

Cambridgeshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan Update

April 2016

1. Introduction

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) was adopted in 2006 as part of the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (LTP). The Plan was formulated following considerable research, data gathering and extensive public and stakeholder consultation. The Local Access Forum played a key part in the development of the Plan, and have steered the preparation of this update. The Plan is well used and has been invaluable in helping to bring about improvements to the rights of way network and enhancing countryside access.

This document provides an update to the ROWIP in line with the requirements of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2002. This update summarises the progress made since the ROWIP was adopted in 2006 and sets out future challenges for rights of way and countryside access to 2031 in the form of updated Statements of Action. This update to the ROWIP forms part of the third iteration of the Local Transport Plan, which is known as LTP3.



Rail commuters accessing Meldreth station on foot and the Wandlebury footpath/cycleway

This update does not amend the policy basis of the existing ROWIP or LTP3 however it does update all Statements of Action that were published in the first ROWIP. The update demonstrates how our policies and plans for rights of way will contribute towards the County Council's vision – 'creating communities where people want to live and work: now and in the future'. Whilst we must have a vision for the future, we must also be realistic and recognise that we do not have the resources to deliver all the measures we would wish to over the lifetime of the Plan. We will try to be innovative in the way that we use funds that are available and continue to prepare strong bids for funding streams as they become available. Delivery of the Plan will require a range of functions and organisations including the voluntary sector to work in partnership. Resourcing levels have decreased significantly since 2006 and therefore some of the objectives have been scaled back as current resourcing levels mean that some areas of work have been, or will be reduced or stopped altogether.

As required by guidance, the updated Statements of Actions give consideration to

- access to woodland,
- provision for cyclists, equestrian and disabled users
- the forthcoming Department for Transport (DfT) Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

The rights of way network is an important asset, providing access to the countryside and is vital to the rural economy. The vision of improved countryside access in Cambridgeshire builds on the rights of way network to bring benefits addressing transport, tourism, the rural economy, social integration, health and the environment.

The scope of the ROWIP

Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for managing the Rights of Way network in Cambridgeshire. Rural path management seeks to follow a joint countryside agenda with landscape, biodiversity and open-spaces to provide a joined up countryside policy. A variety of functions and organisations manage complementary provision which joins to provide a wider access network. Rights of way in urban areas are equally important and are generally managed in tandem with road maintenance programmes.

The main objective of the ROWIP is 'to manage, improve and promote a Public Rights of Way network as an integral part of a wider transport system which meets the needs of the whole community for safe sustainable local transport, which improves public health, enhances biodiversity, increases recreational opportunities and contributes to the rural economy'.

The core of the Plan is a Statement of Action, which sets out how we will manage and improve the local rights of way network. The Statements of Action have been reviewed and updated where appropriate. The Plan is intended as a strategy document, and detailed proposals at a local level will follow the principles set out here. The eight Statements of Action are as follows:

- SOA1 Making the countryside more accessible
- SOA2 A safer and health-enhancing activity
- SOA3 72,500 new homes
- SOA4 Knowing what's out there
- SOA5 Filling the gaps
- SOA6 Better land management
- SOA7 Develop definitive map and other records
- SOA8 A better countryside environment

Policy context

The ROWIP forms part of the LTP3 and contributes towards the delivery of the Council's main outcomes, which are:

- Older people live well independently
- People with disabilities live well independently
- People at risk of harm are kept safe
- People lead a healthy lifestyle
- Children and young people reach their potential in settings and schools

- The Cambridgeshire economy prospers to the benefit of all Cambridgeshire residents
- People live in a safe environment

The strategic objectives of the LTP are:

1. Enabling people to thrive, achieve their potential and improve quality of life
2. Supporting and protecting vulnerable people
3. Managing and delivering the growth and development of sustainable communities
4. Promoting improved skills levels and economic prosperity across the county, helping people into jobs and encouraging enterprise
5. Meeting the challenges of climate change and enhancing the natural environment

There is a clear link between the ROWIP Statements of Actions and LTP objectives, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 How the ROWIP contributes towards LTP objectives

ROWIP Statements of Action	LTP objectives				
	1	2	3	4	5
SOA1 Making the countryside more accessible	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓		✓✓
SOA2 A safer and health-enhancing activity	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓		✓✓
SOA3 72,500 new homes	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓
SOA4 Knowing what's out there	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SOA5 Filling the gaps	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SOA6 Better land management	✓		✓		✓
SOA7 Develop definitive map and other records			✓✓	✓	✓✓
SOA8 A better countryside environment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Supporting Local Plans

We will work with local planning authorities to establish countryside policies in Local Plans to support the delivery of over 70,000 new homes across Cambridgeshire. We will seek

to secure improvements to the rights of way network through the planning process, helping to create sustainable communities and providing access for all to the countryside for recreation and economic purposes. Furthermore, Local Plans for Cambridgeshire contain policies to protect existing rights of way or allow agreed diversions in exceptional circumstances.

What funding is available?

Funding from traditional sources e.g. the LTP has been steadily declining, having halved over the past five years. Therefore securing funding through Section 106 Agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and funding bids will become increasingly important. In addition, funding from partner organisations including parish and town councils and user groups will be required. To further enhance the rights of way network we will encourage and facilitate local communities and organisations to bring about improvements to their local rights of way networks themselves and provide support and advice where appropriate, in accordance with the policies contained in Cambridgeshire County Council's Highway Infrastructure Management Plan 2015-2025.

In some instances the County Council will be unable to take on the additional maintenance liability associated with a new route due to lack of resources. In these cases, long-term maintenance of new routes will have to be secured through agreements with landowners, estate management companies and town and parish councils. The County Council will assist communities in securing such agreements and can provide advice on how local parish and town councils can secure new access opportunities.

What has already been achieved?

The ROWIP has helped to deliver a wide range of improvements to the Rights of Way network. A large focus has been on surface improvements of numerous routes across the county which have helped to provide better access to and within the countryside. To make the countryside even more accessible, we embarked on a significant stile replacement programme, which saw many stiles replaced with gates. In addition, a number of bridges have been improved or replaced. Some of the highlights of what has been achieved include:

- The DEFRA sponsored Green Fen Way project saw the introduction of over 300 'destination and distance' finger signs.
- The launch of a new website which has provided a one-stop-shop for information regarding public rights of way, adopted roads, cycle tracks, county farms permissive routes and estate paths.
- A series of improvements to bridleways across the county, including a new bridleway around the perimeter of Cambourne, Oakington to Histon new bridleway, Thriplow new bridleway over M11 and a new footpath connecting Cambourne to Caxton.
- Cambridgeshire Fly-tipping Action Group has been established.
- Planning guidance has been produced to inform developers of requirements for Rights of Way.
- Section 106 funding has been secured for a range of rights of way improvements, including Jack's Way.

- Updates to the Definitive Map and Statement have been made as part of the consolidation project, including resolution of gap anomalies between the PROW and road network.

Section 3 provides further details of what has been achieved to date.

What can the ROWIP aspire to achieve in the future?

With a population of 621,120 (2011 Census) and an area of 3045 km², Cambridgeshire is one of the less densely populated counties in England, albeit one of the most rapidly expanding (12% population increase 2001-2011). Only a minority of the population lives in the rural and mostly arable countryside. However, demand for access to the countryside is growing, and is becoming increasingly important due to its importance to the rural economy, public health and well-being.

The ROWIP will build on past successes and seek to continue many of the projects already started, including selected surface improvements, making more rights of way information available online and securing rights of way improvements as part of the A14 scheme. Work to remove barriers, maintain paths, undertake verge clearance and clearing debris will also continue. There will be an increased focus on encouraging healthy lifestyles by working closely with the newly established Cambridgeshire Health and Well-being Board. Increased working in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies such as the Local Access Forum and town and parish councils will be key to delivering improvements to countryside access. The value of the Public Rights of Way network in terms of encouraging sustainable transport modes and helping to mitigate the effects of climate change is also reflected in our future priorities. Suitable provision for non-motorised users in new developments plays a greater role in encouraging sustainable ways of travelling.

The updated Statements of Action set out in more detail how we will manage and improve the rights of way network, see Section 2.



Bridge over the River Great Ouse at Braham Dock, near Ely

2. Statement of Action

The Statement of Action is a required part of the ROWIP. This section identifies specific issues to be addressed and proposes possible solutions and activities. Extensive consultation informed the Statement of Action as part of the ROWIP 2006.

These priorities are not within the County Council's capacity to deliver alone. Partnership working will continue to be at the heart of significant improvement to countryside access in Cambridgeshire. Some actions will be easier to achieve, while others will require substantial funding and collaboration between other parties over an extended period of time.

The Statement of Action is grouped into 8 categories, each covering a separate issue. A 'guiding principle' is presented corresponding to each issue.

- SOA1 Making the countryside more accessible
- SOA2 A safer and health-enhancing activity
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Sawtry Footpath

SOA1: Making the countryside more accessible (community cohesion)

Guiding principle GP1:

“Countryside access provision should be physically accessible to the widest possible range of people. Management and improvement of the existing Cambridgeshire Rights of Way network should aim to increase that accessibility, while new countryside access provision should generally be planned to avoid imposing restrictions. Where an existing path may not be fully accessible to those with limited mobility due to limits imposed by external constraints, such route limitations should be effectively communicated to users”.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it an offence to prevent people with disabilities from enjoying countryside access. Since the Plan was adopted, gates have replaced stiles in numerous locations to improve access for wheelchair users and people with reduced mobility. In addition, a number of rights of way have been improved or resurfaced, and over 300 distance and finger signs have been put in place. Subject to resources, we will continue with this programme to enhance access to the countryside. In addition we would support communities to undertake projects that would encourage people with disabilities, young people and ethnic minorities to visit the countryside.



Access for wheelchair users at Histon/Girton woodland

The current Government Agenda for promoting health and wellbeing through increased opportunities for exercise is locally represented by the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board. Links between the work of the Definitive Map Team and Board will be used to help facilitate the use of the countryside as a resource to bring communities together, providing access opportunities for all.

Future programme

The benefits column gives an indication of the additional benefit of undertaking the action and links:

- A: Promoting a healthy lifestyle.
- B: Delivering a safer highway network.
- C: Providing an inclusive countryside access network
- D: Improving the condition of existing access provision to modern standards.
- E: Providing sustainable access to the countryside.
- F: Maintaining and increasing biodiversity.
- G: Contributing to tourism and rural economic prosperity.
- H: Increasing awareness of the countryside, biodiversity issues and responsible enjoyment of countryside access opportunities.
- I: Improving land management
- J: Providing reliable, enforceable information

Ref	Action	Benefits	Project or service	Local body & potential partners
1/1	Selected surface improvements	D	Project	CCC, Disability Groups, parishes
	Support and implement improvement of paths identified by others which are significant desire lines for people of all abilities. Enable local communities to publicise these routes.			
1/2	Bringing people together	C	Project	CCC, Disability groups
	Help bring communities together through increasing inclusivity by replacing stiles with gaps or gates when paths are diverted. Enable communities to promote their own local network of routes through supporting them to do this where a project is proposed.			
1/3	Survey network accessibility	J	Project	CCC, User groups, Disability groups, Parish and Town Councils
	Compile existing asset information. Publish information on interactive map. Support opportunities identified by others for opening up the countryside for the mobility impaired and their carers.			
1/4	New structures to BSI standards wherever possible.	CD	Project	CCC, Landowners
	While CCC seeks to follow BSI recommendations for structures, and encourages landowners to do likewise, there is no formal requirement, especially for existing infrastructure. Applies to bridges, stiles, gates and steps.			
1/5	Accessibility signs & waymarks	CD	Project	CCC, Disability groups
	Design and procure signs and waymarks. Install signs and waymarks on selected paths. Keep stock of signs and waymarks and use for future maintenance.			

SOA2 A safer and health-enhancing activity

Guiding principle GP2

“Countryside Access provision should be safe for users and encourage healthy activities. Where significant potential conflict with motor traffic or railways can be demonstrated, then measures to reduce risk will be considered. Where rights of way are subsumed within urban development, then planners will be encouraged to ensure that path design is open and unthreatening and suitable for regular exercise. Safety-critical path infrastructure will be regularly inspected”.

One of the six priorities of the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board is to encourage healthy lifestyles and behaviours in all actions and activities while respecting people’s personal choices. Improvements to the accessibility of the network will provide new opportunities for healthy activities, where routes that were previously perceived as being unusable are improved to a point where new opportunities for exercise are easily available within a convenient distance for easy access.



Safety issues are particularly important to users of the rights of way network, especially where the network crosses busy roads and railways. This is a particular problem for horses, which can react unpredictably to traffic.

In 2013, 305 people were killed or seriously injured on Cambridgeshire’s roads, with trends showing higher numbers of casualties involving young people, pedal cycles, motor cycles, and on rural roads. Accident prevention work in Cambridgeshire is currently focusing on these areas, which has close links with the rights of way network and its users. The work of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership will ensure safe links with the PROW network where possible and appropriate. In addition, our programme of road safety education places great emphasis on improving road users’ skill levels to improve safety on the county’s transport network. Specific training is available, including pedestrian training, scooter training, bikeability, motorcycle training, and driver training. Targeted training will also encourage more people to undertake healthy activities such as walking and cycling.

In the past, there have been specific instances of footpaths upgraded to bridleways to provide horse riders with safer off-road routes. Examples of schemes that have improved safety for a range of users include:

- Long Road, Comberton;
- Jack's Way, paid for from Northstowe monies
- Fordham bypass – bridleway within bypass,
- new footpath linking to FP15 Caxton from Cambourne,
- Cambridgeshire Guided Busway bridleway and cycleway,
- Sapley Road to King's Ripton route for pedestrians



Newton verge track improvements being enjoyed by a range of users.

The consideration of rights of way as part of planning for new developments can help to address safety issues from the outset, and can sometimes help to provide safe crossings of major routes, or diversions to the rights of way network.

Possible solutions/future programme

Ref	Action	Benefits	Project or service	Local body & potential partners
2/1	Improve future road development including A1, A428, A14	CDE	Project	Highways England, CCC
Working with Highways England to plan better ROW provision				
2/2	Verge and footway improvements	CD	Project	CCC
Provide and publicise safe routes alongside busy roads where required to connect to ROW which otherwise are effectively dead-ended by terminating on busy roads without safe soft user provision,				

taking into account needs of Protected Road Verges, where appropriate.					
2/3	Safety audit of road crossings	BD	Project		CCC road safety, User groups
New proposals for ROW crossing roads will be considered by CCC Road Safety.					
2/4	Implementing safer road crossings	BD	Project		CCC Highway Divisions, Highways England
Provide bridges, refuges, signs and visibility splays where new routes are being constructed.					
2/5	Enable increased access to PROW to facilitate healthy lifestyles.	AC	Project		CCC, Health & Well-being Board
Work to establish and enhance links with the newly created Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board to secure new opportunities for access to PROW through joined up working.					

SOA3: 72,500 new homes

Guiding principle GP3

“New development should not damage countryside provision, either directly or indirectly. New settlements should be integrated into the rights of way network, and improved provision made for the increased population. Where appropriate, development should contribute to the provision of new links and/or improvement of the existing rights of way network.”

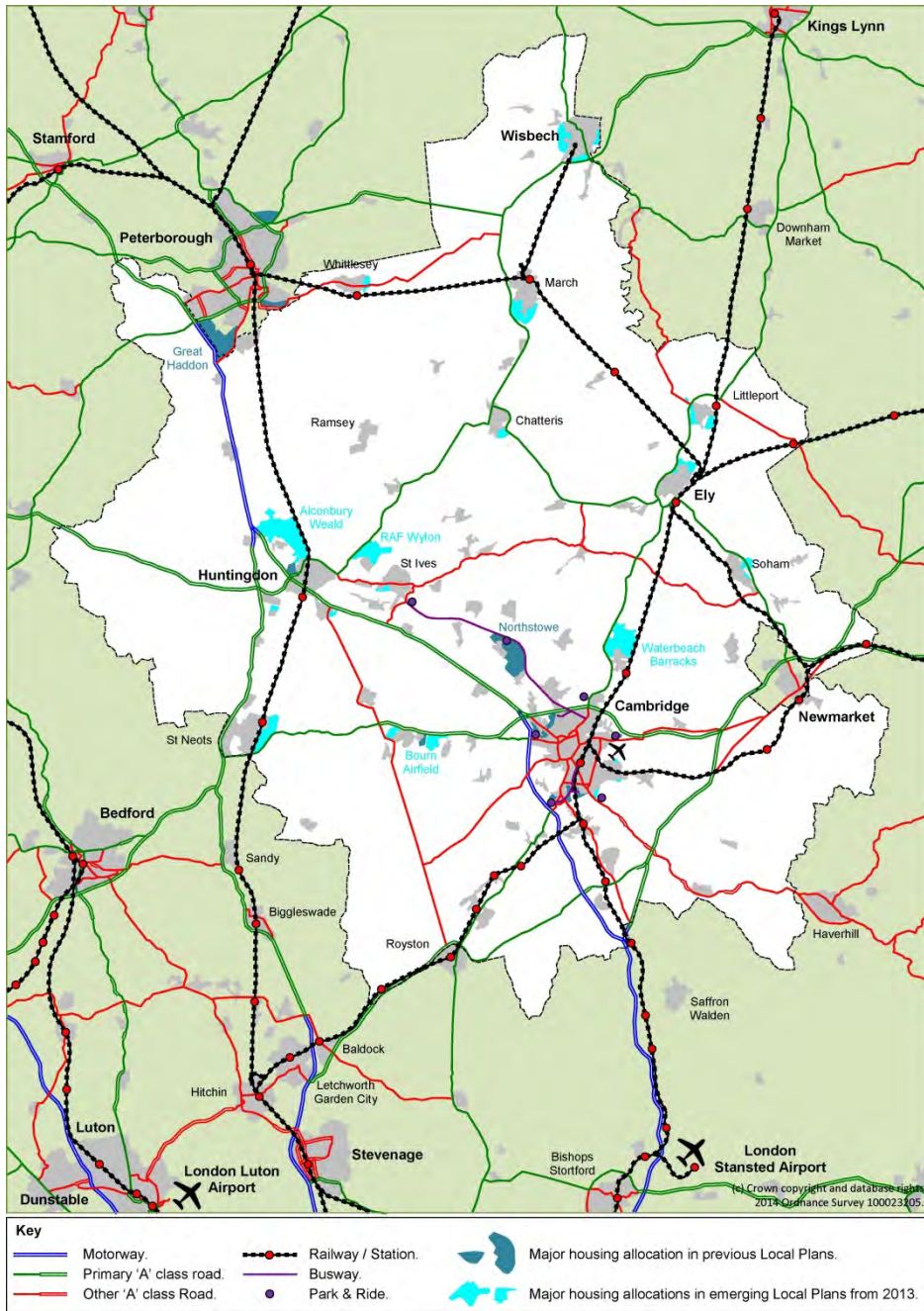
The Local Plans covering the five districts of Cambridgeshire plan for 72,500 new homes across the county to 2031 (2036 in Huntingdonshire). This will place more pressure on the Rights of Way network. For example, new development can adversely affect the network, while the additional population will make new demands of the remaining network. There may also be opportunities for improvements to the RoW network as part of new developments.

The Highway Authority is able to safeguard existing rights of way and also create improvements to the network as part of development taking place. Improvements to the highway network can be made through the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Agreements. For example, improvements have been made to Jack’s Way using S106 funding from the Northstowe development and Trumpington Country Park has been part funded through section 106 funding from the Cambridge Southern Fringe development. Updated planning guidance has been published on the Council’s website and is being provided to all developers who contact the Council.

The pressures that new developments can place on SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) situated close to the area require sufficient and suitable green infrastructure, and for management of visitors to minimise the impact.

Future programme

Ref	Action	Benefits	Project or service	Local body & potential partners
3/1	Development control during development	CD	Service	CCC Planners
Ensure that RoW are protected from inappropriate use during development and that new facilities are provided to a good standard				
3/2	Minimise damage to existing network	AC	Service	Planners Developers CCC
Liaise with planners and developers to ensure that new development does not compromise existing countryside access provision. Development should link into the network.				
3/3	Secure S106 or CIL funding for offsite improvements to RoW for new population and implement	ABC DEF GHI	Service	Planners Developers CCC
Liaise with planners and developers to provide new countryside access provision to link new development into an enhanced network catering for increased population. To include new routes, status upgrades, improved facilities and improved information, signage and interpretation. Facilitate alternative means of providing improvements and ongoing maintenance in discussion with developers and communities in accordance with policies contained in the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan 2015-2025.				
3/4	Extend Strategic Open Space for new population	CFH	Project	Planners Developers CCC
Support planners and developers in the provision of new open space for use by the local population				



Growth planned in Cambridgeshire

SOA4 Knowing what's out there

Guiding principle GP4

Up to date, accurate, comprehensive and integrated access information should be made available to all users of countryside access provision

The benefits of Rights of Way to public health, sustainable transport, the rural economy and the quality of people's lives are now well established. However, though a minority of people make good use of the network, many do not. This can be due to various reasons, some of which may be addressed by this plan.

- Knowledge and information – there is a lack of local knowledge of routes. More information and signage is required on the ground and a wide range of information in various media to reach more people is required.
- Perceptions – those not familiar with the countryside may perceive issues, which are either not present or not general. These can include lack of knowledge about their and others' rights, concerns about unsympathetic landowners, fear of livestock and worry that they may get lost. Whether real or not, these perceptions need to be addressed.
- Inclusivity – making the countryside accessible for all.
- Parking difficulties and public transport – having confidence to get to the start of an outing – whether a safe place to leave a car or which bus to catch and when – can be key to getting into the countryside
- Urbanising the countryside – over provision of sign posts can reduce enjoyment of the countryside for some users

Since the plan was adopted a significant programme of work has been undertaken to make our mapping records available online. This provides a one-stop-shop for information regarding public rights of way, adopted roads, cycle tracks, county farm permissive routes and estate paths. The information is available here

http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20012/arts_green_spaces_and_activities/199/definitive_map_and_statement

Ref	Action	Benefits	Project or service	Local body & potential partners
4/1	Unify underlying access information	H	Project	CCC Information providers
Widen GIS and interactive online map information to provide specific information to a wide range of audiences such as access land and presence of stiles/gates and widths of PROW to enable mobility impaired users to make informed decisions before visiting the countryside.				
4/2	Local facilities and events	CH	Service	CCC Volunteers
Support neighbourhood activities, local map boards and community groups to enhance community cohesion.				
4/3	Keeping routes clear	CH	Project then service	CCC Volunteers Parish/Town Councils
Clearance of crops over paths, managing vegetation and reinstatement of paths after ploughing will be dealt with as a priority, subject to the availability of revenue funding.				



Cambridgeshire
County Council

The

Cawdle Fen Way

Ely • Little Thetford



www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Canals and quays

A former settlement at Braham Farm owed its prosperity to the river. In 1086, monks at a settlement called Brahmewere were recorded as supplying fish to the monastery at Ely.

Unusually, the monks at Brahmewere were totally independent of the other monasteries. They lived in a Grange (now part of the present farmhouse) and were served by inhabitants of their own village settlement.

When the Grange and village were at their most prosperous, the River Great Ouse flowed nearer the island of Sturtney. A channel was dug from the river up to Brahmewere, where it divided into two channels serving both the village and Grange (now called Cawdle Fen Catchwater and Grunty Fen Catchwater). A turning pool was dug to allow boats to dock and turn round.

The site of the turning pool can still be seen from the banks of the Grunty Fen Catchwater and is now occupied by orchards.



Causeways and waterways

The River Great Ouse ploughs through the landscape of open fenland, hedge-lined meadows and cloud-filled skies. This powerful river, now enclosed by elevated earth banks, used to sweep across the land, changing course regularly. Now complemented by a system of dykes and catchwater drains, the river carried excess water to the Wash to avoid flooding miles of fen land.

The importance of the river to people living in the area can be traced back many years. The village of Little Thetford was first mentioned in AD 972 when it was spelt 'plurforda', meaning people (plur) of the ford (forda).

It is thought that the village of Little Thetford was a main crossing point of the river. This theory is reinforced by the discovery, in 1932, of a Bronze Age causeway leading from Barway to Chapel Hill in Little Thetford. There is also some evidence of Roman settlement in the area, again probably based on the river.



SOA5 Filling in the Gaps

Guiding principle GP5

Countryside access provision should build on the platform of the historical network to meet the needs of today's users and land managers

A central action for the updated ROWIP is to improve the network as a whole, making connections with the cycle network and wider transport network. Given the lesser extent of the bridleway network, there is also a real need to provide a better connected network for horse riders too, as well as walkers, carriage drivers and 4x4 users. This focus will help contribute to the DfT's Draft Cycling Delivery Plan (2014).

By 2025, DfT's Draft Cycling Delivery Plan aims to:

- double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of bicycle stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages¹; and
- increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school from 48% in 2013 to 55%.

The Local Transport Plan will also contribute towards the meeting of these targets through its programme of cycle improvements, safety schemes and traffic management measures. Work is currently ongoing to record missing links in the network on the Definitive Map where these were identified under the Lost Highways Project.

Through the ROWIP 2006 a number of bridleways have been improved, as discussed in Section 1. We will continue to work with colleagues and developers to ensure equestrian needs are considered during scheme development.



Hilton verge improvements

Ref	Action	Benefits	Project or service	Local body & potential partners
5/1	Recording of Lost Highways	ABC J	Project	CCC User Groups Parish/Town Councils
	Take action to close missing links identified under the lost highways project, subject to availability of funding.			
5/2	Appropriate seasonal byway voluntary	CF	Project	CCC Districts

¹ Cycling activity for the purpose of this document is measured as bicycle stages as in the National Travel Survey. The basic unit of travel in the National Travel Survey is a trip, which consists of one or more stages. A new stage is defined when there is a change in the form of transport. Counting bicycle stages rather than trips allows us to include journeys that involve a bicycle but where this is not the main form of transport (for example, cycling to a railway station to catch the train to work).

	restraints and TROs to protect bridle access				
	Provide minimum restrictions on use of byways to protect surfaces and the interests of the wider user community. Costs have included legal cost and barriers, though savings have been made on avoiding the necessity for repeated surface repairs. Landowner cooperation is needed to ensure that agricultural use does not cause continued damage. Dates of operation of TROs have been standardised across Cambridgeshire during 2014-15.				
5/3	Deliver improved bridleway network	ABC DEG	Service		CCC User groups Parishes
	Prioritise bridleway improvements on grounds that bridleway users currently suffer highest risk on roads and bridleway network is currently most disjointed. Ensure that bridleway improvements have least possible effect on pedestrians so as to maximise benefit to widest user community, subject to available funding. Support alternative mechanisms of delivery where necessary.				
5/4	County Farms Estate	ABC DEG I	Service		CCC
	Work with County Farms to secure permissive access where appropriate to improve network accessibility and connectivity.				



Shepreth footpath improvements

SOA6 Better Land Management

Guiding principle 6

Management and improvement of countryside access should consider the needs of land management, conservation, heritage and concern about rural crime.

Issue

- Public access to the countryside can have a negative impact on land management for conservation and the sustainability of vulnerable species and habitats.
- Many farmers and landowners believe that providing public access entails an inappropriate workload and financial burden
- Concerns about rural crime and the potential effect of increased access can deter landowners from improving access. Issues include fly-tipping, illegal encampments, theft and burglary, arson, poaching, hare coursing and associated intimidation, illegal off-road vehicle use, and trespass.
- Uncontrolled dogs and fouling are a deterrent to countryside users and makes managing land for access both costly and hazardous

What has been achieved already?

We have worked with landowners to improve waymarking as opportunities came forward. In addition, we have worked with conservation bodies on a number of projects. We have input into individual neighbourhood panels, and our enforcement officer liaises with the police. We have attended rural crime conferences and Rural Crime Action Team meetings

Ref	Action	Benefits	Project or service	Local body & potential partners
6/1	Waymarking	CI	Service	CCC Landowners
Work with landowners, Parish and Town Councils to increase waymarking in places where there are concerns about path users causing problems for land management by straying and about inappropriate use of paths. CCC to provide materials for landowners to install on the ground. Officer time needed to check results.				
6/2	Mowing contracts	CGI	Service	CCC Landowners
Explore opportunities for local communities, District Councils, Parish Councils and landowners to undertake maintenance work on their own land. Though this takes more time to administer the larger number of contracts, there are significant advantages in path 'ownership' and cross-compliance with third-party schemes on cross-field paths. Also puts money back into rural economy.				
6/3	Better conservation liaison	F	Service	CCC Landowners Conservation bodies
To counter real and perceived conflicts between countryside access and conservation management, CCC will liaise with the Wildlife Trust and Natural Cambridgeshire where necessary to ensure opportunities for greater public understanding are maximised.				
6/4	Rural policing	BC	Service	Police
Increase resources and profile of resources addressing those aspects of rural crime, which are countryside access related and which can lead landowners to inappropriately block access.				



Drove Lane, Wicken

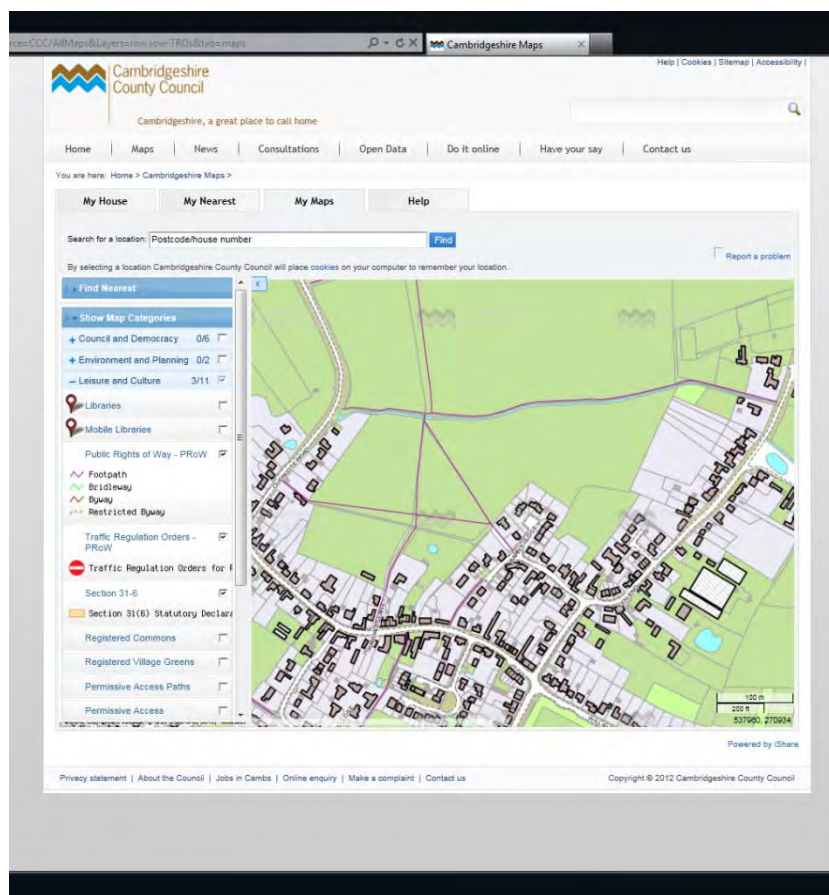
SOA7 Develop Definitive Map and Other Records

Guiding principle GP7

The Definitive Map and Statement should be an accurate, comprehensive, up-to-date and accessible record of the public rights of way network in Cambridgeshire. Proposals for legal changes to the network should be resolved subject to availability of resources.

The Definitive Map consolidation project was commenced when the first ROWIP was published and is now nearing completion. The identification of lost highways, gaps in the network and routes vulnerable to encroachment is complete, with work to address gaps underway. It is envisaged that a consolidated Definitive Map and Statement covering the whole of the modern County of Cambridgeshire will be published in May 2016.

The County Council will continue to process applications to modify the Definitive Map and Statement along with Public Path Orders to divert, create and extinguish PROW at the landowners' request, to enable development to take place and to resolve Definitive Map anomalies.



Ref	Action	Benefits	Project or service	Local body & potential partners
7/1	Map consolidation – accurate interactive GIS map	CHIJ	Service	CCC
	Consolidate changes from existing definitive maps onto a single reissued map, also represented electronically on GIS to a defined accuracy, of 1:10,000 scale to OS repositioned base and to reach the widest public arena – this work is scheduled for completion by May 2016.			
7/2	Resolving problem paths	CHIJ	Service	CCC Landowners User groups
	Continue to catalogue problems with existing definitive routes (e.g. houses built on routes);			

	determine preferred action and implement (e.g. diversion), subject to available funding.				
7/3	Mapping routes which are not definitive	CHIJ	Service		CCC
	Continue to map Unclassified Roads and other routes with public access benefits, which integrate with the RoW network and make this information more public.				
7/4	Definitive path widths	CHIJ	Service		CCC
	Research and define widths of path widths not recorded on the definitive statement; make Definitive Map Modification Orders to register them on the legal record. Rights of way are also important biodiversity corridors and so establishing their boundaries is crucial to conserving that resource.				
7/5	Definitive Map Casework	ABC DEG IJ	Service		CCC
	Formulation of revised Statements of Priority for dealing with applications for Public Path Orders and Definitive Map Modification Orders to enable the backlog of applications to be dealt with fairly and transparently, prioritising those of most importance where appropriate.				

SOA8 A better countryside environment

Guiding principle GP8

The countryside access experience in Cambridgeshire should be straightforward, enjoyable and inspiring.

Issue

If being in the countryside is not a pleasant experience, then countryside access is unlikely to be popular. Issues include fly-tipping, agricultural encroachment, misuse of rights of way and dog waste.

Within our limited resources, we endeavour to keep the path network in good condition by reactive maintenance. Where cropping problems are reported on arable land, enforcement action may be taken, starting with talking to farmers. Problems with fly-tipping and dogs are resolved in partnership with District Councils. Misuse of paths by motor vehicles is referred to the police for appropriate action.



Bridge reinstatement Sawtry (Footpath 27)

Ref	Action	Benefits	Project or service	Local body & potential partners
8/1	Enhance cropping policy to increase compliance with law	C	Service	CCC NFU/CLA Landowners
Reduce threshold for action. Target repeat offenders with more proactive inspections. Better marking of rights of way on ground. Signpost information to agricultural contractors. Encourage local pressure through communities. Develop cross-compliance programmes with DEFRA and the RPA whereby subsidies are linked to respecting rights of way.				
8/2	Develop	BC	Service	CCC

	path mowing programme				Contractors Environment Agency
	Coordinate better with other cutting agencies e.g. Environment Agency on riverbanks.				
8/3	Partnership working and Volunteer groups	BCF	Service		CCC User groups Volunteers
	Effective use of volunteer groups to help maintain paths, which would otherwise not be maintained given limited resources.				

3. ROWIP Summary of progress

The first ROWIP published in 2006 contained eight Statements of Action for the management of local rights of way, and for securing an improved network of local rights of way. The Statements of Action identified specific issues to be addressed and proposed possible solutions and activities. The following tables summarise the progress made against each Statement of Action since they were first published in 2006.

Theme 1: Making the countryside more accessible		
1/1	Selected surface improvements <i>We planned to implement prioritised Local Transport Plan funded schemes.</i>	Surface improvements remain one of the largest areas of work. Routes have been improved in a number of areas including, Bourn, Soham, Wicken, Bury and Haddenham
1/2	Survey network accessibility <i>We planned to survey all regional and leaflet promoted routes and sought to put the information online.</i>	All CCC routes have been surveyed and improvement works have taken place. External funding from DEFRA for the Green Fen Way project has funded promotion of routes through updated leaflets and a website. BVPI 178 surveys (to record path condition and ease of use) are no longer undertaken.
1/3	New structures to BSI standards <i>We planned to raise awareness of our performance indicator (BVPI178), replace 100 stiles with gates and carry out an accessibility audit of our bridges.</i>	Gates have replaced stiles at numerous locations and a programme of bridge replacements was undertaken. BVPI data is no longer collected.
1/4	Accessibility signs and waymarks	Over 300 new 'destination and distance' finger signs are now in place, many funded through the DEFRA Green Fen Way Project.

Theme 2: A Safer Activity		
2/2	Improve future road development <i>Ongoing input into Highways England route management schemes and enhancements</i>	The Rights Of Way team is contributing to A14 scheme development to ensure rights of way issues are fully considered.
2/2	Verge and footway improvements <i>We had planned to list and prioritise gaps, verges and safety schemes. Local Transport Plan funding would be used for improvements</i>	A number of verge paths are being managed by the Local Infrastructure and Street Management Service, works have included vegetation clearance to increase visibility at Isleham. Local demand continues for verge improvements. Advice on highways schemes and road safety schemes is provided as

		appropriate.
2/3	Safety audit of road crossings <i>An audit of existing road crossings to identify opportunities and priorities for improvements works</i>	The Rights of Way Team contribute ideas to the development of schemes.
2/4	Implementing safer road crossings <i>Providing refuges, signs, visibility splays where prioritised</i>	The Rights of Way Team contribute ideas to the development of schemes.

Theme 3: 57,000 new homes – minimising and maximising impact of development		
3/1	Development control during development <i>We planned to</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Produce updated planning guidance</i> - <i>Maintain regular contact with District Planning and Highways England</i> - <i>Assert obligations during planning and construction</i> 	Updated planning guidance has been produced and published on the Council's website and is being provided to all developers who contact the Council. Useful contributions to major planning applications affecting Rights of Way continues, including Cambridge Southern Fringe, Cambridge North West, Northstowe and many smaller applications. We have negotiated with developers on many significant schemes such as RAF Brampton and Alconbury Weald to maintain and improve quality links for communities.
3/2	Minimise damage to the existing network <i>Liaise with developers and planners to ensure development does not compromise existing routes</i>	Officers have continued to monitor planning applications and provide information to applicants and developers. We continue to liaise closely with the Local Infrastructure and Streets Service where access and practical maintenance advice is required.
3/3	Secure Section 106 funding for offsite improvements <i>We planned to use a Section 106 progress table to enable monitoring and contribute to the S106 and external funding group</i>	Significant funding has been secured for developments around Cambridge. Improvements were made to a new footpath linking Cambourne to Caxton, and Earith/Colne, and Bottisham.
3/4	Extend strategic open space <i>We planned to contribute technical advice to Growth Area Fund projects and Greenspace Strategy</i>	Valuable contributions have been made to the Wicken Vision and Drayton Lakes. CCC officers have concentrated on community management of existing reserves and land managed in hand through the County Farms Estate.

Theme 4: Knowing what's out there		
4/1	Unify access information <i>We planned to put archaeology etc information on the internet map and install encapsulated site maps. Our permissive path agreement forms were to make clear where the path could be advertised.</i>	A new website was launched in January 2014. Adopted road, cycle tracks, county farms permissive routes and estate paths data is also available online, enabling us to provide a much-improved one-stop-shop of public access information. A list is now provided online detailing what highway and public access information is available. We have also mapped previously unrecorded soft roads

		to ensure they are captured in inspections and maintenance bids to government, resolving gaps between the roads and PROW network.
4/2	Local facilities and events <i>We planned to host training days, mentor, and maintain staffing and funding.</i>	Patch meetings are held regularly across the County with Parish Council representatives to discuss rights of way issues.
4/3	Better signs and waymarks <i>We planned to produce a bespoke signage report, including the value of maintaining location records – to include waymarks, and implement its recommendations.</i>	A significant number of destination and distance finger posts have now been installed
4/4	Unify marketing of access information <i>We planned to circulate our display board, and produce and implement a leaflet strategy.</i>	In the early stages of the Plan, we attended a number of county shows and a rural crime public meeting. Efforts are now being concentrated on internet delivery and focussing on public health.

Theme 5: Filling the gaps		
5/1	Identify routes required <i>We planned to select schemes from a list of gaps and ask Cambridgeshire Local Access Forum to prioritise it. Links were to be provided equitably across the county.</i>	The initial Gaps Project was completed in 2006 with follow-up work to identify and list all gaps up to 2010. Work then began to undertake the administrative legal work to correct legal records, prioritising those at greatest risk e.g. from losing the route at the 2026 cut-off-date. These are being dealt with through formal investigation, where appropriate achieving the goal quickly by amending the roads (List of Streets) record, otherwise through an evidential Definitive Map Modification Order to record the route on the Definitive Map & Statement, and thus protect the rights and through-link. The Local Access Forum agreed proposals for prioritisation and a significant new link was provided at Cambourne by compulsory Creation Order.
5/2	Voluntary restraints and Traffic Regulation Orders <i>We planned to apply and review the county policy</i>	We have reviewed a number of TROs and Voluntary Restraints and the policy has recently been reviewed as part of the Annual Highways Policy Review. Dates of operation of TROs have been standardised across Cambridgeshire during 2014-15.
5/3	Plan circular routes linked to interpretation. Prioritise route creations for new circular routes for maximum public benefit and use.	Routes have been identified in Chatteris, Whittlesey and Doddington and leaflets produced as part of wider projects. We have been working with partners to identify opportunities for new circular routes as part of wider projects.
5/4	Deliver improved bridleway network	Improvements have been made to bridleways at Bourn, Harlton, Barton, Thriplow, Lode,

	<i>On the maintenance side, we planned to design and implement two bridleway surface schemes and a crossing each year, putting in LTP bids. On the records side, we planned to identify gaps in the network and make appropriate orders to remedy these.</i>	Cambourne and Little Gransden amongst others. We have been working with colleagues to encourage the consideration of equestrian needs during scheme development (e.g. cycle improvements and local highway improvements), and working with the Northstowe project team to secure bridleways in the new town.
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Theme 6: Better land management		
6/1	Waymarking <i>We planned to promote waymarking by landowners and to distribute posts</i>	Working with landowners. Cropping blitz postcards were sent out each year. The cropping postcards are no longer sent out due to the decreased resources available to undertake this work.
6/2	Mowing contracts <i>Extend the proportion of the network cut by farmers on their own land.</i>	Farmers grass cutting contracts were suspended pending changes to grass cutting procurement.
6/3	Better conservation liaison <i>We planned to adopt a maintenance manual and put it online, to receive papers from the Biodiversity Partnership and send our 'Bulletin' to environmental land management bodies.</i>	We have worked with conservation bodies on a number of projects. A 'Bulletin' was sent to environmental land management bodies. The Biodiversity Partnership no longer exists.
6/4	Rural policing <i>We planned to get related maintenance procedures adopted and attend rural crime meetings.</i>	We input into individual neighbourhood panels, and our enforcement officer liaises with the police as part of day to day operations. We have attended rural crime conferences and Rural Crime Action Team meetings.

Theme 7: Develop Definitive Map and Statement and other records		
7/1	Map consolidation <i>We planned to continue to fund staff to update the Definitive Map and Statement.</i>	Consolidate changes from existing definitive maps onto a single reissued map, also represented electronically on GIS to a defined accuracy, of 1:10,000 scale to OS repositioned base and to reach the widest public arena – this work is scheduled for completion by May 2016.
7/2	Resolving path problems <i>We planned to catalogue and address map consolidation issues.</i>	A work programme and prioritisation procedure is now in place.
7/3	Mapping routes which are not definitive <i>We planned to identify public routes vulnerable to being lost from any record and record them properly. In 2013-14 we proposed to continue to work towards ensuring highway records</i>	A total of 316 potential Lost Highways were identified, those which are supported by sufficient documentary evidence to enable a full investigation to be conducted into their status have also been identified. Over 40 records projects have been initiated to resolve gaps in our highways records or to improve their accuracy and accessibility to officers

	<i>correctly show the full extent of the highway and at correct status, and to identify areas of work required as part of an overall Asset Information Records Strategy.</i>	and to the public.
7/4	Recording definitive path widths <i>We planned to do this parish by parish whilst addressing map consolidation issues.</i>	A list of existing paths recorded on the Definitive Map & Statement where additional width is unrecorded (based on additional documentary evidence) had been identified as part of the Lost Highways project. This list has been reviewed against criteria to identify only routes to which the additional width would add value and be worth the resource required to register them. Any other requests for width registration will continue to be dealt with in line with the policy for Definitive Map Casework Prioritisation.

Theme 8: A better countryside environment		
8/1	Anti-fly tip programme <i>We planned to attend Cambridgeshire Fly Tipping Action Group</i>	Working with District Councils, Police and other agencies. Cambridgeshire Fly Tipping Action Group has been established.
8/2	Enforce cropping policy <i>We planned to make contact with the Rural Development Service to address non-compliance and enforce county policy</i>	Continued liaison with DEFRA. Single Farm Payment 'Cross Compliance' conditions are still helping re-instatement.
8/3	Extend mowing programme <i>We planned to add 10% a year to the length to be cut and push for a third or even fourth cut on promoted routes</i>	Lengths have been added to the mowing programme on an annual basis. A new mechanism for delivery has been in place since April 2015 where two cuts are made annually with an option of a third cut if necessary and where resources permit.
8/4	Volunteer groups <i>We planned to publicise volunteering groups on the internet and elsewhere, and work with probation, the Green Lane Association, Parish Path Partnership representatives and farmers</i>	Community Payback (formerly called Community Service) has helped with vegetation clearance and other tasks, as have volunteers from the Ramblers' Association. Parish representatives and farmers continue to give up time and other resources beyond their duties, for example, farmer Matthew Bates and helper spread plantings on 1km of Tadlow Bridleway in return for expenses only. We also acknowledge significant help from user groups. Contributions have been made to the development of a County Council policy on Volunteering.