

Local Access Forum

2 June 2026

Item 9, Report from Sub-Group considering the feasibility of creating further Public Rights of Way for the Lyke Wake Walk

Gerry Orchard, George Winn-Darley, Joel Brookfield & John Toogood met to consider this subject.

GW-D provided a detailed paper (available to LAF members from Judith Seaton) outlining the reasons, that in his view there is no need for any more rights of way to be created which can be summarised:

1. Demand has dwindled to around 400 participants a year, there are many other long-distance walks in existence now, that did not exist when the LWW was at its height of popularity
2. The moor was designated an SSSI, SAC, and SPA between 1998 and 2005. Peat restoration is a priority due to historic erosion from the walk. Any formal route would require protective surfacing or paving in some way. The cost of which would be extremely high and there is no economic justification.
3. The route is through open access country that although can in theory be closed for 28 days a year, this has never happened and for all intents and purposes; is unenforceable for landowners. There is therefore no realistic legal impediment to anyone continuing to use the route.
4. Landowners have supported the permissive route for 70 years. Formalising it as a public right of way could be seen as a betrayal if an attempt is now made to claim it as a Public Right of Way.
5. The walk remains accessible to anyone who particularly wants to do it as there is nothing physically stopping them albeit many prefer that usage stays low. CROW rights provide a legal right to walk on the moorland over the route.

It was suggested that the first sub-group meeting that the route could be amended to now follow part of the C2C route. This suggestion has however been rejected by the New Lyke Wake Walk Club.

The sub-group has robustly debated the proposal and recommend the LAF does not support the New Lyke Wake Walk Club's proposal to create additional rights of way to those currently in existence.

John Toogood