Appendix 2

Hierarchy of Routes - Public Rights of Way Management and Maintenance

Proposal

Identify and prioritise a network that delivers maximum benefit and can be effectively managed and maintained with the same (or similar) resources.

The proposal would allow YDNPA resources to be focussed upon higher priority routes, whilst continuing to manage and maintain other routes outside of this 'core network'.

In reality, YDNPA is probably delivering in this manner already, with major resources often allocated to those routes that would likely be considered as being in 'Priority' or 'Adequate' categories.

Hierarchy

Set out below is a suggested approach for establishing a hierarchy of routes to act as a tool for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority in managing and maintaining public rights of way:

Priority level routes
• All routes actively promoted by the YDNPA (including 'Miles without Stiles', 'Access for All' routes, walking app and website) • National Trails (including Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway and Coast to Coast Path) • Regional Routes (recognised in 'Special Qualities, Special Experiences' strategy) • Key links between communities • Key links into the National Park • Routes identified through development of an Active Travel Plan • Usage (High)
Adequate level routes
• Important right of way regularly used by local communities/general users • Usage (Medium)
Limited level routes
• Any right of way that does not fall within above categories (Priority or Adequate). These would be likely to include remote, cul de sac, duplicate and infrequently used routes (Low)

It is currently difficult to split time/expenditure into these levels (Priority, Adequate, Limited) without doing some formal recording of Ranger time spent performing delegated statutory duties on the PRoW network.

An approximation based on discussions within the Ranger teams initially suggests: 60% Priority, 30% Adequate, 10% Limited. However, more detailed work would be required to establish a more accurate assessment, as would a mapping exercise to place paths in the three categories.

This could be completed to coincide with the review of both the current GIS database for PRoW and the 5 Year Maintenance Plan.

Option

Description	***Comment***
Create a hierarchy of routes as a management tool to aid allocation of resources	• Would enable resources to focus on a core network of public rights of way. • YDNPA will need to conduct a full mapping review to categories all routes in the National Park. This will identify the core network that resources will focus on. • Clear definitions of Priority, Adequate and Limited will need to be defined. • Clear definitions of 'Levels of Use' will need to be defined • It will be necessary to manage the expectations of landowners who have previously benefitted from a responsive service for those with works required in the Limited and possibly Adequate category. • Communicating with landowners will be essential in raising the profile of their responsibilities in relation to PRoW. • YDNPA still have maintenance control over the whole network and can therefore influence 'Ease of Use' outcomes. • Consider allocation of resources in relation to a potential sliding scale of contributions if internal or external factors require a change to service delivery in the future.

Conclusion

There are benefits to creating a management tool based on a hierarchy of routes and this should be explored thoroughly, as the current system of managing and maintaining the network may not remain sustainable in the long term.