

Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy 2007



*Incorporating Cornwall's
Rights of Way Improvement Plan*

Cornwall has an outstanding coastline and countryside of nationally and internationally renowned importance.

Access to Cornwall's countryside is recognised as an essential part of the lives of the people who live here. It provides a cultural connection and an enormous sense of well-being, together with benefits to health and is a largely free recreational resource. It is also recognised as one of Cornwall's important tourism assets, which attracts visitors to the county, providing economic benefits through jobs and investment.

A Strategy is nothing without an action plan that outlines how we will deliver against our policies and priorities. This Strategy sets out actions for Cornwall County Council and its Partners that will manage and enhance access opportunities for all to Cornwall's countryside over the coming years.

It will be reviewed at regular intervals and used to help shape the future delivery of improved services. It will also serve as a way to measure progress made. Although the Strategy has been produced by Cornwall County Council, many individuals, groups, organisations and members of Cornwall's distinctive communities have influenced its content. It will only be with the help of those contributors that such a Strategy to improve access to Cornwall's countryside can be delivered for the benefit of all.

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Foreword

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This Strategy is produced in recognition of the value and role that access to the countryside plays for many people in Cornwall and visitors to the county. It will help to guide where effort needs to be focused, and to make the most of the available resources, and to identify where additional ones may be required. It will also provide a framework to review performance.

- The Strategy will include topics focusing on the important public rights of way network and its management, but it will also include sections on other access opportunities to ensure that an integrated approach to access management is taken.
- The Strategy will deliver improvements where most benefit to users can be achieved and which will provide 'added value'. Some of these activities may be statutory and some may be provided because there is demand for such provision, and that the facility provides other benefits in areas such as healthy living or to provide economic opportunities for the local community.

It is recognised that in producing such a Strategy there will be a need for it to be re-visited in the future to ensure that it can be adapted to be 'fit for purpose' and to ensure that it incorporates the most up to date information available. Most importantly it seeks to meet the needs of the people who want to experience some of the exceptional countryside that Cornwall has to offer.

The Strategy is set out in the following way:

- Section 1** provides an Introduction and gives some background to how countryside access in the county has developed over time.
- Section 2** identifies the extent of the different types of access which are already available in Cornwall.
- Section 3** explains how this Strategy has been developed and outlines the needs of the different users of our countryside.
- Section 4** sets the context in which such a Strategy needs to operate.
- Section 5** sets out the key Policies and the 'Statement of Action' that will lead to improvements in access. Target setting is included where appropriate.
- Section 6** provides the summary tables of Policies and Actions.
- Section 7** identifies the need to monitor and review the Strategy, its policies and actions.
- Section 8** highlights additional resources that will be required to begin implementation of some of the actions within the Strategy.

1.1 The Aim of the Strategy

The aim of this Strategy is to set out actions for Cornwall County Council and its Partners that will manage and enhance access opportunities for all to Cornwall's countryside over the coming years.

1.2 Background

Cornwall's landscape quality is consistently recognised as a key asset and a reason for wanting to live in or visit the county. It has many designations, the most recent of which, World Heritage Site status, was achieved on the 13 July 2006. Consultation undertaken with the people of Cornwall has shown that access to the countryside is extremely important. For example, 98.2% of respondents to the People's Panel survey in October 2005 said that they enjoyed or greatly enjoyed open spaces, with 73.9% of them doing so on a monthly basis.

Access to the countryside in Cornwall in the past has largely been shaped by land use needs, geography, distribution of natural resources and settlement patterns. More recently access has been influenced by changes in use such as recreation and tourism, the green transport agenda, and by law specifically designed to enhance access, such as the CRoW Act 2000¹. In addition, designations such as the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with specific management plans that promote access, have, together with externally funded initiatives enabled enhancements to access. An example of this is the Mineral Tramways suite of trails, and associated site conservation measures, that is becoming increasingly popular with users.

It is important to understand how access needs have changed in order to assess how demands on access requirements in the future may influence the way we deliver services and target resources.

1.3 Historical Influences

Access in Cornwall today has strong links with the county's history. Our lanes, paths and trails act almost as a microcosm of its history, highlighting many defining elements which have shaped the Cornish countryside and way of life: church paths, canal paths, carriage drives, rail and tramways, mining tracks and the South West Coast Path National Trail.

Some of these early routes developed into the road network of modern Cornwall. Others remain as links to abandoned industrial sites and unoccupied or lost settlements. The coastal path, seen in many respects as the jewel in Cornwall's crown, was established by the Preventative and Coastguard Services to control smuggling and piracy. It includes many beacon sites which warned of possible invasion during times of international unrest. 'Sanding ways' provided a means to collect sand and gather seaweed to improve the condition of soils for agricultural use. Nowadays some provide much needed access to beaches and are therefore still in use but for a different purpose.

Inland routes linked farm and mine workers to their homes and places of work. Others linked directly from farms to open grazing on moorland and commons. Many of the routes in use today result from the past farming and mining activity that has shaped the landscape in large parts of the county. The need for more efficient transport methods resulted in the progression from mule packs to horse drawn tramways on wooden rails and later to railways. Some of the routes now lend themselves to development as recreational routes, such as the Camel Trail and are extremely popular, in part because the engineers who built the original tramway or railway generally followed even gradients where this was possible.

Over more recent times, as interest in history, the environment and leisure has grown, a number of sites around the county have been acquired by local authorities and other national organisations. Examples are Bodmin Beacon, Carn Brea and Seaton Valley which are now managed in partnership with the local community and used for educational purposes, recreation and exercise and are held in high regard by those that use them.

The National Trust's ongoing Neptune Coastline campaign has helped them to increase their coastal ownership to well in excess of one hundred miles in Cornwall, much of which can be enjoyed by visitors.

Open Access land, brought into being by the CRoW Act (operative in Cornwall from August 2005) on areas of Mountain, Moor, Heath, Down and registered common land provides a further area in excess of 20,000 hectares of land available for public access on foot.

It is important to consider this history of access together with particular relevance to today's needs in order to plan an effective strategy for the future.

¹ Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

1.4 User Requirement and Partnership Working

The current need for access to the Cornish countryside is largely lifestyle and leisure orientated. This access is vital to the health and well-being of the resident population as well as the visitors that enjoy our countryside all year around.

It is most important that the strategy takes into account the diverse nature of leisure activities that need access.

In developing the strategy and its implementation it is most important that it is developed and planned in partnership with the different user groups, partner organisations, landowners, managers, occupiers and property owners.

Implementation will require working with partner organisations, local communities and people who use the countryside for recreation or to support their income. A number of the actions will require additional resources if they are to be delivered. This will require both internal and external funding from the County Council and other bodies.

It is useful to look at the different types of access and how they contribute to meeting the needs of both residents and visitors. It is important that this information is understood to enable planning of the future strategy.

2.1 Coastal Access

Cornwall is renowned for its beautiful coastline and its beaches.

2.1.1 The South West Coast Path

The South West Coast Path National Trail is the longest of the National Trails at 630 miles in length, with about 300 miles in Cornwall. It provides access to some of the most dramatic scenery in the country and complements other access on and to beaches, coastal historic sites, Open Access land and other paths leading inland. It passes through National Trust land in an estimated 28% of its length (in Cornwall the National Trust own 119 miles of coastline). Research has suggested that it generates £97 million annually to the economy of Cornwall. The management of the Coast Path is co-ordinated by the South West Coast Path Team and involves many partners to ensure that strategic decision making is backed up by high quality ground works.

2.1.2 Beaches

There are estimated to be 150 – 200 beaches in Cornwall, depending on the definition of a beach. Access varies, due to the tidal conditions, ownership and infrastructure, on a site by site basis. Some beaches have no facilities for visitors and may have no parking provision close to them and others have pubs, toilets, shops, parking, cafes etc on or near to them.

Ownership of beaches varies and generally includes district councils, the National Trust, the Duchy of Cornwall, the Crown and other estates, businesses and private individuals. Many have access which is complemented or provided by the South West Coast Path or other paths, some have direct access from the public highway and some require a scramble down narrow paths or cliffs. Others may have access across private land. There may be byelaws in place that restrict behaviour or use, but this varies from site to site, depending on local needs.

Beaches form an important part of the culture in Cornwall, offering world class surfing, sunbathing, walking and a space to carry out other activities. Generally they provide free recreational opportunities and attract local people and visitors who then stimulate the economy through spend whilst there. Parking can sometimes become an issue on some of the busier beaches or where ad-hoc use of verges or wildlife habitat occurs. There can sometimes be conflicting uses of the beach itself and may be issues where damage to wildlife habitat can occur on some dunes,

for example, through sheer numbers or particular activities. Careful access management can play a key role to help address and minimise the detrimental effects of such access.

Work is currently being undertaken by Natural England to explore options for further coastal access on a national basis.

2.1.3 Estuaries

Major estuaries form a very important part of the Cornish coast. On the north coast there is the Camel Estuary. On the south coast there are extensive estuaries around Truro, Falmouth and Helford. In the east of the county there is the Tamar and the Lynher. These are very important recreational areas for boating as well as for their beautiful scenery.

Access to the water on tidal estuaries is freely available to all water craft. Access to the land surrounding the estuaries is very variable. The South West Coast Path excludes all the major estuaries. It uses ferries to bypass them.

There are public footpaths to, and along, parts of some estuaries. The Camel Trail now provides good access along the south of the Camel Estuary. However, the Helford Estuary beyond Helford can only be reached at a few places. Access on the Falmouth and Truro estuaries is very patchy with most parts of the estuaries unreachable.

The only way to access many parts is by water, yet getting to the water can be very difficult. Access for boating is very limited, apart from Falmouth and Mylor. There is only private access at Helford.

2.2 Public Rights of Way

Local public rights of way² provide an invaluable network of footpaths, bridleways, byways and restricted byways, extending right across the county from the coast and hills to valleys and villages. In the past, many of these paths were used mainly by local people to go to work, to reach church or to travel between farms and settlements. Today they enable people to get away from the busy roads and enjoy the beauty and tranquillity of the countryside.

² A public right of way is a route over which the public has a legal right of passage. Most public rights of way are recorded on the definitive map/statement; however, there are also PRoW which are not yet recorded onto the definitive map for a variety of reasons. This does not affect their legal status but means that they are not formally recorded.

Within communities, local rights of way still provide convenient routes, linking to schools, shops and open spaces, used by many on a daily basis for fresh air and exercise.

Visitors to the county are drawn by the inspiring Cornish landscape and heritage; local rights of way are important for tourism, well-being and contribute to the local economy.

Cornwall currently has 2,705 miles (4,352 km) (2006 figure) of recorded Public Rights of Way which includes 300 miles (482 km) of the South West Coast Path National Trail. This network undoubtedly forms the 'backbone' to countryside access which other types of access can complement.

The current breakdown of public rights of way is as follows:

Types of Public Rights of Way	Length in Cornwall (2006 figure)	Legal Use
Footpaths	2,203 miles (3,545 km)	Use on foot only
Bridleways	376 miles (605 km)	Use on foot, horseback and pedal cycle
Restricted Byway	0 miles (0 km)	Foot, horseback, cycle, carriage
Byways	126 miles (202 km)	Foot, horseback, cycle, carriage and motor vehicles

Cornwall County Council, as the Local Highway Authority, has statutory duties to ensure that these ways are adequately signposted, maintained and remain free from obstruction.

The inland paths network in Cornwall has for a long time been the poor relation to coastal access routes and insufficient funding has been available to keep the network in good condition. The network requires significant investment if its socio-economic and environmental benefits are to be fully realised.

The current condition of much of the inland network discourages potential users, both residents and visitors, from accessing many parts of the countryside.

In Cornwall the Definitive Map and Statement of public rights of way, the legal record, currently contains many anomalies and errors. The accuracy of the Definitive

Map makes the paths network often difficult to use and prone to disputes over rights of access, which can affect both the user and land manager.

The management and maintenance of the majority of public paths is co-ordinated through the Living Environment Service, based within the Environment and Heritage Service of Cornwall County Council. Some 'urban paths' (generally in towns and villages with sealed surfaces) are maintained by the Highways section that are better placed to manage paths of this character.

Maps 1 and 2 illustrate the distribution of Cornwall's public rights of way and their priority status (see section 5.2.4a).

2.3 Promoted Trails

Complementing the South West Coast Path, a National Trail, there are other promoted trails that utilise public rights of way. These range from European Cultural Routes to local parish walks.

The most well known of these include:

The Saints Way which runs from Padstow to Fowey (30 miles/48 km) and follows a travel corridor established when Celtic culture linked Ireland to Brittany via Cornwall. The Saints Way is well publicised and is, as a result, seeing an increase in use.

The St Michaels Way in the west of the county is another culturally significant coast-to-coast route, running from Lelant on the north coast to St Michaels Mount (12.5 miles/19.5 km) on the south coast.

Multi-use Trails:

There are a growing number of multi-use trails that are managed by local authorities with the help of many partners and local communities. Multi-use trails are in the main used by walkers, horse riders and cyclists and other users where appropriate. They provide an easy introduction and encouragement for more to enjoy the outdoors environment.

The most well known of these is the Camel Trail which attracts 350,000 – 400,000 people annually. The popularity of these trails is growing because they are largely traffic free routes in spectacular countryside which can easily be enjoyed by a variety of users.

Examples of Multi-use Trails include:

- The Camel Trail
- The Mineral Tramways network of trails around Redruth
- Portreath to Devoran – Coast to Coast
- Off road parts of the Cornish Way (National Cycle Network or NCN)
- The Clay Trails to the Eden Project
- Newham Trail

2.4 Other Paths

There are many other paths and tracks in Cornwall which the public have used but which are not recorded on the definitive map and statement.

2.5 Open Access Land

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 has given the legal right to access approximately 21,109 hectares in Cornwall on foot. Though much of this new open access land has enjoyed past 'de facto' access or previous permissive arrangements, its designation under the CRoW Act represents a significant new access opportunity. As the Access Authority, Cornwall County Council works with Natural England, farmers and other land managers to facilitate responsible access. Open Access land is especially attractive for those looking for undeveloped, more challenging access. Some open access sites are effectively 'islands' (25 sites in Cornwall), where access to those sites themselves is not in place. The larger areas of open access land cover parts of Bodmin Moor, the Lizard Peninsula and parts of West Penwith.



2.6 Permissive Access

Permissive access is available on some public and privately owned land. Some of this access may be 'open' and other access may be along specific paths and trails.

2.6.1 Land owned or managed by the Local Authorities and other public bodies (sometimes jointly) where public access is available

Local authorities own/co-own or provide management input to a number of sites and trails that the public can enjoy the use of. These are managed in a variety of ways including: direct management, lease arrangements, management agreements and joint management. This flexible approach allows the most suitable mechanism to be used in each situation, taking into account the views of local people and the needs of the site or trail.

Examples of sites include:

- Kit Hill
- Bodmin Beacon
- Seaton Valley
- Carn Brea
- Poldice Valley
- Steeple Woods
- Par Green
- Tehidy Country Park
- Upton Towans
- Luxulyan Valley
- Mount Edgumbe
- Penhale
- Ministry of Defence estate land

In addition, district councils are currently carrying out audits of open space provision in their areas to ascertain future needs and management requirements. These include:

- Play areas
- Formal parks
- Gardens
- Local Nature Reserves
- Other publicly accessible open spaces

These spaces play an important part in providing places that people can use in their local area. They may be the only opportunity for some people to enjoy their local environment if they do not have access to a car or good public transport links. They may be used on a daily basis and are important for recreation, exercise such as dog walking, and general well-being and quality of life.

2.6.2 Forestry / Woodland



The National Inventory of woodland and trees carried out for the Forestry Commission, published in 2002, reported that there were 26,869 hectares of woodland (includes woods of 0.1 hectare and over) in Cornwall, representing 7.5% of the land area. It is not clear at the present time how much of this is accessible on a formal basis or otherwise. The Forestry Commission (who provide access to their woodlands with a few

exceptions) and the Woodland Trust (who provide a directory of their woodlands) are working hard to provide opportunities and data to enable woodland access. Further information can be found via:

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/fchomepages.nsf/hp/England>
and <http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/>

Examples in Cornwall include Idless Woods and Cardinham Woods, which are well used facilities within reach of centres of population in Cornwall and offer a different experience to open countryside. They provide a home for wildlife but may also provide opportunities for mountain biking or orienteering events to be held within them. Places such as Tehidy Country Park, attract large numbers of visits during the spectacular Bluebell flowering season or for a stroll around the lake. Sometimes these visits are combined with a walk using the Public Rights of Way path network.

2.6.3 The National Trust

The National Trust have made an on-going commitment to accessibility in its widest sense. As a significant landowner within Cornwall, including coastline (119 miles) and countryside, together with other properties, the National Trust plays an important and valued part in undertaking management work on sites and paths that allow the public to benefit from access opportunities. The partnership arrangements that the County Council has with the National Trust to carry out maintenance and improvement works to the South West Coast Path are a good example of how working together can deliver a quality experience for the user.

The National Trust offer access within estate grounds such as that found at Lanhydrock House, near Bodmin and in complete contrast, they also provide access to the wildest parts of Cornwall's cliffs and moors such as those found in Penwith. Some of their sites provide facilities including interpretation, shops and toilets and a number of their properties offer access for the mobility impaired.

2.6.4 Nature Reserves

Nature Reserves are managed predominantly for the benefit of nature, but where it is appropriate to do so, public access to them is encouraged.

There are four National Nature Reserves in Cornwall managed by Natural England; these are Golitha Falls (18 hectares/44 acres), The Lizard (1,662 hectares/4,106 acres), Goss Moor (482 hectares/1,191 acres), and Carrine Common (19.76 hectares/48 acres). The County Council is also working closely with Natural England on a multi-use trail for Goss Moor, as one of many positive outcomes of re-routing the A30 in this area.

The Cornwall Wildlife Trust has a portfolio of 54 nature reserves (1,928 hectares/4,764.11 acres) across the county. Access provision varies and it needs to be noted that some are by permit only in order to manage the impact of visitors to these important areas.

There are also a number of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) currently designated in Cornwall, including Bodmin Beacon, Gwithian Green, Gwithian Towans, Kilminorth Woods, Steeple Woods, Bude Marshes, Red River, St Gothian Sands, Seaton Valley, Swanpool and Upton Towans, with further designations pending. Many of these sites are managed by local authorities, others are by local community groups.

Map 3 illustrates areas of land accessible for public use.

2.6.5 Agri-Environment Scheme provision for Landowners and Farmers

Agri-environment schemes such as Countryside Stewardship have now been replaced with the Entry Level and Higher Level Schemes (although some existing Countryside Stewardship Agreements still have a term to run). Amongst the benefits to date has been a significant contribution to improving access to the countryside. This tends to be on a ten year basis i.e. for the life of the individual site Agreement. Applicants can attract payments for permissive open or linear access, enhancing access for people with reduced mobility, permissive bridleway or cycle access and for educational access. There may be payments to facilitate such access where gates/stiles/wooden footbridges or hard standing are needed.

In addition, scheme Agreement holders are also reminded of their obligations to maintain public rights of way and it is a condition of the scheme that they do so, in addition to any obligations under Cross Compliance, to receive the Single Farm Payment. This includes keeping ways clear of obstructions, making sure that field paths are managed appropriately and that, where it is the responsibility of the agreement holder to do so, signs, gates, bridges and stiles are maintained in good order.

Schemes of this nature can offer opportunities to link the public rights of way network and access land to other permissive routes. They may provide circular route options that would not otherwise be possible. In Cornwall (at the time ELS and HLS Schemes were introduced) there were 93 Agreements that included access, mostly on farms but not exclusively. This extended the permissive path network by a figure approaching 60 km. In addition there were a further 53 agreements including educational access, requiring at least four visits per year to be organised.

A link to Defra's site where conservation walks and rides can be found is given below.

<http://cwr.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=Home>

2.6.6 Other land with De Facto Permissive Access

There are areas of Cornwall where access is enjoyed by the public where formal arrangements are not necessarily in place. Traditionally this only tends to become an issue where this land is being used inappropriately or damage is being caused, or where the public access is affected.

2.7 The Road Network

Trunk roads are managed by the Highways Agency in Cornwall (beyond Penzance the A30 is not a Trunk Road). Levels of traffic are such on these roads that they are seldom attractive for countryside access.

However, other roads incorporate dedicated lanes for cyclists and provide valuable links to travel to work, connections to trails or for other utility trips.

Other public roads in Cornwall are maintained by the County Council (4457 miles/ 7175 km). The A and B class roads are generally also too busy for leisure access, other than to facilitate linking paths together.

Roads can often create barriers that are difficult or impossible for the more vulnerable users such as walkers, and especially horse riders, to overcome.

Footways are often provided in urban areas, but are frequently not available in rural areas. Verges may be available areas as an alternative, but maintenance regimes, drainage structures and the siting of signage can sometimes reduce their value to the walker or rider. An examination of verge maintenance regimes may offer potential for improved, safer access.

2.8 Access on/to Inland Water



The coast around Cornwall provides a wide range of opportunities for enjoyment and leisure but many people also feel a special sense of pleasure and relaxation from visiting inland rivers, streams and other freshwater haunts. However, the public do not have a right of access to many of these waterways whether this is for a riverside walk, a quiet paddle in a canoe or more exciting 'white water' sport.

There is a right of navigation on tidal reaches of rivers such as the Tamar, Camel, Fal, Fowey, Gannel and Lynher. In a few places, voluntary agreements have been reached between canoeing interests and land/riparian owners. Access under these agreements may be limited to a certain number of days at agreed times of the year. Elsewhere, as in the rest of England and Wales, there is no general legal right of public access.

Inland waters are a special resource and significant efforts are being made in Cornwall to ensure the purity of our rivers and to maintain the water environment. Interests to be considered include the need to protect ground water resources and to provide for water abstraction as well as maintaining a diverse and rich environment available for the enjoyment of all.

Cornwall also has a number of inland stretches of open water in lakes and reservoirs including those at Sibbyback, Crowdy, Colliford, Tamar Lakes, Stithians and Argal. The South West Lakes Trust is an independent charity which was established to promote and enhance sustainable recreation, access and nature conservation on inland waters; activities such as angling, canoeing and sailing are already catered for on most of the sites that the Trust manages in Cornwall. See www.swlakestrust.org.uk

2.9 Information and Awareness

In tandem with providing physical access to the countryside is the need to provide information.

This information may need to serve many different purposes, for example to instruct people to follow the Countryside Code for their safety and to protect the livelihoods of landowners/managers. It may also be to educate; this can be formal through outdoor visits by schools, or to provide information about a site which someone is visiting.

Information can often be critical in influencing the behaviour of visitors to ensure they use the countryside safely and responsibly and is delivered by a variety of methods. Increasingly the internet is being employed as a tool to reach people, but there is still a demand for more traditional books and leaflets that people can refer to whilst enjoying their visit. Information (or lack of it) can be a determining factor in whether people have an enjoyable experience and it may provide the only means to find out about a place for people if they cannot physically visit a location themselves.

There are currently a suite of leaflets and other publications that the County Council provides to provide information on multi-use trails, country parks, cycling on the Cornish Way as examples. This is supplemented by walks booklets which often contain historical and natural heritage information to provide added interests. These tend to be available in tourist information centres, libraries, some local outlets etc.

The key purpose of this strategy is to identify how access to the countryside needs to be improved and how this can be achieved.

Knowing what people want is vital if the right improvements are to be made. Therefore a significant consultation process took place with interested parties before this strategy was drafted in order to identify and understand the needs of different user groups, businesses, landowners and farmers.



The consultation involved: the Cornwall Countryside Access Forum, and a series of questionnaires to the People's Panel, Users, Organisations, Businesses and Land Managers. In addition three focus groups and a Service Providers workshop were also held.

3.1 Results Summary

3.1.1 Questionnaire Results

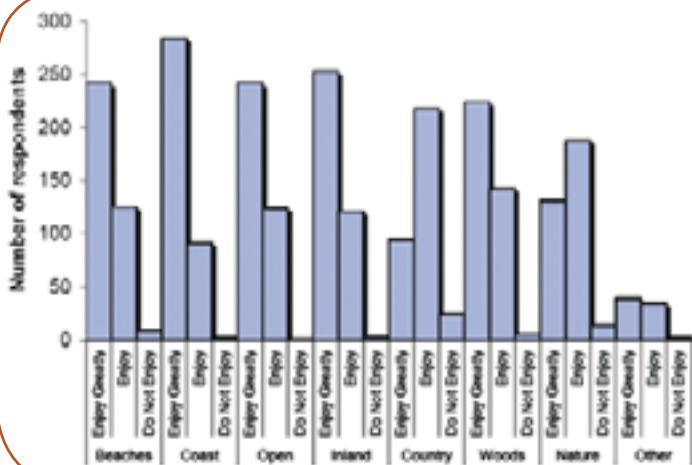
The full results of the wide consultation process are available at <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=28995>.

The key messages from the consultation have been included in this document to provide an outline of the results and are illustrated in the questions and results below:

Which aspects of the countryside in Cornwall do you most enjoy visiting?

The results showed that the coastal access was the aspect of the Cornish countryside that the majority of respondents (71.6%) enjoyed greatly, with 61% feeling the same about beaches and 63% greatly enjoying the inland rights of way. Country parks were enjoyed least (6.32%) but overall respondents seem to enjoy all of the options, with no aspect 'not enjoyed' by more than 10%

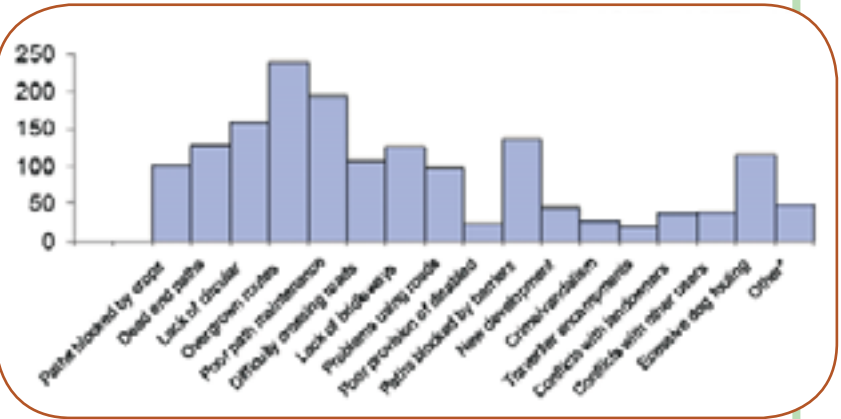
In the last year which of the following have been an issue for you in the Cornish countryside?



The major issue appeared to be that of overgrown routes (60.2% response), followed by poor path maintenance, blocked paths and lack of bridleways and circular routes.

The most popular use of paths was: Walking and running followed by cycling and horse riding.

3.1.2 Results from the People's Panel Survey



The results reported from the People's Panel survey in October 2005 (709 responses) clearly show there is a demand for access to the countryside in a variety of forms. When asked which aspects of visits to the countryside in Cornwall were enjoyed and greatly enjoyed, the responses showed that open spaces, the South West Coast Path, woods, beaches, historic sites, the inland path network, country parks, nature reserves and 'others' were all cited in that order as places that people use.

When 'users' were asked the same question in consultation, the results in the January 2006 report (392 responses) indicated a broadly similar picture.

The People's Panel survey also revealed that open spaces were the most frequently visited category on a daily basis and that beaches are the most frequently visited category on a weekly basis. Woods and the coast path are visited most on a monthly basis. Historic sites, country parks and nature reserves are most visited on a quarterly basis. The 'user' questionnaire followed a similar pattern, but included using public paths to a significant level on a weekly basis.

3.1.3 Focus Group Reports

The Key Issues raised in the three Focus Groups were:

- Need for greater co-operation and communication between user groups, land managers and Cornwall County Council.
- Greater publicity required, and information at tourist centres, to increase awareness of types of routes available and facilities in rural areas.
- A revision of the definitive maps to make designated trails, paths and bridleways (and their uses) clearer.
- A need for improved signage, to include more information on distances, amenities and type of route.
- Increased parking needed close to start/end of circular routes and increased disabled parking at beaches.
- A need for greater respect for wildlife and natural environments by those who access the countryside.
- Greater respect between user groups required.
- More wardens needed to uphold regulations and liaise between user groups and farmers.
- Requirement to ensure ways are suitable for designated use, e.g. appropriate surfacing for horses, cycles or wheelchair users.
- Reparation for landowners if land used for leisure amenities or parking, or if maintaining public rights of way on their land.
- A simpler, specialised website needed to promote access and give information.

3.2 The Consultations

3.2.1 Questionnaires

Four separate questionnaires were sent out over a five week period at the end of 2005. Questionnaires for organisations, land managers and businesses were distributed as paper forms. The user questionnaire was distributed by a variety of means, including public libraries and over the County Council's website. The questionnaires were publicised by press release, posters, newspapers and radio interviews. The user questionnaire was also completed by the People's Panel, established in 2000, and consisted of 1,512 people who are broadly representative of

the population of Cornwall in terms of gender and geography. An encouraging number of responses were received for all questionnaires:

People's Panel	709*
Users	392
Organisations	174
Businesses	322
Land Managers	477
Total	2121

**approximately half of the People's Panel responded*

The Council's Research and Information Unit analysed the responses for the People's Panel and an independent research consultant analysed the remaining responses. Data is held subject to the confidentiality conditions of the Data Protection Act 1998, and may only be used for the purposes of the Strategy. The full reports are available at <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=28995>

3.2.2 Focus Groups

The Council organised and held three focus groups in January 2006, with the assistance of an independent research consultant. The participants from the Users and Land Managers groups had previously participated in research by completing a questionnaire on the Strategy. The third group, comprising people with disability, were contacted independently by the Cornwall Disability Forum and invited to take part.

Type of Group	Date	Venue	People Attended
Users	05/01/06	Kingsley Village, Fraddon	14
Land Managers	10/01/06	Kingsley Village, Fraddon	12
Cornwall Disability Forum	18/01/06	Kingsley Village, Fraddon	15
TOTAL			41

The Focus groups were set up to identify how people use the countryside, what is their attitude to/experience of user conflict in the countryside, what their concerns are regarding countryside access provision in Cornwall, how they would like to see countryside access provision improved and how people can be further encouraged to enjoy the countryside.

The groups were facilitated by an independent research consultant so the participants were able to talk openly about potentially sensitive issues without concern about their identities being revealed.

3.2.3 Service Providers Workshop

There have been two workshops held with Service Providers to enable an integrated approach to access be established. The providers who have been involved are:

- Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Cornwall Country Council
- Cornwall Wildlife Trust
- District and Borough Councils
- English Nature (now incorporated in Natural England)
- The Forestry Commission
- The National Trust
- The RSPB
- The South West Lakes Trust
- The Woodland Trust

The workshops were held with individual groups considering:

- Their vision for countryside access in Cornwall in five years time.
- Learning from local and non local examples of good practice in joining up countryside access provision and what might work well in Cornwall.
- How can this happen in a co-ordinated manner.

In particular, the County Council was looking for suggestions on how best to improve public experience by linking facilities provided by different suppliers to enjoy routes which better suit their personal aspirations, whether for low-mobility access, challenging routes, riding or cycling, healthy exercise, special interests or just a cup of tea after an afternoon in the Cornish countryside.

Attendees engaged constructively with these topics, and many useful ideas were recorded. The minutes from these workshops are available at www.cornwall.gov.uk/countryside

3.2.4 Consultation with User Groups

Although there have been no formal workshops with the key user groups, the user groups have given input via the questionnaires and by separate submission directly into the process of building the strategy.

3.2.5 Cornwall Countryside Access Forum (CCAF)

CCAF was set up in June 2003 under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The purpose of the CCAF is to provide strategy advice on how to make the countryside more accessible and enjoyable for open air recreation, in ways which address social, economic and environmental interests. Further information on the CCAF can be found at www.cornwall.gov.uk/countryside

This Strategy has been formed by regular consultation with CCAF. A number of workshops have been held with CCAF to consider early drafts of the Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy. As detailed development of the Strategy has taken place, a working group comprised of CCAF members and County Council officers has worked on the document in detail. The CCAF will also provide the Council with strategic advice for the future implementation of activities which flow from the Strategy and other initiatives.

3.2.6 Working with Devon County Council

The Council liaises closely with its neighbouring authority, Devon County Council and has specifically addressed the following:

- What specific South West flavour has come out of the consultations?
- Any issues with the Devon and Cornwall border – instances of lack of continuity of local rights of way. A key factor being the fact that the counties are separated by the River Tamar.
- How engagement has taken place with internal and external partners towards the delivery of the strategy.
- Best practice which has come out of their continuing work.

3.3 Assessing the needs of different activities

It is clear from the consultations that people enjoy a wide variety of types and amounts of access around the county. It is recognised that this access is provided by the efforts of many organisations and that most benefit will be achieved if those organisations continue to work together to deliver improvements.

Recreational use of the countryside includes its use for exercise, individual well-being and family visits to the countryside and visitors seeking to explore the county. Equally important are daily walks that use public rights of way to avoid busy roads and reach community centres, access local services, healthcare, schools and shops. This is especially important in a county where its rural nature can present challenges in meeting transport needs.

Cornwall has a high dependency on the car as a mode of transport, largely because of the rural nature of the county. However, it is important to recognise that there are areas of Cornwall where 30% of households do not own a car and this further highlights the importance of maintaining local transport options. Young people may also have limited resources and no access to transport.

3.3.1 Walking

Walking is an increasingly popular activity for all ages, with use of the path network varying according to diverse abilities, needs and expectations. Walking is particularly recognised as beneficial for health and well-being, and as a contributor to tourism and the local economy.

People's motives for walking range from walking to work to the 30 minute health walk, from organised group walks to the long-distance challenge. Local rights of way facilitate the numerous choices for walkers (and runners), whilst linking towns and villages to the countryside and recreational open spaces. Use of the countryside for dog walking is a popular past time and provides opportunities for social interaction for many people.

The rights of way network and other provision for access on foot are noticeably varied across the county. The condition of some paths is excellent but in other areas use of the network can be difficult, and sometimes impossible. Access on foot to the coast and to open access land is also variable.

The nature of problems encountered on public footpaths includes lack of signposting from the

highway, overgrown vegetation and gates/stiles that are difficult to use. There are paths that are obstructed, for example with barbed wire or blocked up stiles. Sometimes the result of planning processes has meant that some paths are obstructed by buildings.

The path network itself has gaps and missing links. For example there are instances where a path leads through a field to a farm, but the recorded right of way does not continue through the farmyard to access another highway beyond it. Other examples of problems include paths not recorded as meeting county roads, and paths ending at parish boundaries - which can be a feature such as a stream with no recorded connection beyond.

This Strategy provides Actions and Policies to help address issues for walkers to improve their enjoyment of the countryside.

3.3.2 Horse riding and carriage driving

Riding and horse ownership is increasingly popular; consequently there is an increasing need for places to ride. The British Equine Trade Association reports that in 1999 the number of horses in Great Britain was 900,000, up from 500,000 in 1995. Of interest, is the difference between the proportion of female riders (77%) and male riders (23%). Riding a horse may well provide the confidence for some people to access the countryside by themselves in the same way a walker may feel when accompanied by a dog.

The proportion of the paths in Cornwall which are bridleway is 14%, which is lower than some other counties. Significantly, the distribution and density of bridleways across the county varies considerably, therefore some areas are better served than others, for example there is exceptionally good provision in the Camborne and Redruth areas. Conversely, some parts of the county have sparse provision and routes may not be connected. In these areas riders need to use roads in order to use the network, which can be busy.

A number of bridleways are in poor condition and may be blocked, or may have difficult gates to use on horseback.

Access for horse and rider, however, is all too easily prevented by locked gates, barbed wire and busy roads. Improvement in bridleway access and provision is needed in view of the increasing number of horses and the ever increasing traffic on our roads.

Definitive map anomalies (see section 5.2.2) are a significant problem. It is also known that a large number of bridleways do not connect through

to another recorded bridleway, byway or county road. Many riders therefore rely on lanes or tracks, undesignated, or designated only as footpath, to complete routes. When properties change hands adjacent to such paths this can cause access issues to come to light where new owners would rather not provide for access on horse, cycle or foot.

Importantly, the introduction of the CRoW Act 2000 provided only for new access on foot and therefore no provision for equestrian use.

Carriage drivers have rights of use on byways and restricted byways. Like horse riders they may have to make use of other paths and tracks to enable safe off road driving.

3.3.3 Cycling

Cyclists can use bridleways and byways legally and may be affected in a similar way to horse riders when meeting problems on them. Whilst the terrain of many bridleways will never appeal to all cyclists they may provide excellent recreation and access for the more adventurous cyclist.



Many new cycle routes are being provided adjacent to urban areas and also the new trails have provided safe recreational opportunities. These attract significant numbers of users, including many family groups. They include off road trails such as the Camel Trail and Mineral Tramways routes, together with Cornwall's contribution to the National Cycle Network.

More safe routes to cycle are required to enable busy roads to be avoided.

3.3.4 Farming and land management

An estimated 74% of land (2000 figure) in Cornwall is classed as agricultural. Many areas of access and public rights of way will therefore occur on, or pass over such land. It is essential therefore that countryside access fully recognises the needs of farmers, property owners, occupiers and land managers to carry out their activities to support their livelihoods.

It is only by co-operation that good relationships can be maintained and nurtured to mutual benefit. Much of the activity that farmers, property owners, occupiers and land managers carry out will benefit visitors to the countryside, for example regimes to encourage wildlife mean that people can enjoy the wild flowers or birds during their time there.

Many people enjoy visiting places where animals are grazing and observing farmers manage their land. Part of the attraction can be passing through a landscape that has been looked after and handed down through generations. The agricultural sector has been under extreme economic pressure in recent times, brought into sharp focus by the foot and mouth crisis. As a result some farmers, occupiers, property owners and land managers have diversified in creative ways to generate an income. This may be through farm shops, cycle hire, accommodation provision, cycle hire, cafes, working holidays or campsites as examples.

3.3.5 Motorcycle riding

There are a number of motorcyclists that enjoy riding off road and they have a legal right of access on byways. In several areas motorcycles are perceived as a problem, due to the damage to surfaces that is sometimes caused and the noise that motorcycles emit. Off-road motorcycle sales are continuing to grow and there are areas around the county where lack of suitable provision of places for off road motorcycling is a significant issue. There are a number of sites in the county where use has occurred historically; sometimes access to these is via public rights of way and the number of communications about conflicts of use is increasing. The distribution and settlement pattern that exists in Cornwall makes it difficult to find suitable locations for such activities to take place without residents or other users feeling the need to raise issues about motorcycle use in the countryside. There is a need to try to address the issues of lack of provision of suitable places to ride.

3.3.6 Use by other motor vehicles including 4 x 4s

Similarly to motorcycles, other motor vehicles may only legally use byways and there are sometimes issues surrounding the detrimental effects that vehicles have on surfaces that affect the use of a way by other users. There are a number of organised events by motor clubs which use rights of way and where these are not on byways, the permission of the land owner and the Highway Authority is required. Where damage to surfacing is caused, clubs are responsible for its re-instatement. Temporary closures may be needed where the route will be unavailable to other users during such times.

3.3.7 Users with limited mobility or visual impairment



In this section we specifically consider the needs of people that may have limited mobility or visual impairment which may mean that it makes it more difficult for them to access the countryside.

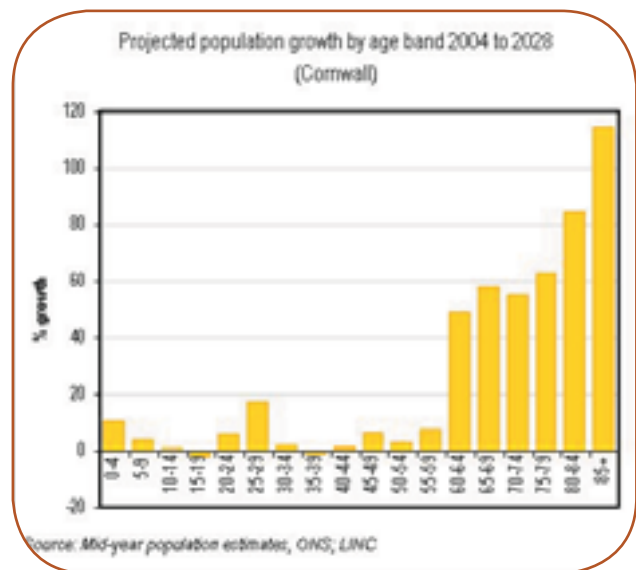
In the 2001 census, just over 100,000 people in Cornwall considered themselves to have a limiting long term illness.

The Office for National Statistics also suggest in their annual population figures that

23.0% of people of working age in Cornwall considered themselves to be disabled. This compares to the national average figure of 18.7%.

Physical ability and agility may also decrease with age and there is data to suggest that Cornwall will have an increasingly ageing population in the future.

It is also important to recognise that limited mobility doesn't just apply to people with physical impairments and is not necessarily health related. It may include people using push chairs for example. There is also a scale of impairment for many people, for instance, someone may be very capable of walking but they may have difficulty negotiating structures such as stiles.



In Cornwall, this can sometimes present difficult situations, where on one hand providers are keen to encourage people to access the countryside but on the other hand, they are trying to retain elements of the historic fabric of the county that make the place distinct from other places.

An assessment of the facilities currently available to people with limited mobility indicates that:

- Cornwall County Council has listed 13 easily accessible routes on its website. These routes are described, with photographs to assist people in deciding whether a route is likely to be suitable for them. These routes are audited by User Groups.
- The South West Coast Path site has eight easy access walks listed for Cornwall with comprehensive descriptions and photographs.
- The National Trust provides a 2007 downloadable Access Guide document detailing its properties and their accessibility.
- The Visit Cornwall website provides details of accommodation providers that may be suitable for people with limited mobility.
- The Visit Cornwall website also contains details of beaches where large wheeled 'sand chairs' are available to improve access to beaches.
- The Royal National Institute for the Blind offer advice and information about leisure activities for blind and partially sighted people. Examples include contacting the local Ramblers' Association Group.

Clearly there is a need to extend opportunities to improve access for less mobile and partially sighted people and to work together to make information more readily available.

3.3.8 Tourists

The quality of the countryside in Cornwall is reflected in its many environmental designations and is a key reason for tourism activity in the county. In the south west region, Cornwall (and the Isles of Scilly) received the second highest number of domestic visitors in 2005, with only Devon receiving more. The 4.1 million trips resulted in an estimated £977 million spend. (Source: United Kingdom Tourism Survey). When overseas visitors are included, the number of trips rises to 4.4 million trips, increasing the spend to £1,088 million.

Tourism is reported to support 25% of jobs in Cornwall, with over 47,000 jobs in the tourism sector (Source: Economic Impact of Tourism in Cornwall 2003 by District).

The management of assets such as Cornwall's countryside and access to it is vital if the economic benefits of this industry are to be captured for the benefit of local communities. Visitors have high expectations which must be satisfied if they are to continue to make trips to Cornwall and recommend the county to others.

Local people, tourists and the economy will all benefit from a well maintained path network and accessible countryside.

3.3.9 Other Leisure Users

There are many other leisure activities that require access to the countryside such as climbing, hang-gliding and canoeing. Provision for some activities is included within the CRoW Act and other access is negotiated with individual landowners where it is not already available to the public.

4.1 Health

Research into the benefits of a healthy lifestyle indicates that exercise is a key factor in maintaining good health.

The Government recommends that people should take 30 minutes of moderate exercise a minimum of 5 times a week.

The Health and Social Care White Paper, Our Health, Our Care, Our Say was published in January 2006 by the Department of Health. It has prompted a rethink of the way in which services are delivered, ensuring that they are more personalised and that they fit into people's busy lives.

Having access to the countryside improves a person's quality of life, and therefore the investment made in making Public Rights of Way and other recreational spaces available has many benefits. Not only do they provide a recreational resource, but they improve the feeling of well-being, which is an essential part of controlling stress and has positive effects on both mental and physical health.

The proposals in this Strategy directly contribute towards achieving the White Paper goals of improving individual's wellbeing through healthy exercise and providing access to the countryside.

Delivering Choosing Health, Making Healthier Choices Easier

The Department of Health has also published *Delivering Choosing Health* in March 2005. This document highlights a number of priorities including **tackling obesity and promoting healthier and active lives**. This Strategy directly supports these priorities as it is about improving access to the countryside which will give people more opportunities for active recreation.

For more information on the above two documents, please visit www.dh.gov.uk

Individual well-being tends to be associated with levels of income and social exclusion, and many people in Cornwall have low incomes and/or social exclusion. Cornwall's population projections indicate that the population will grow, mainly in the 45-64 age group and also in the 65+ age group. Therefore having accessible, free recreational opportunities available to local communities is of paramount importance if a healthy population is to be maintained.

4.2 Communities

As a predominantly rural county, Cornwall has a strong sense of local identity and its individual communities are as distinct from each other as Cornwall is from other parts of the UK. There are key sectors of employment that feature heavily in Cornwall's economy such as agriculture, fishing, tourism and previously mining. The social fabric in many settlements still revolves around these activities and forms part of the reason that people come to visit the county. Cornwall's geography can mean that individual communities suffer from isolation in terms of transport links and access to services and facilities. Countryside access therefore has an important role to play in ensuring that communities have access to recreation, exercise, and local shops, services and schools which may be via the public path network. In doing so, countryside access contributes significantly to delivering the sustainable rural community agenda.

A number of local communities have produced Parish Plans. The intention is that Parish Plans should set out a vision for how the community wants to develop. They can include everything that is relevant to the people who live and work in the community and can include any social, environmental or economic issues. Many of the plans address countryside access issues and therefore this Strategy must link to these to help support those plans which want to address these issues.

4.3 Economy

Whilst there are a number of more traditional industries in Cornwall that have shaped the landscape and culture that exists here, tourism also plays a significant role in supporting the economy in Cornwall. With almost 50,000 jobs supported by tourism, the industry generates over £1,000 million annually, therefore the importance of the tourism infrastructure cannot be underestimated.

This includes the appropriate management of assets such as the South West Coast Path, the inland Public Rights of Way network and the variety of woods, beaches and open spaces that people enjoy visiting.

The countryside has provided diversification opportunities for farmers and other land managers at a time where farming has been under extreme economic pressure. Examples included the provision of riding stables, accommodation, mountain bike trails and fishing lakes.

The Economic and Social Value of Walking in England Report, commissioned by the Ramblers' Association, provides a review of the economic and social value of walking in England. This report dramatically highlights the enormous impact of walking on the rural economy in England, and the benefits of an open and easily useable footpath network to rural businesses. It shows that the total benefits from walking are greatly in excess of the costs of path restoration and maintenance.

This Strategy takes note of the findings of this report, and the requirement for improving access in general, together with economic justification, and proposes actions that will directly improve available access.

Similarly the Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales, December 2005 has been prepared jointly by the Horse Industry and National Government. The report notes that the government expects that the Rights of Way Improvement Plans (which this Countryside Access Strategy embodies) should provide better facilities for equines. The report makes a strong case and recommendation on grounds of safety, economy and health for the provision of a coherent bridleway network and increase in access to off-road riding and carriage driving.

The Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy takes into account the recommendations of this report and it proposes measures for improving access to off-road riding and carriage driving.

4.4 Environment

Cornwall's environment has a special quality; to illustrate this 30% of it is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and it has the UK's third highest number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest. More recently, Cornwall's mining heritage has been recognised as being of international importance through its designation as a World Heritage Site.

Careful management of these special places and access to them is essential if the county and its wildlife and heritage assets are to be looked after for the enjoyment of future generations.

Much of Cornwall's economy centres on its high quality natural environment and is largely what supports the tourism industry. This Strategy will provide a framework for sound management in respect of access to the countryside to ensure that provision meets the needs of local people and tourists whilst ensuring that the quality of the environment does not suffer as a result.

Cornwall's BAP or Biodiversity Action Plan provides priority habitat and species plans to help deliver the UK BAP targets, alongside local priorities. It contains 25 habitat and 127 species action plans, written by local experts, and will contribute to conserving Cornwall's wealth of wildlife. The Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy will contribute to BAP aims by ensuring that management planning and physical works complement its aims where possible.

4.5 Transport

The Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy complements the Cornwall Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011 and will deliver the LTP aims. The path network offers opportunities to travel to work and can provide connections between settlements and services, sometimes using more 'urban paths'. They can also offer a means of improving social inclusion in areas of relative isolation. A number of areas of joint working cut across the work of the LTP and the Countryside Access Strategy. These include the Urban Paths project which improves the quality of some paths in urban areas, the travel plan work offering alternatives to the motor vehicle to get to work and school, and individual access improvement schemes.

4.6 National framework

4.6.1 Natural England

From October 2006, English Nature, Rural Development Service (RDS) and Landscape Access and Recreation (LAR) division of the Countryside Agency merged to become Natural England. Natural England is responsible for integrating the enhancement of biodiversity and landscape – in rural, urban and coastal areas – with promoting access and recreation. Having a single organisation taking a wider view of environmental management that encompasses access and recreation, and aiming where possible to achieve economic and social outcomes alongside conservation goals should aid the implementation of CCAS. For more information visit www.countryside.gov.uk.

4.6.2 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (also known as the CRoW Act) has extended the public's ability to enjoy the countryside whilst also providing safeguards for landowners and occupiers. It has given a new statutory right of access, on foot, to open country

and registered common land (and limited landowners' liability as a consequence), improved the rights of way system, given greater protection to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), provided better management arrangements for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), and strengthened wildlife enforcement legislation. The Act is therefore highly relevant to the design and implementation of this Strategy. For more information visit www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside.

4.7 Regional framework

4.7.1 Regional Spatial Strategy

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy is hugely significant to the Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy. It is a policy document setting out the Spatial Strategy for growth and development in the region, and the strategic policies which will shape this. It is anticipated that there will be 100,000 more people in Cornwall by 2026 which will increase recreation pressure enormously. The Enhancing Distinctive Environment and Cultural Life Section of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy sets out the region's approach on two critical aspects of 'quality of life' in the region: culture and environment. The 'Just Connect!' aim is to enhance our distinctive environments and the quality and diversity of our cultural life. This includes cultural activity and infrastructure, natural environment (landscape, nature conservation, historic environment), the coast, flood risk, energy, water resources, land management, woodlands and forests, air quality, minerals, and waste management. Clearly the Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy can help to deliver the aspirations of the Regional Spatial Strategy (draft) in many areas.

4.8 Local framework

4.8.1 Cornwall County Council's Vision and Aims

The County Council has five aims which lead to providing leadership and delivering excellent services to all the people in Cornwall. This Strategy links specifically to one of these aims as it will work towards **enhancing the living environment**.

4.8.2 Community Strategy

The Community Strategy is a joint approach for dealing with the needs of Cornwall's communities. It brings together the various strategies and initiatives that are

already in place in order to improve the quality of life for all people in Cornwall. The Community Strategy has a number of headline actions and this Strategy links to these in particular, by providing better access provision to the countryside in Cornwall it will lead to a better **quality living environment**.

The five Districts and one Borough within Cornwall all have their own Community Strategies. Key issues include **effective management of the natural environment and healthier lifestyles**. For more information on these documents please visit the District and Borough Councils' websites, which can be accessed via www.cornwall.gov.uk.

4.8.3 Council Plan

The Council Plan links together a number of long term strategic plans that the Council produces. This Strategy directly complements one of the aims within the Council Plan, to **improve the environment**, in particular, **develop, maintain and promote access to the coast, the countryside and heritage**.

4.8.4 Local Area Agreements

The government's ambition for Local Area Agreements (LAAs) is to provide local solutions that meet local needs, while also contributing to national priorities and the achievement of standards set by central government. Cornwall's Local Area Agreement, March 2006, follows government guidance and identifies 32 Outcomes, grouped in four blocks **Healthier Communities and Older People** (7 Outcomes), **Children and Young People** (3 Outcomes), **Safer, Stronger, Sustainable Communities** (19 Outcomes), **Economy and Enterprise** (3 Outcomes) – see <http://www.cornwallstrategicpartnership.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=17262>

Of these Outcomes, a significant number offer potential for engagement by the Cornwall Countryside Access Forum and CCAS. For example, there are Outcomes relating:

- improving health by increasing informal exercise rates
- increasing volunteering opportunities
- providing safer, cleaner, 'greener' public open space
- increasing the sustainability of tourism
- developing Cornwall as a Centre of Excellence for the natural environment

All of these provide opportunities for integrating access to the countryside into wider social, environmental and economic aspirations. At present, Cornwall's LAA is in its infancy but the government has made it clear that LAAs are here to stay and will gradually become the key drivers for improving the delivery of public sector funding and effort. The Living Environment Service is actively engaged in the development of Cornwall's LAA. The Service anticipates developing joint activities with all relevant Outcome partnerships and, over time, this should deliver improved delivery (and possibly funding).

4.8.5 AONB Management Plans

In Cornwall there are two AONB Management Plans: Cornwall's AONB Management Plan and the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (which includes part of Devon).

Recreation and promotion of opportunities for public understanding and enjoyment do not form part of the statutory purpose of AONBs. Nonetheless, these are an essential element of most AONB Management Plans and something that many AONB services focus on. The County Council will continue to work through existing partnership arrangements in the delivery of joint objectives for improved public access.

4.8.6 World Heritage Site (WHS)

A significant achievement in 2006 was the attainment of World Heritage Site Status for Cornwall and West Devon's mining heritage. This will undoubtedly develop interest in Cornwall over the coming years and the WHS Management Plan will need to dovetail within the wider Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy.

Policy 10 of the WHS Management Plan directly relates to the use of trails and paths around the bid areas:

"The Partnership should promote access to the site that is sustainable to the environment and consistent with the values of the site."

There are also three indirect policies which touch upon trails and pathways:

Policy 11b – "Visitors should be encouraged to explore and learn about the physical, social and cultural aspects of the Cornwall and west Devon mining heritage"

Policy 14a – "The communities within and outside the Site should be engaged in the enjoyment, benefits and management of the Site"

Policy 14b – "Enjoyment of the Site should be available to all regardless of ability or income".

The Management Plan outlines the implementation of these policies through Local Transport Plan and Rights of Way Plans. The WHS Office recognises that not all areas are suitable for substantial increases in access/footfall, and that this, plus the views of local residents, will be taken into account when considering supporting access proposals.

For more information on the above documents, please visit www.cornwall.gov.uk.

4.8.7 Planning Policy and Guidance 17 – Open Space

The publication of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, July 2002) and its Companion Guide (September 2002), requires all local authorities to carry out assessments of needs and audits of open space and sports and recreational facilities in accordance with PPG17. This Strategy must link to and work with district councils to improve existing and proposed access provision. For more information on this issue please visit <http://www.communities.gov.uk>.

4.8.8 Transport

The Strategy complements the Cornwall Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011 and will help develop its aims of:

- Transport Aim 1 - Improve access to key services and facilities.
- Transport Aim 2 - Improve local safety for all who travel in Cornwall.
- Transport Aim 3 - Reduce the growth of traffic congestion and transport related air pollution and improve public transport in Cornwall.
- Transport Aim 4 - Provide and maintain an integrated transport network that contributes towards the development of a vibrant and successful Cornish economy and regeneration.
- Transport Aim 5 - Reduce the impact of transport on Cornwall's natural and built environment.

Cornwall's LTP includes reference to how the Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy can help deliver its aims and includes a Position Statement in relation to countryside access.

This section looks at each aspect of access to the countryside in Cornwall identified in section 2.0 and identifies how improvements can be made, specifically taking into account the needs of users, described in section 3.3. In developing, and subsequently delivering the Policies and Actions, the needs of wildlife, the historic landscape and land management must be taken into consideration. This is set in a context where the priorities for Cornwall are:

- coastal access
- multi-use trails
- the delivery of the Public Path Improvement Programme
- open spaces with significant access and land management issues.

These priorities will be reviewed each year. Resources will be focused in accordance with these priorities.

General Policy – G1

Cornwall County Council will seek to manage and develop countryside access in a way that maximises social, economic and environmental benefit to the community.

General Policy – G2

Environmental, heritage and cultural significance, in line with existing and new statutory requirements, will be material considerations when planning the management and development of countryside access.

5.1 Coastal Access

In Cornwall much of the coast is already accessible via the South West Coast Path, Open Access land and the many beaches along its length. It is recognised that there may be improvements needed to connect the coast with the inland areas and that some estuarine areas may benefit from access improvements where it is considered appropriate. The review of coastal access consultation is likely to identify the preferred approach for improving coastal access by Natural England.



Coastal Access Policy – CP1

The County Council will work with others including user groups, landowners and communities to improve coastal and estuary access where it is considered appropriate to do so. This will need to take into account the needs of land management, wildlife, heritage and other factors relevant to considering such improvements within the Cornish context.

Action C1 – Deliver improvements that enhance the links to and from the coast using the Public Path Improvement Programme (PIIP).

Action C2 – Continue to work with the South West Coast Path Team, land managers and other partners in the delivery of maintenance and enhancements on the Coastal Path. Contribute to the delivery of the objectives of the South West Coast Path 'Framework for Action 2007-2012' in ways that reflect Cornwall's cultural, environmental and historical heritage.

Action C3 Beaches – Continue to work with partners and beach owners in ensuring that these valuable assets can continue to be enjoyed by all.

Action C4 – Work with the national initiative on coastal and estuary access and maintain Cornwall County Council membership on relevant forums.



5.2 Public Rights of Way

Section 2.2 briefly gives the headline figures for how many recorded rights of way exist in Cornwall and highlights issues of concern about the existing network.

There are key areas in which action is interlinked and planned:

- Definitive Map and Statement
- Path and map anomalies
- Network additions and revision
- Maintenance of the network
- Enforcement

Public Rights of Way Policy – P1

Cornwall County Council will, with partners, manage and develop inland Public Rights of Way in accordance with the statutory framework and County Council policies and priorities.

5.2.1 Definitive Map and Statement

The Definitive Map and Statement is the legal record of public rights of way (public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic).

The Definitive Map requires regular updating to ensure it accurately reflects any changes on the recorded network.

Action DM1 – Update the Definitive Map on a district or borough basis, starting with Restormel and thereafter by age of map, oldest first.

District / Borough in order to be updated	Target date for update
Restormel	March 2007
Kerrier	September 2008
North Cornwall	March 2010
Penwith	September 2011
Carrick	March 2013
Caradon	September 2014

In the longer term it is recognised that to introduce a digital map could offer benefits. This would be subject to ensuring legality, licensing and copyright issues being met and would allow identical data to be shared and updated on a regular basis. For example it could then be made available to colleagues with

responsibility for planning application determinations to provide the most up to date information to guide decision making in a quick and more efficient way. Other benefits would include being able to link it to other electronic datasets to contrast and compare information.

Action DM2 – Explore the possibility of producing an e-Definitive Map.

The way applications for changes to the Definitive Map are made is a matter that has been reviewed. Previously modification order applications were dealt with in the date order that they were received. A new approach will be employed which has been approved by the County Council and is based on more closely matching path priorities.

Action DM3 – Implement the approved Modification Order Policy so that applications that reflect network value more closely are given priority in processing.

Action DM4 – Review the order of existing Modification Order applications to reflect network priorities more closely.

The Modification Order application process is detailed and very specific in how it must be implemented. Guidance notes on the process are helpful and are given to potential applicants and there is now a need to update the application packs and guidance notes to reflect various changes resulting from the introduction of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Whilst there is a new Modification Order Policy in place, there is also a need to examine the processing of Modification Orders to ensure maximum efficiency and use of resources. To be completed by July 2008.

Action DM5 – Review guidance notes for applicants in respect of the Definitive Map Modification Order process and update the information contained within the application pack.

Feedback from user groups has suggested a need to review the information contained within the Definitive Map and Statement. This relates largely to the recording of widths and limitations. Defra non-statutory guidance issued on the 12 February 2007 identifies Best Practice on this matter.

Action DM6 – Review the type, format and level of information recorded in new Statements in accordance with Best Practice.

5.2.2 Path and Map Anomalies

As stated in section 2.2 the Definitive Map and paths network contains many anomalies and potential errors. These can cause serious problems that make the paths network difficult to use and prone to disputes over rights of access.

Analysis of the County Council's electronic GIS³ Rights of Way Map has provided 3467 anomalies.

Examples of the anomalies are given below:

Break in Path:

This means there is not a continuous recorded right of way running the whole length of the path. This category will include paths stopping at parish boundaries, fragmented paths and may include some paths not meeting a public road.

Change in Status:

This means that the status of the path inexplicably changes, for example from bridleway to footpath, or for example where a section of bridleway rests between two sections of footpaths.

Dead End/Cul-de-sac:

This may include dead ends that exist for good reasons, for example to reach a viewpoint or to access a well. It could also include some paths that do not reach another highway. They may also include 'redundant spurs' that are the result of previous changes in the network.

Does not meet recorded public highway:

The largest of the categories, with over 1200 instances occurring; there may be some overlap with previous categories. This type of problem can be very serious because, although in many instances paths are used without a problem, with more properties changing hands, the rights on such paths are being more frequently challenged.

Inland Public Rights of Way, Definitive Map – Policy P2

Anomalies will be prioritised so that those that reflect network priorities are addressed first.

There are a number of options which can be used to resolve anomalies including:

- Work with landowners to dedicate rights.
- 'Create' a path on what is considered to be the existing line used.
- 'Create' the path on a new line.
- Consider alternative routes on neighbouring land if the owner is willing to work with the Highway Authority.
- Creation Order.

The following specific actions are planned to address the issues resulting from anomalies:

Action A1 – Subject to funding, initiate consultation with Highways Division to explore whether some anomalies are part of the maintained highway.

Action A2 – Examine the different types of anomaly that are not addressed by A1, and determine the most efficient methods to rectify them in accordance with priorities and subject to funding.

5.2.3 Network Additions and Revision

It is very important that the Rights of Way wherever possible form a coherent network.

There are many 'white or green lanes' and other historic routes over which there may be unrecorded Public Rights of Way. The Discovering Lost Ways Project which is now under the auspices of Natural England, will research and identify such routes.

These 'lost' ways together with other potential key additions to the network may assist in building a more coherent network.

There may also be valuable additions to the network that could provide much needed linkages between paths, sites, country parks, the coast or access land for example. It is recognised that such additions require negotiating access (which may include permissive arrangements), making orders, and on-going maintenance. Funding will be an issue but opportunities can be explored through externally funded projects or other identified resources.

³Graphical Information System

Action NA1 – Work with the Discovering Lost Ways Project to identify and implement routes that may assist in reducing ‘gaps’ and providing more continuity in the network.

Action NA2 – Work with Highways Division and the Highways Agency to ensure that road alterations do not add anomalies or unnecessarily add discontinuity to the path network and that such works benefit the PRow network where possible by providing safe connecting routes.

There are currently a number of paths that exist that may be little used or not used at all because they do not have a useful purpose on today’s path network. Examples of these could be ‘dead end’ paths not leading to a destination, site or feature of interest. They may be paths where other alternatives offer a more convenient or enjoyable experience. Similarly, there will be useful additions to the network which would provide useful connections, enhancing the network.

Action NA3 – Identify those paths, through consultation with user groups, which are not needed for public use and those which could usefully be added to make valuable network connections. Seek to rationalise the network accordingly, subject to funding availability.

5.2.4 Maintenance and Development of the Network

The consultation identified, as expected, the current condition of the path network and its future maintenance featured as a high priority for users. The County Council has a statutory maintenance responsibility for most public rights of way.

The County Council has therefore taken a more strategic approach to address these issues. This involves two major initiatives that will provide the springboard for continued improvement to the network condition in the future.

These are the Public Paths Improvement Programme (PPIP) and a review of the Local Maintenance Partnership (LMP) which the majority of parishes in Cornwall are part of.

These initiatives are in addition to other resources available for the maintenance of the network.

5.2.4a Public Paths Improvement Programme (PPIP)

This programme was born out of a survey carried out in 2004 which sought to gather information relating to the condition of public paths. It identified that almost £6 million would be required to address issues on the entire network in order to bring it up to the national standard. The Living Environment Service were able to secure £2.01 million towards this aim, and it was decided that this should be targeted at the paths which are considered to offer most benefit to the highest number of users or were otherwise very important to the network.

To enable this, paths were categorised as ‘Gold’, ‘Silver’ or ‘Bronze’, with ‘Gold’ being the highest priority for attention. The priorities were established via a consultation process, more details and the full criteria for path category can be found at <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=13648>



Support for this approach was sought and approved by the Cornwall Countryside Access Forum at their February 2005 meeting.

A schedule indicating the timescale for works to be carried out in which parishes is available at <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=15618>

Action M1 – Complete the Public Paths Improvement Programme for all ‘Gold’ Paths.

Action M2 – Develop an Improvement Programme for the ‘Silver’ and ‘Bronze’ Paths.

5.2.4b Local Maintenance Partnership

This Partnership brings together over 170 parishes who work with the County Council to deliver path maintenance works, usually vegetation trimming for the benefit of the communities they represent. The system has traditionally been based on paying parishes an amount per kilometre of paths that exist in their parishes. This approach has proved too simplistic and does not necessarily reflect the level of work required in a particular parish.

In order to rectify this situation, assessments of the Gold path networks are gradually being carried out as part of delivering the PPIP work in order to identify the actual cutting requirements of those paths.

A costed maintenance programme will be agreed with parishes after due consultation to ensure that it meets local needs. This is a similar approach taken on the South West Coast Path, is tried and tested and reflects need more closely.

It is also planned to ensure that the most efficient maintenance methods are utilised which will depend upon the terrain of individual paths. It is anticipated that this programme will eventually extend to Silver paths once implementation on the Gold path network is completed.

Whilst this scheme is being implemented it is anticipated that there will be funds available to continue to give funding to parishes towards maintenance of Silver paths. It will be for each parish to determine where this element of funding can be best used.

Action M3 – Review the current LMP arrangements to provide a scheme that reflects maintenance needs more closely. Where parishes are not members of the LMP, the County Council will encourage them to join.

Feedback from some parishes has indicated that the quality of the work carried out by contractors varies

across the county. There is a need therefore to carry out some monitoring of completed work for quality assurance purposes. It will be necessary to work with parishes to do this.

Action M4 – Formulate methodology and identify mechanisms for carrying out monitoring work on a percentage of work carried out by contractors.

Whilst in many cases, the parish councils and the contractors working on their behalf have carried out excellent work, it has been identified that some parishes need more support to identify and engage contractors with the relevant competency and experience to deliver the services required. Therefore small works contracts and maps to identify cutting requirements will gradually be introduced as PPIP work is completed. In 2006/07, skills training for contractors has been offered. Future additional training opportunities will be explored.

Action M5 – Produce small works contracts for parishes to use and introduce path cutting maps showing trimming needs, initially on the Gold network.

5.2.4c Ongoing resources for maintenance

The South West Coast Path has a specific budget for its maintenance as do some of the multi-use trails.

Whilst the current phase of PPIP is targeting significant resources at Gold paths, the County Council has a statutory duty to maintain most public rights of way.

In order to carry out this duty, the ongoing resources that the Living Environment Service receives for routine ground works will be directed in the following way:

Financial year	% of inland path maintenance budget allocated to Gold paths	% of inland path maintenance budget allocated to other paths
2007/08	20	80
2008/09	20	80
2009/10	25	75
2010/11	30	70
2011/12	35	65

These maintenance works are distinct from the PPIP programme and the Local Maintenance Partnership (LMP).

The above table shows how advantage will be taken of the fact that expensive infrastructure works, such as stiles, gates, drainage and bridges on the Gold path network will be delivered via the PPIP programme. Therefore this will allow more resources to be allocated to the other parts of the network for a period after the PPIP works are completed.

The vegetation trimming under the LMP and general maintenance works will be continued on the Gold network as required.

The table shows the intended resource allocation, but it is important to note that budgets are set annually and can be affected by the budget levels allocated to the Living Environment Service.

Some flexibility is also required to ensure that resources can cover unforeseen needs, for example health and safety requirements being met.

Whilst attention is currently, but not exclusively focusing on Gold paths, there is a need to continue to find ways to improve maintenance of the remainder of the network. Partnerships such as Penwith Access and Rights of Way Forum (PAROW) are developing new ways of working and accessing funds for improvement works. The County Council will explore options for more joint working to provide benefits to users.

5.2.4d Performance

The current monitoring of an authority's performance in respect of right of way uses a national Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI). The relevant indicator is 178. Indicators can be useful in trying to compare the work of different authorities but do not necessarily take into account the different methods or priorities that individual authorities employ, the income to an authority nor the local conditions of a particular area. As an example, Cornwall has a large number of small fields and therefore it could be argued that it will have a proportionally higher number of gates and stiles compared to other authorities with a different landscape. To illustrate this point, in Cornwall in the 2005/06 year, the BVPI figure was 42%. That is 42% of all rights of way were considered to be easy to use. This compares to the National County average of 69%. However the consultation carried out to help develop this Strategy indicated that 57% (user questionnaire) and 74% (People's Panel questionnaire) of people felt that paths were easy to use.

Action M6 – To work with others to review the BVPI 178 methodology to better reflect customer satisfaction.

Action M7 – Aim to improve Cornwall County Council's performance to meet the appropriate BVPI national average for counties by the end of year 10 (i.e. 2017).

5.2.5 Enforcement

Unfortunately issues arise on the paths network where paths are unlawfully obstructed.

Cornwall County Council as Highway Authority has a duty to protect and assert the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway for which they are the Highway Authority under section 130 of the Highways Act 1980.

It is always desirable to try to resolve issues that may arise initially through dialogue and advice to landowners. However, where informal negotiations do not result in the public's rights being protected and asserted, more formal action may be necessary.

The County Council currently has an enforcement policy that is in need of review and updating.

Action E1 – Review and update the Enforcement Policy to enable effective protection of the paths network, by the end of 2008.

5.2.6 Planning and Public Rights of Way

Public rights of way can be affected through applications made for development. Generally it is a function of the relevant District or Borough Council to determine such applications in their role as Local Planning Authority. Local Planning Authorities have powers, generally under section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to make orders to divert or stop up a way to allow development that has planning permission to take place where this is necessary.

However, there are occasions where 'spurs' remain on parts of the network as a result of planning decisions that no longer offer useful paths. In addition, historically, the exercise of permitted development



rights for construction of, for example, agricultural buildings has sometimes led to paths becoming obstructed. This can lead to unofficial diversions and conflicts between landowners and users of the network.

Section 106 agreements may offer potential for planning gain whereby improvements to access could be made.

Policy PL1 – When consulted the County Council will require the public rights of way network to be protected from the negative effects of proposed development.

Action P1 – Work with the planning authorities to ensure the County Council is fully consulted on development proposals which could have an impact on a Public Right of Way.

Action P2 – Continue to offer appropriate advice on planning applications when consulted.

Action P3 – Work with colleagues in planning departments to secure access improvements where it is appropriate to do so.

5.3 Promoted Trails

The development of multi-use trails has given much needed access improvements in some parts of the county, and have proved a great success with both residents and tourists.

Policy PT1 – Multi-use trails will be developed where they show a clear contribution to enhancing recreational opportunities, economic development and deliver environmental benefits and where long term resources for their management are in place.

It is planned to build on this success where feasible, and continue to look for opportunities where external funding can be attracted to such initiatives and appropriate long term maintenance mechanisms exist.

The BHS RideUK Project for the Kernow Horse Trail is an important example of a further opportunity and feasibility work is underway at the time of writing this Strategy.

Action T1 - Continue to seek opportunities to attract external funding to improve the access network by the development of further trails where appropriate long term resources for maintenance are in place.

5.4 Other Paths

There are many other paths and tracks in Cornwall which the public have used but which are not recorded on the definitive map and statement. Many actions in this Strategy compliment the use of other paths.



5.5 Open Access Land

The implementation of the CRoW Act itself has increased the amount of land formally available for use on foot in Cornwall. In some cases, this land has been used previously without formal arrangements being in place. Sympathetic management of Open Access sites is desirable if access is to be enjoyed.

Policy OA1 – As Access Authority, Cornwall County Council will seek to maximise opportunities for the enjoyment of Open Access land whilst considering sustainability, wildlife and heritage asset needs.

Action OA1 – Where appropriate to do so, Cornwall County Council will continue to seek resources to support positive management that meets the needs of users and land managers whilst protecting wildlife and heritage assets. Cornwall County Council will work with Natural England, to assist their delivery of their ‘Strategic Direction’.

There are also a number of island sites of Open Access Land in Cornwall that currently are not accessible by any public rights of way or other arrangements.

Action OA2 – We will work with partners and land managers to try to identify ways in which ‘island Open Access sites’ could be brought into appropriate public enjoyment.

5.6 Permissive Access

Permissive Access can offer valuable benefits of access to the countryside where this might not otherwise be available. Open spaces such as some sand dunes are an example of open spaces where permissive access may be in place.

Policy PA1 – Permissive access associated with Open Spaces will be effectively managed where they show a clear contribution to enhancing recreational opportunities, economic development and deliver environmental benefits and where long term resources for their management are in place.

Policy PA2 – No heritage assets (including open spaces and multi-use trails) will be acquired, or management responsibility accepted unless sufficient capital and revenue costs are agreed and available.

Partner Organisations, Land and Schemes that can provide access are:

- Land owned or managed by the Local Authorities
- Forestry Commission/Woodland Trust and other woodland
- The National Trust
- Nature Reserves
- Agri-Environment Scheme provision for Landowners and Farmers
- Other Landowners

Action PA1 – The County Council will work with Natural England to encourage Agri-Environment Scheme applicants to consider access options where it would offer appropriate benefits to countryside access to do so.

Action PA2 – Cornwall County Council Services, in preparing applications for eligible land to enter agri-environment schemes, will maximise opportunities for improved countryside access.

There are in excess of 4,000 Ha of nature reserves owned or managed by Natural England or the Cornwall Wildlife Trust in Cornwall. Much of this land is designated as Open Access land or has existing public path access in place. There may be opportunities to enhance this access, if it is fragmented or not currently

available. We will work with partners where such opportunities exist to enhance access if it is appropriate to do so.

Action PA3 – The County Council will liaise and work with all key partners as appropriate in the provision of access.

To consolidate and make the most beneficial use of the currently available access opportunities, the County Council will work with other partners as appropriate where there are clear benefits.

Action PA4 – The County Council will work with other partners where joint working will add value to countryside access.

It is clear from the consultation that sites such as country parks and other areas of open space are popular places for people to visit and enjoy. Whilst a variety of organisations manage land for public benefit, considerations usually also include wildlife, education and historic environment needs. Sometimes these are the very reason for people wishing to make a visit to a location.

It is essential therefore to consider these management needs together and Cornwall County Council shall undertake to do this through the provision of management plans, working with partners and local communities for key sites that the County Council manages or provides management input into. In producing such management plans, access considerations will be taken into account, both on the site itself and how sites may link to other access provision. In carrying out this process, a review of the land management arrangements will be carried out to ensure that they are fit for purpose and in the best interest of the site and users.

Action PA5 – Provide management plans for key sites that the County Council manages, or manages jointly with others, in line with Service Plan actions and timescales.

Action PA6 – The ownership and management arrangements of all Cornwall County Council recreation sites will be reviewed to ensure that the arrangements are both fit for purpose and in the best interest of the sites and their users.

At the present time there is some uncertainty as to the extent of permissive access that is available. Permissive paths are not recorded on the Definitive Map neither are they generally shown on the Ordnance Survey maps. The County Council will seek to develop a database of known permissive access to i) inform

people where this is available and ii) to assist in identifying where resources can be allocated in the most efficient way.

Action PA7 – The County Council will seek to develop a database of known permissive access to i) inform people where this is available and ii) to assist in identifying where resources can be allocated in the most efficient way.

5.7 The Road Network

The road network can provide valuable access opportunities.

Whilst some roads deter non motorised access because of traffic, there are also many quieter county roads that offer safe leisure access to the countryside. The National Cycle Network (NCN) uses some sections of the road network.

The Living Environment Service will work with the County Council’s Highways Division to improve safe access to the road network and offer advice on how improvements may be made where it is appropriate to do so. The County Council will seek the improvements in partnership with other bodies to develop access improvements where funding is available and the local community supports such proposals.

Action RN1 – We will seek improvements in partnership with other bodies to develop access improvements where funding is available and the local community support such proposals.

5.8 Access on/to Inland Water

Where opportunities exist the County Council will work with others including Natural England, riparian owners and leisure users, to increase the opportunities for access and to provide information about accessing inland waterways in Cornwall.

This Strategy will work towards developing an understanding between all the different river interests with a view to achieving improved and sustainable opportunities for the enjoyment of Cornwall’s inland waterways.

Action AW1 – Where opportunities exist the County Council will work with others including Natural England, riparian owners and leisure users, to increase the opportunities for access to and on inland waterways in Cornwall.

5.9 Information and Awareness

Policy IA1 – Develop the provision of and access to, information that meets the needs of users in the most effective and efficient way.

In this section we consider the types and amounts of information available to users.

Information can give guidance, it can educate, can give direction or signpost people to sources of further information. The use of information to assist in providing the appropriate management of land or to encourage appropriate use is critical. Information needs to be tailored to meet the needs of the circumstances for which is designed. This may mean providing much more emphasis on protecting the wildlife in a particular area or to emphasise access opportunities where the habitat can withstand more pressure from activities. This balance needs to be considered on a site by site basis.



Information can be delivered in a variety of ways:

Leaflets and books – these can be pocket sized to enable them to be taken on a walk and are still preferred by many people. They can be expensive to provide or can be self-sustaining where a charge is made for them.

Guided walks and talks – these have been very popular in the past and may allow people with reading difficulties or visual impairments to access the countryside in a way that they would otherwise not be able to. They may also be appropriate where site interpretation is not desirable because of visual intrusion or vandalism problems. They also offer direct opportunities for feedback from users.

Parish and town councils often provide useful publications in their area about access and places of interest.

On site interpretation – these can be traditional boards, or nature trails and can be made from a variety of

materials. They can suffer over time if not replaced and sometimes suffer from vandalism. The cost ranges from several hundred to several thousand pounds.

The Definitive Map is a key source of information in providing the legal record of recorded public rights of way.

The Web – this is increasingly being used as a relatively cheap way to provide information to as many people as possible. It can allow downloads of copies of publications that may also exist in paper formats. It can be accessed by households, in libraries, internet cafes and can be downloaded on the move via wireless networks or via mobile phones.

What may be an issue is how people find information on the web. Therefore as well as identifying appropriate levels and the volume of information needed, there is a need to consider if the current places where information can be found are the appropriate ones. This is also a key area where working with other organisations may offer efficiencies, reduce duplication and reduce confusion to users about where information can be sourced.

Action I1 – Explore options for working more closely with partners to provide information in a complementary way.

Action I2 – Consider the production of an information strategy that can be developed in close liaison with partners and users groups to meet the needs of countryside access information provision.

5.10 Access for those with limited mobility or visual impairments

Cornwall County Council already has a number of routes that have been assessed to ensure they are easily accessible. Other partner organisations also provide access opportunities for people with limited mobility. The information available is fragmented amongst providers and would benefit from a co-ordinated approach.

Action AA1 - Conduct further research with partner organisations to ascertain the extent of easily accessible routes and sites currently available. Improve information availability in relation to those sites and identify new sites that offer easier access. Aim to add four new easily accessible routes during 2008.

The ‘least restrictive option’ i.e. the method providing best access is generally the way access to the countryside should be managed. Gaps, gates and stiles can be employed where necessary using the easiest to negotiate where possible.

Action AA2 – Apply the principle of the ‘least restrictive option’ where it is reasonable and appropriate to do so, whilst considering the needs to retain the historic fabric of the landscape and ensuring that appropriate land management can take place.

5.11 Meeting the Needs of the Users

This section identifies the policies and actions that specifically address the concerns and requirements of different groups of users.

Policy U1 – The County Council will work towards improving countryside access for all in ways that take account of all relevant constraints.

5.11.1 Walkers

All the proposed actions benefit walkers as walkers can use all classes of path. A network that is well maintained free from obstructions is vital to encourage more healthy exercise in and enjoyment of the countryside. The Definitive Map and its associated inaccuracies and inconsistencies has been a significant problem for many years. The proposed actions on the Definitive Map and removal of anomalies to provide a more contiguous modern network will benefit all. The structured plan for renovation and future maintenance is also a key programme for a user-friendly network.

Action US1 – Seek opportunities to improve access for walkers where provision does not meet current needs, in accordance with policy statements.

5.11.2 Horse Riders and Carriage Drivers

The most significant problems faced by horse riders are a fragmented network and busy roads and road crossings. Riders may have to rely on the use of many paths that are not definitive bridleways. The proposed actions on map anomalies and lost ways may help towards securing a better network. Carriage drivers may benefit from reclaiming lost highways and unclassified roads as Restricted Byways.

Action US2 – Seek opportunities to increase off road access and safety for horse riders in accordance with policy statements.

This Strategy also recognises that carriage drivers face particular problems as they too have to currently rely on use of many tracks that are not byways, and again busy roads are a great hazard.

Action US3 – This strategy recognises the lack of carriage driving routes and will seek to increase provision where practicable.

5.11.3 Cyclists

Cyclists have been catered for by many existing initiatives including Sustrans projects, the Camel Trail and Mineral Tramways suite of multi-use trails. This strategy builds on these by seeking to improve the bridleway network to which cyclists have access, and which is particularly appealing to the more adventurous cyclists, who like more challenging terrain.

Action US4 – The County Council will continue to work towards improving countryside access for all cyclists.

5.11.4 Motorcycle Riders

The County Council recognises the needs of trail riders for access to off road riding.

Action US5 – The County Council, with others will seek to find suitable off road sites to enable off road motorcycle use.

5.11.5 Other Motor Vehicles and 4x4s

Other vehicles including 4x4s can legally use byways.

Action US6 – The County Council will protect the rights of motor vehicle users to ensure their legal use of byways can continue.

5.11.6 Tourism

This strategy recognises the importance of countryside access to tourists, the tourist industry and associated economy of Cornwall. All the proposed actions will greatly enhance the access provision for tourists and widen their enjoyment of the Cornish Countryside.

Action US7 - The County Council will continue to work towards improving countryside access in a way that supports tourism.

5.11.7 Other Leisure Users

Other leisure users include Climbers, Hang Gliders, Canoeists etc.

Action US8 – The County Council will assist where appropriate in enabling accommodation of other activities in partnership with land managers.

5.12 Farming and land management

Farmers, occupiers, land managers and property owners have a role to play in the co-ordinated maintenance of the public rights of way and in maintaining access to other recreational spaces such as Open Access land. Without their assistance and co-operation, the enjoyment of the countryside would be greatly reduced. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the user to ensure that they respect the needs of land management by following the Countryside Code, to protect the livelihoods of those who rely on the land for their income.

Therefore it is necessary to raise awareness of these relationships in order for land managers, farmers, occupiers, property owners and the public to benefit from access to the countryside.

Action FL1 – Continue to raise awareness amongst both land managers and the public about their responsibilities in respect of countryside access to ensure that potential conflicts are minimised.

5.13 Working with Communities

The services that the Environment and Heritage Service delivers help to maintain and nurture local identity and distinctiveness. It also contributes to providing opportunities for leisure and recreation, learning, sport, health and well-being together with supporting the local economy. In summary these services provide opportunities for participation in community life.

However, to truly add value to the work that the service carries out, it is recognised that better functional relationships need to be established in other sectors to deliver joint objectives and meet the needs of the communities.

These key areas are currently identified as:

Education – the Environment and Heritage Service provides a number of events, publications, talks and walks, often using local experts to offer educational enhancement to supplement the physical works that are carried out. This tends to be on an ad hoc basis, depending on staff time and funding availability.

Working with volunteers and local groups – the potential to involve volunteers in countryside access works is something that the Living Environment Service considers very important and is working to actively develop this area. Such involvement increases the capacity to undertake work and it strengthens relationships with local groups and communities who take pride in looking after Cornwall's environment.

Healthy living – it is recognised that the services that the County Council and others provide offer other benefits to improve the quality of life and individual well-being of communities. The County Council has worked with colleagues in the health sector to deliver joint benefits and will be seeking to develop this further. One of the issues that often arises is the fluctuating availability of funds to support such work.

Local partnerships – The County Council attends and supports a number of partnerships. These are invaluable in that they allow it to consult locally on work proposed and they offer forums for debate on actions proposed. Partnerships ensure that decisions affecting countryside access matters are considered alongside other areas of work such as crime reduction, habitat management or economic development and enable work to be delivered in a complementary way. They offer a chance to discuss proposals with neighbouring landowners and often result in improved ways of working.

Action CO1 – Continue to attend and support community partnerships and parish/town councils where appropriate.

Action CO2 – Work closely with volunteers and voluntary groups to enhance countryside access, for example the parish volunteer group pilot.

Action CO3 – Engage with the Local Area Agreement process where appropriate Outcomes will assist in improvements to Service delivery.

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
General				
Policy G1 – Cornwall County Council will seek to manage and develop countryside access in a way that maximises social, economic and environmental benefit to the community.				
Policy G2 – Environmental, heritage and cultural significance, in line with existing and new statutory requirements, will be material considerations when planning the management and development of countryside access.				
Coastal				
Policy CP1 – The County Council will work with Partners, user groups, landowners and communities to improve coastal and estuary access where it is considered appropriate to do so. This will need to take into account the needs of land management, wildlife, heritage and other factors relevant to considering such improvements within the Cornish context.				
Action C1 – Deliver improvements that enhance the links to and from the coast using the Public Path Improvement Programme (PIIP).	During PIIP period (current end date 2009)	£2.01 million capital spend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Town and parish councils 	
Action C2 – Continue to work with the South West Coast Path Team, land managers and other partners in the delivery of maintenance and enhancements on the South West Coastal Path. Contribute to the delivery of the objectives of the SWCP 'Framework for Action 2007-2012' in ways that reflect Cornwall's cultural, environmental and historical heritage.	2007 – 2012	Natural England funding at up to 100% (Improvements) 75% (maintenance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● South West Coast Path Team ● National Trust ● Town and parish councils ● Cornwall County Council ● district & borough councils ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	

Summary Table of Policies and Actions

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Action C3 Beaches – Continue to work with partners and beach owners in ensuring that these valuable assets can continued to be enjoyed by all.	On-going	Officer time at Partnership meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land managers ● Town and parish councils ● Police ● District councils ● National Trust ● Local communities ● Cornwall County Council 	
Action C4 Estuaries – Work with the National Initiative on coastal and estuary access and maintain Cornwall County Council membership on relevant forums.	2007 – 2009 initially	Currently unknown as the consultation has not yet been carried out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land managers ● Natural England ● Cornwall County Council ● National Trust ● Interest groups 	
Public Rights of Way				
Policy P1 – Cornwall County Council will, with partners, manage and develop inland Public Rights of Way in accordance with the statutory framework and County Council policies and priorities.				
Definitive Map				
Action DM1 – Update the Definitive Map on a District or Borough basis, starting with Restormel and thereafter by age of map, oldest first.	Restormel – Spring 2007 Remainder to be completed by September 2014	Existing Definitive Map Officer + Additional post required £40K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council 	
Action DM2 – Explore the possibility of producing an e-Definitive Map.	On-going	Existing Definitive Map Officer – current resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council 	
Action DM3 – Implement the approved Modification Order Policy so that applications that reflect network value more closely are given priority in processing.	To be initiated in spring 2007	Within current resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council 	

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Action DM4 – Review the order of existing Modification Order applications to reflect network priorities more closely.	To be completed early 2007	Existing resource in Programmes team and County Legal Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cornwall County Council 	
Action DM5 – Review Guidance Notes for applicants in respect of the Definitive Map Modification Order process and update the information contained – within the application pack.	During early 2007	Existing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cornwall County Council 	
Action DM6 – Review the type, format, and level of information recorded in new Statements in accordance with Best Practice	Review during 2007	Existing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cornwall County Council 	
Policy P2 Public Rights of Way, Definitive Map –				
Anomalies will be prioritised so that those that reflect network priorities are addressed first.				
Path and Map Anomalies				
Action A1 – Subject to funding, initiate consultation with Highways Division to explore whether some anomalies are part of the maintained highway.	Dependent on attracting project funding	Requires project funds of £40K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cornwall County Council 	
Action A2 – Examine the different types of anomaly that are not addressed by A1, and determine the most efficient methods to rectify them in accordance with priorities and subject to funding.	On-going	(in conjunction with Action A1) £40K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cornwall Countryside Access Forum Cornwall County Council User groups 	
Network Additions and Revision				
Action NA1 – Work with the Discovering Lost Ways Project to identify and implement routes that may assist in reducing ‘gaps’ and providing more continuity in the network.	DLW re-scheduled to come to Cornwall during 2007/08	Currently unknown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cornwall County Council Cornwall Countryside Access Forum User groups Natural England Volunteers 	

Summary Table of Policies and Actions

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Action NA2 – Work with Highways Division to ensure that road alterations do not add anomalies or discontinuity to the path network and that such works benefit the PRoW network where possible by providing safe connecting routes.	As needed	Seek costs from developer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Highways Agency ● Planning authorities 	
Action NA3 – Identify those paths, through consultation with user groups, which are not needed for public use and those which could usefully be added to make valuable network connections. Seek to rationalise the network accordingly subject to funding availability.	On-going	Est. £50K budget to carry out legal work/path improvements in the first phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Town and parish councils ● Users groups ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	
Maintenance and Development of the Network				
Action M1 – Complete the Public Paths Improvement Programme for all 'Gold' Paths.	Deliver remainder of programme by end of 2009	Continued spend of the £2.01 million capital investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Town and parish councils ● Land managers 	
Action M2 – Develop an Improvement Programme for the 'Silver' and 'Bronze' Paths.	Develop over 2007/08 and implement following PPIP completion	Additional £1 million required for delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● External Funding bodies ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	
Action M3 – Review the current LMP arrangements to provide a scheme that reflects maintenance needs more closely. Where parishes are not members of the LMP, the County Council will encourage them to join.	Carry this out in tandem with the PPIP timescales as work is completed	Existing staff + additional hours by part time staff at key periods + £156K annual budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Town and parish councils 	
Action M4 – Formulate methodology and identify mechanisms for carrying out monitoring work on a percentage of work carried out by contractors.	During 2007	Existing staff and explore the possibility of using volunteers, parish/town councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Town and parish councils ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum ● Volunteers 	

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Action M5 – Produce small works contracts for parishes to use and introduce path cutting maps showing trimming needs, initially on the Gold network.	Develop for implementation in 2007/08 financial year	Existing staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Town and parish councils 	
Action M6 – To work with others to review the BVPI 178 methodology to better reflect customer satisfaction.	2007/08	Senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CCC and other authorities 	
Action M7 – Aim to improve Cornwall County Council's performance to meet the appropriate BVPI national average for counties by the end of year 10 (i.e. 2017).	2017	Additional resources will be required beyond PPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● National Trust ● South West Coast Path Team ● Town and parish councils ● Land managers 	
Enforcement				
Action E1 – Review and update the Enforcement Policy to enable effective protection of the paths network and make it available to the public by the end of 2008.	By the end of 2008	Within existing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	
Planning and PRoW				
Policy PL1 – When consulted the County Council will require the public rights of way network to be protected from the negative effects of proposed development.				
Action P1 – Work with the planning authorities to ensure the County Council is fully consulted on development proposals which could have an impact on a Public Right of Way.	On-going as needed	Currently within existing resource. Should workload increase or more involvement be required then additional staff required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● District and borough councils ● Town and parish councils ● User groups 	

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Action P2 – Continue to offer appropriate advice on planning applications when consulted.	On -going as needed	Currently within existing resource. Should workload increase or more involvement be required then additional staff required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● District and borough councils ● Town and parish councils ● User groups 	
Action P3 – Work with colleagues in planning departments to secure access improvements where it is appropriate to do so.	On-going as needed	Existing resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● District and borough councils ● Town and parish councils ● User groups 	
Promoted Trails				
Policy PT1 – Multi-use trails will be developed where they show a clear contribution to enhancing recreational opportunities, economic development and deliver environmental benefits and where long term resources for their management are in place.				
Action T1 – Continue to seek opportunities to attract external funding to improve the access network by the development of further trails where appropriate long term resources for maintenance are in place.	As project opportunities arise	Dependent on external funding availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● User groups ● Local communities ● External funding bodies ● Town and parish councils ● District councils ● Land managers 	

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Open Access Land				
Policy OA1 – As Access Authority, Cornwall County Council will seek to maximise opportunities for the enjoyment of Open Access land whilst considering sustainability, wildlife and heritage asset needs.				
Action OA1 – Where appropriate to do so, Cornwall County Council will continue to seek resources to support positive management that meets the needs of users and land managers whilst protecting wildlife and heritage assets. Cornwall County Council will work with Natural England, to assist their delivery of their ‘Strategic Direction’.	On-going	Using existing staff time but seeking additional funding via external sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Natural England ● Cornwall County Council ● Land managers ● User groups ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	
Action OA2 – We will work with partners and land managers to try to identify ways in which ‘island Open Access sites’ could be brought into appropriate public enjoyment.	On-going	Existing staff but may require additional capital resource to implement solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land managers ● Cornwall County Council ● Natural England ● User Groups ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	
Permissive Access				
Policy PA1 – Permissive access associated with Open Spaces will be effectively managed where they show a clear contribution to enhancing recreational opportunities, economic development and deliver environmental benefits and where long term resources for their management are in place.				
Policy PA2 – No heritage assets (including open spaces and multi-use trails) will be acquired or management responsibility accepted unless sufficient capital and revenue costs are agreed and available.				

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Action PA1 – The County Council will work with Natural England to encourage Agri-environment Scheme applicants to consider access options where it would offer appropriate benefits to countryside access to do so.	As applications are made	Within existing team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Natural England 	
Action PA2 – Cornwall County Council Services, in preparing applications for eligible land to enter agri-environment schemes, will maximise opportunities for improved countryside access.	As they are needed	Staff in programmes team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Natural England 	
Action PA3 – The County Council will liaise and work with all key partners as appropriate in the provision of access.	On-going	Requirements depend on proposed schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Land managers ● User groups ● Natural England ● Town, parish and district councils ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum ● National Trust ● Forestry Commission ● Other relevant groups and organisations 	
Action PA4 – The County Council will work with other partners where joint working will add value to countryside access.	On-going	Depending on workloads – project staff may be required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Land managers ● User groups ● Natural England ● Town, parish and district councils ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum ● National Trust ● Forestry Commission ● Others relevant groups and organisations 	

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Action PA5 – Provide management plans for key sites that the County Council manages, or manages jointly with others, in line with Service Plan actions and timescales.	As per Service and Action Plan timescales	Existing staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Land managers ● Local community groups ● Town, parish and district councils ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum ● User groups 	
Action PA6 – The ownership and management arrangements of all Cornwall County Council recreation sites will be reviewed to ensure that the arrangements are both fit for purpose and in the best interest of the sites and their users.	2 key sites per year	Existing staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council 	
Action PA7 – The County Council will seek to develop a database of known permissive access to i) inform people where this is available and ii) to assist in identifying where resources can be allocated in the most efficient way.	Will start in 2007 and continue to build the database over time	Using existing resource but will require additional staff time, possibly on a project basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Land managers ● Local community groups ● Town, parish and district councils ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum ● User groups ● Other relevant groups and organisations 	
Road Network				
Action RN1 – We will seek improvements in partnership with other bodies to develop access improvements where funding is available and the local community support such proposals.	On-going	May require additional staff on a project by project basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local communities ● Cornwall County Council ● Land managers ● User groups ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	

Summary Table of Policies and Actions

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Access on/to Inland Water				
Action AW1 – Where opportunities exist the County Council will work with others including Natural England, riparian owners and leisure users, to increase the opportunities for access to and on inland waterways in Cornwall.	On-going	Existing staff time – improvements would require additional capital investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land managers ● Natural England ● Environment Agency ● Interest groups ● Local communities ● User groups 	
Information and Awareness				
Policy IA1 – Develop the provision of and access to, information that meets the needs of users in the most effective and efficient way.				
Action I1 – Explore options for working more closely with partners to provide information in a complementary way.	Continuous review	Officer with responsibility for information and interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interest groups ● Local communities ● User groups ● Cornwall County Council ● Partner organisations 	
Action I2 – Consider the production of an information strategy that can be developed in close liaison with partners and users groups to meet the needs of countryside access information provision.	Commence once resources are identified	No current resource – additional needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum ● Cornwall County Council ● Partner organisations 	
Limited mobility and visual impairments				
Action AA1 – Conduct further research with partner organisations to ascertain the extent of easily accessible routes and sites currently available. Improve information availability in relation to those sites and identify new sites that offer easier access. Aim to add 4 new easily accessible routes during 2008.	Start during 2007/08 financial year – aim to research over 12 month period	Existing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● Disability groups ● Partner organisations 	

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Action AA32 – Apply the principle of the ‘least restrictive option’ where it is reasonable and appropriate to do so, whilst considering the needs to retain the historic fabric of the landscape and ensuring that appropriate land management can take place.	On-going	May need additional capital resources to implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local communities Cornwall County Council Town, parish and district councils Disability groups User groups Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	
Meeting the Needs of the Users				
Policy U1 – The County Council will work towards improving countryside access for all in ways that take account of all relevant constraints.				
Action US1 – Seek opportunities to improve access for walkers where provision does not meet current needs, in accordance with policy statements:	On-going	See relevant Actions	See relevant Actions	
Action US2 – Seek opportunities to increase off road access and safety for horse riders in accordance with policy statements.	Complete the Ride UK feasibility study during 2007 Implement the Rural Issues and Opportunities project on Goss Moor during 2007	Funded by external bodies with contributions from Cornwall County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equestrian user groups Cornwall County Council Land managers Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	
Action US3 – This strategy recognises the lack of carriage driving routes and will seek to increase provision where practicable.	On-going	Project funding required when proposals are developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equestrian user groups Cornwall County Council Land managers Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	

Summary Table of Policies and Actions

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Action US4 – The County Council will continue to work towards improving countryside access for all cyclists.	Continue to implement existing projects	External funded projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cycle user groups ● Cornwall County Council ● Land managers ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum ● Sustrans 	
Action US5 – The County Council, with others will seek to find suitable off road sites to enable off road motorcycle use.	Identification of suitable sites currently underway	Will require significant investment from user groups and external funding sources if suitable sites can be found	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local communities ● Motorcycle interest groups ● Cornwall County Council ● D & C Police ● District Councils ● Town and Parish Councils ● Funding bodies 	
Action US6 – The County Council will protect the rights of motor vehicle users to ensure their legal use of byways can continue.	On-going	Staff time to attend Partnership meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land managers ● User groups ● D & C Police ● Cornwall County Council ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	
Action US7 - The County Council will continue to work towards improving countryside access in a way that supports tourism.	On-going	Existing staff and resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land managers ● User groups ● Cornwall County Council ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	
Action US8 – The County Council will assist where appropriate in enabling accommodation of other activities in partnership with land managers.	On-going	Existing staff and resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land managers ● User groups ● Cornwall County Council ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum 	

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Farming and land management				
Action FL1 – Continue to raise awareness amongst both land managers and the public about their responsibilities in respect of countryside access to ensure that potential conflicts are minimised.	On-going	Existing staff and resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land managers ● User groups ● Cornwall County Council ● Cornwall Countryside Access Forum ● FWAG ● NFU ● CLA 	
Working with Communities				
Action CO1 – Continue to attend and support community partnerships and parish/town councils where appropriate.	Attend on regular basis throughout the year.	Staff time to attend meetings and carry out subsequent actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local communities and Partnerships ● Cornwall County Council ● D & C Police ● Town, parish and district councils ● Land managers 	
Action CO2 – Work closely with volunteers and voluntary groups to enhance countryside access, for example the parish volunteer group pilot.	On-going	Existing staff post dedicated to this role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Volunteers ● User groups ● Cornwall County Council ● Local communities ● Town and Parish Councils ● Land managers ● External funding bodies 	
Action CO3 – Engage with the Local Area Agreement process where appropriate Outcomes will assist in improvements to Service delivery.	Current LAA period extends until March 2009	Additional staff to develop links required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cornwall County Council ● District Councils ● Local Partnerships and communities ● D & C Police ● Education providers 	

Recommended Policy / Action	Timescale	Resource / costs	Key Organisations	Progress / Review
Monitoring and review				
Action MO1 – Report annually on progress made against the actions included within the Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy.	Annually	Existing staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CCC ● Other partners as appropriate 	
Action R1 – Review the Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy to align with the timescale for producing the next Local Transport Plan.	By 2010 and to ensure that the next LTP and Access Strategy are integrated	Existing staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CCC ● Other partners as appropriate 	

7.1 Monitoring

Continual monitoring of the work that is carried out to improve countryside access is necessary to ensure that it meets the needs of Cornwall's population and visitors to the county. In order for people to understand what progress is being made, a short annual report is suggested that will include the key actions carried out in the previous year. This process is already carried in respect of Cornwall's Local Transport Plan 2006-2011.

Action MO1 – Report annually on progress made against the actions included within the Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy.

7.2 Review

Whilst Defra guidance suggests that Rights of Way Improvement Plans must be reviewed at periods of no longer than 10 years, the pace of change and the initiatives currently underway in Cornwall mean that there will be need to review the Strategy before this. There will be a need to carry out this process in tandem with the review of the Local Transport Plan and therefore this will mean that this review will need to take place in readiness for publication of the next Local Transport Plan publication. This will provide the opportunity to consider whether the strategic direction of Service delivery is still appropriate and whether other areas of work need to be considered for inclusion within the document.

Action R1 – Review the Cornwall Countryside Access Strategy to align with the timescale for producing the next Local Transport Plan

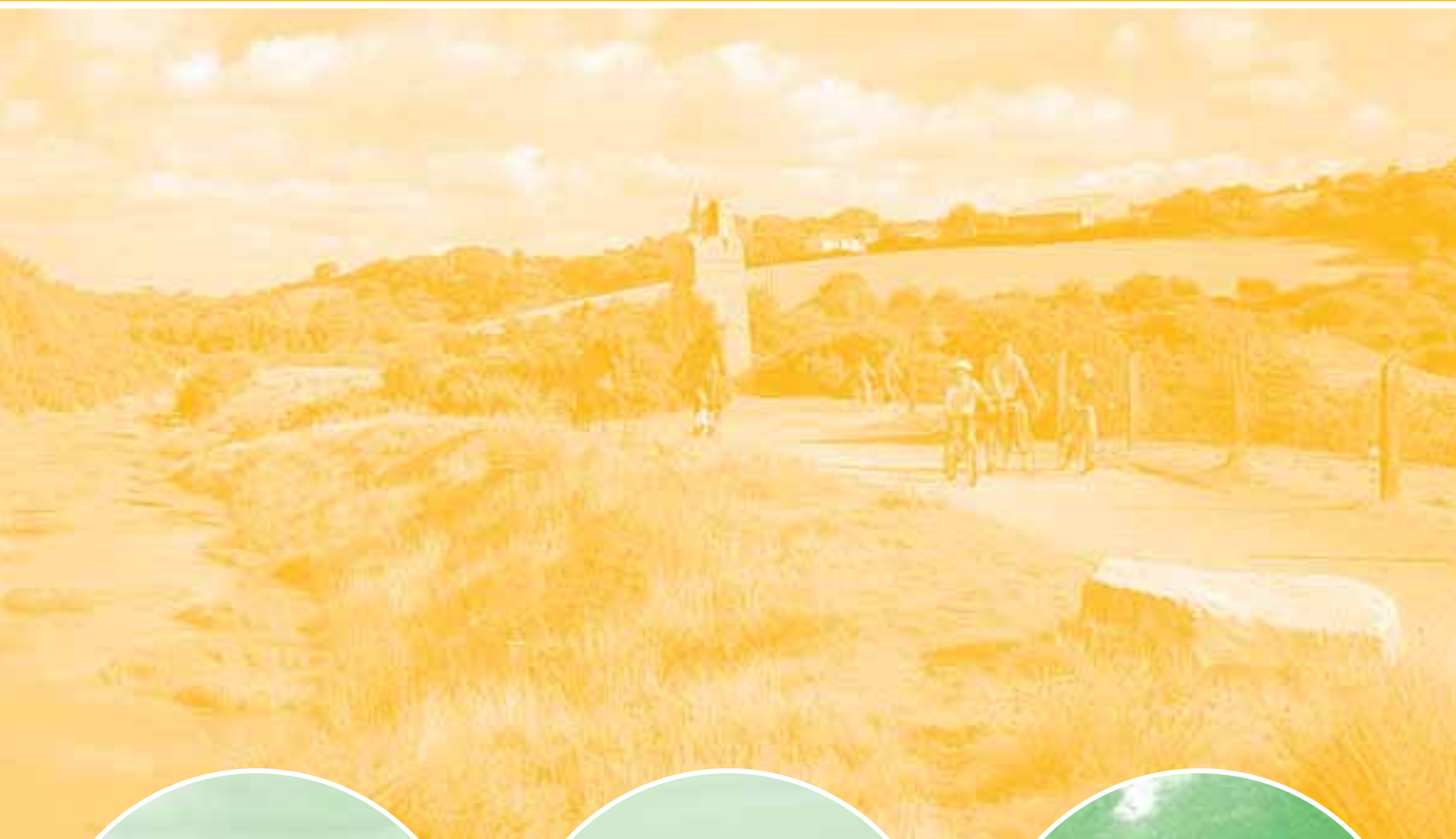


8.0

Additional resource requirements

In order to deliver the actions outlined in sections 5 and 6, there are some additional resource requirements above and beyond current budget levels. The table below illustrates areas of work where this is required.

Capital / Revenue	Cost
Additional staff (revenue) 2 people for 2 years	£80,000
Capital Project funding This resource requirement is to develop and implement a programme of improvements to some parts of the network not currently receiving resources under the present Public Path Improvement Programme (PIIP)	£ 1,000,000
Total	£1,080,000



We want to ensure that your needs are met.

If you would like this information on audio tape, in Braille, large print, any other format or interpreted in a language other than English, please contact:

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