

# RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2

## POLICIES AND ACTIONS

PUBLISHED: 2012



TO IMPROVE PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND ACCESS FOR ALL

**Cover photograph:** *The official opening of a new public bridleway, Cookworthy Forest, West Devon*

# RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2

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# RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2

## INTRODUCTION

Devon County Council published its first Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP 1) in 2005. This was in accordance with Sections 60 to 62 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW).

The County Council is required, not more than 10 years after first publishing the RoWIP, to:

- a. make a new assessment of:
  - i. the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public;*
  - ii. the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and enjoyment of the authority's area;*
  - iii. the accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems; and*
  - iv. such other matters relating to local rights of way as the Secretary of State may direct.**
- b. review the plan and decide whether to amend it.*

*The authority shall, if it decides to amend the RoWIP, publish it as amended. If it decides to make no amendments to it, it is required to publish a report of its decision and reasons for it.*

In light of experience gained since publication of RoWIP 1, some policies have been amended. The amendments were included in the 2011 consultation for the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3).

**This document constitutes RoWIP 2** and should be read in conjunction with RoWIP 1. All objectives remain the same. All current policies are included in this document.

The County Council's assessment of local rights of way can be found in RoWIP 1 and in more detail in the 2004 Draft RoWIP (download from [www.devon.gov.uk/rowip](http://www.devon.gov.uk/rowip)). There is no need to carry out further assessment at this stage.

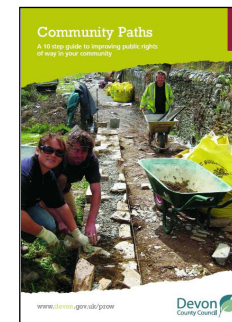
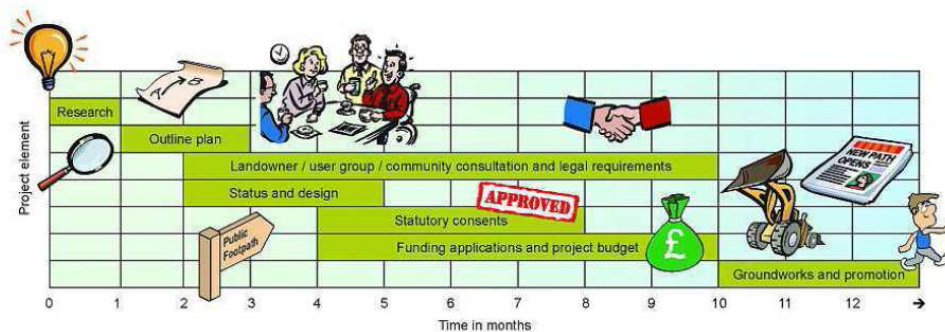
# RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2

## IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

"Both capital and revenue funding will be required to put improvements into practice and to ensure long-term maintenance. Highway authorities are encouraged to be innovative in sourcing funds to support improvements. Highway authorities should consider seeking funds from lottery bodies, local transport plans, European schemes, agri-environment schemes and some charitable trusts. To be successful the right funding partnerships will normally need to demonstrate that they are making improvements to the public rights of way network for reasons which link into broader policy objectives, such as health, reducing dependence on motor cars, tourism, safe routes to schools/work and accessibility for those with limited or restricted mobility or for those who are socially excluded..."

DEFRA Guidance to Local Authorities on RoWIPs: Section 2.4.7

The County Council pro-actively implements improvements within available resources (constrained only by budgets and staff time). It also supports and guides local communities through its *Community Paths: A 10 step guide to improving public rights of way in your community* (download from [www.devon.gov.uk/rowip](http://www.devon.gov.uk/rowip)) The guide is aimed at groups, individuals and landowners who are considering ideas for improving access, whether an improvement to an existing right of way, or a new path such as a link between two villages.



The RoWIP is delivered through **Public Rights of Way and Country Parks Service Action Plans**. These include a review of achievements in the previous year and targets for individual schemes for the year ahead (download from [www.devon.gov.uk/rowip](http://www.devon.gov.uk/rowip)).



# RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2

## OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

This section provides a statement of objectives, policies and actions to improve public rights of way and access for all. These have been grouped into three main areas shown below:

### 1. MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

- A** Legal: Definitive Map and Statement
- B** Legal: Public Path Orders
- C** Maintenance
- D** Signing and waymarking
- E** Information and communication
- F** Road safety
- G** Planning
- H** Access Land
- I** Permissive access

### 2. PROVISION FOR USERS

- A** Users with limited mobility
- B** Walkers
- C** Horse-riders and carriage drivers
- D** Cyclists
- E** Motorised users
- F** Dog walkers

### 3. THE WIDER CONTEXT

- A** Environment
- B** Tourism and economic development
- C** Health
- D** Agriculture
- E** Partnerships

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# 1 MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

## A Legal: Definitive Map and Statement

### OBJECTIVE

To ensure that the Definitive Map and Statement provide an accurate record of public rights of way

### DEFINITIVE MAP REVIEW

**DM1A** Completion of the parish-by-parish Definitive Map Review will be sought before 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

**DM1B/2** Schedule 14 applications and other such claims will be dealt with as part of the parish-by-parish Definitive Map Review. However, exceptions may be made for particularly contentious claims which are supported by a large amount of user evidence and where there is no nearby alternative route available, or where a route is likely to be affected by development, or where a route will result in significant road safety benefits. Negotiation with the landowner(s) to establish whether a quicker solution is available, for example, by express dedication, will be the first option.

**DM1C/2** New claims which arise in a parish where the review has been completed will be deferred until the whole of that particular District has been reviewed. However, exceptions may be made in line with the criteria in policy DM1B/2 above.

**DM1D** Any necessary legal event modification orders will be made and the several Definitive Maps and Statements will be consolidated to form a single Definitive Map and Statement for the whole county on completion of the parish-by-parish Definitive Map Review.

## GENERAL

**DM2A** Where routes have been added to the Definitive Map by Modification Order on purely historical evidential grounds and require significant works for them to be re-opened, or would have an unacceptable environmental impact, consideration will be given to the use of Public Path Orders to divert the routes onto a more appropriate alignment.

**DM2B/2** On-line information on the progress of the Definitive Map Review, Schedule 14 applications and deposits under Section 31(6) will be kept up to date.

## ORDER PROCESSING

**DM3A** Priority in the Definitive Map Review will be given to offers to create routes through landowner Creation Agreements.

**DM3B** Orders will normally be made within 6 months of the relevant Committee decision.

**DM3C** Opposed Orders will normally be sent to the Secretary of State within 6 months of the end of the objection period.

**DM3D** Witnesses will be advised to make statutory declarations where claims may not be dealt with for some years.

# 1 MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

## B Legal: Public Path Orders

### OBJECTIVE

To work within the existing legislative framework to improve the network of public rights of way for all

### DIVERSION ORDERS

<b>LP1A/2</b>	<p>The making of diversion orders which are in the interests of the users and/or landowners will be supported.</p> <p>Examples of diversions in the interest of the public are those which:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. achieve a direct improvement in road safety for users;</li><li>ii. achieve a direct improvement in provision of a circular route; or</li><li>iii. provide access to a National Trail, Recreational Route, attraction or viewpoint.</li></ol> <p>Examples of diversions in the interest of landowners are those which:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. improve privacy to residential buildings;</li><li>ii. remove paths from working farmyards and farm buildings for safety reasons; or</li><li>iii. result in improved farming practice.</li></ol>
<b>LP1C</b>	<p>The sharing or defraying of costs will be considered where a diversion will be of benefit to the public.</p>
<b>LP1D</b>	<p>Concurrent creation and extinguishment orders will be used where diversion orders are not legally possible.</p>

## CREATION AGREEMENTS AND ORDERS

**LP2A** Enhancements to the network will generally be supported through the use of creation agreements and orders where there is a public need or benefit, and in particular in relation to:

- i. road safety;
- ii. providing a direct improvement in provision of a circular route, or access to a National Trail, Recreational Route, attraction or viewpoint;
- iii. development of the strategic Recreational Route Network;
- iv. providing links or improved access to Access Land; or
- v. increasing the range of users on a route.

**LP2B/2** Priority will be given to the replacement of routes which are affected by natural erosion, using powers to allow routes to continue with the new lie of the land.

**LP2C** Anomalies, culs-de-sac routes and routes which change status along their length, including those crossing the county boundary, will be investigated and resolution sought as part of the parish-by-parish Definitive Map Review.

**LP2D** Neighbouring authorities will be encouraged and supported in the creation of appropriate links where it falls to them to resolve a route anomaly.

## EXTINGUISHMENT

**LP3** Extinguishment of a public right of way will be considered where the requisite legal tests are met. However, this will not be a high priority, and it may be dependent upon:

- i. the applicant meeting monitoring costs to show that the route is not needed for public use; and
- ii. the route being physically available to the public, signposted and/or waymarked throughout the monitoring period.

# 1 MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

## C Maintenance

### OBJECTIVE

To ensure that the public rights of way network is maintained at an appropriate level

### MAINTENANCE

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>M1A/2</b> | Maintenance will be carried out to established standards with due regard to statutory responsibilities, relevant strategies and objectives, including responsibilities to users, the environment and wildlife. Special arrangements will be made where necessary to ensure the high standard of the Recreational Route Network. |
| <b>M1B</b>   | Management of the rights of way network will be achieved through a pro-active approach based on the classification of routes, regular inspections and implementation of work programmes.  |
| <b>M1C</b>   | Maintenance standards will be reviewed periodically, including benchmarking with relevant authorities, to take account of best working practice and innovations in technology.  |
| <b>M1D</b>   | Enforcement procedures will be used to assert and protect the rights of the public where goodwill and cooperation have failed.  |
| <b>M1E/2</b> | The least restrictive option (gap, then gate, then kissing gate, then stile) will be encouraged, to improve ease of access, in consultation with the landowner(s) and in accordance with the relevant British Standard for gaps, gates and stiles.  |
| <b>M1F</b>   | The feasibility of improving and maintaining the uUCRs will be investigated and supported, within the available resources, where they contribute to other strategic objectives and plans.   |

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# 1 MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

## D Signing and Waymarking

### OBJECTIVE

To ensure that all public rights of way are signed and waymarked appropriately

### SIGNING

**SW1A** Public rights of way will be signed where they leave the metalled road, except in those urban areas where such signing is deemed unnecessary.

**SW1B** Green and white polycarbonate pointers will be used on all signposts but in exceptional circumstances the use of wooden signs will be considered (for example, in National Parks).

**SW1C** The feasibility of, and demand for, adding route-specific information (for example, distance and destination) at selected sites using separate plates attached to the post will be assessed.

**SW1D** Additional funding sources will be investigated to improve signpost information, particularly in tourist areas (for example, nationally and regionally promoted routes and in World Heritage Sites).

**SW1E** Improvements to signing of the uUCRs will be sought within the available resources under the following priority:

- i. those providing direct access to and from existing rights of way;
- ii. those forming circular links within existing rights of way or where they serve as the primary unsurfaced route in the area; and
- iii. all other uUCRs.



## WAYMARKING

**SW2A** Waymarking will continue to be improved to help users find their way and to avoid inadvertent trespass onto private land.

**SW2B** Parish Paths Partnership groups will be encouraged to liaise with landowners to help identify appropriate locations for waymarks.

## MISLEADING SIGNS

**SW3A** Misleading signs and unauthorised waymarks on and adjacent to public rights of way will be removed and appropriate enforcement action will be taken.

## BRANDING AND PROMOTING ROUTES

**SW4A** AONBs may add their logo to signposts to assist with branding.

**SW4B/2** The Recreational Route Network in Devon will be managed according to the principles set out in *A Strategy for the Management and Promotion of the Recreational Route Network in Devon*.

# 1 MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

## E Information and Communication

### OBJECTIVE

To improve the quality of information and communication

### QUALITY

<b>IC1</b>	Continuous improvements to the quality and availability of information (including on-line information) and communication will be sought, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. rights and responsibilities of landowners and users;</li><li>ii. legal matters;</li><li>iii. countryside access and tourism;</li><li>iv. countryside access and public transport;</li><li>v. local facilities, including refreshments, car-parks and toilets;</li><li>vi. other means of access including Access Land, cycle tracks, uUCRs and permissive access;</li><li>vii. strategic routes;</li><li>viii. routes identified as being particularly suitable for limited mobility users, to include information on the presence or absence of gates or stiles, the nature of the terrain and the surface type; and</li><li>ix. temporary closures or restrictions.</li></ul>
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### ON-LINE INFORMATION

<b>IC2A/2</b>	The development of an on-line map allowing people to select information relevant to their planned activity will be investigated.
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<b>IC2B</b>	Parish Paths Partnership groups will continue to be supported in their production of local route leaflets and these will continue to be made available on-line.
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<b>IC2C</b>	The feasibility of providing down-loadable access guides on-line will be investigated.
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## PRINTED INFORMATION

**IC3A/2** Promotion of National Trails and Recreational Routes will be undertaken according to the principles set out in *A Strategy for the Management and Promotion of the Recreational Route Network in Devon*.

**IC3B** The development and provision of parish maps and notice boards in consultation with parish councils will be supported, and sponsorship will be sought to support production costs.

## MONITORING AND RESEARCH

**IC4A/2** Research will continue into the use of public rights of way and permissive routes to understand any physical and psychological barriers that may hinder use in order to plan future improvements. Other access providers will be encouraged to monitor and share information that may assist this research.

**IC4B** Research will be undertaken to determine areas which are particularly suitable for specific activities (for example, horse-riding or mountain-biking). Targeted information will be considered for appropriate areas.

**IC4C** An ongoing process of public consultation will be undertaken to identify common issues and current trends.

# 1 MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

## F Road Safety

### OBJECTIVE

To improve safety for non-vehicular users on and crossing roads

### ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION

**RS1A/2** Educational information which encourages responsible, safe and courteous road use by all users will be developed, working closely with Safer Travel colleagues.

**RS1B** The development of a multi-user road safety publicity campaign using appropriate media and covering utility and recreational use will be investigated.

**RS1C** The provision of information (such as vehicular flow data, permissive access and highway verge usability) will be investigated to enable users to make an informed decision about safe use of the road network.

### PHYSICAL ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

**RS2A** Work will continue with the Highways Agency to identify and implement improvements for vulnerable road users on and crossing the trunk roads, for example, by raising the height of parapets on over-bridges that are used by horse-riders.

**RS2B** A safety analysis of the rights of way that join A roads will be undertaken in conjunction with the Route Management Strategies and will be extended to B roads in the future.

## DEVELOPMENT OF NEW OFF-ROAD LINKS

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>RS3A</b> | The development of off-road links that provide a safer environment for all users will be pursued.  |
| <b>RS3B</b> | Priority will be given to the development of off-road links for travel to shops, schools and workplaces in the key congestion areas of Barnstaple, Exeter, Kingskerswell, Newton Abbot and Totnes. |
| <b>RS3C</b> | The development of off-road links between communities, in particular, the market and coastal towns, will be encouraged.  |

# 1 MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

## G Planning

### OBJECTIVE

To ensure that the planning process pays due regard to existing public rights of way and, where possible, leads to improvements

### LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES (LPAs) AND DEVELOPMENT

- PL1A/2** The County Council will continue to protect public rights of way in the planning process and will seek improvements in green infrastructure through the County Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy and other relevant plans and strategies.
- PL1B** A holding objection will be made against any planning application which fails to take account of an existing public right of way until the matter is resolved.
- PL1C** Working closely with LPAs, opportunities will be sought for improvements to the rights of way network through planning obligations where new developments are occurring.
- PL1D** LPAs will be encouraged to take account of the RoWIP in the development of their local planning policies, including the Local Development Framework and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF LANDOWNERS AND DEVELOPERS

- PL2A** Advice will continue to be provided to landowners and developers in relation to developments affecting public rights of way.
- PL2B** When a public right of way is obstructed by development, the recovery of all costs associated with making the route available to the public will be sought where appropriate.

## **MINERAL DEVELOPMENT**

**PL3A** | Proposals for mineral development which affect rights of way will not be permitted unless provision can be made for an appropriate alternative route.

**PL3B** | In considering applications for mineral development the County Council will encourage the provision of new rights of way and access to the countryside.



# 1 MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

## H Access Land

### OBJECTIVE

To develop opportunities for Access Land and to integrate this with the rights of way network

### ACCESS TO LAND

#### AL2A

Landowners will be encouraged to consider the dedication of horse-riding and cycling rights on Access Land, or along a particular route across such land.

#### AL2B

Landowners will be encouraged to dedicate additional Access Land (under Section 16 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).

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# 1 MANAGEMENT OF THE ACCESS NETWORK

## I Permissive Access

### OBJECTIVE

To improve opportunities through permissive access agreements

### ENCOURAGE PERMISSIVE ACCESS

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>PA1A</b> | The County Council will encourage permissive access, especially where such access is unlikely to be achieved through a legal process.  |
| <b>PA1B</b> | Work will continue with Defra in the development of its targeted statements relating to public access provision through agri-environment schemes (e.g. access provided under Higher Level Stewardship agreements). |
| <b>PA1C</b> | Closer working arrangements will be sought with major landowners, for example, the Forestry Commission, in the development of public access provision.   |
| <b>PA1D</b> | The inclusion of walkers, riders and cyclists will be encouraged on all appropriate permissive access.   |
| <b>PA1E</b> | Equality issues in permissive access provision will be taken into account, and the least restrictive option (gap, then gate, then kissing gate, then stile) will be encouraged.                                    |

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# 2 PROVISION FOR USERS

## A Users with Limited Mobility

### OBJECTIVE

To improve rights of way and access for blind or partially sighted people and others with mobility problems

### IMPROVED UNDERSTANDING

**LM1A** Links will continue to be developed with people that are blind, partially sighted or have mobility problems, to understand clearly any specific needs and how best to meet them.

**LM1B/2** Findings from partner organisations will be monitored to inform improvements in the Devon-wide network, for example, the improvements in accessibility trialled by the East Devon AONB Team, Countryside Mobility South West project and the South West Coast Path Team.

### ENCOURAGE THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE OPTION

**LM2A/2** The least restrictive option will be encouraged (gap, then gate, then kissing gate, then stile) in accordance with policy M1E/2. Priority will be given to minimising restrictive structures on routes within and between towns and villages linking destinations such as shops, places of worship, schools and recreational areas.

**LM2C** Inappropriate new structures that are put in place without authorisation will be removed.

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# 2 PROVISION FOR USERS

## B Walkers

### OBJECTIVE

To improve opportunities for walkers

### UTILITY USE

#### W1

The development of walking in urban areas will continue to be supported:

- i. for utility use, to encourage people to switch from car use to sustainable transport;
- ii. for health benefits; and
- iii. for the economic benefits accruing from tourism

by improving off-road links between destinations such as shops, schools and work places. This can be achieved through creation agreements and orders.

### RECREATIONAL USE

#### W2A

Priority will be given to the development of:

- i. short routes and circular links of between 3km and 8km;
- ii. routes linking towns, villages and attractions and providing a true off-road network for utility and leisure; and
- iii. appropriate links to and from the Recreational Route Network.

#### W2B

Improvements will continue to be sought in the line of the National Trail and the Recreational Route Network, using diversion orders and creation agreements and orders.

#### W2C

The least restrictive option will be encouraged in accordance with policy M1E/2.



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# 2 PROVISION FOR USERS

## C Horse-riders and carriage-drivers

### OBJECTIVE

To improve opportunities for horse-riders and carriage-drivers

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRIDLEWAY AND RESTRICTED BYWAY NETWORK

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>HC1A</b>   | The County Council will seek to develop a strategic bridleway network and appropriate facilities.   |
| <b>HC1B</b>   | The County Council will seek to develop short routes and circuits for horse-riders of between 4km and 11km.   |
| <b>HC1C</b>   | Opportunities to develop off-road links for horse-riders to reach areas with better riding facilities, for example, on Dartmoor and Exmoor, will be investigated. |
| <b>HC1D</b>   | Upgrading of existing routes to public bridleway or restricted byway status will be supported where this would meet the objectives of the RoWIP.                  |
| <b>HC1E/2</b> | Opportunities will be sought to develop former canals and railway lines for equestrian use and multi-use where appropriate.                                       |

## DEVELOPMENT OF HORSE TOURISM

**HC2A** Recreational use for health benefits will continue to be supported, and opportunities sought to build upon the existing economic benefits accruing from horse tourism.

**HC2B** The promotion of horse-riding to tourists will continue to be explored, with due regard to the environment, as part of increasing Devon's potential as an outdoor activity destination, particularly the Discover Devon Naturally initiative.

## MULTI-USE

**HC3** Multi-use will be encouraged in accordance with policy and action CY3A, B and C/2.

# 2 PROVISION FOR USERS

## D Cyclists

### OBJECTIVE

To improve opportunities for cyclists

### UTILITY CYCLING

#### CY1

The development of cycling in urban areas will continue to be supported:

- i. for utility use, to encourage people to switch from car use to sustainable transport;
- ii. for health benefits; and
- iii. for the economic benefits accruing from tourism

by improving off-road links between destinations such as shops, schools and work places. This can be achieved through creation agreements and orders.

### OFF-ROAD CYCLE NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

#### CY2A/2

Opportunities will be sought to develop former railway lines for cycle use and multi-use where appropriate.

#### CY2B

Opportunities will be sought to develop circular cycle routes, in addition to the long-distance National Cycle Network already in development.

#### CY2C

Public transport links will continue to be developed to help deliver circular routes, for example, using bike-buses.

## MULTI-USE

- CY3A** Provision for multi-use will be preferred where new routes are developed and the use of restrictive covenants will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.
- CY3B** A review of existing cycle routes will be undertaken to see if multi-use is appropriate.
- CY3C/2** Appropriate surfacing and design of multi-use routes will be undertaken following local consultation with the public and user-groups and taking into account environmental considerations, user needs, costs (including future maintenance) and guidance from the relevant sources, such as the good practice guide *Surface Requirements for Shared Use Routes* published by the former Countryside Agency (now Natural England).

## MAXIMISING THE RIGHTS OF WAY RESOURCE

- CY4** The upgrading of existing public footpaths to public bridleway status will be considered where they are to be used as part of the cycle network. Within an urban setting, Cycle Track Orders will be preferred.

## MOUNTAIN-BIKING

- CY5A** Partnerships with organisations which have a particular interest in mountain-biking will continue to be developed, for example, the existing work with the Forestry Commission in their facility development (which includes mountain-biking).
- CY5B** Opportunities will be sought to develop off-road links for mountain-bikers to reach specialist facilities without the need to drive.
- CY5C** The promotion of mountain-biking to tourists will continue to be explored, with due regard to the environment, as part of increasing Devon's potential as an outdoor activity destination, particularly the Discover Devon Naturally initiative.

# 2 PROVISION FOR USERS

## E Motorised users

### OBJECTIVE

To improve opportunities for vehicular users

### LEGAL CLARITY

**MU1** Work will continue to ensure that the correct legal status of vehicular routes is recorded.

### MANAGEMENT

**MU2A** Work will continue with vehicular user groups to educate users, both motorised and non-motorised, about the rights and responsibilities of each to help reduce any actual or perceived conflict.

**MU2B** Work will be undertaken with user groups, landowners and the Police (through the appropriate Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) to combat illegal use, such as vehicular use of public footpaths or bridleways without a private right or the permission of the landowner.

**MU2C** Where use is causing physical or environmental damage to a route, the latest Government guidance will be followed with regard to the implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders.

**MU2D** The possibility of improved maintenance and signage of the uUCRs within the available resources will be investigated in accordance with policies M1F and SW1E.

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# 2 PROVISION FOR USERS

## F Dog walkers

### OBJECTIVE

To balance the need to exercise dogs with the needs of landowners and other users

### CONTROL OF DOGS

**D1A/2** The continued provision of appropriate information about walking dogs in the countryside will be encouraged, particularly when in the vicinity of livestock and where there is potential disturbance to wildlife, for example, ground nesting birds.

**D1C** The use of powers under the Road Traffic Act 1988 will be supported in exceptional circumstances to require dogs to be kept on leads, in consultation with the appropriate Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

**D1D** Appropriate enforcement action will be taken where a dog intimidates a person or injures them or their animal(s).

### DOG GATES

**D2** In order to make access with dogs easier, and to prevent damage and potential injury to dogs and their owners, the provision by landowners of dog gates in existing stiles will be supported where appropriate.



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# 3 THE WIDER CONTEXT

## A Environment

### OBJECTIVE

To ensure that the management of public rights of way and access respects Devon's environment

### ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE MANAGEMENT

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>E1A/2</b> | The objectives of the County Council's Role and Action Programmes for Biodiversity, Coast, Historic Environment and Landscape, the Strategy for the Management and Promotion of the Recreational Route Network in Devon, the Cycling Strategy, the Green Infrastructure Strategy and other relevant County Council strategies and policies will be considered when managing public rights of way and access. |
| <b>E1B</b>   | Opportunities will be sought to improve the environment and appreciation of it through works and promotional information, for example, seeking to improve the landscape corridor along National Trails and Recreation Routes.  |
| <b>E1C</b>   | The diversion or creation of public rights of way which afford links to appropriate environmental, geological or historical sites will be supported, in consultation with relevant bodies and with due regard to the relevant legislation.   |
| <b>E1D</b>   | The diversion of public rights of way will be considered where there is evidence that they adversely affect or may adversely affect very sensitive environmental, geological or historical sites, in consultation with relevant bodies and in the light of relevant legislation and protective policies.   |

## DESIGNATED LAND

**E2** The integrity, conservation objectives and sustainable use of all Designated Land (International, National and Local Designations including other non-statutory environmental designations) will be promoted in partnership with the relevant land managers in the light of relevant legislation and protective policies.

## PROTECTED SPECIES

**E3** Proposals which are likely to have an adverse effect on protected species will only be permitted in accordance with the relevant legislation, where there are no practical alternatives and if measures have been taken to:

- i. facilitate the survival of individual members of the species;
- ii. reduce disturbance to a minimum; and
- iii. provide adequate alternative habitats to sustain at least the current levels of population in a local context.

## CULTURE AND HERITAGE

**E4** Account will be taken of cultural and heritage features when managing the public rights of way network.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

**E5** An assessment will be made of the likely impacts of climate change on public rights of way in the short, medium and long term, in particular where they are adjacent to water courses and the coast.

# 3 THE WIDER CONTEXT

## B Tourism and Economic Development

### OBJECTIVE

To ensure that the management of public rights of way and access add to the economic benefits of Devon's tourism

### TOURISM INFORMATION

**TED1** Up-to-date information from the tourism industry and our partners will be sought and used to understand the needs and desires of Devon's tourists with respect to countryside access.

### TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

**TED2A** The objectives of the County Council's Role and Action Programme for Tourism will be considered when managing public rights of way and access.

**TED2B/2** Sustainable tourism such as walking, horse-riding and cycling will be promoted by working with the tourism providers and other partners.

**TED2C** Opportunities to enhance and promote access in areas of little or no current tourism will be encouraged, and existing opportunities to extend Devon's attractiveness to tourists will be developed. Schemes which have added benefit of providing local access for Devon's residents will be particularly supported.

**TED2D** Opportunities will be sought to enhance and develop the recreational route networks for walking, riding and cycling.

**TED2E** The development of access and car-free links to/from existing visitor attractions will be supported and developers of new attractions will be encouraged to consider such access from the outset of their business development.

**TED2F** Links to and from popular destinations and national and regional routes will be improved by working with public transport providers, including ferry operators.

## **VISITOR UNDERSTANDING**

**TED3A** The provision of information for visitors regarding their rights and responsibilities will be encouraged, making use of Tourist Information Centres and other suitable outlets.

**TED3B** The provision of information in alternative languages and formats (in addition to that which would be provided in response to an individual request) will be considered where supported by an identified tourist profile, working in partnership with South West Tourism.

**TED3C** Appropriate information and advice concerning public rights of way and access will be made available for local tourist providers.

**TED3D** Consideration will be given to the provision of information and interpretation, paying particular attention to the recreational walking, riding and cycling route networks. Business or visitor payback scheme sponsorship will be sought to assist with such work.

# 3 THE WIDER CONTEXT

## C Health

### OBJECTIVE

To ensure that public rights of way and access help to deliver health benefits

### ENCOURAGING EXERCISE

#### H1A/2

The County Council will seek to ensure that public rights of way and access contribute to the relevant Department of Health strategies and plans.

#### H1B

The use of routes in and around communities will be promoted and initiatives such as Walking the Way to Health will be supported to encourage people to walk, ride and cycle as part of their daily life.

#### H1C/2

Initiatives that lead to sustainable and healthy changes in travel choice from the car to walking and cycling will be encouraged and supported in partnership with Travelwise and the local Health Authority.

### SOCIAL INCLUSION

#### H2A

Initiatives will be supported that increase participation in physical activity for underrepresented groups, for example, the Forestry Commission's Haldon Forest Park initiative.

#### H2B/2

Best practice guidance arising from the former Countryside Agency's (now Natural England's) Diversity Review will be considered and opportunities will be investigated to implement the findings as appropriate to Devon.

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# 3 THE WIDER CONTEXT

## D Agriculture

### OBJECTIVE

To encourage a positive attitude and understanding between both users and landowners

### IMPROVE INFORMATION ABOUT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### AG1

Liaison will continue with landowners and their representatives, such as the National Farmers Union and the Country Land and Business Association, to ensure best practice, the sharing of information and practical management advice.

### CONTINGENCY PLANNING

#### AG2/2

Bio-security contingency procedures will continue to be reviewed in liaison with all relevant organisations, ensuring that all partners are aware of their roles.

### COUNTY FARMS ESTATE

#### AG3A

Opportunities to improve access on County Farm Estate land will be identified and assessed.

#### AG3B

County Farm Estate initiatives will be used as a blue-print for taking forward access improvements with other large landowners (for example, district councils, the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency).

### CROSS COMPLIANCE

#### AG4

Appropriate use of the cross compliance measures in the county in relation to the Single Payment Scheme and Environmental Stewardship will be promoted by working with Defra and landowners.



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# 3 THE WIDER CONTEXT

## E Partnerships

### OBJECTIVE

To encourage a positive attitude and understanding between both users and landowners

### LOCAL ACCESS FORUMS

#### P1/2

The Local Access Forums (Devon Countryside Access Forum, Dartmoor Access Forum and Exmoor Local Access Forum), as statutory advisors to the highway authority, will continue to have a role in setting priorities for implementing plans and commenting on opportunities for strategic access to the countryside.

### INNOVATION AND BEST VALUE

#### P2A

Existing partnerships will continue to be reviewed and new partnerships built to ensure best value.

#### P2B

Further partnership working with key partners will be encouraged.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

#### P3A

The Parish Paths Partnership (P3) scheme will continue to be supported and new parishes will be encouraged to join.

#### P3B

Opportunities will be sought for individuals and organisations to become involved in access work at a local level (providing appropriate health and safety and insurance requirements are met).

## GREENER TRAVEL

**P4A** Investigation and promotion of opportunities to develop links between public rights of way and public transport, including the carriage of bicycles to allow wider access, will continue. The integration of information relating to this will be sought through initiatives such as DevonBus and Car Free Days Out (part of Discover Devon Naturally).

**P4B/2** Promotion of safe local options for green travel will be sought in partnership with TravelWise and the local Health Authority.

## FACILITIES

**P4** Opportunities will be sought to enable the use of existing private facilities by the public and encourage public/private partnerships, for example, the use of public house facilities in return for a small payment or purchase of goods, as already successfully developed in some places in Devon.

## EDUCATION

**P5** The educational value of public rights of way and access will be developed in liaison with education partners.

## POLICE LIAISON

**P6A** Links will continue to be developed with the Police, supporting them with advice and information relating to public rights of way and access.

**P6B** Data supplied in relation to reported crime and accident statistics will be used to help identify problem areas and solutions in liaison with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships on particular issues.

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# RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2

## POLICIES AND ACTIONS

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