

Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006-2016

A Rights of Way Improvement Plan under Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

This document has been produced using paper from sustainable forests.
March 2006

Acknowledgements

Warwickshire, Solihull & Coventry Local Access Forum
Countryside Access Liaison Group
WCC Countryside Access Team
for their input at meetings and workshop sessions

Page 27 : photograph reproduced by kind permission of Dr Colin Harris
Page 49 : extract from Tithe Map, Wishaw (ref: CR 328-58-2),
reproduced by kind permission of the Warwickshire County Record Office

Contents

| | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------|
| Foreword | 4 |
| 1 Glossary of terms | 5 |
| 2 Executive summary | 9 |
| 3 Resources | 13 |
| 4 Themes | 15 |
| A Accessibility | |
| E Education | |
| H Health, wellbeing and social benefits | |
| N Path networks and connections | |
| P Paths on the ground | |
| R Records, changes and mapping | |
| S Strategic developments and promotion | |
| T Tourism and leisure | |
| 5 Monitoring and progress | 67 |
| Annex 1 Policies | 69 |
| Annex 2 Appendices | 89 |

Foreword

Almost everyone will use public rights of way, or want to access their local countryside, at some point in their life. We are fortunate to have inherited a unique resource that has evolved over hundreds of years, and which enables us to do so. We have been gradually improving the path network over a number of years and it is now time to look beyond our statutory duties to harness the positive benefits that walking, cycling and riding can bring to our lives.



This is the first Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Warwickshire, and will sit alongside the Local Transport Plan to enable an integrated approach to improving your access to the countryside and encouraging more walking, cycling and riding throughout the County. The Plan sets out a vision for an easily accessible network that meets modern needs.

This is an unprecedented opportunity to look at the future of the rights of way and countryside access opportunities within Warwickshire, where rights are effectively promoted alongside responsibilities.

Martin Heatley,
Warwickshire County Councillor
Cabinet Portfolio Holder, Environment

Glossary of terms

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| | <p>Access Land, Open Access Land Land subject to rights of access on foot under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (commonly referred to as the 'Right to Roam').</p> |
| AONB | <p>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</p> |
| BVPI | <p>Best Value Performance Indicator Figure returned annually to central government to measure performance. BVPI 178 relates to rights of way.</p> |
| | <p>Bridleway, Public Bridleway Highway available to pedestrians, cyclists and horseriders.</p> |
| BHS | <p>British Horse Society</p> |
| BS5709 | <p>British Standard Covers gaps, gates and stiles.</p> |
| BOAT | <p>Byway, Byway Open to All Traffic Highway open to all users, including motor vehicles, but which is mainly used by pedestrians and horseriders.</p> |
| CLA | <p>Country Land and Business Association</p> |
| CAROWIP | <p>Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Warwickshire</p> |
| CALG | <p>Countryside Access Liaison Group See page 14 – Advisory bodies.</p> |
| CAT | <p>Countryside Access Team</p> |
| CoAg | <p>Countryside Agency Government agency with an overview of rights of way. Will soon combine with English Nature and the Rural Development Service to form a new body Natural England.</p> |
| CROW Act | <p>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</p> |
| | <p>County Highways The part of Warwickshire County Council which maintains the main highway network.</p> |
| CTC | <p>Cyclists' Touring Club</p> |
| | <p>de facto access Access which is available on the ground, even though it may not be official.</p> |
| DM&S | <p>Definitive Map and Statement Legal document comprising maps and written information which defines the status and existence of public rights of way. Also includes information about widths. It is conclusive for the information which it includes, but without prejudice to the existence of other rights (which may be recorded by means of a DMMO).</p> |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| DMMO | Definitive Map Modification Order Legal order which changes the Definitive Map and Statement. |
| Defra | Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Government department responsible for rights of way. |
| DfT | Department for Transport Government department responsible for highways other than rights of way. |
| DDA | Disability Discrimination Act (1995 or 2005) |
| DLW | Discovering Lost Ways Project Project set up by the Countryside Agency to research historic rights of way before the Definitive Map closes to historic claims in 2026. |
| DC | District or Borough council |
| | English Heritage Government agency responsible for the historic built environment and archaeology. |
| | English Nature Government body responsible for promoting nature conservation and protecting biodiversity. Will soon combine with the Countryside Agency and Rural Development Service to form a new body, Natural England. |
| | Environment Agency Government agency responsible for rivers and other environmental matters. |
| FACE | Farming and Countryside Education A charity run by teachers, and part of RASE. |
| | Fieldfare Trust A charity which works with people with disabilities and countryside managers to improve access to the countryside for everyone. |
| | Footpath, Public Footpath Highway available for pedestrians. |
| GIS | Geographic Information System Computerised mapping. |
| | Greenway Recreational route, usually open to the public but not a public right of way. Usually available to walkers and cyclists, and sometimes horseriders. Normally owned by a local authority. |
| HA | Highway Authority Local authority responsible for the upkeep of highways (other than trunk roads and motorways). In Warwickshire it is the County Council. |
| | Highways Agency Government agency responsible for trunk roads and motorways. |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| | <p>Landfill tax A tax on landfill operators, part of which helps to fund projects in the local area.</p> |
| LAF | <p>Local Access Forum See page 14 – Advisory bodies.</p> |
| LTP | <p>Local Transport Plan Five year strategic plan covering highways and transport within Warwickshire.</p> |
| | <p>Market Towns There are eleven Market Towns in Warwickshire (Alcester, Atherstone, Bidford on Avon, Coleshill, Henley in Arden, Kineton, Polesworth, Shipston on Stour, Southam, Studley and Wellesbourne). WCC works with them through the Market Towns Initiative to improve their local environments.</p> |
| NFU | <p>National Farmers' Union</p> |
| | <p>National Trail Long distance route supported by the Countryside Agency.</p> |
| NT | <p>National Trust</p> |
| NMU | <p>Non-motorised user Pedestrian, cyclist, horserider, or person with a wheelchair or other small mobility vehicle.</p> |
| OS | <p>Ordnance Survey</p> |
| ORPA | <p>Other Route with Public Access A category of route shown by the OS on their Landranger and Explorer mapping. Generally includes unsurfaced UCRs.</p> |
| PC | <p>Parish Council</p> |
| P3 | <p>Parish Paths Partnership A scheme where the County Council works in partnership with parishes in looking after their local rights of way network.</p> |
| | <p>Path In this plan we have used the term interchangeably with right of way.</p> |
| | <p>Permissive path Path made available through the goodwill of the landowner. It may be withdrawn at any time and the public have no permanent rights over it.</p> |
| PCT | <p>Primary Care Trust Part of the NHS which governs doctor's surgeries.</p> |
| PPO | <p>Public Path Order Legal order which creates, extinguishes or diverts a footpath or bridleway.</p> |
| | <p>Quiet Lanes Countryside Agency scheme aimed at maintaining the character of minor rural roads by seeking to contain rising traffic growth.</p> |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| RA | Ramblers' Association |
| | Restricted Byway Highway open to all traffic except mechanically propelled vehicles. |
| | Right to Roam Commonly used phrase to describe access rights introduced under the CROW Act. It gives the public access to some open country (mountain, moor, heath and down) as well as registered common land but does not give the public the right to walk everywhere. |
| RASE | Royal Agricultural Society of England |
| | Rural Hub Rural business and producer-led group that has been set up in Warwickshire to provide farm and rural businesses with a voice and the opportunity to communicate their needs direct to the agencies who have the resources and finances to help them. |
| SSSI | Site of Special Scientific Interest Site designated by English Nature which enjoys special protection under the law and which has great ecological or geological significance. |
| | SUSTRANS A charity that works on practical projects to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport. Also manages a national network of cycle routes. |
| TROT | Toll Rides (Off Road) Trust Group which sets up pay-to-use permissive routes for equestrians. |
| | Tourism providers Includes tourist attractions, destination marketing organisations and tourism officers working for local authorities. |
| UCR | Unclassified Road or Unclassified County Road These are minor highways, sometimes surfaced, including country lanes, residential roads and some green lanes. They are generally maintainable at public expense. In this plan we have used the term to refer to the unsurfaced UCRs which the Countryside Access Team is responsible for maintaining. |
| | Utility path Path which is used by people going about their daily lives e.g. used to get to school, work, bus stop, shops etc. This Plan applies to those utility paths which are recorded in, or could be recorded in, the Definitive Map and Statement. |
| WCC | Warwickshire County Council |

Executive summary

This Plan, prepared under Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CROW Act), establishes a framework for rights of way and countryside access work over the next ten years. By identifying the key issues and pressures which affect countryside access and public rights of way in Warwickshire, we have developed plans of action which will lead us towards our goal of a sustainable network which meets the needs of modern users.

The Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan (hereafter referred to as 'the CAROWIP') sets out in clear terms our aims and objectives together with the principles which guide our day to day work. It is intended for ourselves, our partners and the wider public.

The scope of the plan

Eventually Rights of Way Improvement Plans will be integrated with the Local Transport Plan (LTP). Full integration is not currently required, but the LTP guidance indicates that the Government would welcome any attempts by local authorities to achieve full integration with the 2006 edition of the LTP. This plan has been prepared to the same timescale as the LTP, and we have attempted to integrate them so far as we are able.

Although the CAROWIP is intended to set our priorities and guide our work for the next ten years, we intend to review it after five years to coincide with the publication of the next LTP.

The legislation requires us to prepare a plan which considers local rights of way (defined as including cycletracks) in the context of;

- the present and likely future needs of the public,
- opportunities for exercise and other forms of open air recreation, and
- accessibility to blind or partially sighted people and those with mobility problems.

Whilst the public rights of way network forms the most significant resource which enables members of the public to access the countryside, there are several other types of access which complement the rights of way network and extend and improve access to the countryside, for example greenways, country parks and canal towpaths.

We have therefore chosen to consider countryside access as a whole, and not to restrict our Plan to the rights of way network alone. This is reflected in the title of our Plan.

Once published, the CAROWIP will supersede the "Warwickshire Public Rights of Way Strategy" c.1996 and the rights of way strands of the Countryside Recreation Strategy 1997-2007. The CAROWIP will also replace all previous policies relating to Warwickshire's rights of way.

Countryside access, rights of way and Warwickshire

Warwickshire is a landlocked county with a population of around half a million people. The landscape is varied, ranging from the gentle rolling landscape of the Cotswolds in the south of the County to the former mining areas and industry in parts of North Warwickshire. Many thousands of tourists come to the County every year to visit places such as Stratford upon Avon, Warwick and their associated attractions.

The County is closely linked to the City of Coventry which sits at the centre of Warwickshire, and many of our countryside users come from the largely urban areas of Coventry and Solihull, as well as from further afield in the surrounding counties and the West Midlands conurbation.

Warwickshire has over 1,740 miles of public rights of way, along with over 100 miles of canal towpaths and a variety of other site based countryside access opportunities, both private and local authority operated. The current extent of the rights of way network is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 : Warwickshire’s rights of way

| | no. of paths | length (miles) | % of network by length |
|-----------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Footpath | 2,911 | 1,442 | 82.5 |
| Bridleway | 393 | 303 | 17.3 |
| Byway | 8 | 3 | 0.2 |

By contrast, the new access rights under the CROW Act (sometimes referred to as the ‘Right to Roam’) will have little effect in Warwickshire. Much of the new access land (mostly registered common land) already has de facto access.

Warwickshire has committed significant resources to opening, maintaining, improving and recording public rights of way over the last 15 years. Considerable progress has been made towards the ongoing target of making all rights of way easy to use for members of the public, and much of our work has been in response to statutory duties placed upon Warwickshire County Council (the Council).

Similarly, the Council has established and developed country parks and greenways throughout the County over the past three decades. Visitor numbers increase year on year and the parks and greenways provide a countryside experience for large numbers of visitors. Country parks and greenways also provide a gateway to the rest of the countryside by building confidence, enabling participation and acting as information points.

The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) covers 5% of Warwickshire, in the south of the County. However, the majority of the AONB is outside Warwickshire, and covers 16 other local authority areas. Local distinctiveness is an important aspect of countryside management within this area, and any work planned should consider the character of the area.

Throughout all our work we are conscious of the built and natural environments, and must balance the duties placed upon us by law, as a Highway Authority, with a responsibility to pass on to future generations the same environments which we have enjoyed.



Warwickshire Cotswold landscape

Vision and objectives

Our vision is for a Warwickshire countryside which is well used in a sustainable way with a network of paths which connect with our parks, greenways and canals and which meets the needs of residents and visitors for both recreation and utility (for example, getting to and from school, shops etc.).

The preparation of the CAROWIP offers an opportunity to present, in a more formal way, the working practices which have guided our work over previous years, as well as introducing new ways of working in support of CAROWIP targets. These are enshrined in our Policies which can be found in Annex 1.

By working towards this vision we will achieve the wider benefits of countryside access which contribute towards making Warwickshire the best place to live and work. Our objectives closely align with WCC's corporate priorities;

- to promote the health and social care of our citizens
 - to improve the environment
 - to develop and maintain a vibrant local economy which promotes prosperity for all
 - to promote lifelong learning and personal development
 - to ensure sound governance of the County Council to provide accessible responsive and well managed services
 - to reduce crime and improve the safety of the community
- together with our commitment to sustainable development.

The plan itself has been divided into eight Themes which have been chosen to reflect the different aspects of our work. The Themes are:

- Accessibility
- Education
- Health, wellbeing and social benefits
- Path networks and connections
- Paths on the ground
- Records, changes and mapping
- Strategic developments and promotion
- Tourism and leisure

The Action Plans under each Theme reflect the commitment we are making to improve access to the Warwickshire countryside for both residents and visitors. The actions are intended to complement our existing duties, not to conflict with them, and will allow us to exercise some of our powers in order to increase the effectiveness of the work we do. The CAROWIP is also a new platform for partnerships and funding bids.

By implementing the CAROWIP we will move towards a better rights of way network for all concerned with;

- better connectivity,
- a sustainable network which meets the needs of modern users,
- a wider range of users and greater participation, and
- responsible users who respect the countryside as a working environment and as an investment for our future.

The process

During August and September 2004 we embarked on our largest ever countryside consultation exercise. We received, in total, over two and a half thousand responses from members of the public, landowners and local councils.

At the same time, we have used our experience of Warwickshire's rights of way network, combined with the results of national research to determine the themes which we address in the plan.

We have also worked with the Warwickshire, Solihull and Coventry Local Access Forum (the LAF) to ensure that its members have had the opportunity to feed into the CAROWIP. The LAF will continue to be involved with monitoring the progress we are making towards CAROWIP targets.

Key findings

The consultation indicated that the public are most likely to be deterred from using the network by overgrown paths and having to cross fast or busy roads. For the groups we consulted, the key issues appear to be:

Walkers

- overgrown paths
- need for better signing and waymarking

Cyclists

- condition of paths and surfaces
- need for clearer signing

Horseriders

- not enough connectivity between bridleways and too much road riding
- overgrown paths
- difficult gate latches

Motorised users

- need for better signage
- need for clearer information about the legal status of routes
- the poor image and reputation of motorised users

Land managers

- loose dogs and dog fouling
- trespass

Parish Councils

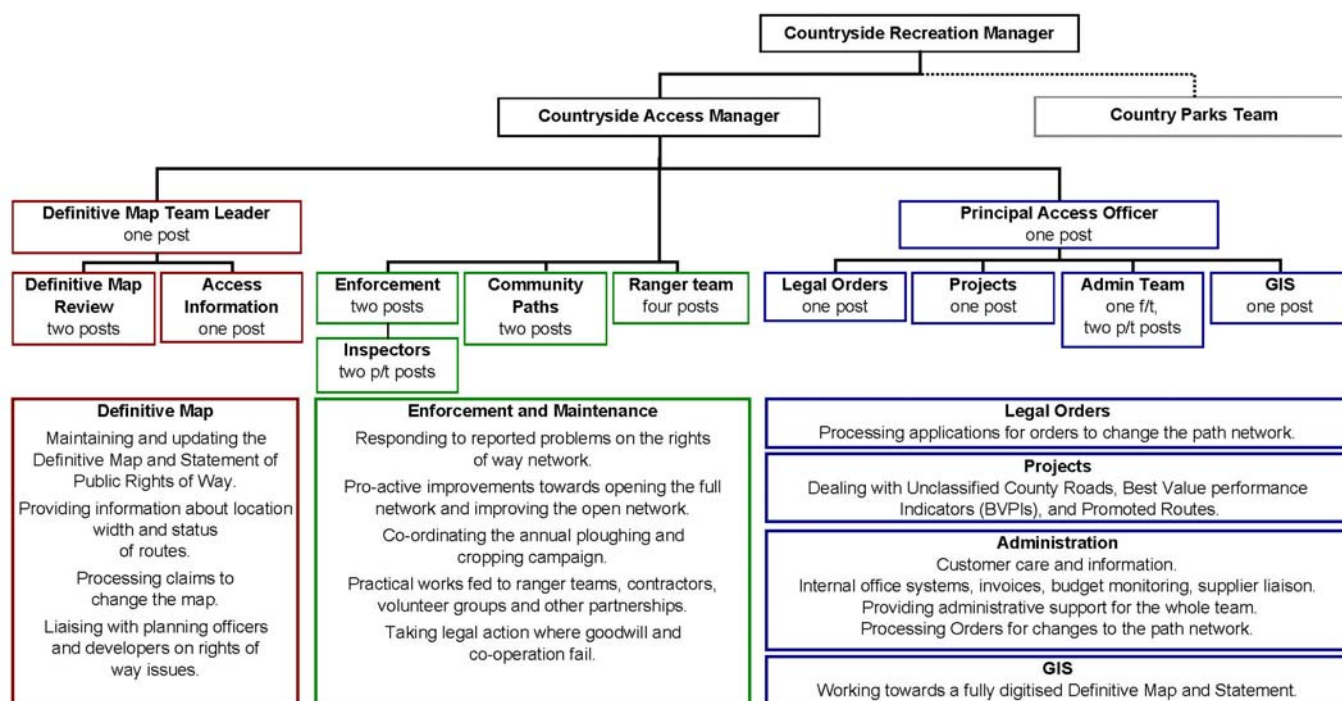
- condition of paths and overgrown paths
- lack of reinstatement of paths which have been ploughed or sown with crops
- need for improved signage and information

Resources

Staff

Warwickshire's Countryside Access Team was established in 1987 and started out with just three members. Reflecting changing priorities and the increased profile of countryside access and user demand, the Team has grown to 18 full time and four part time posts. These cover all aspects of work on the rights of way network. Details of the Team and its activities are given below.

Countryside Access Team and its activities



Warwickshire's Country Parks and Greenways are managed by a separate team which has close links to the Countryside Access Team. A Countryside Information Officer develops promotional material for both Teams.

Budget

The Team is allocated in the region of £175,000 to spend on our rights of way functions (excluding staffing costs and overheads). In addition, an annual bid is made for LTP funding. In 2005-2006 we were allocated £30,000.

Income

Further funding is obtained from outside the County Council through sponsorship, Countryside Agency initiatives, Landfill Tax and similar schemes. Imaginative thinking is required to maximise these opportunities.

During the preparation of this Plan the Countryside Agency launched a Rights of Way Improvement Plan Implementation Grant. Highway authorities within the West Midlands were

invited to apply for 50% grant aid by the Regional Office and the Countryside Agency awarded a grant of £21,868 to Warwickshire County Council for 2005/06. This allocation was used to improve the network of multi user routes, develop a network of accessible trails and promote a number of health walks. These works are working towards achieving Action Points A1a, H1g, H2a, P4c, P9b and S7a.

Partnerships

We also work in partnership with a number of parishes under the Parish Paths Partnership (P3) scheme, whereby much work on the network is carried out by volunteers. Additional arrangements exist with a number of independent volunteer groups who work in more than one parish.

Project based partnerships are also set up from time to time, developing such initiatives as promotional trails, with British Waterways, the National Trust and others. These are effective at reaching new audiences and integrating different types of countryside access, as well as adding value to our own core work.

Some actions within the Themes will require partnership working with others, for example, development of health walks will involve working with health professionals.

Advisory bodies

The Warwickshire, Solihull and Coventry Local Access Forum (LAF) was established under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. A decision was taken at an early stage to work in partnership with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and Coventry City Council, and the three authorities appointed 21 individuals to the LAF. A wide variety of countryside and access interests are represented by those individuals, and they were appointed because of those interests rather than because of affiliations to any group or organisation. The LAF is a statutory advisory body to the three appointing authorities, and has been consulted several times at different stages during the preparation of this document.

The Countryside Access Liaison Group (CALG) was originally formed in 1991 and known as the County Rights of Way Forum. It was re-named in 2003 following the establishment of the LAF. The CALG is made up of representatives of groups and organisations with an interest in countryside access, and it has also been consulted during the preparation of this document. The members act as liaisons between the different countryside interests and the Council, and help to foster good relations.

Themes

| | Page |
|---|------|
| A Accessibility | 16 |
| E Education | 22 |
| H Health, wellbeing and social benefits | 27 |
| N Path networks and connections | 32 |
| P Paths on the ground | 39 |
| R Records, changes and mapping | 48 |
| S Strategic developments and promotion | 54 |
| T Tourism and leisure | 62 |

Each Theme includes;

- the national picture
- the situation in Warwickshire
- conclusions
- an action plan

Notes on Action Plans

Resources - the additional staff or time symbol does not necessarily mean a whole person. A single additional person could take on multiple actions, or an existing part time member of staff could work some additional hours.

Additional funding - where there is overlap between actions, for example A1a and P4c, the identified additional funding should not necessarily be added together. The identified funds may meet both actions.

The above are both estimates based on 2005/06 budget and costs, and will need to be reviewed in line with inflation and changes to baseline budget.

Quick wins

We have identified some 'quick wins' in our Action Plans. These may either be one off projects which are already resourced, or actions which can be achieved within current staff numbers and budget. The quick wins are actions we aim to achieve in the first year.



Accessibility

National picture

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires us to consider the accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and those with mobility problems, as well as to users of the paths in general.

The Disability Discrimination Acts of 1995 and 2005 give disabled people rights to access everyday services that others take for granted. Service providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the way the service is delivered so that disabled people can use them. The 1995 Act indicates that 'services' include 'access to and use of any place which members of the public are permitted to enter'. The 2005 Act extends this duty to include local authority functions.

In addition to the duties set out in these Acts, there is a need to make the countryside more accessible for other potentially excluded groups such as those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those on low incomes and young people.

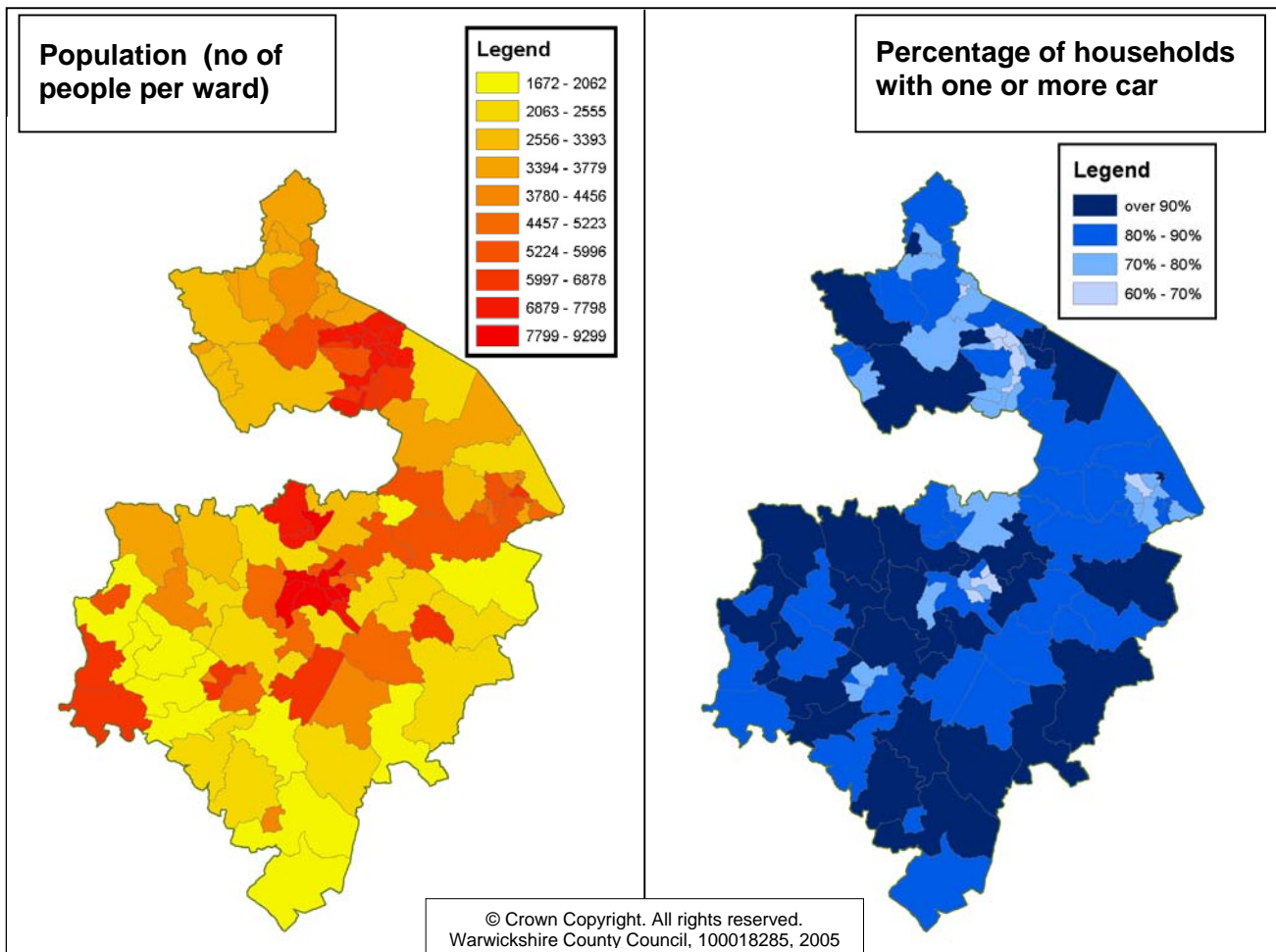
There are a number of factors which are recognised as acting to prevent people from disadvantaged groups reaching opportunities which are generally available to the wider public. Many of these factors apply to countryside access, and research has been carried out specifically to determine their nature and extent.

These factors include:

- ♦ **Transport**
People may have difficulty in getting out into the countryside. This may equally apply to people with mobility problems, and people who do not have their own transport, or those who are not served by public transport.
- ♦ **Safety and security**
People may feel uncertain about what to expect and how to behave when they get to the countryside. Fear of the unknown may mean that people will not use a path unless they have sufficient information first.
- ♦ **Knowledge and access to information**
People may be unaware that the countryside is available to them, and may not know how to find out what they can and can't do. Research has shown that the countryside is not marketed in a way which appeals to under-represented groups.
- ♦ **Physical accessibility**
People may encounter difficulty using a path, for example, they may be prevented from using the path by stiles, gates, steps or a narrow path width.

Situation in Warwickshire

Accessible is commonly taken to mean “available to wheelchair users”. We recognise that its meaning is far wider, and that accessibility should encompass not only those people with mobility problems but anyone who, for any reason, is not able to access the countryside or the path network. These groups include those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those on low incomes and young people.



- ♦ **Transport**

Many of the excluded groups are not able to reach the countryside. Public transport tends to be concentrated in the urban areas, and the countryside is often denied to those without a car. The maps above show that the highest figures for car ownership are generally in the more rural areas. Recently, in partnership with others, we have put together a circular route which starts at a railway station, and we intend to expand this concept and develop other such routes. For those not served by public transport we intend to develop routes leading outwards from centres of population.

- ♦ **Safety and security**

For many of the excluded groups, research has shown that the availability of managed green space is of great importance. In Warwickshire the Country Parks and Greenways offer a safe, controlled environment where people can enjoy the countryside without worrying about, for example, getting lost or finding somewhere to park. Our Country Parks have accessible trails, as well as some loan schemes for mobility scooters. These have both proved very popular but we would like to do more, expanding beyond the Country Park environment.

- ♦ **Knowledge and access to information**

We aim to develop some routes to a standard consistent with Fieldfare Trust accreditation, as well as promoting some new leaflets featuring those, and other, accessible routes. We have also made progress through publicity material such as the “Countryside for All” leaflet pack. We will encourage greater use of the countryside by disadvantaged groups by providing targeted high quality information, use of innovative formats and special projects.

- ♦ **Physical accessibility**

We have been working towards making routes more accessible for a number of years. This is largely being done in conjunction with landowners through the proactive replacement of stiles with gates, or the removal of stiles altogether. We have a number of stile free routes in the County. We have responded on several occasions to specific requests from mobility impaired users to improve or make changes to local paths, mainly relating to improved surfacing. There is a need to look at creating or improving more routes. One of our key actions will be to audit our signing to ensure that it is appropriate for those with impaired vision, whilst still in line with the appropriate regulations and conventions for such signing.

We recognise that there is still a long way to go, and the actions we have chosen are intended to move us towards a more accessible network. However, we cannot replace every stile with a gate in the short term, nor can we surface every rural route, nor is it reasonably cost-effective for us to do so. We have no wish to ‘urbanise’ the countryside. By targeting specific locations, and producing appropriate publicity material, we intend our efforts to benefit the widest number of people.

Conclusions

The progress in replacing and removing stiles should continue, and this is covered within Policy CA9 relating to ‘Gaps, gates and stiles on footpaths and bridleways’. Additional effort should be focussed on producing appropriate information and publicity material to target excluded groups, to help them make informed choices about taking up recreation opportunities in the countryside. We should continue to build on the success of the ‘Countryside for All’ leaflet pack so as to increase the provision of accessible routes.

Actions identified for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Continue with targeted removal of stiles from the countryside
- Provide other access improvements on the ground
- Review the condition of bridges
- Promote the countryside to disadvantaged users via appropriate publicity material
- Provide and publicise easy access gateways to the countryside, such as Country Parks
- Provide special access trails at Country Parks and other sites e.g. sensory trails
- Seek to improve key routes to give access to people with reduced mobility and visual impairments
- Run special projects targeting hard to reach groups
- Comprehensive review of WCC’s house style of signs and waymarkers.

Policies see Annex 1

The actions under this Theme are supported by the following Policies:





- Gaps, gates and stiles for footpaths and bridleways
- Surfacing
- Signs and waymarking
- Promoted routes and trails.



















Key legislation see also Appendix III









- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

Key references

- 2001 Census data
- City of York 'Exemplar' Rights of Way Improvement Plan (City of York Council 2004)
- Corporate Business Plan 2004/7 (Warwickshire County Council)
- Diversity Review Evaluation Framework and Toolkit (Countryside Agency 2005)
- Diversity Review Research Notes (Countryside Agency 2005)
- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation (ODPM 2002)
- By all reasonable means: inclusive access to the outdoors for disabled people (Countryside Agency 2005)

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|--|--|--|--|
| Action Plan: Accessibility | Key |  existing staff |  additional staff or time |  partnerships |  quick wins |
| | | | | | |

| Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders | |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|-------------------|------------|----|-----------------------------|--|
| | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | | |
| A1 Physical improvements | | | | | | | | |
| a | Continue to remove stiles and unnecessary structures from the rights of way network | A1e A2a S3a P4a P4c |   | £30,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Land managers Volunteers |
| b | Develop surfacing guidelines for improving multi user routes for older, mobility impaired and less able users <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS7, Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | H2c P9a A1i |   | - | | ✓ | | CoAg Fieldfare Trust LAF Disability groups |
| c | Carry out an accessibility audit of our signs and waymarks | A3c P3e |   | £2,000 | ✓ | | | Disability groups WCC (others) |
| d | Develop at least one wheelchair accessible circular route of at least 3 miles in the countryside, outside Country Parks | A2a H2b A1i |   | £20,000 each | ✓ Q | ✓ | | CoAg Fieldfare Trust |
| e | Devise a system for monitoring and signing promoted routes which are stile free or fully accessible | A1a P3b P3e |   | - | | ✓ | ✓ | Associated groups e.g. HOEW Assoc. |
| f | Work with Fieldfare Trust to receive accessibility accreditation for a number of routes within Warwickshire (3 by year 4 and 10 by year 10) | A2a A1i |   | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Fieldfare Trust |
| g | Whole network survey to identify areas and routes for improvements | H2d N4a R4b P10a A1i |   | £10,000 | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| h | Provide four new sensory trails | A2a |   | £10,000 each | ✓ Q | ✓ | ✓ | Land managers Disability groups |
| i | Identify key routes for accessibility improvements | A2a |   | £1,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | | Disability groups Other councils WCC (others) Minority groups |

| Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|-------------------|----------------|----|-----------------------------|---|
| | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | | |
| A2 Promotion and publicity | | | | | | | | |
| a | Publicise appropriate routes once improvements have been carried out | A1a A1d A1f A1h E1a H2b S6b S7a A1i |  | £5,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Land managers Fieldfare Trust Volunteers CoAg |
| b | Countryside for All - Build on success of existing walks pack and develop pack of longer, more challenging routes and develop additional publicity material to promote them | H5a S3a |  | £5,000 | | ✓ | | |
| A3 Encouraging participation | | | | | | | | |
| a | Provide a range of publicity material in appropriate formats to increase the confidence and awareness of non-users, in consultation with target audience | E3a H1f S5c |  | £5,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | Community, disability and minority groups WCC (others) |
| b | Promote use of Country Parks and greenways as safe gateways to the countryside | E1a S11b |  | - | ✓ _Q | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Research into the needs of disadvantaged users | A1c A4a A1i |  | £5,000 | | ✓ | | Community, disability and minority groups WCC (others) |
| d | Special projects to encourage and inspire non-users from disadvantaged groups | |  | £10,000 | | | ✓ | Community, disability and minority groups WCC (others) |
| A4 Further Research | | | | | | | | |
| a | Undertake research into the needs of users with disabilities, which can inform future actions | A3c |  | £20,000 | ✓ | | | CoAg Disability groups WCC (others) |
| b | Undertake an assessment of current open space and green space provision within Warwickshire, so as to identify gaps in availability | S13a T2c |  | £20,000 | ✓ | ✓ | | CoAg Other councils Land Managers |



Education

National picture

Users

Access to the countryside provides many opportunities for learning. It covers a wide variety of disciplines including wildlife and ecology, our natural and built heritage, farming and food production, geology and more. The mosaic of interests, constraints and opportunities offers opportunities for teachers to meet the demands of the Key Stage 3 citizenship curriculum.

Conflict between countryside users and landowners or land managers is relatively uncommon, but is unpleasant and in extreme cases can attract legal action and/or negative media coverage. Understanding basic 'rights and responsibilities' such as those set out in the updated Countryside Code is one means of reducing conflict, as is promoting understanding of farming and other countryside management operations which may be encountered. Research demonstrates that a lack of understanding about opportunities and how to behave in the countryside can deter people and sometimes may cause conflict between different types of user. In a similar way, the fear of conflict is also a barrier. These barriers are more pronounced in difficult to reach sections of the community.

Workers

There are few professional qualifications in countryside access and so access workers, professionals in related disciplines and volunteers rely in the main on support from the Highway Authority. Although much access training was formerly subsidised by the Countryside Agency, this has now largely ended. There are many other professionals whose work impacts on rights of way, but whose training has not necessarily provided specific rights of way information, for example, planners, land agents, developers, solicitors and highway engineers. In order to develop competent workers and volunteers it is essential that those in the field work effectively to train and develop new entrants, existing workers and professionals whose work impacts on countryside access.

Situation in Warwickshire

Users

Our practice has been to promote rights alongside responsibilities and this has been successful. There is confusion about the extent of the new access rights under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (sometimes referred to as the 'Right to Roam') and this needs to be clarified for local countryside users as it has very little impact in Warwickshire. We are aware that the revised format for the Countryside Code does not appeal to everyone and that we must have a range of ways of delivering the 'rights and responsibilities' message. The links to the National Curriculum and work with schools is currently underdeveloped but there are opportunities to work in partnership with schools in developing Key Stage 3 resources and trialling activities. There is an ongoing role for our Country Parks as a gateway to the wider countryside, from the

delivery of formal curriculum based education to informal advice and the distribution of literature.

Workers

Warwickshire has developed a team of specialists, each of whom also has an overview of the work of the wider Countryside Access Team. There is also considerable knowledge and skills amongst the voluntary sector. Delivery of the CAROWIP targets will require a new set of skills in seeking funding and expanding our use of discretionary powers. Computers, the internet and mobile technology, as well as other fields of IT will inevitably become more important in determining how we deliver our services. Volunteer support will need to be increased in order to successfully deliver many of our CAROWIP targets.

Conclusions

The emphasis of 'rights and responsibilities' while promoting access to the countryside remains a priority. Doing so will ensure the continued support and cooperation of the farming and landowning community in providing both public access and access by permission. We should be developing educational resources for young people so as to ensure the appreciation and understanding of the countryside by future generations of users.

Actions identified for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Develop Key Stage 3 resources for Citizenship for Country Parks Education programme
- Promote basic information to the public, including the revised Countryside Code, and how the new access rights under the CROW Act (sometimes referred to as the 'Right to Roam') apply locally
- Provide effective volunteer training through workshops and by sharing best practice between groups and parishes
- Target appropriate information at other professionals whose work impacts on Countryside Access (e.g. planners, solicitors, land agents, highway engineers and developers)
- Ensure we are promoting responsibilities, including information relating to dogs on rights of way and in the countryside
- Work with user groups and parishes locally to promote responsible use of the countryside
- Run workshops and other training resources for volunteers, including Health and Safety and risk assessment, and rights of way law and practice
- Develop trainer training skills in the Countryside Access Team
- Use the website to provide information.

Policies see Annex 1












There is a need for some level of training to be provided covering all the Policies. The level of knowledge required will depend on the audience.









The actions under this Theme are supported by the following Policy;




- Volunteers.

Key references

- Access Land and Rights of Way Training Strategy (National Countryside Access Forum)
- Diversity Review Research Notes (Countryside Agency 2005)
- National Curriculum Key Stage 3 - Citizenship
- The Countryside Code (Countryside Agency 2004)
- The Countryside Code Education Pack (Countryside Agency 2005)

| Action Plan: Education | | Key |  existing staff |  additional staff or time |  partnerships |  quick wins | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|--------------|---|
| Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key Partners | |
| | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | | |
| E1 Countryside access magazine | | | | | | | | |
| a | To publish a countryside access magazine twice a year to inform users of the countryside, share best practice and promote rights and responsibilities | A3b P7b S5c |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| E2 Talks and public speaking | | | | | | | | |
| a | Free talks will be given to any group willing to work to manage, promote or improve the path network | H1a H1c P8b |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| E3 Countryside Recreation website <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS11, Cycling Strategy CY12</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop website to educate and inform all countryside users | A3a E3c E5a E6a H1b R4e |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Maintain up to date web pages including network changes and closures | R4d S5c |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Campaigning based web pages on specific issues, 2 per year, e.g. dog fouling, ploughing and cropping, litter, car parking, Countryside Code, etc. | E3a E5a E6a R3a S10b |  | - | ✓ Q | ✓ | ✓ | Land managers Other councils English Nature |
| d | Develop map based web pages with interactive path defect reporting, route selection, inventory etc. | P6a S5a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| E4 Promote the responsible use of the countryside | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop inputs into the Country Parks Education Rangers programme to educate schoolchildren on active citizenship | S10a |  | - | | ✓ | | |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key Partners |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|---|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| b | Produce an activity pack for schools and young people, including map reading, basic farming, local history, hedge aging, rights of way, landscape interpretation, value of exercise etc. <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS11</i> | S10a H1h |  | £5,000 | | ✓ | | FACE Heritage and environmental professionals |
| c | Develop and run map reading courses – one off sessions, adult education, etc. | E7a |  | - | | ✓ | | |
| d | Develop and run path surveying course for partners, user groups and other interested parties | E7a |  | - | | ✓ | | Heritage and environmental professionals |
| E5 Dog owners | | | | | | | | |
| a | Arrange publicity campaign to highlight the importance of dog worming, effects of livestock worrying and impact on wildlife etc. | E3a E3c E5b S10b |  | £3,000 each time | ✓ | | ✓ | Land managers User groups Parish Councils Other councils English Nature |
| b | Liaise with dog wardens to promote the responsible use of rights of way and the countryside by dog owners | E5a |  | - | ✓ | | | Other councils |
| E6 Open Access | | | | | | | | |
| a | Promote understanding of Open Access rights, and areas involved through leaflets, website, talks, media, etc. | E3a E3c S5c S10b |  | £5,000 | ✓ | | | CoAg |
| b | Ensure all affected areas are suitably signed | P3d |  | £1,000 | ✓ | | | CoAg |
| E7 Training the workers | | | | | | | | |
| a | Provide support and training for volunteers and other partners | E4c E4d H3d |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Land managers |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key Partners |
|---|--|-----------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|--------------|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| b | Share training and best practice, and ensure that some within the team have the skills to train others | E7d |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Provide targeted information to other professions covering applicable rights of way law and practice | R5b R5c |  | £1,000 | | ✓ | | |
| d | Provide training for the Countryside Access Team in understanding overlapping disciplines e.g. agriculture, planning, ecology etc. | E7b R4e |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |



Health, well-being and social benefits

National picture

A variety of research has been carried out on the health and social benefits of access to the countryside. Benefits to health include improvements to well-being and mental health as well as the physical benefits associated with exercise. The countryside can be an inspiration to many people.

In urban areas, well managed rights of way can provide short cuts to the shops, schools etc and provide a healthier alternative to a trip in the car.

It is recognised that the countryside does not always appear welcoming. Lack of information about paths acts as a barrier, as does a lack of experience or confidence, as potential users may be discouraged from venturing into the unknown.

It has always been difficult to make contact with those people who do not use or access the countryside. It is many of those people who would derive the greatest benefits associated with enjoying the natural environment. Walking, in particular, can be a social activity and a good way of meeting new people.

Many people perceive walking or cycling as uninteresting and may need additional stimuli such as an organised event to tempt them into the countryside. Volunteering can also be a good way of becoming involved and deriving the health and social benefits of the activity and the countryside.

Situation in Warwickshire

In a survey carried out by WCC in December 2003, 65% of citizens said that access to footpath networks has a big impact on their personal health and well-being.

Where schemes have been set up under the “Walking the Way to Health” initiative, they have been successful, but in Warwickshire they are geographically limited. Resources will be needed, as well as partnership working with the Primary Healthcare Trusts (PCTs), to enable schemes to be rolled out across the County.

WCC already publishes programmes of countryside events. Targeted publicity of these events amongst potential beneficiaries may encourage wider participation.

Conclusions

Whilst the benefits to health and well-being are clear, and existing countryside users cite health and wellbeing as important reasons for using the countryside, people may not take up walking, riding or cycling just because they know it will improve their health. The chances of persuading someone to start using the countryside for exercise are greatly increased if there are regular organised activities in which they can participate.

Actions identified for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Develop a suitable range of routes for beginners, intermediate and experienced users so that participants can progress and remain stimulated
- Establish commitment from the PCTs to support a health walks programme
- Establish commitment from health professionals e.g. participation in referral schemes or provision of information about opportunities
- Provide an officer to co-ordinate and develop health walks throughout the County
- Arrange for volunteers to lead regular events
- Provide targeted information and publicity.





Policies see Annex 1









The actions under this Theme are supported by the following Policies:










- Promoted routes and trails
- Gaps, gates and stiles on footpaths and bridleways.








Key references

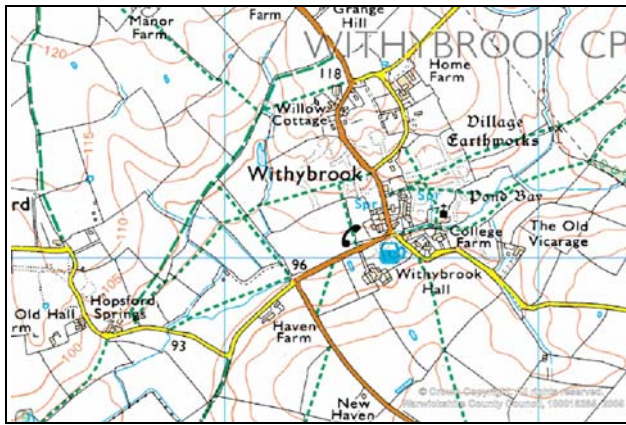
- A Countryside for Health and Well-being: The Physical and Mental Health Benefits of Green Exercise (2005 Countryside Recreation Network)
- Choosing Health – making healthy choices easier (Department for Health white paper 2004)
- Quality of Life in Warwickshire (November 2004 WCC)
- Rights of way research by Faber Maunsell (2004 Cheshire County Council)
- “Walking the Way to Health” Initiative (www.whi.org.uk)
- Warwickshire County Council Citizens’ Panel Survey – Health and Well-being (January 2004)
- Warwickshire’s Physical Activity Strategy – Draft version (2004 WCC & others)
- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation (ODPM 2002)

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|--|--|--|--|
| Action Plan: Health, wellbeing and social benefits | Key |  existing staff |  additional staff or time |  partnerships |  quick wins |
| | | | | | |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|---|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|--|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| H1 Encouraging participation <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS11</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Encourage people to sign up to volunteering with existing practical groups | E2a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Existing practical groups |
| b | WCC promotion of local walking and cycling clubs and cycle hire etc. through website, media, posters, etc. | E3a T1b S5c |  | £2,000 | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Offer talks to Weightwatchers and Slimming World groups to promote walking | E2a |  | - | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| d | Promote existing Health Walks Schemes and support the growth of the Scheme | H3b |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) Health walk groups |
| e | Provide led walks and walks with a theme e.g. history <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | S4a S11a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Heritage and environmental professionals WCC (others) |
| f | Publicise the availability of information in order to increase the confidence of potential users | A3a S6b S7c |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| g | Develop packages of walks for health professionals to recommend | H5b S7a |  | £10,000 each | ✓ Q | ✓ | ✓ | CoAg PCTs WCC (others) |
| h | Provide information about the social and health benefits of walking, riding and cycling <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY1 and CY5</i> | S4a S7a S7c S8c |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | PCTs WCC (others) |

| Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|---|-------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | | |
| H2 Network accessibility | | | | | | | | |
| a | Continue to remove stiles and unnecessary structures from the rights of way network to allow access for more people | A1a P4a P4c S7a |  | £30,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Land managers |
| b | Targeted publicity for appropriate routes once improved | A2a S5c |  | £5,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Develop standard surfacing guidelines for improving multi user routes for older, mobility impaired and less able users <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | A1b P9a |  | - | | ✓ | | CoAg WCC (others) |
| d | Whole network survey to identify appropriate routes, and target improvements <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | A1g N4a P10a N8f P10b R4b |  | £10,000 | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| H3 Support the development of a network of health walks across the county <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy policy WS11</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Work with existing “Walking the Way to Health” groups to establish and improve suitable routes | A1a H2a |  | £3,000 per group | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| b | Promote existing “Walking the Way to Health” groups within existing partnerships and community groups | H1d |  | - | | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| c | Develop and promote healthy walking initiatives to those deriving most benefit | H1d H6b S7d |  | £5,000 pa | | ✓ | | PCTs WCC (others) |
| d | Train more “Walking the Way to Health” leaders | E7a |  | £3,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| H4 Pilot projects targeting ‘hard to reach’ communities | | | | | | | | |
| a | Work with the WCC Health & Environment Project Officer, PCTs and others to identify appropriate recipient groups and communities | H4b |  | - | | ✓ | ✓ | PCTs WCC (others) |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------------|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| b | By using school buses and/or transport brokerage service and other means, to chaperone identified groups on series of introductory countryside experiences and led walks | H4a |  | £10,000 | | | ✓ | Identified groups WCC (others) |
| c | Develop and promote healthy walking initiatives to appropriate communities | H3c |  | £3,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | PCTs CoAg WCC (others) |
| H5 Promotion and publicity | | | | | | | | |
| a | Countryside for All - Build on success of existing walks pack and develop pack of longer routes <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | A2b S3a S7c |  | £5,000 | | ✓ | | |
| b | Develop range of trail leaflets from areas of population into adjacent countryside <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | H1g S6b S7c S8e |  | £5,000 per area | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Promote use of Country Parks and greenways, for health benefits <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5 and CY12</i> | H6a S7c S8a |  | £10,000 each | ✓ _Q | ✓ | ✓ | PCTs CoAg |
| H6 Young people | | | | | | | | |
| a | Promote health benefits to visitors and school and community groups in Country Parks | H5c |  | - | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Develop exercise pack with loan pedometers to encourage walking, through schools and community groups | H3c |  | £5,000 | | ✓ | | |



Path networks and connections

National picture

England's network of 118,000 miles of public rights of way provide us with a significant recreational and transport resource which is, together with Wales, unique throughout the world. However, this network of paths is only one means of gaining access to the countryside and it is likely that a walk or ride will also involve using roads, canal tow paths, parks and nature reserves, permissive paths, commons and open access land.

Historically the rights of way network evolved to serve the needs of local people travelling to and fro in their daily lives and so linear routes between settlements are often well developed. The modern countryside user is more interested in recreational use, and the network does not always match those needs, for example, short circular routes are popular with dog walkers.

However, not all use is recreational, and some rights of way still form important transport links for walkers and cyclists who wish to avoid the busy roads, or where the right of way takes a more direct or pleasant route.

Many urban or village paths can be subject to very frequent use. In limited instances, the existence of urban alleys can facilitate crime and antisocial behaviour. Recent legislation introduced under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 provides for the gating of routes that are part of the network of minor highways. The Act places the onus on local authorities to balance the needs of local residents affected by serious and persistent crime and disorder issues, and the needs of legitimate users of the any proposed for gating.

With increased traffic volumes and speeds, many of our roads and rural lanes present a barrier to the use of particular paths and trails, as do certain railways with at-grade crossings which may deter users. In other instances successive improvements to the highway for vehicular traffic have resulted in the loss of verges or verges being obstructed by signs and other highway furniture. There is also a legacy of truncated paths and poor quality diversions made to accommodate motorway and trunk road construction and other large scale developments, such as quarries and wartime airfields.

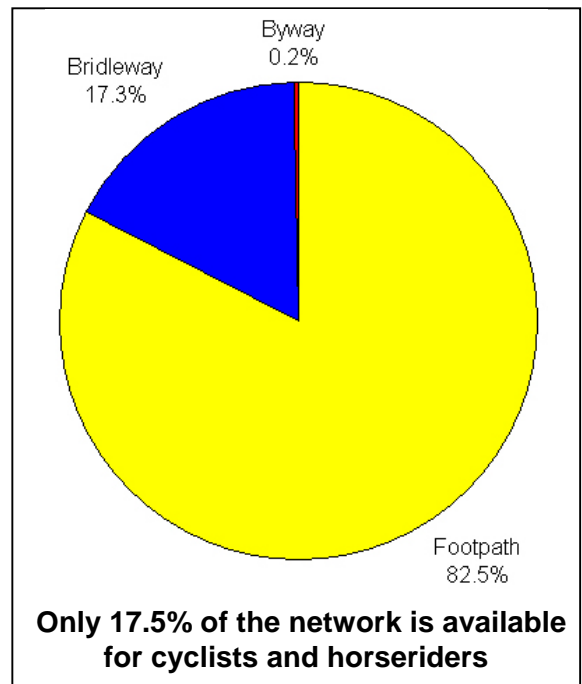
Situation in Warwickshire

The County's network of 1,740 miles (2,800km) of public paths intersects with Warwickshire's 3,000 miles (4,800km) of roads. Our roads are busy with both local residents and others passing through the County, due to our position in the centre of England. In addition there are over 100 miles of public access associated with Warwickshire's canals, along which people can walk and sometimes cycle.

In order to protect the network of public paths and encourage use it is vital that where roads are built or improved, appropriate changes and improvements are made for non-motorised users (NMUs) and associated rights of way. There are several sites within the County where the network is effectively severed by previous road schemes and other developments and we will be looking to resolve some of the issues these have generated. In addition to this, the bridleway network is patchy and many areas have little or no provision for equestrians, though footpath provision may be good. There are currently few verges which are maintained for NMU use and the unwelcome necessity of using (or crossing) heavily trafficked roads has proved one of the top issues amongst the users we consulted. In appropriate areas we will assess the potential of the Quiet Lanes scheme. Powers are also available to restrict traffic under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Our vision is to move from an historic patchwork of paths severed by subsequent development to a connected network fit for present and future use. In order to achieve this we envisage a menu of potential solutions from which to select the ‘best fit’ for identified issues and locations.

In addition to protecting and reconnecting our path network, we can continue our work to improve the usability of the network by making better connections with canal towpaths, parks, nature reserves and greenways. In some cases this may mean securing additional access, whilst in other cases signage and provision of improved information will be more relevant.



We have not experienced significant demand in Warwickshire for gating orders on routes that carry public highway rights. However, the urban areas of the County contain many unrecorded highways due to the exclusion of the urban centres from the preparation of the original Definitive Maps. The significance of any route proposed for a gating order needs to be considered in terms of its links with local facilities, its usefulness within the network, role in connecting to surrounding countryside and the proximity and suitability of alternative highways

Conclusions

There are significant severance issues in some parts of the County and a general need to look at the needs of NMUs across much of the highway network. There are many links in the network which have evolved into busy and fast roads, and there are many unsafe roads to cross. Achieving safe linkages for NMUs which avoid traffic will form one of the cornerstones of the CAROWIP, and we expect to achieve this through better use of verges and ‘behind the hedge’ routes. We will need to target resources in consultation with others in order to achieve the best value outcomes. We cannot achieve optimum connectivity in the short term, and it will require investment over many years.

Actions identified for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Work with the Highways Agency on improvements to at grade crossings of trunk roads
- Work with Network Rail on at grade crossings of rail lines
- Work with partners to identify and record key sections of other roads, verges or crossings

- Work with County Highways, contractors and landowners to instigate improvements
- Work with landowners and other recreation providers to better connect with other countryside sites and provide additional linear access
- Work with parish and town councils to identify key utility paths for improvement
- Achieve better connectivity and provision for cyclists and horseriders
- Achieve better connectivity from centres of population and public transport nodes to local countryside
- Identify key sites for creation of new rights of way to connect existing paths or to link with sites of interest to the public
- Identify existing permissive routes which may add connectivity
- Develop web based mapping showing connectivity between the path network and other forms of access
- Improve connectivity at the County boundary, and across quarry sites and wartime airfields
- Work with the Police and crime and safety partnerships and the LAF to agree an authority wide approach to gating orders.

Policies see Annex 1

The actions under this Theme are supported by the following Policies:





- Development
- Public Path Orders for footpaths and bridleways
- Roads and railways
- Permissive paths
- Antisocial behaviour and crime.









Key legislation see also Appendix III










- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Highways Act 1980
- Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

Key references




- Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way in Warwickshire, 1998, Warwickshire County Council
- You're either quick or dead, 2004, The Ramblers' Association

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|--|--|--|--|
| Action Plan: Path networks and connections | Key |  existing staff |  additional staff or time |  partnerships |  quick wins |
| | | | | | |

| Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key Partners | |
|---|--|-----------------|---|---------------------|-----|----|--------------|--|
| | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | | |
| N1 Permissive access | | | | | | | | |
| a | Support applications for agri environment schemes which include constructive access elements | N2b |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Identify and establish a register of existing permissive routes, and, in consultation with landowners, supply details of significant routes to OS for inclusion on OS maps | |  | - | | ✓ | ✓ | Parish Councils User groups |
| N2 Key links <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Identify and use key sections of roadside verge to create safe links for all NMUs <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS8, Cycling Strategy CY4 and CY5, Road Safety Strategy RS22</i> | N8f S1d |  | £10,000 per section | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | User groups Highways Agency WCC (others) Parish Councils |
| b | Identify key roadside links and create 'behind the hedge access' <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS8, Cycling Strategy CY4 and CY5</i> | N1a N8f S1d |  | £5,000 per link | | ✓ | ✓ | User groups Land managers Highways Agency Parish Councils |
| c | Identify key equestrian and cycling links and desired links, and prioritise and secure them <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY2, CY3, CY4 and CY5</i> | N2d N2e N8f R7a |  | £10,000 per link | | ✓ | ✓ | User groups Parish Councils |
| d | Identify all cross county boundary routes and ensure consistency of route alignment and status | N2c N8f |  | £3,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | Adjoining councils |
| e | Identify network gaps left by quarries and wartime airfields and work to improve the connectivity | N2c N8f R7a |  | £5,000 per gap | | ✓ | ✓ | User groups |
| f | Undertake a programme of works to deal with the 6 large (over 8 metre span) missing bridges | N8f P5a |  | £100,000 per bridge | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key Partners |
|--|---|------------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|---|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| N3 Path and road/railway interface <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5, Road Safety Strategy RS6</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Establish safer crossings of major roads, 'LTP heavy traffic routes' other roads and railway lines for all NMUs <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS6 and WS8, Cycling Strategy CY4,</i> | N8e N8f |  | £30,000 each | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Highways Agency Network Rail WCC (others) |
| b | To ensure that all classes of NMUs are catered for in the design of road crossings and road junctions <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS6 and WS8, Cycling Strategy CY4</i> | R5a N8f |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Highways Agency WCC (others) |
| c | Identify where the use of surfaced roads forms a significant part of the path network <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS8</i> | N2a N2b N8f |  | - | ✓ ^Q | ✓ | ✓ | User groups Parish Councils LAF |
| d | To work with others to improve the safety of NMUs where the use of surfaced roads forms a significant part of the path network <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS8, Cycling Strategy CY4,</i> | N6c N8f |  | - | | ✓ | ✓ | Highways Agency WCC (others) |
| N4 Network survey and information | | | | | | | | |
| a | Carry out a full network survey | A1g H2d P10a R4b |  | £10,000 | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Make rights of way mapping and other route information available online <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10, Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | E3a E3d S5c |  | - | | | ✓ | |
| N5 Utility paths <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Identify important utility paths especially in rural or smaller communities <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS4 and WS7</i> | P9c |  | - | | ✓ | | Parish Councils User groups Market Towns |
| b | Improve and promote the use of utility paths within and between communities in line with sustainable transport objectives <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS3 and WS4</i> | P3b P9b P9c R5a |  | £20,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) Market Towns |
| c | Identify important routes in path network for access to schools <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS2, Cycling Strategy CY3</i> | P9b P9d |  | - | | ✓ | | WCC (others) |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key Partners |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|---|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| d | Work in partnership with Safer Routes to School Officers to develop and secure improvements to the utility path network <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS2, Cycling Strategy CY3</i> | P9b P9d | | - | | ✓ | | WCC (others) |
| N6 Greenways and Quiet Lanes <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop 2 new greenways – Kenilworth Berkswell and Leamington to Rugby <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY3 and CY5</i> | S2g | | £250,000 | ✓ | ✓ | | Sustrans Other councils |
| b | Identify other potential greenways <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | N2c | | - | | ✓ | | Sustrans User groups |
| c | Assess potential for Quiet Lanes scheme in Warwickshire | N3d | | - | | | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| N7 Public transport | | | | | | | | |
| a | Improve public transport to WCC Country Parks and other walking/cycling gateway sites and 'start points' | | | £25,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| b | Promote recreational routes from major junctions with the public transport network | | | £5,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| N8 Developing the network <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Secure public access through Warwick Castle Park | N8b R2b | | £15,000 | | | ✓ | |
| b | Continue to identify areas of poor access to the countryside and seek to improve it. Prioritise tourist areas and areas close to centres of population <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | N8a N8f P3a R5a R7a S3c S3d | | £15,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) Market Towns Parish Councils |
| c | Review and develop links from WCC Country Parks and other recreational sites to adjacent countryside and rights of way <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | N2b N2c | | £5,000 per link | | ✓ | ✓ | |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key Partners |
|---|--|---|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|--|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| d | Survey all WCC landholdings and review and develop the countryside access path network <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | R2e |  | £2,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| e | Identify and review all at-grade rail crossings on the network with a view to improvements | N3a N5b N5d |  | - | ✓ ^Q | | | Network Rail |
| f | Assess provision of horse-riding routes in North Warwickshire and develop and progress a programme of enhancements | H2c N2 N3 N8b P2e R2e R2f R6a R7a |  | £5,000 per link | | ✓ | ✓ | User groups Other councils WCC (others) Local horseriders Landowners |



Paths on the ground

Note : This theme does not cover permissive paths.

National picture

The practical management of rights of way covers a wide range of disciplines ranging from the installation of a single waymarker disc, through surfacing and bridge engineering works, to enforcement through the courts where paths are deliberately obstructed.

These disciplines are applied very differently by different authorities – with some using a direct labour organisation, others solely relying on contractors, and others using a mixture of both as well as utilising volunteers. Often, the legal aspect of the work is separated from the practical side.

Each Highway Authority is required to carry out an annual survey covering 5% of the rights of way network. In most authorities, 2½% is surveyed in May and the other 2½% is surveyed in November. The results from this make up the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 178 which is returned to central government and which indicates the percentage of the network which is open and easy to use by the public.

The accepted designs for signs and waymarkers are included in the 'Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002', whilst the designs for gates and stiles are set down in British Standard 5709:2001. Often, adaptations of designs are chosen for reasons of local distinctiveness, but the general waymarking scheme of yellow for footpaths, blue for bridleways and red for byways is common throughout England and Wales.

The majority of the paths are maintainable at public expense and so the responsibility for the maintenance of the path network rests mainly with the Highway Authority, although the landowner or occupier does bear some responsibility. The landowner/occupier must maintain stiles and gates which are on their land, as well as being required to reinstate paths which are disturbed through ploughing and cropping. The responsibility for bridges may vary according to the location and type of bridge, for example, bridges over canals are usually the responsibility of British Waterways, and some bridges may also be scheduled ancient monuments or listed buildings.

New requirements under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 require an authority to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the interest features of all Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and this does have an impact on the management of rights of way. Similar consideration should be given to scheduled ancient monuments.

Situation in Warwickshire

Warwickshire has over 1,740 miles (2,800 km) of public rights of way and it is estimated that there are 5,000 signpost locations, 5,500 stiles, 3,700 gates and 2,000 bridges on the network. There are also around 65 miles of unsurfaced unclassified roads (UCRs – also known as unclassified county roads or, in Warwickshire, E Roads).

Until recently, we largely carried out practical works in a reactive way and we relied on members of the public, user groups and landowners to inform us of instances where the network or infrastructure require attention. Parish and volunteer groups have mainly concentrated on specific proactive improvements. More recently we have been able to target a small number of specific areas for improvement, with a very positive result. Further investment in proactive works will bring significant benefits to the users, and this can also reduce the pressures faced by landowners with public routes on their land.

Other than the BVPI survey and paths inspected under the ploughing and cropping campaign, we carry out few regular, planned inspections, and there has never been a full condition survey carried out in the County. With the technology available to us now it will be possible to both carry out the survey using computerised mapping (GIS), and to record the results in our GIS database.

Our BVPI figures have steadily risen over the years, and we are approaching the point where many of the easily remedied problems, such as signposting by the roadside, have been resolved, and the problems which remain – for example building obstructions and seasonal problems such as ploughing and cropping – will require a greater input of resources to solve.

We have a particularly active volunteer community assisting in our work, with one group having been in existence for over 30 years. They have all made an invaluable contribution to the maintenance and improvement of the network. Some groups work independently, whilst others require supervision on site. There are around 55 parish groups signed up to our 'Parish Paths Partnership' (P3) agreement, many of which have active volunteers.

Signposting in Warwickshire is done using wooden posts with waymarker arrows which, at the roadside, also describe the status of the paths. For several years there have been calls to increase the range of waymarks we use and to review the design. We have also been asked to consider using finger posts. There is a need for advisory signs indicating diversions or advising of other aspects of the law (e.g. keep dogs under close control). Although we have standard designs for these, they have arisen when there has shown to be a need for a particular sign, and the range of signs has never been assessed as a whole.

Half the paths we are responsible for have a natural surface which will only require intermittent attention. There are, however, paths where a constructed surface is necessary either because the condition of the route has become very poor, or where a path is co-existent with a private route such as a driveway or farm track. In cases where a private route also carries a public path, we will only maintain the route to a standard suitable for public



One of our signposts

use e.g. it may not be suitable for the private vehicles using it, but is fine for pedestrians as part of a recreational walk. In those cases, the landowner will need to repair the route for vehicular use, and we may contribute a small amount towards it. This is set down in more detail in the Policy covering Surfacing. There are currently no recognised standards set down for the surfacing of paths, although some research has been carried out by the Countryside Agency.

We have a fairly comprehensive record of the bridges on the network, and we will be able to develop maintenance and inspection programmes once we have completed a full condition survey.

We have a dedicated team of Rangers who carry out small scale works on the paths, such as small bridges, gates and clearance work. For larger works such as surfacing, we generally use contractors.

Our relationships with landowners have been built up over many years and we will always seek to resolve problems through goodwill and co-operation. Sometimes, however, it is necessary to take enforcement measures where goodwill and co-operation fail.

Conclusions

We have succeeded, over many years and together with support from parishes and volunteer groups, on making significant improvements to the overall condition of the paths. However, there is a considerable amount of work left to do, and a significant amount of work involved in just maintaining and supporting the existing condition of the paths. We will continue in our work to protect and assert the rights of the public by ensuring that all paths are open and available to use.

Now that the network is by and large available to the public we should use some of our resources on improvement works so as to enhance the enjoyment of path users and increase accessibility.

There are several areas where a long term commitment is needed in order to resolve some of the most common issues which are highlighted by the BVPI survey results. This includes continuing with the ploughing and cropping campaign and concentrating on the remaining missing bridges and on resolving issues of paths with permanent obstructions.

We should continue to support and encourage our volunteer workers to assist with the maintenance and improvement of the network. This has proved to be successful in maximising our resources and delivering results at a local level.

Actions identified for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Continue with an annual ploughing and cropping campaign
- Develop seasonal and non-seasonal targeted clearance programmes for paths where vegetation is regularly a problem
- Review WCC's house design of signs and waymarkers
- Develop an inspection programme for bridges on the path network
- Continue to improve the accessibility of the network through the application of the Policy on Gaps, gates and stiles on footpaths and bridleways
- Undertake a full network condition survey and record the results in the GIS database
- Develop guidelines and standards for the surfacing of paths.
- Continue to provide structured support for voluntary groups and P3 partners
- Improve path defect reporting facilities for the public.

Policies see Annex 1

The actions under this Theme are supported by the following Policies:

- Gaps, gates and stiles on footpaths and bridleways
- Signs and waymarking
- Enforcement
- Path reports and inspections
- Surfacing
- Volunteers
- Non-Definitive alternative routes
- Electric fences.

Key legislation see also Appendix III









- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions Order 2002










Key references









- BS 5709:2001 Gaps Gates and Stiles
- BVPI methodology, (County Surveyors' Society, 2002)




| | | | | | |
|---|-----|----------------|--------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Action Plan: Paths on the ground | Key | existing staff | additional staff or time | partnerships | quick wins |
|---|-----|----------------|--------------------------|--------------|------------|

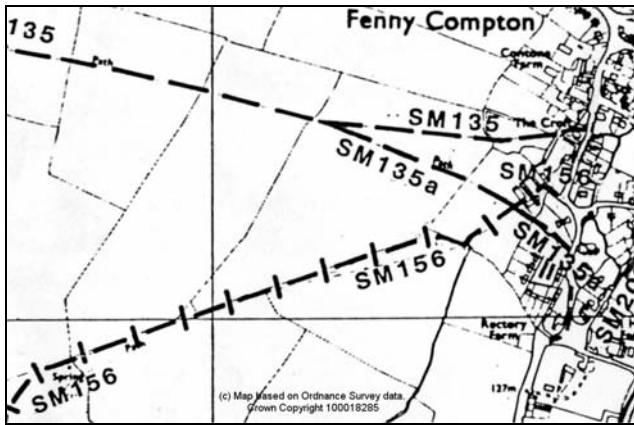
| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|---|--|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|--------------------------------|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| P1 Ploughing and cropping <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Continue annual ploughing and cropping campaign | E3c | | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | NFU CLA |
| b | Continue to take legal action against persistent non compliance with legislation | P1a | | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Explore new ways of resolving ploughing and cropping issues through liaison with farming organisations and Defra | E3c | | - | | ✓ | | NFU CLA Defra |
| P2 Vegetation clearance <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Identify field edge paths which require regular clearance | A1g H2d N4a P10a | | - | | ✓ | | User groups Parish Councils |
| b | Develop a seasonal field edge path clearance programme | P1a | | £30,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | Land managers |
| c | Identify utility paths which require regular spraying or clearance programme <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS3 and WS7</i> | N5b N5d | | - | | ✓ | | Other councils |
| d | Develop a utility path clearance and spraying programme <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS3 and WS7</i> | N5d | | £30,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| e | Carry out a survey, and develop an overhead vegetation clearance programme, for all routes with equestrian rights | N8f P4f | | £20,000 pa | Q | ✓ | ✓ | User groups CoAg |

| Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders | |
|---|---|---------------------------|---|-------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------|--|
| | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | | |
| P3 Signing and waymarking | | | | | | | | |
| a | Inspect all routes surrounding centres of population and improve waymarking to reduce trespass and encourage use | N8b P4e |  | - | | ✓ | | |
| b | Develop a trial of improved roadside signage including fingerposts with destinations and route times, stile free routes, etc and monitor public response | A1e N5b P3c P3e |  | £10,000 | ✓ | | | |
| c | Encourage P3 groups and other partner groups to sign paths with fingerposts displaying destinations and route times | P3b P3e |  | £300 per path | ✓ Q | ✓ | ✓ | P3 groups |
| d | Inspect and sign, where appropriate, all Open Access Land | E6b |  | £1,000 | ✓ | | | CoAg |
| e | Undertake a comprehensive review of signs and waymarking on public rights of way <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS7, Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | A1c A1e P3b P3c |  | £2,000 | ✓ Q | | | Disability groups WCC (others) Parish Councils P3 groups LAF CALG User groups |
| P4 Stiles, gates, barriers, and boundary crossings | | | | | | | | |
| a | Follow the policy on 'Gaps, gates and stiles on footpaths and bridleways' when replacing or repairing existing boundary crossings | A1a H2a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Follow the policy on 'Gaps, gates and stiles on footpaths and bridleways' for boundary crossings when authorising new structures | |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Develop a proactive programme of removing unnecessary structures and improving existing structures especially close to centres of population, tourist areas and easy access trails following the policy on 'Gaps, gates and stiles on footpaths and bridleways' <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS4 and WS7</i> | A1a H3a R5a S3a S7a |  | £10,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Land managers Volunteers |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|--|---|-----------------------|---|---------------------|-------------------|-----|----|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| d | Develop system of recording and authorising structures on path network | R4b |  | - | ✓ | | | |
| e | Seek landowners' consent for installation of dog-gates alongside stiles especially surrounding centres of population (NB only if unable to install gate or gap instead) | P3a |  | £2,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| f | Survey all routes with equestrian rights and develop a programme for improving gates and gate latches <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | P2e |  | £20,000 pa | ✓ Q | ✓ | | User groups CoAg |
| g | Develop a strategy to exclude illegal motorised users from public footpaths and bridleways <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | |  | - | | ✓ | | Police User groups WCC (others) |
| h | Review Policy CA11 Electric fences on footpaths and bridleways and seek feedback from the farming and equestrian communities | |  | - | | ✓ | | |
| P5 Bridges | | | | | | | | |
| a | Undertake a programme of works to deal with the 6 large (over 8 metre span) missing bridges | N2f |  | £100,000 per bridge | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Continue the programme of bridge repair | P5c |  | £75,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Develop an inspection programme for all known bridges on the public path network | P5b |  | - | ✓ | | | |
| P6 Obstructions and defects <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Make reporting defects and other obstructions as easy as possible for path users | E3d |  | - | ✓ Q | ✓ | ✓ | LAF |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|--|--|-----------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| P7 Parish Paths Partnership scheme | | | | | | | | |
| a | Continue with the existing P3 Scheme and encourage other parishes to join the Scheme | P8a P8b |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Regularly publish details of grants and other funding opportunities for P3 groups | E1a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| P8 Volunteer groups | | | | | | | | |
| a | Support voluntary groups which undertake practical, promotional and research work on the path network | P7a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Encourage other voluntary and community groups to undertake practical works on the path network | E2a P7a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| P9 Surfacing <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop surfacing guidelines in conjunction with the main user groups for rural routes | A1b H2c |  | - | | ✓ | | User Groups |
| b | Develop and undertake a programme of surface improvements for heavily used rural routes <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS7</i> | N5b |  | £50,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Develop programme of surface improvements for inter town/village and other utility paths <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS4 and WS7, Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | N5a N5b |  | £20,000 pa | | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| d | Develop programme of surface improvements for access to school routes <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS2, Cycling Strategy CY2 and CY3</i> | N5c N5d |  | £15,000 pa | | ✓ | | WCC (others) |

| Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders | |
|------------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|-------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------|--|
| | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | | |
| P10 Network survey | | | | | | | | |
| a | Complete full network survey | A1g H2d N4a P10b R4b |  | £10,000 | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Enter all data collected onto GIS | P10a R4b |  | - | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| P11 Working practices | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop written working practices to formalise internal procedures | A1g H2d N4a P10b R4b |  | - | ✓ | | | |



Records, changes and mapping

National picture

The Definitive Map and Statement forms the legal record of public rights of way. It comprises a number of maps showing the position of the rights of way and a list of paths describing their position and it may include other details such as the width of paths. The Definitive Map is the source for the routes shown on the Ordnance Survey Landranger and Explorer maps.

The law places a duty on each Highway Authority to undertake a continuous review of the Definitive Map (the Review). The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) introduced a deadline of 2026 for completing the Review. The Countryside Agency's 'Discovering Lost Ways' project has been set up to systematically search historic records for routes of previously unrecorded public footpaths, bridleways and byways so that Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) can be made to record them on the Definitive Map. The research is also expected to reveal the existence of higher rights along some routes e.g. bridle rights along routes recorded as public footpaths. Routes can also be recorded based on evidence of longstanding use by the public. Landowners can protect themselves against paths being created through future usage, by submitting a plan and declaration under Section 31 Highways Act 1980 and resubmitting at regular intervals, but this has no effect retrospectively.

Progress on the Review varies a great deal between authorities, with some dealing with applications in date order and some dealing with them geographically, and others selecting the next case on the grounds of benefit to the network or other criteria.

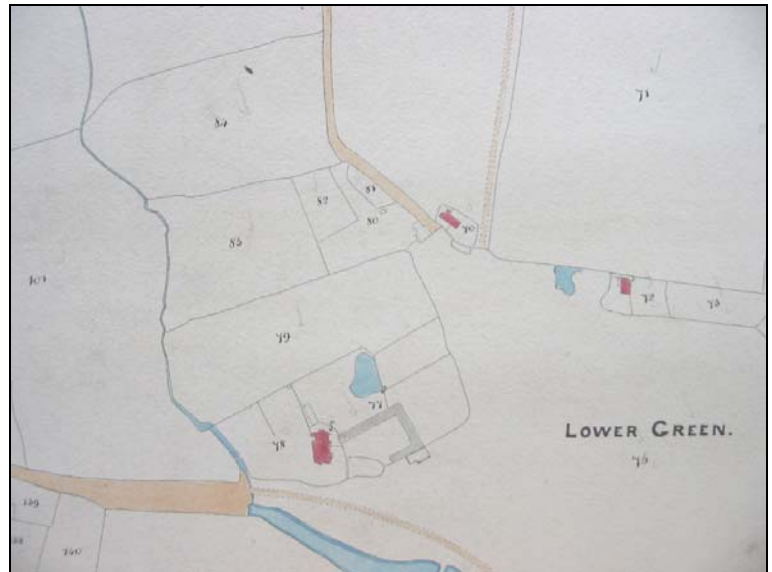
Other orders are made which change the rights of way network through extinguishments, creations and diversions (Public Path Orders or PPOs). These can be made by either county or district/borough councils and many of them are made in association with planning consents. Development offers the opportunity to achieve improvements to the path network. Paths can also be created, diverted or extinguished via application to the magistrates courts or the Secretary of State.

It is also possible to enter into agreements with landowners to create routes over their land. This is a cost effective way of achieving improvements to the network provided agreement can be reached with the landowner. Such agreements can form part of a "new paths for old" package.

The government is currently looking at changes in the law to minimise the impact of motorised users on rights of way, and this may make blanket changes to the rights which mechanically propelled vehicles have over certain routes. A Bill (Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill) is currently before Parliament, but at the time of going to print, the outcome is not yet known.

Situation in Warwickshire

Warwickshire's Definitive Map and Statement was first published in the 1960s and was updated and re-issued in 1991 and 1998. Every year a number of legal orders are made; DMMOs to correct the Definitive Map and Statement, adding previously unrecorded highways or higher rights, deleting wrongly recorded rights and/or correcting errors, and PPOs to move or change existing rights of way. Since 1998, some 22 DMMOs and over 140 PPOs have been completed (some PPOs have been made by authorities other than WCC). There are 166 outstanding applications for DMMOs and a further 400 potential cases awaiting investigation. On average 30 or so PPO applications are received by WCC each year.



Extract of a 19th century tithe map – commonly used as evidence in a DMMO case

Due to the large number of outstanding DMMO cases we believe that the Review must be undertaken as efficiently as possible. In Warwickshire we have adopted a geographic progression which, as source documents are most commonly parish based, allows us to research an area comprehensively. It also allows parish and town councils, users and landowners to look at all the cases within their area within a short space of time, to understand the area and participate fully in the process. In addition to the claims and applications, there are over 100 unsurfaced unclassified roads (UCRs – also known as unclassified county roads or, in Warwickshire, E Roads) which will require investigation. Although it is generally assumed that these carry vehicular rights, evidence has shown that some should only be recorded as footpaths or bridleways. Many of these are shown on Ordnance Survey (OS) maps as 'Other Routes with Public Access' or 'ORPAs'.

The majority of potential claims have been identified in Warwickshire, and the Discovering Lost Ways project is therefore unlikely to discover a significant number of new cases but, even so, meeting the 2026 deadline will be a considerable challenge, and will not be achieved within current resources.

PPOs have, until now, been dealt with in the order in which they are received. Whilst this is a reasonable way of dealing with the cases, considerable benefits could be obtained for the public by prioritising cases where a PPO will improve the path network. It has been rare for us to promote a PPO solely for the public benefit. In addition, the number of applications being received is increasing, and is likely to increase further when the CROW Act is fully implemented. It is therefore inevitable that some form of prioritisation will have to be introduced.

From 2002 onwards, a project has been in progress to ensure that the rights of way network can be made available digitally in map form, through a Geographic Information System (GIS), and with the eventual aim of making map based countryside access information available through the internet. This will not only make the information more easily accessible to the public when it can be published on the internet, but will also assist other functions within local government, such as planning, land searches etc.

Conclusions

The geographic progression of the Review has been successful and will be continued. Any change to the proposed progression would disadvantage those people who had been given to understand their cases would be dealt with in the near future, and will inevitably increase the time taken to complete the Review. Publication of the Definitive Map via GIS will minimise future transcription errors and enable more efficient republication of the Definitive Map as well as allowing countryside access mapping information to be available over the internet and allowing rights of way information to be shared electronically with other local authorities.

The order in which we deal with PPOs will be changed so as to maximise the benefit to the public, and this should include both PPOs which are promoted by us as well as PPOs which are requested by the landowner or a third party. A new Policy will cover prioritisation of PPOs.

Actions identified for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Continue with the Definitive Map Review as before
- Set up mechanism for prioritisation for PPOs and consider making pro-active PPOs where there is sufficient public benefit to justify the action
- Make the most of opportunities for developer contributions
- Integrate, so far as is possible, work on DMMOs and PPOs
- Publicise Section 31 Highways Act 1980 declarations amongst the landowner community
- Make interactive countryside access mapping and information available via the internet, libraries etc
- Seek new routes to fill gaps in the network.

Policies see Annex 1

The actions under this Theme are supported by the following Policies:





- Definitive Map review
- Public Path Orders for footpaths and bridleways
- Landowner declarations
- Development.









Key legislation see also Appendix III









- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Highways Act 1980
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981








Key references

- Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way in Warwickshire, 1998, Warwickshire County Council
- Discovering Lost Ways project (www.countryside.gov.uk/dlw)
- Statement of the order of priorities for bringing and keeping the Definitive Map of public rights of way up to date (WCC November 1989)
- Warwickshire Public Rights of Way Strategy c.1996

| | | | | | |
|--|-----|--|--|--|--|
| Action Plan: Records, changes and mapping | Key |  existing staff |  additional staff or time |  partnerships |  quick wins |
| | | | | | |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|--|--|-----------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| R1 The review of the Definitive Map and Statement | | | | | | | | |
| a | Progress the review at the current rate in accordance with Policy CA1 Definitive Map review | |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Increase pace of the review in order to meet the 2026 deadline | |  | £5,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Take UCRs out of sequence and process DMMOs to remove uncertainty over status | |  | £5,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| R2 Public Path Orders <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10, Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Offer reduced fee PPOs on paths newly recorded or upgraded by DMMOs for applications made within 3 months of confirmation | |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Pursue PPOs where they can be made in lieu of DMMOs | N8a R1a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| c | Offer reduced fees to landowners who are willing to create additional paths or links as part of a “New Paths for Old” package | N2b N2c R7a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| d | Give priority to all PPO applications which remove or improve crossings of railway lines or heavily trafficked roads or which remove the need for excessive road walking <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS8</i> | N8e R7a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| e | Promote creation orders to create links between existing paths or to improve strategic recreational routes over WCC land <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | N2b N2c N8d N8f |  | £1,000 per route | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|---|---|------------------------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|--|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| f | Promote creation orders to create links between existing paths or to improve strategic recreational routes over land in non-WCC ownership <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | N2b N2c N8a N8f S3c T2d |  | £1,000 per route | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| R3 Section 31(6) Highways Act 1980 declarations | | | | | | | | |
| a | Encourage landowners to lodge declarations with WCC through a publicity campaign | E3c |  | £5,000 | | ✓ | | NFU CLA |
| R4 The installation of the rights of way database and associated GIS | | | | | | | | |
| a | Continue and complete the digitised data checking process towards a digital record | R4c |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| b | Establish IT framework to allow full network survey, including inventory information, and input data into GIS | A1g H2d N4a P4d P10a P10b |  | £5,000 | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| c | Publish updated Definitive Map and Statement | P4a P4d |  | £10,000 | | | ✓ | |
| d | Make the Definitive Map and Statement information available online | E3b R4c S5c |  | - | | | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| e | Establish links between, and share the rights of way dataset with other environmental datasets e.g. habitat, species, archaeology | E3a E7d S6d |  | - | | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) Heritage and environmental professionals |
| R5 Development | | | | | | | | |
| a | Seek additional routes and improvements to existing paths commensurate with increase in population or vehicle movements on large development sites <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS9 and WS10, Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | N3b N5b N8b P4c R5d |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|---|---|--|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|--------------------------------|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| b | Work with district and borough planners to ensure applications affecting existing rights of way are advertised and treated as a material planning consideration <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS9</i> | E7c |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Other councils WCC (others) |
| c | Publicise issues surrounding agricultural permitted development and public rights of way | E7c |  | £5,000 | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| d | Seek developer contributions associated with all large developments <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS9, Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | H5b R5a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| R6 Dedication agreements <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Seek agreements which add routes constructively to the path network <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | N2b N2c N2e N8a N8b N8c N8d N8f |  | £1,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Seek agreements in lieu of DMMO's | R1a |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| R7 New Paths for Old <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10, Cycling Strategy CY2</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | We will use schemes under the 'New Paths for Old' umbrella to improve and develop the rights of way network for the public by combining public path orders and other legal agreements | N2c N2e N8b N8f R2c R2d S1d |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| R8 Working practices | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop written working practices to formalise internal procedures | |  | - | ✓ | | | |



Strategic developments and promotion

National picture

The legal network of public paths is overlain by a range of promoted paths and trails. These promoted trails encourage people to use the network and can aid understanding and interpretation of the surrounding environment. Rather than simply selecting a route from an Ordnance Survey map, promoted trails are the means by which many people will venture into the countryside for an experience wider than a visit to a single site.

Promoted routes vary from trails of national and international significance, to local circular walks within a particular parish. Some trails have specific trail waymarking and interpretation on the ground, others rely simply on a leaflet or guidebook. A well designed promoted route encourages confidence and enables users to select the right type of countryside experience for them. Good trail interpretation on the ground and/or via published material can bring the surroundings to life and add significantly to enjoyment, appreciation and learning. A poorly designed or incorrectly described route can cause problems for both users trying to follow the route, and landowners trying to prevent trespass.

In the main, promoted trails tend to follow existing public rights of way, roads, canal tow paths or cross land in public ownership. Although some trails cross land by agreement (often referred to as permissive paths) such agreements can be vulnerable to changes of ownership (or mind). Trail designers can often be thwarted by the lack of connectivity in the network, being forced to include sections of road walking or to disregard otherwise attractive sections because of such barriers.

Although some trails are devised by local authorities, the majority are promoted by interested individuals and organisations. Trails and their literature vary in quality. There is no requirement for authors to audit paths on the ground prior to publication, although many do, nor to check accuracy against the Definitive Maps held by local authorities. Similarly, the only check which the Ordnance Survey make before including named trails on their maps is to check with the local authorities whether a route is recognised. There is no quality standard or kite mark for trails (other than National Trails). The majority of trails are for walkers, with some (largely on the road) trails and routes for cyclists and a few routes targeted at horseriders.

Situation in Warwickshire

Warwickshire has no National Trails passing through the County. There are a number of established long distance paths for walkers and a growing number of cycling trails, including two routes in the National Cycle Network developed and promoted by Sustrans. There are very few promoted routes for horseriders, largely because the bridleway provision is patchy and poor through most of the County.

A number of named routes of regional importance pass through the County (or are contained wholly within it), however these have mainly arisen from the commitment of dedicated individuals and voluntary groups. There is ongoing demand for long trails. Our own Centenary Way leaflets continue to sell despite lack of active promotion and outdated information. The exemplar routes which we wish to encourage and support are those which are actively monitored and updated by those who have created them.

There are several routes in the County, such as the Avon Valley Way which have great potential but which lack any cohesive promotion or publicity. There is an opportunity to both extend the route from Stratford upon Avon to Warwick, and to promote it regionally and increase usage. There is the added potential to develop this and other routes as joint cycling and walking trails.

There is good, if patchy, provision of circular trails in the one hour to half day range for walkers. Cycling trail provision has increased significantly, but demand remains high, particularly for off-road or traffic free routes. There is a need for provision of routes for horseriders, particularly circular routes of less than a days ride. Adjoining counties have made provision for horseriders, and a long distance trail to link into these routes would be well received and link into a regional network of such routes.

One area with potential for expansion is the provision of entry level 'easy access' trails such as greenways which can encourage first steps into the countryside and widen participation beyond the traditional ramblers.

There are plenty of local trail guidebooks and leaflets available across the County, but these vary in quality and some may never be updated. Additionally one-off trails are published by others in national and local magazines.

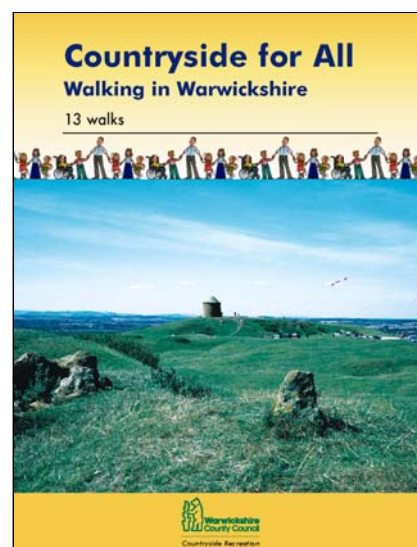
There are many led walks across the County ranging from regular trips out with the Ramblers' Association to short themed walks within, and leading out from, the Country Parks, as well as some organised by other organisations such as Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and district/borough councils. In addition to the regular led walks programmes, in 2005 we held our first 'Warwickshire Walking Festival' with a programme of walks over 8 days, promoted nationally.

In each of these areas we need to analyse existing provision and maximise the opportunities already in existence as well as developing new trails.

Both national research and our own research has shown that there is much demand for access to water and woodland. We have therefore included a section on access to woodlands and waterside.

Conclusions

Good promoted trails add value to the network by enabling and encouraging use. Flagship routes can showcase the County as an alternative venue to established trail destinations. The River Avon with its Shakespeare and Stratford upon Avon associations presents an opportunity to create a new trail for the County.



Countryside for All - our successful easy access trails

We should concentrate on the provision of trails of regional importance and entry level provision such as 'easy access' trails as the mid distance circular walks are being covered by the voluntary and commercial sectors. We will continue to support others developing mid distance trails, providing support and advice, and sharing best practice. However, we should exercise caution and ensure that our improvements are compatible with the sustainability of the Warwickshire countryside.

We should develop and maintain a list of 'recognised trails' and define criteria for the Local Access Forum to consider future routes for inclusion.

Actions identified for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Create a maintained list of existing trails supported by WCC with criteria for additional trails to be included
- Create an equestrian trail for the County in partnership with BHS or other equestrian partners
- Develop a flagship trail between Warwick and Stratford upon Avon along the River Avon for walkers and cyclists
- Provide more high quality easy access trails in the type of countryside identified by our consultation work
- Provide a countryside access information point within Stratford-on-Avon District
- Host high profile events such as the Warwickshire Walking Festival to showcase access in the county
- Open greenways at Leamington to Rugby and Kenilworth to Berkswell
- Support Sustrans in the development of the National Cycle Network.

Policies see Annex 1

The actions under this Theme are supported by the following Policies:





- Public Path Orders for footpaths and bridleways
- Signs and waymarking
- Volunteers
- Promoted routes and trails
- Permissive paths.



















Key legislation see also Appendix III

- Highways Act 1980



Key references

- Growing our Future - the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework (Forestry Commission 2004)
- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation (ODPM 2002)
- Space for people - targeting action for woodland access (Woodland Trust 2004)





| | | | | | |
|--|-----|--|--|--|--|
| Action Plan: Strategic developments and promotion | Key |  existing staff |  additional staff or time |  partnerships |  quick wins |
| | | | | | |

| Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders | |
|--|---|--|---|-------------------|--|----|-----------------------------|--|
| | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | | |
| S1 Existing promoted routes <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Maintain a list of Recognised Promoted Routes ('the List') | S5c |   | - |  | ✓ | ✓ | LAF |
| b | Ensure that routes on the List are periodically inspected | |   | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | User groups |
| c | Continue seeking improved infrastructure on routes on the List | A1a N3a P4c |   | £10,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | P3 partners User groups |
| d | Identify key road links on the List and seek to create alternative routes <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS8, Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | N2a N2b N3c N3d R2e R2f R6a R7a |   | £5,000 per link | | ✓ | ✓ | User groups |
| S2 Proposed promoted routes <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop a procedure for adding routes to the List | S1a |   | - |  | | | LAF User groups |
| b | Support and assist the development of Sustrans routes <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY3</i> | N6a N6b |   | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Sustrans |
| c | Support and assist the development of the Battlefields Trail | |   | - | ✓ | ✓ | | Other councils Battlefields Trust WCC (others) Heritage professionals |
| d | Support and assist the development of the North Arden Trail (this project has recently been awarded £442,500 by Heritage Lottery Fund) | |   | - | ✓ | ✓ | | WCC (others) Other councils |


| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|--|---|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-------------------|-----|----|--|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| e | Support and assist the development of a strategic equestrian route through the County | | | £15,000 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | User groups |
| f | Develop a strategic equestrian route through the County | | | £35,000 | | | ✓ | User groups |
| g | Develop the two proposed greenways (Leamington-Rugby and Kenilworth-Berkswell) <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY3 and CY5</i> | N6a | | £250,000 | ✓ | ✓ | | Sustrans Other councils |
| S3 Waterside and woodland access <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Work with others to identify and improve a number of suitable waterside routes, and promote them as easy access walks | A1a A2b H2a H5a P4c | | £25,000 | | ✓ | ✓ | British Waterways Environment Agency |
| b | Relaunch the existing Avon Valley Way between Stratford upon Avon and Marlcliff | | | £5,000 | ✓ | | | Other councils |
| c | Develop and extend the Avon Valley Way between Stratford upon Avon and Warwick for bankside walking and cycling <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY2 and CY5</i> | N8b R2f T2d | | £50,000 | | | ✓ | Environment Agency |
| d | To support other organisations in securing access to woodland | N8b | | £5,000 per route created | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Forestry Commission Woodland Trust Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Landowners |
| S4 Walking festival <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10 and WS11</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop and organise an annual walking festival, building on the success of the 2005 event | H1e H1h T1a | | £20,000 | ✓ _Q | ✓ | ✓ | Sponsors WCC (others) Volunteers |
| S5 Countryside Recreation website <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10, Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop an interactive route-planning facility online and available in libraries | E3d | | £10,000 | | | ✓ | WCC (others) |










| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|---|--|---|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| b | Establish online ordering of countryside publications | |  | - | ✓ | | | WCC (others) |
| c | Produce a range of downloadable leaflets and other information | A3a E1a E3b E6a H1b H2b N4b R4d S1a S9a T1a T2b T2f |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |







S6 Countryside information *LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|---|------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| a | Develop an information point in the south of the County, including car parking and toilets | T2c |  | £100,000 | | | ✓ | WCC (others) Other councils |
| b | Develop a network of, predominantly village based, information boards (or similar) throughout the County to publicise local access networks and responsible use of the countryside including; dogs, Open Access Land, Countryside Code, local attractions, heritage, wildlife, refreshments, etc. | A2a H1f T2a |  | £5,000 per board | | ✓ | ✓ | Other councils P3 partners Market Towns Heritage and environmental professionals |
| c | Develop a range of circular trails from villages and small towns with leaflets publicising local attractions, farm shops, refreshments, public transport, garden centres etc. | H5b S7c |  | £10,000 per village | | ✓ | ✓ | Other councils P3 partners Local attractions WCC (others) Market Towns |
| d | Work with heritage and environmental professionals on promotional material which links together topics e.g. history, archaeology, wildlife | R4e S7c |  | £5,000 per publication | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) Heritage and environmental professionals |

S7 Health *LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|---|--------------------|--------|---|--|--------------|
| a | Develop a series of stile free circular routes with information explaining the health benefits, timed circuits, etc from centres of populations <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS11</i> | A2a H1g H1h H2a P4c |  | £10,000 per series | ✓ Q | ✓ | | CoAg PCTs |
|---|--|---------------------------|---|--------------------|--------|---|--|--------------|

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|--|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|-----------------------------|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| b | Organise an annual healthy cycling promotion campaign and associated events <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY1</i> | H1h |  | £5,000 | | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) User groups |
| c | Assess existing and future promotional material to ensure that opportunities are taken to promote the health benefits of countryside activities | H1f H1h H5 S6c S6d |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) PCTs |
| d | Produce a directory of healthy activities in the Warwickshire countryside <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY1</i> | H3c |  | £5,000 per edition | | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| S8 Cycling <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Promote the opportunities for safe cycling in Country Parks and greenways and bridleways <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY12</i> | H5c S11b |  | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| b | Investigate the opportunities to establish corporate purchase schemes for bicycles to promote cycling | S8d |  | - | | ✓ | | WCC (others) |
| c | Promote family cycling on named trails | H1h S8d |  | £3,000 per route | | ✓ | | |
| d | Promote a cycling culture by encouraging families and young children to go cycling | S8b S8c |  | £3,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| e | Promote cycle routes from residential areas to the wider countryside access network and specific sites and provide cycle storage <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY6</i> | H5b |  | £10,000 per route | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| S9 Horseriding | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop and promote circular rides throughout the County | S5c T3b |  | £10,000 per route | ✓ | ✓ | | User groups |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|--|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| S10 Countryside Code | | | | | | | | |
| a | Provide a schools activity pack to cover responsible use of the countryside and the Countryside Code | E4a E4b |  | £5,000 | | ✓ | | WCC (others) CoAg |
| b | Develop an annual media campaign to publicise the Countryside Code and use of the Warwickshire countryside | E3c E5a E6a |  | £3,000 pa | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| S11 Guided events | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop, with farmers, a series of farm walks to promote an understanding of rural issues | H1e |  | £3,000 per walk | | ✓ | ✓ | Land managers NFU CLA Rural Hub |
| b | Develop the existing walks and events programme to include guided cycling events <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | A3b S8a |  | - | | ✓ | | |
| S12 Marketing plan | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop a marketing plan for access to the Warwickshire countryside, including the effective distribution of the leaflets for the County's promoted routes and other information leaflets | T4a |  | - | | ✓ | | WCC (others) |
| S13 Open space and green space | | | | | | | | |
| a | Undertake an assessment of current open space and green space provision within Warwickshire, so as to identify gaps in availability | A4b T2c |  | £20,000 | ✓ | ✓ | | CoAg Other councils Land managers |



Tourism and leisure

National picture

The importance of the countryside and the public path network to tourism is increasingly recognised and well documented. Research has quantified the contribution of specific trails to the local economy, for example the total economic value of the South West Coast Path to the local economy is estimated to be £135.7 million annually. Work by the Countryside Agency and the Ramblers' Association aimed to quantify the general contribution of walking and tourism spend.

The Great Britain Day Visitors Survey 2002/3 reported 5.2 billion day visits nationally, almost 400 million of which included walking in the countryside. It was the second most popular activity. The average spend per person on day trips in the countryside was £8.60, and the average journey to the countryside in England was 18.6 miles. The West Midlands recorded an estimated 114 million day trips to the countryside of which 94 million were by West Midlands residents.

The Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in 2001, whilst terrible for the stock farmers and all concerned, temporarily deprived the public of the 'taken for granted' access to much of the countryside and highlighted the relative contributions of the tourism and farming sectors to the national economy.

Much early work looking at linkages between tourism and public rights of way tended to focus on high profile trails and 'big hike' destinations. More recently it has been recognised that the existence of walking, cycling and riding trails as complementary to existing tourist facilities is important.

The biggest single factor in measuring the importance of countryside access to the tourism sector has been a re-evaluation of how we define tourism. Rather than simply focus on high spend overseas visitors and the home holiday market we now appreciate the contribution of the short break and day visitor market as well as the 'visits from friends and relatives'. A visit is often the catalyst for people to make alternative choices about how and where they spend their time, for example, friends visiting for the weekend resulting in a first visit to an attraction which has been on the doorstep for years.

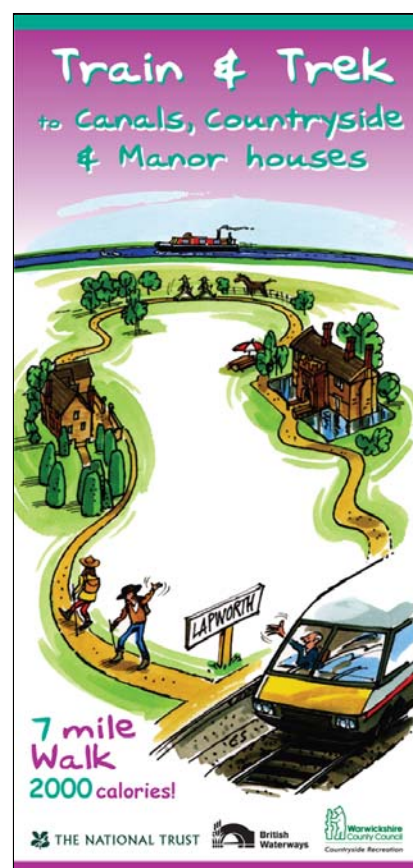
Situation in Warwickshire

Warwickshire is a varied and accessible county, with around half a million residents. The landscape is steeped in history, gentle and welcoming with countryside that is generally intensively farmed. The County has an increasingly well managed network of public paths overlain with promoted trails of national, regional, sub-regional and local importance. Many local visitors come from Coventry, Solihull and the Birmingham conurbation.

Warwickshire is fortunate in having a world renowned tourism destination in Stratford upon Avon with its Shakespeare associations as well as other 'A-list' destinations such as Warwick Castle. Of equal or greater importance (though not necessarily economically) are the growing list of other attractions in the countryside, together with the role of our Country Parks and historic market towns as gateways to the wider countryside. Our approach has been to package days out for the existing visitor market by suggesting walks and trails near to other attractions and presenting the information in a clear accessible format and promoting sustainable transport options. We believe this approach to be right, but to date modest investment has resulted in modest returns.

The first Warwickshire Walking Festival ran from 1st – 8th June 2005, and had over 50 walks led by voluntary walks leaders. The positive feedback from this event and from visitors to the County tells us that the product is right and the visitor experience a good one.

In order to derive benefits from tourism, and its link with promoted trails and use of the countryside, we believe that we, in partnership with others, should put together a range of projects which together market Warwickshire as a great place for countryside recreation. We do not need to lead on all projects but will support and add value to countryside access projects which forward the wider aims within this plan. Ideally we should have a marketing plan for the Warwickshire Countryside which is developed with partner providers.



Train and Trek – developed in partnership with the National Trust and British Waterways

Conclusions

The linkages between accessible countryside and tourism are under-developed in the County.

Much of the work on countryside access to date has focused on the statutory duties placed upon WCC. For us to realise the wider benefits of this investment we need to promote Warwickshire as a great destination for countryside recreation. There is a significant opportunity lost in not doing so as other areas aggressively compete in the tourism and leisure sector. Most of our aims will be shared or complementary to the objectives of other providers in the sector.

Actions identified for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Set out a clear, shared vision for promoting the Warwickshire countryside
- Improve existing trails of regional importance
- Identify, develop and promote flagship countryside sites and facilities
- Host high profile events – our own and supporting others
- Increase the range of high quality local trails linked to and promoted from other attractions
- Research the opportunities for equestrian tourism e.g. bed and breakfast for horses and toll rides
- Provide gateway information points in Country Parks, market towns and via the Warwickshire Web and the Enjoy Warwickshire website
- Share publicity and distribution with other providers.

Policies see Annex 1

The actions under this Theme are supported by the following Policy:

- Promoted routes and trails.

Key references

- Great Britain Day Visitors Survey, 2002-2003
- Quality of Life Report, 2004, Warwickshire County Council.
- The Economic and Social Value of Walking in England, 2003, Dr Mike Christie and Jon Matthews for the Ramblers' Association
- The Economic Impact of Recreation and Tourism in the English Countryside 1998, The Countryside Agency
- www.heartofenglandtourism.com

Action Plan: Tourism and leisure

Key



existing staff



additional staff or time






partnerships



quick wins

| Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders | |
|---|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------|----|-----------------------------|---|
| | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | | |
| T1 Events <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Publicise the annual walking festival throughout the UK | S4a S5c | | £20,000 | ✓ Q | ✓ | ✓ | Sponsors |
| b | Support A Coventry Way Association in supporting their annual event, and offer similar support for other key events. | H1b | | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | User groups |
| T2 Information points and key sites/routes <i>LTP links: Walking Strategy WS10</i> | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop series of gateway information boards in key tourism locations to promote local circular routes and other countryside attractions and businesses | S6b | | £5,000 per board | | ✓ | ✓ | Other councils WCC (others) Local businesses Market Towns Tourism providers |
| b | Further develop use of the Warwickshire Web to provide information for visitors about the Warwickshire countryside <i>LTP links: Cycling Strategy CY5</i> | E3a E3b E3c E3d E6a S5c | | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| c | Identify, develop and promote flagship countryside sites N.B. none of the WCC countryside sites in the south of the County have visitor centres or information points | A4b S6a S13a | | £300,000 per site | | | ✓ | WCC (others) |
| d | Extend the Avon Valley Way between Stratford and Warwick and publicise it | R2f S3c | | £50,000 | | | ✓ | Environment Agency |
| e | Develop a "Two Castles Walk" between Warwick and Kenilworth Castles | P4c | | £10,000 | | ✓ | | User groups |
| f | Provide up-to-date information about the Centenary Way | E3a S5c | | £15,000 | | ✓ | | User groups |

| | Action | Link to other actions | Resources | Additional funding | Timescale (years) | | | Key partners & stakeholders |
|---|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----|---|
| | | | | | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5+ | |
| T3 Holiday accommodation | | | | | | | | |
| a | Work with tourism and accommodation providers to distribute circular trail information and other promotional material to visitors to the County | S12a T4a |  | - | | | ✓ | WCC (others) Tourism providers |
| b | Investigate ways of encouraging equestrian tourism | S9a |  | - | | | ✓ | User groups Tourism providers TROT Rural Hub |
| T4 Profile of the Warwickshire countryside | | | | | | | | |
| a | Develop a marketing plan for the Warwickshire countryside with key partners | S12a T3a |  | - | | ✓ | | WCC (others) Tourism providers |

Monitoring and progress

The time span covered by the CAROWIP will be 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2016. It is likely, however, that the plan will be reviewed with the LTP in 2010, with a new or revised plan taking effect from 2011.

At the beginning of each financial year, following consultation with the Local Access Forum, we will publish:

- a **CAROWIP Annual Report** which will include information about the progress within each Theme.
- a separate **Annual Progress Summary** will be prepared to report back with the Local Transport Plan.
- a **CAROWIP Statement of Intent**, indicating the targets which we will aim to meet that year together with costings, and relating them to the Action Plans. It will also include details of those targets which it will not be possible to meet and give the reasons for that.

These reports will be available to the public and will be posted on the Warwickshire Web, and publicised through our countryside magazine "Viewpoint" and the Local Access Forum.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 provides for the Secretary of State to make regulations covering the reporting of performance on rights of way functions. The regulations may affect the way in which we monitor and report on the CAROWIP but at the time of writing we are still awaiting those regulations.

This page has been left blank on purpose.