

Norfolk Local Access Forum

Item No.

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| Report title: | PROW Sub-Group March Report |
| Date of meeting: | 19 April 2017 |
| Responsible Officer: | Tracy Jessop, Assistant Director, Highways and Transport |

Strategic impact

1 Widening Access to Public Paths

A review of rights of way and access provision to increase the use of PROW by cycles would generate extra work for NCC staff. In the longer term, the challenges would be, firstly identifying suitable routes or pilots for paths to cycle on, secondly ensuring they met an adequate standard for cycling, thirdly mapping and maintaining them and fourthly enforcing “responsible access”. It is hard to see how this would be possible in the current economic climate without external resources. Discussions of a pilot would need to take these considerations into account.

2. Support for Footpath Wardens in Parishes

A second Parish Council Seminar would help to support NCC Communities work and provide opportunities for other discussions around the role of Pathmakers, Permissive Access and wider volunteer roles.

3 2026 – Claims for Lost Paths

Better coordination of claims would help to manage the workload of the NCC Definitive Map Team who are already struggling with a backload, and ensure that key routes are given priority.

Executive summary

1 Widening Access to Public Paths

Cycling UK is supporting British Cycling and a number of other partners in writing to English and Welsh ministers calling for a review of rights of way and access provision. With pilot projects to test the feasibility of different models of improved access for cyclists proposed as a way forward, their off-road cycling advisor, has set out the case for greater responsible access. At its meeting on 1 March 2017, the LAF agreed to encourage a dialogue with British Cycling and Cycling UK to explore whether Norfolk might pilot a location for trials and to research properly the likely effects of enhanced off-road cycle access and the PROW Sub-Group Agreed to take it away and investigate further.

2 Support for Footpath Wardens in Parishes

The Senior Trails Officer is developing a single reporting system for members of the public and volunteer wardens which will become part of the NCC reporting system. Once finalised it will be available to Parish Wardens with an information pack.

It was agreed that a second Parish Council Seminar would be useful, particularly for parishes who are interested but need more support and this is recommended to the LAF. The subgroup proposes to discuss this in more detail at its next meeting on 12 June.

3 2026 – Claims for Lost Paths

There is a need to coordinate claims for “lost paths” and to prioritise the key ones, reduce duplication and withdraw those unlikely to succeed. Ken Hawkins is working with Helen Chester and others to establish a coordination point for claims.

Recommendations:

Concerning

1. **Widening Access to Public Paths**, the Sub-Group recommends that the LAF responds to Cycling UK saying they are
“Happy in principle that there should be a review of rights of way and access provision providing better access for cyclists to public paths as long as “responsible access” is encouraged. However they can foresee significant problems in the detail particularly
 - Defining which routes would be suitable
 - Agreeing and meeting adequate standards
 - Raising resources to meet the costs of mapping and management
 - Enforcing “responsible access”
2. **Support for Footpath Wardens in Parishes**, The sub-Group recommends that the LAF organises a second Parish Council Seminar
3. **2026 – Claims for Lost Paths**
The LAF should support the establishment of a first point of contact for coordination of claims.

1. Proposal (or options)

- 1.1. As above

2. Evidence

- 2.1. Presented to LAF meeting of 1 March 2017

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1. None

4 Issues, risks and innovation

NA

5 Background

See LAF Papers [1 March 2017](#)

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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