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PRIORITIES

The purpose of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan is to provide a baseline for rights of way against which future improvements can be measured.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan highlights the present gaps in provision where improvement is needed.

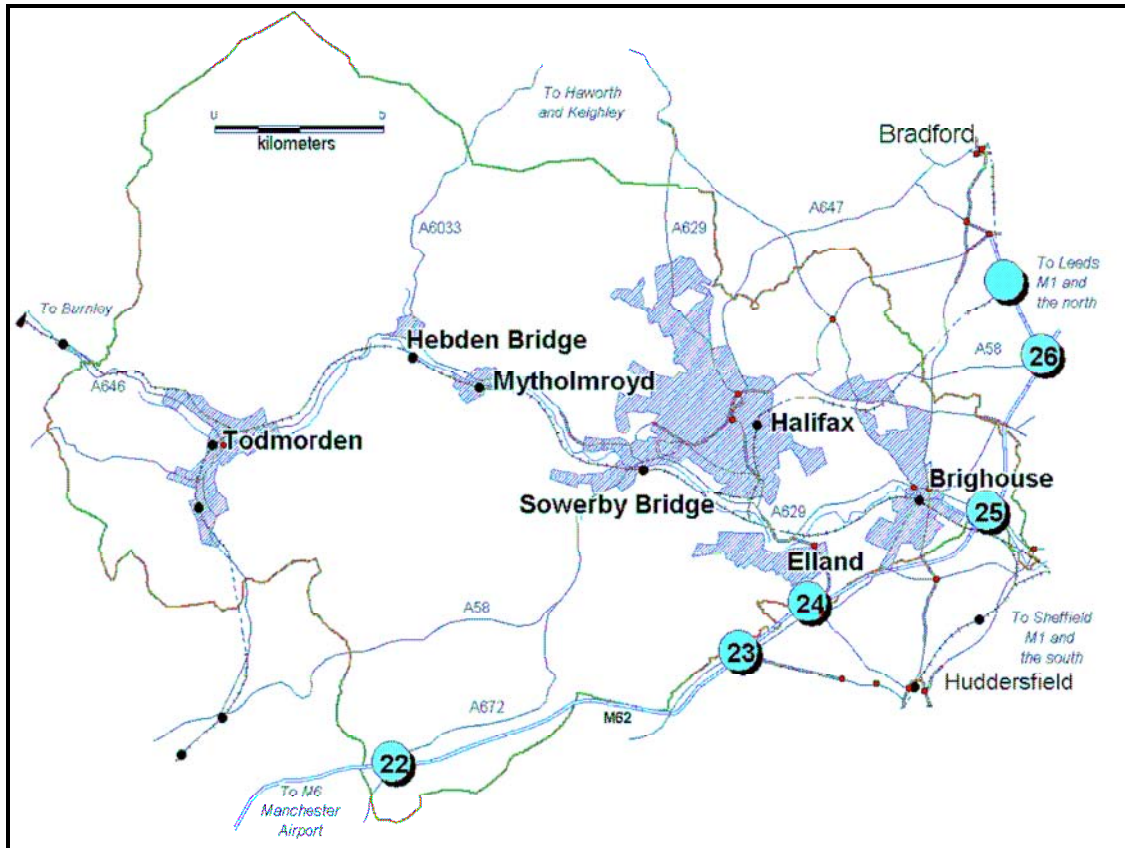
The action plan will show how the improvements will be prioritised and delivered.

The development of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan has shown that the priorities for rights of way are:

- Accessibility of the network
- Condition of the network
- Extent of the network
- Other barriers to access
- Protecting the network for the future

The above priorities all require additional funding and this is reflected in the action plan.

1 Introduction to Calderdale



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Map of Calderdale showing main towns – Halifax, Brighouse, Elland, Sowerby Bridge, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, Todmorden.

1.1 Calderdale

Calderdale in the South Pennines covers an area of 140 square miles (36,346 hectares) and stretches from Todmorden on the border with Lancashire in the west to Brighouse and Elland near the M62 motorway in the east. Calderdale is part of West Yorkshire and its neighbouring authorities are Bradford, Kirklees, Rochdale, Oldham, and Lancashire. The main town is Halifax with a population of just over 82,000. Much of the remainder of Calderdale is characterised by small rural market towns on transport routes in the valley bottoms, and large areas of spectacular upland scenery and moorland, which make up Pennine Yorkshire.

Today in Calderdale there is a thriving local economy, and a broad range of innovative manufacturing and service industries. There is also a host of national tourist attractions, a legacy of magnificent buildings and architecture and breathtaking rural landscapes. The many improvements to the local environment, the quality of life, and learning and leisure have made Calderdale an increasingly popular place to live, work and visit.

1.2 Services

Halifax serves a wide hinterland and wide range of social/ economic groupings. It is the major service centre for Calderdale with transport interchange facilities and major retail developments as well as markets and more traditional shopping. Theatres, numerous pubs and clubs, leisure and sport facilities and a variety of restaurants provide entertainment.

1.3 Transport

There are direct public transport links to Leeds, Manchester, Bradford and Huddersfield. However, road transport within Calderdale is congested due to both the volume of traffic and the topography, which squeezes roads into narrow valleys where they compete for space with railways and canals.

1.4 Attractions

Calderdale boasts a tremendous architectural heritage, including the unique 18th century Piece Hall and over four thousand listed buildings, twice the per capita level for West Yorkshire. Across the district there are seven museums and galleries, two cinemas and some outstanding visitor attractions including the nationally renowned children's museum, Eureka.

In much of Calderdale the countryside is also of a very high visual quality with impressive landscape and areas of ecological importance. In many places, this landscape is visible and accessible from urban areas.

1.5 Local economy

There are over 75,000 people employed in Calderdale with nearly a quarter employed in the manufacturing sector, almost twice the national average (Census 2001 on Calderdale website). The largest single employer is Calderdale MBC and the largest private employer is HBOS. A significant number of people commute from Calderdale to work in Leeds, Manchester and further afield. At the same time there is a significant number of households with no one in employment (see table below)

Households with no one in employment 1991 - 2001

Area	All households % with no one in employment		Households with children % with no one in employment		Lone-parent households % with no one in employment	
	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991
Calderdale	36.1	36.5	16.0	15.3	47.3	51.0
West Yorkshire	37.3	37.0	17.9	16.9	50.2	56.3
England & Wales	36.1	35.4	15.7	15.7	50.8	57.8

Source: 2001 and 1991 Census of Population, Office for National Statistics© Crown Copyright

1.6 Sustainability

Consideration needs to be given to lessening the impact of the car as a way of tackling climate change and reducing carbon emissions as well as improving access and air quality.

Households without a car; with 1 car; and with 2 or more cars 1991-2001

Area	Households with no car %		Households with 1 car %		Households with 2+ cars %	
	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991
Calderdale	31.0	39.0	43.7	41.7	25.3	19.3
West Yorkshire	32.2	39.8	43.2	41.4	24.6	18.8
England & Wales	26.8	32.4	43.8	43.7	29.4	23.8

Source: 2001 and 1991 Census of Population, Office for National Statistics© Crown Copyright

Calderdale's superb network of rights of way can provide a safe alternative off road route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, allowing them access to greener travel without restricting their mobility. Existing rights of way link town with countryside and allow walking / cycling to local destinations, which may be more practical than motorised transport for short journeys.

1.7 Health

Increasing exercise and improving diet can help to tackle chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and obesity. A high percentage of Calderdale households have at least one person with a limiting long-term illness (see table below). The percentage rises when just pensioners' households are considered, and this group may see real benefits from increasing appropriate exercise.

Households with residents who have a limiting long-term illness 1991-2001

Area	Households with at least one person with a limiting long-term illness % of all households		Households with pensioners and someone with a limiting long-term illness % of households with pensioners		Households with someone with a long-term illness and no carer % of total households with someone with a long-term illness	
	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991
Calderdale	34.7	25.4	58.7	n/a	71.9	n/a
West Yorkshire	35.6	26.1	60.2	n/a	70.6	n/a
England & Wales	34.1	24.6	56.7	n/a	70.0	n/a

Source: 2001 and 1991 Census of Population, Office for National Statistics© Crown Copyright

1.8 Countryside

Calderdale has landscape characteristic of the South Pennines. Features are heather-covered uplands with steep gritstone edges, narrow steep sided river valleys, springlines on many of the hillsides, field boundaries typically of drystone walls.

The district is not well wooded, with only 3% of Calderdale being tree-covered - well below the national average. This places great importance on the woods we do have, especially the small clough woodlands which hold valuable remnants of woodland plant and animal communities. There are many reservoirs and old mill dams which are important refuges for many aquatic species to maintain a foothold in the area.

The moorlands are of international importance for their range and numbers of breeding birds which is recognised in that a large proportion have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and candidate Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The peat moorland habitat is under increasing threat and as a result, a Heritage Strategy for the Southern Pennines (2001) has been prepared by the Standing Conference of South Pennine Authorities (SCOSPA - now known as Pennine Prospects). The Strategy provides a vision for the future management and enhancement of the area and seeks ways to secure the conservation of the area's heritage and ensure that future generations can enjoy it.

Calderdale has a large number of diverse local nature reserves. These are Beechwood Park, Colden Clough, Cromwell Bottom, Gorpley Clough, Jerusalem Farm, Milner Royd, Norland Moor, Ogden Water, Scarr and Long Woods, Shibden Park and Cunnery Wood.

1.9 Land Management

Sheep are kept on the uplands, beef cattle on the lower areas and forage crops such as silage and hay are produced. There is also a small but intensive dairy industry in Calderdale. Horses are increasingly being kept for recreational use, and there are several livery businesses. Shooting is a popular pastime and estates in the Upper Calder Valley have traditionally provided this activity. The National Trust

and Yorkshire Water own large estates, and there are several large private landowners as well, all of whose activities influence the way rural Calderdale is managed.

1.10 Rights of Way

Calderdale has a network of around two thousand paths totalling about eight hundred and forty miles of footpaths, bridleways, and other rights of way. Some of these paths are a good way of seeing Calderdale's countryside while others provide useful short cuts to the local shops, bus stop or other services.

1.11 National Trails and Circular Routes

The rights of way network within Calderdale includes sections of two national trails, the Pennine Way and the Pennine Bridleway . The Pennine Way is perhaps Britain's best known long distance footpath. The Pennine Bridleway is a new linear route which will eventually run from the Peak District to Byrness in Northumberland. The section through Calderdale is complete and connects with a section running through Lancashire to form a forty seven mile (seventy five kilometre) circular route known as the Mary Towneley loop.

Circular routes for walkers can be found on the Calderdale Way, the Todmorden Centenary Way and the Brighouse Boundary Walk, along with numerous shorter walks based around some of Calderdale's villages. There are many available routes in the urban areas too.

1.12 Access Land and Permissive Routes

There are large areas of access land in Calderdale ie land which is open to the public on foot and where there is the right to roam, rather than keep to public footpaths. Access to access land can theoretically be gained at any point on its boundary, although it is expected that most users would prefer to use a gateway or stile.

The Countryside Agency has drawn up maps of the access land in Calderdale and paper copies of these are available to view in the Central Library in Halifax. Within access land there may be restrictions on access for all or part of the year, for example to protect nesting birds or sheep during the spring, or to lessen fire risk during the summer. Details of closures are posted on the Countryside Access website.

Permissive routes are privately owned paths that have a limited amount of public access, depending on the details of the original permission that was granted. An example of permissive paths in Calderdale is on land owned by Yorkshire Water, where the public are able to use paths around reservoirs by permission of the landowner. Many but not all permissive paths in Calderdale are marked on Ordnance Survey maps.

2 What is a Rights of Way Improvement Plan?

- 2.1** The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 imposed a new duty on Highway Authorities to prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. Rights of Way Improvement Plans are intended to be the prime means by which local highway authorities identify changes to be made to their public rights of way network in order to meet the Government's aim of better provision for walkers, cyclists, equestrians and people with mobility problems.
- 2.2** Preparing a Rights of Way Improvement Plan has given Calderdale Council the opportunity to reassess the local rights of way network and increase its relevance for the people who use it now, and those who may wish to do so in the future.
- 2.3** Although there is a duty to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan, there is no corresponding duty to implement the action plan contained within it. It is anticipated that additional funding for implementation will have to be raised through local authority partnership working and external funding bids.
- 2.4** The CROW Act aims to improve access to the countryside for everyone. It will make more places accessible to more people and remove some of the barriers preventing people from enjoying the countryside. Rights of Way Improvement Plans are a significant part of this process and highlight the benefit to the authority and the public of taking a positive proactive look at access provision both in rural and urban areas.
- 2.5** Each authority is required to publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan covering all of their area, and the Rights of Way Improvement Plan supersedes in its entirety the Milestones Statement of 1996. In drawing up the plan, Calderdale Council is required to assess: -
- The extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public.
 - The opportunities provided by local rights of way (and in particular by footpaths, cycletracks, bridleways and restricted byways) for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and the enjoyment of their area.
 - The accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems.
- 2.6** Calderdale Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Includes a statement of actions the council proposes to take for the management of local rights of way and for securing an improved network of local rights of way.
 - Will be published by November 2007. Thereafter the council is required to make a new assessment, review its plans and decide whether to amend them, not more than ten years after first publishing its Plan.
 - Will audit, evaluate, prioritise and improve the access to local rights of way, countryside and access land across the district for the benefit of Calderdale's residents and visitors alike.

- Will help the council to meet its current corporate priorities, the aims and objectives of the Calderdale Futures Plan as well as meeting the Council's legal obligations.
- Will enable the council to take the opportunity to assess its work practices and develop new ways of working which will help to deliver a better service for rights of way in Calderdale

2.7 Calderdale Council has many other plans and strategies for related areas of work. These related areas include healthy living, leisure, recreation, tourism, sport, and transport.

2.8 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan is intended to be a mechanism for improving the network of public rights of way and other non motorised routes in light of the needs of all types of users.

2.9 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan is not designed to provide detailed solutions to access problems in every locality, but to take a **strategic approach** to managing public access.

2.10 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR RIGHTS OF WAY AND ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

- The highways authority, in this case Calderdale Council, is responsible for the management of rights of way across the District, through the Rights of Way Team.
- The first page of diagrams overleaf shows a summary of the powers given to the highway authority's Rights of Way Team, and the duties expected of the same team, to enable the rights of way network to remain open and accessible to the public.
- The second page of diagrams shows a summary of the rights and responsibilities of other organisations, agencies and individuals in relation to the use, maintenance and dedication of public rights of way and other access across the district.
- These lists are not exhaustive and have been designed to give users and landowners a better overview of whom to approach when they encounter problems on the network, or wish to make changes to the network.

**HIGHWAY AUTHORITY –
RIGHTS OF WAY TEAM
POWERS**

To administer and issue public path orders (creation, diversion, extinguishment of public rights of way)

To draft dedication agreements for the creation of new public rights of way

To negotiate, draft and authorise permissive path agreements **across privately owned land**

To authorise the erection of stiles, gates, bridges and other structures on public rights of way

To remove anything deposited **on the rights of way which constitutes a nuisance or an obstruction**

To represent the highway authority at public inquiries

To enforce various legislation under National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, Highways Act 1980, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Town and Country Planning Act 1990, CROW Act 2000, etc.

**HIGHWAY AUTHORITY –
RIGHTS OF WAY TEAM
DUTIES**

Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMO's) and maintain Section 53 and Section 31(6) Registers

Legal Event Modification Orders (LEMO's) to update the definitive map and statement

Maintenance of path surface and removal of upgrowth on rights of way

Update the Adoptions and Highways Register and make it available to the public in office hours

Enforcement regarding the removal of nuisance on, and obstructions to, rights of way under legislation in the Highways Act 1980

Represent the highway authority at public inquiries

Produce the **Rights of Way Improvement Plan** and 10 yr action plan by November 2007, after consultation with the public and user groups

**LANDOWNER/
OCCUPIER
POWERS AND
DUTIES**

**PUBLIC
POWERS AND
DUTIES**

**GOVERNMENT
AGENCY
POWERS AND
DUTIES**

Maintenance of built structures on rights of way (stiles/gates) where necessary and authorised (duty)

The public has the right to use and enjoy the highway, and prevent if possible the stopping up or obstruction of the highway

Defra develops policy relating to the countryside, which the agencies below deliver

Maintenance of existing land drainage (although CMBC responsible for drainage on path surface) (duty)

The claims process allows the public to apply to have certain paths added to the definitive map

Natural England – develops, promotes and maintains national trails and designates land under CROW Act

Power to develop, then duty to maintain **permissive paths** in partnership with CMBC

The claims process also allows the public to apply to have a path's status altered on the definitive map

Natural England – designates sites for the purposes of wildlife, plant and geological protection

Prevention and removal of obstructions from rights of way (duty)

The public can participate in **enforcement action** where paths are obstructed and all other approaches have failed

British Waterways – develops, promotes and maintains canal routes, bridges and towpaths

Removal of overhanging vegetation and that encroaching from the sides of rights of way (duty)

User groups and individuals can report obstructions/ missing signs/ nuisance on paths

Environment Agency licences activities on and beside rivers and watercourses to prevent or mitigate pollution and flooding

Opening new access through agri-environment schemes (power)

User groups and individuals can act as witnesses at public enquiries

Land Registry – holds all ownership records of land and property for England

Summary – What is a Rights of Way Improvement Plan?

- **Rights of Way Improvement Plans will be the prime means by which local highway authorities identify strategic changes to be made to their public rights of way network.**
- **Calderdale Council will use the Rights of Way Improvement Plan to assess whether the existing network meets present and future needs, particularly in regard to blind or partially sighted users and those with mobility problems.**
- **The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will include a 10-year action plan of improvement proposals.**
- **There is no duty on the Council to implement the action plan and implementation will be subject to funding.**
- **The Council will prioritise proposed improvements after a wide public consultation.**
- **The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will be published by November 2007.**

3 Policy Framework

This section looks at how the Vision Statement for Rights of Way, reproduced on page 2, has been informed by the plans and priorities discussed below. The Action Plan, which forms part of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, is the delivery mechanism for the "Vision".

A vital part of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan is how it integrates with the themes, aims and objectives of other plans and strategies both within and outside of the Council. The plan has the potential to deliver on several of the aspirations expressed in the current corporate priorities, and is embedded across the themes of the Futures Plan. It is also an integral part of the Local Transport Plan.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan represents a major development in the Council and its partners' approach to achieving and improving the health and well-being of residents and visitors in the borough. Concerns for the environment, safer communities, safe routes to school and sustainable development within a local economy are all issues that are high on the local agenda, and improvements to public rights of way can help to deliver positive outcomes.

3.1 The Calderdale Futures Plan 2006 – 2016 and Local Area Agreement

This is a ten-year community strategy for Calderdale developed by Calderdale Forward through the Local Area Agreement. Calderdale Forward is made up of people from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors.

The Vision described in the Calderdale Futures Plan has six inter-related and overlapping themes: -

- Economy and enterprise
- Environment
- Safer and stronger communities
- Healthier Communities
- Older people
- Children and young people

3.2 Calderdale Council's current corporate priorities

The Corporate Priorities supports the Futures Plan and mirrors the themes through its corporate priorities. It is anticipated that the Rights of Way Improvement Plan will impact positively on all the corporate priorities.

Our ambition for Calderdale

" We want Calderdale to be a place where we value everyone being different and through our actions we demonstrate that everyone matters."

This will be achieved by continuing to work with local people and partners to:

- **Economy and Enterprise** - Safeguard Calderdale's future and foster economic prosperity for all
- **Environment** - Improve the quality of our environment and promote respect for Calderdale's heritage
- **Safer and Stronger Communities** - Prosper as a place where people can feel safe and are encouraged to get involved in shaping their future
- **Healthier Communities** - Reduce the amount of preventable ill-health across the population as a whole
- **Older People** - Ensure that people stay in control of their lives and play a full and active role in society
- **Children and Young People** - Flourish as a place where every child and young person thrives, is safe and happy
- **Narrowing the Gap** - Work to ensure that the differences in health, quality of life and economic prosperity between different communities within Calderdale be reduced rather than increase –
This priority underpins all the above priorities.
- **Use of Resources** - Ensure that resources are allocated and used efficiently and effectively to meet the Council's priorities
This priority particularly addresses the work of the Local Authority

3.3 **Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI 178) for public rights of way**

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) was first introduced by the Audit Commission for single tier councils in 2002. It provides a measure of performance against specific targets for all local authorities. Since 2002 it has evolved in response to changes in the operational and regulatory environment, rising public expectations and the performance of local government itself.

CPA is partially measured through best value performance indicators. Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 178 relates to the percentage of the total length of footpaths and other public rights of way that are easy to use by members of the public. A random sample of five percent of the network is surveyed every year, with the results forecast to improve at a steady rate into the future.

3.4 **West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2 (WYLTP2)**

WYLTP2 is an important step towards the longer-term vision for transport and provides a firm foundation for future Local Transport Plans. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan is a strand of the Local Transport Plan and some of the funding to deliver the Rights of Way Improvement Plan objectives may come through Local Transport Plans. WYLTP2 has five objectives and the influence that these objectives will bring to bear on Rights of Way Improvement Plans is outlined below.

3.4.1 Objective 1 - Delivering Accessibility

Public rights of way for walking and cycling are important to everyone but especially people without cars – elderly people, children, people on lower incomes, and disabled people. They provide important links between communities and workplaces, shops, schools and other facilities especially as more out of town developments and loss of local facilities make access harder. If routes are improved so that they can be accessed by people with mobility problems and visual impairments this will improve access for everyone and make public rights of way more attractive to all users.

3.4.2 Objective 2 - Tackling Congestion

Public rights of way offer alternatives to the car for journeys to work, school, local facilities, local recreation/tourism sites, etc. Public rights of way can sometimes provide for shorter or quicker journeys than using the car.

3.4.3 Objective 3 - Road Safety

Public rights of way can segregate users from road traffic, providing safer routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

3.4.4 Objective 4 - Air quality

Air quality can be improved if we can reduce reliance on vehicles by providing an attractive alternative of a quality path network, and so encourage more walking and cycling.

3.4.5 Objective 5 – Effective Asset Management

Rights of way need to be managed with other transport assets to achieve a truly integrated transport system.

LTP2 sets out a programme for a wide range of improvements to local transport over the period 2006 – 2011. Several of the improvements will be delivered through the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

LTP2 will help to:

- Deliver a more sustainable transport system with growth in the use of alternatives to the private car including bus and train.
- Provide improved accessibility to jobs and key facilities such as hospitals
- Improve road safety and reduce road casualties
- Reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality in those areas worst affected by pollution
- Improve journey safety and security
- Deliver better travel information through the use of modern technology
- Provide better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
- Improve the condition of the local highways and bridges

3.5 Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (RCUDP)

The Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan provides a long term vision for land-use for the District until 2016. When the Council considers planning applications for development the RCUDP provides a framework for rational and consistent decision making. RCUDP policies and proposals are intended to control

and shape development and to provide certainty as to the circumstances in which development proposals will be supported.

Transport policy is an essential element of integrated land use planning. It is supportive of, and complementary to land use strategies.

The Replacement Calderdale UDP can contribute to achieving the vision of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and WYLTP2 by making sure that development is built where it can give opportunities to use public transport, walking, cycling or other modes of transport, and by putting in place policies to encourage and support sustainable development.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will complement the Replacement Calderdale UDP, especially with regard to the following Policies:

- **E10** Tourism development
- **GBE1** The contribution of design to the quality of the built environment
- **GE1** Meeting the economic needs of the district (especially with regard to the rural economy)
- **GNE2** Protection of the environment
- **GOS1** The protection and enhancement of open space, sports and recreation facilities
- **GT1** Provision of a sustainable, safe and efficient transport system
- **GT4** The hierarchy of consideration
- **M2** Details required with any minerals planning application
- **OS8** Development within or at the edge of common land
- **OS9** The recreational use of waterways and open water
- **T10** Safeguarding public rights of way
- **T11** Protection of the sites of former railway lines
- **T12** Applications affecting public rights of way
- **T13** Cycleways

3.6 Other strategies and plans

Other strategies and plans produced by Calderdale Council that may influence or be influenced by the production of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan are summarised below:

- 3.6.1 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy and Action Plan - draft from may 2006 supports the over-arching aims of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- 3.6.2 Calderdale Council's Tourism Action Plan supports and complements the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. Walking is one of the reasons that tourists visit Calderdale, and so improvements to the rights of way network will result in greater accessibility to Calderdale as a whole. Walking, cycling and horse riding are also sustainable activities for tourism and have less impact on rural areas than motorised visits to honey pot sites. (As a National Trail, the Pennine Bridleway may encourage equestrian tourism in addition to walkers).
- 3.6.3 Health Inequalities Strategy 2006 – looks at obesity and its causes, primarily poor diet and insufficient physical activity. It notes that in Calderdale :

- Has a very high prevalence [of obesity] (estimated 60% of adults in Calderdale are classified as overweight or obese) and this is increasing, nationally and locally.
- Physical activity levels among adults are lower than national average.

Physical improvements to Calderdale's public rights of way network, combined with better promotion of the paths could help to tackle obesity at little individual cost, as there are few costs associated with walking.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan can help improve overall health through highlighting the opportunities for providing improved and additional paths to enable people to increase their access to exercise facilities from their homes.

- 3.6.4 Physical Activity Action Plan (2007) - Physical activity and sport impact positively upon health, educational attainment and behaviour, community safety and community cohesion. (The Health White Paper makes a case for more physical activity, in various forms, to become a part of everyday life). Within Calderdale increasing activity levels have a key role to play in addressing the Health Inequalities agenda. The public health importance of physical activity is clear. Encouraging the activities that use the public rights of way network can contribute to the Council's stated priority of promoting "healthy living", and reducing health inequalities.
- 3.6.5 Cycling Strategy – The cycling strategy for West Yorkshire appears in the LTP2 Appendix 7 and is fully supported by Calderdale Council. The Cycling Strategy has four specific objectives as listed below:
- To encourage more people to cycle more often for both utility and leisure journeys, and so help to reduce the dependency on private cars;
 - To develop a safe, convenient, efficient and attractive transport infrastructure that encourages and facilitates cycling;
 - To reduce the casualty rate of cyclists;
 - To ensure that policies to increase cycling and meet the needs of cyclists are integrated into all appropriate Policies, Plans, Strategies and resources bids.
- 3.6.6 Walking Strategy - The walking strategy for West Yorkshire appears in the LTP2 Appendix 7 and is fully supported by Calderdale Council. The Council has also produced a specific walking strategy and action plan for Calderdale. The objectives of the West Yorkshire Walking Strategy are to:
- Increase the proportion of journeys undertaken on foot especially by achieving a transfer from private car use;
 - Emphasise the role of walking as part of journeys by public transport; improve the walking environment to make walking more attractive by enhancing safety, security and environmental quality;
 - Promote walking as a practical mode of travel with benefits to health, the environment and the community;
 - Make it possible for more journeys to be made on foot by people with impaired or reduced mobility;
 - Ensure that actions to encourage walking and cycling complement one another to realise opportunities for achieving more sustainable local travel patterns.

NB There is no strategy for horse riding as it considered by WYLTP primarily as a leisure activity.

Summary - Policy Framework

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will integrate with the themes, aims and objectives of other plans and strategies both within and outside the Council.

Examples of these plans and strategies are:

- **The Calderdale Futures Plan 2006 – 2016**
- **Calderdale Council's current Corporate Priorities**
- **West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP2)**
- **Unitary Development Plan (UDP)**
- **Green Spaces Strategy**
- **Calderdale Council's Tourism Action Plan**
- **Health Inequalities Strategy**
- **Physical Activity Strategy**
- **Cycling Strategy**
- **Walking Strategy**

4 Countryside Access in Calderdale

The network of public rights of way, permissive paths, areas mapped as access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, areas registered as urban commons and other areas managed for public access, provide access to urban destinations and to the countryside in Calderdale.

4.1 Rights of Way

Calderdale currently has a network of around two thousand recorded public rights of way across the district, totalling over seven hundred and fourteen miles (eleven hundred and fifty kilometres) of urban and rural footpaths and one hundred and twenty five miles (two hundred kilometres) of mostly rural bridleways, along with a very short network of byways open to all traffic (BOATs).

From these figures it can be seen that path provision is good for walkers in both urban and rural areas, although the figures alone do not indicate whether the routes are well connected and lead to places where the public want to go. The overall proportion of bridleways is small, meaning that horse riders and cyclists are less well catered for. The bridleway routes are less likely to link up with each other, and users have to ride on stretches of the adopted highway network, with a loss of amenity and safety. A shortage of bridleways puts at a disadvantage those users with disabilities as there are more gates and stiles on the footpath network, presenting barriers to many users.

The Council has a number of functions relating to rights of way that could improve this situation and the network as a whole. These are:

4.2 Definitive map review

All public rights of way are required by law to be recorded on the definitive map, which, with the accompanying statement, forms the legal record of all those rights recorded on it. Maintaining the definitive map is a statutory requirement under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which requires the Council to continuously update and review the definitive map so that it provides an accurate and up to date record of all rights of way.

A review of the definitive map is needed because Calderdale's public rights of way network was formally recorded on the definitive map back in 1952 as a result of legislation in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. A revised map was published in 1985.

Discrepancies between old records and the definitive map have become apparent over time. For example recreational horse riding was not a popular activity in the 1950's and some bridleways were recorded only as footpaths. Also, there may be rights of way, or changes to them, recorded in old documents which had been forgotten about before the definitive map was first drawn up. Additional rights of way have also been created through years of usage by the public, without any formal paperwork.

Reviewing the definitive map will create greater certainty for landowners and the public over the extent of the rights of way network; it could result in a higher

proportion of bridleways and byways in the network and could make the network accessible to more people. Public support for reviewing the map is demonstrated by the constant trickle of applications from members of the public for alterations to the definitive map.

A successful claim to have a path added to the definitive map requires the gathering of historical research and user evidence. Such evidence can take a long time to investigate and evaluate. The formal order process also requires advertising and can lead to a public inquiry. There is therefore a financial cost to the review in terms of staff time and advertising costs.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 has introduced the concept of closing the definitive map in 2026 to new applications. This means that any historic public rights of way that existed before 1949 but are not recorded on the definitive map will be automatically extinguished on that date if there is no application pending.

Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency) has established the Archive Research Unit to work with all local authorities to investigate historic unrecorded paths (lost ways) and put in an application for an order, to prevent them being extinguished in 2026. It is not clear when the Archive Research Unit will make a start on work in West Yorkshire, but it is unlikely to be before 2010.

4.3 Maintenance and enforcement on public rights of way

Calderdale's path network is well used and the most popular paths and promoted routes are well maintained. Other paths, particularly those with apparently insoluble problems are less well maintained. There is a limited annual budget and there have been real cuts in the number of staff available to do practical work on the paths. There is at present an ever greater reliance on skilled volunteers to help do much of the practical work. In spite of the huge input by both staff and volunteers, some parts of the network and some aspects of rights of way work have been neglected.

Besides the obstructions caused by overgrown vegetation or poor drainage or surfacing, many paths in Calderdale are obstructed by the failure of landowners to maintain authorised gates and stiles, or by deliberate attempts to prevent the public using rights of way. Calderdale aims to deal with obstructions by gaining the co-operation of landowners. However, in cases where no progress can be made by negotiation, legal action will be taken.

These problems are reflected in the results of the best value performance indicator (BVPI178) which shows that only about half of the rights of way in Calderdale are easy to find and easy to use.

The ongoing review of the definitive map is likely to reveal paths which have been unrecorded or shown with the wrong classification. As a result their maintenance may have been neglected or carried out to the wrong standard and landowners may have obstructed paths they did not realise existed. Restoring these paths will increase the pressure on existing maintenance and enforcement budgets.

Although rights of way are highways, the majority of their use is for recreational reasons and their amenity value is therefore important to the public. Developments alongside rights of way have an impact on the public even if the paths are not

obstructed but the Rights of Way Team does not currently have the resources to deal with visual amenity issues.

4.4 Changes to the network

The Council has the power to make legal orders to change the rights of way network, either temporarily to allow work to take place, or permanently. The Council has the power to divert a path for the benefit of the landowner, either to enable a planning permission to be implemented or to improve the amenity or security of a property. On occasion, a diversion order can also be used to deal with a longstanding obstruction.

Orders can also be made to create a new path where there is a need for one, to alter the route for the benefit of the public, or to upgrade a footpath to a bridleway, for example. However, in most cases, the Council would need to compensate the landowner for disturbance to the property so this power is seldom used.

4.5 Information and communication

The legal record of public rights of way consists of the definitive map, the accompanying statement and any confirmed orders to modify the map. This is a cumbersome collection of documents that the public can only inspect by visiting the Council's offices at Northgate House.

Electronic maps are available on the Calderdale Council website www.calderdale.gov.uk in the online maps section. This enables the public to see what paths are available, either by visiting any council office with access to the internet or by logging on from home.

Maps showing the new access land (see section 4.7 below) can be viewed at the Central Library and also online, although these maps do not constitute the legal record.

Calderdale has a number of walks leaflets published by the Countryside Service but some of these are now out of print or out of date and staff reductions in Community Services mean these are no longer being updated or developed. The Council does still run a programme of guided walks in the countryside, on both rights of way and access land.

Areas of access land and public rights of way on the definitive map are also shown by the Ordnance Survey on the Landranger and Explorer maps. However, some people lack confidence in using a map and prefer a set of written instructions, or to go on a guided walk, which also provides for social interaction. Some walking leaflets are available through Tourist Information.

Commercial publishers can and do provide information on walks and rides in the area but the Council has no control over which areas they may choose to promote or over the use of routes which may not be rights of way.

4.6 Permissive paths

It is possible for landowners to allow access over their land without dedicating a right of way. These routes are called permissive paths. To the user they are often indistinguishable from normal highways, but there are some important differences:

- A permissive path must have some sign or similar indication that it is not intended to be a right of way.
- The landowner can close off or divert the path if they wish to do so, without any public consultation or legal order.
- The landowner can make restrictions that would not normally apply to highways, for example to allow horse riding but not cycling, or the other way around.
- The Council has no statutory duty to maintain a permissive path.

Permissive paths are commonly found on land owned by a body that allows public access. In Calderdale organisations such as the National Trust and Yorkshire Water have permissive paths on their land. In addition there are a number of individual landowners who have negotiated agreements with the Council relating to permissive paths in Calderdale. Most permissive paths in Calderdale are available only to walkers. Some have been in place for many years and are starting to need major repairs.

4.7 Access land

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 granted a right of access for walkers to areas of registered access land. The areas where you can now walk in Calderdale and in the rest of England, with other information, can be found on the website Countryside Access (see Section 7 for details). This also shows any temporary or long-term restrictions which may be in force.

At present a copy of the maps for Calderdale only can be seen in the Central Library at Halifax. The Council's Countryside Service has been involved in signposting these areas and providing access to them, using grant aid from the Access Management Grant Scheme but future funding from this source is not available. This could impose a future maintenance cost on the Countryside Service budget.

There are approximately 29,737 acres (12,141 hectares) of access land in Calderdale consisting of 16,687 acres (6,475 ha) of open access and 13,650 acres (5,666 ha) of registered common are now open to the public and publicised on Ordnance Survey maps.

4.8 Registered commons

Common land is sometimes used as a term for any land in public ownership, or to which everyone has access. In fact, the term “common” only applies to land that has been registered as a common and does not automatically give the public any rights.

The public is entitled to walk or ride horses on registered urban commons, which generally means those within the former boroughs and urban districts, while all other commons are open to the public on foot, subject to any temporary restrictions.

Some registered common land is designated as being a site of special scientific interest (SSSI) with a high value for nature conservation and this designation may conflict with its use for countryside access.

There is little information available to the general public to indicate land that is registered common, as it does not appear as such on Ordnance Survey maps and is not shown on the Countryside Access website. Therefore many horse riders are not aware of the potential of registered urban common for horse riding. As Calderdale has a relatively small network of bridleways, registered common is an additional resource that would be better used if it were better publicised. However, if used more by horse riders in addition to walkers, the disturbance may affect its value for nature conservation. This potential conflict of interest needs to be addressed.

4.9 Other areas managed for public access

- **Open spaces** managed for public access and recreation such as public parks, land and woodland in Calderdale owned by the National Trust, Wildlife Trust, Yorkshire Water, and various local trusts and conservation bodies as well as Calderdale Council. Some of this land is open to the public because of legal obligations or a longstanding policy to provide public access.
- **Land open by agreement or permission.**
Some land, including agricultural land, is open under more short-term arrangements such as agri-environment schemes. A small number of such schemes operate in Calderdale.
- **Land with 'de facto' access.**
Some areas of land – for example many open spaces, woodlands, cliffs, coast and beaches – are treated as public because the landowner does not try to prevent access, though such policies may change at any time. An example of this in Calderdale is Hardcastle Crags.
- **Community and Urban Forestry Initiatives**
The West Yorkshire urban fringe forestry initiatives, such as in Leeds, Bradford and Calderdale complement the larger, rural-based forests by providing major access and recreation opportunities close to the main population centres. The Calderdale forest has been particularly successful at drawing down community woodland grant supplement in recognition of the local access provision being created (Forestry Commission 1999). Each forest is an area in which a partnership of public, private and voluntary sector bodies, along with land owners and managers, is undertaking major environmental and landscape improvements, which are both improving local quality of life and contributing to the economic regeneration of the region.

Summary - Countryside Access in Calderdale

- **Calderdale's 1350 km of public rights of way include footpaths, bridleways, byways open to all traffic (BOAT) that are on the definitive map and the accompanying statement. To remove, alter or add paths to the definitive map requires appropriate legal action.**
- **Permissive paths allow access over private land with the permission of the landowner, without the path being dedicated as a public right of way.**
- **Access land has been created by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and is shown on Ordnance Survey maps. Access land is only available to walkers and those using mobility aids such as wheelchairs. There are 12,034 ha of access land in Calderdale, made up of 6510 ha of open access ("right to roam" land) and 5524 ha of registered common (see below)**
- **The public is entitled to walk or ride horses on registered urban commons, which generally means those within the former boroughs and urban districts, while all other commons are open to the public on foot, subject to any temporary restrictions. Registered commons are not shown on Ordnance Survey maps.**
- **Other areas include open spaces such as parks; land open by agreement or permission as under agri-environment scheme; land with de facto access; community and urban forestry initiatives.**
- **There are numerous opportunities for countryside access on foot but the opportunities for horse-riders, cyclists and people with disabilities are considerably fewer and therefore likely to be less well connected with each other and with people's homes and destinations**

5 Assessing the needs of different classes of user

Public rights of way are the footpaths, cycle tracks, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic within Calderdale highway authority's area. Cycle tracks, with or without a right of way on foot, (other than those in or by the side of a highway, consisting of or comprising a made-up carriageway) come within the scope of rights of way improvement plans, although they are not shown on the definitive map or managed by the Rights of Way Team.

5.1 Assessing users' needs

"It seems to me fairly common sense that good paths lead to more use to more exercise on an everyday basis, to better health and less obesity, more people walking, so less crime and more social cohesion"
Brighouse resident

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan has to consider the needs and circumstances of people with a range of expectations, interests and levels of ability. To this end, Calderdale has consulted widely about the needs of all users of the rights of way in order to prioritise improvements to their network. The Action Plan for Calderdale will take account of the needs of both local people and visitors to the area.

5.2 Specific User Needs

In Calderdale a questionnaire was sent out to walkers, cycling groups, horse riders, landowners, schools, etc, regarding their particular needs in relation to rights of way, and how these needs could be met. 575 completed questionnaires from walkers, horse riders and cyclists, have been summarised in the pie chart overleaf and highlight the main issues for these user groups. In addition comments received from readers of the draft plan have been incorporated into this section and have informed the Action Plan in Section 6.

"The disabled would probably be best served by keeping the existing reasonably level paths to a good standard and gradually extending these as resources become available, not trying to extend unsuitable paths as a political gesture"
Heath Stroke Club

One of the issues not included in the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan but highlighted by the Consultation was the problems faced by the deaf and those with hearing problems, being forced to walk, ride or cycle on roads.

Deaf people. . . are in great danger when they have to use main roads, especially when being approached by traffic from behind.
Local Ramblers' Association

The connectivity of the network is of particular importance to such people, as careful routing of promoted paths can avoid stretches of road. Improvements to the Calderdale Way, for example, will include routing it away from roads as much as possible.

5.3 Walkers' needs

Walkers form a large and diverse group of people and can be divided into two broad sub-groups with slightly different needs from the rights of way network in Calderdale. Walkers frequently categorise themselves as belonging to both sub-groups and may well be members of a third sub-group, that of dog walkers.

Firstly there are **utility walkers** who walk for a purpose, such as to get to work or the bus stop, visit the shops or keep appointments or to go to school. The majority of walkers will at some point fall into this group, for example walking from home to the train station, or from the car park to the shops, with utilitarian walkers frequently being more urban based. Such walkers have particular needs, such as well-surfaced and well-lit paths, adequate signposting, road crossings, connections with public transport, and paths wide enough for push chair users with suitable barriers provided to prevent accidents on roads, especially near schools.

"It is particularly important that school children are given every opportunity to walk to school, and attention should be given to ways of improving access on foot to school"

Hebden Bridge Walker's Action

Utilitarian walkers in rural areas are often restricted by poor surfacing on paths, and the danger of sometimes having to walk on poorly lit roads.

Improvements to this part of the network in Calderdale are limited, but a greater pressure could be brought to bear on developers to consider foot and bicycle access in new developments. Use could also be made of section 106 agreements.

Recreational walkers walk mainly for pleasure although they may have a secondary goal such as keeping fit, or visiting a tourist site. They prefer more natural looking path surfaces and routes, preferably in a green and/or rural setting free from litter and fly tipping and preferably with wildlife or agricultural interest. They require paths that are clearly signposted and may prefer circular routes, so that they can leave their car safely parked at the start and collect it easily at the finish. Benches, picnic facilities and activities for children are also popular with some walkers, while others prefer these activities to take place elsewhere.

Consultation on the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan showed that many people would like more and clearer signage on rural rights of way. A minority, however, felt that signage was too prominent, or was unnecessary and detracted from the walking experience.

"Too many paths are being fitted with stiles where none previously existed. This makes it difficult for the less agile to climb over. Consider using small gates instead"

Calderdale resident

All walkers benefit from well maintained paths, stiles and gates, no dangerous animals in fields and easy access for those with mobility problems. Promoted routes are popular and information on the length and type of route, points of interest to be seen on the way and public transport links for access can all be provided on leaflets as well as on a website.

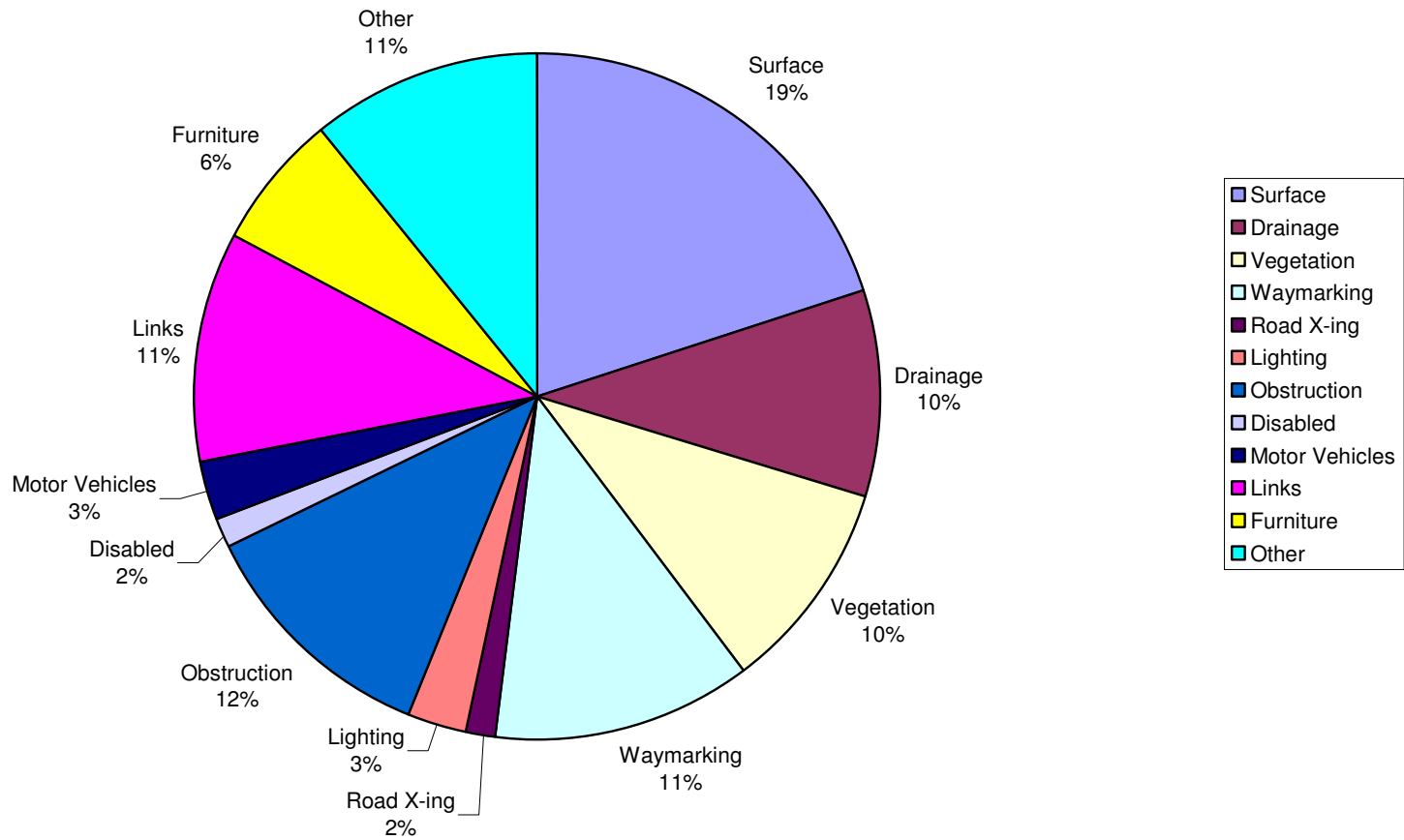
Dog walkers have particular needs regarding their pets. They prefer sites free from traffic, where their dogs can exercise off the lead without being a threat to other walkers and livestock. They also like dog bins that are regularly serviced. Dog walkers on rights of way like routes with no stiles or dog gates as these are frequently not suitable for larger dogs, and routes with places for dogs to drink are popular. Dog walkers also like to meet other dog walkers and their pets, and see walking as a social activity.

A point raised during the consultation period was that dog owners should be more aware of their responsibilities when exercising their pets on agricultural land, and should clean up after their pets in the countryside as well as in town. Urban fringe farmers, particularly, suffer from dog fouling on their land.

“To protect species and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, particularly from disturbance by dogs”

Pennine Sheepkeepers Association/ Federation of Yorkshire Commoners and Moorland Graziers

Pie chart showing % response to Rights of Way issues
575 questionnaires returned of which 45% of respondents included comments which have been categorised below



5.4 Cyclists' needs

According to a snap shot survey conducted in 2006, approximately 1 per cent of journeys to work in Calderdale are made by bicycle. This is very low when compared to cities such as York. The main reason for the low figure for cyclists in Calderdale is the topography, which means many routes are very hilly for part or all of their length. The steep valleys also focus traffic onto the main roads making them narrow and busy and so less attractive to cycle on.

Theoretically all roads are available to cyclists in Calderdale, but cycling exposes users to a high level of danger per mile travelled when compared to other (motorised) road users. Efforts are being made to encourage more people to cycle to reduce car usage for short journeys and to encourage people to exercise more, through promoting safe routes to school and offering cycle training to adults as well as children.

Cyclists are entitled to use bridleways subject to the rights of walkers and horse riders but some mountain bikers prefer more challenging terrain than other users and this cannot be accommodated on bridleways. Cycle orienteering is also becoming popular although cycle racing on footpaths and bridleways is illegal.

The provision of the Pennine Bridleway gives cyclists good opportunities for off road activity, and the Pennine Cycleway is an on-road route aimed at touring cyclists, but overall the provision is poor and this is another reason for the low numbers of cyclists on Calderdale's roads. Dedicated and promoted cycle routes in Calderdale are shown in the table below.

Name of route	On road miles	Off road and Rights of Way miles	Total miles
Calder Valley	9.2	3.6	12.8
Hebble Trail	0.6	0.9	1.5
Todmorden High School	0.0	0.75	0.75
Sowerby Bridge	0.0	0.4	0.4
West Yorkshire Cycle Route	22.5	0.0	22.5
Pennine Bridleway	0.0	47.0	47.0
Pennine Cycleway	16.8	0.0	16.8
Total	49.1	52.65	101.75 miles

Cycling (along with walking) offers a real sustainable alternative to the car for short journeys, and is particularly useful for young people, giving them a mobility option in the years before they can afford to own a car.

Some of the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan future spend will be targeted on encouraging young people to cycle to school, and providing safe routes, training and facilities such as cycles racks at school to enable them to do so.

5.5 Horse riders' needs

Horse riders share some of their needs with recreational walkers and cyclists, such as routes wide enough to safely accommodate horses, cyclists and pedestrians. In particular, they have difficulty with gates that cannot be opened from horseback, overgrowing and encroaching vegetation, livestock (including other horses), and aggressive dogs.

Bridleways make up a relatively small percentage of routes that appear on Calderdale's definitive map, and main roads frequently sever these existing routes.

“Horse access needs re-evaluating across the district to improve and link the network”

Calderdale resident

Horse riders are forced to use, or to cross, busy roads more and more and this puts both them and their horses at risk. On roads, danger comes from the speed of the traffic, the slipperiness of the tarmac surface, and the lack of suitable verges. Where such verges exist they are not being managed for horse riders, so the surface may be uneven, there may be open drainage channels, and litter and flytipping can be a problem.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan consultation showed that horse riders could not rely on bridleway routes being open and accessible for them. Many riders spoke of having to walk routes that were new to them, to ensure they were passable, before going out riding. Parents who rode with their children were worried about taking their children riding on new routes, in case they proved impassable and they had to ride on the roads.

Like recreational walkers, horse riders like to have circular routes of six to eight miles.

“Link paths to make circular routes, and give info via leaflets”

Calderdale walker, cyclist and horserider

The Pennine Bridleway passes through Calderdale in the upper Calder valley. On completion this will be a linear 350 mile (560 km) route from Derbyshire to

Northumbria, but the length running through Calderdale forms part of the Mary Towneley Loop that is a circular 47 miles (75 km) route and takes approximately three to four days to ride or walk. Obviously this is a great resource for horse riders (and cyclists) in the area, and several businesses have grown up providing B&B accommodation for horses and riders. However horse riders in other parts of the District are less well served by the bridleway network.

5.6 Carriage Drivers

Carriage drivers have similar needs to horse riders, but are not able to use bridleways. They have the right to use BOATs (byways open to all traffic), restricted byways and all adopted roads, although they prefer unsealed roads. There are few of these routes available at present in Calderdale, but it is possible more may be revealed by the definitive map review. The impact of hooves and wheeled vehicles on unsealed roads is likely to require a high level of maintenance for such routes.

5.7 Motorised Vehicle users' needs

Vehicular users have the right to use BOATs and unsealed adopted roads of which there are a limited number in Calderdale. They do not have the right to use bridleways.

Motorcycles on footpaths and bridleways are a problem in certain parts of rural Calderdale. This use is illegal and creates a problem that is very difficult to address, as barriers erected to prevent access by motorcycle will often prohibit access to other legitimate users such as horse riders or cyclists.

*“Problem of preventing access for motor cyclists at the same time preventing access to wheelchairs”
Heath Stroke Club*

Throughout the Rights of Way Improvement Plan consultation, many people have highlighted the problems that illegal use of paths by motorcycles causes for those who use and maintain public rights of way. It is a national problem with no single solution, and it needs to be reported to the police when it occurs. In Calderdale we will continue to tackle the problem as and when it arises.

Off road vehicle drivers would like a network of connected routes and routes that are free of obstruction. Like some mountain bikers, their preference for challenging terrain can conflict with the needs of walkers, cyclists and horse riders who require a less extreme surface on their shared routes.

5.8 Mobility and Visually Impaired Users' needs

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires Calderdale Council to assess the accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems. Those with mobility problems can include users with children and pushchairs. Family and friends who accompany people with mobility problems are also affected by the accessibility of the network. People with disabilities have needs and aspirations as diverse as any other access group, but at the moment there is very little provision for disabled users of public rights of way in Calderdale.

“Details of routes suitable for the disabled should be clearly identified and plans available to all concerned.”

Heath Stroke Club

One of the issues not included in the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan but highlighted by the consultation was the problems faced by the deaf and those with hearing problems, being forced to walk, ride or cycle on roads, where they can't hear vehicles approaching from behind. The connectivity of the network is of particular importance to such people, as careful routing of promoted paths can avoid stretches of road. Improvements to the Calderdale Way, for example, will include routing it away from roads as much as possible.

Relatively few rights of way in Calderdale are at present suitable for use by those with mobility problems and even fewer have been developed with the needs of those with mobility problems in mind. Besides the topography, a major limitation on use in Calderdale is the number of stiles, steps, heavy farm gates and narrow bridges on public rights of way in the district.

“Concern was also expressed about the poor quality of some stiles, gates and steps in that they can be difficult for the less able to use and should be improved”
Blackshaw Parish Council

Section 21 (2) a,b,c of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 says that ‘from 2004 service providers will have to take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide reasonable means of avoiding physical features that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use a service’, and public rights of way are considered a service under the terms of the Act. The Rights of Way Team advises landowners to replace stiles with gates or gaps where appropriate, and to use gate latches that are easy to operate, which benefit all users.

Because of the terrain in Calderdale, and the remote nature of some of the paths, it will not be ‘reasonable’ to provide total access to all paths to all people who suffer some sort of disability. In addition, due to budgetary constraints, Calderdale, in common with other local authorities, cannot afford to immediately replace all stiles and gates that may cause access difficulties.

“Many existing walks at high level could eventually be adapted to provide a reasonably level walk but with panoramic views over the excellent Calderdale countryside.”

Heath Stroke Club

Those who commented about disabled users’ needs during the Rights of Way Improvement Plan consultation agreed that it was impossible to make all paths in Calderdale accessible to all people with disabilities in Calderdale. They would like to see suitable routes identified for upgrading to meet their needs, and better information available, both online and in the public domain, to allow them to make their own choices about access.

Therefore it is considered that best value can be obtained by identifying particular routes and sites that will meet some of the needs of those with mobility problems.

5.9 Needs of Non Users

“Education is needed to inform the public of their opportunities and rights to enjoy the countryside”

Local Ramblers’ Association

The needs of non-users of public rights of way, including Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BME groups), have not been researched in Calderdale. It is assumed that the reasons for non-use of public rights of way in Calderdale are similar to reasons expressed elsewhere i.e. not interested, unable to read a map, fear of getting lost, no access to suitable transport, no time, poor health, cultural reasons, physical barriers.

The consultation via questionnaire had very low rates of response from BME groups and other non-users. Therefore one of the actions in the first years’ Action Plan is to identify and make contact with such groups and individuals, and start to work with them to understand and meet their access needs.

5.10 Land management, heritage and nature conservation

While Rights of Way Improvement Plans are concerned with improving rights of way for the benefit of the public, it is nevertheless important that the interests of land managers, including those engaged in agriculture and forestry, be taken into account, together with those of heritage and nature conservation. Different organisations need to work in partnership to resolve issues that affect their right to access. In Calderdale this is particularly important in relation to access land, a designation of land that has only been in existence for a short while.

The West Yorkshire Pennine Local Access Forum established under section 94 and 95 of Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 provides an important means to consult representatives of these interests. The Forum meets four times a

year. It discusses current access issues and advises Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees councils on improving access, as well as helping to resolve long-standing disputes involving public rights of way.

5.11 Recreation, Tourism and Leisure

Tourism is one of the largest economic sectors within the United Kingdom and:

- Contributes over £178 million each year to the Calderdale economy,
- Creates over 339,000 overnight stays in Calderdale's accommodation establishments,
- Over 3 million visitors a year enjoy a day trip out in Calderdale, visiting the delights of attractions, the countryside, towns and villages.

Calderdale has a very large number of rights of way, many of them taking the user through outstanding high quality countryside. As such the public rights of way network in Calderdale constitutes a huge resource for tourism and leisure use, as well as providing vital links in more urban areas in the form of short cuts to the shops and to work. The paths form an attraction in their own right, as well as leading visitors to tourist destinations such as Gibson Mill and Stoodley Pike.

“Our local landscape is unique to the west riding south Pennines region . . . yet it should be accessible to those who live within its bounds as well as visitors to the region so that they may benefit from whatever green activity they chose to participate in.”

Landowner in Calderdale

The Tourism and Rural Development Team within Calderdale Council will introduce a new Tourism Action Plan for 2007/2008. Interest in outdoors activities such as walking and cycling has increased significantly nationally, whilst rural tourism, and the need to develop tourism in a sustainable manner, continues to be significant, underpinning much of the economic activity of the most beautiful parts of the country. Visitors to Calderdale need to have easy access to high quality, up to date, accurate information, available in many different formats.

Urban fringes are important in providing an interface between town and country, and are some of the most easily accessible areas for the local people of Calderdale to make use of green space. However this land is under the greatest threat, due to numbers of users, conflict between different classes of users, and changes to the nature of the fringe through physical regeneration and development, as well as neglect.

“There should be a particular focus on opening up as much as possible routes along river valleys”

Hebden Bridge Walker's Action

Green corridors such as canals and rivers provide passage between urban areas and rural areas along towpaths as well as the water surface. Such corridors have a value for wildlife as well as providing access for walkers, runners, cyclists, fishermen and boaters. Calderdale is fortunate to have the Calder and Hebble Navigation and the Rochdale Canal, as well as the River Calder, to provide such important links between town and country.

As a result of comments made through the Rights of Way Improvement Plan consultation, an investigation into the potential of improving riverside access between Elland and Brighouse is under way in partnership with Calder Future. This will involve working with landowners, countryside managers, British Waterways and the Environment Agency as well as user groups such as anglers and boaters, to achieve a consensus about the level and extent of access required.

5.12 Health benefits to ‘Green Exercise’

Calderdale has a higher than average number of households with a member suffering from a long-term illness (34.7 per cent of the population locally against a West Yorkshire average of 35.6 per cent and a national average of 34.1 per cent). Rates of obesity are rising nationally, but particularly in West Yorkshire and especially amongst young people. Rates of heart disease and type two diabetes are also high in the region, and there are national and local campaigns to try and get people to exercise more to improve their basic health.

Green Exercise includes walking, cycling and conservation activities, but also extends to any activity that takes place in the natural environment and is designed to increase the amount of physical activity taken by individuals. From informal play and games on local greenspace, to adventure and orienteering in national forests and parks, Green Exercise is being recognised as one of the most effective and cost effective ways of increasing the nation's physical and mental health.

*“Promote and encourage participation in healthy lifestyle”
Todmorden C of E School*

Rights of way provide the population with an environment that allows them to take exercise if they wish. Rights of way are open twenty four hours a day and are free to use, although costs can be incurred accessing them (transport costs) and some equipment such as suitable footwear is required. Lack of basic skills such as map reading and the confidence to know that you have the right to use paths in certain locations may also put off the less confident.

The National Travel Survey in 2005 found that 36 per cent of people of all ages say they make a walk of at least 20 minutes' duration 3 or more times a week. An

additional 21 per cent say they do so once or twice a week. 24 per cent of people say they walk for at least 20 minutes less than once a year or never!

Organisations such as the Walking the Way to Health Initiative (WHI) help to overcome these issues by providing training for walk leaders. WHI then provide supported and guided group health walks to encourage those who have been advised to take exercise to improve their health, to get started. In Calderdale only Todmorden has such a group.

The National Travel Survey in 2005 also found that between 1995/97 and 2005 the proportion of primary school children walking to school declined from 53 to 49 per cent, with a corresponding increase in those being taken by car from 38 to 43 per cent. The proportion of secondary school children walking to school actually increased slightly over the same time period.

Summary – Assessing the needs of different classes of user

- Walkers, cyclists and horse riders all benefit from accessible information about public rights of way, adequate signposting, appropriate surface material, absence of obstructions, access to private, pedestrian or public transport and physical separation from motorised traffic.
- Utility, recreational and dog walkers are generally well served in Calderdale.
- Cyclists would benefit from greater separation from traffic and more dedicated cycle routes in Calderdale.
- Horse riders share some of their needs with recreational walkers and cyclists. In particular, they have difficulty with gates that cannot be opened from horseback, overgrowing and encroaching vegetation, livestock including other horses, and aggressive dogs. The bridleway network in Calderdale is small and fragmented and does not serve horse riders well.
- Public consultation did not reveal a demand for facilities for carriage driving in Calderdale.
- Off road vehicle drivers need a legal network of connected routes and routes that are free of obstruction, which is lacking in Calderdale. Illegal use of motor vehicles on public rights of way, especially use of motorcycles, is a problem in Calderdale.
- Mobility and visually impaired peoples' needs can be met by providing suitable routes at particular sites for people using wheelchairs and pushchairs, and those with visual impairments.
- Providing accurate and detailed information for those with disabilities will make it possible for them to make their own decisions about where they can access in Calderdale.
- Little is known about the needs of black and minority ethnic groups in relation to Calderdale's public rights of way. More research will be undertaken. Other non-user needs will also be researched.
- Conflicting pressures on land use e.g. tourism and the need for nature conservation, need to be addressed with new and innovative solutions.
- The health benefits to green exercise mean that greater numbers of people will wish to access the countryside in the future.

6 Issues and Actions

The purpose of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan is to provide a baseline for Rights of Way against which future improvements can be measured. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will also highlight the present gaps in provision where improvement is needed. The action plan will show how the improvements will be prioritised and delivered.

A number of broad issues have been raised. These are:

- Accessibility of the network
- Condition of the network
- Extent of the network
- Other barriers to access
- Protecting the network for the future
- Funding

Actions to improve accessibility of the network

6.1.1 Actions to improve accessibility of the network

General

- Chapter 5 contains the assessment of need based on responses so far and consultation on the draft plan. Further consultation will take place during the life of the Plan.
- It is anticipated that this assessment will be carried out by the Rights of Way Team, through continued consultation with all stakeholders, including hard to reach groups such as the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in Calderdale.
- Particular attention will be given to schemes such as safe routes to school, (where need has already been established in the WYLTP2 for more cycle routes).
- “Improvements to accessibility” include physical improvements for those who access public rights of way by private car and public transport; circular routes to encourage leisure and health use of rights of way; access for people with disabilities, including those with mobility and visual impairments; those with pushchairs / prams / motorised and non-motorised wheelchairs.
- In addition, improvements can take the form of access to information, particularly information for BME groups such as information in other languages, other formats and in large print for people with visual impairments.

Access to the Countryside

- Landowners have responsibility for maintenance for public rights of way furniture such as stiles, gates and walls on their land. The Council has the power (but not the budget) to finance the upgrading of furniture on promoted routes, and look at innovative ways of creating better access for all users. It is hoped to bring in additional funding from external sources to enable such work to progress.
- Lack of enforcement has in the past allowed the illegal obstruction of public rights of way to go unchallenged. The Council will try to improve its record in this area by carefully targeting its existing resources to deal with the problem.
- Public transport provides access to many paths, but could be improved by being rerouted/ retimed / better publicised to increase leisure and health use of public rights of way. The Council will continue to work closely with transport providers to try to meet this need.

Access to information

- The Rights of Way Team will continue to provide a responsive service to callers. More information has already been made available to users online, such as up to date maps. Other services could include more visitor information; public reporting of faults and obstructions; links to other local and national organisations.
- Information in other languages could be made available as part of a structured programme of events to introduce BME groups and other non-user groups to the countryside. Formats in large print and audio recording should be provided, and information available online for specific user groups.
- We will relaunch the Countryside Access Liaison Group and encourage two-way communication between user groups and the Council.
- New guidance for mountain bikers' use of public rights of way will be drafted after consultation with stakeholders, to provide up to date information about their rights and responsibilities on the network in Calderdale.
- New guidance will be drafted in consultation with user groups to give motorcyclists and other users up to date information about their rights and responsibilities regarding the network in Calderdale.
- Management Information Systems will be used to deliver better working and feedback

Disabled access

- Research still needs to be done in Calderdale on the needs and aspirations of people requiring disabled access. We will then try to develop a range of sites and practical solutions suitable for people with a range of disabilities.
- Standardised information relevant to those with disabilities will be accessible in a number of formats.
- The Council will continue to carry out access improvements to existing path furniture and look to making additional and appropriate provision for those with mobility and visual impairments.
- Policy will be developed to prevent a worsening of access opportunities when authorising diversions and new gates and stiles.

Partnerships

- The Council will work in partnership with all stakeholders to bring about the actions described in this section. More efficient working and greater access to information in the future will build and maintain good relationships between all involved in the improvement of our public rights of way.

Accessibility of the network

- **Specific Actions in the next 12 months**

Action	How	When	Who
Improvements in connectivity for local rights of way users and visitors to Calderdale, to promote and sustain the rural economy.	By focussing improvements on providing links between existing paths, particularly bridleways, and avoiding roads, whenever the opportunity occurs.	January 2008 - ongoing	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council working with user groups
Access for people with disabilities	More effort will be made to canvass the opinions of a wider range of people with a variety of disabilities, in relation to their use of public rights of way.	Ongoing	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council in consultation with user groups
	There will be a rolling programme to identify and upgrade a range of routes and sites suitable for access to people with disabilities		
	Stiles and steps on paths will be replaced with gates, gaps and ramps where appropriate		
The provision of accessible and up to date information about rights of way routes in many different formats.	Through consultation and a better understanding of need.	Ongoing	Countryside Team Disability Awareness Groups Tourist Information
	Through better use of technology		

Dealing with obstructed paths	Appointment of a new enforcement officer to ensure rights of way are unobstructed in Calderdale	August 2007	Enforcement Officer
Dealing with paths of unclear status	See Discovering Lost Ways project Section 6.3 below		
The Council will continue to work with enforcement agencies to reduce the number of incidents of motorcycles illegally using public rights of way.	We will work in partnership with neighbouring authorities and landowners to try to find a solution to the problem.	Ongoing	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council WY Police Neighbouring authorities Landowners

6.2 ISSUE 2 - Condition of the network

Calderdale has a huge variety of public rights of way in both urban and rural areas. All of them have different and particular maintenance requirements necessary to keep a quality resource in a useable condition.

6.2.1 Actions to improve the condition of the network

General

- The Council has a statutory duty to maintain public rights of way. It is limited in what improvements it can make in any financial year by the budget allocation
- The Council has a statutory duty to maintain rights of way in a fit condition for public use and its performance is measured each year in the Best Value Performance Indicator BVPI 178. Calderdale Council will continue to target its resources to improve this performance, enabling it to improve its score year on year.

Physical condition

- Landowners have responsibility for maintenance of public rights of way furniture on their land. The Council has the power to finance the upgrading of furniture on promoted routes, and look at innovative ways of creating better access. It is hoped to bring in additional funding to enable such work to progress.
- The results of the consultation questionnaire showed that comments about surfacing were one of the largest categories of response. Improvements will be prioritised on an area basis to make effective use of the available funding.
- The Council has no duty to improve specific paths but does have the power to do so. The need may arise where for example an unmade path has become a useful link to local services in a residential area. The Council will seek to identify partners and funding to ensure that paths are in a suitable condition for their likely use.

Legislation

- Legislation exists to allow the Council to take legal action against those who obstruct public rights of way. In future, enforcement action will be taken to remove obstructions and charges will be recovered against those responsible
- The Council will make use of Section 215 notices (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) with regard to eyesores visible from public rights of way, particularly in areas of high tourist value

Condition of the network

- **Specific Actions in the next 12 months**

Action	How	When	Who
Improvements in Best Value Performance Indicator 178 (BVPI 178). Calderdale is in the bottom quartile for the percentage of rights of way that are “easy to use”, and would like to improve.	Initially through tackling path obstructions, a primary contributor to Calderdale’s low BVPI 178 score.	August 2007 – a new enforcement officer in post	Rights of Way Team
	Improving waymarking to make paths easier to follow		
Calderdale Way 2008 is the 30 th anniversary of the creation of the Calderdale Way. To celebrate, we would like to re-publish the accompanying book, and update the route to take it off the road where possible, to improve the overall condition.	Existing route needs to be audited and a list of potential works needs to be costed.	Before December 2007	Rights of Way Team Countryside Team Countryside Volunteers
	Project outline drafted and potential funders identified.	February 2008	Rights of Way Countryside Team Calderdale Way Association
	Funding applications to be drafted and submitted.	March 2008 – October 2008	Rights of Way Countryside Team
Specific path improvements The Rights of Way Improvement Plan is not designed to provide detailed solutions to access problems in every locality, but to take a strategic approach to managing public access	Maintenance problems raised by the Liaison group may be put into the next years’ work plan, depending on estimated costs, available budget and competing priorities. See section on funding	January 2008 – December 2008	Rights of Way Team Countryside Access Liaison Group

6.3 ISSUE 3 - Extent of the network

Calderdale has a huge network of paths but parts of the network suffer from a lack of connectivity, particularly for bridleway users. Improvements are needed to find an innovative solution to problems such as the fragmentation of the network and severance of the network by main roads and District boundaries.

6.3.1 Actions to improve the extent of the network

Claims

- Efforts will be made to improve the connectivity of the network through changes to path status (eg where there is historic evidence, upgrading a footpath to bridleway to provide a link to other routes for horse riders), while acknowledging that this is a slow process and needs to be tackled in a logical order.
- Calderdale Council will continue to actively encourage claims relating to path status from members of the public, these applications being prioritised according to score. Claims based purely on historical evidence are being dealt with on an area by area basis.
- Creations and upgrades require working in partnership with landowners. Additional funding will also be required.
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 has given a cut off date of 1st January 2026 for any claims relating to pre 1949-ie before the Definitive Map / National Parks legislation. All claims (including Lost Ways) are being processed with this deadline in mind!

Path Status

- Calderdale Council will endeavour to bring permissive path, registered commons, village greens and access land records together so that they can be accessed by everyone through the Council website. It will also update its permissive path process and records to give greater clarity to landowners wishing to create such paths.

Strategic

- Public transport may need to be rerouted/ retimed / better publicised to improve the extent of leisure and health use of public rights of way
- Work with neighbouring authorities will help to address the problems of cross boundary routes, and lead to the sharing of more information between authorities.
- Greater information about routes suitable for mountain biking will be publicised alongside new guidelines about the do's and don'ts of mountain biking on public rights of way.

Extent of the network

- **Specific Actions in the next 12 months**

Action	How	When	Who
Bridleway improvements The development of a new link to the Pennine Bridleway and Mary Towneley Loop will be considered, as potential funding may be available.	Expression of interest submitted to Yorkshire Tourism for 50% funding.	July 2007	Rights of Way Team Tourism and Rural Development Team Bridleway user groups Landowners
	Potential routes identified	Ongoing	
Better linkages to extend the network	We will seek to work with interested parties to look at specific routes that can be improved for horse riders, including cross boundary routes. Improving bridleways connectivity will be of benefit to walkers, cyclists and those with mobility issues too.	January 2008 - ongoing	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council Horse riders Cyclists
Lost Ways project Research into mostly historical routes which are either missing or have the wrong status on the definitive map, and which will be extinguished by 2026 if action is not taken now to add them to the map.	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council has employed a definitive map review officer who will research as many of the paths as is possible, and will work with the national Lost Ways Project Team to research West Yorkshire.	Before 1 January 2026	Definitive map review officer Trained volunteers National Lost Ways research team from Natural England WY Pennine Local Access Forum
Accessibility through the Calderdale website	The Rights of Way Team will continue to put information on the Calderdale website so that the public can make best use of the existing network of rights of way, permissive paths, common land, access land	January 2008 - ongoing	Rights of Way Team Web team

ISSUE 4 - Other barriers to access

Barriers to access can include lack of interest, lack of knowledge, poor health and mobility, lack of facilities for particular classes of user, insufficient information about access and lack of skills such as mapreading. A further barrier can be poor communication between the Council and user groups (including potential user groups).

6.4.1 Actions to remove other barriers to access

General

- An assessment of current access needs and provision is required before improvements can be considered.

People with disabilities

- The Council will continue to carry out improvements to existing path furniture after further consultation with user groups, to make additional and appropriate provision for those with mobility and visual impairments.
- After consultation, the Council will try to develop a variety of sites across Calderdale suitable for people with a range of disabilities. Research needs to be done in Calderdale on the needs and aspirations of these groups. Information relevant to those with disabilities will be made available in a number of formats.
- Written formats in large print should be provided, along with downloads and podcasts, with information available on the website for specific user groups.

Cultural barriers

- Research on the cultural needs and aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic groups and other non-user groups and individuals will be carried out through the Rights of Way Team. Information in other languages will be provided if necessary as part of a structured programme of events to introduce BME groups to the countryside.
- It is hoped that the Rights of Way Team and the Countryside Team can work together to improve the information available on the website, to include up to date visitor and user information; rights of way mapping; allow public reporting of faults and obstructions; have links to other local and national organisations.
- Improvements to work practices will focus on changes that will enable Council staff to give more accurate and up to date information and feedback to callers.

Other barriers to access

- **Specific Actions in the next 12 months**

Action	How	When	Who
Action to increase path use by non-user groups. Appropriate action can then be planned and delivered.	Identify non-user groups representatives and do some research into the non-users of the public rights of way and how they can be encouraged to use both rural and urban paths.	January 2008 - ongoing	Rights of Way Improvement Officer Representatives from non-user groups: with visual impairments with auditory impairments less physically mobile young people minority ethnic groups asylum seekers
	Set up meetings with non users and define and address their issues	Ongoing	
	Look at how to overcome problems and support non-users to become public rights of way users	Ongoing	
Accessibility through the Calderdale website	The Rights of Way Team will continue to put information on the Calderdale website so that the public can make best use of the existing network of public rights of way, permissive paths, common land, access land	January 2008 - ongoing	Rights of Way Team Web Team
In Calderdale travel to school issues are being addressed by school travel plans and the development of safe routes to school, which are supported by the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.	Identify opportunities to improve routes to school	Ongoing	Road Safety Team and Rights of Way Team Transportation Team

6.5 ISSUE 5 - Protecting the Network for the Future

The ROWIP must take into account the public's likely future needs for access, at least for the next ten years. The Council will therefore need to establish policies to ensure that changes to the ROW network take into account future needs and developments.

6.5.1 Actions – Improvements – protecting the network for the future

General

- Although the definitive map should show all the public rights of way, some were missed off, or recorded incorrectly when the map was first drawn up in the 1950's.
- These incorrect and /or missed routes will be abolished through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 if they have not been added to the map by 1st January 2026. any claims relating to paths pre 1949 ie before the Definitive Map / National Parks legislation.
- All claims (including Lost Ways) are being processed with this deadline in mind! Calderdale Council has appointed a definitive map review officer to deal with claims generated by this deadline.
- Calderdale Council will continue to actively encourage claims from members of the public, these applications being prioritised according to score (see 6.3.1). Claims based purely on historical evidence are being dealt with on an area by area basis.
- Calderdale Council will endeavour to bring existing records of permissive paths, access land, registered commons and village greens together to improve access. The Council will also update its permissive path records to give greater clarity to landowners wishing to create such paths.
- For the Council to ensure best value, an assessment of current needs and provision will be carried out before improvements can be considered to the following:
 - Footpath and cycle routes for local utility journeys to shops, railway station, doctors' surgeries etc, in rural areas in particular;
 - Additional opportunities for off-road cycling, harness horse driving and horse riding as well as walking;
 - Links to avoid roads;
 - Safe and convenient crossings on roads, rivers, canals, railways
- Legislation exists to allow the Council to take legal action against those who obstruct public rights of way. To ensure that paths remain available for future use, in future enforcement action will be taken to remove obstructions and charges will be recovered against those responsible.
- The Council will continue to carry out improvements to existing path furniture and look to making additional and appropriate provision for those with mobility and visual impairments. The Council will continue to maintain and improve its signposting and waymarking in line with the aims of BVPI 178.

Policy and planning

- New sustainable policies will be drafted to deal with particular issues such as enforcement, planning applications for wind turbines near public rights of way, the use of mountain bikes on rights of way, the problem of illegal motor cycling and other crime on or relating to rights of way. New policies will be drafted in consultation with user groups to give mountain bikers and other users up to date information about their rights and responsibilities regarding the network in Calderdale.
- The Council will ensure that all public rights of way continue to be effectively protected where necessary from development, while creating new opportunities offered by development and regeneration schemes
- The Council will endeavour to work closely with developers, to ensure the rights of way network is protected and enhanced by new development.

Protecting the network for the future

- Specific Actions in the next 12 months

Action	How	When	Who
This Rights of Way Improvement Plan needs to consider how the Council can improve the way it works in terms of responsiveness and transparency.	Through internal review and team meetings to discuss how we can carry out our duties while being responsive to issues raised by the public.	Ongoing	Rights of Way Team
	Through the development of the Countryside Access Liaison Group (see below)		
Permissive path agreements	In an attempt to standardise, update and clarify permissive path agreements, Calderdale Council will review all such agreements, and get legal advice about how best to formulate a more satisfactory agreement for future use.	Ongoing	Calderdale Council
Lost Ways project Research into mostly historical routes which are either missing or have the wrong status on the definitive map, and which will be extinguished by 2026 if action is not taken now to add them to the map.	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council has employed a definitive map review officer who will research as many of the paths as is possible, and will work with the national Lost Ways Project Team to research Calderdale.	Before 1 January 2026	Definitive map review officer Trained volunteers National Lost Ways research team from Natural England

<p>Countryside Access Liaison Group Create a dedicated group of users of public rights of way for Calderdale, to improve communication and responsiveness between the Rights of Way Team and the public.</p>	<p>Send invitation and draft agenda to potential new members, and put note on Calderdale website.</p>	<p>Plan quarterly meetings for the first year, with the first one planned for January 2008.</p>	<p>Rights of Way Improvement Officer</p>
<p>Future annual Action Plans will be drafted each October.</p>	<p>After consultation with the newly set up Countryside Access Liaison Group.</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>Calderdale Council and Countryside Access Liaison Group.</p>

6.6 ISSUE 6 - Funding

6.6.1 Actions to improve the funding of public rights of way work

General

- The Council has a statutory duty to maintain public rights of way but no new funding has been given to local authorities to implement Rights of Way Improvement Plans. Any increase in the length of the network will have cost implications but it is impossible to know the scale of these at this stage.
- Landowners have responsibility for maintenance for gates and stiles on their land. The Council has the power to finance the upgrading of furniture on promoted routes, and look at innovative ways of creating better access. It is hoped to bring in additional funding to enable such work to progress.

External fundraising

- Some funding will be sought from external sources to tackle future work programmes which will be carried out in partnership with local organisations and neighbouring authorities, in a sustainable manner.
- Funding for future improvements is anticipated to come from a variety of sources, some of which will require the creation of external partnerships to be eligible for funding. Fundraising will be done as part of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan process, and the Plan itself will act as a bidding document.
- It is hoped that the Rights of Way Team and the Countryside Team can work together to access funding to improve electronic access to rights of way information and other outdoor activities and facilities. Money would be targeted at providing up to date visitor and user information; rights of way mapping; public reporting of faults and obstructions; links to other local and national organisations.

Funding

- Specific Actions in the next 12 months

Action	How	When	Who
Fundraising to increase the number of improvements that can be undertaken	The West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan is a potential source of funding for delivery of Calderdale's Rights of Way Improvement Plan through funding of an Asset Management Plan.	Applications will be prioritised according to availability of funding streams (including match funding) and demonstrated need on the ground.	Rights of Way Improvement Officer
	Natural England has access to the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development which may provide core funding for improvements		
	Yorkshire Tourism may have funding available for bridleway developments		
Continual ongoing research into potential sources of funding to improve or create routes available to new user categories eg those with disabilities.	Networking with other local authorities and Government Agencies such as Natural England to keep abreast of new funding regimes	Ongoing/continuous	Rights of Way Improvement Officer and Calderdale Countryside Team
Supporting local community bids to enable community and user groups to apply for funding for access work through sources not available to Local Authorities.	Networking with groups through the Countryside Access Liaison Group and other such organisations, will lead to applications for funding from Lottery distributors and local business partnerships.	January 2008 - ongoing	Calderdale Council and representatives of community groups

7 Reading and References

Selection of Documents, Strategies and Plans taken into account during the preparation of the Calderdale Rights of Way Improvement Plan

National

The areas where you can now walk in Calderdale and in the rest of England, with other information, can be found on the website Countryside Access This also shows any temporary or long-term restrictions which may be in force.

www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk/things_to_do/open_access

(please note that the “gaps” in the above address contain underscores ie things_to_do/open_access)

Countryside And Rights of Way Act 2000 and Regulations and Guidance
www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/cl/rowip/rowip.pdf

Social Exclusion Unit
Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion.
<http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/seu/page3d04.html>

Making the Best of Byways
www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/cl/mpv/pdf/bestofbyways.pdf

England Forestry Strategy
www.forestry.gov.uk/efs

English Nature Upland Management Handbook.
www.english-nature.org.uk/pubs/handbooks/upland.asp?id=1

Managing Public Access, “ A Guide for Farmers and Landowners”
www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications

DfT Walking and Cycling – an Action Plan
www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/walking/actionplan

Disability Discrimination Act.
www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/RightsAndObligations

Comprehensive Performance Assessment
www.audit-commission.gov.uk/cpa

Fieldfare Trust
www.fieldfare.org.uk/

Walking the Way to Health Initiative
www.whi.org.uk

British Horse Society
“Access and Rights of Way “
www.bhs.org.uk and <http://www.ride-uk.org.uk>

Ramblers Assn. Report, "The Economic and Social Value Of Walking in England"
www.ramblers.org.uk/campaigns/EconVal.pdf

Institute of Civil Engineers + Countryside Agency,
"Rural Routes and Networks"
Pub. Thomas Telford Ltd
ISBN: **9780727732033**

Regional

West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan and Annual Progress Report.
www.wyltp.com

Yorkshire Tourist Board Role and Corporate Objectives
www.yorkshiretouristboard.net/about/downloaddocs/corporateplan2006.pdf

Calderdale

Calderdale Council Corporate Plan
www.calderdale.gov.uk/council/performance/corporate

Calderdale MBC Replacement Calderdale UDP
www.calderdale.gov.uk/environment/planning/developmentplan/udp

Calderdale Tourism Policy
www.calderdale.gov.uk

The Calderdale Strategic Partnership, The Futures Plan
www.calderdaleforward.org.uk

Fit for The Future, A Strategy for Sport In Calderdale
Leisure in Action
Spring Hall Mansion
Huddersfield Road
HX3 0AQ

Calderdale and Kirklees Primary Care Trust Report
"Locality based Health Needs Assessment."
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust

2001 Census report and key statistics
www.calderdale.gov.uk/statistics