy of the Definitive Map on the internet that will reflect ongoing changes.	Achieved.
16	Publish register of applications for changes and modifications to the Definitive Map website linked to a working copy of the Definitive Map.	Achieved.
17	Prepare a register of landowner rights of way declarations (S31A, Highways Act 1980) and provide access to the register on the internet.	Achieved.
18	Explore the potential for including non-rights of way access information on the Council's internet map of public rights of way.	Web links to promoted routes, Sustrans website and DEFRA permissive routes.
19	Work with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to implement their Integrated Management Plan for the Otterburn Training Area and promote the new access opportunities to the public.	Achieved in partnership with the MOD





Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
20	Work with neighbouring highway authorities to identify and address cross boundary rights of way anomalies.	List of anomalies prepared
21	Develop a coordinated action plan to resolve outstanding anomalies within the North Pennines AONB rights of way network.	No progress
22	Produce a prioritised action plan to address the current backlog of applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders.	Achieved: the Council now has no backlog of DMMOs where no substantial progress on an application is being made.
23	Seek landowner dedication of rights of way on claimed public footpaths that cross areas of open access. Progress Modification Orders on claimed paths where landowner dedication cannot be achieved.	Achieved/not applicable
24	Develop a statement of priorities for new applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders and officer generated work.	Achieved
25	Liaise with the Natural England to identify the potential scale of new applications which may result from the Discovering Lost Ways project.	Discovering Lost Ways project discontinued. NCC awaiting implementation of the Deregulation Act 2015.
26	Identify the North Pennines as one of the key priority areas for archive research and prioritise those claims which are likely to offer the most significant public benefit and have the strongest supporting evidence.	Achieved.
27	Prioritise the installation of replacement foot and bridleway bridges where the present lack of provision inhibits recreational development in Northumberland.	Major footbridges at Otterburn and Plankey Mill completed (2007). Replacement bridges at Doddington, Allendale, Kilham, Hexhamshire and Warkworth. 5 new or replacement bridges in National Park 8 new or replacement bridges outside of National Park
28	Develop a prioritised list of locations for the construction of new bridges (e.g. River Till at Etal) which would enhance use of public rights of way.	Ongoing. See ref 10.
29	Continue to work to resolve obstructions to public rights of way in the forest areas.	Ongoing in partnership working with the Forestry Commission and National Park Authority. Improvements in Swarland Woods.
30	Investigate reports of obstructions and resolve in accordance with the priority approach contained in the reports management system.	Ongoing.



Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
31	Reply to the complainant within one month of the receipt of either section 56 or 130 notices (Highway Act 1980) setting out what action the Council will take to resolve an alleged obstruction.	Ongoing.
32	Continue to remind farmers and landowners of their duties in relation to ploughing and cropping on public rights of way. Where necessary take enforcement action and notify the Rural Payments Agency.	Ongoing.
33	Resolve outstanding matters in relation to path misalignment and the formalisation of permissive paths in the National Park.	No progress.
34	Develop and implement programmes of work to address erosion and drainage problems on rights of way within the North Pennines.	Improvements to byways in and around Slaley Forest. Improvements to Hexhamshire BR1 on Greenrigg Moor, Allendale BR50 on Burntridge Moor and West Allen BR28 on Wellhope Moor. Healey BOAT16 / Slaley BOAT40 reinstated after clear fell.
35	Investigate reports from members of the public about the condition of the surface of rights of way and path structures and resolve in accordance with the priority approach contained in the reports management system.	Ongoing.
36	Take action to address issues concerning the signing of paths from roads and way marking of their routes.	A continuous programme of signage/way marking has been undertaken by NCC, NNPA, and volunteers since 2006 (average 75 signposts installed per annum).
37	Prioritise key upland paths for improvement where erosion is deterring use.	Byways around Slaley Forest. Alnham RBW26 / Alwinton RBW15 (Salter's Way) surface improvement and drainage works completed in partnership with Forestry Commission and NNPA. Also see Ref 34 .
38	Prioritise action to address serious erosion alongside popular riverside paths on the Rivers Coquet and Tweed	Re-established path on Horncliffe FP1 below Norham Castle following landslip/rockfall. Riverbank stabilisation, surface improvements and tree clearance on Ord FP22 (West Ord). Landslip works on Horncliffe FP1 (The Chain Bridge) in partnership with Highways. Earle FP2 re-aligned at Yearle Mill due to river bank erosion.



Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
38 cont.	Prioritise action to address serious erosion alongside popular riverside paths on the Rivers Coquet and Tweed	Carham FP13 minor river bank path improvement work. Warkworth FP4 and FP7 works to realign and resurface riverside paths. Flooding repairs, Rothbury BR11.
39	Implement appropriate management approaches to address issues of illegal usage and user conflict where they are a source of persistent complaint by local communities, user groups and conservation interests.	Partnership work with police and NNPA on key routes in National Park. New stakeholder group established to monitor illegal motor vehicle use in the north of the Park. Improvements to byways in Slaley and Traffic Regulation Order made to prohibit vehicular use on some routes. Police and FC enforcement action ongoing in Slaley forest. Work with landowners, police and Prudhoe Pathforce to restrict illegal use of bridleways and byways at Hyon's Wood, Prudhoe. Engagement with GLASS and the TRF to develop partnership working with motorised recreational users.
40	Implement approved policies and procedures to address issues of user conflict and damage associated with motor vehicle use on byways, bridleways and footpaths	See ref 39.
41	Where necessary, implement the procedures contained in the Framework for the Management of Byways Open to All Traffic and the Policy for the use of Traffic Regulation Orders.	Ongoing where appropriate. See ref 39.
42	Identify particular conflict problem localities in the urban fringe and work with partners, including the police and community groups, to identify individually appropriate solutions.	Work with police and users on the Wylam Wagonway following incidents of spreading tacks to puncture tyres. Code of conduct revised.
43	Identify byways which are appropriate to accommodate recreational motor vehicle use.	No progress.
44	Accord high priority to safety and facilitating increased use of the rights of way network by all when programming action to address problems on public paths.	Ongoing.
45	Consult Natural England and English Heritage when work to rights of way may impact on a protected site or species.	Ongoing.





Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
46	Where appropriate utilise the Vulnerability Mapping Tool to enable the Council to consider the impact of the use of rights of way on protected sites or species.	See ref 39.  Vulnerability Mapping Tool used to assess suitability of byways for different users at Slaley.
47	In consultation with parish councils and other locally based organisations, identify popular local routes which will benefit from additional management and improvement works.	Joint working/projects/consultation undertaken with: Greater Morpeth Development Trust (see ref 51) Ovington Parish Council (bridleway network - see ref 11) Prudhoe Pathforce Corbridge, Broomley and Stocksfield, Felton, Ulgham, Ellington, Carham, Cornhill-on-Tweed, Horncliffe and Norham Parish Councils Haltwhistle Partnership Tynedale Healthy Walking Partnership (health walk routes) Swarland Woods Action Group (in partnership with Forestry Commission)
48	Encourage each parish council to appoint a path champion as the key contact with the Highway Authority.	Key contacts established at Haltwhistle Town Council and Ancroft, Belford, Carham, Cornhill-on-Tweed, Ellingham, Felton, Greenhead, Horncliffe, Norham, Ord, Ovingham, and Ulgham Parish Councils.  Northumberland Association of Local Councils requested to promote path champions on their website and through NALC ENews.  See also ref 47.
49	Work with the Local Planning Authority to ensure appropriate policies to protect and enhance the public rights of way network are included in their planning frameworks.	Ongoing.
50	Respond to all consultations on planning applications where the proposed development impacts on a public right of way.	Ongoing.
51	Implement agreed improvements to the local path network through the Castles, Woods and Water Project.	Improvements completed to Morpeth footpaths 7, 8, 11 and 20, Mitford footpath 4 and path between Morpeth and Bothal.



Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
52	Work with the minerals planning team and site operators to ensure that restoration plans for open cast coal mining sites maximise opportunities to improve the rights of way network and in particular, result in improved bridleway provision.	PROW works at open cast sites Stobswood, Maidens Hall, Potland Burn, Shotton, Hedgely Sand and Gravel and Caistron Sands and Gravel.  18km PROW created or re-instated at Stobswood.
53	Work to develop an appropriate network of paths and bridleways within North Ashington Woods with linkages to the QEII Country Park.	Access to Nature (National Lottery) funding secured (in partnership with Groundwork North East) to appoint Ashington Woods Project Officer. Growth Point Green Infrastructure Fund capital grant secured to improve permissive links to the woods and between Ashington Woods and QEII Country Park
54	Support existing healthy walking and green exercise schemes and support the development of new initiatives.	Working with Groundwork North East's SE Northumberland Green Exercise Project and other Health Walking initiatives at Allendale, Prudhoe, Corbridge, Hexham, Haltwhistle, and Wark.
55	Identify routes within and adjacent to the main wards with poor health indicators where improvement works would assist the delivery of healthy living programmes and apply for contributory funding.	No progress.
56	Continue access for all improvement works identified in the Kielder Access Strategy.	Kielder Lakeside Way project including bridge improvement at Leaplish; improvements to gate catches between Leaplish and Hawkhurst to improve access.
57	Identify key tourism hubs in the County where enhancements to rights of way would deliver benefits to the local economy.	Wooler and Haltwhistle proposed as Tourist Cycling Hubs, Haltwhistle proposed as a Walkers Are Welcome town (all unsuccessful).
58	Work in partnership to implement the proposed Pennine Bridleway northern extension.	No progress and unlikely to proceed.
59	Undertake a feasibility study to look at the opportunities and issues that will need to be resolved to develop former rail lines as recreational routes.	Study of SE Northumberland wagonways undertaken in 2008.



Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
60	Continue to promote and develop the Coast and Castles Cycle route and Northumberland Coastal Path and shorter trails around settlements.	Northumberland Coast Path actively promoted. Northumberland Coast National Landscape (formerly AONB) worked with local communities to develop circular walks/heritage trails etc. Surface improvements planned on the Coast and Castles Cycle route at Spittal and discussions about possible funding for additional off road sections have taken place with Natural England.
61	Examine the feasibility and benefits of creating a new promoted walking route along the main ridge of the Sandstone Hills linked to key settlements.	The Sandstone Way launched 2015
62	Undertake an audit of urban public rights of way suitable for improvement and promotion as sustainable transport routes and adoption by the Highway Authority.	Sustainable Transport Schemes completed between Cramlington Railway Station and the Nelson Industrial Estate, Cramlington Railway Station and the new Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital and between A193, Bebside and New Delaval via Three Horseshoes Public House.
63	Undertake a road safety audit of dangerous crossing points or sections of the road network used by walkers, horse riders and cyclists to reach connecting paths.	No progress.
64	Prepare a schedule of routes where safety is a significant issue and develop a costed action programme and priorities for implementation.	Some individual routes identified and works being considered to address issues.
65	Explore with landowners opportunities for the diversion of public rights of way to remove the need for the public to use busy stretches of highway to reach a connecting path.	No progress.
66	Identify unclassified county roads which complement the rights of way network and consider how best to promote these to users.	66 UCRs have had their status determined and been recorded on the DMS.
67	Work with the Highway Agency and Network Rail to improve the provision on safe crossings on popular rights of way.	Ongoing discussions with Highways regarding possible closure of pedestrian gap on A1 near Alnwick.  Gap provided in central reservation safety fence on A189 (spine road) on Blyth FP13.





Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
67 cont.	Work with the Highway Agency and Network Rail to improve the provision on safe crossings on popular rights of way.	<p>Work with Network Rail on:</p> <p>Removal of rail crossing at Corbridge (with Corbridge Heritage Trails)</p> <p>Diversion/extinguishment/ creation of PROW rail crossings at proposed new station at Belford</p> <p>Proposals to close or divert rail crossings at Widdrington, Stannington and Spital.</p> <p>Ongoing discussions with Highways regarding possible closure of pedestrian gap on A1 near Alnwick.</p> <p>Gap provided in central reservation safety fence on A189 (spine road) on Blyth FP13.</p>
68	Develop and promote short cycling routes suitable for family use leading from settlements and main visitor attractions.	<p>Circular routes around Rothbury.</p> <p>Cycling hubs proposed for Wooler and Haltwhistle - see ref 57.</p> <p>Connect 2 funding secured for cycling improvements in SE Northumberland.</p>
69	Prepare and implement a strategy to develop horse riding opportunities within the County.	No progress.
70	Act on opportunities to fill gaps in the bridleway network within the coast area, particularly adjacent to local communities and bring forward proposals to improve traffic management to facilitate horse and cycle use on minor roads.	Bridleway Creation Order confirmed between Seghill and Cramlington.
71	Work to improve the provision of bridleways in the urban fringe with a particular focus around Hebron, Widdrington/ Druridge, Newbiggin, Bedlington Country Park and Acklington.	<p>Improvements to bridleways around Hebron in conjunction with local horse riders (surface improvements and removal of unnecessary gates).</p> <p>Permissive riding route at Druridge Bay Country Park.</p> <p>Gate improvements on Amble BR15 and Togston BR13 to improve accessibility, and to allow paths to be cut by flail.</p> <p>Permissive riding routes at Choppington and East Chevington LNRs.</p>
72	Prioritise routes for improvement that facilitate legal access for all potential users.	<p>Improvement works around Kielder Water, on South Tyne Trail, and proposed for Ashington Woods (subject to funding).</p> <p>Drainage/surface improvements to Slaley Forest byways.</p>



Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
72 cont.	Prioritise routes for improvement that facilitate legal access for all potential users.	Wheelchair accessible latches to gates on Craster FP1 (Craster to Dunstanburgh Castle)  Accessibility assessment undertaken when considering replacement structures on PROW to ensure access is not inhibited.  Minimum standards for structures on PROW agreed
73	Encourage and assist landowners to address the needs of all potential users when replacing or repairing structures on rights of way.	Consultation on NCC specifications for gaps, gates and stiles and new procedure for assessing access for all.  See ref 72.
74	Ensure work on sites and rights of way undertaken by the Council meets, where appropriate, the needs of all potential users.	See ref 73.
75	Work with disability groups to identify routes linked to settlements or popular countryside destinations in the North Pennines which can be improved to facilitate access for all.	No progress.
76	Work with partners to improve use of the path network in the urban fringe with better targeted and distributed locally focused information.	No progress.
77	Identify and promote existing public rights of way that are suitable for users with different levels of mobility difficulty.	No progress.
78	Work with partners to establish a project to raise awareness of countryside opportunities targeted at the most deprived communities in the County.	No progress.
79	Explore how potential users of public rights of way could be better informed of opportunities for recreation in their locality.	No progress.
80	Identify opportunities for developing promoted routes from tourism hubs and settlements with good public transport links.	See ref 57.
81	Continue to support key recreational bus services in the area and focus the development of new recreational routes around tourism hubs to support existing businesses.	See ref 57.
82	Identify potential walking routes which could be improved and promoted to link into the local bus networks of the North Tyne and Allendale valleys.	No progress.



Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
83	Increase the amount of information available on the County Council website to promote the countryside access in Northumberland.	Information updated on NCC website including PROW, access land and countryside sites.
84	Re-print previously popular self guided trails and develop new walking and cycling guides for the area in both print format and using the internet.	Cycling in Northumbria Map updated.
85	Work with a wide range of partners to ensure that new promoted routes within Northumberland support wider tourism objectives.	See ref 57.
86	Undertake promotion of the Kielder Lakeside Way and other routes that provide access for all.	Lakeside Way launched in 2009 by Kielder Water & Forest Park Partnership.
87	Develop a programme to engage with specific communities to enhance user confidence to explore the local countryside.	No progress.
88	Promote walking, riding and cycling opportunities particularly the Coast Path.	<p>Ongoing promotion of National Trails, National Cycle Routes, St Cuthbert's Way, Northumberland Coast Path, St. Oswald's Way.</p> <p>Revised St. Cuthbert's Way trail guide published.</p> <p>New circular walks from both Northumberland Coast Path and St Oswald's Way.</p> <p>Leaflet highlighting ROW network and recreational opportunities in and around Rock &amp; Rennington produced with Parish Council.</p> <p>Cycling in Northumbria Map updated.</p> <p>Illustrated talks given to various walking and other countryside access groups across the County.</p>
89	Prepare an annual joint action plan setting out major structure, surfacing and other management works in the National Park.	No progress.
80	Identify a new rights of way management structure in the two urban districts.	New arrangements put in place.
91	Work in partnership with landowners, farmers and tenants to improve public rights of way and to jointly discharge responsibilities for the maintenance and replacement of stiles and gates.	Stiles replaced with gates on paths around Bamburgh, Craster, Embleton and Wooler.
92	Develop new partnership working arrangements to deliver the economic, social and related benefits associated with increased use of the rights of way network.	No progress.





Ref	Action Proposed	Progress 2006-16
93	Identify cross border routes that offer opportunities to support local businesses, and work with partners to establish how these might be implemented.	No progress.
84	Explore the feasibility of developing a scheme similar to Parish Paths Partnership.	No progress.
85	Work with all partners to refine and agree priorities for investment in improving the rights of way network.	See ref 10.





NCC Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2025-35

Statutory duty, Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000

Front cover image: Katherine Williams

Back cover image: Northumberland National Park

Case study images: page 26, NCC; page 28, Sue Rogers; page 30, NCC; page 35, Joyce & Conrad Clayton; page 39, Northumberland Coast National Landscape; page 41, Katherine Williams; page 44, NCC

The ROWIP 2024-34 was written by Katherine Williams, Consultant, on behalf of Northumberland County Council, 2025

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