

Yorkshire Dales Access Forum –2 June 2020

Public Rights of Way Annual Report 2019/20

Purpose of the report

1. To receive comments from the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum (YDAF) on the Rights of Way Annual Report for the period April 2019 to March 2020, prior to submission to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

Background

2. The annual report (**Appendix 1**) identifies progress made on public rights of way maintenance against our own targets in the Corporate Plan. This work is undertaken through delegation agreements with Cumbria and North Yorkshire County Councils.

Recommendation

3. YDAF members are asked to comment on the Rights of Way Annual report before consideration by the National Park Authority at their meeting on 30 June 2020.

Alan Hulme
Head of Park Management

26 May 2019

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

**Public Rights of Way
Delegated Highway Authority**

Annual Report 2019/20

May 2020

Introduction

1. For the period of this report, April 2019 to March 2020, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (the Authority) had delegated Highway Authority responsibilities for maintenance of 2,608 km of public rights of way (footpaths, bridleways, byways open to all traffic, and restricted byways) within the National Park area. The current Delegation Agreements are with North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and Cumbria County Council (CCC) for maintenance of 1898 km and 710 km respectively. In total there are 2,623 km of public rights of way in the National Park. There are a further 15 km of public rights of way in the Lancashire area of the National Park, which Lancashire County Council (LCC) currently continue to maintain but discussions have commenced on reaching a similar Delegation Agreement with LCC as those with NYCC and CCC.
2. The Delegation Agreements cover a broad range of functions that allow for the management of public paths on the ground. These functions can be summarised as:
 - Signposting of public paths
 - The maintenance and improvement of public paths
 - The maintenance of river crossings
 - Traffic Regulation Orders and Temporary Closure Orders
 - Enforcement and protection of public rights.
3. The Authority has taken on these responsibilities because it recognises that a well-maintained rights of way network is fundamental to the achievement of its statutory purposes, particularly its second purpose - promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park.

About this Report

4. This report identifies the key achievements for the year 2019/20. It considers the Authority's corporate actions, targets and progress relating to the following areas:
 - General maintenance
 - River crossings
 - Major projects
 - Path Orders and Definitive Map
 - Pennine National Trails Partnership Management
 - Unclassified Unsurfaced Roads (North Yorkshire)
 - Flood damage
 - COVID19 Coronavirus

Key Achievements 2019/20

Public Rights of Way Maintenance

5. During 2019/20 the following maintenance work was undertaken:

- 1,298 improvements to rights of way infrastructure: stiles, gates and signposts;
- 76 river crossings and 5 sets of stepping stones maintained or replaced;
- 3km of engineered paths maintained;
- 1km of new engineered paths created.

6. A total of **£404,322** of external funding was secured for rights of way projects in the National Park. The breakdown is as follows:

Value	Description
£ 66,232	National Trails Partnership Manager and Lead Role;
£ 23,231	Pennine Way Ranger;
£ 2,020	Pennine Way, maintenance;
£ 31,221	Pennine Bridleway Officer;
£ 5,600	Pennine Bridleway, Clouds Lane surfacing;
£ 1,350	Pennine Bridleway Hell Gill bridge survey
£ 2,092	Pennine Bridleway, maintenance;
£ 31,073	Three Peaks Project (Friends Scheme, merchandise and donations);
£ 1,134	Donations for various works Western Dales;
£ 14,480	Holiday Fellowship, Coast to Coast, Swaledale;
£ 3,960	Donations for various works Northern Dales;
£ 6,472	Donation YDMT Linton and Drebley Stepping Stones;
£ 600	Donation Dales Way Association:
£ 9,635	Path Orders;
£ 42,172	Works to Unsurfaced Unclassified Country Roads, (NYCC);
£ 13,050	Stories in Stone, Ingleborough walkers shelter and topography project
£150,000	NYCC contribution to flood recovery works for 2020 and 2021
£404,322	Total

Pennine Way

7. Total funding secured for the Pennine Way, for 2019/20, was £25,251:

- £25,251 for Pennine Way Ranger post, including general maintenance works to stiles, gates and river crossings;

Pennine Bridleway

8. Total funding secured for the Pennine Bridleway, for 2019/20, was £38,171:

- £31,510 for Pennine Bridleway Officer post including general maintenance works for stiles, gates and river crossings.
- £5,600 for surfacing repairs to Clouds Lane, Ravenstonedale.
- £1,350 for bridge survey of Hell Gill bridge in Mallerstang.

Pennine National Trails Partnership

9. During 2019/20, the Authority was the Lead Partner for the Pennine National Trails partnership and will continue performing the role for the foreseeable future.
10. Functions of the Lead Partner include to:
- Accept the grant offer from Natural England and claim and receive payments;
 - Have an oversight of delivery and report to Natural England about how our financial support has been used by the partnership and what has been; achieved;
 - Ensure that partners have the opportunity to participate in the management and development of the maintenance of the trails.
11. Over the last year the partnership has met on 2 occasions between April 2019 to March 2020, and the Authority through the partnership has:
- Distributed 23 grants to 10 different partners.
 - Total expenditure across the Trails of £558,150.
 - Grant funding from NE of £329,878, with £228,271 secured in match (41%).
 - Significant investment from Derbyshire County Council's Local Transport Plan towards works on the Pennine Bridleway, contributed £85,150.
 - The Spine Race organisers donated £3,000 towards works in the Peak District.
 - A potential underspend of £17,500 (due none delivery of a complex project in Durham) was avoided at short notice, by allocating grant to another partner project that was ready for delivery.
12. The Authority received £51,232 (100%) grant for the Partnership Manager post and £15,000 income for hosting of the Partnership Manager and its role as Lead Partner.
13. In 2019 an assessment of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's role as Lead Partner for the Pennine National Trails Partnership, (this extends beyond the National Park boundary), and to identify lessons learnt was carried out. The results were presented to Members of the Audit and Review Committee in Nov 2019.

Three Peaks

14. During 2019/20 implementation of the 3 Peaks Project including carrying out of Phase I of the Ingleborough Access Project with the creation of a 180m of new engineered route through Sulber Nick.
15. The Three Peaks project brought in sufficient income to cover the cost of the Three Peaks Ranger (£31,073) plus funding for additional works. The numbers of Friends (386) and Corporate Members (115) have remained constant during the year. :

Path Orders and Definitive Map

16. During 2019/20 progress has continued on Public Path Orders. The following Orders were completed by the Authority:

Public Path Orders:

Cumbria	Order Process
Combe House, Dent, Diversion Highways Act	Confirmed
Low Stennerskeugh, Diversion Highways Act	Confirmed
West Clint, Diversion Highways Act	Confirmed
Dockra, Diversion Town & Countryside Planning Act	Confirmed
North Yorkshire	
Tossbeck Farm, Diversion Highways	Confirmed

Creation Agreements

North Yorkshire	Order Process
Creation at Arcow Quarry	Sealed

Temporary and Emergency Closure Orders

North Yorkshire/Cumbria	Order Process
20 Emergency Closures	Completed
22 Temporary Closure for 6 months	Completed
9 Further extensions on current Temporary Closure	On-going

Resources

17. In 2019/20 there were 8.2 full time equivalent (FTE) members of staff working on rights of way maintenance, and 1 Rights of Way Officer undertaking Path Orders. The Authority's rights of way maintenance budget was £255k.

18. In addition, there were a further 2.8 FTE externally funded posts. These were:

Pennine Way Ranger (1.0 FTE)

The Authority received 63% funding from Natural England for the Pennine Way Ranger.

Pennine Bridleway Project Officer (1.0 FTE)

The Authority received 63% funding for their maintenance role.

Three Peaks Ranger (0.8 FTE)

The Three Peaks Ranger post was funded through income and donations generated by the project during 2019/20 with £31,073 collected through the Friends and Corporate Members, merchandise and event donations.

19. The Authority is also supported by the Dales Volunteers and other volunteers. In total 1,600 days of practical work and 510 days of surveying were undertaken on the rights of way network, by volunteers, this year. This equates to approximately 10 full time staff equivalents; this is an increase on the previous year of one more full time member of staff.

Corporate Plan 2019/20

20. The National Park Authority's Corporate Plan, 2019/20, sets out a programme of works and measures to assist in achieving the aims of the National Park Management Plan.

Specific performance indicators were identified for 2019/20:

Performance Indicators	15/16 Actual	16/17 Actual	17/18 Actual	18/19 Actual	19/20 Target	19/20 Actual
% of public rights of way that are signposted where they leave a metalled road (old National Park area only)	(98.2%)	(96.2%)	(95%)	(97%)	97%	97%
% of rights of way that are easy to use but may not follow the definitive line (old National Park area only)	(88%)	(88%)	(85%)	(90%)	86%	90%

21. Specific Corporate Plan actions for 2019/20 were:

Action	NYCC In the park	CCC In the park	Total	Achieved
Determine whether Lancashire County Council will provide the Authority with a scheme of delegation for rights of way in the Lancashire part of the National Park				Yes
Carry out engineering works to 510m of eroded routes, including new surfacing of the Coast to Coast route Ravenseat, Muker and Occupation Road, Dent	0.5km	0.5km	1km	Yes
Repair 2.5km of previously engineered routes, including significant works on the ridge footpath, Whernside Summit, and Threshfield Moor Bridleway		3km	3km	Yes
Replace 4 bridges and carry out repairs to Nipe Lane, Stepping Stones, Thornton Rust and the approach to Linton Stepping Stones				Yes
Maintain existing roadside signs and erect 15 new roadside signs so that the number of places where a right of way is signposted from a metalled road reaches 97%				Yes
Repair stiles and gates identified in parish path surveys so that 92% remain in satisfactory condition				Yes
Complete 66% of unopposed path order applications within 9 months from the date of receipt				Yes
In conjunction with Natural England implement the first phase of the Ingleborough Access Project				Yes
Submit a detailed bid to Defra for funding to restore those rights of way and footbridges that were damaged by the 2019 Swaledale Floods.				Yes

Performance Indicators by area

22. The table below breaks down the performance indicators further. The individual county figures are given in relation to the network of rights of way within each individual area. (Results are taken from the Yorkshire Dales Access Recording Database, rather than field survey, and for the whole National Park area unless stated).

Performance Indicator	Target	NYCC In the park	CCC In the park	LCC In the park	YDNPA
% of Rights of Way that are Easy to Use by members of the public (but may not follow the definitive line) (Field Survey)	90%	90%	90%	100%	90%
% of Rights of Way that are signposted where they leave a road	97%	98%	96%	93%	97%
% of infrastructure - stiles gates and signs in 'condition 1'	92%	95%	93%	74%	94%
Performance Indicator	Target	NYCC In the park	CCC In the park	LCC In the park	YDNPA
% of rights of way that are accessible for people with limited ability	196km				198km

Ease of Use results

23. The Authority's 2019/20 objective for Rights of Way maintenance is based on the new National Park Management Plan 2019/24. The objective for 2019/20 was 86%:

Target Benefit a wide variety of users by raising the standard of all public rights of way so that 90% are 'easy to use' by 2023.

24. In 2013 the English National Park Authorities Joint Improvement Group (JIG) agreed to collect one indicator, across all the English National Parks. The indicator for 'Ease of Use' for the English National Parks is:

- % Percentage of rights of way that are 'Easy to Use' but may not follow the exact definitive line.

25. Each year's survey selects, randomly, a number of paths making up 5% of the overall network. In total, approximately 137 km were surveyed (89km NYCC, 47km CCC and 1km LCC) in the National Park in 2019. The 'Ease of Use' figure is then calculated from the length of routes which pass the 'Ease of Use' definitions as agreed by the English National Parks Joint Improvement Group.

2019 Ease of Use Results	NYCC In the Park	CCC In the Park	LCC In the park	YDNPA
% Percentage of rights of way that are 'Easy to Use' but may not follow the exact definitive line in the National Park	90%	90%	100%	90%

Signing

Target. Maintain at 97% the proportion of public rights of way that are signposted where they leave a metalled road in 2019/20.

26. The Authority's 2019/20 objective for 'signing' is based on the whole of the national park and the 5 Year Maintenance Plan 2019/24 and Corporate Action Plan targets. The calculations below give a true picture of the situation across the National Park.

27. The Access Recording System indicates that there were 2,912 places in the National Park requiring a signpost at the roadside. There were 2,833 (97%) actually in situ with 79 (3%) missing. During 2019/20, 172 directional signs were replaced or repaired where they leave metalled roads, indicating designation (footpath/bridleway), distance and destination. In addition, 144 signposts have been replaced or repaired indicating direction, distance or status along public rights of way in the National Park.

28. Signposts from a Metalled Road based on the Yorkshire Dales National Park Access Recording System:

	Total	Present	Missing	% in situ
YDNPA	2912	2833	79	97%
NYCC	2068	2033	35	98%
CCC	815	773	42	95%
LCC	29	27	2	93%

General Maintenance

29. The following section provides a brief breakdown of the main areas of works carried out, during 2019/20, in relation to the maintenance of stiles, gates and signage along the rights of way network.

Infrastructure

Type	Total improved 2019/20
Ladder Stile	25
Timber Step Stile	85
Stone Step Stile	124
Stone Squeeze Stile	191
Fieldgate > 5ft	231
Handgate < 5ft	139
Kissing Gate	18
Boardwalk	4
Signpost (directional on route)	144
Waymarker post	103
Information Sign	14
Roadside Signpost Present	172
Steps	25
Culvert	23
Total	1,298

River Crossings (includes bridges and stepping stones)

TYPE	Cumbria CC	NYCC	YDNPA	
	repair/replaced/ erected	repair/replaced/ erected	Total improved	Total in Park
Bridges	14	62	76	913
Stepping Stones	0	5	5	29
Total	14	67		

Miles without Stiles (access for those with limited ability)

30. Wherever an existing right of way is being maintained, every opportunity to replace difficult barriers with more accessible features will be considered, e.g. replacing a ladder stile with a gap or gate. The less remote a route, the more stringently this criterion will be applied.
31. We will also continue to measure the two 'access for all' indicators against very strict criteria as laid out by Natural England. This is based on the Countryside Agency 'Zone A' national standard which is equivalent to BT Access for All Standard 3, that is routes designed for wheelchair use (1st indicator) rather than more challenging routes capable of being used by wheelchair users with strong pusher (2nd indicator).
32. Over the year we have continued to make progress by increasing the length of rights of way that are accessible for people with limited ability to 198km, an increase of 18km. We have continued to reduce physical barriers along rights of way by removing stiles and replacing with gates. There has also been some initial work to identify and test, practically, routes by less abled visitors in the new area of the National Park at Smardale, but unfortunately the Smardale viaduct is now currently closed.

Major Projects

33. Under the Delegation Schemes the Authority has responsibility for the surface condition of rights of way. Each year projects are identified, by Rangers, for specific works which either improve 'Ease of Use' or enhance a route. The projects listed below are those with a capital expenditure greater than £1,000, and in most cases significantly more.

Route	Works Undertaken
North Yorkshire County Council	
New Engineering Works	
Hebden Suspension Bridge, Dalesway, Thorpe	26m flagging
Skuff Road, Burnsall	30m aggregate surfacing
Sulber Nick, Three Peaks, Horton in Ribb	70m grass/gravel surfacing
	90m flagging
Ravenseat, Coast to Coast, Keld	180m flagging
River Ure, Hawes	75m flagging
Snaizeholme, Hawes	75m flagging
TOTAL	546m
North Yorkshire County Council	
Maintain Previously Engineered Routes	
Bruntskar, Three Peaks, Ingleton	335m stonepitching
Long Lane, Horton in Ribblesdale	100m aggregate surfacing
Threshfield Bridleway	800m aggregate surfacing
Dalesway, Buckden/Hubberholme	90m aggregate surfacing
Dalesway, Grassington	100m aggregate surfacing
Dalesway, Burnsall	90m aggregate surfacing
Bolton Abbey	250m aggregate surfacing
Dubbing Garth Lane, Grinton	200m aggregate surfacing & drainage
Langthwaite Bridleway, Arkengarthdale	400m aggregate surfacing
Park Field, Reeth	100m aggregate surfacing & drainage
Freeholder Wood, ysgarth	100m aggregate surfacing
Stake Road, BOAT, Bainbridge	400m aggregate surfacing
TOTAL	2,965
Cumbria County Council	
New Engineering Works	
Occupation Road, Dent	300m surfacing & drainage
Town Head Lane, Orton	70m flagging
Underley Estate, Kirkby Lonsdale	115m aggregate surfacing
TOTAL	485m

Unsurfaced Unclassified Roads

34. In the National Park there is a significant network of unsurfaced unclassified roads (UUR) these routes often provide connections into and within the existing network of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs). This network consists of over 120km of routes that are available to a wide range of users. However, these are not recorded on the Definitive Map and are therefore not part of the delegation agreements with NYCC or CCC. They are however, recorded on the 'list of streets' which the county councils have responsibility for maintaining.
35. Over the years the Authority has worked in an ad-hoc manner (mainly with NYCC) on a number of these routes because of their significance. Last year a more formal working relationship was established with the appointment of a UUR Officer at NYCC. This has led to the Authority being given a second year of funding for works to help maintain these routes, this year (2019/20) and is likely to continue in future years for routes across the county. During 2019/20 the following projects, funded by NYCC, have taken place in the National Park at a total cost of **£42,172**.

Work Programme 2019 – 20

UUR Code	UUR Name	Location	Description or work
U230/9/30	Marsett - Stalling Busk	Marsett Revetment wall	Repair / rebuild failing revetment block wall
U7028/9/90	West Cam Road	Ten End	Surfacing & drainage
U255/9/70	Dubbing Garth Lane	Multiple sites	Surfacing & drainage
U254/9/30	Low Lane	Multiple sites	Surfacing & drainage
U429/9/40	Fremington Edge	Quarry	Installation of cut off drains, side ditches, minor surfacing
U232/1/60	Stake Road	Multiple sites	Surfacing & drainage
U2250/2/80	Moor Lane, Grassington	Grassington	Surfacing & drainage
U8037/9/70	Moor Head Lane (BOAT & UUR)	Stainforth	Surfacing & drainage
	Deerstons Bridge	Beamsley	Replace footbridge rebuild abutments
	Moor Lane	Long Preston	Minor surfacing and drainage works

Flood Damage

36. On the 30 July 2019 a significant cloud burst occurred resulting in 113mm (4.45inches) falling in just 3 hours in the north east corner of the park. This caused significant damage around Arkengarthdale, Reeth and Grinton. The following is a full list of the works identified since the initial flood event.

PARISH	NAME	LENGTH	DESCRIPTON
Arkengarthdale	Arkle Beck, Langthwaite	14m	Footbridge.
Arkengarthdale	Slei Gill lower	10m	Footpath
Arkengarthdale	Green Bank/Wood House Bridge	12m	Footbridge
Arkengarthdale	Low Faggergill, Whaw	14m	Footbridge
Arkengarthdale	Shepherd's Lodge bridge.	10m	Footbridge
Arkengarthdale	Slei Gill upper	30m	Landslip
Arkengarthdale	Riverside path	130 m	Riverside Damage
Arkengarthdale	Scar House Footbridge,	3.6m	Footbridge
Arkengarthdale	Langthwaite to Fremington BW	750m	Surface Damage
Arkengarthdale	Eskeleth		Stone Stiles Damaged
Arkengarthdale	Faggergill	3m	Culvert Damage
Arkengarthdale	East Arkengarthdale Estate	15m	Culvert Damage
Arkengarthdale	Danby Lead Level	40m	Landslip
Arkengarthdale	Scarhouse Wood	20m	Landslip
Ellerton Abbey	Juniper Gill		Footbridge
Grinton	Cogden Hall bridge, Lawrence Allison	9m	Stone Arch Bridge
Grinton	footpath below the Vicarage	80m	Riverside Damage
Grinton	Grinton Smelt Mill, Grinton Estate	100m+	Surface Damage
Grinton	Grinton Gill Footbridge,	3.2m	Footbridge
Grinton	Cogden Gill	30m	Debri
Grinton	Cogden Gill	5m	Sink hole
Grinton	Cogden GillFeb	30m	Landslip
Grinton	Low Lane, Swale Trail	300m	Surface Damage
Grinton	Grinton Beck	50m	Riverside Damage
Grinton	Below John Moss's Chair	5m	Dangerous Crossing
Grinton	Above John Moss's Chair	5m	Dangerous Crossing
Grinton Estate	Grinton Estate		Various Works
Low Row	Langhorne House	300m	Surface Damage
Malham	Gordale	400m	Surface Damage
Marske	Ellers	5m	Footbridge
Melbecks	Birk Park, Barney Beck	100m	Riverside Damage
Reeth	Cringley Bottom	4.5 m	Footbridge
Reeth	Langthwaite to Fremington Bridleway	100m	Landslides
Reeth	Fremington Edge to Cuckoo Hill	100m+	Landslides
Reeth	Storthwaite Hall Upper Bridge	10m	Footbridge
Reeth	Castle Farm House bridge	18m	Footbridge
Reeth	Barney Beck Stepping Stones	12m	Stepping Stones
Reeth	Town Foot to Reeth Bridge	275m	Surface Damage
Reeth	Fremington Egde - Hurst Route	12m	Surface Damage
Reeth	Park Field path	650m	Debris
Reeth	West Rawcroft Bridge	15m	Debris
Reeth	Storthwaite Hall Lower Bridge	7.5m	Footbridge

37. This was followed by a further isolated event in Feb 2020 when Storm Ciara brought rainfall ranging between 40 and 80 millimetres (1.5 inches to 3 inches) in 24 hours across much of northern England. (The highest levels were recorded in Cumbria with 179.8 millimetres (7 inches) of rain over the course of the day). This again caused isolated flooding mainly in the Horton in Ribblesdale area with the 22m footbridge across the River Ribble at Studfold being washed away.

Conclusion

38. Rights of way maintenance continues to be a 'priority programme' and an area of work where the Authority makes a clear visible difference to the National Park. We help farmers and landowners maintain their stiles and gates, whilst users of the network (both visitors and residents) have certainty about where they can go, and an enjoyable experience of the area. Businesses benefit because access to the area's special qualities, through the rights of way network, underpins the local tourism economy.

39. This past year has been an excellent year in relation to securing external funding. A total of **£404,322** of external funding and in-kind contributions has been secured from a number of different sources to support rights of way work across the National Park. In addition, the work with Dales Volunteers and other volunteers goes from strength to strength, with all rights of way surveying in the National Park now being carried out by volunteers.

Looking ahead to 2020/21

40. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority now manages a network of 2,623 km of rights of way in the National Park.

41. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan for 2019-24 has now been launched, and established a new objective for Public Rights of Way for the next 5 years.

B1 Benefit a wide variety of users by raising the standard of all public rights of way so that 90% are 'easy to use' by 2023.

42. It should be noted that the target for Public Rights of Way in the national park is 'that 90% are easy to use by 2023'. However, the ease of use figures for 2019 was already 90% for the National Park area. This is a significant increase against the previous year's figure which was 84% for the National Park.

43. This year's result is pleasing - indicating we have already reached our 'target'. However, there is a note of caution the 'ease of use' indicator measures a 5% random sample of rights of way across the network and figures can fluctuate. In addition, we may also see the potential affects of the flood damage experienced in 2019 and 2020.

44. On the 23 March 2020 the Government announced the UK lockdown to deal with the Coronavirus outbreak. This stopped all but emergency works on Public Rights of Way and the progression of Public Path Orders. As a result of the lockdown there has been a review of the Corporate Actions and a revised budget established. While work is now resuming, with the easing of the lockdown it is difficult to gauge the impact of reduced

work occurring on Public Rights of Way during Coronavirus restrictions, and factoring in the outstanding flood recovery works 2020/21 is going to be a challenging year.

Further Information

Further information regarding the report is available from:

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