

## Item 8

### Multi User Routes

This is the first Principle in the North Yorkshire LAF list of principles, also agreed by the Dales LAF, see **Appendix 1**. The point about new access being multi-user (unless it is impossible) is that it is:

- Best value of the resources in terms of land available and funding
- It provides widest usage amongst the NMU's, and ticks the 'inclusive approach' box that LAFs are required by remit to adopt.
- It does not discriminate against any one particular user-group, and ticks the equal opportunity box

Therefore unless the path, for instance, was a new route to schools through narrow urban ways, or was totally impractical in some other way, it is expected that any new path should be **multi-user** or for **shared use**. I use these phrases because although it will include horses, these days mobility scooters are very much part of the scene, and if you say '**bridleway**' some people may think it is primarily for horses and be worried about using it.

With regard to the perception of 'conflict', this is something planners and other worry about, but in reality peer pressure from users usually sorts out any difficulties, and I would refer anyone to the research by Surry University on this subject, and the successfully shared railway lines in Co. Durham which was the first county to experiment with many shared use routes. The LAF message should be that sharing is sensible and responsible, recognising the fact that all NMUs need good provision, because the roads and verges are so unsafe and unpleasant.

Incidentally, the Principles were first adopted by our LAF in 2008 and revised in 2009 (only the odd word or two – the main statements gave the same message)

Best wishes

**Rachel Connelly**

**North Yorkshire Local Access Forum**

### Revised Principles

Local Access Forums perform a statutory function and all section 94(4) bodies are required under section 94(5) of the CROW Act to 'have regard in carrying out their functions to any relevant advice given to them' by a forum.

Reflecting the directives given to forums, the North Yorkshire LAF has drawn up a set of principles which now underpin their work and advice.

- Any new access should be at the highest rights practicable
- All rights of way should be maintained to the standard required and where appropriate upgraded physically and legally to a higher standard
- The Forum will work to see rights of way developed to redress the fragmentation of the network, connect communities and improve links to places of demand
- The Forum will work to develop more access opportunities to include the widest possible range of users, especially families, children, minority groups and the less able
- The Forum seeks the establishment of an annual budget to fund the fulfilling of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP)
- Whilst the creation of all access is welcome, then Forum stresses that permissive (temporary) access does not equate with the public benefit of definitive (permanent) access
- The Forum wishes to raise awareness of how different users can enjoy responsible sharing of routes where appropriate, whilst supporting challenges to illegal use
- The Forum recognises the establishment and challenges of new initiatives such as coastal access, access to water, access to woodland and dedication of land for public access
- The Forum supports the continuation of Best Value Performance Indicator for rights of way (BVPI 178) to measure the ease of use of rights of way in the county

The Forum welcomes consultation from all section 94(4) bodies or others who feel they might benefit from discussion with them. For further information please contact the chairman through:

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