

Norfolk Local Access Forum

Date: **Wednesday 3rd April 2024**

Time: **10:00**

Venue: **Cranworth Room, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich NR1 2SG**

Persons attending the meeting are requested to turn off mobile phones.

Membership:

Mr Martin Sullivan (Chairman)
Mr Ken Hawkins (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Lana Hemsall (Sustainable Transport Member Champion)

Mr Chris Allhusen	Mr Simon Fowler
Mr Paul Baker	Ms Ruth Goodall
Mrs Elizabeth Meath Baker	Ms Birgit Griem
Mr Fraser Bowe	Mr Kevin Grieve
Ms Anne Killett	Mr Rob Lodge
Mr Andrew Darby	Ms Sarah Morgan
Ms Karen Davidson	Mr Niall Pettitt
Ms Rebecca Durant	Cllr Maxine Webb

**For further details and general enquiries about this Agenda please contact
NLAf secretary nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk**

Under the Council's protocol on the use of media equipment at meetings held in public, this meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed. Anyone who wishes to do so must inform the Chairman and ensure that it is done in a manner clearly visible to anyone present. The wishes of any individual not to be recorded or filmed must be appropriately respected.

Advice for members of the public:

This meeting will be held in public and in person.

We also welcome attendance in person, but public seating is limited, so if you wish to attend please indicate in advance by emailing nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk

Please stay at home if you are unwell, have tested positive for COVID 19, have symptoms of a respiratory infection or if you are a close contact of a positive COVID 19 case. This will help make the event safe for attendees and limit the transmission of respiratory infections including COVID-19.

A g e n d a

1 To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending

2 Chair's Announcements

3 Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2024

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4 Members to Declare any Interests

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is on your Register of Interests, you must not speak or vote on the matter.

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is not on your Register of Interests, you must declare that interest at the meeting and not speak or vote on the matter

In either case you may remain in the room where the meeting is taking place. If you consider that it would be inappropriate in the circumstances to remain in the room, you may leave the room while the matter is dealt with.

If you do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, you may nevertheless have an **Other Interest** in a matter to be discussed if it affects, to a greater extent than others in your division

- Your wellbeing or financial position, or
- that of your family or close friends
- Any body -
 - Exercising functions of a public nature.
 - Directed to charitable purposes; or
 - One of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);

Of which you are in a position of general control or management.

If that is the case, then you must declare such an interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

5 To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency.

6 Public Question Time

Fifteen minutes for questions from members of the public of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Secretary nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk by **9am Tuesday 2nd April 2024**. For guidance on submitting a public question, please visit

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/councillors-meetings-decisions-and-elections/committees-agendas-and-recent-decisions/ask-a-question-to-a-committee>

7 Local Member Issues/Questions

Fifteen minutes for local member to raise issues of concern of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Secretary nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk by **9am Tuesday 2nd April 2024**.

8 Feedback from events attended by NLAf members

9 Meetings Forward Plan

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10 Natural England support for LAFs

Report by Member of NLAf

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11 Norfolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy – NLAf involvement

Report by Member of NLAf

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12 NCC Cycling and Wheeling Strategy and Norfolk Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP)

Report by the Director of Culture & Heritage

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18 Major infrastructure projects and planning

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Tom McCabe
Chief Executive
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Date Agenda Published: 26th March 2024



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Norfolk Local Access Forum
Minutes of the Meeting Held on 24 January 2024
at 10:00 at County Hall Norwich NR1 2SG

Members present:

Martin Sullivan - Chair
Ken Hawkins – Vice Chair
Birgit Griem
Rob Lodge
Ruth Goodall
Kevin Grieve
Cllr Lana Hemsall
Chris Allhusen
Sarah Morgan
Simon Fowler

Representing:

Motorised Vehicles / Pathmakers
Walking
Walking
Nature Conservation
Access to land at the water's edge
Health and wellbeing
Norfolk County Councillor
Land Ownership
Equestrian
Voluntary Sector (and Pathmakers Chair)

Invitees

Keith Bacon Chair of the Broads Local Access Forum
Jo Thompson Waterways and Recreation Officer, Broads Authority
Danielle Radley Natural England LAF coordinator

NCC Officers Present:

Wendy Brooks Head of Environment
Katy Owen Protected Landscapes Manager
Helen Terry National Trail Team Leader
Andrew Hollis Project Officer (Greenways)
Su Waldron Project Officer (Environment Team) and NLAFF co-ordinator

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Fraser Bowe, Elizabeth Meath-Baker, Paul Baker, Anne Killeth, Rebecca Durant, Cllr Maxine Webb. Jason Moorse (NCC staff)

2. Chair's Announcements**2.1 Consultations**

Consultations that the NLAFF had responded to between October 2023 and January 2024 are appended (Appendix 1)

3. Minutes

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2023 were confirmed as a true record.

4. Declarations of Interest

- 4.1 There were no interests declared.

5. Urgent Business

5.1 There was no urgent business

6. Public Question Time

6.1 There were no public questions received.

7. Local member Issues / Questions

7.1 There were no member questions received.

8. Feedback from Events

8.1 The Vice Chair had attended the East Region LAF chairs' meeting in January 2024 and offered to circulate the notes. The next meeting would be in six months' time.

8.2 The meeting discussed Natural England's involvement with LAFs which has reduced, and there are no central funds provided for LAFs any longer. Officers thought there was the opportunity for the NLAF to raise this with local elected councillors and MPs, whilst also highlighting the benefits of funding for National Trails and Protected Landscapes and LAFs coming from the same government body to capitalise on interest in green infrastructure, landscapes and access.

8.3 The Chair and Vice Chair had attended the Broads LAF meeting

8.4 The Chair had attended a meeting on access restrictions on Brettenham Heath for stone curlew.

9. Meetings Forward Plan

9.1 The NLAF received the report which outlined agenda items for the forthcoming meetings.

There was a short discussion on one of the suggested future topics (water-based activities), and the BLAF's remit was explained (which is to cover access to the water, such as footpaths on the riverbank, staithes etc.; and pressing for improvements to water quality within the Broads Authority area).

Members felt that all forward topics should have a clear purpose and support the NLAF's objectives.

Officers thought that the NLAF and Pathmakers might play a role in exploring what communication tools work for different people to encourage greater uptake of countryside access and the current offer in Norfolk.

An update on the NCC Local Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy was offered for the April meeting.

Members were encouraged to send further topics for discussion at future meetings to the chair.

9.2 The NLAF **AGREED** to include water-based activities, and the NCC Cycling and Walking Strategy at the April NLAF meeting

10. Feedback from Task Group

10.1 The meeting received a report on the NLAFF Task Group held in November which had aimed to find ways of encouraging greater engagement and involvement of NLAFF members and to establish productive links between the NLAFF and lead councillors.

Discussions had continued at subsequent Vision and Ideas Subgroup meetings (see Agenda item 12)

10.2 On the specific issue of permissive access, the Vice Chair reported that at the Regional LAF, options available to landowners under the Sustainable Farm Incentive Scheme (not yet available – coming into being later in the year) for permissive access which had not been permitted under the EU (Stewardship) rules were:

- Educational Visits at £363 per visit
- Open Access at £92/ha
- New footpaths payment of £77 per 100 meters for a 5 year agreement
- New cycle/bridlepaths £158 per 100 meters
- Further sums for mobility paths

Source: Technical annex: The combined environmental land management offer - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024/technical-annex-the-combined-environmental-land-management-offer#access-and-engagement>

10.3 The **NOTED** outcomes from the Task Group held in November.

11. Norfolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy

11.1 The meeting received a presentation on Norfolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). See Appendix 2. The NCC Head of Environment explained that the LNRS would map areas of potential for nature recovery and would describe measures to deliver nature recovery. NCC is working with Suffolk County Council on its Strategy as the two counties share landscapes and biodiversity and would consult with the same stakeholders.

11.2 There would be extensive consultation as the LNRS is developed, and the NLAFF would be invited to get involved with thematic working groups, including a communications group. Opportunities to add value by creating access to green spaces would be explored

11.3 Questions were raised following the presentation on managing communities' expectations, links with the Norfolk Strategic Planning Forum and potential to support nutrient neutrality.

11.4 NLAFF members felt that an ad-hoc NLAFF group could explore the Strategy in detail (when invited to as part of one or more thematic working groups).

11.5 The **NOTED** the report on Norfolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy and looked forward to receiving information from NCC on (and joining) the thematic working

groups. Points that the NLAf wished to make would come to the full NLAf for agreement.

12. NLAf subgroups' report (PRoW; NAIP; Vision and Ideas)

- 12.1 The NLAf received the reports which set out the latest discussions and recommendations of the sub-groups of the NLAf.
- 12.2 The PRoW subgroup had requested further information on the National Highways Benchmarking indicators for NCC, to better understand the data on annual performance indicators for Public Rights of Way. In particular, it was hard to see how Norfolk could, as reported, be rated as first among comparable authorities for customer satisfaction regarding public rights of way, when the majority of the scores in the evidence provided showed Norfolk as being marginally below the average on most measures which related to public rights of way.
- 12.3 The PRoW subgroup had noted the continuing lack of progress in resolving an access obstruction at Upwell. The group also expected to work to draft an NLAf response to the Western Link Planning application once it had been submitted.
- 12.4 The potential to dedicate areas inland of paths lost to the river had been raised with Legal Orders.
- 12.5 The Vision and Ideas Subgroup had met twice, with useful discussions on how to proceed with meetings. Officers were thanked for their time.
- 12.6 The NLAf **NOTED** the updates.

13. Broads Local Access Forum (BLAF) update

- 13.1 The Chair of the BLAF was pleased to attend the meeting and thanked the Chair and Vice Chair of the NLAf for regular attendance at BLAF meetings.
- 13.2 As outlined under 9.1, the BLAF's main areas are access to water (rather than navigation) in the Broads Authority Area, with a particular interest in staithe, and water quality. A recent Mills and Marshes project at Halvergate (access and windmills) is coming to a close.
- 13.2 The NLAf **NOTED** the updates.

14. Pathmakers Projects

- 14.1 The NLAf received a report from the Pathmakers chair giving details of recent activities, including the recent WalkNorfolk 23, at which 33 guided walks and 31 self-guided walks were offered.

Pathmakers would continue to work with One Agency on marketing and would be appointing a digital manager, with funds secured to do so.

The outgoing NCC Head of Environment has joined Pathmakers as a trustee.

- 14.2 The NLAf **NOTED** the report.

15. Natural England SharePoint for LAFs

- 15.1 The meeting received a presentation from Natural England (NE). The LAF SharePoint site is an information hub and has been set up to aid communication between LAFs, and with Natural England, and replaces Huddle. It is available to any LAF member who can request access by registering their email address with Natural England.
- 15.2 The meeting **AGREED** to send suggestions on improvements/ changes on the SharePoint to Natural England. NE guidance on registering for NLAF members would be circulated.

16. Countryside Access Arrangements update

- 16.1 The Forum received the report which highlighted work to manage the countryside access network in Norfolk work in terms of the volumes of customer queries received and responded to. The report also updated the NLAF on Norfolk Trails activities, and work to establish the England Coast Path at Hunstanton to Sutton Bridge. The Brancaster boardwalk is progressing well. Issues with path management at Hembsy, Happisburgh and Sidestrand due to cliff erosion had required officer time to resolve.
- 16.2 Highlights from many Norfolk Trails and Greenways Team access improvements were reported with many photographs to illustrate what has been accomplished. Two more Trails Officers had been recruited. Planning permission will be submitted for Wherryman's Way improvements shortly. The NLAF were impressed.
- 16.3 The report summarised reported issues with PRow logged on the Mayrise Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
- Open issues on CRM had not changed significantly since the last report, indicating a significant backlog.
- 16.4 The NLAF **NOTED** that the significant backlog of issues reported to NLAF over recent years remains and seeks the views of the County Council on ways of addressing this..

17. Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning

- 17.1 The Forum received the annexed report which updated them on the major infrastructure projects that were currently underway in the County which impacted on Public Rights of Way. Latest information on each of the schemes was highlighted in the report appendix.
- 17.5 The NLAF **NOTED** the table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 3rd April 2024 at 10am at County Hall.

The meeting closed at 11:55.

**Martin Sullivan, Chair,
Norfolk Local Access Forum**

Appendix 1

NLAF consultations July 2023 to September 2023

1. October 2023. Invitation to comment on NCC proposals to develop Hunstanton Bus Station and former library. Circulated to NLAF members but no formal response sent
2. October 2023. CPRE Norfolk invited to attend a future NLAF meeting to present their recently published views on countryside access
3. October 2023. NLAF invited to a Dark Skies event
4. October: NCC Walking and Sheeling Strategy for 2023 – 2036. NLAF response supported the vision to create a healthier and greener Norfolk by enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle more often, and supported the need for effective engagement with local communities and recommended fully maintained and improved PRow links from people's doorsteps to the wider network and the need for multi modal journey planning to start from a person's home
5. November 2023. Invitation to join a seminar in November 2023 organised by Norwich City Council on regenerating Norwich's Parks and Green Spaces. Circulated to NLAF members to make them aware
6. November 2023. Opportunity to comment on proposals for a new woodland at land surrounding a PRow at Newton by Castle Acre. NLAF commented that the land runs between FP5 and RB6, proposing that the public was given access from each of these ROW through the woodland
7. November 2023. Santon Downham access restriction owing to a regular motorbike event. NLAF asked that the organisers take steps to ensure that users of PRow crossing the motorbike event route do not stray
8. November 2023. Bridleway issues reported at Old Buckenham by a member of the public visiting Norfolk with his horse. Specific points were reported which included a faulty gate, poor signing and difficulties crossing the A11 in addition to comments on NCC mapping of PRow. The NLAF responded, encouraging reporting of faults on the CRM system
9. November 2023: Western Link. NLAF to agree recommendations at/ after January 2024 meeting when NCC submits its planning application
10. November 2023. Following up on NLAF's comment on extending opening times, the NRO pilot Friday opening was successful and will continue.
11. December 2023. Anglia Green project: newsletter circulated
12. December 2023. West Hall felling licence notification regarding poplar adjacent to a PRow. NLAF requested clearer information about the location of the work and species of poplar

13. December 2023. Invitation to join a Invitation to join online meeting reviewing directions restricting CROW access rights for stone curlew
14. January 2024. BBC article on widespread PROW maintenance issues circulated for interest, leading to email discussions
15. January 2024. Essex Access Guide circulated to NCC
16. January 2024. Query from parish councillor at Scoulton seeking advice regarding lack of footpaths. Detailed response from the NLAf with information on creating permissive access and potential for investigating paths not incorporated on the definitive map

Appendix 2: Presentation on Norfolk's LNRS

Report title:	Forward Plan (NLAF agenda)
Date of meeting:	3 rd April 2024

Summary

A plan for agenda items for future NLAF meetings has been prepared. Further suggestions very welcome.

Recommendation

To agree agenda items from those suggested (or from further suggestions) for the NLAF meetings ahead.

1.	Proposal
1.1.	<p><u>Standing agenda items are generally as follows:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairman's announcement (not a report) • Feedback from conferences and events attended by NLAF members (not a report) • Meetings forward plan (NLAF member report) • Sub groups' meetings (NLAF member report) • Pathmakers update (NLAF member report) • Countryside Access arrangements (NCC report) • NCC Member Champion for Sustainable Transport (NCC report, not brought to every meeting) • Major infrastructure projects update (NCC report) • Future funding for access (NCC report, not brought to every meeting)
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	To agree agenda items for future meetings from the above list or from other suggestions
3.	Evidence
3.1.	See proposal

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLAF member name :	Martin Sullivan and Ken Hawkins
Email addresses :	nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk
Phone number	Via 01603 222810

Norfolk Local Access Forum

(Forum member report)

Report title:	Natural England support to LAFs
Date of meeting:	3 April 2024

1	Proposal
	That Natural England be advised that NLAF considers it to be a better use of its limited resource to suspend work on SharePoint and instead arrange national (or two or more regional) meetings for LAF members every year or two years. Although in person meetings would have greatest impact, on line meetings would be better than none.
2	Recommendations
	To send the above proposal to Natural England and to raise it with Regional LAF colleagues at the next meeting in July.
3	Evidence
	<p>At the NLAF meeting on 24 January 2024, Danielle Radley of Natural England (NE) described her work developing a SharePoint facility for use by Local Access Forums across the country. This was being set up to aid communication between LAFs, and with Natural England, available to any LAF member requesting access by registering their email address with Natural England. The meeting agreed to send suggestions on improvements/ changes on the SharePoint scheme to Natural England. The NE guidance on registering for NLAF members was subsequently circulated to NLAF members; the level of take up is not known.</p> <p>Danielle reported that NE had little resource time to review the material currently on SharePoint and she had no past experience of this subject area, making it hard for her to decide what should be retained and what removed. Pending that, the material on line consists of a mass of files which puts off those logging in from trying to search further.</p> <p>Further, in the past, many NLAF members have reported difficulties in using NCC's SharePoint to access NLAF related documents, with many requesting that documents are emailed to them instead. It is believed that the same is likely to apply to many members of other LAFs.</p> <p>Regardless of this, it is further believed that having the opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas with members from other LAFs would carry significant advantages in its own right. Meetings, even online, offer better experiences than message board sharing (which is not yet available anyway).</p>

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLAF member name :	Ken Hawkins (Chair PRow subgroup)
Email address :	ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk and we will do our best to help.

Report title:	Local Nature Recovery Strategy – agree NLA Forum representative(s)
Date of meeting:	3 rd April 2024

Summary

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a new, England-wide system of statutory spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature’s recovery and provide wider environmental benefits. Norfolk County Council has been appointed as responsible authority to produce Norfolk’s LNRS.

LNRSs are expected to include the wider environmental benefits of nature recovery and will be developed with a broad and diverse stakeholder base with community engagement playing an important part. The NLA Forum is invited to get involved with the process through participation in a health and wellbeing sector group.

1.	Proposal
1.1.	Agree NLA Forum representative(s) who will engage with the team developing the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) to explore opportunities for improved access to the countryside through nature recovery programmes, to benefit health and wellbeing (such as developing permissive access for example).
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	Agree NLA Forum representative
3.	Evidence
3.1.	LNRSs will identify where we should take action for nature’s recovery as well as where nature-based solutions can help address wider environmental problems. They will be created collaboratively with stakeholders enabling collective effort to be focussed where it will have the most benefits. LNRS will contribute to the Nature Recovery Network (NRN), a national network of wildlife-rich places enacted by the Environment Act 2021. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/part/6/crossheading/local-nature-recovery-strategies/enacted . Norfolk County Council (NCC) has been appointed as responsible authority to lead development and delivery of the Norfolk LNRS.

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLA Forum member name :	Martin Sullivan
Email address :	Via nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk and we will do our best to help.

Norfolk Local Access Forum

Item No:

Report Title: Progress update on the Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy & Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Date of Meeting: 03 April 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste)

Responsible Director: Steve Miller (Director of Culture & Heritage)

Co-Director: Chris Starkie (Director of Growth and Investment)

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: DD Month YYYY

Executive Summary

This report is to update the Norfolk Local Access Forum on the progress of the Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy and the Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which are on the forward plan for adoption by Norfolk County Council's (NCC's) Cabinet on 8 April 2024.

The Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy is an update to the county's existing Walking and Cycling Strategy, which was published in 2017. The strategy sets a new, ambitious, vision for the walking, wheeling and cycling in the county.

The Countywide LCWIP is a key delivery mechanism of the Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy, as well as the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP). The LCWIP study area includes active travel network proposals for 20 towns in the county, as well as proposals for active travel routes which provide wider connectivity with rural communities and provide access to green space. The Countywide LCWIP builds on the Greater Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn LCWIPs which are already adopted.

These two new documents set the vision, objectives and priorities for walking, wheeling and cycling across the county, providing a direction for investment in infrastructure as well as behavioural change projects to enable and encourage people to walk, wheel and cycle in the county.

Enabling and encouraging people to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as a natural choice is a key priority coming from central Government and our local plans and policies. The strategy and LCWIP take into account the new government and local policies, guidance (including Local Transport Note 1/20) and strategies which place walking, wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid) and cycling at the heart of decision making.

The Department for Transport's Gear Change Vision (2020) was a catalyst for change and set the ambitious target for half of journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. NCC's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) also places emphasis on the role of active travel to deliver a sustainable Norfolk and enhance Norfolk's quality of life. These new documents support LTP4 ambitions as well as the NAIP, to enable and encourage walking, wheeling and cycling and facilitate access to green space and Norfolk's Public Rights of Way.

The benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling are also well documented and adoption of the strategy and Countywide LCWIP will help unlock these.

Public engagement on the Countywide LCWIP and public consultation on the strategy have been carried out. Feedback from the public and stakeholders has been taken into account and actioned in the final drafts of the documents appended in the 13 March 2024 Infrastructure and Development Select Committee agenda from page 157 [here](#).

The scale and pace of delivery of both the strategy and the Countywide LCWIP is dependent on our ability to secure future funding. LCWIP schemes are currently unfunded and will be subject to their own consultation when being taken forward for delivery. The LCWIP also sets out the next steps and potential active travel barriers to be addressed as part of any initial feasibility study or assessment stage for each scheme.

Having these documents adopted by NCC will put the county in a better position to secure future funding, including funding from Active Travel England and development funding (e.g. Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy funding) as we are able to clearly show our ambition, direction and priority projects for walking, wheeling and cycling in Norfolk.

The Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy proposed for adoption can be found from page 456 of the 13 March 2024 Select Committee paper [here](#). This includes the proposed amendments following consultation, shown as tracked changes.

The active travel network proposals contained within the Countywide LCWIP are documented within the appended Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Main Report February 2024 which can be viewed from page 157 of the 13 March 2024 Select Committee paper [here](#). Further information on individual

schemes within each of the active travel networks are detailed within the Countywide LCWIP Annex A: Programme of Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Improvements for Norfolk document. This can be viewed from page 270 of the Select Committee paper [here](#).

Recommendations:

1. To note the Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy as shown in the linked [Infrastructure and Development Select Committee paper](#), to replace the Walking and Cycling Strategy 2017.
2. To note the 'Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Main Report February 2024' and the 'Countywide LCWIP Annex A: Programme of Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Improvements for Norfolk February 2024' as shown in the [Infrastructure and Development Select Committee paper](#).

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 In July 2020 the Department for Transport (DfT) published Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking. The document is a catalyst for change and places walking, wheeling and cycling at the heart of decision making to create safer streets, healthier, happier and greener communities, provide convenient and accessible travel. The vision also sets out ambitious targets for walking and cycling, with an aim for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. This new vision, Norfolk's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), and a number of other important national and local plans and policies relating to transport, public health, environment and climate (including the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan), all place emphasis on the role of walking, wheeling and cycling to support improved physical and mental health, to safeguard the environment and support the local economy.
- 1.2 To account for this, a Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy (to replace Norfolk's 2017 Walking and Cycling Strategy) and a Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) have been developed.
- 1.3 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Norfolk Local Access Forum (NLAFF) with an update on the progress of the two new documents which are due to be adopted by Norfolk County Council's (NCC's) Cabinet on 8 April 2024.
- 1.4 The strategy and the LCWIP are two large workstreams. Each section of this report will provide an update on each in turn.

Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy

- 1.5 The draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy 2023 sits beneath LTP4 and brings together national and local transport,

environmental and public health ambitions. The strategy sets the context for the Countywide LCWIP and enables a joined-up approach to our investment in walking, wheeling and cycling into the future. The strategy explores the challenges and opportunities faced to enable people in Norfolk to walk wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for short journeys or as part of longer journeys, supporting Government's target for 50% of journeys in towns and cities walked and cycled by 2030, and proposes steps to success and achieving this.

- 1.6 Norfolk has a strong track record in attracting funding for active travel schemes. This has seen the delivery of new crossings, cycle parking facilities, cycle lanes and campaigns, to name a few, making Norfolk a safer, healthier, and more attractive place to choose to walk, wheel and cycle. Norfolk also has a number of defined walking and cycling routes across the county, including networks of Public Rights of Way and long distance trails. Despite this, there is still work to be done to make walking, wheeling and cycling a natural choice. The updated strategy looks to address this, but the scale and pace of delivery, and the ability of the council to achieve its ambitious vision, will be dependent on the authority being able to secure sufficient funding to enable delivery of schemes and other intended actions.
- 1.7 Adopting the updated Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy will:
 - Better align our strategy to national and local policies
 - Help overcome the barriers faced to walking, wheeling and cycling in Norfolk and unlock their benefits
 - Support Norfolk in securing funding. This is particularly the case with funding from Active Travel England as we can demonstrate we have a comprehensive plan and direction for walking, wheeling and cycling in Norfolk, helping to raise our Active Travel Capability Rating.
- 1.8 A public consultation on the draft of the strategy, which received 396 responses, ran from 16 October 2023 to 24 November 2023. The consultation sought views on the Strategy's vision and themes, and gave the opportunity for respondents to comment on anything else relating to the Strategy. An in-person engagement session was also held with Vision Norfolk and similar sessions were offered to key stakeholders. Responses following the consultation have been taken into account and the draft strategy reviewed as a result. A final draft has now been developed ready for adoption.

Countywide LCWIP

- 1.9 The purpose of the 'Countywide LCWIP' is to help identify and prioritise unfunded short, medium and long-term active travel infrastructure schemes, which will enable increased levels of cycling, walking and wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid) across the county.
- 1.10 The Countywide LCWIP builds on LCWIPs already adopted for King's Lynn, Greater Norwich and Great Yarmouth (April 2022).

- 1.11 LCWIPs support the ambitions set out in the emerging County Council Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy and Local Transport Plan 4 and supports the Government's ambition for 50% of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030.
- 1.12 The purpose and benefit of developing an LCWIP is to help authorities to make a strong case for future investment in active travel infrastructure.
- 1.13 Completed LCWIPs have also been used by Active Travel England to assess and score Norfolk County Council's capability to deliver infrastructure schemes, which is already being used when making decisions on active travel funding allocations.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is for NCC's Cabinet to agree to adopt both the Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy and Countywide LCWIP at the 8 April 2024 Cabinet meeting.

Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy

- 2.2 The draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy vision is "to create a healthier and greener Norfolk by enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle more often and as the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey, supporting Government's target for 50% of the journeys in towns and cities to be completed by walking, wheeling and cycling by 2030". This aligns with DfT's Gear Change vision, DfT's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2 as well as our local plans and policies.
- 2.3 The Strategy outlines 'Seven Steps to Success' which propose what we will do to achieve our vision. These are:
 1. Engage with local communities and enable behavioural change
 2. Create a safe, connected and well-maintained walking, wheeling, and cycling network for all that gets people to where they need to be
 3. Build healthy places, spaces and communities
 4. Support multi-modal journeys
 5. Embrace new technology
 6. Remove barriers to provide a network that is accessible, inclusive and considers the needs of all users
 7. Work with our partners to achieve common ambitions
- 2.4 The strategy will be delivered primarily through the Countywide LCWIP and the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP), which is already adopted by NCC, as well as other local strategies and plans which are also outlined within the draft strategy. The scale and pace of its delivery is dependent on future funding secured.

Countywide LCWIP

- 2.5 The Countywide LCWIP contains proposed active travel network improvements, which enable connectivity within 20 towns in the county.
- 2.6 The towns align with strategic growth areas and have been agreed with borough and district councils.
- 2.7 The 20 towns identified within this report are the first tranche in the plan and wider ambitions for rural areas are out of scope of this report, however they are still within the ambitions of Norfolk County Council. The towns included within the study area of the Countywide LCWIP include:

Acle	Long Stratton
Attleborough	North Walsham
Aylsham	Reepham
Cromer	Sheringham
Dereham	Swaffham
Diss	Thetford
Downham Market	Watton
Fakenham	Wroxham & Hoveton
Harleston	Wymondham & Hethersett
Holt	
Hunstanton & Heacham	

- 2.8 It should be noted that LCWIPs for Norwich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth have already been adopted by NCC hence these locations are not included in the above.
- 2.9 Active travel network proposals for each town link people with public transport, key central services, employment areas, places of education and training, as well as giving residents and visitors access to greenspace. The proposals also consider future planned growth and the connectivity people will need when developments come forward.
- 2.10 The LCWIP also includes proposals which could enable wider connectivity between towns and provide connectivity for rural communities with key services in addition to providing access to green space.
- 2.11 Schemes within the plan are unfunded and set out the next steps and potential active travel barriers to be addressed as part of any initial feasibility study or assessment stage for each scheme.
- 2.12 All schemes are in the early stages of development and are subject to full public consultation. The scale and pace of delivery is also subject to securing external funding.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 The impact of the proposed strategy and LCWIP proposals will be an up-to-date suite of documents for Norfolk showing the county's ambition for active travel and our short, medium and long term priorities for investment in active travel infrastructure.

- 3.2 The two documents will help to create a positive impact on the physical and mental health of people in Norfolk, our environment and air quality, or communities and our local economy.
- 3.3 By delivering on the strategy's 'Seven Steps to Success' we want to achieve a number of outcomes for Norfolk including:
- Communities know the benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling and have the confidence, capability, opportunity and motivation to change their travel behaviours
 - Projects are well informed by partners, stakeholders and local communities' expertise and local knowledge ensuring projects meet their needs
 - A walking, wheeling and cycling network that can be enjoyed by everyone which is safe, well maintained, accessible and considers the needs of all types of user
 - New developments support good access to sustainable travel, facilitate walking, wheeling and cycling and safeguard the environment and air quality
 - Multi-modal journeys are simple and convenient enabling people to travel further and flexibly via sustainable modes
 - New technologies are used to enable active travel, including micromobility, gain insight into the way people in travel in Norfolk, and support the achievement of net zero carbon emissions in transport by 2050
 - Close partnership working ensuring walking, wheeling and cycling interventions are joined up and collective challenges are overcome
- 3.4 Creating an updated Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy and a Countywide LCWIP will enable Norfolk County Council to make a strong case for future investment in active travel infrastructure and will particularly influence the future funding NCC can obtain from Active Travel England. Active Travel England are working alongside local authorities to ensure people have the high-quality infrastructure needed to make active travel part of their everyday lives, supporting the achievement of the Gear Change vision for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. Achieving this objective will be challenging, so Active Travel England are focusing their resources on councils that have strong leadership, ambition, plans and a track record of delivery. Following a self-assessment of Norfolk's own active travel capabilities, Active Travel England provided Norfolk with a rating of 2 out of 4. We want to improve on this rating as it is linked to funding, and being able to demonstrate our ambition, plans and priorities for walking, wheeling and cycling in an updated strategy and a Countywide LCWIP is a step towards this.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy

- 4.1 The draft Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy has been informed by a variety of policy, evidence and data as well as results from the recent Strategy consultation, as well as consultations on the LCWIP and LTP4 in the development of the Strategy.
- 4.2 Norfolk County Council also led two workshops with internal and external officers, stakeholders and partners on 4 May 2023 and 15 June 2023.
- 4.3 The workshops, data collection and reviews of recent consultations show that Norfolk faces a number of challenges which the strategy looks to help overcome. These include, but are not limited to, population growth, maintenance and levels of physical activity.
- 4.4 Evidence has also informed knowledge of the benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling and the reasons for promoting these modes of transport. Key benefits include prevention and management of chronic conditions and diseases, support for improved air quality and reduced carbon emissions, enablement of multi-modal journeys through share schemes, and support for the local economy.
- 4.5 The public consultation on the draft strategy also showed large support for its vision and themes. The responses received endorse the work that has been done so far and provide evidence that the strategy can be taken forward to adoption with relatively minor amendments to pick up people's comments.

Countywide LCWIP

- 4.6 Development of the Countywide LCWIP has been undertaken with support from district and borough councils and aligns with local planning policy, transport policy, environment and air quality policy and public health policy. Development of active travel networks has also included a review of network planning data.
- 4.7 Two phases of public engagement have been completed to help shape and develop the Countywide LCWIP.
- 4.8 An attitudinal survey was completed in April and May 2022 to identify the barriers which stand in the way of people choosing to walk, wheel and cycle more in Norfolk. The survey ran for eight weeks and received 1,642 responses, 94.1% of who replied as individuals.
- 4.9 When asked which infrastructure improvements would encourage people to walk more in their local area; 69% of respondents said 'Better maintenance of pavements and walkways'; 63% said 'Safer roads' (e.g. slower driving speeds, less traffic, or more considerate driving) and 40% said 'Safer crossing points'.
- 4.10 When asked which infrastructure improvements would encourage people to cycle more in their local area; over 75% of respondents said 'off road and segregated cycle paths would encourage them to cycle more and 61% said 'safer roads'.
- 4.11 During the engagement for the Countywide LCWIP, respondents were asked how important it is that improvements are made to the cycling and walking routes within their town. Across all surveys, significantly more

respondents felt that it is 'very or quite important' that improvements are made compared with those who felt that it is 'not very or not at all important'.

5. Alternative Options

Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy

- 5.1 An alternative option would be to not undertake an update to Norfolk's Walking and Cycling Strategy (2017). This option however is not advised as the existing 2017 strategy does not account for the new policy direction coming from central government and our local policies and plans such as LTP4. Not undertaking the strategy could also impact on our ability to access future funding from Active Travel England as it would reduce our potential to achieve the higher capability rating. Having an adopted Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy will help to boost NCC's rating by showing our ambition and plan for active travel in the county, supporting us in securing future funding.
- 5.2 Another alternative option would be to make no changes to the consultation version of the Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy. This option is not preferred as it does not draw on evidence and comments received through the consultation to shape and refine the final version of the strategy.

Countywide LCWIP

- 5.3 Not adopting the Countywide LCWIP could hinder NCC's effectiveness in delivering active travel schemes and make it harder for district and boroughs to identify priority schemes to put forward when funding arises.
- 5.4 Similarly to the strategy, delay or postponement of adoption of the Countywide LCWIP could result in missed external funding opportunities from Active Travel England.

6. Financial Implications

Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy

- 6.1 Delivery of the strategy will be funded from a number of sources including the council's Local Transport Plan capital funding, successful bids, developers and funding via Active Travel England, see above. The scale and pace of delivery will depend on future funding levels secured. Member approvals for delivery of projects will come forward in the usual way.

Countywide LCWIP

- 6.2 All schemes with the Countywide LCWIP are currently unfunded. Adopting the Countywide LCWIP strengthens Norfolk County Councils ability to secure future external funding from Active Travel England in addition to development funding (e.g. Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy funding).

7. Resource Implications

7.1 Staff:

None. Current activities to develop the Strategy and the Countywide LCWIP are being undertaken within existing financial and staff resources.

7.2 Property:

None at this stage. Any impacts on property are only likely to arise from delivery of individual transport schemes. These will be identified at later stages of development and delivery. Impacts will be considered at the appropriate time on the specific schemes.

7.3 IT:

None. The Strategy and the Countywide LCWIP will be published on the NCC website. Resource is allocated within existing teams.

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications:

None.

8.2 Human Rights Implications:

None.

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):

EqIA has been undertaken in the preparation of the Strategy and the Countywide LCWIP and reviewed following the consultation and engagement. The EqIA's are available on request. The Strategy and Countywide LCWIP aim to promote equality and inclusivity with a key theme of "Remove[ing] barriers to provide a network that is accessible, inclusive and considers the needs of all users".

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

A DPIA Screening has been undertaken through the preparation of the Strategy and Countywide LCWIP as a public consultation and engagement has been carried out. A Full DPIA was not deemed necessary due to the nature of the data being collected as part of the work. The DPIA's are available on request.

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

None.

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

The Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy promotes travel via sustainable modes, including active travel and public transport, aiming to have a positive implication on sustainability and support decarbonisation of transport. The

adoption and delivery of the strategy and Countywide LCWIP will support sustainability in Norfolk.

8.7 Any Other Implications:

None.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 A potential risk identified is a lack of funding to deliver the Strategy and Countywide LCWIP. The scale and pace of delivery will depend on future funding levels secured. Reassurance from this risk can be found as by adopting the Strategy, we hope to be able to achieve a higher Active Travel Capability Rating from Active Travel England as we are showing ambition and political support for active travel. The Capability Rating influences the amount of funding Norfolk County Council may receive from Active Travel England therefore by having this Strategy adopted, our ability to receive funding is heightened, helping to deliver the strategy.

10. Select Committee Comments

- 10.1 The draft Strategy and LCWIP went to Infrastructure and Development Select Committee on 13 March 2024.
- 10.2 Comments received on the strategy included the process of and responses to the public consultation and enforcement of 20mph zones. Regarding the consultation, Select Committee noted that there were few responses from people aged under 24 and asked what was done to encourage children and young people to respond to the consultation. Officers acknowledged the children and young people response rate was disappointing and outlined that schools and universities had been targeted for engagement through emails to the education providers, inclusion in newsletters and promoting the consultation on social media. Through delivery of the strategy we want to improve engagement with young people by better targeting engagement at under-represented groups (including children and young people), as outlined in the Strategy's first Step to Success. Another comment received on the Strategy from Select Committee was regarding the levels of enforcement in 20mph zones and concern that enforcement was lacking. Chairperson Cllr James Bensly took the action to write to the Police to understand what is being done to ensure proper enforcement in these areas. There was useful discussion on the Strategy at the meeting. No amendments to the Strategy are required as a result of the meeting.
- 10.3 Comments received on the Countywide LCWIP included a question about the Department for Transport network design guidance and specifically about design guidance for people walking and wheeling. Network design guidance is provided through the Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance and the Department for Transport Manual for Streets guidance. The Healthy

Streets Design Check Tool as well as other walking and wheeling route, junction and crossing assessments tools are also applied by NCC. NCC design all schemes not to disadvantage any road users, and all Active Travel England funded schemes are design checked against all modes of active travel.

Questions also received regarding schemes which are contained within the adopted King's Lynn LCWIP. Specifically, the need for safe and accessibility infrastructure over busy crossings on the A149 and active travel accessibility for the Knights Hill development.

Clarity was sought on the link between King's Lynn and the Fakenham Greenway. The Countywide LCWIP connects with the adopted King's Lynn LCWIP to enable this connection.

Potential wider connectivity between King's Lynn and Swaffham was also highlighted, however, this wider connectivity route is not currently included as it was not identified as a priority following public engagement.

Cllr Robert Savage expressed support the Countywide LCWIP and noted that the proposals could take up to 5 years to deliver. Officers welcomed the offer of further discussion about prioritisation of routes within in Wymondham. Questions also received regarding funding opportunities for housing developments and officers also acknowledged the need to provide accessible information about routes and suitability for all users.

No amendments to the Countywide LCWIP are required as a result of the meeting.

11. Recommendations

1. To note the Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy as shown in the linked [Infrastructure and Development Select Committee paper](#), to replace the Walking and Cycling Strategy 2017.
2. To note the 'Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Main Report February 2024' and the 'Countywide LCWIP Annex A: Programme of Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Improvements for Norfolk February 2024' as shown in the [Infrastructure and Development Select Committee paper](#).

12. Background Papers

- 12.1 [Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking](#)
[13 March 2024 Infrastructure and Development Select Committee Meeting agenda](#)
[Better Together, For Norfolk 2021-25](#)
[Norfolk Local Transport Plan 4](#)
[Norfolk Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#)
[Norfolk Access Improvement Plan 2019-2029](#)

Equality Impact Assessment: Available on request

Data Protection Impact Assessment: Available on request

Norfolk Cycling and Walking Strategy 2017: Available on request

12.2 Further relevant documents can be found referenced in the Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy which can be viewed from page 456 in the 13 March 2024 Infrastructure and Development Select Committee paper [here](#).

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

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Report title:	NLAF Subgroups' report (PRoW, NAIP, Vision and Ideas)
Date of meeting:	3 rd April 2024

Summary

Meetings of the NLAF's subgroups since the previous full NLAF meeting are reported.

The PRoW subgroup met on 11th March (see Appendix 1 for minutes).

The Vision and Ideas subgroup on 11th March (see Appendix 2 for minutes)

The NAIP subgroup did not meet over the reporting period.

1.	Proposal 1 - Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)
1.1.	as below
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	<p>That NLAF proposes the following changes to the TAMP.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 To amend the High category to read "High - if it affects a National Trail or Norfolk Trail, or if there has been unlawful action (eg a ploughed out restricted byway, failure to clear a path across a cropped field or an obstruction on a public right of way)" 2 To amend the Medium category to read "Medium - if it affects a Norfolk Trail associated route, or is a well used local route or is a route which constitutes a key link in the wider network." 3 To introduce a category between the present Medium and Low categories to address issues on routes (probably the vast majority of all PRoW) that are not associated with a National or Norfolk Trail yet are not 'isolated generally unused path[s]'. 4 That a requirement be introduced to state that path closures should be applied only as a last resort, and work to resolve the problem causing the closure should be given High priority.
3.	Evidence
3.1.	<p>The basic policy document used by NCC to determine response to issues arising on public rights of way (and all highways) is the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). The current version reads:</p> <p>22.7.2. Renewal or Replacement</p> <p>22.7.2.1. Surfaces and structures are renewed or replaced based on continual monitoring or reports from the public. These are logged for attention as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate - if it has health and safety implications. • High - if it affects a Norfolk Trail spinal route. • Medium - if it affects a Norfolk Trail associated route. • Low - if it affects only an isolated generally unused path or one that runs alongside another path.

	<p>The PRow subgroup believes that the current definitions for the High and Medium categories are too limited and do not extend to other routes whose maintenance should be given priority. This has led to the proposed changes in 2.1.1 and 2.1.2.</p> <p>As currently written, there is no guidance for how to treat the vast majority of public rights of way, which are not connected to Norfolk Trails, nor yet isolated generally unused paths or ones that run alongside another path. 2.1.3 addresses this gap.</p> <p>2.1.4 is a proposal that applies to any work needed and emphasises the need to keep the network open to the greatest extent possible.</p>
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1.	Proposal 2 - Norfolk Record Office (NRO) opening hours
1.1.	as below
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	<p>That NLAf notes the current consultation, which closed on 22 March, but agrees to send the following comments to the NRO.</p> <p>NLAf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regrets these proposed changes; • expresses the hope that they will be temporary and reversible; and • suggests that NRO explore the possible use of volunteers to enable opening hours to be maintained and extended.
3.	Evidence
3.1.	<p>A consultation was received under which the NRO's opening hours would be slightly reduced and the booking system extended to an additional day. It is considered that these changes will further deter casual visits. It is also understood that 2 days' notice is required to book a maximum of 4 items, with no possibility of ordering more during the visit. It is noted that when hours were reduced a year ago, NLAf had asked that consideration was given to opening on an evening and/or at a weekend to enable the widest possible access to the records held, but this had not been done and was not proposed now.</p> <p>The NRO is a crucial facility for those researching information relating to paths not currently recognised as public rights of way, but where evidence may be found enabling applications to be made to have the case for recognition considered. Under current legislation, any submissions for recognition not made before 1 January 2031 will be prohibited, so there is an urgency to completing this research. Until a year ago, the deadline had been 1 January 2026, which had prompted a considerable increase in research work. The English government then announced an intention not to enforce the deadline, followed a few months later by stating that it would enforce it, but to a later deadline. In the meantime, a huge amount of work has been done by volunteers preparing cases for consideration, work which will be squandered if they are unable to consult key records at NRO.</p>

1.	Proposal 3 – Reports for the NLAf
1.1.	<p>Norfolk County Council regularly reports on Countryside Access Arrangements and Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning (NSIPS) to the NLAf.</p> <p>The reports' content and format were discussed at the Vision and Ideas subgroup in question.</p>
2.	Recommendations

2.1.	That the NLAF agrees information brought to the NLAF by NCC for the Countryside Access Arrangements and Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning (NSIPS) reports, to form the basis for future discussion with NCC for future reports.
3.	Evidence
3.1.	Please see Attachment 1 of Appendix 2 (Vision and Ideas Minutes from 11 th March 2024)

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

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APPENDIX 1

NORFOLK LOCAL ACCESS FORUM : Public Rights of Way Subgroup Minutes

Date: Monday 11 March 2024

Venue: County Hall and MS Teams meeting

All supporting documents are on SharePoint

https://norfolkcounty.sharepoint.com/sites/Norfolk_Local_Access_Forum/SitePages/Home.aspx

Present		
Ken Hawkins (Chair)		Norfolk Local Access Forum
Keith Bacon		Broads Local Access Forum
Chris Cane		Norfolk Local Access Forum
Simon Fowler		Norfolk Local Access Forum
Ruth Goodall		Norfolk Local Access Forum
Ian Mitchell		The Ramblers
Martin Sullivan		Norfolk Local Access Forum
In attendance from item 8		
Jason Moore		Area Manager West, NCC Highways
Katy Owen		Protected Landscapes Team
Helen Terry		Protected Landscapes Team

	action
<p>1 Introductions and apologies for absence All attending (online or in person) were welcomed and thanked for attending. Apologies were received from Birgit Griem and Ann Melhuish from NLAF and Su Waldron (NCC staff).</p>	
<p>2 Minutes of the meeting on 11 December 2023 The minutes were approved.</p>	
<p>3 NLAF meeting on 24 January 2024 The minutes of the NLAF meeting had been circulated and were noted.</p>	
<p>4 Matters arising from the minutes</p> <p>4.1 <u>4.1 Norfolk Record Office opening hours</u>: a consultation had been received under which the NRO's opening hours would be slightly reduced and the booking system extended to an additional day. It was considered that these changes would further deter casual visits. It was also understood that 2 days' notice was required to book a maximum of 4 items, with no possibility of ordering more during the visit. It was noted that when hours had been reduced a year ago, NLAF had asked that consideration was given to opening on an evening and/or at a weekend to enable the widest possible access to the records held, but this had not been done and was not proposed now. After discussion the subgroup agreed to recommend that NLAF responded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to regret these proposed changes; • to express the hope that they would be temporary and reversible; and • to suggest that NRO explore the possible use of volunteers to enable opening hours to be maintained and extended. <p>4.2 <u>4.2 East of England Coast Path</u>: there was no update.</p> <p>4.3 <u>4.3 The Great Chalk Way</u>: there was no update.</p> <p>4.4 <u>6.1.5 National Highways and Transportation Survey</u>: it was noted that the majority of the scores in the evidence provided showed Norfolk as being marginally below the average on most measures which related to public rights of way. Nothing in the information available related to Norfolk's overall position in relation to comparable authorities. Further information</p>	Ken

<p>had been requested, but none received.</p> <p>4.5 NLAf 24 January 2024, 16.4 <u>Report statistics</u>: it was noted that NLAf had asked that its concern about the continuing backlog of unresolved issues be referred to NCC. Enquiries had been made as to with whom in NCC the NLAf's concern should be registered, but no reply had been received.</p>	
<p>5 Partnership and Community Working</p> <p><u>Issues from represented organisations</u>: Ian Witham (Open Spaces Society) had drawn attention to a proposal to stop up part of a public path which referred to the use of section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 (Magistrate's Court); OSS considered that the more user-friendly process of sections 118 and 119 should be used instead, which Defra guidance also supported. It was not clear from the information supplied whether this approach was purely what the applicant had stated or whether NCC endorsed it, though it was felt unlikely that NCC would prefer it. It was agreed to enquire if NCC had a policy in regard to this.</p>	Ken
<p>6 Countryside Access Arrangements report</p> <p>6.1 <u>General update</u>: no report had been received.</p> <p>6.2 <u>Specific issues</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 <i>Legal challenges regarding longstanding obstruction at Upwell</i>: There was no update on this issue, first reported to the subgroup in September 2021. 2 <i>King Charles III England Coast Path</i>: It was noted that the Hunstanton to Sutton Bridge section had been opened on 6 March. There was no update on possible changes to the route following the opening of the new bridge in Great Yarmouth. 3 <i>Peddars' Way crossing at Swaffham</i>: Su Waldron had written to National Highways and was awaiting a reply. 4 <i>Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)</i>: discussion took place on the section of the TAMP which specified priorities for dealing with issues on public rights of way. It was noted that NLAf had put forward requests for changes in 2018 and 2021, but its proposals did not appear to have been considered. Recently, Ken had discussed issues with Kevin Townly, Asset, Programme & Funding Manager for Highways, Transport & Waste, who had supplied extracts from the current version (no longer available on the NCC website). After discussion, it was agreed to recommend that NLAf proposes the following changes to the TAMP. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 To amend the High category to read "High - if it affects a National Trail or Norfolk Trail, or if there has been unlawful action (eg a ploughed out restricted byway, failure to clear a path across a cropped field or an obstruction on a public right of way)" 2 To amend the Medium category to read "Medium - if it affects a Norfolk Trail associated route, or is a well used local route or is a route which constitutes a key link in the wider network." 3 To introduce a category between the present Medium and Low categories to address issues on routes (probably the vast majority of all PRoW) that are not associated with a National or Norfolk Trail yet are not 'isolated generally unused path[s]'. 4 That a requirement be introduced to state that path closures should be applied only as a last resort, and work to resolve the problem causing the closure should be given High priority. 5 <i>Newton by Castle Acre</i>: It was noted that the order to add a byway to the Definitive Map had been confirmed, but not yet published. There would be a period of 6 months following publication when an appeal could be made on legal grounds only, but noted that it had been reported that some of the obstructing material had already been removed. [Post meeting update: the Order was published on 15 March, with a deadline for appeals of 29 April 2024.] 	Ken

<p>6.3 Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning Applications</p> <p>1 <i>Norwich Western Link Project Update</i>: It was noted that the planning application had not yet been submitted.</p> <p>2 <i>NSIPs update</i>: No report had been received.</p>	
<p>7 Definitive Map Modification Orders</p> <p>No issues were raised</p>	
<p>8 Reports from NCC Officers</p> <p>The meeting was joined by Katy Owen, Helen Terry and Jason Moore.</p> <p>8.1 Jason reported that NCC was receiving, from one source, a high volume of emails about PRow issues, some of which were considered abusive. Katy Owen endorsed this, noting that consideration was being given at senior level to the response that should be made by NCC. Subgroup members were unanimous in expressing support for the staff and emphasising that there was no place for any abusive behaviour.</p> <p>8.2 Katy noted that an application by an external body for CIL funding for the improvement of a PRow used by the King Charles III England Coast Path in West Norfolk had been rejected; discussion was continuing on the work needed to make the desired improvement.</p>	
<p>9 Responsibility for PRow</p> <p>The subgroup discussed who was best placed to take responsibility for looking after PRow. It was noted that at one end of the spectrum was the view that “parish councils taking on the responsibility for the PRow in their locality is the most sensible solution” and at the other “As a town councillor, we have even less capacity to take this on than County, not to mention that dividing the work up into even smaller units incurs more administrative costs, reduces their purchasing power/negotiating power - 540 organisations instead of 1 County is bound to cost far more to deliver (or fail to deliver) the same amount of work.” Both views had received support from NLAF members. After some discussion, it was concluded that where there was commitment at a local level this was likely to have many advantages and produce high quality results, but such commitment could change over time and was not to be found in the majority of other parishes. It was noted that the option for parishes to take on these responsibilities already existed and this was to be encouraged but not required. It was therefore agreed to make no proposal for change.</p>	
<p>10 Date of next meetings</p> <p>The next subgroup meetings are planned for Mondays 10 June, 16 September and 9 December, all now from 13:30 to 15:00, as hybrid meetings.</p>	<p>all</p>

All were thanked for their attendance and contributions, and the meeting closed.

APPENDIX 2

Norfolk Local Access Forum Subgroup MINUTES



Subgroup	Vision and Ideas
Date of meeting:	11/3/24 at 3.15
Invitees	Present from 3.15: Rob Lodge, Ken Hawkins, Martin Sullivan, Birgit Griem From 4.15: Katy Owen, Helen Terry, Jason Moorese
	Apologies: Kevin Grieve

	Item	Action to be taken for meeting on 10th June 2024
2	Minutes from the meeting on 8th January 2024 were accepted as a true record	
2.1	Matters arising from previous minutes Pathmakers: David (Walk Coordinator) is leaving. Pathmakers want to consider children more when planning the next walking festival	
3	Terms of Reference are accepted and understood	
4	Ways Forward/timelines	
4.1	Review of NCC reports brought to NLAF See attached contribution from KH (Attachment 1). KO and HT are also reviewing the Countryside Access Arrangements report to the NLAF and welcomed the opportunity to receive KH's suggestions	KH to pass his suggestions to KO and HT. Countryside Access reporting to be agenda item for full NLAF in July
4.2	National Trails Management Plan update and budget KH reminded the meeting that the Weybourne to Hunstanton section of the King Charles III Path has not been approved yet. HT is working on defining specific outcomes. KO is working on CRM data, what could be meaningfully extracted from it and presented at a glance. The new network of people counters should provide meaningful evidence, which will	

	<p>have implications for the NAIP. Solutions will be in the management plan. KO's aim is progress and measurable change.</p> <p>£2.5 million has been awarded on a 4 year contract for Norfolk and National Trails starting on 1/4/24. KO is in charge of spending this and her priorities are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replace the vehicle fleet, find suitable premises, invest in equipment such as the people counters - Increase promotion of the network by slowly growing and improving an online presence - Staffing. The National Trails team has a good number of employees. Norfolk Trails will have new jobs in the form of a team leader, another trails officer and assistant. KO wants these appointments to be sustainable beyond the period of the contract <p>KO singled out Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Deputy Leader of NCC and in charge of Finance) as a real champion.</p> <p>KO stated the intention of collaborative working between JM (PROW) and her department.</p>	
4.3	<p>Promotion of Green Lanes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders</p> <p>There was general discussion of the issues we would be taking on if we were to pursue this in an official way.</p>	Item to be brought forward to future meetings
4.4	<p>NAIP</p> <p>This is a policy document that officers are working to until 2029. However, there is agreement between officers and NLAFF that the next one should be briefer. There is a half way review being prepared and NLAFF have requested that this be more focused than the review we received in the autumn.</p> <p>There was some confusion about whether KG is attempting to modify it.</p>	RL to confirm with KG what, if anything, he is working on.
5	<p>Input from NCC colleagues</p> <p>See contributions from NCC colleagues in relevant agenda items</p>	
7	<p>AOB</p> <p>None. The meeting closed at 4.45pm</p>	

If you have any questions please get in touch with:

<p>NLAFF Chair: Rob Lodge</p> <p>Email Address: via nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Attachments: KH's suggestions as per 4.1</p>
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Attachment 1 (Vision and Ideas Minutes 11.3.24) - Reports to NLAf

I am concerned with 2 reports, both made to the PRow subgroup before the full NLAf meeting, to allow the subgroup to consider matters of detail and bring recommendations to NLAf, rather than expect NLAf to find the time to review that detail. These are my thoughts on those two reports.

Countryside Access Arrangements

- it doesn't need a proposal, consideration of implications or recommendations (I assume these are included because the report has historically followed the format of reports made into Council committees)
- it does need clear quarterly information:
 - on the number of PRow/access issues reported, resolved and unresolved, compared to previous quarters
 - a table and/or graph showing the numbers unresolved after 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, 12 months, and longer
 - if easy to do, information about the types of issue unresolved for longer periods (6+ months?) would be informative
 - on enforcement issues - (1) statistics to show how many notices are being issued and how long it is taking to resolve them (this will need to be cumulative), (2) statistics on how many notices are served on NCC and information about their resolution, again cumulative
 - changes in total front line fte staff
 - update on cutting programme/problems
- specific problems, issues and successes - brief notes only
- I'm not bothered about Trails/PRow split - from the viewpoint of the user, it doesn't matter
- there is no need for loads of photos unless specific projects are being highlighted

Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning

- the table is useful to enable NLAf to consider whether it should comment - if possible a direct copy of what is prepared for NCC will avoid extra work, but if this is not possible, I would be happy to explore other ways that NLAf can be made aware of significant proposals that could impact the access network
- it's useful also to have non NSIP major projects that would interest NLAf

Ken Hawkins

11 March 2024

Norfolk Local Access Forum (Forum member report)

Report title:	Broads Local Access Forum (BLAF) update
Date of meeting:	3 rd April 2024

Summary

An update from the Broads Local Access Forum (BLAF) will be given to the NLAF as part of ongoing interaction and information sharing between the two LAFs in Norfolk.

1.	Proposal
1.1.	NLAF members will receive an update from the BLAF
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	To note the update
3.	Evidence
3.1.	<p>The Broads Authority is the special statutory authority with responsibility for the Broads National Park https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/learning/broads-curriculum/the-broads-national-park</p> <p>Under Section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, there is provision for National Park Authorities to set up a Local Access Forum to advise on improvements to public access for outdoor recreation and sustainable travel within their executive area. The Broads Authority have done this https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-us/committees/local-access-forum to develop a successful independent advisory forum for their area.</p> <p>Thus there are two LAFs for Norfolk: the Norfolk LAF www.norfolk.gov.uk/nlaf covering all Norfolk with members appointed by NCC as highway authority for Norfolk, and the Broads LAF covering the Broads Authority executive area, with members appointed by the Broads Authority.</p> <p>The NLAF Chair and Vice Chair regularly attend BLAF meetings, and the BLAF Chair is a member of the NLAF PRoW and NAIP subgroups, meaning there is good ongoing interaction and engagement between the two LAFs.</p> <p>The Broads Authority Waterways and Recreation Officer has also attended recent NLAF meetings.</p>

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

Report author	Martin Sullivan (Chair of the NLAF) Keith Bacon (Chair of the BLAF)
Email address :	nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk blaf@broads-authority.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk and we will do our best to help.

Report title:	Pathmakers report
Date of meeting:	3 rd April 2024

Summary

Pathmakers recent highlights and successes are presented to Norfolk Local Access Forum members.

1.	Proposal
1.1.	An update on recent Pathmakers activities will be presented by the Chair of trustees, Simon Fowler
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	To note work ongoing by Pathmakers to improve access to the Norfolk countryside for people of all abilities and backgrounds.
3.	Evidence
3.1.	<p>Pathmakers is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which has been established by the Norfolk Local Access Forum.</p> <p>https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?subid=0&regid=1161475</p> <p>Its mission is to improve access to the Norfolk Countryside for people of all abilities and backgrounds. Pathmakers works with organisations and communities to help run, facilitate or support walking projects - both financially and in other ways - that improve countryside access. www.pathmakers.org.uk</p>

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLAF member name :	Simon Fowler
Email address :	nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk and we will do our best to help.

Report title:	Appointments to Pathmakers
Date of meeting:	3 rd April 2024

Summary

Confirmation of 5 trustee appointments to Pathmakers by the NLAFF is sought.

1.	Proposal
1.1.	<p>Pathmakers NLAFF-appointed Trustees</p> <p>It seems we may have overlooked the correct procedure for the appointment of NLAFF Trustees to our charity Pathmakers. So firstly, to confirm the appointments of the following who were re-instated as Trustees from 12 Dec 2023, for a term of three years.</p> <p>Sarah Abercrombie Simon Fowler Kate Mackenzie Martin Sullivan</p> <p>And to confirm the NLAFF appoints John Jones as a new Trustee of Pathmakers for a three-year term.</p>
2.	Recommendations
2.1.	To agree appointments
3.	Evidence
3.1.	<p>Pathmakers is a charity which has been established by the Norfolk Local Access Forum. www.pathmakers.org.uk https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?subid=0&regid=1161475</p> <p>Up to five trustees are appointed by the Norfolk Local Access Forum for a term of up to 3 years. Other trustees are appointed directly by Pathmakers.</p> <p>Pathmakers is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation</p>

If you have any questions about this report please get in touch with:

NLAFF member name : Simon Fowler
Email address : nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact nlaf@norfolk.gov.uk and we will do our best to help.

Norfolk Local Access Forum

Item No:

Report Title: Countryside Access Arrangements update

Date of Meeting: April 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Eric Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste)

Responsible Director: Steve Miller, Director of Culture & Heritage

Is this a Key Decision? No

Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member

At the July 2017 Local Access Forum (NLAF), it was agreed that at each future meeting, a summary of the work the Countryside Access Officers and Environment teams would be provided. At the October 2017 NLAF it was agreed that this report should be presented to the PROW sub-group prior to being brought to NLAF.

This paper highlights this work in terms of the volumes of customer queries received and responded to. The paper also highlights other key areas of work.

Recommendations:

1. That the Norfolk Local Access Forum notes the progress made to date since the Countryside Access Officer posts were introduced.

1. Background and Purpose

1.1 Since 1 April 2017, there is a single point of contact within each Highways Area office being responsible for their local rights of way issues. By having the officer within the Area office, they are more “on the ground” and better placed to deal with the operational reactive issues that occur when managing rights of way. In addition, the Norfolk Trails team sits within the Environment Service at County Hall and carries out strategic and developmental aspects of developing the countryside access network.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The information in **Appendix 1** summarises the performance information available for the complete months since the last report.
- 2.2 The CRM defect reporting system went live in March 2018. Defect notes are being made visible to the public in the automatic update emails sent when third party defects have been inspected & more status options available on tablets under the 'No Defect' category, as previously reported.
- Use of the NCC system is the most efficient way of reporting issues, Other systems require additional administration which puts additional strain on limited staff resources.
- Minor updates continue to be made to CRM to enhance operation and feedback elements.
- 2.3 A new report has been prepared to display the relevant PROW/Trails information via PowerBI **Appendix 1 (a) Stats for the last 3 months and Appendix 1 (b) Stats for the last 2 years.**
- 2.4 In summary, the Mayrise system of logged requests for service on 8th March 2024 had 1,540 open issues for Public Rights of Way (up slightly comparable with the last quarter figures). The fact that overall numbers remain high reflects that PROW issues are often complicated matters to resolve. Most enquiries received continue to be regarding damaged or missing signs, non-reinstatement, obstructions, overgrown surface, overgrown hedges/ trees and surface condition. Vigorous vegetation growth has led to an increase in enquiries about surface maintenance.
- 2.5 The original rise in cases is primarily attributed to the impact of Covid 19. While the country went into lockdown Central Government advice was that local outdoor exercise was promoted for wellbeing and there was evidence of significant increases in walking, running and cycling on village/local path networks across the Country. There were also isolated cases of landowners using Covid as an excuse to close some paths. Naturally, additional use has led to an increase in complaints about the condition of the local path network. There remain considerable backlogs to work through. This has been recognised within the ROW profession nationally and some LAs are now re-evaluating the importance of adequately maintaining local path networks and several Eastern Region Highway Authorities have recently reported increases in staff numbers and maintenance budgets in order to manage the demand. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the increased use of local networks continues with people having formed new habits of getting outdoor exercise. There is no shortage of evidence relating to the importance of how local path networks contribute to health and wellbeing.
- 2.6 At the current time there are no additional financial resources earmarked for PROW maintenance. 3 x PROW Technicians have commenced their roles in mid-September 2021, one each in support of Countryside Access Officer for the three highway areas in an attempt to tackle some of the backlog of open issues. The contracts have now been extended to March 2025.
- 2.7 Overall, the number of unresolved public enquiries through the CRM system is remaining up slightly from the last quarter. As of the 8th March 2024, the Norfolk Trails Team had 199 open CRM issues (up 11)
PROW had 181 open CRM issues, (up 29)

- 2.8 These figures do not reflect the substantial volume of reports and correspondence still received through direct email and telephone communication from members of the public, but which remain unrecorded. Neither does it reflect the complexity often found in resolving PROW issues.
- 2.9 In addition to the numbers above, there have been a number of enforcement notices sent out to landowners since April 2023. The figures include more informal email conversations where the landowner is politely reminded that enforcement may follow if action is not forthcoming. The following have been issued:
- 142 Section 131A, 134-137 Non-reinstatement Notices/emails issued. The majority are resolved without recourse to further enforcement. It should be noted that there are significant resource pressures associated with serving and following up on Notices.
 - Since April 2023, 7 Section 130's (obstructions) or s56 (out of repair) notices have been received by NCC.
- 2.10 It should be noted that processing any legal notices is time consuming for NCC staff. Similarly, when NCC receives FOI requests, these are a drain on limited staff resources.
- 2.11 In terms of other progress, key highlights include:
- Higher incidences of people using local paths during Covid and anecdotal evidence that this has continued since. The wet winter 20/21 saw an increase in flooding reports and associated bridge damage. These issues are still being worked through and there have been further instances of issues caused by the wet winter of 2023/4. Bridges Team have a substantial backlog of missing structures, with most of the structures being timber there is a constant requirement to replace on a cyclic basis. Approximately 20 larger scale structures were replaced on the network each financial year.
 - Smaller scale bridges/ligger crossings remain a Highway Area responsibility and are also subject to continual cyclic replacement. EG South area will have completed 18 bridges and issued another 5 by the end of the financial year. West area are making progress towards the reinstatement of culverts in Feltwell and Nordelph.

- Bridge recently replaced in North area at Hindringham



- A long-standing flooding issue at Dickleburgh Moor is now resolved through the installation of a culvert but remains subject to some seasonal flooding.
- 2023 cutting: Two cuts were completed on the selected PROW routes in 2023, the final year of the current contract period. Trails routes receive 3 cuts. The retendering process is ongoing at this current time with tenders now being evaluated (March 2024) and a proposed start for cutting in May 2024.
- There have been fewer issues with contractors quality control in 2023 but they were at full stretch, the weather resulted in vigorous surface growth. It seems to be apparent in recent years (perhaps related to climate change?) that 3 cuts is the minimum required to keep paths open all season. Two cuts are again anticipated for 2024 on the PROW network.
- Some Parishes have expressed an interest in carrying out their own cutting with financial support from NCC (equivalent to the amount spent under the main contracts) but to date this only currently applies to a handful of parishes.
- Enforcement procedures were carried out on a path at Upwell in 2021 but the path is again obstructed. The matter is now with NPLaw regarding potential court action.

March 2024 update: No further progress has been made. Several longstanding obstruction cases remain ongoing. A growing number of encroachment cases are under investigation.

- In 2023 PROW staff attended an “enforcement” course run by the Institute of Public Rights of Way(IPROW). As a result the CAO’s will be compiling some procedures for PROW to complement NCC’s overarching enforcement protocols drawn up by Trading Standards and others, to ensure a consistent approach across the Council.
- Not all ‘enforcement’ relies on more formal action. It might be more appropriately be termed as “compliance”. Most landowners respond to reinstatement notices and there continues to be dialogue with most landowners leading to small scale improvements that are nevertheless essential to the integrity of the network. A landowner at Wiggshall proposes to bequeath a replacement bridge on a favourite walk (subject to Bridges standards being met)
- The £15k “Urban paths” allocation has a shortlist of sites considered for funding for the next 2 to 3 years assuming this funding stream remains available. Two schemes were completed in 2023. Prices for the work have risen significantly but the overall budget for such works has remained static. Discussions are ongoing with a Parish Council regarding a scheme in South area for 2024.
- County Councillors have “Member Fund” to allocate to local Highway projects each year, increased to £11k each for 2023/24 and this can be spent on small scale PROW projects of maintenance or improvement. To date, uptake on tackling PROW issues has been limited.
- NCC has recently been rated as No1 (against comparable authorities) in the National Highways and Transportation Survey for customer satisfaction regarding public rights of way.
- All areas have now completed “winter works” where more substantial overgrowth identified through reports and seasonal maintenance is then cleared. In West area for example this extended to around a dozen sites, resolving some long-standing issues.

2.12 Norfolk and National Trails

Since 1st January 2024 the Norfolk and National Trails teams have had:

- 203 issues reported in total (20.3 issues/week).
- 97 issues inspected and confirmed.
- 49 issues dealt with (or duplications, either way they are ‘resolved’ on Mayrise).
- 57 currently waiting for inspection.

Updates on work taking place over the last quarter are outlined below.

2.12.1 Recruitment

In January we welcomed Laurie Underwood to the role of Assistant National Trail Officer. This is to support the small Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail team – initially in the development of Stretch 4 of the Norfolk Coast Path and the delivery of Brancaster boardwalk, as well as the day-to-day monitoring and maintenance of the National Trail.

In addition, we have appointed Jason Smyth as Assistant Trails Maintenance Officer into the Norfolk Trails team to provide valuable assistance to Martin Caplin in maintaining the promoted Norfolk Trails network. This recruitment represents a significant increase in staffing levels, bringing the number of National Trail officers to four and Norfolk Trail officers to two.

2.12.2. Norfolk Coast Path – part of the King Charles III England Coast Path 'Stretch 4' – Hunstanton to Sutton Bridge

Stretch 4 of the King Charles III England Coast Path was officially opened on 6 March 2024. This includes brand new public access between King's Lynn and Snettisham. As a result, Norfolk now has a continuous walking trail around the county. Additional works will continue to improve access in the near future.

We have also had confirmation of funding from Ramble Worldwide and the Rural England Prosperity Fund at the end of November for the addition of sculptural, interpretive installations to celebrate the completion of the Norfolk Coast Path, with a specific objective of protecting the sensitive nature along the route. The interpretation has been designed to be aligned with the Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape new branding and use mixed/tactile materials to engage with wider range of users.

As part of the works, we are also using a new brand of people counter which appear to be more cost effective and potentially a viable option to use on the Trails network. We will be monitoring the results to see how accurate and user-friendly they appear to be in comparison to previous providers.

Whilst Stretch 4 is now open, the last remaining stretch (Stretch 3) between Hunstanton and Weybourne is with the planning inspectors and the Secretary of State to formalise proposals.

NAIP theme: THEME 1: Well Managed Access Network

1.9 Manage Norfolk Trails and the National Trail in Norfolk (Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path) and establish new stretches of the England Coast Path in Norfolk (*establishment is a 'Priority action' within the NAIP*)

2.12.3. Happisburgh cliff erosion

We are monitoring the cliff erosion at Happisburgh. If the cliff collapses further, this will sever the National Trail.

To protect the route of the Norfolk Coast Path we have spoken to the landowner, Coastwise team at North Norfolk District Council and Natural England. A planning application is currently in place to move the access to the car park inland, potentially moving the car park at the same time. We will be looking to re-align the path with the new track.

The re-alignment will be through roll-back, as this is not a Public Right of Way and is part of Coastal Access. If erosion takes place quicker than expected and the current track from Beach Road is severed, we already have permissions in place to re-align the Coast Path across the field where the track will be built so we can minimise disruption to walkers.



NAIP theme – THEME 1: Well Managed Access Network

1.9 Manage Norfolk Trails and the National Trail in Norfolk (Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path)

2.12.4 Sidestrand Erosion

Over the last 2 months there have been two cliff falls at Sidestrand resulting in the path being lost. Coastal access means the path can naturally roll back 4m from the cliff edge, however in this location a safe route was not easily accessible.

We have been out and spoken to the landowner and Natural England about the situation. Subsequently we have removed lengths of fencing, installed signs and cut vegetation to establish a safe route inland and prevent walkers from walking too close to the fragile cliff edge.



NAIP theme – THEME 1: Well Managed Access Network

1.9 Manage Norfolk Trails and the National Trail in Norfolk (Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path)

2.12.4 Sustead FP10 Re-alignment

As part of our legal duties, we are meant to maintain the definitive line of Public Rights of Way. Where the route has changed over the years, we will try to re-establish the route on the correct line. This will be in conversation with landowners and advising them on the legalities, serving notices if required.

Sustead FP10 was re-aligned back onto the definitive line with agreements in place with the landowner. In order to maintain accessibility, we installed a new kissing gate and a bridge.

NAIP theme – THEME 1: Well Managed Access Network

1.3 Create accessible routes without barriers.

2.12.4 Norfolk Trails access improvements

The Norfolk Trails team have been improving access and making the routes viable for more users. In the last 3 months they have:

- Replaced 6 stiles and gates for more accessible options.
- Replaced of broken and inaccessible steps on the Marriott's Way at Brick Kiln Lane
- Widening of route which had been encroached with vegetation making them accessible to horse riders and cyclists, as well as walkers.

NAIP theme: Theme1: Well Managed Access Network

1.2 Manage path surfaces and vegetation and 1.3 Create accessible routes without barriers.

2.12.5 Cutting Contract Tender

One of the most prominent issues on the Trails network is vegetation growth, which means the cutting contract is an important part of the maintenance schedule. The contract is up for re-tender this year and we will be making changes to ensure the contractors work effectively and can manage a sustainable area. This requires re-mapping the cutting areas and creating a new framework for the contract.

This has been advertised and we are in the process of assessing potential contractors ahead of formalising this contract in the next few weeks.

NAIP theme: Theme1: Well Managed Access Network

1.2 Manage path surfaces and vegetation.

2.13 Greenways Team (Green Infrastructure delivery)

2.13.1 Closer to Nature Project - Brancaster FP5 Boardwalk replacement

Designed with equity of access at its heart, our Closer to Nature project enables more ages and abilities to enjoy the Norfolk’s stunning wildlife and scenery, with a new, accessible 2km boardwalk providing inclusive access to this popular part of our coast.

Passing places, rest stops, viewpoints: all create space for users to pause and catch their breath. The innovative and dementia-friendly design will provide space for wheelchairs and pushchairs to pass each other, and for family members young and old to walk together in safety.

Working alongside the National Trails and Specialist Advice Service Teams, this project is currently in the latter part of its delivery phase. Due to be completed mid-April 2024, we have been successful in securing matched funding from a wide variety of sources for this project. It will be officially launched in early summer after the local elections.

2.13.2 ‘Access for All’ CIL-funded projects (Greater Norwich Growth Board)

The following projects have been funded from the ‘Access for All’ CIL

1. Marriott’s Way ‘curve’ at Drayton

Resurfacing and access improvements at Drayton have now been completed – including the resurfacing of 170m of the Marriott’s Way, north of the A-Frame Bridge over the River Wensum, and up to where it meets Costessey Lane in Drayton.

The works have included the introduction of a stair set to replace the dangerous desire line previously used by cyclists and a timber fence to prevent members of the public falling off the path as they navigate the curve down from the historic rail line.

The path will be officially reopened on 15 March 2024.

The contractors are due to return to site to plant three fruit trees and sow grass seed onto the verges of the path.

Before and After:





2. Marriott's Way Brick Kiln stair set replacement

The original steps were narrow, steep and uneven, with a step height over 250mm. Steps over 250mm in height breach building code regulations, which are designed to ensure maximum accessibility and safety to all users. We have removed and replaced the steps with wider, well-spaced and regular steps at a height no greater than 150mm. In addition two 'landing spaces' (installed every 10 steps) have been installed, which creates a rest point for users. Additionally a handrail has been installed on both sides of the steps.

Before and after:



3. Circular walk improvements

Circular walk improvements have also been made at the following locations:

1. Loddon Warren Hills circular walk (4 miles)
2. Loddon Ingloss circular walk (3.5 miles)
3. Claxton circular walk (5 miles)
4. Rockland St Mary circular walk (6.5 miles)

The aim was to improve accessibility and navigation. It included:

- The installation of new fingerposts, improving navigation of the route, with fingerposts installed being significantly larger/taller than is standard.
- Route names and distances have also been added.
- Waymarker discs have been installed at all junctions of the circular walks, with additional signposts at strategic locations.
- Access-limiting gates have been replaced with wider, more accessible kissing gates,
- Two footbridges have been widened from 400mm to 1500mm, additionally with handrails.
- Benches have also been added as rest stops along some of the routes.

3. Clarification of Timescales re issue reporting

3.1 The NLA requested clarification of the issue reporting process which is presented below:

3.2 If an issue is reported online this will be allocated to the tablet of the responsible Countryside Access Officer/ Trail Officer for review almost straight away. If there is a danger to life, we advise customers to call in and our colleagues in the customer service centre would alert the local team so that they can take remedial action within 2 hours. If a report is made by fixmystreet or by email, there will be a delay as these have to be manually added to the system (usually one working day)

3.3 Officers will assign a priority to each defect reported based upon a risk assessment. Our Countryside Access Officers will prioritise enquiries as per the TAMP):

9.1.1.1.7. Public Rights of Way

9.1.1.1.7.1. Work programmes are based on a risk assessment of the severity of the problem and the likelihood of its affecting others. Issue logged for attention as follows:

- High – if it affects a nationally, or regionally, promoted route
- Medium – if it affects a well-connected or well used path
- Low – if it affects only an isolated generally unused path or one that runs alongside another path. Those deemed a low priority will be actioned when resources are available.

A full breakdown of the defect risk register for PROW can be found in APP D (viii) of the TAMP here: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media/norfolk/downloads/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance->

[and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/roads-and-transport/transport-asset-management-plan-part-3.pdf](#)

The risk register helps officers determine the priority. The timescales of which are below.

(i) If the defect is not deemed an emergency and is on a trail, it is allocated to a Trails Officer to investigate, prioritise and action based upon the resources available.

(ii) If an issue has already been reported, this should be visible on the online map so the customer knows that this has already been identified. The customer who reported the issue will get an email update after investigation to advise if this is a duplicate (where we have identified the issue already and it is in the system); if we are sending out a letter to landowners; or if we have identified work is required. If it has been identified that work is needed and a customer has not had a response in over 6 weeks, our customer service colleague will look to see the status of the defect and assign to the relevant officer to provide an update.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1 N/A

5. Alternative Options

5.1 N/A

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Officers and contractors are aware of labour, plant, fuel, and material rising costs, these rising costs are discussed regularly with our contractors adjustments are then made to NCC financial control systems, however funding availability may have an impact on project delivery if costs continue to rise. This ongoing issue will be monitored and fed back to the LAF as deemed necessary.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 Staff:
Please see paragraph 6.1

7.2 Property:
N/A

7.3 IT:
N/A

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications:
N/A

8.2 Human Rights Implications:
N/A

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):
N/A

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):
N/A

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):
N/A

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):
N/A

8.7 Any Other Implications:
N/A

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 N/A

10. Select Committee Comments

10.1 N/A

11. Recommendations

1. That the Norfolk Local Access Forum notes the progress made to date since the Countryside Access Officer posts were introduced.
- 2.
- 3.

12. Background Papers

12.1 none other than the Appendices

12.2

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

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Katy Owen

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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

APPENDIX 1(a)

PROW and Trail Defect Report

The information presented on this page looks at PROW and Trail defects reports. PROW & Trail defect reports are sent to Mayrise mobile tablets for investigation by the relevant team.

Alter the Report Date Range in the top right hand corner to see FAQs received over a

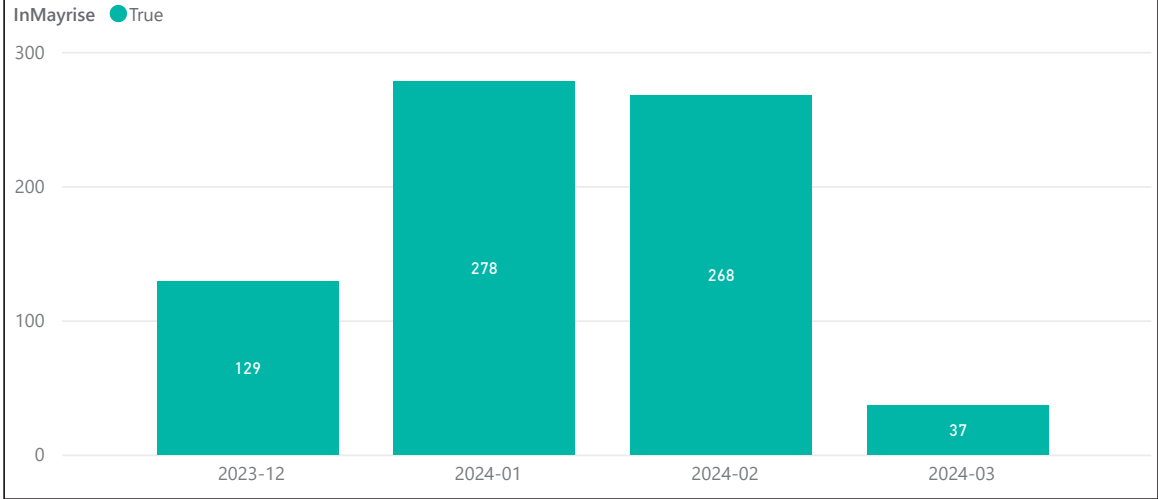
Report Date Range

Last 3 Months
📅 09/12/2023 - 08/03/2024

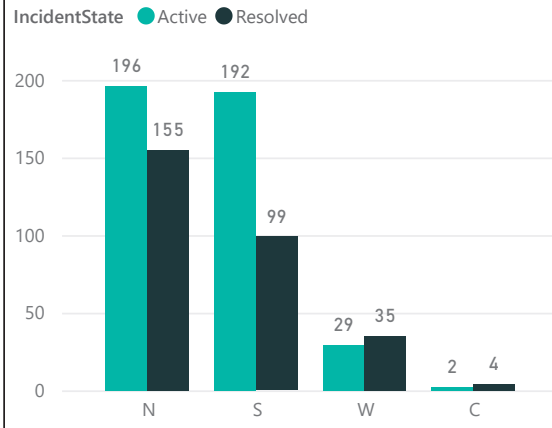
Volume of PROW/Trail defects by type

DescriptionOfFault	C	N	S	W	Total
PROW - Damaged or missing sign		60	81	7	148
PROW - Obstruction -e.g. building works, fences, ditches, locked gate	1	45	24	4	74
PROW - Surface condition		39	20	12	71
PROW - Crops/ploughing affecting footpath		35	23	1	59
PROW - Tree dangerous/fallen	1	28	17	7	53
PROW - Overgrown hedge/tree		18	23	3	44
Trail - Surface condition	1	23	9	3	36
PROW - Bridge		7	23	2	32
PROW - Overgrown surface -e.g. grass/weeds		16	12	1	29
Trail - Damaged or missing sign		10	10	5	25
Trail - Tree dangerous/fallen	2	13	4	2	21
PROW - Flooded Path		4	9	5	18
PROW - Gate/Barrier		9	4	3	16
PROW - Misleading sign		10	3	1	14
PROW - Illegal / Vehicle Use		6	4	1	11
Trail - Overgrown hedge/tree	1	2	1	4	8
Trail - Bridge		2	5		7
Trail- Obstruction -e.g. building works, fences, ditches, locked gate		4	3		7
		2	3	1	6
Trail - Gate/Barrier		2	4		6
Trail - Steps damaged/other		5			5
PROW - Steps damaged/other		3		1	4
PROW - Stile damaged/too/high/other			4		4
Trail - Misleading sign			2	2	4
Trail - Crops/ploughing affecting footpath		2	1		3
Trail - Flooded Path		1	2		3
Trail - Illegal / Vehicle Use		3			3
Trail - Overgrown surface -e.g. grass/weeds		1	2		3
PROW - Animal(s)		1	1		2
Trail- Stile damaged/too/high/other			2		2
Total	6	353	294	65	718

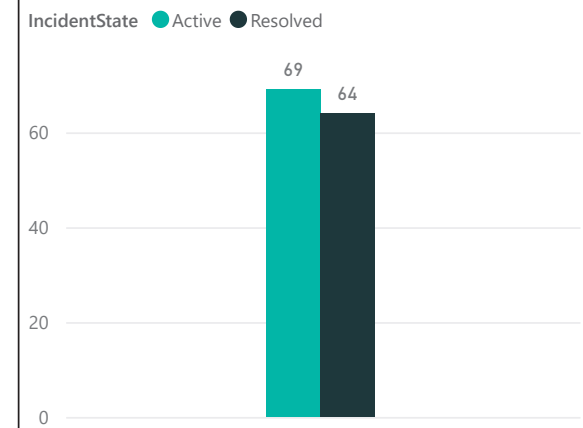
PROW and Trail defects received by month



PROW Defects by Status (in Mayrise)



Trails Defects by Status



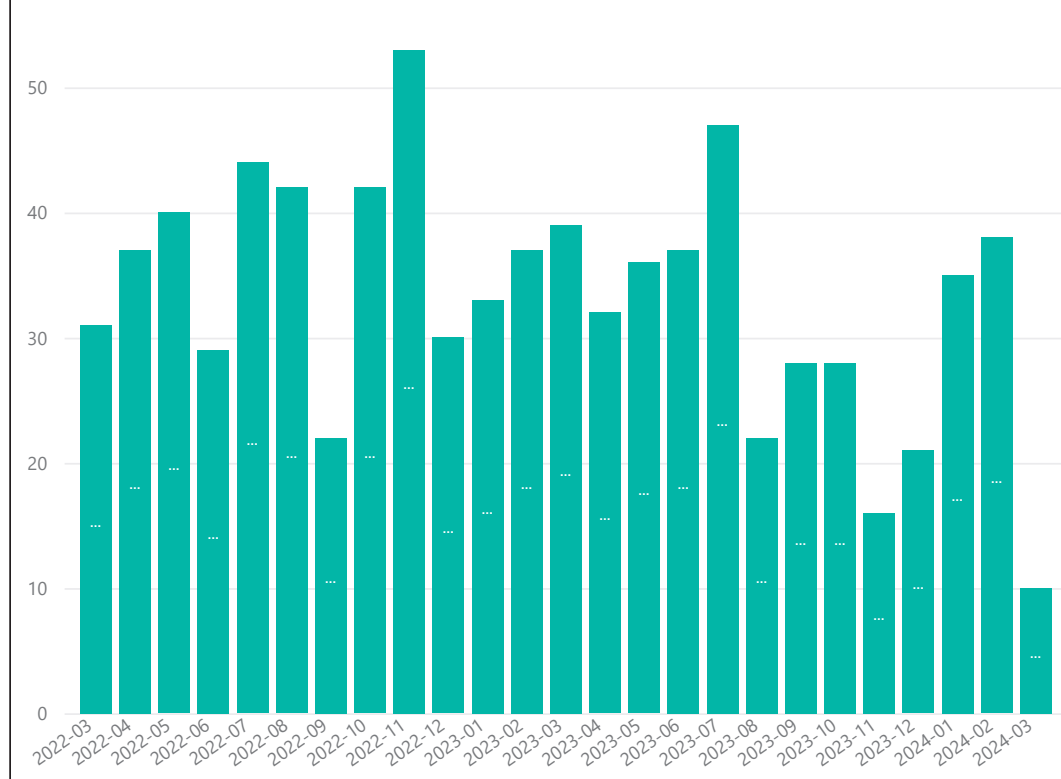
Public Right of Way and Trail FAQ Report

FAQs relate to all enquiries made by customers that include queries on policy, information requests, formal notices and chasing requests. These are logged by the Customer Service Centre and managed within the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM).

These present to either the PROW 'queue' (managed by Countryside Access Officers) or the Trails queue (managed by the Environment team).

Alter the Report Date Range in the top right hand corner to see FAQs received over a different time period.

Volume of PROW/Trail FAQs received by month



Report Date Range

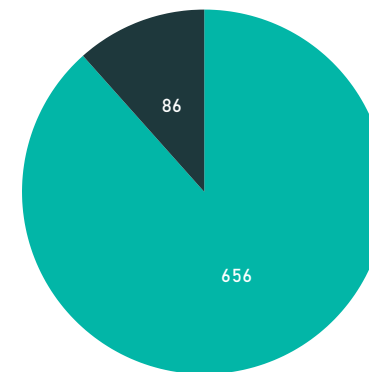
📅 09/03/2022 - 08/03/2024

Volume of PROW/Trail FAQs by question

Question	Count of CaseNumber
I would like to make a town and village green application	1
Section 130 notice received	2
I've seen unauthorised cycling, driving or riding on a Public Right of Way or Trail. What can be done?	9
I would like information about a Norfolk Trail	26
I have an enquiry about the definitive map	28
I have an enquiry about PROW or Trail grass cutting	29
I have an enquiry concerning common land	36
Total	829

PROW/Trail FAQs received by Status

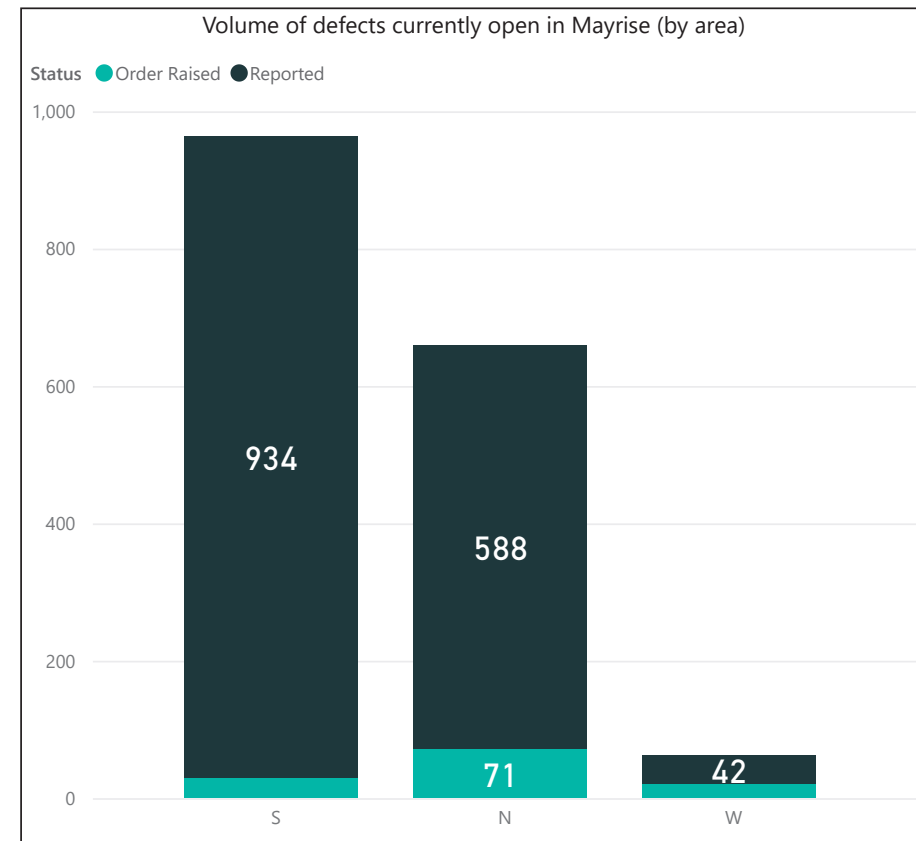
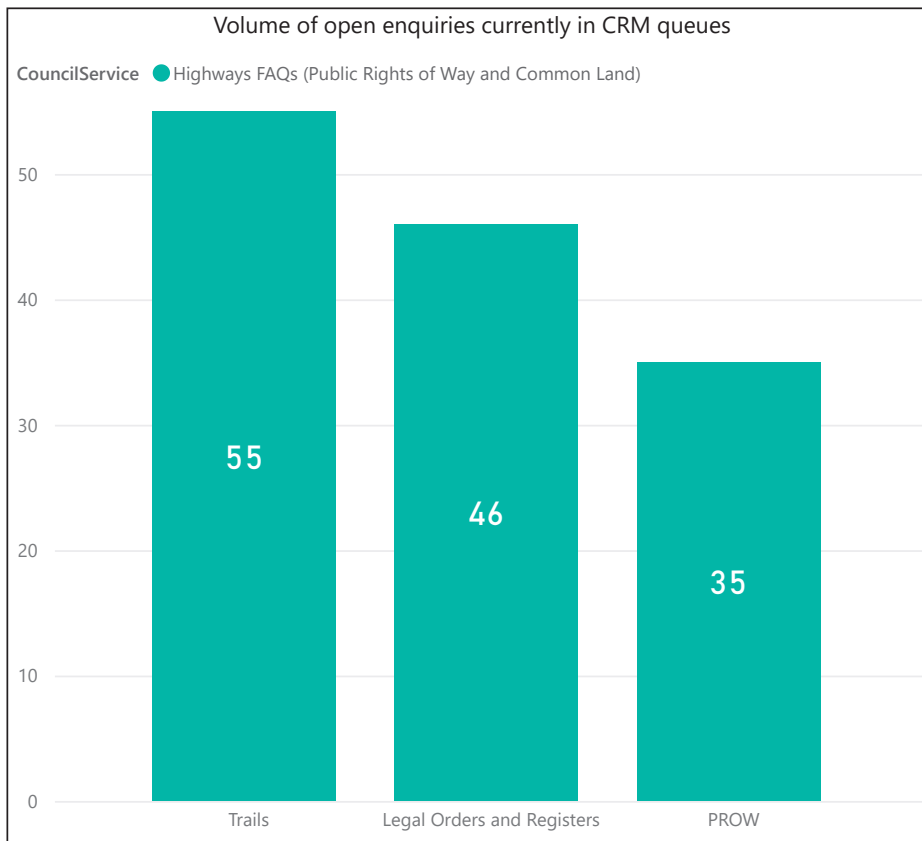
IncidentState ● Resolved ● Active



Active Enquiries

This page provides a snapshot of the customer reported defects and FAQs that are currently open in Mayrise and CRM.

The graph below reflects what is currently open in the team Queues in CRM. You will notice that some queues have both FAQs and defects. This is because before April 2019 Trails defects were managed within CRM. Defects registered on PROWs (and Trails from April 2019 onward) all automatically 'leave' CRM and are sent through to Mayrise. You can see the open PROW & Trail customer reported defects that are in Mayrise in the graph to the right. Anything with the status 'reported' indicates the defect is awaiting investigation.



This page looks at the average number of days from when a defect is reported to inspected and reported to repaired.

This data is for all defects within the Highways Management System (it does not include general enquiries)

This is the average length of time between report and inspection (in days) for defects created in the specified time scale.



Select time period

CREATEDATE

Last Months

📅 09/12/2023 - 08/03/2024

Average of Reported to Inspected Days

LEVEL2	Average of NCC_PI_Days_Reported-Inspected
PROW	10.88
TRLS	10.21
Total	10.72



This is the average length of time between report and repair (in days) for defects created in the specified time scale. This looks at all defects that have been completed.



Average of report to Repair Days

LEVEL2	Average of NCCReportRepairDays
PROW	28.53
TRLS	21.14
Total	26.89

APPENDIX 1(b)

PROW and Trail Defect Report

The information presented on this page looks at PROW and Trail defects reports. PROW & Trail defect reports are sent to Mayrise mobile tablets for investigation by the relevant team.

Alter the Report Date Range in the top right hand corner to see FAQs received over a

Volume of PROW/Trail defects by type

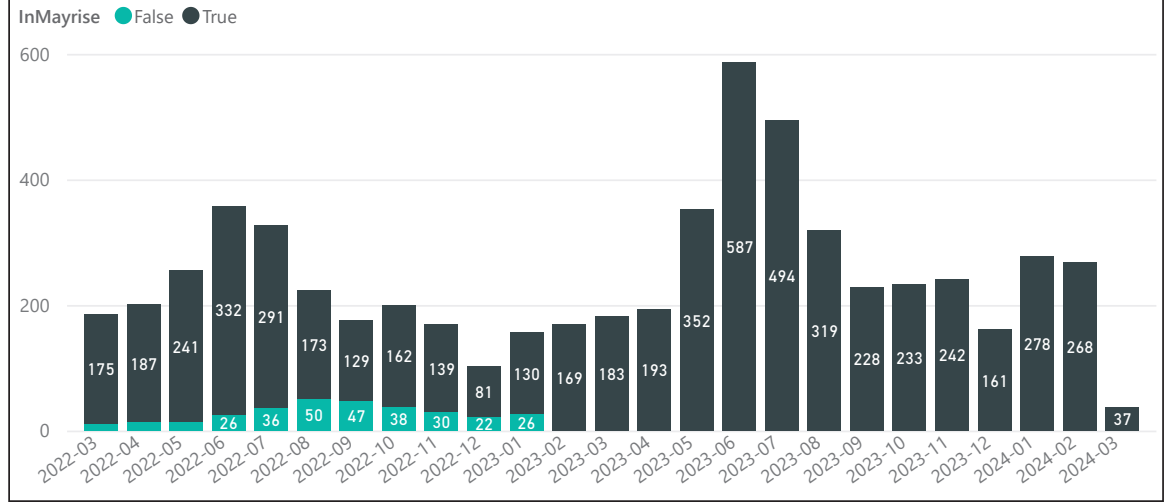
Description	OffFault	C	N	S	W	Total	
PROW - Overgrown surface -e.g. grass/weeds		3	529	336	104	972	
PROW - Damaged or missing sign			370	427	70	867	
PROW - Overgrown hedge/tree		7	282	260	94	643	
PROW - Obstruction -e.g. building works, fences, ditches, locked gate		1	228	187	69	485	
PROW - Crops/ploughing affecting footpath			229	168	24	421	
PROW - Surface condition		2	186	92	46	326	
Trail - Overgrown hedge/tree		20	111	92	39	262	
Trail - Overgrown surface -e.g. grass/weeds		4	137	99	10	250	
PROW - Tree dangerous/fallen		3	117	84	34	238	
Trail - Surface condition		10	123	71	21	225	
Trail - Damaged or missing sign			88	71	14	173	
PROW - Bridge			38	114	13	165	
PROW - Gate/Barrier			77	50	25	152	
Trail - Tree dangerous/fallen		10	81	32	8	131	
PROW - Misleading sign			64	45	6	115	
Trail- Obstruction -e.g. building works, fences, ditches, locked gate		2	41	43	5	91	
PROW - Flooded Path			29	33	7	69	
PROW - Stile damaged/too/high/other			26	40	2	68	
Trail - Gate/Barrier		6	25	32	5	68	
Trail - Illegal / Vehicle Use		5	31	18	4	58	
PROW - Illegal / Vehicle Use			21	22	12	55	
		1	23	17	5	46	
PROW - Animal(s)			19	16	8	43	
Trail - Bridge		2	11	25	4	42	
Trail - Steps damaged/other		1	32	4	2	39	
Trail - Misleading sign	1		14	11	9	35	
Trail - Crops/ploughing affecting footpath			12	21	1	34	
PROW - Steps damaged/other			14	13	4	31	
Trail - Flooded Path		1	9	11	2	23	
Trail - Animal(s)			9	5	2	16	
Total		1	79	2981	2444	649	6154

Report Date Range

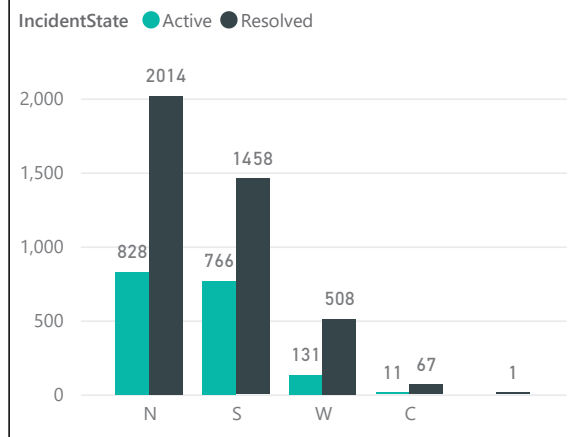
Last 2 Years

📅 09/03/2022 - 08/03/2024

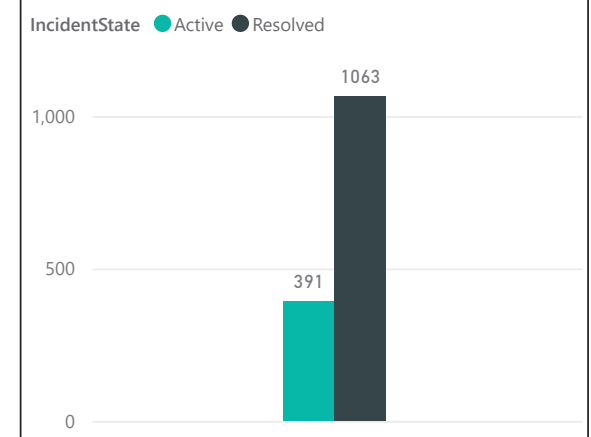
PROW and Trail defects received by month



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Trails Defects by Status



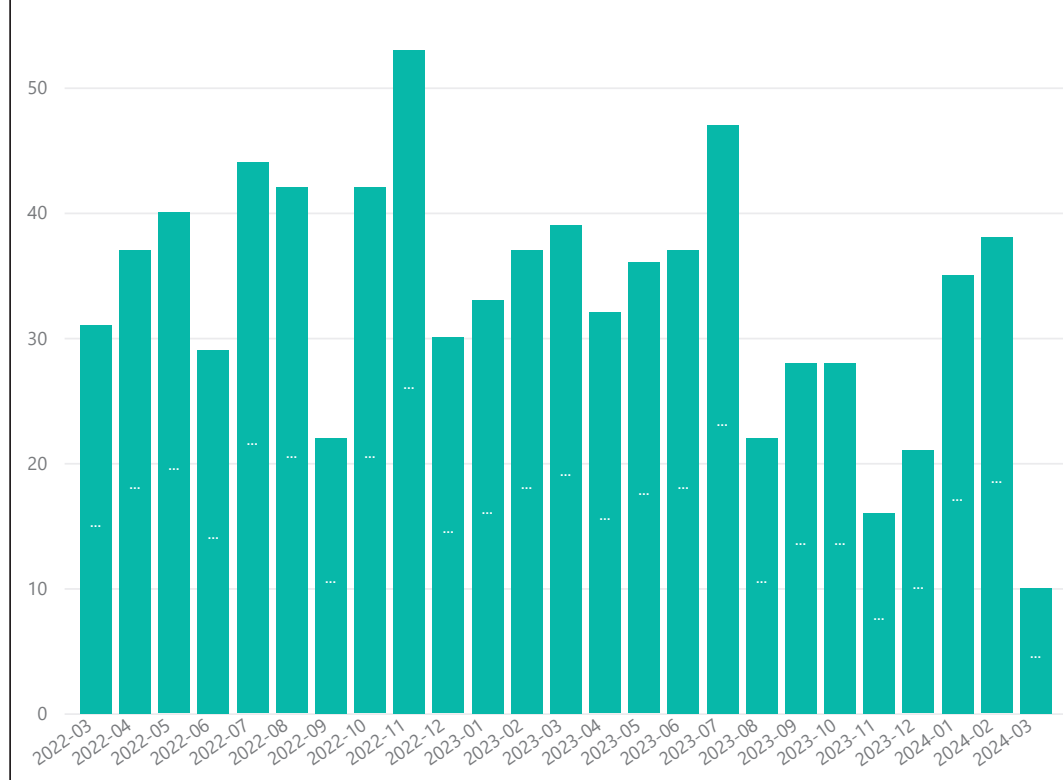
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Volume of PROW/Trail FAQs received by month



Report Date Range

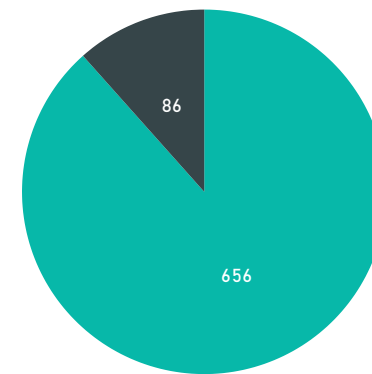
Last [v] 2 [v] Years [v]
 09/03/2022 - 08/03/2024

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PROW/Trail FAQs received by Status

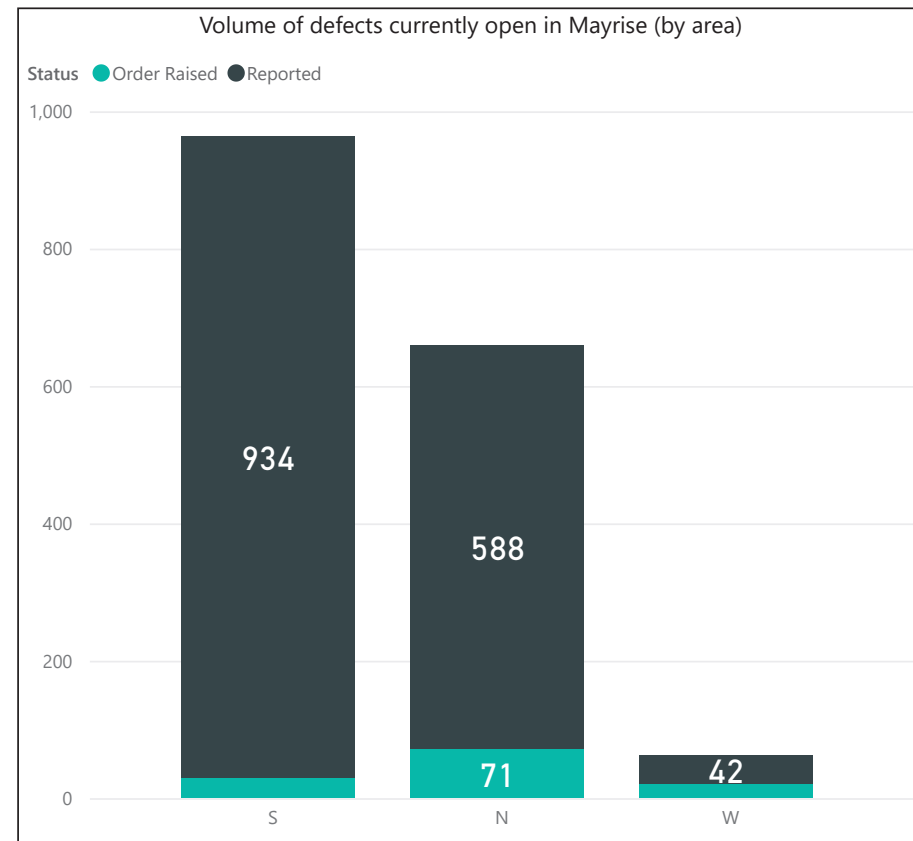
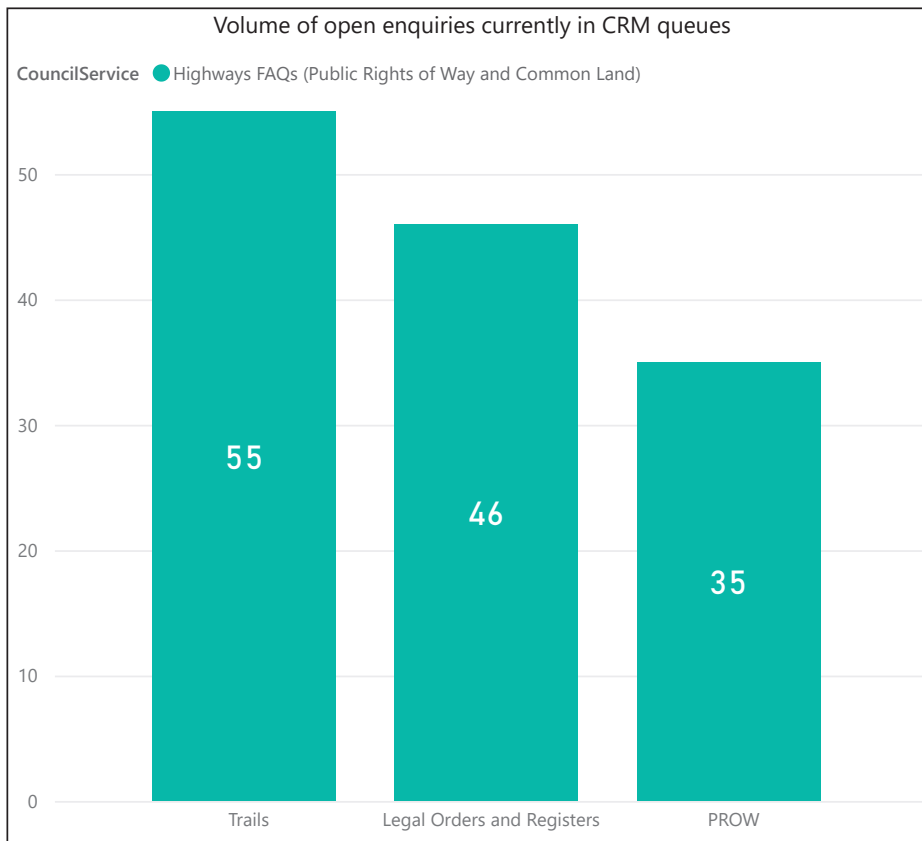
IncidentState ● Resolved ● Active



Active Enquiries

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Select time period

CREATEDATE

Last Months

📅 09/12/2023 - 08/03/2024

Average of Reported to Inspected Days

LEVEL2	Average of NCC_PI_Days_Reported-Inspected
PROW	10.88
TRLS	10.21
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Average of report to Repair Days

LEVEL2	Average of NCCReportRepairDays
PROW	28.53
TRLS	21.14
Total	26.89

Norfolk Local Access Forum

Item No:

Report Title: Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning

Date of Meeting: 3rd April 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Eric Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste)

Responsible Director: Steve Miller, Director of Culture & Heritage

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: NA

Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member

A table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk (including Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)), which impact on public rights of way has been made available to the NLA Forum by NCC Environment Team (Appendix 1).

Recommendations:

- 1. To note the table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 Major infrastructure projects (including Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)) in Norfolk carry implications for the public rights of way (PRoW) network.
- 1.2 A table of major infrastructure projects which impact of PRoW has been listed by NCC Environment team and made available to the NLA Forum (Appendix 1)

2. Proposal

- 2.1 That the NLA Forum notes the table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk.

3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1 See background and proposals

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1 See background and FAQs here

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/frequently-asked-questions/#pre-app>

4.2 The Local Access Forums Regulations

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/268/contents/made>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>

5. Alternative Options

5.1 none

6. Financial Implications

6.1 None as a result of this report

7. Resource Implications

7.1 **Staff:**

N/A

7.2 **Property:**

N/A

7.3 **IT:**

N/A

8. Other Implications

8.1 **Legal Implications:**

N/A

8.2 **Human Rights Implications:**

N/A

8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):**

N/A

8.4 **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):**

N/A

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

N/A

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

N/A

8.7 Any Other Implications:

N/A

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 N/A

10. Select Committee Comments

10.1 N/A

11. Recommendations

1. To note the table of major infrastructure projects in Norfolk.

12. Background Papers

12.1 N/A

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

Officer name: Stephen Faulkner

Telephone no.

Email: stephen.faulkner@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Appendix 1 (Major Infrastructure Projects and Planning report)

Summary of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and other Major Strategic Projects- March 2024

See also <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/strategic-planning-and-infrastructure/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects>

Summary of NSIP Proposals and other Major Projects		
	Proposal (Applicant)	Status / Note
1. Offshore Projects		
1.1	<p>Hornsea Project Three – Offshore (2.4 GW) (supplying up to 2 million household with electricity) Wind farm and ancillary onshore grid connection (Orsted);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landfall Weybourne; • Booster Station at Little Barningham (see update below as may no longer be needed); • Grid connection at Norwich Main 	<p>Applicant: Orsted (Danish)</p> <p>For further information: https://hornseaproject3.co.uk/ https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/hornsea-project-three-offshore-wind-farm/</p> <p>Onshore works have commenced. There have been several “flooding issues” associated with works in North Norfolk and at the Norwich Main Substation site. These are currently being investigated by LLFA; EA; Highway Authority and the relevant Planning Authorities</p> <p>Hornsea 3 community Benefit Fund will be available soon (2023/24), in the meantime applications to the East Coast Community Fund by communities affected by the cabling route are encouraged: https://grantscape.org.uk/fund/eastcoastcommunityfund/</p>
1.2	<p>Norfolk Vanguard - Offshore Wind Farm and ancillary onshore grid connection (Vattenfall) (1.8 GW) (supplying up to 1.3 million household with electricity)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landfall at Happisburgh; • Grid Connection at Necton 	<p>Applicant: Vattenfall (Swedish)</p> <p>For further information: https://group.vattenfall.com/uk/what-we-do/our-projects/vattenfallinnorfolk/norfolk-vanguard https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/norfolk-vanguard/</p> <p>The Secretary of State (BEIS) has re-determined the Norfolk Vanguard proposal and awarded a Development Consent Order (DCO) on 11 February 2022.</p>

		<p>Construction has started September 2023, with ducting to be installed from March 2024 (Necton to River Wensum).</p> <p>Community Benefit Fund expected https://group.vattenfall.com/uk/what-we-do/our-projects/vattenfallinnorfolk/norfolk-zone-community-benefit-fund</p> <p>In December 2023 Vattenfall announced they were selling both Norfolk Vanguard and Norfolk Boreas to RWE and that the Norfolk Boreas Project would be re-instated.</p>
1.3	<p>Norfolk Boreas (1.8 GW) Offshore Wind Farm and ancillary onshore grid connection (Vattenfall)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landfall at Happisburgh; • Grid Connection at Necton 	<p>Applicant: Vattenfall (Swedish)</p> <p>For further information: https://group.vattenfall.com/uk/what-we-do/our-projects/vattenfallinnorfolk/norfolk-boreas https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/norfolk-boreas/</p> <p>A decision on the application for a Development Consent Order for Norfolk Boreas was taken on 10 December 2021 and has now been issued.</p> <p>In December 2023 Vattenfall announced they were selling both Norfolk Vanguard and Norfolk Boreas to RWE and that the Norfolk Boreas Project would be re-instated.</p>
1.4	<p>Extension to Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Wind Farms (Single NSIP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension to existing windfarms owned by Norwegian company Equinor. Total capacity (new) 720 MW (0.72 GW); • Landfall tbc (Weybourne or Bacton); • Grid Connection – Norwich Main; • HVAC technology – no need for Booster station (too small output). 	<p>Applicant: Equinor (Norwegian)</p> <p>For further information: https://www.equinor.com/en/how-and-why/impact-assessments/dudgeon-and-sheringham-extension-projects.html https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/sheringham-and-dudgeon-extension-projects</p> <p>Secretary of State’s decision has been delayed and is now expected on 17 April 2024</p>

2. Onshore Projects		
Highway Projects		
2.1	<p>A47 Blofield to North Burlingham Dualling Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start date January – March 2022-23; • End date 2024-25; • Cost £50-£100 million <p>The project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver 2.6 KM of dual carriageway 	<p>Applicant: National Highways For further information:</p> <p>https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east/a47-blofield-to-north-burlingham/</p> <p>https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/a47-blofield-to-north-burlingham/</p> <p>Planning consent has been granted to proceed with the works to the A47 between Blofield and North Burlingham.</p> <p>A legal case heard in July 2003 had challenged the decisions from the Secretary of State for Transport to grant development consent orders (DCOs) for this and two other A47 improvement schemes near Norwich. The High Court dismissed the claimant’s argument.</p> <p>However, on 18 October, the Court of Appeal granted the claimant a right to have his appeal heard.</p> <p>A one-day hearing was held on 16 January 2024 and on 22 February the Court of Appeal Judges dismissed the appeal.</p>
2.2	<p>A47 / A11 Thickthorn Junction Improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of works Jan - March 2023; • Open to Traffic 2024/2025. • Cost- £50-£100 million <p>The project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help relieve congestion at Thickthorn junction by providing two new free-flowing slip roads that will connect the A47 with the A11. The new slip roads will re-route traffic away 	<p>Applicant: National Highways</p> <p>For further information:</p> <p>https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east/a47-thickthorn-junction-near-norwich</p> <p>A decision on the application for a Development Consent Order for A47 – A11 Thickthorn Junction was taken on 14 October 2022 and has now been issued.</p> <p>Start of works June 2023 - delayed;</p> <p>Open to Traffic 2024/2025.</p>

	<p>from the junction and flow it under new underpasses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove the existing footbridge over the A47 and a new footbridge for walkers, cyclists and horse riders provided. 	<p>Timetable is awaiting confirmation following the decision of the appeal.</p> <p>(See above A47 Update from National Highways on the legal challenge.)</p>
2.3	<p>A47 North Tuddenham to Easton Dualling Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start of works Jan-March 22-23 End Date 2024 / 2025 Cost £100 - £250 million <p>The scheme will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a new dual carriageway to replace the existing single carriageway between North Tuddenham and Easton. Build two new junctions to better connect the side roads into the new dual carriageway, the first will be at Berry's Lane and Wood Lane and the second is at Blind Lane and Taverham Road. Remove the existing roundabout at Easton to create safer routes for walkers, cyclists and other vulnerable users. 	<p>Applicant: National Highways</p> <p>For further information: https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east/a47-north-tuddenham-to-easton-improvements9km</p> <p>Development Consent Order (DCO) granted.</p> <p>Start of works Jan-March 2023 – involving vegetation removal; End Date 2024 / 2025 Cost £100 - £250 million</p> <p>Timetable subject to legal challenge (see above A47 Update from National Highways on the legal challenge.)</p>
2.4	<p>A47 Vauxhall Junction (not currently a NSIP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start Date 2023-24 End Date 2024-25 Cost £25- £50 million <p>Proposals under development.</p> <p>The scheme will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make journeys quicker, safer and more reliable, allow for increased future 	<p>Applicant: National Highways</p> <p>For further information: https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east/a47-vauxhall-roundabout/</p>

	<p>traffic and help grow the local economy (Great Yarmouth)</p>	
2.5	<p>Third River Crossing – Great Yarmouth (not an NSIP)</p> <p>The scheme will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce congestion and improve access to the A47 	<p>Applicant: Norfolk County Council</p> <p>Further information: https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/major-projects-and-improvement-plans/great-yarmouth/third-river-crossing</p> <p>DCO granted on 24 September 2020 by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>The bridge was opened for river users in November 2023, and opened to the public on 1 February 2024.</p>
2.6	<p>Norwich Western Link (NWL) (not an NSIP)</p> <p>The scheme will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a new 3.8 mile dual carriageway road connecting the western end of Broadland Northway to the A47 trunk road. 	<p>Applicant: Norfolk County Council</p> <p>Further information: https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/major-projects-and-improvement-plans/norwich/norwich-western-link/about-the-norwich-western-link</p> <p>NCC Cabinet agreed the appointment of the contractor in June 2021.</p> <p>An update was taken to cabinet on 4 December 2023 (https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/2055/Committee/169/Default.aspx)</p> <p>The report confirmed an updated budget and timescale for delivery (main construction 2026-2029) and it was agreed to submit the planning application as soon as possible (early 2024).</p>
3. Other Projects (not highways related)		

<p>3.1</p>	<p>The Medworth Project – Waste to Energy</p> <p>Energy from waste combined heat and power facility generating electricity and steam on land at Algores Way, Wisbech.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main site is located wholly within the Cambridgeshire district of Fenland. NCC is considered a host authority as the proposed grid connections will be in Norfolk. • Grid connection will be in Norfolk to Walpole sub-station via an over-head power line 132 kv 	<p>Applicant: MVV Environment Ltd.</p> <p>Further information: https://www.mvv-medworthchp.co.uk/about-the-project https://www.mvv-medworthchp.co.uk/news/ https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/medworth-energy-from-waste-combined-heat-and-power-facility/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application was received by the Planning Inspectorate on Thursday 7 July 2022 and accepted for examination. Examination opened on 21 February 2023 and closed 21.8.2023 • Details of the Preliminary Meeting TBC • Public Rights of Way plan available here • Targeted start construction 2024; and complete by 2026. <p>Secretary of State granted development consent on 20 February 2024.</p>
<p>3.2</p>	<p>Norwich to Tilbury (previously East Anglia Green) - National Grid</p> <p>The East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) project is a proposal to build a new high voltage network reinforcement between Norwich, Bramford and Tilbury.</p>	<p>Applicant: National Grid</p> <p>Further information: https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/norwich-to-tilbury/</p> <p>Interactive map https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ba2cbd9ac64c4723847fae8637d50df3/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Soft launch” of the project on 26 January 2022; • Non-Statutory Consultation on the Preferred Route Corridor ran to 16 June 2022 • Statutory Consultation (S42) – April 2024; • Statutory Consultation Submission DCO – Q1 2-25 ; • Examination and Decision 2025-2026 • Construction starts 2027 • Fully Operational from 2031

		NCC response to non-statutory consultation(September 2023): CMIS > Calendar of Meetings
3.3	Grimsby to Walpole – National Grid Proposed new 400 kV overhead line and substation at Walpole	Proposal includes a new stand-alone Substation located at Walpole comprising 12.6 Ha site . There would be approximately 2 – 3 KM of 400kV overhead line entering Norfolk from the Lincolnshire border. Non-statutory Consultation was held on 18 January 2024 for 8 week period. Further detail can be viewed: https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/grimsby-to-walpole
3.4	Eastern Green Links 3 and 4 National Grid project	These two offshore projects comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EGL 3 – HVDC marine cable from Scotland to Lincs (554 km). Landfall the cable buried and would link to a new convertor station at Walpole • EGL 4 – HVDC marine cable from Scotland to Lincs (450 km). Landfall the cable buried and would link to a new convertor station at Walpole • Convertor station sites 19.2 Ha (for both EGL 3 AND 4). Non-statutory Consultation expected in April. https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/eastern-green-link-3-and-4
3.5	Fens Reservoir New Reservoir North of Chatteris	Applicant: Anglian Water and Cambridge Water Water transfer infrastructure expected in Norfolk covering new pipelines and service reservoir (TBC). Second round Non statutory Consultation expected March 2024

		https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/WA010004
3.6	Larkshall Mill Aggregate Manufacturing and Carbon Capture Facility	The application has been withdrawn by the applicant