



**Devon Countryside Access Forum**  
**c/o Public Rights of Way team**  
**Great Moor House**  
**Bittern Road**  
**Sowton**  
**EXETER EX2 4QD**

**Tel: 07837 171000**  
**01392 382771**

[devoncaf@devon.gov.uk](mailto:devoncaf@devon.gov.uk)

[www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf)

## **Sixty-Seventh meeting** **Devon Countryside Access Forum**

**Westbank Community Health and Care, Farm House Rise,**  
**Exminster EX6 8AT**

**Monday, 22 April 2024 at 10.00 am**

The meeting will be open to the public in accordance with provisions of reg.7 of The Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007 (under s 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).

### **A G E N D A**

1. Apologies and welcome
2. Declarations of interest
3. To approve minutes of meeting held on 22 January 2024 (Pages 1 - 12)
4. Matters arising

4.1 Network Rail, Sandy Lane, Rewe (Pages 13 - 14)

To note and formally approve letter submitted to Network Rail. To discuss further with Network Rail staff.

4.2 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (Pages 15 - 20)

To formally approve the revised Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan position statement, submitted in response to the Devon County Council consultations on the Cullompton and Tiverton LCWIP and Clyst Valley and New Communities LCWIP.

4.3 Lower Brenton Farm planning application

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment

- 4.4 Sidbury to Sidford cycle route, Devon County Council
- 4.5 Defra response on dog issues
- 4.6 Devon Countryside Access Forum information pack
- 5. Election of Chair and Vice Chair
- 6. Public questions
- 7. Correspondence log April 2024 (Pages 21 - 26)
- 8. Report on meetings attended by DCAF members
  - 8.1 Otter Estuary. National Nature Reserve opening
- 9. Rights of Way Improvement Plan Review (Pages 27 - 96)
- 10. To note minutes of the Public Rights of Way Committee held on 7 March 2024 (Pages 97 - 100)
- 11. Public Rights of Way update
- 12. Current consultations
  - 12.1 A379 bridge (Pages 101 - 102)
    - To consider drawing designs for improved accessibility.
  - 12.2 Smarter regulation: proposed changes to legislation for electrically assisted pedal cycles. Department for Transport. (Pages 103 - 108)
- 13. To note and approve responses to consultations and submissions. To note any feedback.
  - 13.1 Exeter Plan, Exeter City Council (Pages 109 - 110)
  - 13.2 Woodbury Common. Deregistration and exchange of common land. (Pages 111 - 112)
  - 13.3 Hemyock Common. Review of statutory direction. Natural England. (Pages 113 - 118)
    - To note response submitted and Natural England decision.

14. Training Day
15. Work Plan (Pages 119 - 120)
16. Date of next meeting

Monday, 23 September 2024, venue to be confirmed.

Notice of questions from the public should be submitted in writing four working days before the Forum meeting. At the discretion of the Chair members of the public may be invited to ask a question or make a statement.





# Agenda Item 3.

Devon Countryside Access Forum  
c/o Public Rights of Way team  
Great Moor House  
Bittern Road  
Sowton  
EXETER EX2 7NL

Tel: 07837 171000  
01392 382084

[devoncaf@devon.gov.uk](mailto:devoncaf@devon.gov.uk)

[www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf)

## Minutes of the Sixty-Sixth meeting of the Devon Countryside Access Forum held at County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QD

Monday, 22 January 2024

### Attendance

#### Forum members

Andrew Baker	Tino Savvas
Cllr Richard Chesterton	Robert Sewell
Tim Felton	Lorna Sherriff
Lucinda Francis	Sarah Slade (Chair)
Cllr Linda Hellyer (virtual)	Tim Spray
Jo Hooper	Glynn Yabsley
Sue Pudduck	

#### Devon County Council Officers and others present

Richard Walton, Public Rights of Way and Country Parks Manager, DCC  
Hilary Winter, Forum Officer, DCC  
Philip Hackett, Access Field Officer, South West, British Horse Society  
Daniel Hayes, Level Crossing Manager, Network Rail

### 1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Jo Burgess, Chris Cole, Gordon Guest and Bryan Smith.

### 2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. To approve minutes of meeting held on 18 September 2023

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2023 were approved and signed.

# Agenda Item 3.

## 4. Matters arising

### 4.1 Network Rail. Sandy Lane, Rewe

The Chair welcomed Daniel Hayes, Level Crossing Manager, from Network Rail. Mr Hayes explained that Sandy Lane was currently closed at both ends whilst works were being undertaken. No Traffic Order Regulation was in place. Works being done on the crossing included a new surface, gates with cradles either side of the track and a miniature warning light system to allow time for pedestrians to cross. There were no rights for motorbikes or horses to cross the railway line at this location, although motorbike use had been reported in the past.

The new crossing, surfacing, fences, approaches, and signage were being finalised and would be tested by the Civils and Telecommunications teams in early February. Work had been delayed as much had to be done overnight as it was a main line. Mr Hayes apologised for the long closure.

Network Rail had been contacted about accessibility. If the gates were changed to permit this, motorbikes could potentially access the crossing. Works could be done on the lane to prevent motorbikes.

Andrew Baker, also Chairman of Rewe Parish Council, expressed frustration at the length of time the crossing had been closed and the lack of consultation with the Parish Council. The positioning and timing of the warning lights was critical on the busy stretch of line.

It was agreed and stressed that a Network Rail policy to routinely consider accessibility should be essential at the beginning of the planning process for any crossing to meet Equality Act requirements. Any crossing might be used by disabled people if suitable gates were installed. Procedures should be put in place to consult and design appropriate solutions, wherever safety considerations could be met.

Richard Walton, DCC, confirmed that the Institute of Public Rights of Way officers (IPROW) had done a lot of work with Network Rail. The crossing was unusual as the crossing point was a 'pedestrian only highway,' not a footpath, and the lane either side was an unsurfaced, unclassified county road. He requested specification details for the gates and associated access work being undertaken.

It was resolved to write to Daniel Hayes and senior staff within Network Rail to advise that a policy and process for assessing accessibility use and adaptations should be developed. This applied generically and not just to Sandy Lane. A draft would be circulated to members. Learning from this could be brought back to IPROW.

*Action: Forum Officer*

## 4.2 Defra response on dog issues

Hansard for 14.09.23 reported Trudy Harrison's response to a Parliamentary question. (Trudy Harrison MP was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs at that time).

"Publication of the membership, regular participants and key stakeholders who have engaged with the Responsible Dog Ownership working group is expected later this year alongside their conclusions. We are currently working in partnership with the police, local authorities and animal welfare organisations to address all aspects of tackling irresponsible dog ownership effectively, from prevention to robust, consistent enforcement, focussing on owners as well as on their dogs." This information had not yet been published.

It was agreed that the existing DCAF information on varying dog legislation should be placed on the new Local Access Forum SharePoint discussion board.

*Action: Forum Officer*

## 4.3 Former railway line between Buttercombe and Foxhunters

Planning approval for the 700m trail between Buttercombe and Foxhunters was granted in late September which pre-empted any further DCAF comments on surfacing. The surfacing, as stated in the planning application, would be bound tarmac which did factor in British Horse Society advice but was more intrusive in the landscape. It was agreed that earlier involvement in the process would be helpful. It was suggested rolling chippings into the top surface or changing the colour might reduce the impact. Surfacing considerations would be included in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

## 4.4 Annual Report

The Annual Report had been put on the website and the national Local Access Forum SharePoint site.

## 4.5 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

A number of suggestions were made to improve the draft position Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan position statement.

- Design and Safety aspects, point 9. The first sentence to be amended to read 'Replacing stiles and kissing gates with 1.5 m wide gates with easy access latches and trombone handles where gaps are not possible.' A new fourth sentence to be added stating that 'weight of gates should be considered to allow easy access.'
- Whilst encouraging road users to consider how they could improve their own safety was a valid point, it was considered not appropriate

# Agenda Item 3.

for this position statement.

- Identifying the focus, point 1). It was agreed dog walkers should be added to the list of users.
- Design and safety aspects, point 6. It was agreed that different surface treatments could include different colours to make the trail less visually intrusive.
- To future proof the position statement it should refer to adopting up to date best practice.

A further draft would be circulated for approval.

*Action: Forum Officer*

## **5. Public questions**

There were no public questions.

## **6. Correspondence log**

The correspondence log was noted. With reference to the footpath obstruction, it was confirmed this related to electric fencing dividing a field into multiple horse areas.

## **7. Report on meetings attended by DCAF members**

### **7.1 Northbrook Park visit with Devon Wildlife Trust**

Gordon Guest, Sue Pudduck, Sarah Slade and Tim Spray had attended a meeting at Northbrook Park, Exeter, with staff from Devon Wildlife Trust to discuss new paths and improvement plans. There was evident local interest in proposals for the Park and it was important for the DWT to connect with the local community.

### **7.2 Opening of the Elizabeth Bridge, Lower Otter Restoration Project**

Elizabeth Bridge. This had been well-supported with various groups, such as the Disabled Ramblers', being photographed. Everyone was very positive about the bridge.

## **8. To note minutes of the Public Rights of Way Committee held on 23 November 2023**

Minutes of the Public Rights of Way Committee held on 23 November were noted.

## **9. Secretary of State's Decisions on the England Coast Path**

The Secretary of State's decisions on the England Coast Path in north and south Devon were noted.



## 10. Public Rights of Way update

Richard Walton, Public Rights of Way and Country Park Manager, DCC gave an update.

### *Staffing*

The Partnerships and Projects Officer post had been advertised. This would include P3. A good response had been received and interviews would take place shortly.

It was hoped to progress the senior post for the Definitive Map and Technical team in the next financial year. In the interim, a meeting had been arranged with WSP, contractors to DCC, to organise temporary support on planning applications, Public Path Orders, temporary Traffic Regulation Orders and development work on the England Coast Path.

Tim Spray said the East Devon Ramblers had met with East Devon National Landscape officers to discuss surveying the East Devon Way for any issues. It would be useful to liaise with the new Partnerships and Projects Officer when appointed.

### *Budgets*

Information was being fed into a Cabinet report on the Capital Programme. The current capital allocation for 2023-2024 was £1.9m with £1m of that investment on the Exe Estuary Trail, led by the Engineering Design Group. £900,000 was being spent on public rights of way projects including path furniture and drainage. The public rights of way team had tapped into resilience funding for storm repairs which had caused surface water flooding and tree damage.

No substantial cuts in revenue budget were anticipated in the next financial year but with inflation spending power would be reduced. The capital allocation may potentially be a little higher.

A ring-fenced sum of £150,000 had been secured from the Asset Innovation Fund for 2024-2025 with flexible spend over the next couple of years. This is to explore surfacing techniques with an emphasis on optimising environmental sensitivity and securing carbon reduction with a focus on shared use and durability. Locations where good data could be obtained were being explored, including a section of the Exe Estuary Trail.

In response to a question about use of road planings, a waste product, Richard Walton confirmed that planings were used in accordance with waste exemption licences and the public rights of way team was reviewing locations to optimise storage for quick re-use. Planings were useful, in particular where there were private vehicle rights. The designer checklist for road improvement schemes meant that public rights of way were consulted about planings.

As not all landowners permitted storage of planings, it was suggested that the National Farmers Union might contact members to see whether farmers would be prepared to store, provided their waste licences permitted this.

# Agenda Item 3.

*Action: Richard Walton*

## *Definitive Map Review*

The Definitive Map Review team were on target to complete parishes by the end of 2025, with a focus on opening meetings for the last few parishes. The priority would then be on schedule 14 applications where public rights of way, thought to exist on historic evidence, are not on the map. Some of these were being picked up as part of the parish review too.

## *Warden work*

Key challenges were surface water and tree damage resulting from storms. As examples, three bridge crossings on the River Otter were impacted.

1. The Coleridge Bridge handrail had been damaged by a fallen tree, including the top rails which are integral parts of the bridge structure. Engineers were investigating. The bridge, an important school route and part of the National Cycle Network, was likely to be closed for a long time. The nearby public footpath (south of the bridge) had been eroded with part of the riverbank totally washed away. Resolution of this involved consideration of wider responsibility issues associated with a housing development and former flood wall built by the Environment Agency.
2. Red Bridge at Newton Poppleford, part of the East Devon Way, is being impacted by river movement and the current location is unlikely to be viable in the future. A new bridge location is proposed a little downstream, to potentially include upgrading its status.
3. At Dotton Bridge, near Newton Poppleford, river movement had caused erosion either side of bridge pillars. Engineers were looking at temporary solutions to re-open the bridge. An unclassified, unsurfaced county road met the bridge.

Much work was being carried out on uUCRs to improve the surface and drainage.

Following proactive inspections, work to fell trees affected by ash dieback was being carried out on the Wray Valley Trail and Drakes Trail with three-week closures. Information had been shared on Facebook and with businesses. The target was to finish before half term.

## *England Coast Path*

Following the Secretary of State's decision letters, the projects list would be updated in liaison with Lorna Sherriff, South West Coast Path Officer. Approximately £500,000 worth of projects had been identified for 2024-2025. These included a new route to take the trail above the road between Croyde and Saunton and avoid an unpleasant road crossing; waymarking of a route at Saunton Sands (factoring ordnance requirements in relation to Braunton Burrows and the MoD); accessibility improvements between Saunton Sands and Braunton by providing graded bypasses around historic stone stiles, also part of the drainage network; habitat related signage works in consultation with the district councils; alignment work around Skern, Appledore, including stabilisation of the coastal defence; and signage at

Hartland Quay. In south Devon works include accessibility improvements at Wembury in conjunction with the National Trust and South Devon National Landscape; and a high tide route at Mothecombe. Planning permission is in place for the Mothecombe works. Additional projects include signage for estuary routes, a new route along Shady Lane at Stoke Fleming and coast path improvements near Blackpool Sands where a tree came down in a storm. This removed a section of path with the root plate undermining stability and proximity to the cliff face meaning design specifications could not be signed off.

In response to a question about Lighthouse Beach, it was confirmed that DCC would have powers to connect the public right of way and coastal access rights once the designation process was complete, hopefully in the summer. DCC will then work with the landowner and should be able to secure removal of the gated structure. Any obstructions to the existing footpath from Beacon Road would be a public highway enforcement matter.

Work continued on Beacon Road in Kingswear. A Traffic Regulation Order was in place which allowed continued pedestrian use.

### *Stover Park*

Following a question at the last meeting, it was confirmed that visitor numbers at the Park were 186,000 in 2022 and estimated to rise to 203,500 in 2027. Despite optimising contingency and inflation figures, the contract costs for the visitor discovery centre had come in over budget. Discussions were taking place with the preferred tenderer to achieve savings and contractors should be on site at the end of February. The National Heritage Lottery Fund were content with this. Focus was on the Discovery Centre and funds would have to be secured elsewhere for the car park works to complete these within the timescale, for example through section 106 developer contributions. In a worst-case scenario, an application would have to be made to the NHLF to reduce the scope of the project.

Consultants were finalising design work for the Gatehouse and Serpentine Lake restoration. Tenders were due in for the lake desilting.

## **11. Rights of Way Improvement Plan review**

### **11.1 Rights of Way Improvement Plan review - DCAF consultation response**

The response submitted to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan consultation was approved.

### **11.2 Rights of Way Improvement Plan review update**

Richard Walton thanked the Devon Countryside Access Forum for its response. The consultation had been on 'Have Your Say' and organisations had been contacted. Ramblers' local groups had made a good response. The CLA had requested an extension and their feedback had now been received. Comments had been constructive and would be integrated into the final document.

# Agenda Item 3.

The plan is to take the final RoWIP to the Public Rights of Way Committee on 7 March and to the DCAF on 22 April. This will include the Equalities Impact and Environmental Impact Assessments. The draft was on the website as a reference document and factored in during decision making processes.

## 12. Current consultations

### 12.1 Woodbury Common. Deregistration and exchange of common land. Clinton Devon Estates.

The proposal to deregister and exchange common land was supported and would have a net benefit. Bryan Smith was thanked for his excellent report and his recommendations would be included in the response to The Planning Inspectorate. The draft response was approved and would be submitted.

*Action: Forum Officer*

### 12.2 A379 bridge, Devon County Council

Chris Cole and Gordon Guest had been on a site visit to the bridge but had given apologies for the meeting. It was agreed that this item should be deferred until the next meeting, subject to feedback on timescales.

*Action: Forum Officer*

### 12.3 Countryside and Rights of Way Act. Review of restriction Hemyock Common, Natural England

The Chair outlined the background to the restriction. The Devon Countryside Access Forum had previously seen this as a reasonable and proportionate restriction. It was noted that considerable discussions and work had gone into noise abatement between Mid Devon District Council and the Gun Club. It was resolved to support a continuation of the direction, using previous comments.

*Action: Forum Officer*

## 13. To note and approve responses to consultations and submissions. To note any feedback.

### 13.1 Wolford Lodge. Felling Licence, Forestry Commission.

The response was noted and approved.

## **13.2 Lower Brenton Farm planning application DCC/4337/2023**

The response was noted and approved.

## **13.3 Little Bray Farm forestry. Felling Licence, Forestry Commission**

The response was noted and approved.

## **13.12 Stoneycombe Quarry. Felling Licence, Forestry Commission**

The response was noted and approved.

## **13.5 Torridge District Council draft Strategic Local Plan**

The response was noted and approved.

## **13.6 North Devon Council. Public Spaces Protection Order (dogs) consultation**

The response was noted and approved. Following consultation, North Devon Council had agreed and published its Public Spaces Protection Order. [Public Spaces Protection Order - Dogs \(northdevon.gov.uk\)](https://www.northdevon.gov.uk/public-spaces-protection-order-dogs)

## **13.7 South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council. Public Spaces Protection Order (dogs) consultations**

The response was noted and approved.

## **13.8 Sidbury to Sidford cycle route. Devon County Council pre-application consultation**

The response was noted and approved.

## **14. Succession planning on the Devon Countryside Access Forum**

The Chair led a wide-ranging discussion on succession planning on the Forum and how to move forward.

The knowledge and experience of the Chair and Vice Chair were seen as invaluable. It was not clear whether the Vice Chair stepped into the Chair role and a documented succession plan was suggested to bring people on into the roles. It was recognised there should be a change regardless of any plan. Other LAFs might have experience in succession planning that the DCAF could learn from.

Members were reminded that councillors should not stand for Chair or Vice Chair and that the two positions should not be held by people from the same interest group.

# Agenda Item 3.

The Chair acknowledged the greater time input as Chair in deciding with the Forum Officer when and how to take matters forward. Anyone interested in taking on the role in future was asked to speak to the Chair or Forum Officer.

*Action: Forum members*

The Forum Officer stated that training for members had been less effective in recent years due to CoVID. Options for future meetings included historic records to inform the Definitive Map Review process at the South West Heritage Centre and a presentation from a warden.

An information pack, defining the roles of Chair, Vice Chair and members, together with more advice on the Forum's remit and in particular in areas such as planning would be invaluable. The guidance to local access forums, published in 2007, had not been updated to reflect new legislation. Given that the Forum dealt with a large geographical area compared with other authorities, some degree of proportionality might be appropriate.

*Action: Forum Officer*

Richard Walton, DCC, emphasised the importance of the Forum Officer role and that he would push hard for reappointment if the role was vacant. The expertise and varying experience of DCAF members plugged a gap in responding to consultations. A suggestion was made that a university could research the costs and benefits of a local access forum.

Prior to the establishment of the DCAF, Devon County Council had a liaison group comprised of representatives of different bodies. The DCAF had a statutory function with an aim to reach consensus between different interests.

It was explained that at one time Natural England required LAFs to attempt to measure their effectiveness. This was difficult due to the time lag between consultations and policy development. The DCAF had achieved some changes in policy and members such as Gordon Guest had been proactive in trying to make a difference. The Chair said the Forum did a good job but needed to keep challenging itself and look at the value it added.

The difficulties in recruiting young people were raised and there being no evident and immediate benefit.

Improving publicity about the DCAF and its work was mentioned. Making use of DCC's social media channels might be one option.

It was agreed it would be useful to add a training element to the next meeting.

*Action: Forum Officer and Chair*

## 15. Devon Countryside Access Forum recruitment

The Chair thanked Andrew Baker and Sue Pudduck for their contribution to the work of the Devon Countryside Access Forum over the past three years and wished them well if they decided to seek re-appointment. Vacancies would be advertised shortly.

## 16. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be on Monday, 22 April, venue to be advised.

## 17. Any other business

### 17.1 2031 cut-off date

The Chair reported that legislation associated with the Deregulation Act 2015 was being worked on. The initial date in the Countryside and Rights of way Act 2000 was 1 January 2026 but the legislation had not commenced. The national Stakeholder Working Group had worked on transitional issues and what should be excluded. The Government had subsequently announced a 2031 deadline for applications based on historical evidence pre-1949. There was a cost of going through the schedule 14 process and consideration might be made of whether a route was a useful addition to the network.

Tim Spray said the Ramblers' were likely to put in all schedule 14s in the absence of time to research all thoroughly.

The Creation Order process could still be used for additions to the network.

### 17.2 *Shared use trail from Shercroft Close, Broadclyst to Mosshayne Lane, Exeter*

The creation of a new 1.5km stretch of trail had been approved on 15.12.23. Conditions included details of drainage design including flood boards, depth boards and warning signage. Further conditions related to public interpretation stating that the trail shall not be opened until public art, direction signs, route maps, interpretations and vehicular access restrictions have been installed in order to enhance the attractiveness for future users in the context of the Clyst Valley Regional Park.

### 17.3 *Permissive access*

The Chair reported that the Government had announced new permissive access payments under the Sustainable Farming Incentive Scheme. Former Countryside Stewardship payments had been withdrawn in 2012. The new scheme includes upgrading for cyclists and horse-riders, alongside the existing educational access offer. Previously concerns that permissive access could become permanent were a deterrent to uptake.







**Devon Countryside Access Forum  
c/o Public Rights of Way team  
Great Moor House  
Bittern Road  
Sowton  
EXETER EX2 7NL**

**Tel: 07837 171000  
01392 382771**

[devoncaf@devon.gov.uk](mailto:devoncaf@devon.gov.uk)

[www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf)

Mr D Hayes  
Level Crossing Manager  
Network Rail  
Weston-Super-Mare Depot  
Station Approach  
Weston-Super-Mare  
BS23 1XY

20 February 2024

Dear Mr Hayes

## **Crossing at Sandy Lane, Rewe**

Thank you very much for coming along to the Devon Countryside Access Forum meeting on 22 January. It was very helpful and useful to understand how Network Rail is improving the Sandy Lane crossing and the constraints and delays associated with this. Thank you for your message on 8 February confirming that the crossing has opened following assessments by the Civils and Telecommunications teams.

As you know, concerns were expressed at the meeting about the lack of a process to assess the suitability of Sandy Lane and any other crossing for disability access. On occasions it might well not be safe to permit disabled use, but the Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that Network Rail should adopt an agreed process and policy to explore this from the outset, including best practice procedures such as local consultation. This is in line with the duties under the Equality Act 2010 to anticipate the need to make reasonable adjustments for disabled users. The process should provide the evidence to support, or otherwise, the installation of accessible gates and appropriately timed warning mechanisms. If there is already such a policy document within Network Rail it would be helpful to have sight of this.

It would be appreciated if you could respond and also let the DCAF know whether this advice has been forwarded to the Network Rail policy or safety/risk assessment team.

At the meeting, the lack of consultation and liaison with the local community and in particular the Parish Council was noted. This would appear to be contrary to Network

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment.



# Agenda Item 4.1

Rail's published document entitled 'Enhancing Level Crossing Safety 2019-2029'. In the section on crossings (page 23), the importance of working with the community is highlighted in the following extract. "However, we must recognise the importance of community, and how our level crossings do, in some circumstances, allow communities to remain connected. We will continue to work with communities, private landowners and local authorities to find safer ways to cross the railway." The need for prior consultation at an early stage before closing or making changes to crossings is critical, and it would be appreciated if you could advise the Devon Countryside Access Forum, parish councils, community groups and landowners, as well as the highway authority, about any proposals affecting passive footpath, bridleway and user worked crossings and level crossings on roads. As part of these discussions, it is vital that Network Rail is open about the information and data used to justify changes/closures of crossings. Such evidence would have been particularly pertinent to the Sandy Lane crossing. This is important as it builds trust and confidence.

Members noted the length of time that this particular crossing has been closed. Given the importance of crossings to the access network, Network Rail should endeavour to close paths for the minimum period and should ensure that as much public access as possible remains open during any works. Where there are unavoidable delays, Network Rail should liaise with the groups consulted to advise them of the situation, providing a revised timetable of works.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum looks forward to receiving your comments.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter  
Forum Officer

*Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum*  
*Chair: Sarah Slade*  
*Vice Chair: Chris Cole*

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice "as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area..." Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice, and this includes the Secretary of State for Transport.

The DCAF currently has seventeen members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.



**Devon Countryside Access Forum**  
**c/o Public Rights of Way team**  
**Great Moor House**  
**Bittern Road**  
**Sowton**  
**EXETER EX2 7NL**

**Tel: 07837 171000**  
**01392 382771**

[devoncaf@devon.gov.uk](mailto:devoncaf@devon.gov.uk)

[www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf)

## **Devon Countryside Access Forum**

### **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans**

#### **Position Statement**

**April 2024**

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice “as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area...” Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice, and this includes county and district councils.

The DCAF currently has seventeen members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

In considering the development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, Devon County Council is advised to take into account the following aspirations which have been adopted by the Devon Countryside Access Forum in its position statements on different topics. The full suite of position statements can be viewed on [Newsletters and reports - Public Rights of Way \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)

#### **Pre-consultation stage**

Ensuring timely and informed liaison and consultation with landowners at the earliest stage in the development of any proposed route helps to diffuse potential difficulties. It is important that any tenants of agricultural or other land are notified at this early stage.

Please note trail may refer to a footpath, a shared cycle and foot path or a multi-use route available to all users, including horse riders. Legally defined bridleways are multi-use. The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that multi-use routes should be used, wherever possible and appropriate, as these provide the most inclusive and

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment.

# Agenda Item 4.2

accessible opportunities for everyone. Such routes should be designed to allow safe use by all users.

- a) Check who will bear the insurance liability for the trail. Where there are any tenancies on the land confirming the 'occupiers' liability' is particularly important.
- b) Check the maintenance liability for the trail and adjoining structures.
- c) Check whether risk assessments have been carried out in respect of livestock adjacent to the route. This is crucial where there are suckler cows and calves. Fencing along the route of the trail may be appropriate.
- d) Discuss the financial implications associated with the development of any route. Some environmental payments on the land may need to be re-paid.
- e) Check whether the farm has to re-mapped to show the trail as there may be implications for future Environmental Land Management schemes.
- f) Check the location of any grant-aided fencing and trail furniture which might have to re-situated. It is important to ensure that permission of grant funders is sought to relocate fencing. Otherwise, this could constitute a breach of a stewardship agreement with associated penalties.
- g) Discuss signposting to ensure people go the right way and responsibilities for signing.
- h) Discuss the line of the trail to minimise the effect on privacy or business activity.
- i) Consider timing and details of work during the construction period to minimise impact on livestock movements, agricultural operations and other factors which impact on the landowner or tenant.
- j) Discuss whether the trial could allow stock to stray and measures to mitigate this.
- k) Discuss implications of the Basic Payment Scheme and agri-environmental schemes on vegetation management alongside the route. Please note that the Basic Payment Scheme is being replaced with de-linked payments from 2024-2027.

## Identifying the focus

Maximise opportunities for walking and cycling within villages and towns. This would accord with the Government health agenda and sustainability proposals embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework. Wherever possible, routes should be multi-use to allow use by all non-motorised users, including horses.

- 1) Identify strategic walking and cycling routes within settlements and ensure these link to surrounding rural areas and the rights of way network.
- 2) Wherever possible, routes should be multi-use allowing access for all users, in accordance with Devon County Council's statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP Version 3 2024). Multi-use means use by all non-motorised users: walkers, cyclists, horse-riders, dog walkers and those using wheelchairs, mobility scooters or buggies. (Powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters are exceptions and are permitted on all public rights of way and cycle tracks, but not on cycle lanes where there is no distance or barrier from vehicular traffic. Electric bikes can use bridleways, byways, cycle tracks, multi-use trails and cycle lanes).
- 3) Ensure new development proposals include safe and high-quality provision for cycling and walking routes linking housing to schools, shops, employment areas and recreational and sports facilities.

- 4) Seek to develop circular multi-use routes within settlements to encourage healthier lifestyles and minimise car use.
- 5) Encourage opportunities to develop, facilitate and promote the National Cycle Network and its integration with other forms of transport.
- 6) Explore opportunities for locally important or strategic routes along former railway lines and canals.
- 7) Recognise other routes, such as unsurfaced Unclassified County Roads, and their contribution to recreational opportunities.
- 8) There should be a high degree of connectivity between greenspace areas.

## **Design and safety aspects**

Design of routes is critical to ensure inclusivity and use by the maximum number of user groups.

- a. Encourage suitable surfacing of multi-use routes to permit access by all users. Routes should be compatible with the landscape and sensitive to the location.
- b. Give adequate consideration to the requirements of those with mobility needs in the design of new walking, cycling and multi-use routes, and in the improvement of existing routes.
- c. Surfaces and use of materials should be appropriate for the intended use and respect the character of the surrounding environment. For example, it may be appropriate to have a hard tarmac surface for key routes for all users, including cyclists and disabled users. Elsewhere, softer surfaces more in keeping with the environment could be adopted and allow use by other recreational access users such as horse riders.
- d. Seek to improve the safety for rights of way users where routes meet or run along roads.
- e. Design and improvement work on roads to encourage non-motorised users and sustainable travel should reflect the hierarchy in the Highway Code, rule 204. This acknowledges that road users most at risk in order of vulnerability are pedestrians, in particular children, older adults and disabled people, cyclists, horse riders and motorcyclists.
- f. Some trails include on-road sections. It might be possible to use a Quiet Lanes approach, as permitted under the Transport Act 2000, in consultation with parishes and other stakeholders to educate car users that other recreational users may be using the road. This 'share with care' or 'expect and respect' approach, as used in Gloucestershire and Suffolk, might allow soft landscaping changes to roads and verges, different surface treatments and the provision of passing bays. Different surface treatments could include distinct colours to make the trail less visually intrusive.
- g. Monitoring of usage and behaviour change should be included as part of any trial.
- h. Fencing should be discrete, with particular regard to impact on the landscape and public enjoyment. High tensile wiring is preferred with the minimum number of fence posts. A top strand of barbed wire is acceptable for stock control purposes but should not be placed on or immediately adjacent to access points.
- i. Ramps rather than steps would improve access for all users particularly wheelchair users, cyclists and those with pushchairs and prams. Where steps

# Agenda Item 4.2

are unavoidable, rest or landing areas should be included or there should be signposting to an alternative reasonable route.

- j. Replacing stiles and kissing gates with 1.5 m wide gates with good latches and trombone handles, where gaps are not possible. Where self-closing gates are required, a two-way gate is preferable. Kissing gates that can be operated by radar keys may be an option in some locations. Weight of gates should be considered to allow easy access. Latches are often overlooked but can ensure gates can be easily opened and closed. They should be positioned where they can be reached and in good condition. Long handles which can be reached at different heights are useful to open gates.
- k. Entry points should aim to achieve the least restrictive option in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Self-closing gates, where acceptable to landowners, are a preferred option to kissing gates which are not easy to use with wheelchairs and pushchairs.

## **Additional facilities and information**

Extending beyond the immediate provision of cycling and walking routes, other factors can encourage use.

1. The provision of car parking, refreshments and toilet facilities are additional aspects which should be considered alongside the trail itself. These may be essential for some users to be able to access or enjoy the trail.
2. Information. Provide clear, easy to read information about the route or site so that people can plan their visit with confidence and consider making information usable by visually impaired and/or deaf persons.
3. 'Share this space' messages are useful and are supported. However, consideration needs to be given to managing people on the route and slowing people down, where needed.
4. Maintaining and seeking improvements to biodiversity, alongside provision of greenspace, should be a key target.

## **Good practice**

Any proposals should consider and adopt up-to-date best practice, ensuring that information and guidance is current and relevant.

## **Useful publications**

A number of publications incorporate design guidance relevant to Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and would be helpful to ensure proposals are designed in the optimum way.

### ***Sensory Trust Outdoor Accessibility Guidance (2023)***

This sets out how to make the countryside accessible for everyone regardless of age, disability, and circumstance. Useful information is included, for example on path widths, surfaces, gradients, and requirements for different user groups. [Outdoor Accessibility Guidance by Sensory Trust formerly Countryside for All](#)

## **British Standard BS 5709:2018 Gaps, gates and stiles**

The key principle of the British Standard is that any human-made impediments on a public right of way must consider what will be the Least Restrictive Access. A simplified version has been created called 'Understanding the British Standard for Gaps, gates and stiles' and is available on [Understanding BS5709 3gn \(centrewire.com\)](https://www.centrewire.com/understanding-bs5709-3gn/)

## **Sustrans**

This covers key principles relating to inclusivity, design, construction and maintenance and addresses land and legal issues, planning and consents, and ecology. [Sustrans traffic-free routes and greenways design guide - Sustrans.org.uk](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/traffic-free-routes-and-greenways-design-guide/)

The subsequent Sustrans 'Paths for Everyone' report built on aspirations and put forward recommendations to improve the access and safety of the National Cycle Network. [Paths for Everyone -Sustrans.org.uk](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/paths-for-everyone/)

## **Devon County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan (Version 3 2024)**

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) is produced by Devon County Council in accordance with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and related guidance from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and Natural England. The key purpose is to encourage and guide improvements to the public rights of way network to provide a better experience for all users. [Rights of Way Improvement Plan and policy - Public Rights of Way \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/ro-wip/)

## **Department for Transport**

This guidance is mainly concerned with designs that will remove barriers and so improve access and inclusion for all users. [Inclusive Mobility. A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100000/inclusive-mobility-a-guide-to-best-practice-on-access-to-pedestrian-and-transport-infrastructure.pdf)





# Agenda Item 7.

## Devon Countryside Access Forum CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND RESPONSE (not specifically on the agenda)

Available to view on request subject to General Data Protection

	Sender	Subject	Action
1	Tavistock Town Council Chair of the Tavistock Neighbourhood Development Plan 30.12.23	Tavistock Neighbourhood Development Plan. Question about wording of policy ENV2: Extending Access into the Countryside	Discussed with Chair and Vice Chair. Amended wording proposed.  “Bridleways are public rights of way so it would be best not to identify them separately. Trails, such as the Drake’s Trail, are either shared use paths (for cycling/walking) or multi-use (permitting horse riding too). These trails are not public rights of way although some sections may be.”  ENV2: Extending Access into the Countryside “Proposals which support, contribute to or provide improved access into the countryside on public rights of way, permissive paths and cycling/walking or multi-use trails will be supported.”  The Chair of the Tavistock Neighbourhood Development Plan has confirmed this advice has been forwarded to the topic leads.
2	Mid Devon District Council 9.01.24	Crediton Town Centre Masterplan	Did not respond.
3	East Devon District Council December 2024	East Devon Council Plan	Consulted with Chair and Vice Chair. Planning, green space and disability position statements submitted. A brief comment was made that the Plan should include sustainable transport as a key area. Submitted 12.01.24.
4	Open Access Contact Centre 15.01.24	<u>Case number 2023080001</u>  Notification of a discretionary restriction under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.	For information.

# Agenda Item 7.

		<p>The restriction applies to land at Hartridge Hense Moor and Luppitt Common for an additional date of the 6 February 2024.</p> <p>7 of the 28 days allocated to this case have now been used. The details of this restriction appear on the Open Access website.</p>	
5	<p>Open Access Centre 15.01.24</p>	<p><u>Case number 2024010089</u></p> <p>Notification of a discretionary restriction under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.</p> <p>The restriction applies to land at Hemyock Common for the following dates in 2024:</p> <p>16 and 30 March 13 and 27 April</p> <p>4 of the 28 days allocated to this case have now been used.</p>	For information.
6	<p>Open Access Contact Centre 1.02.24</p>	<p><u>Case number 2023080001</u></p> <p>Notification of a discretionary restriction under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.</p> <p>The restriction applies to land at Hartridge Hense Moor and Luppitt Common for the additional date of 20 February 2024.</p>	For information.
7	<p>RSPB 6.02.24</p>	<p>Fire Beacon Hill. Revised plans and routes for the undergrounding of the 33Kv powerlines that traverse Fire Beacon Hill Local Nature Reserve. Consultation prior</p>	<p>Consulted with Chair and Vice Chair and submitted previous comments from 26 October 2022 as these are still pertinent. An additional comment was made: As the new route follows the path down a steep hill it will be very</p>

# Agenda Item 7.

		to submission to the Planning Inspectorate.	important that the reinstatement is carried out with great care to avoid it washing out in storm events.  Comments have been acknowledged by the RSPB.
8	Town Clerk 9.02.24	Information requested on coastal access.	Sent information and weblinks to the England Coast Path and South West Coast Path Association.
9	Devon County Council 26.02.24	Cullompton and Tiverton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.	Submitted DCAF Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Position Statement on 4 April 2024. Position statement to be formally approved at meeting on 22 April 2024.
10	Devon County Council 26.02.24	Clyst Valley and New Communities Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.	Submitted DCAF Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Position Statement on 4 April 2024. Position statement to be formally approved at meeting on 22 April 2024.
11	East Devon District Council 29.02.24	Clyst Honiton Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The plan has been assessed as compliant with the Regulations. A formal consultation has been launched.	Discussed with members. Online survey forms submitted re-emphasising comments made previously.  “If a route or trail is defined as multi-use then this should include not only mobility scooters but horse riders too. If the term Active Travel is used, with an emphasis on cycling and footpaths, this excludes options for multi-use and in particular for horse riders to make use of safer off-road routes. The Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that routes should be multi-use, wherever possible and appropriate, as these provide the most inclusive and accessible opportunities for everyone. Such routes should be designed to allow safe use by all users. Legally defined bridleways are multi-use. This would not apply to cycle lanes where there is insufficient distance or no barrier to protect users from vehicular traffic. Given the wider area around the parish of Clyst

# Agenda Item 7.

			<p>Honiton, multi-use routes could potentially link in time to the proposed Clyst Valley Trail and to the Killerton Estate.”</p> <p>Reference was made to Devon County Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan (draft revised RoWIP Version 3, draft 4) policy C14 in Chapter C. Accessibility, Social Inclusion, Health, and Wellbeing. This refers to multi-use and inclusion of horse riding in planning and developing routes.</p> <p><a href="#">Rights of Way Improvement Plan and policy - Public Rights of Way (devon.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>Amendments to the policy wording to reflect these comments were suggested.</p>
12	Mid Devon District Council 4.03.24	<p>The referendum on the Silverton Neighbourhood Plan took place on Thursday 29 February 2023. The referendum results recorded 90.53% of votes in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan. All the documentation associated with the Neighbourhood Plan can be viewed on Silverton Neighbourhood Plan website <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will now go on to be ‘made’ by Mid Devon District Council and will form part of the statutory development plan for the Silverton area. It will carry full weight for guiding planning applications submitted to the Council for determination and the decisions made on these.</p>	For information.

# Agenda Item 7.

13	Teignbridge District Council 14.03.24	<p>Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 – Regulation 22. Teignbridge Local Plan</p> <p>The Council has submitted the Teignbridge Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. The Council submitted the Local Plan, along with an extensive library of evidence and other documents. <a href="#">Local Plan Examination - Introduction - Teignbridge District Council</a></p> <p>The Planning Inspectorate will appoint an independent Inspector in due course to carry out the examination of the Plan. Mr Robert Young will be the Programme Officer who will help the Inspector run the examination.</p>	For information.
14	Mid Devon District Council 13.03.24	Publication of the submission Willand Neighbourhood Plan Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (Regulations 15 &16)	Consulted with Chair on content and submitted Neighbourhood Plan position statement.

*In addition, the DCAF Forum Officer receives a large quantity of e-mail updates from Devon County Council and other organisations. Relevant information is extracted and circulated to DCAF members via regular newsletters, available on the website [www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf) or forwarded direct.*



Devon on the move

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan Version 3

(Objectives and Policies)

Draft v4 (March 2024)

**Contents**

1. Introduction and Background
2. Strategic Context
3. Consultation
4. Objectives and Policies

**Appendices**

- i) Glossary of Terms
- ii) Summary of Supporting Documents and Strategies
- iii) Summary of Topics, Issues, and Activities/Priorities from initial consultation



## 1. Introduction and Background

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) is produced by Devon County Council in accordance with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and related guidance from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and Natural England. The key purpose is to encourage and guide improvements to the public rights of way network to provide a better experience for *walkers, cyclists, horse riders, horse and carriage drivers, people with mobility problems, and people using motorised vehicles, for example, motorbikes.*

The initial Rights of Way Improvement Plan (Devon on the move) was published in 2005. This was reviewed, with a summary document published in 2012.

The legislation sets out that the RoWIP should be reviewed every 10 years. This includes considering the role of the plan in:

- (a) *meeting the present and likely future needs of the public*
- (b) *opportunities provided for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation and enjoyment*
- (c) *accessibility to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems*
- (d) *such other matters relating to local rights of way as the Secretary of State may direct.*

This document (once completed) will replace the 2012 summary. Initial consultation was instigated in 2022, alongside work to update the Public Rights of Way Annex to the Highway Asset Management Plan. The Highway Asset Management Plan has subsequently been approved and is now published on the Devon County Council website at [Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan - Roads and transport \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/highway-infrastructure-asset-management-plan-roads-and-transport).

Early feedback has directly informed the format for this new RoWIP document, with a focus on updating key policies, rather than a full rewrite of the initial plan. The intention is that this updated version of the objectives and policies for the RoWIP will be reviewed in five years' time (2028).

The main purpose of this document is to set out the key principles to inform and steer maintenance and improvement of the public rights of way and wider access network across Devon. These objectives and policies subsequently influence service priorities, day-to-day working practices, and action plans to extend and enhance the network. Relevance and effectiveness will be periodically

monitored and reported through the Devon Countryside Access Forum and Devon County Council Public Rights of Way Committee.

With regards to the network maintained by Devon County Council, this comprises of approximately 5,000km of public rights of way, 560km of unsurfaced Unclassified County Roads, and 225km of off-road recreational trails (such as the Exe Estuary Trail, the Granite Way and Tarka Trail). The network also includes Devon sections of 2 National Trails (the South West Coast Path and King Charles III England Coast Path), and Access Land (for example access on foot to moors, heaths, downs, commons and some coastal areas).

It is important that the RoWIP is not considered in isolation, and that associated actions reflect, influence, and benefit from relevant experience, knowledge and initiatives drawn from wide ranging sources. Examples of this are summarised within Appendix ii), referencing guidance documents from wide ranging organisations including local authorities, Government, third sector, user groups, and stakeholders. Related topics include sustainable transport, environment, design guidance, research, and practicable measures to improve equity of access. These examples do not provide a definitive list, and there is a need to monitor and review to ensure that related actions continue to be relevant and informed by good practice.

Social inclusion is of particular significance, including in relation to (c) above. A core principle is the British Standard 5709:2018 Gaps, gates and stiles, and 'the least restrictive option' for accessibility of structures on public rights of way. Added to this, Outdoor Accessibility Guidance commissioned by Paths for All and published by the Sensory Trust in 2023 provides an important reference point in informing more inclusive outdoor experiences (available to download at [outdoor-accessibility-guidance-18April2023.pdf](https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk/outdoor-accessibility-guidance-18April2023.pdf) ([sensorytrust.org.uk](https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk))).

## 2. Strategic Context

The Devon Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) fits well with the Devon Strategic Plan – Best Place (2021 – 25), and action to be fairer, healthier, caring, greener, and prosperous. At a strategic level, public rights of way and access are of great importance to:

- *connecting people and places (including Active Travel),*
- *the local economy (with the network providing essential infrastructure in support of recreation, leisure, and tourism),*
- *carbon reduction, biodiversity, landscape, and heritage (particularly provision for non-car based travel, contribution to climate change avoidance and mitigation measures, and as a key component of green infrastructure), and*
- *physical and mental health and wellbeing (with benefits directly attributable to exercising outdoors and contact with nature).*

Directly relevant priorities set out within the Devon Strategic Plan include:

Responding to the climate emergency, especially:

- *More opportunities for cycling and walking,*
- *Helping wildlife and landscapes to recover,*
- *Encourage sustainable lifestyles, and*
- *Continue to reduce carbon emissions across all our services.*

Supporting recovery and growth, especially:

- *Secure investment in transport infrastructure, and*
- *Maintain, and where necessary, improve our highway network and improve sustainable transport options*

Tackling poverty and inequality, especially:

- *Promote community cohesion.*

Improve health and wellbeing, especially:

- *Give people greater opportunities for walking and cycling to increase their physical activity.*

Supporting people and communities, especially:

- *Continue to support our vibrant community and voluntary sector,*
- *Enable a range of transport options, including public transport, and*
- *Engage directly with people in meaningful ways and encourage participation in decisions that affect them.*

Management and maintenance priorities reflect, and support delivery of the objectives highlighted above, with onus on providing a network which is safe, reliable, and fit for purpose (within any necessary funding and resource constraints). This takes into consideration current statutory duties and maintenance regimes, as well as the responsibilities of landowners. A key related document is the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (2023 – 25), which relates to and supports the Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 3 2011 – 26.

At the national level, public rights of way and countryside access are also of importance in supporting delivery of the HM Government’s A Green Future, 25 Year Environment Plan (published in 2018). Of particular significance are policies relating to ‘*Connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing*’ and goals for ‘*Enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment*’. This sets out that the UK Government will conserve and enhance the beauty of our natural environment, and make sure it can be enjoyed, used by and cared for by everyone. This will be done by:

- *safeguarding and enhancing the beauty of our natural scenery and improving its environmental value while being sensitive to considerations of its heritage.*
- *making sure that there are high quality, accessible, natural spaces close to where people live and work, particularly in urban areas, and encouraging more people to spend time in them to benefit their health and wellbeing*
- *focusing on increasing action to improve the environment from all sectors of society.*

A related target is the ‘*Accessible Greenspace Standard – promote access to good quality green and blue space within 15 minutes’ walk from home*’.

The importance of public rights of way is also recognised within the National Planning policy Framework, which states; *100. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.*

### 3. Consultation

Review of the RoWIP was instigated in 2022.

Initial consultation has included workshop sessions, held during the Autumn, involving local partners from the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme (also known as the P3 scheme). P3 is an initiative to encourage and support community involvement in managing and maintaining the public rights of way network. Devon County Council works in partnership with parish/town councils, landowners, and local voluntary groups to improve the condition of the local rights of way and to keep paths open and enjoyed - as outlined on the Devon County Council website at [Parish Paths Partnership scheme - Public Rights of Way \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/parish-paths-partnership-scheme-public-rights-of-way).

Workshop discussions focused on considering issues and trends over the previous plan period (2012-2022) which may have impacted on use and management of the Public Rights of Way network; and inviting suggestions for priority actions to be included within the updated plan. Feedback was subsequently collated into topics, issues, and activities/priorities which were reviewed via a working group of the Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) [Devon Countryside Access Forum - Public Rights of Way](#). A related summary table is included within Appendix ii) of this plan.

Whilst much of the 2012 RoWIP remains valid, there have been some notable changes to consider, including:

- designation of the King Charles III England Coast Path National Trail (and new opportunities through Coastal Access Rights);
- awareness of and urgency to mitigate and avoid the impacts of climate change (including in choice of design and materials, significance of public rights of way and the wider access network for non-car based travel, and loss of path through riverbank and coastal erosion); and
- greater understanding of the physical and mental health benefits of outdoor recreation (for example, as experienced through 'lockdown' arrangements during the Covid 19 pandemic).

This is reflected in some new and revised policies – for example relating to carbon reduction and climate change, biodiversity, and establishing the new National Trail. Approximately two-thirds of the objectives and policies have been carried forward from the 2012 RoWIP (with some amended wording), and one-third new policies to reflect changes over the last ten years.

Initial consultation also involved inviting representative internal and external interests to review and inform the draft topics, issues, and activities/priorities. This has included individuals and organisations with expertise and experience in protected landscapes (National Landscapes – previously known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and National Parks), transport planning, landscape, wildlife, heritage, public access, recreation (including walking, horse riding, cycling, and trail riding), landowners and land managers, and agriculture.

The respective responses have informed this draft plan, for which feedback and comments are now being sought from a wider audience.

This will also include carrying out additional Impact Assessment to properly consider actual and potential effects on people, the economy, and the environment.

Oversight of this review is through the Devon Countryside Access Forum and the Devon County Council Public Rights of Way Committee ([Committee details - Public Rights of Way Committee - Democracy in Devon](#)).

#### 4. Objectives and Policies

##### A. Legal Status:

- Definitive Map and Statement A1 to A7
- Public Path Orders A8 to A15
- Access Land and Coastal Access A16 to A18
- Permissive Paths and Alternative Routes A18 to A23

##### B. Management and Maintenance:

- Quality Standards B1 to B7
- Signing and Waymarking B8 to B16
- Collaborative Working, Funding, and Resources B17 to B23
- Safety B24 to B 31
- Public and Animal Health B32

##### C. Accessibility, Social Inclusion, Health, and Wellbeing:

- Accessibility C1 to C7
- User Groups (Walking, Cycling, Horse Riding, Carriage Driving, Motorised) C8 to C28

##### D. Network Development:

- Planning Policy and Plans D1 to D2
- Accessible Green Space, Public Rights of Way and Access Provision D4 to D5
- Active Travel D6

##### E. Information, Education and Technology:

- Communication E1 to E2
- Community Engagement and Campaigns E3 to E7
- Information and Guidance E8 to E13
- Adapting to Technological Advances E14

- Research and Data E15 to E18

**F. Environment and Climate**

- Climate Change F1
- Protected Landscapes, Biodiversity and Heritage F2 to F5

**G. Land Use and Economy**

- Tourism G1 to G3
- Contractors and Businesses G4
- Agriculture and Land Management G5 to G8



**A. LEGAL STATUS: Definitive Map and Statement**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
A1	Definitive Map and Statement	Ensure that the Definitive Map and Statement provides an accurate record of public rights of way	<p>Continue the parish-by-parish review, with all parishes assessed by the end of 2025.</p> <p>This will include liaison with relevant groups such as the Ramblers and BHS on 'Don't Lose Your Way' and related initiatives.</p>	<p>January 2026</p> <p>(N.B. The cut-off date in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act is now extended to 1 January 2031)</p>
A2			<p>Schedule 14 applications and related claims will be prioritised on an area basis as part of the parish-by-parish review.</p> <p>Exceptions to this will be considered where the route offers significant public benefit – for example where there is no nearby alternative path available; where a path will help address road safety concerns; if there is a high public profile supported by a substantive user evidence; if the path provides a strategic link; or where a route is likely to be affected by development.</p>	<p>To be assessed in accordance with the Deregulation Act and implementation of associated regulations</p>

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			<p>These factors will also inform prioritisation of applications post completion of the parish-by-parish review.</p> <p>In determining applications, negotiation with the landowner(s) will be assessed to establish whether an alternative solution is available, for example, express dedication.</p>	
A3			<p>New claims which arise in a parish where the review has been completed will be deferred until the whole of that particular District has been reviewed. However, exceptions may be made in line with the criteria in policy A2 above.</p>	
A4			<p>On completion of the parish-by-parish review, necessary legal event modification orders will be made; and the multiple Definitive Maps and Statements will be consolidated to either form a single Definitive Map and Statement for the whole county, or one per District.</p>	January 2026 onwards
A5			<p>Where paths have been added to the Definitive Map by Modification Order on historical evidential grounds and require significant works for them to be re-opened, or negatively impact on land management activities, or have an unacceptable environmental impact,</p>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			consideration will be given to the use of Public Path Orders to divert the routes onto a more appropriate alignment.	
A6			On-line information and registers relevant to progress of the Definitive Map Review, Schedule 14 applications and deposits under Section 31(6) will be kept up to date.	
A7			<p>In processing Orders;</p> <p>Priority in the Definitive Map Review will be given to opportunities to create routes through landowner Creation Agreements.</p> <p>Orders will normally be made within 6 months of the relevant Committee decision.</p> <p>Opposed Orders will normally be sent to the Secretary of State within 6 months of the end of the objection period.</p> <p>Witnesses will be advised to make statutory declarations where claims may not be dealt with for some years.</p>	

**A. LEGAL STATUS: Public Path Orders**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
A8	Public Path Orders (Diversion, Creations and Extinguishments)	Utilise appropriate legal powers to enable new routes, path diversions and related extinguishments to enhance the public rights of way network.	<p>Making of diversion orders in the interests of path users and/or landowners will be considered, with priority placed on proposals which provide greatest strategic benefit to the public rights of way network, including addressing route anomalies.</p> <p>Examples of diversions in the interest of the public are those which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• achieve a direct improvement in road / path safety for users,</li> <li>• will improve equity of access,</li> <li>• achieve a direct improvement in provision of a circular route and / or connectivity between locations,</li> <li>• provide access to a National Trail, Recreational Route, attraction, or viewpoint.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of diversions in the interest of landowners are those which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve privacy to residential buildings,</li> <li>• relocate paths away from working farmyards and farm buildings for safety reasons, or</li> <li>• positively contribute to tangible improvements in farming operations.</li> </ul>	To be assessed in accordance with the Deregulation Act (including Right to Apply) and implementation of associated regulations

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
A9			Sharing, or defraying of costs will be considered where a diversion will be of benefit to the public, and/or enable management and maintenance efficiencies.	
A10			Concurrent creation and extinguishment orders will be considered in situations where diversion orders might not be feasible.	
A11			<p>Use of creation agreements will be considered where this will meet public need or result in public benefit, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• addressing a road or path safety concern,</li> <li>• providing improvement in provision of a circular route and / or connectivity between locations,</li> <li>• providing or improving access to a National Trail, Recreational Route, attraction, or viewpoint,</li> <li>• providing links or improved access to Access Land,</li> <li>• improving equity of access and / or increasing the range of users able to enjoy a route.</li> </ul>	
A12			Priority will be given to paths which are affected by natural erosion, enabling routes to continue with the new lie of the land.	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
A13			Anomalies, cul-de-sacs, and routes which change status along their length, including those crossing the county boundary, will be investigated and resolution sought as part of the parish-by-parish Definitive Map Review.	
A14			Neighbouring authorities will be encouraged and supported in the creation of appropriate links where it falls to them to resolve a route anomaly.	
A15			<p>Extinguishment of a public right of way will be given consideration where requisite legal tests are met. However, this will not be a high priority, and may require that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the applicant meets monitoring costs to show that the route is not needed for public use; and</li> <li>• the route is physically available to the public, signposted and/or waymarked throughout the monitoring period.</li> </ul>	

**A. LEGAL STATUS: Access Land and Coastal Access**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
A16	Access Land and Coastal Access	Seek opportunities to extend Access Land, and to improve connectivity and integration with the wider rights of way network	Landowners will be encouraged and supported in considering dedication of horse-riding and cycling rights on Access Land, or along a particular route across such land.	Actions to be considered alongside Defra policy including the Agricultural Transition Period and Environmental Land Management measures
A17			Landowners will be encouraged to dedicate additional Access Land (under Section 16 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).	
A18			Close working will be encouraged with Natural England and local partners and stakeholders to complete the designation process for the King Charles III England Coast Path and associated Coastal Access Rights. This includes delivery of implementation works for the National Trail, associated access improvements to coastal margin, and potential use of 'roll back' arrangements.	31 December 2024

**A. LEGAL STATUS: Permissive Paths and Alternative Routes**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
A19	Permissive Access	Permissive agreements, leases, and licences will be actively considered where this provides the most realistic opportunity to enhance the public access network	Emphasis will be placed on securing permanent access rights; however, permissive access arrangements will be supported, especially where such access is unlikely to be achieved through making of legal orders.	
A20			Collaborative working with Defra, Natural England, other appropriate agencies, and landowners and land managers will be encouraged and supported to develop and deliver new and enhanced public access provision. This includes through Environmental Land Management and Countryside Stewardship schemes.	
A21			Close working arrangements will be sought with major public landowners, for example, the Forestry Commission, in the development of public access provision.	
A22			The inclusion of walkers, horse riders and cyclists will be encouraged when negotiating appropriate permissive access arrangements.	



Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
A23			Equity of access will be actively sought when negotiating permissive access provision, with emphasis on achieving the least restrictive option (i.e., gap, then gate, then kissing gate, then stile).	

**B. MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Quality Standards**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B1	Quality Standards	Ensure that the public rights of way network is maintained to appropriate standards	<p>Maintenance will be carried out to recognised, established standards, and with regards to statutory responsibilities, and relevant strategies and plans. This includes recognising wider responsibilities to different user groups, environment factors (including climate change), wildlife, landscape, and heritage.</p> <p>Of particular relevance are National Trail Quality Standards and the Devon County Council Public Rights of Way Condition Criteria.</p>	
B2			<p>Management of the rights of way network will be achieved through a pro-active approach based on the classification of routes, regular inspection, implementation of routine work programmes, and carrying out targeted improvements.</p>	<p>Annual inspection for National Trail paths and shared use trails</p> <p>Every three years for other public rights of way and uUCRs</p>

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B3			<p>Management and maintenance standards will be periodically reviewed, including benchmarking with relevant authorities to take account of good working practice and innovations in technology.</p> <p>Appropriate guidance notes will be produced to support and inform local standards.</p> <p>Of particular relevance will be measures to reflect and address the impacts of climate change with paths becoming more at risk from adverse weather including excessive surface water and high winds.</p>	
B4			<p>Priority will be placed on working cooperatively with landowners and land managers; however, enforcement procedures will be utilised to assert and protect the rights of the public where agreement cannot be reached through discussion and negotiation.</p>	
B5			<p>Equity of access will be actively pursued, with emphasis on the Least Restrictive Option. Wherever practicable, access measures will reflect current good practice – for example the British Standard for Gaps, Gates and Stiles (BS:5709:2018) and guidance such as By All Reasonable Means 2020 and Outdoor Accessibility Guidance 2023 (Sensory Trust).</p>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B6			Unsurfaced Unclassified County Roads (uUCRs) form an important part of the wider access network. Priority for management and maintenance will be placed on uUCRs where they provide access to and / or along strategic recreational and Active Travel routes.	
B7			<p>Multi-use trail design and surfacing will take account of environmental considerations, user needs, costs (including future maintenance) and guidance from relevant sources – for example, the good practice guide Surface Requirements for Shared Use Routes published by the former Countryside Agency (now Natural England), and BHS advice notes.</p> <p>Over reliance and/or assumptions about use of tarmacadam will be challenged.</p>	Cross Asset Innovation funded capital work in 2024-25 and 2025-26 to trial alternative surface materials

**B. MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Signing and Waymarking**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B8	Signing and Waymarking	Ensure that all public rights of way are signed and waymarked appropriately to identify status and to support navigation	Public rights of way will be signed where they leave the metalled road (unless such signing is identified as being unnecessary in accordance with relevant legislation).	Assessed as part of routine inspections
B9			<p>Continuity, consistency, and accuracy of signage will be encouraged.</p> <p>Green and white pointers will be used as the default specification for signposts. However, use of locally distinctive signposts – for example wooden signs, will be supported in certain circumstances such as National Parks, National Landscapes, and National Trails.</p>	Review of signage terminology, the information provided, and designs to aid awareness and to improve consistency (2025-2027)
B10			Consideration will be given to adding route-specific information (for example, distance and destination) where this is cost effective, will provide notable public benefit, and/or forms part of a promoted route.	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B11			Additional funding sources will be investigated to improve signpost information, particularly in high profile locations - for example, nationally and regionally promoted routes, protected landscapes, and in World Heritage Sites.	
B12			Improvements to signing of uUCRs will be considered where they provide direct access to and from existing rights of way, form part of a promoted or circular route, and/or provide the primary unsurfaced route within an area.	
B13			Waymarking improvements will be carried out to help users find their way and to reduce the risk of people inadvertently trespassing onto private land.	
B14			Parish Paths Partnership arrangements will be utilised to encourage local community representatives to liaise with landowners to help identify appropriate locations for waymarks.	
B15			Misleading and/or inappropriate, unauthorised signs and waymarks will be removed. If required, enforcement action may be undertaken.	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B16			Inclusion of appropriate branding to a signpost will be considered where the path is within a protected landscape such as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or forms part of an approved promoted route such as the National Cycle Network.	

**B. MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Collaborative Working, Funding, and Resources**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B17	Collaborative Working Funding, and Resources (Local Access Forums)	<p>Encourage cooperation, respect, and understanding between users, landowners, and land managers.</p> <p>Promote and support cooperative working, partnerships, and agreements to share expertise, actively engage local communities, and optimise resources.</p>	Local Access Forums (Devon Countryside Access Forum, Dartmoor Access Forum and Exmoor Local Access Forum) will continue to have a key role in providing advice and guidance, and in identifying priorities to improve public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation.	
B18	Collaborative Working Funding, and Resources (Partnerships)		<p>Partnerships, joint working arrangements and agency agreements will be actively encouraged. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South West Coast Path National Trail Partnership</li> <li>• National Park Authority Agency Agreements</li> <li>• Parish Paths Partnership Scheme</li> <li>• Initiatives with National Landscape teams</li> </ul>	



Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B19	Collaborative Working Funding, and Resources (Participation and Involvement)		<p>Support will be given to extending the ways in which individuals and groups can directly participate and contribute to maintaining and improving recreation and access; particularly with regards to promoted routes and trails. This includes through volunteering, work experience, apprenticeships, education, training, and skills development.</p> <p>Opportunities will also be sought to encourage and extend joint working with representative organisations such as Sustrans, Ramblers, British Horse Society, Disabled Ramblers, Trail Riders Fellowship, Slow Ways, the NFU, and the CLA.</p> <p>Internally, opportunities will also be sought to engage with the Devon County Council Corporate Parenting Team to encourage and support participation by children and young people in care.</p>	
B20	Collaborative Working, Funding, and Resources (Visitor Payback/Visitor Giving and Sponsorship)		<p>Consideration will be given to encouraging corporate and community volunteering days.</p> <p>Opportunities will also be considered for people and business to contribute financially - for example as outlined in Visit England guidance at <a href="https://www.visitengland.com/visitor-giving-helpsheets.pdf">visitor_giving_helpsheets.pdf (visitengland.com)</a>.</p>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B21	Collaborative Working, Funding, and Resources (Community Payback)		Opportunities will be investigated to include routine path maintenance and improvement work as part of Community Payback activities.	
B22	Collaborative Working, Funding, and Resources (External Grants)		<p>Identify, and where feasible, seek joint funding and external grant opportunities to support delivery of improvements to public rights of way, Access Land, and other outdoor recreational provision.</p> <p>This includes mechanisms such as management agreements (e.g., through the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981).</p>	
B23	Collaborative Working, Funding, and Resources (Facilities)		Opportunities will be sought to enable the use of existing private facilities by the public and encourage public/private partnerships, for example, the use of public house facilities in return for a small payment or purchase of goods, as already successfully developed in some places in Devon.	

**B. MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Safety**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B24	Safety (Roads)	<p>Improve safety for non-vehicular users, including along and when crossing roads</p> <p>Identify and implement measures to improve perceived and actual public safety issues relating to crime and anti-social behaviour</p>	Development of off-road links that provide a safer environment for all users will be pursued.	
B25			Priority will be given to the development of off-road links for travel to shops, schools, and workplaces in key congestion areas (e.g., Barnstaple, Exeter, Kingskerswell, Newton Abbot and Totnes)	
B26			The development of off-road links between communities, in particular within market and coastal towns, will be encouraged.	
B27			Work with National Highways and other agencies to identify and implement improvements for vulnerable	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			road users on and crossing trunk and other busy roads, for example, by raising the height of parapets on over-bridges that are used by horse-riders, inclusion of respite/rest areas on pedestrian and shared use bridges, and provision of controlled crossings.	
B28			Undertake safety analysis of key rights of way that connect to busy roads. This will be prioritised in conjunction with potential route management strategies for promoted trails.	
B29	Safety (Crime and Anti-social Behaviour)		<p>Links will continue to be developed with the Police, supporting and sharing advice and information relating to public rights of way, access, and issues such as trespass, criminal damage and rural crime.</p> <p>Guidance and support will also be provided to landowners – for example use of signage to increase awareness about considerate behaviour by path users.</p>	
B30			Data supplied in relation to reported crime and accident statistics will be used to help identify potential problem areas and associated solutions (in liaison with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships).	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
B31			<p>Where sufficient evidence is available, appropriate enforcement action will be pursued – for example if a dog intimidates a person or injures them or their animal(s).</p> <p>The use of powers (e.g., the Road Traffic Act 1988) will be supported in exceptional circumstances to require dogs to be kept on leads, in consultation with the appropriate Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.</p>	
B32	Public and Animal Health		Bio-security contingency procedures will be monitored and reviewed in liaison with all relevant organisations, ensuring that respective organisations are aware of roles and responsibilities.	

**C. Accessibility, Social Inclusion, Health, and Wellbeing:**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
C1	Accessibility (Equity of Access)	Improve rights of way and access for blind or partially sighted people and others with limited mobility, including users of mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs	Links will continue to be developed and improved with people that are blind, partially sighted or have limited mobility, to understand clearly any specific needs and how best to meet them.	
C2			<p>Research, data, and good practice from partner organisations and other relevant bodies will be supported and utilised to inform improvements in the Devon- wide network, for example, the improvements in accessibility previously trialled by the East Devon AONB Team (now the East Devon National Landscape), Countryside Mobility South West, Disabled Ramblers and the South West Coast Path team.</p> <p>This will include identifying and better promoting information to support blind or partially sighted people and others with limited mobility to make informed choices.</p>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
C3			<p>Equity of access will be actively pursued, with emphasis on the Least Restrictive Option (i.e., gap, then gate, then kissing gate, then stile). Wherever practicable, access measures will reflect current good practice – for example the British Standard for Gaps, Gates and Stiles (BS:5709:2018) and guidance such as By All Reasonable Means 2020 and Outdoor Accessibility Guidance 2023 (Sensory Trust).</p> <p>Priority will be given to minimising restrictive structures on routes within and between towns and villages linking destinations such as shops, places of worship, community facilities, schools, and recreational areas.</p> <p>Close liaison will be required with landowners and managers to consider and address livestock management requirements.</p> <p>Inappropriate new structures placed on public rights of way without authorisation will be removed.</p>	
C4	Social Inclusion	Improve opportunities for under-represented and socially excluded audiences to use	Identify physical and other barriers that restrict access opportunities for socially excluded and under-represented audiences and seek positive actions so that these are addressed.	From April 2024 onwards: Review and update inspection

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
		public rights of way and wider access networks – including with regards to the Equalities Act 2010	This should include (but not be limited to) measures to improve representation for young people, women, ethnic minorities, those on low incomes, and people with limited mobility.	criteria, records, and research to collate more accurate information. This will be used to inform targeted policies and associated action plans to improve accessibility.
C5	User Groups (Walking)	Improve opportunities for walking – including mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs	<p>The development of walking in towns, villages and other urban areas will continue to be supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for utility use, to encourage people to switch from car use to sustainable transport</li> <li>• for health benefits; and</li> <li>• for the economic benefits accruing from tourism and day trips</li> </ul> <p>Actions will include improving off-road links between destinations such as shops, schools and workplaces. This can be achieved through a combination of physical works, creation agreements and orders.</p>	



Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
C6			<p>Priority will be given to the development of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short routes and circular links of between 3km and 8km</li> <li>• routes linking towns, villages and attractions and providing a substantive off-road network for utility and leisure; and</li> <li>• appropriate links to and from the wider promoted recreational trail network</li> <li>• opportunities for longer routes for mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs.</li> </ul> <p>This includes collaborative working with relevant groups and initiatives including Slow Ways (<a href="#">Slow Ways - help create a network of walking routes connecting Great Britain - Home page</a>).</p>	
C7			Improvements will continue to be sought in the alignment of the National Trail(s) and promoted recreational route network, including potential use of diversion orders and creation agreements and orders.	
C8	Horse Riding and Carriage Driving	Improve opportunities for horse-riders and carriage-drivers	Opportunities will be sought to improve and extend bridleway provision to create a more strategic network.	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			This includes seeking to develop short routes and circuits for horse-riders of between 4km and 11km.	
C9			Opportunities to develop off-road links for horse-riders to reach areas with better riding facilities, for example, on Dartmoor and Exmoor, will be investigated in liaison with respective landowners and occupiers.	
C10			Upgrading of existing routes to public bridleway or restricted byway status will be supported where this can be achieved in accordance with related RoWIP objectives and policies, and in liaison with respective landowners and occupiers.	
C11			Opportunities will be sought to increase opportunity to utilise canal tow paths and former railway lines for equestrian use as part of multi-use provision.	
C12			Recreational use for health benefits will continue to be supported, and opportunities sought to build upon the existing economic benefits accruing from horse tourism.	
C13			The promotion of horse-riding will continue to be explored, with due regard to the environment, as part of increasing Devon's potential as an outdoor activity	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			destination (for example linked to initiatives such as Discover Devon Naturally).	
C14			<p>Inclusion of horse riding as part multi-use trails will be encouraged. This should be the starting position in planning and improving routes.</p> <p>Where horse riding is currently restricted on existing cycle and walking trails, this will be reviewed to identify where access for horse riding can be safely added.</p> <p>Should it not be feasible to include horse riding on new and/or exiting routes, the reasons for this should be recorded, and the information made available to interested parties.</p>	
C15	Cycling	Improve opportunities for cycling	<p>The development of cycling in urban areas will continue to be supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for utility use, to encourage people to switch from car use to sustainable transport</li> <li>• for health benefits; and</li> <li>• for the economic benefits accruing from tourism and day trips</li> </ul>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			<p>Actions will include improving off-road links between destinations such as shops, schools and workplaces.</p> <p>This can be achieved through a combination of physical works, creation agreements and orders.</p>	
C16			Opportunities will be sought to develop former railway lines for cycle use and multi-use where appropriate.	
C17			Opportunities will be sought to develop circular cycle routes, in addition and connecting to the long-distance National Cycle Network	
C18			Public transport links will continue to be sought through transport policies and projects to help deliver circular and linear routes, for example, encouraging and supporting bike carriage on trains and buses.	
C19			Provision for multi-use (including horse riding) will be encouraged where new routes are developed, with use of restrictive covenants only agreed in exceptional circumstances.	
C20			The upgrading of existing public footpaths to public bridleway status will be considered where they are to be used as part of the cycle network.	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			Within some urban settings, consideration may be given to use of Cycle Track Orders.	
C21			Partnerships with organisations which have a particular interest in mountain-biking will continue to be developed, for example with the Forestry Commission in their facility development (which includes mountain-biking).	
C22			Opportunities will be sought to develop off-road links for mountain-bikers to reach specialist facilities without the need to drive.	
C23			The promotion of mountain-biking to tourists will continue to be explored, with due regard to the environment, as part of increasing Devon's potential as an outdoor activity destination, particularly the Discover Devon Naturally initiative.	
C24	Motorised Vehicles	Improve opportunities for recreational vehicular users	Work will continue to ensure that the correct legal status of vehicular routes is recorded.	
C25			Work will continue with relevant groups and the wider public to improve information and education for both	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			motorised and non- motorised users, about the rights and responsibilities to help reduce actual or perceived conflict.	
C26			Work will be undertaken with user groups, landowners and the Police (through the appropriate Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) to combat illegal use, such as vehicular use of public footpaths or bridleways without a private right or the permission of the landowner.	
C27			Where use is causing physical or environmental damage to a route, the latest Government guidance will be followed with regard to the implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders	
C28			Opportunities will be sought to carry out improvements to surfacing, drainage and signage of the unsurfaced Unclassified County Roads and Byways Open to All Traffic.	

**D. Network Development: Planning Policy and Plans, Recreational Infrastructure Improvements, Active Travel**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
D1	Planning Policy and Plans	Ensure that the planning process properly considers existing public rights of way and access, and that opportunities are optimised to protect and enhance the network	<p>Influence and inform land use planning policy and development management to optimise and improve public rights of way and access as an important part of green space and green infrastructure, and to support social inclusion.</p> <p>This includes contributing to delivery of local and national guidance e.g., <a href="http://www.gov.uk">National design guide - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>	
D2			<p>Ensure that development management arrangements recognise and protect public rights of way in the planning process.</p> <p>This includes objecting to or recommending deferral in determination of any planning application which fails to adequately take account of existing public rights of way until appropriate protection and/or mitigation measures are identified.</p> <p>Advice and guidance will continue to be provided to landowners and developers in relation to developments affecting public rights of way.</p>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			<p>If Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) are required for schemes with planning permission, these should not be processed until appropriate measures are agreed to protect or enhance public rights of way.</p>	
D3			<p>Proposals for mineral development which affect rights of way will not be supported unless provision can be made for an appropriate alternative route.</p> <p>In considering applications for mineral development, the County Council will seek opportunities for the provision of new rights of way and safe access to the countryside.</p>	
D4	<p>Accessible Green Space, Public Rights of Way and Access Provision</p>		<p>Public Rights of Way should not be absorbed within estate roads. Path character should be protected and improved.</p> <p>In considering development proposals, opportunities will be sought to identify strategic links and gaps in the path network.</p> <p>Local Planning Authorities and developers should seek to create new routes and enhance the quality of existing paths to meet existing needs and to mitigate impacts arising from new development.</p>	



Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
D5			<p>Encourage, carry out, and collate research to identify deficiencies and gaps in access provision.</p> <p>Seek opportunities to enhance provision through planning and transportation policies and associated funding mechanisms.</p>	
D6	Active Travel		<p>Create new routes and enhance quality of existing paths, including as part of greenways and greenspaces to support and encourage non-car based travel. This includes improving connectivity between residential areas, recreational destinations, places of work, public transport, and other local facilities.</p> <p>Design, materials, and construction should respect local character and avoid urbanising rural locations. The assumption should not be that tarmacadam provides the default option.</p>	<p>Seek to influence and inform Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and Local Transport Plan 4</p> <p>Surface type trials as part of Cross Asset Innovation Capital funded work in 2024-25 and 2025-26</p>

**E. Information, Education and Technology: Communication, Community Engagement and Campaigns, Information and Guidance**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
E1	Communication	Improve quality, relevance, and availability of information and communication relating to management, development, and use of the rights of way network, including national guidance such as the Countryside Code	<p>Regular review and improvements in quality and availability of information (including on-line information) and communication will be sought, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rights and responsibilities of landowners and users</li> <li>• legal matters</li> <li>• countryside access and public transport</li> <li>• countryside access and tourism</li> <li>• local facilities, including refreshments, carparks, toilets and accessible toilets</li> <li>• other means of access including Access Land, cycle tracks, uUCRs and permissive access.</li> <li>• strategic routes</li> <li>• routes identified as being particularly suitable for people with restricted mobility, to include information on the presence or absence of gates or stiles, the nature of the terrain and the surface type</li> <li>• targeted information and advice for other under-represented and socially excluded groups, and</li> <li>• temporary closures or restrictions</li> </ul>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
E2			<p>A range of media will be utilised to optimise understanding and awareness of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering the RoWIP</li> <li>• Accessing the countryside</li> <li>• Feeding back and reporting</li> </ul> <p>This includes utilising ranger, warden, and community networks.</p>	
E3	Community Engagement and Campaigns		<p>Collaborative working will be encouraged and supported in identifying and communicating key messages – for example veterinary practices and The Kennel Club on guidelines for safe, enjoyable, and responsible dog walking.</p>	
E4			<p>Provision of appropriate information about walking dogs in the countryside will be encouraged, particularly when in the vicinity of livestock and where there is potential disturbance to wildlife, for example, ground nesting birds.</p> <p>This should include encouraging and supporting the production of consistent local and national guidance across different organisations.</p>	<p>Grand Western Canal Country Park guidance to be published by 31 December 2024</p>

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
E5			<p>Joint working with user and interest groups, and other organisations including schools, colleges and youth service providers will be encouraged and supported.</p>	<p>Liaison with the Trail Riders Fellowship in 2024 to improve uUCR mapping and inclusion of this as a layer on publicly accessible online maps</p>
E6			<p>Social / green prescribing will be supported alongside promoting research opportunities with universities and other further education establishments. This should include adding to the evidence base to demonstrate the physical and mental health benefits of outdoor recreation and impacts from actions delivered as part of the RoWIP.</p> <p>Good examples are work commissioned by the South West Coast Path Association with the University of Exeter; and research carried out on the health and wellbeing value of the Pebblebed Heaths.</p>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
E7			<p>Educational information which encourages responsible, safe and courteous path and road use by all users will be developed, working closely with Safer Travel teams.</p> <p>Development of multi-user path and road safety publicity campaign using appropriate media and covering utility and recreational use will be investigated.</p>	
E8	Information and Guidance		<p>Support and influence production of easily accessible, effective guidance on accessing and enjoying the countryside, and minimising associated impacts. Where practicable, this should be compatible with the national curriculum, and made available in a range of formats, including interactive maps.</p>	
E9			<p>Identify and promote guidance on and for different categories of mobility scooter (with examples).</p>	
E10			<p>Targeted information will be encouraged to enable greater use by under-represented and excluded people e.g., looked after children, children with additional educational needs, people with disabilities, mental health needs, and blind and partially sighted people.</p>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
E11			Utilise community and other facilities for distributing information, including working with Tourist Information Centres.	
E12			Parish Paths Partnership and other groups will continue to be supported in their production of local route leaflets, including in making these available on-line.	
E13			Development and provision of parish maps and notice boards in consultation with parish councils will be supported, and sponsorship will be sought to support production cost. This includes physical and/or digital provision, appropriate to local needs.	
E14	Adapting to Technological Advances		Work flexibly to optimise opportunities arising from technological advances over the plan period.	
E15	Research and Data		<p>Research will continue into the use of public rights of way and permissive routes to understand any physical and psychological barriers that may hinder use in order to plan and prioritise future improvements.</p> <p>Other access providers will be encouraged to monitor and share information that may assist this research.</p>	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
E16			<p>Research will be undertaken to determine areas which are particularly suitable for specific activities (for example, horse-riding or mountain-biking).</p> <p>Targeted information will be considered for appropriate areas.</p>	
E17			An ongoing process of public consultation will be undertaken to identify common issues and current trends.	
E18			Actively encourage and promote sharing of information and data.	

**F. Environment and Climate: Climate Change, Protected Landscapes, Biodiversity and Heritage**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
F1	Climate Change Protected Landscapes Biodiversity and Heritage	Ensure that the management of public rights of way and access respects Devon's environment and positively contributes to carbon reduction measures	Ensure that design, materials and works for path creation and improvements are sensitive to local character, heritage and biodiversity; and positively contribute to Devon County Council's target to reach net zero carbon by 2030.	
F2			The integrity, conservation objectives and sustainable use of protected landscapes and designated sites (International, National and Local Designations including other non-statutory environmental designations) will be supported and promoted in partnership with the relevant land managers and associated organisations.	
F3			Opportunities will be sought to improve the environment and appreciation of it through works and promotional information, for example, seeking to improve the landscape corridor along National Trails and promoted recreation routes.	
F4			The diversion or creation of public rights of way which afford links to and/or enhancement of appropriate	



Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			environmental, geological, or historical sites will be supported, in consultation with relevant bodies and with due regard to the relevant legislation.	
F5			The diversion of public rights of way will be considered where there is evidence that they adversely affect or may adversely affect very sensitive environmental, geological, or historical sites, in consultation with relevant bodies and in accordance with relevant legislation and protective policies.	

**G. Land Use and Economy: Tourism, Agriculture and Land Management, Contractors and Businesses**

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
G1	Tourism	Ensure that the management of public rights of way and access positively contributes to the Devon economy	Sustainable tourism such as walking, horse-riding and cycling will be promoted by working with tourism providers and other partners, including to encourage and support Devon as a year round destination.	
G2			<p>Opportunities to enhance and promote access in areas of little or no current tourism will be encouraged, and existing opportunities to extend Devon’s attractiveness to tourists will be developed.</p> <p>Schemes which have added benefit of providing local access for Devon’s residents, address gaps in accessibility provision standards, and/or aid dispersal from more intensively used locations will be prioritised (for example Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces).</p>	
G3			Development of access and car-free links to/from existing visitor attractions will be supported and developers of new attractions will be encouraged to consider such access from the outset of their business development.	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
G4	Contractors and Businesses		Opportunities will be sought in accordance with relevant policy, regulation, and legislation to support the economy through use of local contractors and suppliers; and by providing appropriate business opportunities linked to management of Council owned recreational facilities.	
G5	Agriculture / Land Management	Encourage and support a positive attitude and understanding between path users, local residents, and landowners / land managers	<p>Work cooperatively with landowners and occupiers to identify opportunities for additional temporary permissive routes to enable people to bypass sensitive locations.</p> <p>This can only be done if the legally defined route remains available, and there is no misleading signage, intimidation, or obstruction.</p>	
G6			Liaison will continue with landowners and representative organisations such as the National Farmers Union and the Country Land and Business Association, to ensure best practice, the sharing of information and practical management advice.	
G7			Opportunities will be sought to enhance access opportunities through Environmental Land Management schemes and other relevant initiatives.	

Ref:	Topic:	Objective:	Policy:	Key Dates and Targets (where applicable)
			Appropriate cross compliance requirements will be supported and promoted by working with Defra and landowners/land managers.	
G8			Appropriate access management measures will be supported to enable landowners and land managers to carry out legitimate actions to help address issues such Ash Dieback, forestry operations, people and dogs straying from paths, and cycling on footpaths – for example through use of Public Path Orders, Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders, alternative routes, waymarking, and signage.	

**i) Glossary of Terms**

To be inserted

**ii) Supporting Documents and Strategies**

Strategy / Plan / Topic	Organisation	Link
Strategic Plan, 2021-2025	Devon County Council	<a href="https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan">The best place - Strategic Plan (devon.gov.uk)</a>
Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan, 2023-2025	Devon County Council	<a href="https://www.devon.gov.uk/highway-infrastructure-asset-management-plan">Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan - Roads and transport (devon.gov.uk)</a>
Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 3, 2011-2026	Devon County Council /	<a href="https://www.devon.gov.uk/devon-and-torbay-local-transport-plan-3">Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 3, 2011-2026 - Roads and transport</a>
Cycling and Multi-use Network Strategy, 2015	Devon County Council	<a href="https://www.devon.gov.uk/cycling-and-multi-use-network-strategy">Cycling and Multi-use Trail Network Strategy</a>
'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-green-future">25 Year Environment Plan - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
National Planning Policy Framework	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework">National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>

Strategy / Plan / Topic	Organisation	Link
Equalities Act 2010: guidance	Government Equalities Office and Equalities and Human Rights Commission	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/equality-act-2010">Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
Impact Assessment	Devon County Council	<a href="https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact-assessment">Home - Impact Assessment (devon.gov.uk)</a>
By All Reasonable Means, Least restrictive access to the outdoors	Sensory Trust on behalf of Natural England, and in collaboration with Natural Resources Wales	<a href="https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/ByAllReasonableMeansEnglandAug2020.pdf">ByAllReasonableMeansEnglandAug2020.pdf (sensorytrust.org.uk)</a>
Outdoor Accessibility Guidance	Paths for All and Sensory Trust	<a href="https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/outdoor-accessibility-guidance-18April2023.pdf">outdoor-accessibility-guidance-18April2023.pdf (sensorytrust.org.uk)</a>
King Charles III England Coast Path: improving public access to the coast	Natural England	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/news/king-charles-iii-england-coast-path-improving-public-access-to-the-coast">King Charles III England Coast Path: improving public access to the coast - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20)	Department for Transport	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120">Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>

Strategy / Plan / Topic	Organisation	Link
Advice on bridleways and other access	The British Horse Society	<a href="https://www.bhs.org.uk/access-and-bridleways-advice">Access and bridleways advice   The British Horse Society (bhs.org.uk)</a>
On the right track: surface requirements for shared use routes	The Countryside Agency (now Natural England)	<a href="https://www.naturalengland.org.uk/On-the-right-track-surface-requirements-for-shared-use-routes">On the Right Track Surface Requirements for Shared Use Tracks</a>
Visitor Giving: A toolkit for Destination Organisations	Visit England and nurture lakeland	<a href="https://www.visitengland.com/visitor-giving-helpsheets.pdf">visitor_giving_helpsheets.pdf (visitengland.com)</a>
National design guide	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682222/national-design-guide.pdf">National design guide - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
The South West Coast Path Health and Wellbeing Assessment Report, 2020	South West Coast Path Association, Natural England, University of Exeter	<a href="https://www.southwestcoastpath.org.uk/health-wellbeing-assessment-report-2020">The South West Coast Path Health &amp; Wellbeing Assessment Report 2020 by southwestcoastpath - Issuu</a>
Valuing Nature Report, 2018		



Strategy / Plan / Topic	Organisation	Link
	Valuing Nature, University of Exeter, Clinton Devon Estates, European Centre for Environment & Human Health, University of Exeter Medical School	<a href="https://pebblebedheaths.org.uk/Understanding-and-quantifying-the-health-and-wellbeing-value-of-the-East-Devon-Pebblebed-Heaths-and-exploring-the-potential-of-partnership-working-involving-private-sector-organisations.pdf">Understanding-and-quantifying-the-health-and-wellbeing-value-of-the-East-Devon-Pebblebed-Heaths-and-exploring-the-potential-of-partnership-working-involving-private-sector-organisations.pdf (pebblebedheaths.org.uk)</a>
Naturally Healthy Forum	Devon Local Nature Partnership	<a href="https://devonlnp.org.uk/Naturally-Healthy-Forum-Devon-Local-Nature-Partnership">Naturally Healthy - Forum - Devon Local Nature Partnership (devonlnp.org.uk)</a>
Countryside Code	Natural England and Natural Resource Wales	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/The-Countryside-Code">The Countryside Code - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
Position Statements and Good Practice	Devon Countryside Access Forum	<a href="https://devon.gov.uk/Newsletters-and-reports-Public-Rights-of-Way">Newsletters and reports - Public Rights of Way (devon.gov.uk)</a>
Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/Open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space">Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>

Strategy / Plan / Topic	Organisation	Link
Inspections and Maintenance	Devon County Council	<a href="http://devon.gov.uk">Inspections and maintenance - Public Rights of Way (devon.gov.uk)</a>
National Trail Quality Standards	Natural England	<a href="http://www.gov.uk">National Trails: management standards - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>

iii) Summary of Topics, Issues, and Activities/Priorities from initial consultation

Topic	Issue (summary examples)	Activity/Priorities
Development/ Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population growth</li> <li>• Landscape character</li> <li>• Demand/levels of use</li> <li>• Impact on existing infrastructure</li> <li>• Opportunities for new/improved paths</li> <li>• Risks re. negatively impacting on character and use of existing paths</li> <li>• Traffic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Active Travel:</b> create new routes and enhance quality of existing paths to support and encourage non-car based travel. This includes improving connectivity between residential areas, recreational destinations, places of work, public transport, and other local facilities</p> <p><b>Recreational Infrastructure Improvements:</b> create new routes and enhance quality of existing paths to meet existing needs and to mitigate impacts arising from new development. This should seek to optimise the contribution that paths provide to green infrastructure, and social inclusion</p> <p><b>Design and Materials:</b> ensure that path creation and improvements are sensitive to local character, heritage and biodiversity; and positively contribute to Devon County Council’s target to reach net zero carbon by 2030</p> <p><b>Planning Policy and Plans:</b> influence and inform development management to optimise and improve access as an important part of green space and green infrastructure. This includes contributing to delivery of local and national guidance e.g., <a href="http://www.gov.uk">National design guide - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>

Topic	Issue (summary examples)	Activity/Priorities
Information, Education and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media</li> <li>• Smart Phones</li> <li>• GIS</li> <li>• Webpages</li> <li>• Information provision</li> <li>• E-bikes</li> <li>• Attitudes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication:</b> utilise a range of media to optimise understanding and awareness of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Delivering the RoWIP</li> <li>❖ Accessing the countryside</li> <li>❖ Feeding back and reporting</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Engagement and Campaigns:</b> work collaboratively in identifying and communicating key messages – for example veterinary practices and The Kennel Club on guidelines for safe, enjoyable, and responsible dog walking</p> <p><b>Information and Guidance:</b> support and influence production of easily accessible, effective guidance on accessing and enjoying the countryside, and minimising associated impacts</p> <p><b>Adapting to Technological Advances:</b> work flexibly to optimise opportunities arising from technological advances over the plan period</p>
Agriculture/ Land Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farm traffic – volume and size of vehicles</li> <li>• Livestock and crops – restricting access</li> <li>• Shoots and hunts</li> <li>• Working landscapes – impact of dogs straying and trespass</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community Engagement and Campaigns</b></p> <p><b>Information and Guidance</b></p> <p><b>Planning Policy and Plans</b></p> <p><b>Recreational Infrastructure Improvements</b></p>

Topic	Issue (summary examples)	Activity/Priorities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbon offsetting e.g., tree planting etc.</li> <li>• Land use changes – loss of farmland to development</li> </ul>	<p><b>Alternative Routes:</b> work cooperatively with landowners and occupiers to identify opportunities for additional temporary permissive routes to enable people to bypass sensitive locations. This can only be done if the legally defined route remains available, and there is no misleading signage, intimidation, or obstruction</p>
Population Profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in dog ownership</li> <li>• Ageing population</li> </ul>	<p><b>Information and Guidance</b></p> <p><b>Recreational Infrastructure Improvements</b></p>
Accessibility/ Social Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements in mobility scooters – importance of recognising the advancement in size, length, and range of mobility scooters</li> <li>• Growth in range and availability of E-bikes</li> <li>• Better understanding of need, including the importance of protected characteristics and tackling issues such as racism</li> <li>• Gaps gates and stiles – least restrictive</li> <li>• Aging population</li> <li>• Blind and partially sighted people</li> </ul>	<p><b>Information and Guidance:</b> including identifying and promoting guidance on and for different categories of mobility scooter (with examples)</p> <p><b>Recreational Infrastructure Improvements</b></p> <p><b>Communication:</b> including uUCRs: as a layer on interactive maps</p> <p><b>Community Engagement and Campaigns:</b> including a potential project with the Trail Riders Fellowship re. uUCR mapping</p> <p><b>Adapting to Technological Advances</b></p>

Topic	Issue (summary examples)	Activity/Priorities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance / value of the unsurfaced Unclassified County Road (uUCR) network – ‘Green Lanes’/Quiet Lanes</li> <li>• Availability (or lack of) public transport connections to green spaces</li> </ul>	
Public/ Animal Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ash Dieback</li> <li>• Covid</li> <li>• Avian Flu</li> <li>• Increase in awareness and appreciation of the value of local path networks (particularly during periods of restrictions on movement due to the Covid pandemic)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Alternative Routes</b></p> <p><b>Community Engagement and Campaigns</b></p> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>Information and Guidance</b></p>
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetation growth – longer growing season and increasing number of cuts</li> <li>• Surface water/flooding</li> <li>• Storm damage</li> <li>• Erosion/cliff falls</li> </ul>	<p><b>Planning Policy and Plans</b></p> <p><b>Active Travel</b></p> <p><b>Design and Materials</b></p> <p><b>Recreational Infrastructure Improvements</b></p> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>Information and Guidance</b></p>

Topic	Issue (summary examples)	Activity/Priorities
		<p><b>Community Engagement and Campaigns</b></p> <p><b>Alternative Routes</b></p> <p><b>Adapting to Technological Advances</b></p>
<p>Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature Recovery</li> <li>• Rural landscapes</li> <li>• Pollution/littering</li> <li>• Invasive species</li> <li>• Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces</li> </ul>	<p><b>Planning Policy and Plans</b></p> <p><b>Design and Materials</b></p> <p><b>Recreational Infrastructure Improvements</b></p> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>Information and Guidance</b></p> <p><b>Community Engagement and Campaigns</b></p> <p><b>Alternative Routes</b></p>
<p>Health and wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in demand for walking, cycling and equestrian provision – but is this a long-term trend</li> <li>• Connection to nature</li> <li>• Multi/shared use paths</li> </ul>	<p><b>Planning Policy and Plans</b></p> <p><b>Active Travel</b></p> <p><b>Design and Materials</b></p> <p><b>Recreational Infrastructure Improvements</b></p>

Topic	Issue (summary examples)	Activity/Priorities
		<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>Information and Guidance:</b> including targeted information to encourage greater use by under-represented and excluded people e.g., looked after children, children with special educational needs and disabilities, and blind and partially sighted people</p> <p><b>Community Engagement and Campaigns:</b> including supporting social / green prescribing; and promoting research opportunities with universities and other further education establishments. This should include adding to the evidence base to demonstrate the physical and mental health benefits of outdoor recreation and impacts from actions delivered as part of the RoWIP.</p> <p>A good example is work commissioned by the South West Coast Path Association with the University of Exeter – available to read at <a href="#">The South West Coast Path Health &amp; Wellbeing Assessment Report 2020 by southwestcoastpath - Issuu</a></p> <p>Another example is research carried out on the health and wellbeing value of the Pebblebed Heaths (ref. <a href="#">Understanding-and-quantifying-the-health-and-wellbeing-value-of-the-East-Devon-Pebblebed-Heaths-and-exploring-the-potential-of-</a></p>



Topic	Issue (summary examples)	Activity/Priorities
		<a href="https://pebblebedheaths.org.uk/partnership-working-involving-private-sector-organisations.pdf">partnership-working-involving-private-sector-organisations.pdf (pebblebedheaths.org.uk)</a>
Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active Travel</li> <li>• Growth in holiday accommodation – inexperienced and less well-informed path users</li> <li>• Recreation and leisure/demand for trails</li> <li>• Increase in home working</li> <li>• Importance of the network to local business involved in management and maintenance activities (Framework Contractors)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Planning Policy and Plans</b></p> <p><b>Active Travel</b></p> <p><b>Design and Materials</b></p> <p><b>Recreational Infrastructure Improvements</b></p> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>Information and Guidance:</b> including working with Tourist Information Centres</p> <p><b>Community Engagement and Campaigns</b></p> <p><b>Adapting to Technological Advances</b></p>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austerity</li> <li>• Reduced public transport (especially rural buses)</li> <li>• Partnership working</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Corporate Social Responsibility</li> <li>• Grants</li> </ul>	<p><b>Visitor Payback/Visitor Giving and Sponsorship:</b> identify opportunities to encourage and enable people and business to contribute financially - for example as outlined in Visit England guidance at <a href="https://www.visitengland.com/visitor-giving-helpsheets.pdf">visitor_giving_helpsheets.pdf (visitengland.com)</a></p> <p><b>Participation and Involvement:</b> support and extend the ways in which individuals and groups can directly participate and</p>

Topic	Issue (summary examples)	Activity/Priorities
		contribute to maintaining and improving recreation and access. This includes through volunteering, work experience, apprenticeships, education, training, and skills development.
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• England Coast Path/Coastal Margin</li> <li>• Deregulation – ‘right to apply’</li> <li>• 2026 Cut-off/lost paths</li> <li>• Brexit and changes to agri-environment policy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Coastal Access:</b> work closely with Natural England and local partners and stakeholders to complete the designation process for the England Coast Path. This includes delivery of implementation works for the National Trail and associated access improvements to coastal margin</p> <p><b>Planning Policy and Plans</b></p> <p><b>Active Travel</b></p> <p><b>Design and Materials</b></p> <p><b>Recreational Infrastructure Improvements</b></p> <p><b>Alternative Routes</b></p> <p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>Information and Guidance</b></p> <p><b>Community Engagement and Campaigns</b></p> <p><b>Adapting to Technological Advances</b></p>

# Agenda Item 9.



## PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

7 March 2024

### Present:-

Councillors L Hellyer (Chair), R Chesterton (Vice-Chair), J Bradford, J Brook, I Chubb and D Sellis

### Apologies:-

Councillors M Squires and D Thomas

\* 87

### Minutes

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023 be signed as a correct record.

\* 88

### Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

\* 89

### Devon Countryside Access Forum

The Committee received the draft minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2024. The committee were advised on the updated timetable for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan with the revised policies and objectives to be considered by Devon Countryside Access Forum in April, and this committee in July.

\* 90

### Parish Review: Definitive Map Review - Parish of Clawton 2022-23

The Committee considered the Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/24/10 ) which examined the current proposal arising from the Definitive Map Review in Clawton.

The original survey under s. 27 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 revealed 6 footpaths and 2 bridleways, which were recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement with a relevant date of 1 September 1957. The review of the Definitive Map, under s.33 of the 1949 Act, which commenced in the late 1960s but was never completed, produced a number of proposals for change to the Definitive Map at that time. The Limited Special Review of Review of Roads used as public paths (RUPPS), carried out in the 1970s, did not affect the parish.

The order would address the dual status with the path also recorded as a county road (T Class, Maintenance Category 9) between Leworthy Cross and France also known as Southdown

# Agenda Item 10.

2

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

7/03/24

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hellyer, **SECONDED** by Councillor Brook and

**Resolved:** that a Modification Order be made in respect of Proposal 1, to modify the Definitive Map and Statement by deleting part of Footpath No. 7, Clawton, between points A – B – C – D between Leworthy Cross and France (Southdown), along Leworthy Lane, as shown on drawing no. CCET/PROW/22/103.

## \* 91 Parish Review: Definitive Map Review - Parish of Farringdon

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/24/11) which examined the Definitive Map Review in the parish of Farringdon in East Devon.

The original survey under s. 27 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, revealed two footpaths, which were recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement with a relevant date of 1st September 1957.

The reviews of the Definitive Map under s.33 of the 1949 Act, which commenced in the 1960s and 1970s but were never completed, produced no valid proposals affecting the parish of Farringdon. The Limited Special Review of Roads Used as Public Paths (RUPPS), also carried out in the 1970s, did not affect this parish.

No orders have been made to date and no objections received.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hellyer, **SECONDED** by Councillor Sellis and

**RESOLVED:** that it be noted that the Definitive Map Review has been completed in the parish of Farringdon and no modifications are required.

## \* 92 Public Path Orders - Proposed Diversion: Footpath No.13, Thurlestone

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/24/12) which examined an application to divert part of a Footpath No.13, Thurlestone. The proposed diversion would divert walkers away from a newly developed barn which has replaced an old farm shed and for privacy to their client's house.

The application was submitted in accordance with s119 of the Highways Act 1980 on 26 February 2021. The proposal was subject to an informal consultation process in July – August 2023, which included the parish council, local ward member, statutory undertakers, and representative user groups.

The parish council have been supportive of the planning application at Worthy. However, objections were raised by local representatives of the parish council with regards to the path diversion proposal.

Ms Burden, the land agent, attended the meeting under the Council's Public Participation scheme and expressed her concern of no diversion to the existing footpath. It was noted that the current route runs to the north of the agricultural building where the trees and tree roots have become overgrown, surface water has eroded the surface and the whole route needs assistance to manage the trees, foot up the bank and repair the stone walls.

During general discussion the Committee considered that a diversion would be less commodious and substantially less convenient to the public, and have a negative impact on public enjoyment.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Brook, **SECONDED** by Councillor Sellis and

**RESOLVED:** that no Public Path Diversion and Definitive Map & Statement Modification Order is made in relation to divert Footpath No. 13, Thurlestone (part) from the lines A – B – C to the line A - D - C, as shown on drawing no. CCET/PROW/24/09.

\* **93**      **Public Inquiry, Informal Hearing and Written Representation Decisions; Directions and High Court Appeals**

The Committee **NOTED** the report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/24/13) and the Secretary of State conclusion that the Devon County Council (Bridleway No.28, Wembury) Definitive Map Modification Order 2022 should be confirmed with a minor modification to replace 'Warren Road' with 'Warren Lane' on the third line of the third paragraph in Part 1 of the Schedule.

\* **94**      **Definitive Map Modification Orders**

The Committee considered and **NOTED** the report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/24/14) and plan HIW/PROW/18/03 which informed that a Public Path Diversion and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Orders had been made and confirmed under delegated powers.

\* **95**      **Public Path Orders**

The Committee **NOTED** the report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport (CET/24/15) on the Public Path Orders made and confirmed under delegated powers.

**96**      **Dates of Future Meetings**

# Agenda Item 10.

4

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

7/03/24

11 July 2024, 14 November 2024, 6 March 2025

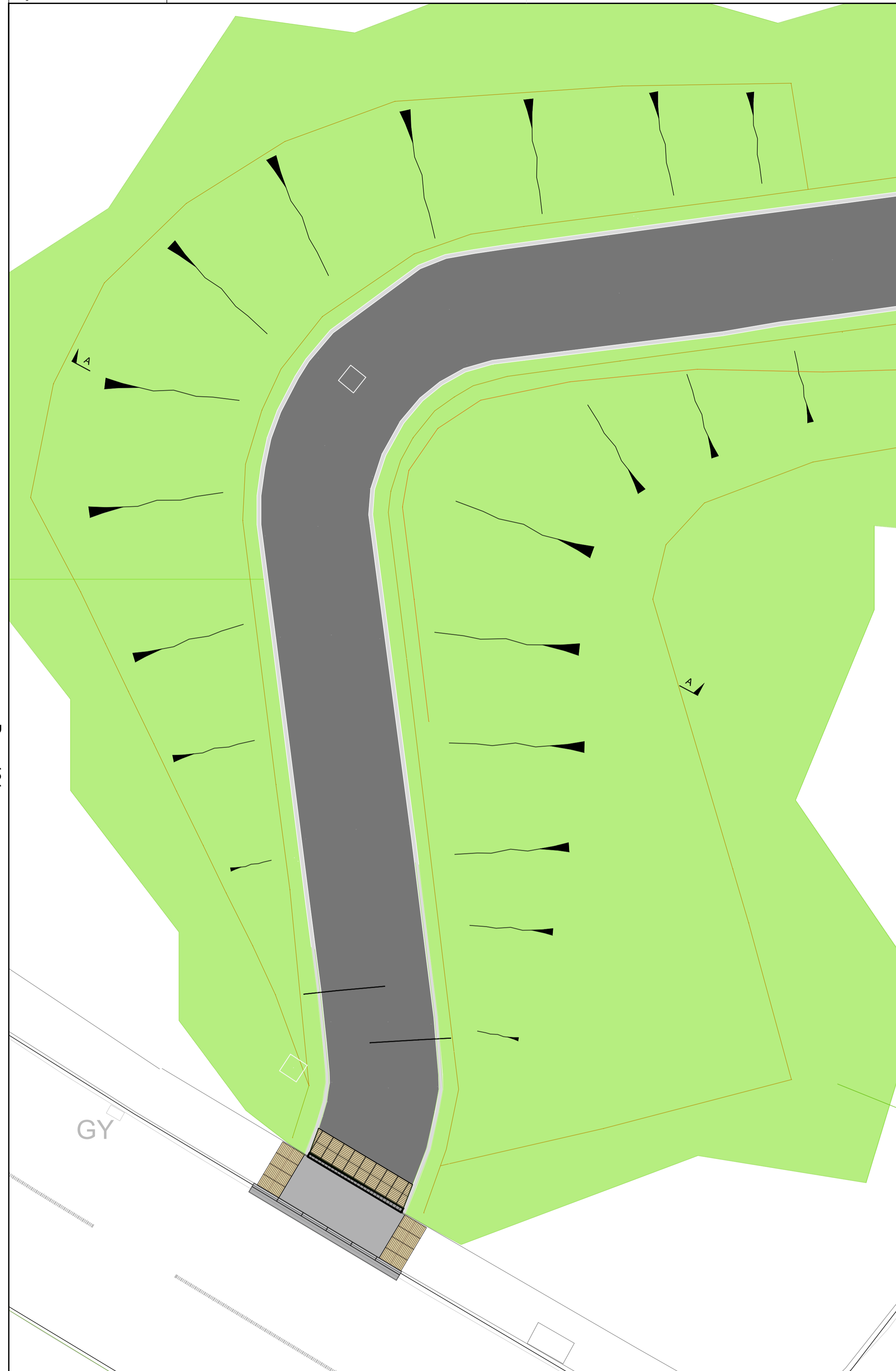
## **NOTES:**

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

\* **DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 2.15 pm and finished at 2.41 pm

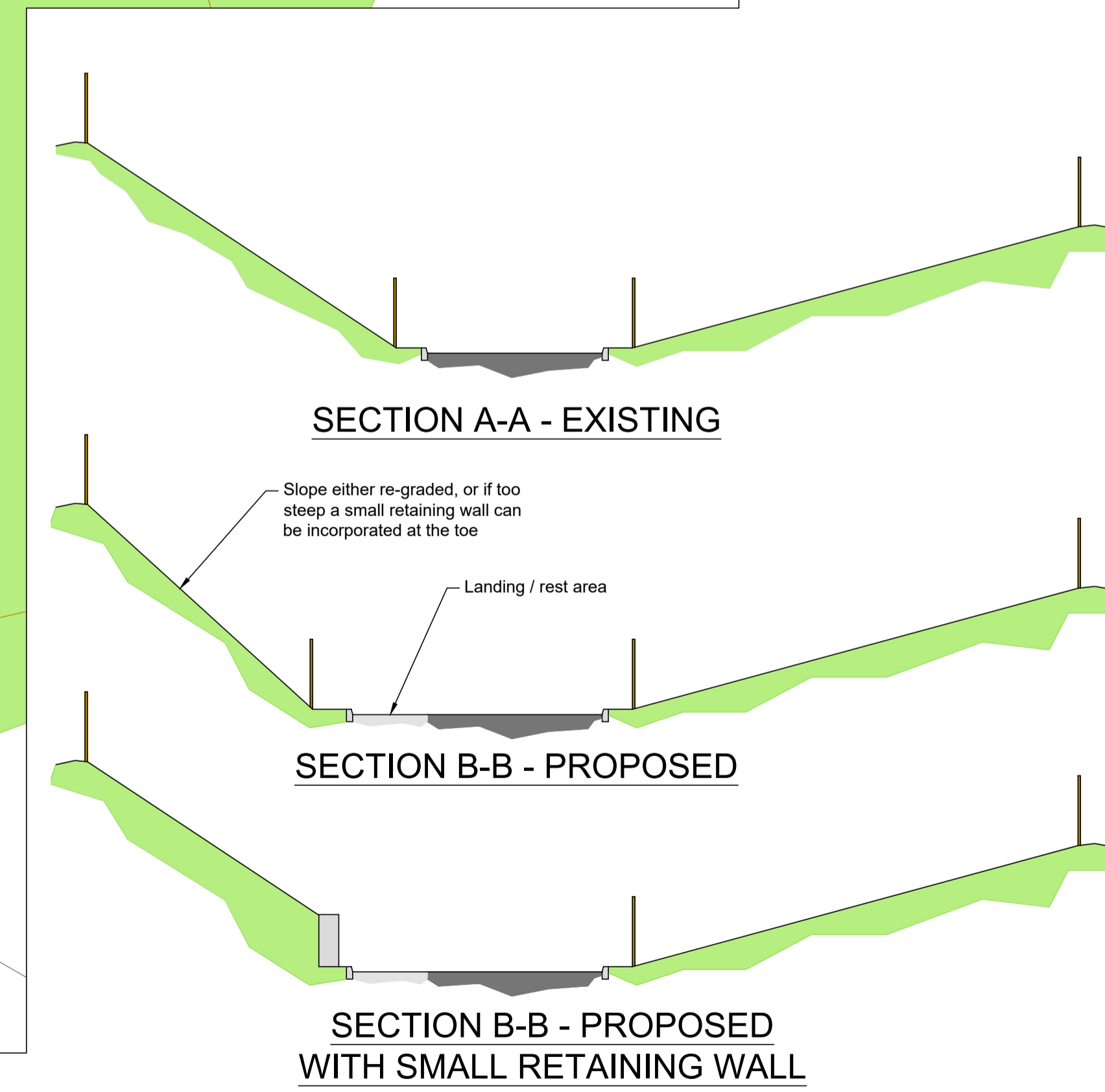




PLAN VIEW - EXISTING



PLAN VIEW - PROPOSED



**Devon**  
County Council

**Engineering Design Group**

Crow Tor  
Great Moor House  
Bittern Road  
Exeter  
EX2 7NL

Tel 0845 155 1004  
Fax 01392 382342  
customer@devon.gov.uk  
www.devon.gov.uk

JOB

A379 SOUTH WEST OF EXETER CYCLE BRIDGE

DRAWING TITLE

ACCESS PATH OFF CHUDLEIGH ROAD  
LANDING AND REST AREA

Rev	Date	Des	Drawn	Revisions	Chk
P0	05/12/23	JL	JL	Draft/preliminary issue for comment	

**PRELIMINARY ISSUE**

Do not scale from this drawing in either hard or electronic format. No responsibility is accepted where this drawing is used in circumstances other than that for which it was originally prepared and issued.		
Drawing Number	Originator	Volume
DCCP15579 - EDG - SBR		
05296	- DR - S - 119	
Scale(s)	Size	Revision
AS SHOWN	A1	P0



## Department for Transport Open consultation

### Smarter regulation: proposed changes to legislation for electrically assisted pedal cycles

Published 29 February 2024. Closing date: 25 April 2024.

#### Active travel agenda

These proposals are part of the government's Smarter Regulation Programme. The [Smarter Regulation policy paper](#) sets out its focus on how we can improve regulation across the board to reduce burdens, push down the cost of living and drive economic growth.

The government's [second cycling and walking investment strategy](#) sets out its commitment to active travel. This includes making walking, wheeling and cycling the natural first choice for shorter journeys and for half of all short journeys in towns and cities in England to be walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030.

This will help achieve important benefits for improving health, reducing emissions, cutting congestion and making local areas more attractive places to live and work. The government's objectives for active travel are underpinned by its projected investment of over £3 billion up to 2025, and the creation of Active Travel England, a new executive agency that is delivering its programme with local authorities to improve active travel across the country.

#### Electrically assisted pedal cycles

Electrically assisted pedal cycles (which we will interchangeably refer to as EAPCs or e-cycles), can play a key role in increasing cycling levels and supporting the government's objectives for active travel. In particular, e-cycles can make cycling more accessible. They provide assistance for cycling longer distances or riding up hills, which can make an important difference for anyone who may be older, disabled or have mobility impairments. E-cycles can also help cyclists who need to ride in business clothes without breaking sweat.

#### E-cargo bikes

E-cargo bikes can deliver the objectives and benefits of active travel as electrical assistance helps riders of cargo bikes transport goods with greater ease. In particular, the use of e-cargo bikes by freight and logistics operators can reduce congestion from other vehicles and improve air quality. To support the development of e-cargo bikes, the government has invested in supporting businesses and local authorities to transition to more sustainable business travel and last-mile deliveries through e-cargo bike grants, including £2.6 million for local authorities from 2 rounds of funding administered by the Energy Savings Trust between 2019 and 2022.

# Agenda Item 12.2

## Current regulations

### Classification of electrically assisted pedal cycles

[Current EAPC regulations \(as amended in 2015\)](#) set out the requirements an EAPC has to meet so as to fall outside the definition of motor vehicle contained within the Road Traffic Acts and to be treated as a cycle. The requirements are that the:

- cycle must be fitted with pedals that are capable of propelling it
- maximum continuous rated power of the electric motor must not exceed 250 watts
- electrical assistance must cut off when the vehicle reaches 15.5mph (25km/h)

An EAPC that complies with the above is not considered to be a motor vehicle within the meaning of the [Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984](#) and the [Road Traffic Act 1988](#).

EAPCs, therefore, are not required to be registered or subject to vehicle excise duty (road tax) and do not have to be insured as a motor vehicle.

The [Road Traffic Act 1988](#), however, sets out that EAPCs must not be ridden by anyone under the age of 14 years.

EAPCs are treated the same as pedal cycles in terms of what infrastructure they may use and can, therefore, use cycle lanes, tracks and other cycle facilities.

### Throttle assistance

EAPCs that provide electrical assistance without the use of pedals are usually known as 'twist and go' e-cycles. It is possible to use these cycles in the same way as any other EAPC. However, under [assimilated EU Regulation 168/2013](#), vehicles with throttle assistance above 3.73mph (6km/h) require type approval.

Type approval is provided via the [Vehicle Certification Agency](#) and is there to ensure that a vehicle meets certain technical requirements. This is normally achieved at the manufacturing stage, but importers and individuals will be able to seek individual approval for vehicles that have not been type approved.

### Proposed changes

The government proposes 2 changes to existing regulations:

- to amend the legal definition of how EAPCs are classified so that the maximum continuous rated power of the electric motor must not exceed 500 watts instead of 250 watts as set out in the current regulations
- to allow 'twist and go' EAPCs to have throttle assistance up to 15.5mph (25km/h) without the need for type approval

The proposed changes would require the government to bring forward statutory instruments to amend the current regulations. Pending the outcome of this consultation, the government would propose to lay this secondary legislation in Parliament in 2024.



E-cycles with increased power and throttle assistance in line with the proposed changes would be classified as EAPCs and would, therefore, be able to use the same infrastructure as pedal cycles, including cycle lanes, tracks and other cycle facilities.

The current regulations apply to Great Britain.

## Rationale

The overriding rationale is to make EAPCs a more attractive and viable travel option for more people.

More specifically, increasing the power of EAPCs to 500 watts would make it easier for cyclists using EAPCs to ride up hills and gradients. This has the potential to enable more people to cycle, for example, if they live or work in areas with hilly terrain or they are less physically fit and would otherwise struggle to cycle up gradients.

EAPCs with 500 watts could be valuable for e-cargo bikes, because they would better enable delivery riders to transport heavier loads, including on terrain with gradients. E-cargo bikes are a growing area of interest and operations for logistics organisations and have the potential to support efforts to cut congestion and improve air quality.

Allowing throttle assistance up to 15.5mph (25km/h) could help make EAPCs more accessible. In particular, some stakeholders have identified how this could enable some disabled people to use EAPCs as a mobility aid and give them greater choice for their personal transport. Higher throttle assistance could also support users who are older, less physically fit or have mobility impairments, in addition to enabling e-cargo bike riders to transport goods with greater ease.

E-cycle users could benefit from the proposals because they may reduce the costs of e-cycles by allowing a greater range to be imported and used. Enabling users to ride e-cycles with greater power or throttle assistance may also reduce the incentive for users to tamper with the settings of their e-cycles to achieve these and other objectives.

By helping more people to use EAPCs, the proposed changes could support the government's wider objectives for active travel and the underlying benefits for this agenda, including improving health outcomes, reducing emissions and cutting congestion. By supporting e-cargo bikes, the proposals could also benefit the government's [Future of Freight plan](#) and, in particular, the use of urban consolidation centres.

## Potential issues

The Department for Transport (DfT) is aware of some potential disadvantages to the proposals and would be interested in stakeholders' views on them.

Increasing the power of e-cargo bikes would enable them to carry heavier loads, which could increase the potential severity of injury caused to pedestrians and cyclists in collisions. Greater usage of e-cargo bikes could also increase the number of collisions, but this could be mitigated if it reduces other forms of freight traffic.

# Agenda Item 12.2

There may be greater safety risks where more powerful or heavier EAPCs interact with other road users, particularly where they are ridden on shared-use cycle tracks alongside pedestrians and are used illegally on the pavement. More powerful EAPCs will be able to accelerate more quickly and travel up hills and gradients at faster speeds. This could lead to EAPCs overtaking pedal cycles and other road users more frequently.

Increasing the power limit of EAPCs will increase their uncapped speed if they are tampered with so that electrical assistance does not cut off at 15.5mph as required. This would increase road safety risks significantly, including from collisions. Riding EAPCs that have been tampered with in this way is illegal and police forces are able to enforce this.

Increasing throttle assistance may reduce the health benefits of pedalling, but it could lead to more people cycling and cycling for longer distances, including by pedalling.

There may be a risk of more severe battery fires from more powerful e-cycles and this could be exacerbated by tampering. This will be considered as part of cross-government work into the safety of lithium-ion batteries used by e-cycles which, for example, includes the recent publication of [safety guidance on how to safely purchase, charge and use e-cycles](#).

## Engagement

DfT will encourage responses to this consultation by identifying relevant stakeholder organisations and representative bodies and proactively contacting them to draw their attention to this consultation and seeking their written responses. It will target various organisations including those representing active travel, disabled people, fire and road safety stakeholders in addition to representatives from the manufacturing, engineering, freight and e-cargo industries.

The expertise provided by stakeholders through their consultation responses will inform a better understanding of the benefits and impact of the proposed changes, and how best to mitigate any risks.

## Questions

**There are seventeen questions in the consultation. Questions relevant to the Devon Countryside Access Forum are below. The excluded questions are aimed specifically at industry and manufacturing representatives. Responses can be made on an online form or in writing.**

***The consultation is limited to the 2 proposed changes to the regulations and the above questions. It does not extend to wider topics related to e-cycles, cycling or active travel, including mandatory insurance, licensing or helmets, the Highway Code, cycle training or riding in an antisocial manner. Responses that are not relevant will be disregarded.***

### Question 1

Do you support or oppose the proposed change to how EAPCs are classified so that the maximum continuous rated power of the electric motor must not exceed 500 watts instead of 250 watts as set out in the current regulations?

**Question 2**

Explain your response to question 1. Are there any additional benefits or risks (including in relation to road safety) not referenced in this document?

**Question 3**

Provide any relevant evidence to support your responses to questions 1 and 2.

**Question 4**

Do you support or oppose the proposed change to allow EAPCs to have throttle assistance up to 15.5mph (25km/h) without the need for type approval, instead of 3.73mph (6km/h) as currently regulated?

**Question 5**

Explain your response to question 3. Are there any additional benefits or risks (including in relation to road safety) not referenced in this document?

**Question 6**

Provide any relevant evidence to support your responses to questions 4 and 5.

**Question 7**

Do you support or oppose limiting either or both of the proposals to disabled people with impairments that affect their mobility and who would benefit from the proposals? If applicable, provide views on which disabled people the proposals should apply to. Explain your response and provide any relevant evidence.

**Question 8**

Do you support or oppose limiting either or both of the proposals to e-cargo bikes? If applicable, provide views on how e-cargo bikes could be defined for these purposes. Explain your response and provide any relevant evidence.

**Question 9**

Provide any relevant evidence in response to the questions in the [impact assessment](#) – see paragraph 33.

**Question 16**

What, if any, evidence can you supply on what impact these proposals might specifically have on disabled people?

**Question 17**

What, if any, evidence can you supply on what impact these proposals might specifically have on e-cargo bike users?





## Devon Countryside Access Forum Response to Exeter Plan

Submitted 12.01.24

### Exeter Plan



Hilary Winter

To Planning.Policy@exeter.gov.uk

Egress Switch: Unprotected

 This message was sent with High importance.



DCAF response Exeter Local Plan 6.12.22.pdf  
.pdf File

Dear Sir/Madam

### Exeter Plan consultation

Apologies for emailing but the online portal and opportunity to upload documents was insufficient.

I am re-attaching the Devon Countryside Access Forum's response to the earlier consultation exercise. The Forum is pleased to note that some of its advice and recommendations have been incorporated in the full draft consultation.

Two issues in the initial Forum response do not appear to have been addressed. The first relates to space to let dogs exercise off-lead. Secondly, the DCAF raised points about disability access and transportation of different types of cycles and mobility scooters on public transport. Although there are useful references to accessibility within new developments and a requirement for storage facilities for cycles etc., the question of disability access across the City and transportation of cycles etc. is not included.

For information, a comment has been added to the online survey website for CC8. (Climate Change – Flood Risk) which states:

Without well-designed SuD schemes, paths, public rights of way and cycle routes are more likely to be impacted by climate change and flooding. Increased levels of maintenance are likely to be required. If routes are not resilient, people may use these less which would be detrimental to both health and wellbeing and sustainable transport aspirations. The Council is advised to adopt the Schedule 3 SuDs legislation to assist in mitigation.

I should be grateful if you could confirm that the comments above will be considered as the full Plan is finalised.

# Agenda Item 13.1

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice “as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area...” Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice, and this includes the City Council.

The DCAF currently has seventeen members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

Regards

Hilary

Hilary Winter  
Forum Officer  
Devon Countryside Access Forum  
c/o Public Rights of Way team  
Great Moor House  
Bittern Road  
Sowton  
Exeter  
EX2 7NL



**Devon Countryside Access Forum**  
**c/o Public Rights of Way team**  
**Great Moor House**  
**Bittern Road**  
**Sowton**  
**EXETER EX2 7NL**

**Tel: 07837 171000**  
**01392 382771**

[devoncaf@devon.gov.uk](mailto:devoncaf@devon.gov.uk)

[www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf)

Mr M Gibbons  
Case Officer  
The Planning Inspectorate  
Room 3 O/P  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
BRISTOL  
BS1 6PN

23 January 2024

Dear Mr Gibbons

## **Woodbury Common - Proposal to deregister and exchange common land**

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice “as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area...” Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice, and this includes the Planning Inspectorate.

The DCAF currently has seventeen members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

A member of the Devon Countryside Access Forum attended a pre-application site meeting at Blackhill Quarry on 8 November 2023 to discuss the above application. A report was compiled and subsequently brought to the next full meeting of the Forum held on 22 January 2024.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum would like to make the following comments.

- The proposal represents a sensible rationalisation of the status of small pockets of land owned by Clinton Devon Estates in order to meet associated CDE objectives. In essence, the proposal represents a benefit to the public in

## Agenda Item 13.2

terms of formalising access to parts of the Common. In practice there is no corresponding loss of access.

- The proposal will provide formalised common land status to six small parcels of land situated close to the quarry and covering 3.4 ha for which there is currently only permissive access.
- The public have not had access for many decades to the 1.7 ha of industrial site which, it is proposed, will be deregistered as common land and is primarily hard standing ground with no particular conservation value.
- No public rights of way are affected by the process of deregistering and exchanging this common land. This is with the minor exception of short-term work concerned with underground cabling along a stretch of approximately 500m of public bridleway running roughly north-south along the eastern side of the Blackhill Quarry site. It is understood this cabling work may take in the order of a week to complete and the surface will be re-instated. Although short term, DCAF welcomes the intention to provide a suitable alternative route during this short period.

Overall, the Devon Countryside Access Forum supports the application to deregister Blackhill Quarry as common land and exchange this land for some small nearby parcels.

It would be appreciated if you could advise the Forum of the outcome of this application.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter  
Forum Officer

*Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum*

*Chair: Sarah Slade  
Vice Chair: Chris Cole*



**Devon Countryside Access Forum**  
**c/o Public Rights of Way team**  
**Great Moor House**  
**Bittern Road**  
**Sowton**  
**EXETER EX2 7NL**

**Tel: 07837 171000**  
**01392 382771**

[devoncaf@devon.gov.uk](mailto:devoncaf@devon.gov.uk)

[www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf)

Ms C White  
Lead Adviser  
Access to the Outdoors Team  
People, Landscape, Access & Nature  
Natural England  
Sterling House  
Dix's Field  
EXETER  
EX1 1QA

29 January 2024

Dear Ms White

**Consultation on review of direction number 2013036672 restricting access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 at Hemyock Common, Devon.**

Thank you for consulting the Devon Countryside Access Forum, a statutory local access forum, on the review of the statutory direction under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 at Hemyock Common.

The Forum currently has seventeen members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of landowners/ managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as planning and tourism.

Members of the Devon Countryside Access Forum discussed this at the meeting held on 22 January. The efforts made to agree a suite of measures to mitigate noise through the court Consent Order were noted and appreciated. The Forum is of the view that the existing direction is satisfactory and that a restriction on access is required to permit the shoot to continue safely.

The shoot has been operating for many decades and has permission from the parish council as landowners. The limits on days and hours means that there is still access to the common outside these times.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment.

# Agenda Item 13.3

It would be appreciated if you could let the Forum know the outcome of the consultation.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter  
Forum Officer

*Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum*

*Chair: Sarah Slade*

*Vice Chair: Chris Cole*

## Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000

### NOTICE OF RELEVANT AUTHORITY DECISION FOLLOWING REVIEW OF DIRECTION RESTRICTING CROW ACCESS

**Prepared by Natural England**

**Access Authority:** Devon County Council  
**Relevant Authority:** Natural England  
**Local Access Forum:** Devon Countryside Access Forum

**Direction reference:** 2013036672

Land Parcel Name	Direction Reference	Details of restriction on original direction
Hemyock Common	2013036672	Outline Direction 12 days between 1 May and 1 October  Every year until 7 March 2024  This will only apply between 13:00 and 18:00 hours on any day, or between 11:00 and 17:00 hours as notified on the site notice.

Natural England has decided how to proceed following its review of the above long-term direction to restrict CROW Access rights on this land. A consultation was held from 17 January 2024 to 12 February 2024 with statutory consultees and the public.

We received feedback from consultees including the Devon Countryside Access Forum and Open Spaces Society. In summary the feedback was as follows:

Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) stated that they consider that the existing direction is satisfactory and that a restriction on access is required to permit the shoot to continue without disruption. They noted that the shoot has been operating for many decades and has permission from the parish council as landowners and that the limits on days and hours means that there is still access to the common outside these times. The efforts made to agree a suite of measures to mitigate noise through the court Consent Order were acknowledged.

The Open Spaces Society (OSS) suggested that the common may be owned by the parish council as an open space under the Open Spaces Act 1906. Under s.10(a) of the Act, the owner would be required to: ‘...hold and administer the open space...in trust to allow, and with a view to, the enjoyment thereof by the public as an open space within the meaning of this Act and under proper control and regulation and for no other purpose.’ The OSS state that given the words ‘no other purpose’, it is impossible to see how the grant of a permission to a shooting club with consent to exclude the public can be compatible with the council’s statutory duty. They therefore questioned whether it is proper for Natural England to impose a direction excluding public access on Hemyock Common.

# Agenda Item 13.3

## **Outcome of the review:**

Following correspondence with the landowners, Hemyock Parish Council, Natural England's decision is to revoke the outline direction to exclude access to Hemyock Common during clay pigeon shoots.

## **Background**

Hemyock Common is a small common to the west of the village of Hemyock on the Blackdown Hills in Devon. The common is around 8 hectares in size and a County Wildlife Site due to its dry heathland. In 2013 Natural England received an application from the landowner Hemyock Parish Council on behalf of a clay pigeon shoot run by Culm Vale Gun Club that had been using the site for over 40 years and managing the site and shooting safely during this long period. During this time there had been no incidents or issues.

The members of the shoot are fully licensed with regard to their firearms, insured and the shooting dates are certified by Devon and Cornwall Police. They supplied a risk assessment which referred to the safety guidelines provided to all members and guests and detailed other measures to ensure safety on the day of the shoot. Access to the common was informally managed, by positioning two safety officers at the single entrance point and using informative signage. Shooting over the open space in the centre of the common stopped when a vehicle or member of the public on foot entered from this access point and continued when it was safe to resume.

Therefore, given the safe working practices detailed in the risk assessment including access management measures, and the clear unobstructed view of the area of risk, it was determined in 2013 that a restriction for public safety was not required.

We also assessed whether there was an issue with disruption to the shoot.

The Secretary of State approved Relative Authority Guidance (RAG) in Criteria Set 19 states:

- *Participants can be distracted from shooting (whether or not the target is moving) by the need for extra vigilance in order to prevent any risk of accidental injury to visitors. Where visitor levels are high, the frequent need to stop shooting in order to allow visitors to pass may detract significantly from their enjoyment of the sport.*
- *Signs, flags or lookouts ('stops') may be used to let visitors know when shooting is taking place and encourage considerate behaviour. These techniques are most likely to be effective where there are safe and clearly marked rights of way or other routes that people can use through or around the area affected without causing significant disruption.*

The shoot was able to manage the small number of walkers who use the site by informing people a shoot was in progress and visitors either left or were invited to stay to spectate the sport. However, some local residents were not sympathetic to the continuation of the shoot and there was a risk of disruption from them insisting on utilising their CROW access rights. A direction to exclude people while shooting was



taking place gave the shoot the power to protect their activity from significant levels of disruption and effectively manage visitors by asking them to leave if they felt that was necessary.

An outline direction to restrict access was put in place at this site because the exact dates and times of closures were known well in advance and were notified at the start of every season. The closure was only necessary for the period in a day when shooting occurred, i.e. from 13.00 to 18.00 or from 11.00 to 17.00, therefore leaving the common open to other users for the remainder of the day. This was the least restrictive option available given the need to prevent disruption to the legitimate shooting activities. The Parish Council notified Natural England of shooting dates each year since the start of the direction and the dates were displayed on their website.

During the review of this direction Natural England corresponded with the Parish Council and the Chair of the Commons Management Committee. Since there have been no issues with disruption to the shoot since 2013, the Parish Council confirmed that they are happy for Culm Vale Gun Club to return to informally managing access to the common during the shoot, as they did for many years prior to this date. It was therefore agreed that Natural England would revoke this outline direction to exclude access to Hemyock Common.

Date review completed: 6 March 2024



**Devon Countryside Access Forum**  
**DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2024 - 2025**

ACTIVITY	TIMING
<b>Consultations</b> <i>Use of working groups as appropriate</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local Development Framework documents and Neighbourhood Plans (district/borough councils)</li> <li>○ Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, in particular countywide rural.</li> <li>○ Major planning applications with recreational/functional access and green space elements</li> <li>○ Other consultations</li> </ul>	Throughout year  2024 Throughout year  Throughout year
<b>DCAF proactive work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Disability access</li> <li>○ Multi-use trails and equestrian use</li> <li>○ Develop and update position statements</li> </ul>	Throughout year
<b>Updates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ England Coast Path</li> <li>○ Public Rights of Way updates and funding</li> <li>○ Exeter Valley Parks</li> <li>○ Stover Country Park restoration project</li> <li>○ Lower Otter restoration project</li> <li>○ Multi-use trails</li> <li>○ Pebblebed Heaths improvements</li> <li>○ Deregulation Act 2015</li> <li>○ Clyst Valley Regional Park</li> <li>○ Killerton 'historic landscapes' project</li> </ul>	As appropriate
<b>Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Training Day</li> <li>○ Training – Definitive Map</li> <li>○ Other workshops and training events</li> </ul>	June 2024 Autumn 2024 To be offered to members

<b>Presentations</b>	September 2024 January 2025
<b>General aspirations 2024-2025</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Respond to consultations, using working groups where appropriate</li> <li>○ Support the Public Rights of Way section, DCC</li> <li>○ Ensure integration between the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and other strategies and policies</li> <li>○ Continue to work with DCC on multi-use route development</li> <li>○ Continue to encourage working with landowners</li> <li>○ Consider increased use of the countryside and how to encourage responsible use</li> <li>○ Contribute to green infrastructure policy development throughout the County</li> <li>○ Continue the link with the Public Rights of Way Committee</li> <li>○ Liaise with neighbouring local access forums, as appropriate</li> <li>○ Network with relevant organisations, through members or directly</li> <li>○ Raise the profile of the DCAF</li> </ul>	Throughout year
<b>Publications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Annual Report</li> </ul>	September 2024