



Rights of Way & Permissive Routes Improvement Plan for Hillingdon

2011 – 2021



Executive Summary

The London Borough of Hillingdon Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) has been produced to meet the requirements of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act). The ROWIP is required to contain an assessment of the extent to which local Rights of Way meet the present and likely future needs of the public for exercise and other forms of open air recreation, and the accessibility of Rights of Way to those with sensory and mobility problems.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan provides an opportunity to assess and progress the service the Council provides. It is an opportunity to build on statutory requirements and identify areas to improve the statutory and permissive access networks in the borough.

The development of the plan was influenced by statutory government guidance and consultation involving internal stakeholders and external organisations. An online survey was conducted for the general public. The ROWIP fits in with existing regional and local policies for promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel and recreation.

From the consultation a statement of eight actions was identified. The actions are based on the findings of an assessment of the Definitive Map and Statement and consultation to provide an improved network of routes.

A review of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan will be carried after a five year period in 2016.

Vision Statement

To enhance and promote the borough's Rights of Way Network for the purpose of providing exercise and open air recreation into the borough's green spaces and to access to local amenities.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan aims to:

- Provide a Rights of Way network which is correctly signed, free from obstruction and easy to use.
- Develop the network to enable use by all, with regard to least restrictive access where possible.
- Promote the network to increase health and well being, recreational opportunities and as a means of accessing the natural and built environment.
- Help develop the network of access and permissive routes around the borough.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Hillingdon

Hillingdon is the second largest of London's 33 boroughs in area, covering approximately 115 kilometres (44.6 miles). Hillingdon forms a long narrow strip on the western edge of London approximately 18 kilometres (11.1 miles) from north to south and 6 kilometres (3.7 Miles) from west to east. The London boroughs of Harrow, Ealing and Hounslow lie to the east of Hillingdon and it is bounded on the north by Hertfordshire, on the west by Buckinghamshire and Slough and to the south by Surrey.

Hillingdon varies from open country and housing development in the north to a more heavily developed, urban structure in the centre and south. Whilst the south of the borough is relatively flat, the north becomes increasingly hilly as the land rises toward the Chilterns. The River Colne and the Grand Union Canal run down the western perimeter of the borough and the river Pinn and Yeading Valley also thread their way through the eastern side of the borough and are all important areas for leisure and nature pursuits.

Hillingdon has over 5,000 acres of open countryside including lakes, fields, rivers and woods. A large green belt in the borough is largely protected from urban development. The majority of Hillingdon's woodland lies within Ruislip Woods National Nature Reserve. There are over 200 parks and open spaces in the borough including parks, allotments, commons, recreation grounds, playing fields, children's play areas, and civic spaces.

1.2 *Aim of the ROWIP*

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan is the means by which local highway authorities will identify the changes to be made, in respect of management and improvements to the local public rights of way network, in order to attain better provision for all users, including walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

This has been created through the following key stages:

- Carrying out an assessment of the Rights of Way network and current access provision - see section 3.
- Carrying out consultation with an established Council officer steering group, key organisations, neighbouring authorities and the general public - see section 6.
- Assess user needs and survey responses - see section 6.
- Developing statements of actions for improvements to the Rights of Way network - see section 7.

1.3 Legislative Background

Hillingdon Council has produced this Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) to meet the requirements of Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) which requires each local highway authority in England and Wales (excluding inner London Boroughs) to publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

The Authority has a duty to review the ROWIP within a ten year period and then on a ten yearly cycle.

The statutory guidance requires that a Rights of Way Improvement Plan must assess:

- The extent to which the local Rights of Way meet the present and likely future needs of the public.
- The opportunities provided by local Rights of Way for exercise and other forms of outdoor recreation and enjoyment of the authority's area.
- The accessibility of local Rights of Way to blind and partially sighted people and others with mobility problems.

Following the assessment the plan sets out a statement of action the authority proposes to take for securing an improved network of local rights of way.

2. What are Public Rights of Way

2.1 Categories of Rights of Way

England contains a unique historic network of paths, approximately 118,000 miles, which are legally protected highway. The original purpose of Rights of Way, as with roads today, was to provide links to settlements for access and commerce, though many Rights of Way are now utilised for recreational amenity.

Public Rights of Way are routes that allow the public a right of passage over land, which can be privately or Council owned. Common Law states that users can pass and re-pass along highways at all times. Footpaths, bridleways and byways are all highways, differing from roads only in the type of traffic entitled to use them and surface types. Most Public Rights of Way are publicly maintainable. Once a Public Right Of Way has been established it will remain maintainable at public expense until there is a legal order to either close, divert or extinguish it as a Public Right Of Way.

Public Footpath On which there is a right of way on foot only

Public Bridleway On which there is a right of way on foot, on horseback and leading a horse, with an additional

right for cyclists provided that they give way to other users; in some cases also with a right to lead or drive animals

Roads Used as Public Paths (RUPPS)	Highways mainly used by the public for the purposes that footpaths or bridleways are used, but which may or may not carry vehicular rights. In some parts of the country RUPPs were reclassified individually as byway, bridleway or footpath and those remaining in 2006 became restricted byways.
Restricted Byways	A category created by CROW Act 2000 with rights for all traffic except mechanically propelled vehicles.
Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATS)	Highways that are mainly used for the purposes that footpaths and bridleways are used, but on which there is a right of way for all traffic.
Cycle Ways	A way over which there is a right of way on pedal cycles (cycle ways are not a type of right of way that has to be shown on a definitive map). These are established by an Order under the Cycle Tracks Act 1984 and are separate to those cycle routes provided at the side or within the road.

2.2 Private Rights 'easements'

Private rights are termed easements. For example, one landowner might have a private right of access over a neighbour's land and usually be mentioned in the deeds of both properties. Such private rights do not apply to the public at large, but only to those for whose benefit they have been granted. Some ways can carry both public and private rights. For example, a farm access road may also be a public bridleway, and a public footpath may also carry private vehicular rights. Private rights must not be exercised in such a way as to interfere with the rights of the public.

2.3 List of Streets

The list of streets is a statutory requirement the Council is required to keep under the Highways Act 1980. This is held by the Highways Department. It Record's all highways that are publicly maintainable including Public Rights of Way recorded on the definitive map and adopted paths which are not on the Definitive Map and Statement.

2.4 Legally Defined

Public Rights of Way excluding Cycle Tracks are required by law, under the

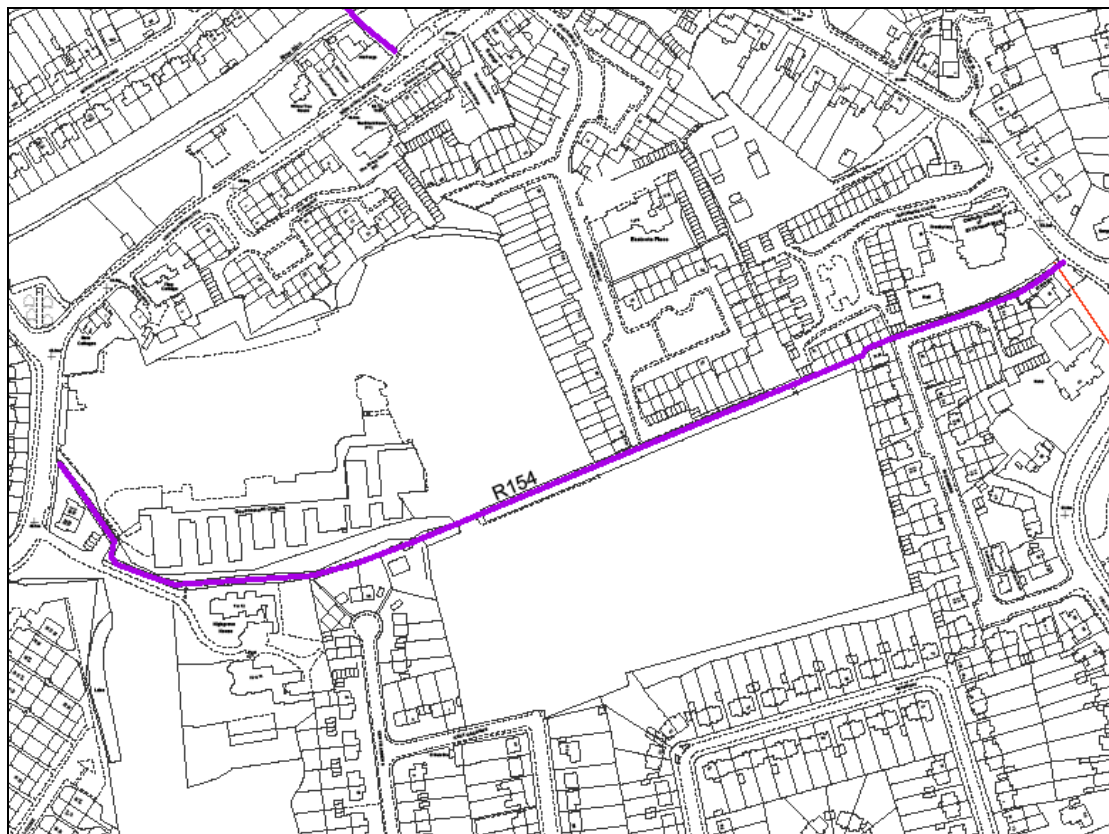
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to be recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement.

2.5 The Definitive Map and Statement

The first Definitive Map came into existence as a result of the National Parks and Countryside Act 1949, which required all county councils in England and Wales to carry out a survey of their area and produce a map showing footpaths, bridleways and byways which were Public Rights of Way.

Definitive Maps and Statements are extremely important records of Public Rights of Way, they provide conclusive evidence, at the relevant date of the map, of the existence and status of the Public Rights of Way which are shown on them. The Definitive Map and Statement for Hillingdon records all Public Rights of Way within the borough, it is a living document as it is subject to on-going changes as routes are added, changed or deleted.

Figure1 Example of an abstract from Hillingdon's Definitive Map showing footpath R154, Eastcote Road to Field End Road. The former RAF site is currently being developed, this will include reconstruction of a new path. This path has been highlighted by the Rights of Way Improvement Plan consultation as having areas for concern by local residents.



The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 also requires the Highway Authority to keep the Definitive Map and Statement under continuous review and ensure

that the Rights of Way are adequately signposted, maintained and free from obstruction.

2.6 Amendments to the Definitive Map

Changes can be made to the map most commonly by Modification Orders and Public Path Orders.

Modification Orders may be made:

- To add a Right of Way where it is shown to exist but not recorded on the Map.
- To alter the status of a Right of Way.
- To delete a Right of Way where it is shown to be included on the Map in error.
- To record a width in the Definitive Statement.

The process is based on user / archive evidence. Before making an order the authority must have evidence which shows the right of way has come into being through presumed dedication following use over a period of time. If Modification Orders are made they can be challenged and could lead to a public enquiry.

Public Path Orders may be made:

- To create a Public Right of Way.
- To divert an existing Public Right of Way onto a new route.
- To extinguish an existing Public Right of Way.

Public Path Orders enable applicants to apply to make a permanent legal change to a Public Rights of Way across their land. This is a public process where anyone may object to the making of an order. The authorities will process Public Path Orders in response to applications, or as authority generated schemes.

If a new path is to be created the test is that it must appear to the authority that there is a need for it and the authority must be satisfied it is expedient to create it having regard to the extent to which it would add to the convenience or enjoyment of a substantial section of the public or of local residents and the effect the creation would have on the rights of those with an interest in the land.

The tests for extinguishing a public path include that it is 'not needed for public use'.

Statutory duties also include the requirement to keep a register of applications made for modification orders, which must be available for viewing on the internet.

3. Hillingdon's Rights of Way and Permissive Routes Network / Current Access Provision

3.1 Health Opportunities

The Rights of Way network plays an essential role in health and well-being. It provides an opportunity to carry out daily exercise and organised activities. The current Government recommendation for physical activity is 30 minutes of moderate activity at least 5 days a week, walking as a low impact form of exercise can help reduce the risk of disease and give benefits such as building up energy levels and reducing stress.

The Walking the Way to Health Initiative and Change4Life Programme are health initiatives championed by Natural England and the Department for Health. The Healthy Walks Scheme is a nationally evaluated programme that maintains high standards for healthy walks. Hillingdon has 12 routes around the borough and gained accreditation for the walks in 2008.

The Walking the Way to Health Initiative and Change4Life Programme highlight the importance of exercise and the Rights of Way network represents a resource to encourage healthier lifestyles for both organised and informal public exercise.

3.2 Public Rights of Way

The Public Rights of Way network in the borough as recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement is approximately 112 km (69 miles) long and contains 366 footpaths, 11 Bridleways and 10 BOATS (byway open to all traffic). Hillingdon produced its Definitive Map and Statement in December 1964 as an amalgamation of the three Urban Districts of Hayes and Harlington, Ruislip and Northwood, Yiewsley and West Drayton and former borough of Uxbridge. Although consolidated into one Definitive Map and Statement for Hillingdon the boroughs Rights of Way are split into four areas comprising Ruislip / Northwood, Hayes / Harlington, Uxbridge and Yiewsley / West Drayton. Each route is identified by a letter and number, for instance H8 in Hayes.

Hillingdon's Rights of Way network encompasses both urban and rural routes. Urban paths are in the main used for convenient short cuts to schools, shops, public transport and other local amenities and are in the whole metalled surfaces. Other public footpaths follow and cross through farmland, parks and open spaces, woodland, nature reserves, golf courses, river banks and canal towpaths and have differing surfaces. Rights of Way form a significant part of the local access infrastructure in the sense, that they are a major recreational resource and offer access into the boroughs countryside and surrounding areas.

Table 1 Breakdown of Rights of Way in the borough

Status	Footpath	Bridleway	BOAT	Total Number	Total length km
Ruislip / Northwood	180	7	3	190	33.74 (20.9 m)
Hayes / Harlington	71	0	4	75	14.89 (9.2 m)
Uxbridge	94	2	0	96	51.4 (31.9 m)
Yiewsley	21	2	3	26	11.59 (7.19 m)

3.3 Public Bridleways

Hillingdon has eleven bridleways of which eight are situated in Ruislip Woods National Nature Reserve. These routes connect with permissive bridleways to provide an extensive route through the differing woods which make up the National Nature Reserve. Bridleways were originally designated as a right of way for people on horse or foot, but the Countryside Act 1968 introduced legislation to allow cyclists to use bridleways with the intention that cyclists give way to horse riders and walkers.

3.4 Byway Open To All Traffic (BOAT)

The term Byway Open to All Traffic means a highway over which the public have a right of way for vehicular and all other kinds of traffic but which is used by the public mainly for the purposes of which bridleways and footpaths are used. Hillingdon has ten BOATS and although they serve the purpose stated above there are anomalies related to them, these being:

- Routes that stop at a 'dead end' for horse riding or cycling.
- Routes on a private road, which have been widened or surfaced, which leads to a maintenance issue.
- Heavy goods vehicle use, which can lead to health and safety concerns and maintenance issues.

The problems described will be investigated under Section 7, Statement of Action, Action 4: Definitive Map and Statement.

3.5 Cycle Ways

Cycle ways have a two fold remit; "on highway" and "off highway". Cycle ways that are classified as falling in the "on highway" category can form part of the carriageway or footway. They are usually designated as shared use for pedestrians and cyclists when on the footway. On the carriageway cycle facilities are commonly either advisory or mandatory cycle lanes.

Cycle ways that are classified as falling in the “off highway” category can be specifically designated for cyclists or shared use facilities with pedestrians. This type of cycle track is created by means of a Cycle Track Order. Cycle ways created utilising a Cycle Track Order have specific legal status, but are not shown on the Definitive Map and Statement. Hillingdon has a total 2.55 km (1.6 miles) of Cycle Tracks remote from carriageways.

Table 2 Designated Cycle Tracks remote from carriageways

Start	Finish	Ward	Length km
Station Road	Peachey Lane	Brunel	0.4 (0.2m)
Park Road	A40 – Western Avenue	Uxbridge North	0.4 (0.2m)
A40 – Western Avenue	Warren Road	Ickenham	0.4 (0.2m)
Warren Road	Milton Road	Ickenham	0.5 (0.3m)
Shakespeare Avenue	Shakespeare Avenue	Barnhill	0.2 (0.1m)
Hill Lane	Hill Lane	West Ruislip	0.2 (0.1m)
Elmbridge Drive	Fore Street	Eastcote	0.15 (0.09m)
Bedwell Gardens	Shepiston Lane	Pinkwell	0.3 (0.18m)

3.6 Wider Network of Access - Permissive and Promoted Routes

Permissive paths are paths which the land owner permits the public to use, with the intention that it should not be dedicated a Public Right of Way. Because a permissive path is not a Public Right of Way, it is not subject to Rights of Way law. Hillingdon’s permissive routes are usually located on local authority owned land.

Hillingdon has a good network of permissive promoted routes of varying lengths for walking, horse riding and cycling which complement the network of definitive routes to make up the wider access network. Permissive paths, particularly in Green Spaces, form an important and well used part of the network. These routes are utilised for regional and local recreational use.

Permissive Bridleways in Hillingdon

Hillingdon has approximately 40.2km (25 miles) of permissive Bridleways; they form an essential recreational resource for horse riders, cyclists and walkers. They are located around the borough through woodland, farmland and parkland, and also form links with South Buckinghamshire and surrounding authorities.

Hillingdon Trail

This is a 32.1km (20 miles) path through Hillingdon's countryside from Cranford to Harefield. The walk passes through Nature reserves, parks, meadows, parks and open spaces, Grand Union Canal, Yeading Brook and the River Pinn.

Celandine Route

A walk of 19.3km (12 miles) along the River Pinn from Pinner to the Grand Union Canal at Cowley. The path follows the River Pinn and passes through meadows, woodland and green spaces. The Celandine Route links Hillingdon to Harrow.

Willow Tree Wander

This is an 8km (5 miles) walk along a stretch of the Yeading Brook from North Harrow station to Ickenham Station. The path passes through meadows and open spaces. Willow Tree Wander links Hillingdon to Harrow.

Trails of Discovery

The Trails of Discovery are 5 different routes in the borough, with a combined length of 18.5km (11 ½ miles). They are located in Harefield, Uxbridge, Cowley, Hayes and Harlington and offer walks through woodland, canal side, lakeside, Country Park and recreational parkland.

Ruislip Woods Walks

Ruislip Woods walks consists of 3 different routes, the Blue route, Red route and White route. The routes take in Ancient woodland environments in Mad Bess Wood and Park Wood and also the Ruislip Lido. The routes are around 1.6 km (1 mile) each in distance.

London Loop (London Outer Orbital Path)

The London Loop encircles Greater London. The total length reaches 150 miles and consists of 24 sections through London's boroughs. Hillingdon has 3 sections which run through parkland, canal side and river side for approximately 18.5 km (11 ½ miles).

Colne Valley Trail

The Colne Valley Trail is a shared use route designed for walkers, cyclists and horse riders and is part of the Colne Valley Regional Park. The majority of the trail in the borough passes along the Grand Union Canal and runs an approximate length of 16 km (10 miles). Horses are only permitted on certain parts of the trail.

Colne Valley Circular Routes

The Colne Circular routes are designed to encourage people to discover and explore the countryside on their doorstep. 9 of the 20 promoted routes are located wholly or partially within the London Borough of Hillingdon, these range in length from 2 miles to 7 miles.

David Brough Cycle Trail

The trail is located in Bayhurst Wood and offers views of a wide range of wild life; a full circuit of the trail is just over 1.6km (1 mile) long.

Harefield Church to Springwell Lock

This is a 8 km (5 miles) walk through fields and woodlands, alongside the Grand Union Canal and offers local historical landmarks.

Ruislip Lido to Harefield Church

The walk takes in woodland and farmland and wanders through Mad Bess Wood and Bayhurst Wood, the walk is approximately 6.4 km (4 miles) long.

Ickenham Marsh to Ruislip Lido

The walk passes through Ickenham Marsh Nature Reserve, meadows and open space's, the walk is 4.8 km (3 miles) long.

Cranford Park to Bulls Bridge

This walk offers riverside views and the chance to explore historical Cranford Park House and church of St Dunstan in Cranford Park. The walk is 2 miles long. (3.2km).

Dog Rose Ramble

This route starts and finishes in Ealing, approximately 4.8 km (3 miles) wander through farmland and meadows alongside the Yeading Brook in Hillingdon.

Details of these routes can be obtained by visiting the Council website at www.hillingdon.gov.uk.

3.7 Public Open Spaces

Across the borough, there are a range of town parks, open spaces, commons, country parks, a National Nature Reserve at Ruislip Woods (NNR), and over 40 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), all of which are open to the public. Hillingdon has approximately 200 sites which form an important part of the network of routes.

Some of Hillingdon's green spaces are among the best in London with 14 sites holding Green Flag status (a national standard for parks and green spaces across England).

3.8 Accessibility

Statutory guidance requires assessment of the accessibility of the local Rights of Way for the blind or partially sighted and others with mobility problems this includes those who use pushchairs.

Urban footpaths in the borough have in the past had tube barriers placed to prevent illegal use by motorcycles; the same barriers can also prevent access for disabled users. Where possible these barriers are being replaced with DDA compliant barriers to allow equal access for all.

Relatively few rural footpaths and trails are very suitable for use by people with mobility problems, sections rather than whole routes are user friendly. The nature of the rural terrain and steps, stiles, bridges and gates will always

be a barrier to some users, added to this is the inconvenience of footpaths ending or starting on busy roads in the borough.

The majority of local green spaces, parks and country parks offer wheelchair access and 3 routes have been promoted as wheelchair friendly routes, these being:

- Hayes Botanical Gardens (the Norman Leddy memorial).
- Ruislip Lido – lakeside walks.
- Little Britain Lake – lakeside walks.



Hayes Botanical Gardens – Norman Leddy memorial

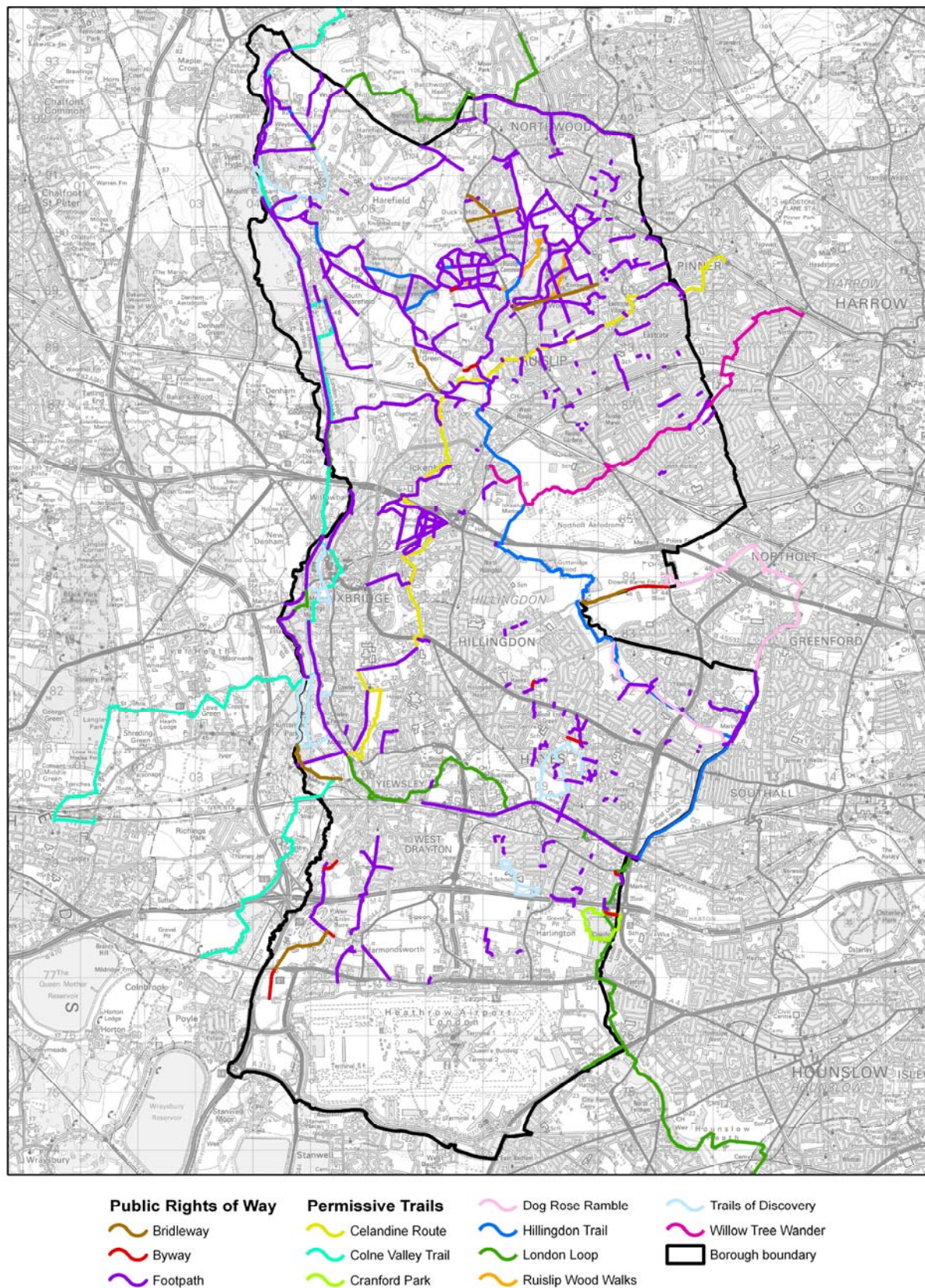
3.9 Canal Towpath

Hillingdon contains large sections of the Grand Union Canal on its Definitive Map and Statement but canal towpaths are legally part of the canal. Towpaths are generally owned by British Waterways who are normally responsible for their upkeep and enforcement of their bylaws. The council has no direct responsibility for the maintenance or improvement of canal towpaths, but is committed to working with British Waterways to promote use of the canal routes.

3.10 Colne Valley Regional Park

The Colne Valley Regional Park is a large area to the west of London and contains approximately 270km of Rights of Way, offering local residents further opportunities to explore their local countryside. Hillingdon Council is committed to working with the Colne Valley partnership to ensure residents can benefit from a co-ordinated network of Rights of Way that are joined up across administrative boundaries.

Figure 2 Public Rights of Way with Walks and Trails in the borough



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4. Network Management

4.1 Existing management of Public Rights of Way

Management of the statutory public rights of way network and permissive networks is carried out by the Highways and Green Spaces services of the Environment and Consumer Protection Group. Statutory Rights of Way duties are co-ordinated by the Rights of Way Officer in Street Scene Maintenance and permissive networks to the Green Spaces Team. The Rights of Way Officer and the Green Spaces Team, work together to achieve an enjoyable recreational experience for users of statutory and permissive routes.

4.2 Local Performance Indicator (formally BVPI 178)

Best Value Performance Indicators were previously used to measure performance against national key performance indicators set by the Audit Commission. Ex Best Value Performance Indicator 178 relates to a minimum 5% sample of the public rights of way network. The government has now removed BV178 from national performance indicators but Hillingdon Council will continue to use ex BV 178 as performance indicator to monitor Public Rights of Way.

The methodology developed requires the assessment of a randomly selected sample of routes from the Definitive Map to determine the percentage that are easy to use.

‘Easy to use’ means:

- Signposted or waymarked where they leave the road in accordance with the authority’s duty under s.27 of the Countryside Act 1968.
- Free from unlawful obstructions and other interference, (including overhanging vegetation and fences) to the public’s right of passage.
- Surface and lawful barriers (e.g. stiles, gates) in good repair and to a standard necessary to enable the public to use the way without undue inconvenience.

4.3 Inspections of Rights of Way

Public footpath inspections are carried out at least once a year to assess the condition of the paths and to help plan maintenance schedules and identify defects. These are accompanied by a reactive inspection service where users who encounter problems contact the Council via the contact centre and the issue addressed.

The Hillingdon branch of the Ramblers Association carry out annual footpath inspections and forward their findings to the Council, both positive and negative.

4.4 Condition of the Network

The Countryside and Rights Of Way Act 2000 (CROW) highlighted the growing importance of Rights of Way both in legislation and as a national high profile subject. Recognising this, Hillingdon employed a dedicated Rights of Way Officer in 2003.

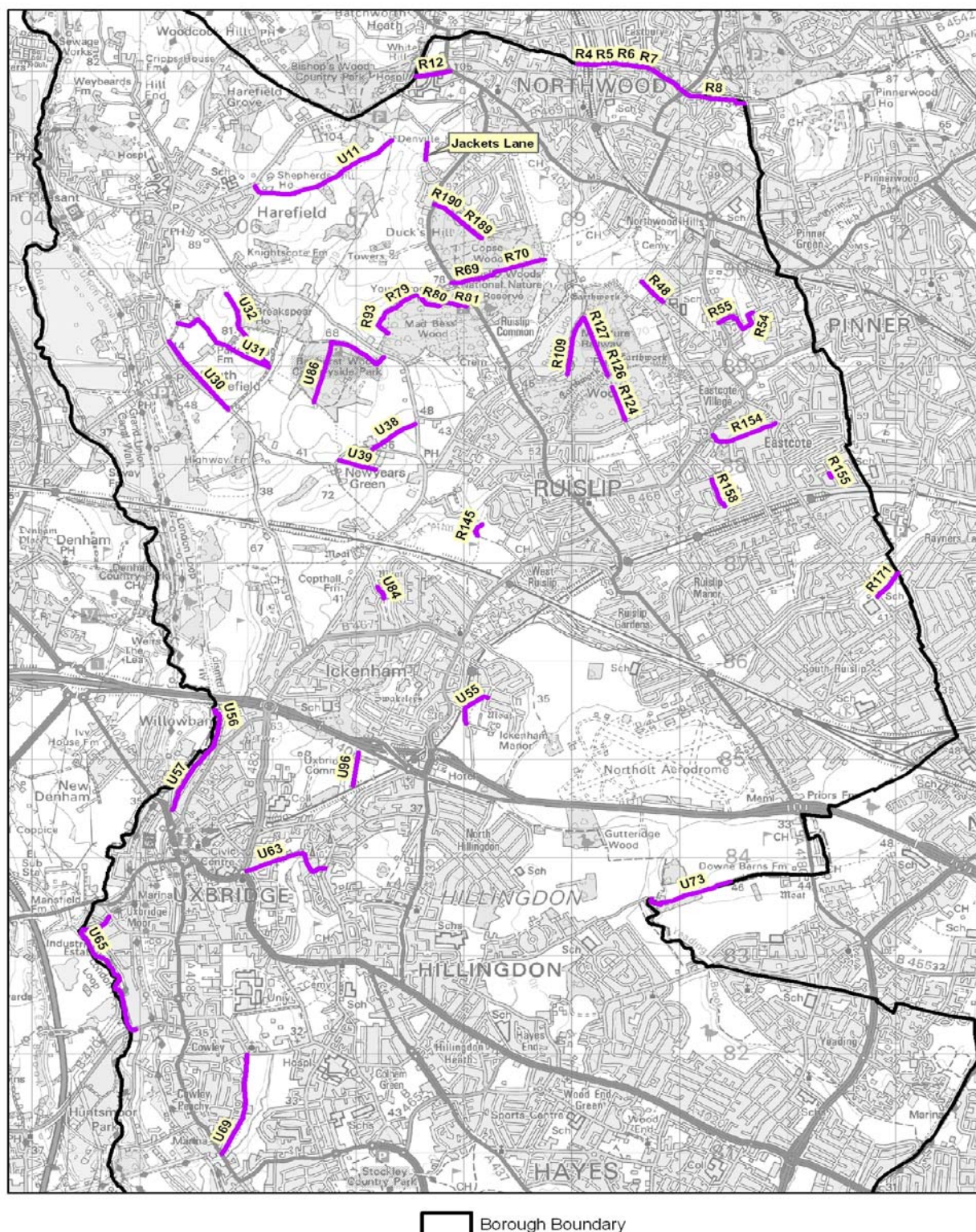
Surveying authorities will often find problems within their Definitive Map and Statement which have developed over time for example through development, lost routes, lack of management and routes incorrectly recorded. The Hillingdon Ramblers last annual survey (early 2008) identified the most extensive problem with the Rights of Way network was with the signage, which was missing or dilapidated; at that time it affected around 50% of the network. About 9% of the network was affected by blockages or inadequate stiles. Legal and physical blockage problems have been identified which have led to problems being highlighted and routes re-opened but further anomalies in the DM&S remain to be cleared.

Outstanding Definitive Map works as of 25/03/2009:

- 2 applications for Public Path Orders to divert and extinguish routes for the purposes of development at footpaths R154, U39 and U40.
- 2 applications for a Definitive Map Modification Order to add a route to the DM&S.
- 4 Legal Event Orders to modify the DM&S (Legal events modify the DM&S to show the outcome of Public Path Orders and Definitive Map Modification Orders).
- 6 temporary diversion orders for the purposes of development, utility installation and improvement works.
- 5 temporary closures for the purpose of utility installation.

Figure 3 highlights key problem routes that have issues ranging from man made and natural obstructions, uneven surfaces, worn surfaces, muddy surfaces and erosion of surfaces. Appendix B: Description of problem routes highlighted by survey and consultation gives a description of the problems on these routes.

Figure 3 Problem routes highlighted by survey and consultation



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4.5 Enforcement and Protection

The Council has a legal duty under the Highways Act 1980 to assert and protect the rights of the public to use and enjoy Public Rights of Way. There are various provisions contained mainly within the Highways Act 1980 which deal with obstructions and disturbance to the highway.

Enforcement follows a process of written letters which highlight the problems and actions required, if no response is forthcoming, legal notices can be served on offenders and this could ultimately lead to prosecution.

The Council will always strive to solve problems through negotiation; this can help to promote good practice and relations between Council Officers and landowners who have property next to footpaths or footpaths running through their land.

4.6 Maintenance

Maintenance standards for the network are based on the ex Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 178.

Signposting and Waymarking

Highway authorities have a duty to signpost all statutory Footpaths, Bridleways and Byways Open to All Traffic where they leave a metalled road and the status of the route must be given on the sign. Waymarkers are added to the route to assist the user where deemed necessary.

Permissive routes are signed and waymarked in a similar fashion as statutory footpaths.



Statutory signage for footpath R168

Surfaces

The Council has a responsibility for the maintenance of Public Rights of Way which includes the surface and surface vegetation that causes an obstruction. Surface type varies with tarmac and artificial stone path (ASP) the most prominent surface type in urban areas. Rural paths and bridleways are predominantly natural surfaces to fit into the rural surroundings but can be surfaced with scalping or hogging materials.

Landowners can also surface PROW but the surface must be safe and suitable and they must obtain permission from the Council before carrying out any works.

Vegetation Management

Where vegetation or trees overhang or encroach onto the highway the responsibility lies with the owner or occupier of the land to ensure that it does not cause a danger or obstruction to users of the highway.

The Council is responsible for cutting surface vegetation other than crops on PROW with environmentally sensitive chemical control being applied to the surfaces in urban areas to suppress weeds and unwanted vegetation.

Management of vegetation on statutory and permissive footpaths is undertaken by contractors and volunteers. The Council also utilises Blue Sky Development & Regeneration (who provide ex-offenders with employment to reduce re-offending crime in the community) and utilises the Community Payback Scheme to carry out clearance works.

Gates, Stiles and Structures

A highway authority may allow the erection of stiles or gates by the owner of the land to prevent animals from escaping from their land, A British Standard, BS5709 has been introduced; it covers the provision of gates and stiles and recommends specifications for structures.

Public Rights of Way can suffer from illegal use by motorbikes. To address health and safety issues the Council can install anti-motorcycle barriers to eradicate this problem but this does not allow for the needs of disabled users under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The design and placement of barriers or Kissing gates allows for access by disabled mobility scooters but this can be difficult and not always possible depending on the width of the footpath, therefore assessments are made on the individual footpath.



Barriers placed at footpath R174, Cranley Drive, Ruislip

5. The Policy Framework – Rights of Way Improvement Plan Links

5.1 Regional and Local Policies

Regional and local policies support the promotion of health, accessibility, safety and sustainable forms of transport other than the car. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan is complementary to these policies and can further help to achieve shared aims and objectives set in the regional and local plans below. Identifying and linking these plans will help with funding bids and possible joint working with potential partners. A summary of these plans and strategies can be seen in Table 3 below, the ROWIP will co-exist and contribute to these plans.

Table 3 Regional and Local Plan links

Regional Plans
Walking Plan for London
London Plan
Mayors Transport Policy
Local Plans
Hillingdon Community Strategy
Hillingdon Community Safety Strategy
Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan (UDP) - Saved Policies 2007. (<i>The plan is due to be replaced by Local Development Frameworks</i>)
Hillingdon Green Spaces Strategy & Joint Bridleways Strategy
Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme
Safer Routes to School Initiative
Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005
Colne Valley Regional Park Action Plan 2009-12

Appendix A: The Policy Framework – Rights of Way Improvement Plan Links gives a more in-depth look into the regional and local plans.

5.2 Local Implementation Plan

Hillingdon's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) sets out how the Council proposes to implement the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) and provides details on projects, proposals and programmes through to 2010-2011. In the LIP Hillingdon has presented a range of transport policies, initiatives and projects and reflects Council's commitment to improving transport in the borough and ensuring that Hillingdon remains an attractive place in which to live and work. The LIP has been prepared in accordance with the Guidance issued by Transport for London. The approved LIP is a statutory document, legally binding on the Council and the Mayor of London.

5.3 Integration of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan into the Local Implementation Plan

The Government expects that each ROWIP will be incorporated into local transport planning and in the case of London Boroughs, Local Implementation Plans when they are next reviewed. The plan contains an assessment of the current Rights of Way network and how it is likely to meet current and future needs. It aims to identify improvements which will provide a better local network for walkers, equestrians, cyclists and people with mobility problems following a consultation process.

This can be achieved by incorporating the aims of the ROWIP to contribute to the shared aims and objectives of the LIP. The ROWIP can contribute to the following objectives of the LIP:

- Increasing sustainable travel
- Improving air quality
- Encourage active travel, especially to schools
- Provide safer roads especially for walkers and cyclists
- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour

6. Consultation and Survey Responses / Assessing User Needs

6.1 Information Gathering

The process for developing the ROWIP included an assessment of the Definitive Map and Statement and wider network of access.

To gain a representative sample of users of the Rights of Way network and the population of the borough in general to assess how the network meets the user's needs and demands the following methods were used:

- An online questionnaire for the general public (also available in paper format) promoted through Hillingdon People which circulates to the whole of the borough.

- Consultation / meetings with the established Council Officers Steering Group, representing various departments and groups.
- Consultation / survey with external key groups who have an interest in Rights of Way.
- Consultation with highway authorities adjoining Hillingdon.

Table 4 Consultation List

London Borough of Hillingdon – Steering Group
Transport Policy and Planning - Planning and Community Services - (Local Implementation Plan)
Joint Commissioning - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing. (Physically and Visually Impaired)
Transport Policy and Planning - Planning and Community Services - (Walking and Cycling)
Transport Policy and Planning - Planning and Community Services - (Safer Routes to School)
Adult Social Care, Health and Housing - Healthy Hillingdon - (Walking for Health)
Community Safety Team - Planning and Community Services - (Community Safety)
Green Spaces Team - Environment and Consumer protection - (Green Spaces Strategy)

Key Organisations
Ramblers Association -Hillingdon and District Group
Hillingdon Equestrian Advisory committee (HEAC)
Hillingdon Cycle Users Group - London Cycling Campaign
Open Spaces Society - Hillingdon Branch
Groundwork Thames Valley - Colne Valley

General public

Neighbouring Authorities
London Borough of Ealing
London Borough of Harrow
London borough of Hounslow
Spelthorne District Council
Slough Borough Council
Three Rivers District Council
South Bucks District Council

6.2 Consultation Feedback

General Public

A range of issues were highlighted by the consultation process with has provided information about the borough's Rights of Way and how they are used.

The survey showed that the public used both urban and rural footpaths and bridleways and utilised permissive routes. The main use of Rights of Way was for the following:

- For recreation / leisure.
- To access open space / parks.
- To access shops / local amenities.
- For exercise / health reasons.
- To get to / from work.
- For business.

Usage of the network varied most popularly between 5 and 7 and 1 and 2 times a week with up to 1 hour the most popular time span.

Problems highlighted by the general public survey were:

- Fly tipping/ litter / dog mess.
- Vegetation encroachment.
- Surface condition.
- Signposts / waymarking.
- Illegal motor cycle use.
- Access to footpaths and bridleways.
- Other type of user.
- Number and design of gates, stiles and barriers.

The survey asked which aspects of the network were important to improve, the following list was prioritised:

- Litter / dog fouling / graffiti.
- Obstructions / overgrown vegetation.
- Surface improvements.
- Signs / waymarking.
- Gates / stiles / barriers – accessibility.
- Awareness of rights of way.
- Personal safety.
- Lighting.
- Conflict with other users.

Further comments included:

- Providing information leaflets.
- Introduce litter cleansing programme.
- Vegetation management control programme.

- Promotion of Rights of Way through the Council website.
- Gating of alleyways.

Individual footpath issues were identified, these included:

- Unclear and blocked paths near Newyears Green.
- Overgrown vegetation at Clack Lane.
- Poor surface and lighting through RAF Eastcote.

From the individual footpath issues raised above, Newyears Green has six footpaths. Footpaths U40 and U49 are currently undergoing an application for diversion due to planning permission being granted to West London Composting LTD. Footpath U38 St Leonard's farm, blockages on the path route have been identified and works are ongoing with the land owner to clear the route. Clack Lane has undergone vegetation clearance works and is now clear. Footpath R154 through the former RAF Eastcote, the site is now being developed for housing with the footpath due to be upgrading as part of the development. The footpath receives vegetation maintenance and the lighting columns have had tree growth cleared back to increase lighting.

Other issues were raised which were not strictly Rights of Way issues but were forwarded to the appropriate Council department where applicable.

Key Organisations and Steering Group

Key organisations with an interest in Hillingdon's Rights of Way network were consulted to establish:

- The current frequency and for what purpose you make use of rights of Way in Hillingdon.
- Whether or not the network of Rights of Way meets your current needs.
- Whether or not you find them easy to use and what particular difficulties, if any, that you encounter.
- What improvement to the network which you would like to see.

Walkers

Healthy Hillingdon - Walking and Health

The new National Change4Life programme highlights the importance of walking and cycling to the cultural shift in lifestyle that is needed to address increases in obesity and other health problems related to physical inactivity. In terms of cost to the NHS alone the Chief Medical Officer has estimated that the increase in obesity is already costing the NHS £4.2 billion a year. The CMO further suggests that the wider cost to the economy of decreasing

physical activity in terms of quality of life, morbidity and mortality is significantly higher.

The goal for activity promotion is creation of a sustainable culture in the UK in which adults and children understand the health risks of inactivity and value resources like walks and walking as part of their everyday lifestyle.

In relation to objective developing a sustainable 'active culture' the long-term maintenance and development of Rights of Way in Hillingdon is extremely important. The need to enhance current levels of use of Rights of Way suggests that the focus of the ROWIP can help to develop community awareness of, appreciation and confidence in using existing routes, in addition to physical management of the links between routes, communities and facilities (shops, work, schools, leisure, friends etc).

Rights of Way are important for a whole range of quality of life issues that are now being promoted in the National Change4life programme. Achieving the vision of the Change4Life programme, of a sustainable culture, suggests the need to develop partnerships within Council departments to integrate use of Rights of Way with wider Council active community engagement initiatives.

The Hillingdon branches of the Ramblers Association and Open Spaces Society

The Ramblers organise an extensive programme of led leisure walks of varying distances which make use of the various Rights of Way in the borough. Most of the walks take place in the north of the borough to access rural areas and the National Nature Reserve.

The Ramblers have highlighted areas for access improvement such as links into Minet Country Park from the Grand Union Canal but identified the most extensive problems of the network as being:

- Signage which is missing or dilapidated.
- Blockages in various forms.
- Problems with stiles and furniture.

The Open Spaces Society

The Open Spaces Society identified a broad spectrum of ideals which relate to Public Rights of Way, their management and the legal requirements surrounding them. The following were listed:

- Existing PROW should be brought back into use with correct signage and agreements (where required) over surface maintenance. We have a problem with clay soil in Hillingdon and this can be a problem on Bridleways where use by other recreational uses can cause problems for walkers.
- Look to join up existing paths / open spaces / parks to create good circular walks.
- Ensure that urban short cuts are maintained and due process adhered to with regard to footpath closures / safety concerns.

- Ensure that all planning decisions that could affect rights of way have timely input from local interest groups (ie OSS / Ramblers + ROW Officer) and this information is included in the reports to the planning committees.
- Coordinate action with any new cycle paths to ensure that all uses of land / paths can be safely accommodated and sufficient space is available to both uses.

Cyclists

Hillingdon Cycle Users Group

Hillingdon Cycle Users Group acknowledges an extensive network of bridleways for use by cyclists but highlight up-grading these surfaces as a priority area, thus allowing easier access for cyclists. Another area of interest to users is the upgrading of footpaths where possible to dual use between roads and links across parks and green spaces to encourage cycle use and off road safe cycling.

Horse Riders

Hillingdon Equestrian Advisory Committee (HEAC)

The majority of use of public rights of way for horse riding is for leisure purposes, with riders coming from a wide range of age and abilities. Horse riding as an activity is taken up for a number of reasons including parents introducing young children and people enjoying early retirement.

While Hillingdon's network of statutory and permissive bridleways compares favourably with a number of London boroughs, the horse riders feel the network can benefit from the following improvements:

- The network is disjointed and needs the creation of safe routes to link the bridleways.
- Increased surface and vegetation maintenance of the bridleways.
- Whilst there is good access and parking to some bridleways often riders with transport are denied access due to barrier restrictions to combat illegal use of car parks.
- Lack of signage which can lead to confrontation with land owners and recreational users, therefore re-signage of the bridleway network.
- Lack of finance.

Groundwork Thames Valley – Colne Valley

Groundwork highlighted their aspirations which were relevant the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. These being:

- The creation of 2 new circular routes along public Rights of Way in the north of the borough to promote as part of a series of walks within the Colne Valley Park.
- Continued promotion of Colne Valley Park walks within Hillingdon.
- Disabled access where possible.
- Possible addition of links into the borough from neighbouring counties

Disabled access – Physically and Visually Impaired

The general public consultation response informed us that regular problems encountered were:

- Surface maintenance
- Control of vegetation
- Height of kerbs
- Barriers

All make use more difficult for the less mobile, elderly, visually impaired, mobility scooter users and parents with pushchairs.

Disablement Association Hillingdon (DASH) in response to the survey commented that the surfaces of Rights of Way or cycle routes are very important to disabled users and they would like to see tarmac surfaces where possible. DASH also identified the use of radar key gates so wheelchair users can access Rights of Way whilst stopping illegal use by motorbikes.

Community Safety

Community Safety Team – Anti- Social Behaviour

The importance of having safer communities has been identified by the Hillingdon Community Safety Strategy document which sets out the key priorities for the Council. The Hillingdon Community Safety Partnership, which comprises the Local Authority, Police, Primary Care Trust, London Fire brigade and London Probation Service, has been in operation following the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The document promotes community safety and projects and methods to reduce crime in problem areas.

Crime and anti-social behaviour can be an issue on Rights of Way and alleygating is the preferred way of dealing with anti social behaviour in privately owned access paths but Public Rights of Way or adopted highway are not so easy to deal with due to the complex criteria required.

Neighbouring Authorities

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires the Council to consult with each adjoining highway authority to establish existing links and potential opportunities to development further links between the borough's or counties.

The Council has good working relationships with its neighbouring authorities, when dealing with cross boundary path issues. The consultation highlighted already existing links and the Council will look to establish further links with regard to any specific proposals highlighted by Hillingdon or neighbouring boroughs.

6.3 Summary

The main elements to be addressed in the development of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan were how is the current network utilised, what problems exist and what improvements users would like to see.

The borough contains a network of statutory and permissive routes and trails but the network is disjointed in places, due mainly to development. With a considerable network already in place, user needs point to revitalising and upgrading with additional opportunities taken to further develop and enhance opportunities for disabled users and user groups where possible. Many of the concerns raised by the consultation were maintenance issues such as vegetation, lack of litter collection and physical improvement to the network, missing signage and information and promotion of Rights of Way.

From the consultation, a set of actions have been identified to be carried out over a 10 year period.

Small scale Improvements, including limited resurfacing and new signage, can be addressed using the council's existing Public Rights of Way budget. More extensive improvements, including development of the existing network, are beyond present resources, and will require additional funding to be secured through the Local Implementation Plan proposals or through other funding opportunities.

7. Statement of Action

The action plan provides the main focus for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and has been compiled based on the survey of the network, comments made and recommendations received. The ROWIP and the proposed statement of actions are short and long term objectives detailing how they will secure an improved network over the next 10 years.

Key

Estimated costs:

£ Less than £5000
 ££ Between £5000 and £20,000
 £££ more than £20,000

Action 1 - Regeneration of existing Public Rights of Way

Action 1 is to prioritise existing problem routes by carrying out physical improvement works, removing blockages, hazards, updating furniture and removing trip hazards.

Action / objective	Timescale	Estimated Cost / Funding	Partnerships	Linked Plan
Action 1. Regeneration of existing public rights of way				
1.1 Re-open blocked routes	1-2 years	£ Existing revenue budget	Highways, Green Spaces, Street Scene Enforcement Team & land owners	DDA 1995
1.2 Furniture – replacing gates and stiles	2 years	££ Existing revenue budget, External opportunities	Highways & Green Spaces & land owners	DDA 1995
1.3 Reconstruction / physical improvement works to identified routes.	1-10 years	£££ Existing revenue budget, Local Implementation Plan funding, Chrysalis Programme, Section 106 agreement, Groundwork Partnership / funding opportunities	Highways, Green Spaces, Council departments & land owners	Hillingdon Local Implementation Plan, DDA 1995, Green Spaces Strategy & Joint Bridleways Strategy
1.4 Ensure statutory & permissive	Ongoing	Existing revenue budget	Highways & Green Spaces	DDA 1995, Green Spaces Strategy & Joint

routes are correctly signed				Bridleways Strategy
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Action 2 – Maintenance Schedules

Action 2 aims to review and improve current maintenance schedules. This includes vegetation management of rural routes, which has been a reactive service rather than a pro-active service and litter and cleansing of urban routes which has been identified as a major concern from the survey.

Action / objective	Timescale	Estimated Cost / Funding	Partnerships	Linked Plan
Action 2. Maintenance schedules				
2.1 Introduce planned joint programme of maintenance for vegetation control for statutory and permissive routes	Complete	£££ Existing revenue budget Source best value options	Highways, Green Spaces, current contractors & external partnership opportunities	Green Spaces Strategy & Joint Bridleways Strategy
2.2 Introduce litter & path cleansing schedule for urban Public Rights of Way	1-3 years then review	£££ Funding needed	Highways, Waste and Community Services (Street Cleansing) & Investigate support from community based projects such as Community Payback	Hillingdon Community Strategy

Action 3 – Least Restrictive Access

Action 3 relates to the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 requiring ROWIPS to assess accessibility of local Rights of Way to the principles of least restrictive access and adhere to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA).

Action / objective	Timescale	Estimated Cost / Funding	Partnerships	Linked Plan
Action 3. Least restrictive access				
3.1 Review statutory & permissive routes and trails in terms of least restrictive access.	1-3 years	Officer time	Highways & Green Spaces	DDA 1995, Hillingdon Community Strategy & Green Spaces Strategy
3.2 Identify opportunities to improve or create routes with an emphasis on improvement for the mobility or visually impaired	1-10 years as funding becomes available	£££ Existing revenue budget, Local Implementation Plan funding, Chrysalis Programme, Section 106 agreement, Groundwork, Partnership / funding opportunities	Highways, Planning Department, Green Spaces, Joint Commissioning (physically & visually impaired) & DASH & MAB	Hillingdon Local Implementation Plan, Hillingdon UDP, DDA 1995, Hillingdon Community Strategy & Green Spaces Strategy
3.3 Continued access into parks & open spaces that ensure least restrictive access by reasonable means in the borough	1-10 years as funding becomes available	££ Existing revenue budget, Local Implementation Plan funding, Chrysalis Programme, Section 106 agreement, Groundwork Partnership / funding opportunities	Green Spaces & Highways	Hillingdon Local Implementation Plan, DDA 1995, Hillingdon Community Strategy & Green Spaces Strategy
3.4 Continue policy of balancing user needs with issues of anti-social behaviour	1-10 years	Existing revenue budget	Highways, Green Spaces & Community Safety Team (Anti Social Behaviour)	DDA 1995 & Hillingdon Community Safety Strategy
3.5 Continue annual survey of statutory routes to identify surface defects / improvements, vegetation / obstructions and	1-10 years	Existing revenue budget	Highways, Public lighting, Street Scene Enforcement Team & Community Safety Team (Anti Social	DDA 1995 & Hillingdon Community Safety Strategy

lighting issues			Behaviour)	
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Action 4 – Definitive Map and Statement

To update the Definitive Map and Statement, by identifying and addressing anomalies in the statutory Public Rights of Way network as required by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Action / objective	Timescale	Estimated Cost / Funding	Partnerships	Linked Plan
Action 4. Definitive Map and Statement				
4.1 Identify and address current anomalies in the DM&S, including permissive trails in relation to the DM&S	1-5 years	£ Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces, land owners, User groups & Legal Department	Green Spaces Strategy & Joint Bridleways Strategy
4.2 Clear ongoing Public Path Orders, Definitive Map Modication Orders & Legal Event Orders	1-2 years	£££ Officer time, Applicant fees	Highways, applicant & Legal Department	
4.3 Review List of Streets & DM&S to assess whether paths need to be added or removed from the DM&S	3 years	£ Officer time	Highways & Legal Department	
4.4 Update Definitive Map & Statements to incorporate changes to the network	3 years	Officer time	Highways	
4.5 Promote greater understanding between Council Departments with regard to the legal complexities of Public Rights of Way	1-10 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces, Planning & Transport, Policy and Planning (Planning and Community Services)	

Action 5 – Promotion of Network

Current promotion of the statutory Rights of Way network is limited. The aim is to provide information not just for legal procedures and practices but promoting and encouraging the use of Public Rights of Way for recreational and health benefits as well as sustainable travel methods. Green Spaces currently promote parks, nature reserves, open spaces and trails through the Council website and leaflets, Rights of Way should be incorporated into this successful model.

Action / objective	Timescale	Estimated Cost / Funding	Partnerships	Linked Plan
Action 5. Promotion of network				
5.1 Develop online information to promote Rights of Way practice, statutory legal procedure & recreational use & health promotion	1-2 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces, Healthy Hillingdon, Map Research & Web creation Team	Green Spaces Strategy, Hillingdon Community Strategy, Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme
5.2 Create shared use links between Highways & Green Spaces to promote both statutory and permissive routes	1-2 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces, Healthy Hillingdon, Map Research & Web creation Team	Green Spaces Strategy, Hillingdon Community Strategy, Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme
5.3 Continue work with the Groundwork and the Colne Valley Regional Park to update and produce new route leaflets.	1-2 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces, Groundwork (Colne Valley Park), land owner	Hillingdon Community Strategy, Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme, Colne Valley Regional Park action plan.

Action 6 – Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

The Hillingdon Community Safety Partnership (Community Safety Strategy) seeks to reduce crime in the borough which includes Public Rights of Way and adopted highways. Action 6 aims to further links with the Hillingdon Community Safety Partnership and to review crime prevention measures on Rights of Way.

Action / objective	Timescale	Estimated Cost / Funding	Partnerships	Linked Plan
Action 6. Crime and anti-social behaviour				
6.1 Further develop close working with the Community safety Partnership.	1-10 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces & Community Safety Team (Planning and Community Services)	Hillingdon Community Safety Strategy
6.2 Review crime prevention on Rights of Way with regard to the complex legal nature of Public Rights of Way	1-10 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces & Community Safety Team (Planning and Community Services)	Hillingdon Community Safety Strategy & Hillingdon Community Strategy
6.3 Continue policy of measures to limit anti social behaviour with the needs of user groups	1-10 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces, Community Safety Team (Anti Social Behaviour) & Joint Commissioning (Physically & visually Impaired)	DDA 1995 & Hillingdon Community Safety Strategy
6.4 Renew no cycling signage on footpaths with no cycling bylaws attached to them	1-3 years	££ Existing revenue budget	Highways, Green Spaces & Community Safety Team (Planning and Community Services)	Hillingdon Community Safety Strategy, Safer Routes to School Initiative & Hillingdon Community Strategy

Action 7 – Health Promotion

Public Rights of Way offer the opportunity for regular exercise and to the promote the government Change for Life Programme. By improving the network this Rights of Way Improvement Plan can help achieve these aims. Promotion is an essential element in getting greater use of the borough's network.

Action / objective	Timescale	Estimated Cost / Funding	Partnerships	Linked Plan
Action 7. Health Promotion				
7.1 Develop links between the Rights of Way network & Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme	1-3 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces & Healthy Hillingdon - (Walking for Health) & Joint Commissioning (Physically & Visually Impaired) Natural England	Hillingdon Community Strategy, Green Spaces Strategy, Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme
7.2 Help develop potential routes / walks for the Walking for Health scheme	1-3 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces & Healthy Hillingdon - (Walking for Health) & Joint Commissioning (Physically & Visually Impaired) Natural England	Hillingdon Community Strategy, Green Spaces Strategy, Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme
7.3 Promote health benefits and well being with regard to the varying uses of Rights of Way via web site. (walking, cycling & horse riding)	1-3 years	Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces & Healthy Hillingdon - (Walking for Health) & Joint Commissioning (Physically & Visually Impaired)	Hillingdon Community Strategy, Green Spaces Strategy, Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme

Action 8 – Creation of New Routes and Links

Action 8 aims to improve the connectivity of the network by addressing issues identified by the consultation process and further developing the network through the creation of routes where possible

Action / objective	Timescale	Estimated Cost / Funding	Partnerships	Linked Plan
Action 8. Creation of new routes and links				
8.1 Investigate suggestions for routes to be added to the Definitive Map & Statement or through permissive agreement	1-10 years	£ Officer time	Highways, Green Spaces, land owners & Legal services	DDA 1995 & Green Spaces Strategy
8.2 Continue to explore creating circular / multi use routes in the borough's green spaces through identified need	1-10 years	£££ Existing budgets, Local Implementation Plan funding, Chrysalis Programme, Section 106 agreement, Groundwork Partnership / funding opportunities	Highways & Green Spaces	Hillingdon Local Implementation Plan, DDA 1995, Green Spaces Strategy, Hillingdon Community Strategy, Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme
8.3 Continue to identify possible shared cycling routes and continue association with partners to develop possible routes in the borough	1-10 years	£££ Local Implementation Plan funding, Section 106 agreement, Partnership / funding opportunities	Highways, Green Spaces, Planning & Transport, Policy and Planning (Planning and Community Services), Legal services & Joint Commissioning (Physically & Visually Impaired)	Hillingdon Local Implementation Plan, DDA 1995, London Plan, Mayors Transport Policy, UDP
8.4 Renew Joint Bridleway Strategy 2004 – 2009, to address needs established by the ROWIP process.	1-2 years	£££ Staff time, Existing budgets, Chrysalis Programme & Partnership / funding opportunities	Highways, Green Spaces, Hillingdon Equestrian Advisory Committee (HEAC) & relevant user groups	DDA 1995, Green Spaces Strategy & Joint Bridleway Strategy 2004 – 2009

8 Monitoring the ROWIP

8.1 Monitoring

The Authority has a duty to review the ROWIP within a ten year period and then on a ten yearly cycle. It is intended that the ROWIP will be incorporated into the Local Implementation Plan and a review be carried out after a five year period in 2016. The Rights of Way Officer will be implementing the ROWIP and an annual delivery report will be produced to monitor the implementation of actions and any amendments to actions as the plan develops.

8.2 Deliverability

Actions have been identified for implementation over a ten year period but further consultation will have to be undertaken in relation to individual actions where appropriate. Following the endorsement of the approved ROWIP and within the next year, consultation should take place with Council officers and stake holders with a view to agreeing programme dates for each of the actions. This will however depend on available funding and resources.

It is intended that the Rights of Way Improvement Plan will be integrated into the Local Implementation Plan but the ROWIP will have to bid for funding against other LIP projects as not all of the ROWIP actions are relevant to the LIP objectives, therefore LIP funds cannot be sought for all of the actions. Funding for projects will also be sought through other organisations and opportunities.

Appendices

Appendix A:

The Policy Framework – Rights of Way Improvement Plan Links

Regional and local policies support the promotion of health, accessibility and sustainable forms of transport other than the car. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan is complementary to these policies and can help to achieve objectives set in the regional and local plans below. Identifying and linking these plans will help with funding bids and possible joint working with potential partners.

Regional Plans

Walking Plan for London

The Walking Plan for London seeks to address the issue of walking in the capital by addressing the concerns raised in the Mayor's Transport Strategy and translating them into actions. It is designed to assist all walking stakeholders to facilitate in realising the walking vision for London - particularly London Boroughs. The initiatives identified by the Walking Plan include:

- Understanding the demand for walking and the benefits of walking.
- Responding to the demand for walking with quality designed schemes.
- Provide, maintain and manage quality walking schemes.
- Promote more walking.

London Plan

The Plan provides London with its first planning and development strategy for 25 years. The plans integrated and strategic policies cover a range of areas including transport.

The fundamental objectives set out in the London Plan are:

- To accommodate London's growth within its boundaries without encroaching on open spaces.
- To promote social inclusion and tackle deprivation and discrimination.
- To improve London's accessibility.
- To make London a more attractive, well-designed and green city.

Mayors Transport Policy

The Mayor's proposals for improving transport for London are set out in his Transport Strategy.

Of direct relevance to local rights of way are:

- Making London a city where people of all ages and abilities have the incentive, confidence and facilities to cycle whenever it suits them;
- Working towards making London one of the World's most walking friendly cities by 2015;
- Reducing travel demand by influencing the modes of transport used for people and goods

Chapter 41 sets out how the Mayor intends to promote and encourage walking.

Local Plans

Hillingdon Community Strategy

Hillingdon Partners vision is to ensure Hillingdon is a pleasant and vibrant place to live and work, where every member of its community has access to excellent services and the opportunity to fulfil their potential. The Partners' vision is both ambitious and fully achievable in the long term. To reflect this long term vision they have produced a new long term Community Strategy. The Strategy was developed following consideration of the views of local people to make sure that it is an accurate reflection for the future of the borough. The strategy is a series of short, medium and long term targets and goals for our community. These have been pulled together in seven themes, as follows:

- A borough of learning and culture.
- A safe borough.
- A clean and attractive borough.
- A borough with improving health, housing and social care.
- A prosperous borough.
- A borough where opportunities are open to all .
- A borough where children and young people are healthy, safe and supported.

Hillingdon Community Safety Strategy

The Hillingdon Community Safety Partnership, which comprises the Local Authority, Police, Primary Care Trust, London Fire brigade and London Probation Service, has been in operation following the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The Purpose of the Partnership is to:

- Improve the quality of life of those who work in or visit Hillingdon by working together to reduce crime, disorder and the harm caused by drugs and alcohol and increase community safety.
- Engage the local community in action against crime to increase confidence in feeling safe.
- Undertake projects to reduce crime and disorder in the borough and monitor performance and adjust in necessary
- Promote community safety as a key issue to all departments and agencies operating in Hillingdon and as a central part of the Community Strategy adopted by the Hillingdon Local Strategic Partnership.

Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan (UDP) - Saved Policies 2007.
(The plan is due to be replaced by Local Development Frameworks).

The Unitary Development Plan sets out the current planning policies against which development proposals will be assessed.

There are five guiding principles which form the basis for the policies and proposals of this UDP, these being:

- To maintain and improve the environment.
- To meet community needs.
- To maintain a strong local economy.
- To provide access to opportunities for all residents.
- To reduce travel demand.

The following sections of the UDP relate specifically to the ROWIP.
 Part 2

Section 1 - Maintaining and Enhancing Environment.

3. Open Land and Countryside.

3.31. Access for People with Disabilities.

3.22. Green Chains.

Section 4 - Reducing Travel Demand

14. Accessibility and Movement.

14.21. Pedestrians and Wheelchair Users.

14.23. Cyclists.

Hillingdon Green Spaces Strategy & Joint Bridleways Strategy

The Green Spaces Strategy gives direction to the improvement of the Borough's Green Spaces required to meet the needs and interests of the people who live, work and play in the Borough.

The Green Spaces strategy highlights the need to address issues to do with all green spaces in the Borough (whether public or private, formal or informal) and the green corridors, pathways, highways and waterways that provide links to and between other green spaces. The Strategy contains eight themes based on creating and enhancing a borough wide network of green spaces, connecting routes and other green links.

The Eight Themes of the Strategy:

- A Borough Wide Network of Green Spaces, Connecting Routes and other Green Links – to optimise the value of Green Spaces throughout the borough to people, wildlife and the community as a whole. Help maintain the network of statutory and non-statutory footpaths, bridleways and other link ways such as canals and streams and rivers more effectively as part of the network of organisations with responsibility for these features.
- Working with Communities, Local Groups and Organisations – to support and work well with communities and local groups when planning new facilities, implementing work on site, maintaining existing facilities or promoting the use of particular Green Spaces.
- Young People and Green Spaces- to provide a wide range of appropriate facilities and activities for young people in Green Spaces. Recognising that young people need places to let off steam, socialise and enjoy the great outdoors. Addressing inappropriate uses of Green Spaces so that young people and other users are safer and can feel safe in the Borough's green spaces
- Community Safety issues related to Green Spaces- to continue to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and fear of crime/anti-social behaviour in Green Spaces, continuing to make parks patrol work more visible and effective, with community support.
- Using Green Spaces for Sports and Recreation- to encourage the use of the Borough's Green Spaces for appropriate sports and recreation by people of all ages and backgrounds. Catering for informal and formal sports and informal recreational use and providing good quality facilities to encourage participation in these healthy and socially beneficial activities. To ensure that the Borough achieves the national "6 Acres" standard for playing pitches set by Sports England and best practice provision for other recreational uses.
- Nature Conservation and Attractive Sites – to optimise the nature conservation (biodiversity) and visual amenity value of green spaces. Making all the sites important and attractive features in the locality, thereby enhancing the image of the area, thereby providing social and economic benefits for the immediate area and borough as a whole.

- Gaining increased Health and Educational Benefits from Green Spaces - to ensure that Green Spaces contribute positively to the health and well being of people throughout the borough and to provide educational opportunities for children, young people and adults as part of the borough's commitment to lifelong learning objectives.
- Promoting Green Spaces, Facilities and Events - to ensure that people through out the borough and more widely are able to take part in an appropriate range of events and activities on Green Spaces throughout the Borough. Ensuring equal opportunities for all.

Joint Bridleways Strategy

The strategy provided an overview of the current network of bridleways with the aim of producing a systematic approach to maintaining and improving existing bridleways. The strategy formed the basis for discussion and enabled progress to be made with improvements to bridleways around the borough. The strategy is due to be reviewed in 2009 which will give the opportunity to encompass improvements highlighted in the ROWIP.

Walking the way to Health Initiative & Change4Life Programme

The Walking the Way to Health Initiative is championed by Natural England and has created local health walk schemes around the country. The initiative is a nationally evaluated programme that maintains high standards for healthy walks, Hillingdon gained accreditation in 2008.

Change4Life Programme

The Department for Health initiative is a society wide movement which aims to highlight the importance of exercise to address problems related to physical inactivity. The aim is to achieve this through relating to communities the health risks of inactivity and promoting healthy eating and walking and to incorporate resources such as local walks and parks into their everyday lifestyles.

Safer Routes to School Initiative

Contained within the School Travel Plan Strategy, the SRtS Initiative aims to combat the increasing trend in car usage on pupils and teachers journeys to and from borough schools. SRtS determines a programme of action that, through redress of actual and perceived danger along the school route, can reduce dependence on the motorcar and encourage other forms of transport.

In developing SRtS, Hillingdon's primary goal is to make existing routes for walking, cycling and public transport safer whilst the secondary goal is to encourage people to consider other modes of travel, besides the car, for journeys to and from school. Associated benefits targeted include greater road safety awareness, an increase in environmental and health benefits and

setting the pattern for future SRtS initiatives.

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005

The DDA requires people with a disability to be treated fairly. It identifies what every organisation must do to make sure that it is treating people with a disability fairly. The DDA became law in 1995. It made it illegal to discriminate against disabled people on the grounds of their disability. Since 1999 service providers, including those who run airports, ports, train and bus stations, have had to make 'reasonable adjustments' to make those services accessible. From October 2004 they have had to take reasonable steps to remove physical obstacles. The DDA is a law that says that people with a disability must be treated fairly. It says what every organisation must do to make sure that it is treating people with a disability fairly.

Colne Valley Park Regional Plan

The Colne Valley Partnership was established in 1965, members of the partnership are 8 local authorities, Groundwork and the Chiltern Society.

The 5 key aims of the Colne Valley Park are:

- To maintain and enhance the landscape, historic environment and waterscape of the park in terms of their scenic and conservation value and their overall amenity.
- To resist urbanisation of the Colne Valley Park and to safeguard existing areas of countryside from inappropriate development.
- To conserve the biodiversity resources of the park through the protection and management of its diverse plant and animal species, habitats and geological features.
- To provide opportunities for countryside recreation including appropriate accessible facilities.
- To achieve a vibrant and sustainable rural economy, including farming and forestry, underpinning the value of the countryside.

The Colne Valley Park Action Plan 2009-12 aims to tie together the works of local authorities and ensure that park-wide projects are executed in a co-ordinated and efficient manner.

Appendix B:

Description of problem routes highlighted by survey and consultation

R4 – Sandy Lodge Way to R5

Partially blocked by 2 veteran Oak trees.

R5 – R4 to Eastbury Road

Partially blocked by 2 veteran Oak trees and stump, dilapidated residential fencing causes partial blockages.

R6 – Eastbury Road to Eastbury Avenue

Partially blocked by veteran Oak tree and Elder tree.

R7 – Eastbury Avenue to Watford Road.

Partially blocked by veteran Oak tree and Hawthorn tree, dilapidated residential fencing causing partial blockages, 3 drain covers which have faulty covers and settings, section of path suffers from flooding and vegetation encroachment from neighbouring properties.

R8 – Watford Road to Potter Street Hill

Partially blocked by veteran Oak tree and 2 stumps, 8 veteran Oak trees and 6 Ash trees line the route and although they do not block the route some of their roots protrude through the surface, dilapidated residential fencing causing partial blockages, vegetation encroachment from neighbouring properties and surface defects.

R12 – Rickmansworth Road to White Hill / borough boundary

Footpath blocked by development of Bishops Wood Hospital.

U11- Jackets Lane to Northwood Road

Physical blockage in the form of fencing and faulty stile.

U32 – U35 / Park Lodge Farm track to U24 / Breakspear Path

2 faulty stiles and fencing / vegetation blockage.

U31 – U32 / Park Lodge Farm track to U26 / U28

3 faulty stiles.

U30 – Harvil Road to Harvil Road.

Footpath has 4 different blockages through fencing and scrub.

U38 – Newyears Green Lane to Breakspear Road North.

2 faulty stiles and blockage through scrub and fencing. One section of this path through St Leonard's farm is also now a working storage yard with heavy vehicles in use.

U39 – Newyears Green Lane to U41/ Pylon Farm.

Development of West London Composting LTD, application to divert footpath received.

U86 – Bayhurst Wood.

Sections of path suffer from the elements and become muddy in winter.

R93, R79, R80, R81 – Mad Bess Wood.

Sections of paths suffer from the elements and become muddy in winter.

R69, R70 – Copse Wood.

Sections of paths suffer from the elements and become muddy in winter.

R190, R189 - Copse Wood Bridleways – Ducks Hill Road

Erosion of surfaces, Sections of paths suffer from the elements and become muddy in winter.

R109, R127, R126, R124 - Park Wood.

Sections of paths suffer from the elements and become muddy in winter.

R154 – Eastcote Road to Field End Road.

Mature trees have disturbed section of the surface and dilapidated sections of fencing line parts of the route. The former RAF Eastcote site is now under development with improvements to the footpath highlighted as part of the project.

R171 – Field End Recreation Ground - Field End Road to Yeading Avenue.

The footpath is routed through Field End Recreation Ground which was land filled, a section of the path is suffering from erosion which is now revealing bricks and rubble in the surface.

R145 – Ruislip Golf Course

Section of path suffering from surface erosion, which is slopping the path.

U84 – Copthall Road West – U51 / Breakspear Road South

Erosion of surface has revealed utilities works and slopping of the path.

U55 – Long Lane Farm to Burnham Avenue.

1 faulty stile and blockage of route through locked gate.

U56 & U57 - Frays River Braybourne Close to Shire Ditch

Section of the route suffering from river bank erosion, which is slopping the path into the river.

U96 – Hillingdon House Farm

Section of route blocked through scrub.

U63 – Former RAF Uxbridge- Hillingdon Road to Vine Lane

Footpath is currently closed under anti terrorist legislation with the site now due to be developed.

U69 – Church Road to High Road, Cowley.

Faulty stile.

U65 – Cowley Mill Road to Iver Lane.

The route has suffered from illegal motorbike use and fly tipping.

R48 – Wiltshire Lane to Haste Hill Golf Course

Path suffering from erosion leading to gullying of surface.

R158 – Warrender Way to Myrtle Avenue

Surface eroded and uneven, suffering from puddling.

R55 & R54 – Chamberlain Way to Chamberlain Lane

Surface eroding and breaking up.

U73 – Charville Lane to Sharvel Lane

Severe surface erosion of route, muddy conditions and erosion of Yeading Brook which has led to bridleway erosion and collapse.

Jackets Lane – Ancient Highway

Severe erosion of one section of surface which is now revealing hard core base.

Bibliography

- Rights of Way Improvement Plans Statutory Guidance to Local Highways Authorities in England. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, November 2002