

Foreword

I am pleased to be able to introduce the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) for Telford & Wrekin for public consultation.

The rights of way network is part of the local travel infrastructure, providing paths from people's homes to local facilities including leisure and places of work.

Our rights of way network is an asset. But it is an asset that requires management and improvement if it is to fulfil its potential. The ROWIP provides a means by which we can secure the improvements that will benefit both the local community and visitors to the borough.

The ROWIP is at draft stage and the Council is seeking comments on the draft plan from users, parish councils, user groups, land managers and the wider public. Comments received will help shape the preparation of the final ROWIP.

We hope for a significant level of public involvement through this consultation process to ensure that we have got the right priorities and mix of actions.

It is vital that Telford & Wrekin Council does all it can to safeguard and improve the public rights of way network in consultation with everyone who has an interest in this important issue.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those organisations and individuals who have already given up their time to help us get to this stage in the preparation of the draft improvement plan.

Councillor

Foreword

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1 Introduction

The rights of way network in Telford & Wrekin is an important access facility that contributes to local people's enjoyment of their countryside, and the means of getting to local facilities. It is also an important factor in contributing to visitor's enjoyment of tourist attractions in the Borough, such as the World Heritage Site and the Wrekin.

The rights of way network is also a link with the areas rich industrial heritage as many of the routes were established by local workers as they went about their business and leisure while the Industrial Revolution was happening. This is evident from the large number of routes that connect workers cottages to sites of work, schools and churches that are associated with that period.

The development of the New Town in the area has also left its mark on the rights of way network with strategic routes, such as the Silkin Way and the Ironbridge Way, designed and built by the Telford Development Corporation to provide links and access for the new communities being developed at that time.

1.1 The character of Telford & Wrekin

Telford & Wrekin Council was given status as a unitary authority in April 1998; previously the relevant authorities for the area were Wrekin District Council and Shropshire County Council. The administrative areas of parish councils within Telford & Wrekin were not affected by the local government reorganisation.

In 1986 UNESCO awarded Ironbridge status as a World Heritage Site recognising the area's contribution to the birth of the Industrial Revolution in the 18th Century. The designation of this status gives Telford & Wrekin Council a responsibility to care for and protect the site on behalf of the Global Community and for future generations. One of the key features of the site is the unique Iron Bridge itself.

The most prominent and natural feature in the Borough is the Wrekin Hill. The hill and the surrounding area is part of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and is a popular destination for both locals and tourists. The area is the site of an ancient settlement, and is rich in local folklore.

Telford is a planned town having being designated as a New Town in 1963. A large part of the subsequent development – residential, industrial and commercial – took place in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. In 1968 an extension to the original New Town area was granted by Central Government, and at the same time the name of the town was changed from Dawley New Town to Telford New Town. Development took place on previous agricultural land and sites of older industry.

The development of Telford, unlike many similar New Town development of the time, has incorporated a number of existing settlements. Although most of the settlements were industrial at the time of development, many pre-date the Industrial Revolution, and some pre-date Domesday; in any event each retains a unique characteristic.

Key developments in transport in the area have been the opening of the M54 in 1983, which connects the A5 to the M6, and the introduction of a direct rail route to London in 2008.

1.2 Telford & Wrekin Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

The Council's ROWIP has been drafted as a response to the initiative from Central Government that requires all local authorities to prepare and publish a 10 year plan to improve rights of way in their area by November 2007.

The legislation that promotes the production of the ROWIP is the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Under this legislation the Council is obliged to evaluate and implement the following:

- Assess the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and future needs of Telford & Wrekin's residents and visitors.
- Develop local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation and enjoyment of the countryside.
- Consider accessibility needs of those with mobility problems, sensory impairments and families with children and pushchairs.
- Provide a statement of action the authority proposes to take for the management of local rights of way, to ensure a network fit for future use.

Section 60(5) of the Act defines local rights of way as including: footpaths, cycle tracks, bridleways, restricted byways, and byways open to all traffic that are within the authority's area.

1.2.1 The scope of the Telford & Wrekin Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

The ROWIP covers access throughout the administrative area of Telford & Wrekin Council. It deals with access issues both in the urban area of Telford and in the surrounding rural area.

The Plan also reviews and evaluates access opportunities beyond those shown on the Council's Definitive Map, and recognises the different requirements that people have of the access network.

The Plan aims to be progressive and innovative, and seeks to improve and promote an access network that not only fulfils the authority's

statutory requirements, but meets the diverse and challenging needs of an expanding and vibrant community and visitors to the Borough.

1.3 Rights of way and types of access – what is available

Public rights of way fit into one of four categories:

Footpath	For use by walkers only. Dogs, pushchairs and wheelchairs are classed as “usual accompaniments” and may be taken on these routes
Bridleway	For use by walkers cyclists and horse riders
Restricted Byways	The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 created this category by reclassifying all Roads Used as Public Paths on the Definitive Map. Restricted Byways can be used by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers
Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT)	For use by all traffic, including walkers, cyclists, horse riders, carriage drivers and drivers of mechanically propelled vehicles.

In addition to the rights of way network a variety of other routes and areas exist that enhances the facility provided by the network. These routes and areas are not shown on the definitive map and include the following:

1.3.1 Adopted Footpaths

These are routes that are built either by the Council or a third party, and that have been adopted by the highway authority for the purposes of maintaining them. They are designed to standards commensurate with pedestrian use, and are distinct from footways that run adjacent to vehicular highways.

1.3.2 Cycle Tracks

These are routes over which there is a right to cycle and walk. They are similar in nature to adopted footpaths but have been constructed to a higher specification; often with two specific lanes.

1.3.3 Permissive Access

These routes play an important role in allowing greater access, complementing public rights of way and can help to provide a more cohesive network where permanent public rights are not achievable.

1.3.4 Access Land

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 gave people the right of access on foot to certain open country and registered common land. These areas are known as “Access Land” and are identified on new Ordnance Survey maps. There are no areas of Access Land currently in Telford & Wrekin.

1.3.5 Paths and access on land owned by Telford & Wrekin Council

The Council own a number of sites that are promoted and managed for public access and amenity, such as the Town Park and Granville Country Park. Although there are rights of way on these sites, there are also a large number of additional routes that contribute to the access network.

1.3.6 Quiet Lanes and Roads

These routes can add value to the rights of way network by providing important links along relatively safe vehicular highways.

1.4 How present and future need has been established

The best way to determine what the needs of the public are is to engage with them directly. Consultation has been achieved by means of questionnaires, the results of which have been analysed and interpreted, and are discussed later in this document.

Where the Council has identified specific needs requiring more detailed consultation this has been undertaken by engaging with Focus Groups.

Additionally partners have been invited to contribute by correspondence or interviewed by officers.

1.5 How the strategies in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan have been developed

The ROWIP has recognised and adopted the Council's corporate vision and priorities, which has informed the core ethos of the document.

The ROWIP has had due regard to all other Council policies and strategies to ensure that it is informed by, and contributes to these policies where appropriate.

The drafting of the ROWIP has been undertaken against a background of consultation with the public and partners. The feedback from this consultation has been analysed and evaluated, and has informed the content of the Plan.

The ROWIP has taken into account the topography of the Borough, the density of the access network, and the demographics of the area. It has also recognised and evaluated the impact of the access network on key features such as the World Heritage Site.

1.6 The ROWIP Action Plan

The Action plan will show how the Council intend to achieve the aims and objectives set out against the key strategies outlined in the Plan.

The Action Plan will provide information on resources required, timescales for completion and give a priority score. The Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

1.7 Implementation, monitoring and review of the ROWIP

The Council is required to make a new assessment and review the ROWIP within 5 years. Thereafter, the Council is required to review the ROWIP at not more than 10 year intervals.

The ROWIP will form an important part of Telford & Wrekin's Local Transport Plan, which sets out a vision and objectives for transport in Telford & Wrekin up to the year 2010. It is intended that the ROWIP will be a distinct strand in the LTP at its next review in 2011.

The ROWIP will respond to the changing needs of users, land managers and new legislation. Annual reviews will take place in consultation with the Local Access Forum. Annual reports and progress summaries will be published at the end of each financial year.

2 The Access Network in Telford & Wrekin

2.1 What is available in Telford & Wrekin

The Definitive Map for Shropshire, which includes the administrative area of Telford & Wrekin Council, was published in 1958, following the requirements of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (NPACA) 1949. It showed those routes including Footpaths, Bridleways and Roads Used as Public Paths (RUPPs) that the public were entitled to use as of right, according to their status.

Subsequent Reviews of the 1958 Definitive Map under the NPACA were carried out by Shropshire County Council, the highway authority, in 1960 and 1965. The Review Map of 1965 became the Definitive Map.

The category of Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) was created by the Countryside Act 1968.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 created an obligation on the highway authority to keep the Definitive Map under constant review, and to reclassify all RUPPs on the Definitive Map to the status of Footpath, Bridleway or BOAT. The review under WCA 1981 takes into account “Evidential Events”, and “Legal Events” that take into account changes brought about by Public Path Orders made under other legislation.

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 automatically reclassified all RUPPs remaining on the Definitive Map at the relevant date to the status of Restricted Byway.

2.2 Where rights of way are in Telford & Wrekin

The density of the network in Telford & Wrekin has been broken down into parish and town council administrative areas. This is because population and health demographics, strategic development areas and other key sites can easily be identified by reference to these boundaries.

There are 28 town and parish councils in the Borough of Telford & Wrekin. The number and distances of public rights of way recorded on the definitive map per parish are shown on the table below:

2.2.1 Total length of Rights of Way in Telford & Wrekin in Kilometres

Parish	FP	BW	RB	BOAT	TOTAL (KM)
Chetwynd Aston & Woodcote	8.4	2.9	2.3	0	13.6
Chetwynd	11.4	3.8	4.8	0	20
Church Aston	6.7	0	0.9	0	7.6
Dawley Hamlets	12.3	3.6	1.2	2.7	19.8
Edgmond	9.5	2.5	10.7	0	22.7

Ercall Magna	31	0	0	0	31
Eyton on the Weald Moors	0	0	0	0	0
The Gorge	21.3	5.7	0.2	0.4	27.6
Great Dawley	9.4	0.7	5.6	0	15.7
Hadley & Leegomery	9.3	2.5	1.1	0	12.9
Hollinswood & Randlay	2.5	2.0	0	0	4.5
Ketley	5.9	3.2	2.5	0	11.6
Kynnersley	0.7	1.0	0	0	1.7
Lawley & Overdale	8.4	3.0	1.7	0	13.1
Lilleshall & Donnington	22.0	0	1.1	0	23.1
Little Wenlock	27.3	2.9	3.9	0	34.1
Madeley	16.2	5.7	0	0	21.9
Newport	8.7	1.0	2.3	0	12.0
Oakengates	5.6	2.1	0.5	0.5	8.7
Preston on the Weald Moors	0.5	0	0	0	0.5
Rodington	15.6	2	1	0	18.6
St Georges & Priorslee	4.8	0.5	1.9	0	7.2
Stirchley & Brookside	4.5	3.1	0.1	0	7.7
Tibberton & Cherrington	4.0	1.3	0	0	5.3
Waters Upton	17.5	0.8	0	0	18.3
Wellington	10.3	0	0.7	0	11
Wrockwardine	28.6	1.9	0	0	30.5
Wrockwardine Wood & Trench	4.1	1.1	0.5	0	5.7
TOTAL FOR BOROUGH	306.5	53.3	43	3.6	406.4

2.2.2 What is available for each category of user?

Pedestrians are able to use all rights of way, horse riders and cyclists are able to use Bridleways, Restricted Byways and BOATs, carriage drivers are able to use Restricted Byways and BOATs, and motor vehicle users are restricted to BOATs.

The percentage of the total network available to each category of user in the entire Borough is shown below:

2.2.3 Total percentage of network available:

Category of User	%	Distance Available (KM)
Pedestrian (Ped)	100	406.4
Horse Rider & Cyclist (HR&C)	24.6	99.9
Carriage Driver (CD)	11.5	46.6
Motor Vehicle (MV)	0.9	3.6

The percentage of network available to each category of user on a parish-by-parish basis is as shown below:

2.2.4 Percentage of network available in each parish:

Parish	Ped % Distance	HR&C % Distance	CD % Distance	MV % Distance
Chetwynd Aston & Woodcote	100	38.2	16.9	0
Chetwynd	100	43.0	24.0	0
Church Aston	100	11.8	11.8	0
Dawley Hamlets	100	37.9	19.7	13.6
Edgmond	100	58.1	47.1	0
Ercall Magna	100	0	0	0
Eyton on the Weald Moors	0	0	0	0
The Gorge	100	22.8	2.2	1.4
Great Dawley	100	40.1	35.7	0
Hadley & Leegomery	100	27.9	8.5	0
Hollinswood & Randlay	100	44.4	0	0
Ketley	100	49.1	21.6	0
Kynnersley	100	58.8	0	0
Lawley & Overdale	100	35.9	13	0
Lilleshall & Donnington	100	4.8	0	0
Little Wenlock	100	19.9	11.4	0
Madeley	100	26	0	0
Newport	100	27.5	19.2	0
Oakengates	100	35.6	11.5	0
Preston on the Weald Moors	100	0	0	0
Rodington	100	16.1	5.4	0
St Georges & Priorslee	100	33.3	26.4	0
Stirchley & Brookside	100	41.6	1.3	0
Tibberton & Cherrington	100	24.5	0	0
Waters Upton	100	4.4	0	0
Wellington	100	6.4	6.4	0
Wrockwardine	100	6.2	0	0
Wrockwardine Wood & Trench	100	28.1	8.8	0

2.3 Conclusions

There are only 7.5 km of rights of way in the rural parishes (Eyton, Preston, Kynnersley and Tibberton & Cherrington) that make up the Weald Moors area of Telford & Wrekin, representing the smallest concentration in the Borough.

Additionally, there is below average rights of way provision for horse riders and off-road cycling in the rural parishes of: Church Aston, The Gorge, Lilleshall & Donnington, Little Wenlock, Rodington, Waters Upton and Wrockwardine.

There is below average provision for carriage drivers in the rural parishes of The Gorge, Lilleshall & Donnington, Rodington, and Wrockwardine.

There is little provision for motorised vehicle users other than in Dawley Hamlets.

2.4 Adopted Footpaths and cycle ways

These are public routes that have been created by the Telford Development Corporation as part of the process of designing strategic access routes during New Town Development, in response to the demands of the Local Transport Plan (LTP), or have come about through development of an area.

The adopted footpath and cycleway network is most prevalent in parishes in which there has been extensive New Town Development – Great Dawley, Hadley & Leegomery, Hollinswood & Randlay, Lawley & Overdale, Madeley, St Georges & Priorslee, Stirchley & Brookside.

There is also adopted footpath and cycleway provision in Dawley Hamlets, The Gorge, Ketley, Lilleshall & Donnington, Newport, Oakengates, Wellington and Wrockwardine Wood.

There is very little adopted footpath and cycle way provision in any of the rural parishes.

2.5 Land managed in Telford & Wrekin for access

The key sites in the Borough that provide access are:

2.5.1 Telford Town Park is a 170 hectare site, forming part of the Green Network, providing access opportunities for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. The Town Park is in the parishes of Great Dawley, Hollinswood & Randlay, and Stirchley & Brookside.

2.5.2 Granville Country Park is a 35 hectare site in the parish of Lilleshall & Donnington that provides access opportunities for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. The area is owned by Telford & Wrekin Council and managed by both the Council and Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

2.5.3 The Cockshutt Piece is a woodland site in the parish of Wrockwardine Wood that provides access for pedestrians and cyclists. Use for horse riders of certain routes in the site is currently being investigated.

2.5.4 Paddock Mound in the parish of Ketley is an 11 hectare site, incorporating woodland, meadow, marshland and ponds that provides access for pedestrians.

2.5.5 Additionally the **Green Network** in Telford & Wrekin provides 2500 hectares of open space in the urban area that provides access for pedestrians and, to a more limited extent, horse riders and cyclists.

2.5.6 Permissive routes

There is limited permissive access in the Borough, primarily in the parishes of Chetwynd, Lilleshall & Donnington, Newport and Rodington. Details of the permissive access are included at Appendix 1.

2.6 ACTION POINTS IN RESPECT OF AVAILABLE ACCESS

- 1. To investigate and promote additional access in the parishes in the Weald Moors area.**
- 2. To investigate and promote additional bridleway access in the parishes of Church Aston, The Gorge, Lilleshall & Donnington, Little Wenlock, Rodington, Waters Upton, and Wrockwardine.**
- 3. To investigate and promote additional restricted byway access in the parishes of The Gorge, Lilleshall & Donnington, Rodington, and Wrockwardine.**
- 4. To investigate and promote options for off-road access in the Borough for vehicle users.**

3 Telford & Wrekin Community Profile

3.1 Overview

The population of Telford and Wrekin is growing at a faster rate than any other locality in the West Midlands. Between, 1991-2001 the (Census) population of the Borough increased by 12% from 141,500 to 158,325, ranking the area in the top 30 fastest growing local authorities. This presents a challenge to the Council and partners, not just in ensuring that additional homes are built, but in planning/providing the range of public services that will be needed for this significant increase in the population, including health and social care services.

There is evidence that the economic and skills situation in Telford & Wrekin is improving. Wages are increasing, and the percentage of employees receiving training is increasing above the national rate. The percentage of the population with NVQ level 4 is increasing, albeit still below the national rate of 26.3%. Unemployment is below national rates. However, in 2005 35.6% of the Borough's working age population had no qualification in English and 40% had no qualification in Maths.

Children that live in households on low incomes or where their parent(s) or guardian(s) are not working are likely to lack access to facilities such as health, leisure and education services. Also, where the child is in a "workless" household, it increases the likelihood of the child not working on reaching working age. Some 20% of dependant children in Telford & Wrekin were found (2001 Census) to live in a household in which there was no working adult – compared to the national average of 17.4%. Addressing the problem of "worklessness", in order to positively impact upon child poverty, is therefore a Borough priority.

3.1.1 Age

The Borough has historically had a young population. In 2006, some 21% of the population was aged 15 years or less compared to 19% nationally and just 13% of the population were aged 65+ compared to 16% nationally. Whilst this trend is forecast to continue over the next 2 decades, the number of older people in the Borough will increase by over two-thirds by 2026, which will have a significant impact on the provision of facilities and services. Over this period, the number of residents aged 85+ will increase by 80% to 4,300.

3.1.2 Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks Telford & Wrekin as the 112th most deprived of 354 local authority areas, placing it in the top third most deprived local authority areas in England. Within the West Midlands, the Borough is ranked the eighth most deprived (of 34) local authority areas.

When looking specifically at income deprivation, Telford & Wrekin ranked 84th nationally (in the top 25%), and 8th regionally. This figure equated to 24,240 people in the Borough who were income deprived – 15.3% of the population.

The five neighbourhoods in Telford & Wrekin that ranked amongst the 10% most deprived in England were the wards of Woodside, Malinslee (2 neighbourhoods), Brookside and Donnington. These neighbourhoods comprise around 5% of the Borough's total population.

3.1.3 Ethnicity

The Borough is primarily comprised of people of white ethnicity. This includes people of white ethnicity who are not British (7%), for example, white people from Eastern Europe. Approximately 5% of the community are from black and minority ethnic (non-white) communities.

As the Borough's population has grown it has also diversified. In 2001, 5.2% of the population was from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities (3.5% in 1991). The largest minority communities are Indian and Pakistani. The arrival of economic migrant workers from new EU accession states in the last 3 years places new and complex demands on local services. The Borough now contains the third highest proportion of migrants in the Region.

BME groups represent a relatively small part of the population of Telford and Wrekin as a whole but they are particularly concentrated within two wards. According to the 2001 Census, ethnic minorities make up more than 23.7% of the population in the College Ward and 14.3% in the Hadley and Leegomery ward.

The Pakistani community of Punjab and Mirpuri origins live mainly in the College Ward. An estimated 400 Pakistani families live in four adjoining streets in Wellington but they are also resident in other parts of Telford and Wrekin.

The African Caribbean community is more widely dispersed within the College and Hadley & Leegomery Wards, as well as on the housing estates of South Telford – Brookside, Woodside, Stirchley and Madeley.

Nationally and locally, the minority population is much younger on average than the white population and was estimated to have grown more quickly during the 1990s. The Borough's BME population was much lower than national average of 9% and West Midlands regional population of 11.2%.

The Borough covers a relatively large rural area where the BME settlement is of very low percentage. This disparity offers challenges of isolation, the need to address common issues of discrimination within the context of urban and rural environments.

3.1.4 Gender

The 2005 mid-year estimates identified slightly more men than women aged under 25 in the Borough. Beyond age 25, the gender imbalance was reversed and there were more females than males. The imbalance towards females increases towards the older end of the population and in the 85+ age group only 30% of the population are male. The Council's Gender Equality Scheme 2007-2010 explores gender issues in more detail.

3.1.5 Disability

The Disability Rights Commission estimates disability rates in Great Britain in 2006 at 19% of adults between the ages of 16-64. This would equate to 20,085 people in Telford & Wrekin. The 2001 census asked a question about economic activity. Six percent of people in Telford & Wrekin between the ages of 16-76 stated they were not in employment as they were permanently sick or disabled.

3.1.6 Religious Groupings

In 2001 the religious profile of the local population was relatively similar to England and Wales. Some 15.1% of the local population said they did not have a religion compared to 14.8% for England and Wales. Christianity accounts for 74.3% of the local population, which is slightly higher than 71.7% for England and Wales.

3.1.7 Sexuality

It is estimated that 6% of the UK population are lesbian, gay or bi-sexual, which in Telford would equate to over 10,000 people by 2011.

Currently the Council has no specific "scheme" to address sexuality issues and although there is no legal requirement the Council is committed to address this issue and this forms part of the councils equality and diversity action plan.

4. Policy Context

The ROWIP has functional links with, and contributes to, a wide range of documents, plans and strategies and it is important that the aims and objectives of these are recognised. As the ROWIP evolves, many new links with other strategies and plans within and also outside the authority will be identified and established.

4.1 Community Vision and Priorities

The shared vision of the Council and the Telford & Wrekin partnership for the community that we serve is:

“A successful, prosperous and healthy community which offers a good quality of life for all the people of Telford & Wrekin”.

Creating a successful, prosperous and healthy community is dependant on all parts of the community and local organisations and agencies working together in a “joined up” way. Together with our partners on the Local Strategic Partnership, the Council is committed to realising a shared agenda of Community Priorities that support delivery of the Vision.

These priorities and how the Rights of Way Improvement Plan will contribute to them have been detailed in the table below:

1. Transforming Telford & Wrekin.	The development and improvement of the rights of way network will help to improve the quality of life for people in Telford & Wrekin by creating a high quality network of leisure and utility routes that is suitable for all needs.
2. Giving children and young people the best possible start in their lives.	The ROWIP will contribute to the development of safe access to schools and learning centres for children and young people. The improvement of the network will provide a free, easily accessible leisure facility that will help to promote a healthy lifestyle for children and young people and promote a better understanding of the countryside.
3. Maintaining a high quality, attractive and sustainable environment.	The ROWIP will seek to develop and promote access and mobility for all types of users in the Borough. The improvement of rights of way in rural areas will significantly improve access to local services and public transport.

4. Creating a safe, strong and cohesive community.	The ROWIP will detail and put into context the Council's strategy for the management of access where communities have issues of criminal and anti-social behaviour.
5. Promoting healthy communities and improving the quality of life of vulnerable and older people.	The ROWIP will demonstrate how the Council will improve rights of way with particular emphasis on the needs of disabled and older people, and promote the network as a healthy, sustainable leisure and access facility.
6. Strengthening the local economy and the skills of local people.	The improvement of the rights of way network on key routes will help to improve access to local shops and facilities and places of employment.
7. An efficient, effective and customer focused Council that delivers value-for-money for the community.	The ROWIP will demonstrate how the needs of communities have been identified and evaluated. The Action Plan will show how the Council will respond positively to meeting those needs. The document will also demonstrate how the Council will work with partners to achieve the objectives in the Action Plan.

4.2 Council policies and Plans

4.2.1 A Community Strategy for Telford & Wrekin

The overall vision of the Community Strategy is of: "A successful, prosperous and healthy community which offers a good quality of life for all the people of Telford & Wrekin". To achieve this vision the Community Strategy lists the following key ambitions:

- An economy that is diverse, dynamic, competitive and successful
- A community that is well educated and skilled
- A community that is healthy, cared for and well housed
- A community that feels safe and protected
- A place that is attractive, vibrant and with a high quality environment.

4.2.2 Local Journeys and Transport

The Council's primary policy document in respect of transport and accessibility issues is the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006-2011. The LTP sets out a strategy for the continuing development of transport and has the overall aim to "encourage regeneration and sustainable growth" in the Borough.

The Council is committed to improving accessibility to local services. The key strategic document, the Accessibility Planning Strategy, encapsulates the vision of the Council as seeking “to shorten the gap between those who are able to access key services in the Borough and those who cannot, by actively working to mainstream accessibility planning into policy and project development across all service areas and partner organisations”.

How the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) will contribute to the visions, aims and strategies of these policy documents is set out below.

4.2.3 The Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006-2011

Following on from the first Local Transport Plan, the LTP has been developed following extensive consultation with local organisations and community representatives, transport providers, and residents.

While the Plan is based on a comprehensive set of objectives derived from the Governments shared priorities for transport (congestion, accessibility, safer roads, air quality and other quality of life issues), it also reflects the vision and objectives of the Borough’s Community Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and emerging Local Development Framework. As such it recognises that transport is a major influence on broader social, economic and environmental issues and is fundamental to achieving a high quality of life for residents in the Borough.

Development of the ROWIP is essential to ensure that local transport planning is making most effective use of the rights of way network in both urban and rural areas. The ROWIP will link into the four main objectives in the LTP as shown in the table below:

Local Transport Plan Objectives	How the ROWIP will support the LTP objectives
To combat social exclusion and maximise accessibility to everyday facilities for all	The needs of disabled and elderly people have been evaluated following the consultation process, and the Action Plan will detail how improvement of the rights of way network will respond to the needs of these sections of the community
To support sustainable economic growth and regeneration	The improvement and promotion of the rights of way network will take into account the location of places of work, businesses and retail outlets, and services. Maintenance provision, signposting and literature will be tailored to meet these needs where appropriate

To improve safety for all	Improvement of the rights of way network will prioritise issues that can be shown to improve the safety of users and communities. This will include identifying safe routes to school and work, and determining applications for gating orders
To protect and enhance the built and natural environment	Improvement of rights of way in rural areas will initially focus on upgrading and promoting strategic routes connecting communities to services and facilities

4.2.4 Accessibility Planning Strategy 2006-2011

Accessibility planning originated from a report produced by the Deputy Prime Ministers Office entitled "Making the Connections: Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion". The report linked poor access to essential and non-essential services as a key factor influencing peoples' life chances.

The focus of accessibility planning is on improving access to employment, health, education and fresh food shopping for hard to reach groups or those identified as most in need.

At a regional level the accessibility planning agenda is reflected through the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy 2004, which incorporates a number of strategies that help to contribute towards improving accessibility across the West Midlands Region.

The Accessibility Objectives for the Borough as shown in the table below:

Accessibility Objectives	How the ROWIP will support Accessibility Objectives
Support economic development by providing access to work opportunities for residents and an available labour pool for investors	Priority will be given to the improvement of routes that provide access to places of work
Reduce health inequalities by providing access to fresh food shopping and awareness of healthy diets	Priority will be given to the improvement of routes that provide access to appropriate retail facilities
Improve the health of residents by providing access to health facilities and improving awareness of health improvement opportunities	Promotion of the access network will focus on providing health benefit information
Support the creation of a life-long learning culture through improved access to educational facilities and opportunities	Priority will be given to the improvement of routes providing access to educational facilities

Help improve accessibility to services and opportunities through a range of non-transport and transport solutions and interventions	Improvement and promotion of the rights of way and access network will help provide an infrastructure of routes to promote non-transport solutions
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4.3 KEY ACTION POINTS IN RESPECT OF LOCAL JOURNEYS AND TRANSPORT

- 1. To identify and locate key services and facilities, and places of work and learning in the Borough.**
- 2. To identify routes that provides access to identified services and facilities.**
- 3. To carry out a condition survey of routes identified to ensure that they are of an appropriate standard giving particular regard to the needs of people with mobility problems.**
- 4. To identify a programme of improvements on key routes.**
- 5. To promote local routes.**

4.4 ACTION PLAN – LOCAL JOURNEYS AND TRANSPORT

AIM	ACTION	INDICATOR	STAFFING & TIMESCALE	FUNDING SOURCE CORE/NEW	PRIORITY 1/2
<p>1. To promote and support the vision and objectives of the Local Transport Plan by the improvement of the rights of way network and associated access</p>	<p>To undertake an audit of services, facilities, shops, and places of learning and work in the Borough.</p> <p>To undertake an audit of rights of way and associated access routes that can support access to the above and improvements that are needed to make these routes suitable.</p> <p>To implement improvements as appropriate.</p> <p>To publicise and promote routes.</p>	<p>Amount of routes that have been upgraded and publicised to access facilities.</p>	<p>2011</p> <p>Network Management & Policy Business Unit</p>	<p>Core</p>	
<p>2. To promote and support the vision and objectives of the Accessibility Planning Strategy by the improvement of the rights of way network and associated access</p>	<p>To undertake an audit of rights of way and associated routes that contribute to a healthy lifestyle.</p> <p>To implement improvements as appropriate.</p> <p>To publicise and promote routes.</p>	<p>Amount of routes that have been upgraded and publicised to promote health</p>	<p>2011</p> <p>Network Management & Policy Business Unit and TWC partners</p>	<p>Core</p>	

4.5 Development

A key issue that will affect the management of access in Telford & Wrekin, particularly in the urban areas, is development. Many of the sites affected by new development will have rights of way crossing them, and there is a need to ensure that new and alternative access on development sites retains and improves on the integrity of the existing network and meets the needs of communities and users in accordance with Council strategies.

4.5.1 Development Plan Documents

The emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) will constitute the Council's strategic planning policy document addressing the key spatial development issues for the Borough to the year 2016. The LDF will consist of a number of Development Plan Documents (DPD) central to which is the Core Strategy.

The Vision of the Core Strategy is informed by the vision of the Community Partnership, and the Strategy includes issues such as accessibility, health and access to services as part of the spatial development objectives.

4.5.2 Spatial Development Strategy

The Spatial Development Strategy for the Borough is to facilitate the accessibility of services and the delivery of infrastructure and development, in a sustainable spatial pattern and form that meets local and community needs. To achieve this development we must meet the objectives in the table below, which also shows how these objectives will be supported by the improvement of rights of way and access.

Relevant Spatial Development Strategy Objectives	How Objectives will be supported by the ROWIP
Improve accessibility to jobs, health, housing, education, shops, sport, recreation, open space, leisure and community facilities for all members of the community	The management of access in development areas will focus on establishing good quality routes that provide access to these facilities
Development will be focused within existing town, district, local centres, and key rural settlements to support their vitality and viability. Outside these centres development to meet local need will be considered in locations that are, or can be made, accessible	Priority will be given to improving existing key routes outside the development area that provide access to services and facilities for that development
Development will reduce the need to travel, encourage the availability of a choice of transport, and reduce	Priority will be given to providing sustainable access links within the development and to the existing

growing dependence on the road network	network with an emphasis on accessibility to work, schools, health centres, shops, and other facilities
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4.6 KEY ACTION POINTS IN RESPECT OF DEVELOPMENT

- 1. To give consideration to existing access and rights of way on applications for development sites, and ensure that new and alternative access has the same connectivity to the rest of the network.**
- 2. To promote the provision of additional or upgraded access on development sites that provides useful links for strategic leisure routes with particular emphasis on multi-use routes.**
- 3. To give consideration to give consideration to the improvement and promotion of the existing access network where it can be shown that this would provide useful links to facilities and services from the development.**

4.7 ACTION PLAN – DEVELOPMENT

AIM	ACTION	INDICATOR	STAFFING & TIMESCALE	FUNDING SOURCE CORE/NEW	PRIORITY 1/2
<p>1. To ensure that connectivity to the rights of way and access network is maintained on development sites</p>	<p>To audit all rights of way shown on the definitive map, and all applications for modification orders on and in the vicinity of all applications for development.</p> <p>To discuss rights of way and access provision on development sites with developers at the pre-application stage</p> <p>To ensure that rights of way and access requirements are identified on planning application consultation responses where appropriate.</p>	<p>Planning applications that have been monitored</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Network Management & Policy and Development & Design</p> <p>Developer partners</p>	<p>Core</p>	
<p>2. To promote the provision of additional or upgraded access on development sites that provides useful links for strategic leisure and access routes with particular emphasis on multi-use routes</p>	<p>To consult with partners, local councils and the Local Access Forum in respect of potential access improvements for all medium and large applications.</p> <p>To negotiate improved and upgraded access with</p>	<p>New routes that have been made available on development sites</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Network Management & Policy and Development & Design</p>	<p>Core</p>	

	<p>developers.</p> <p>To ensure that improved access is identified on planning approval where appropriate</p>		Developer partners		
<p>3. To improve and promote the existing access network where this would provide useful links to services and facilities from the development site</p>	<p>To audit services and facilities and potential access to these from development sites.</p> <p>To identify improvements that can be made to appropriate routes.</p> <p>To identify funding sources from development to implement improvements.</p>	<p>Number of routes that have been improved as part of the development procedures</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Network Management & Policy and Development & Design</p> <p>Developer partners</p>	<p>Core</p> <p>Funding from developers</p>	

4.8 Disabilities Equality

4.8.1 Legal Framework

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, places a general duty on all public authorities to actively promote disability equality. This means that Councils shall, in carrying out their duties, have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination which is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disability
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even if that means treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

4.8.2 Telford & Wrekin Council Disability Equality Scheme

The aim of the Disability Equality Scheme is to make equality a central part of the way that the Council works by putting it at the forefront of policy making, service delivery, regulation, enforcement and employment.

Through extensive consultation with the Disability Steering Group, the Access Group, and voluntary and community groups a number of priority issues of the community have been identified. The issues relevant to the improvement of rights of way and the access network are:

- Transport
- Accessing the environment.

The Disability Equality Scheme has recognised the Council's commitment to improving accessibility through the Accessibility Planning Strategy, and has specifically noted that improvement of accessibility in the rural area is a priority.

The Council has committed, through the Disability Equality Scheme, to evaluate and implement improved opportunities for disabled people on the rights of way and access network. This chapter and action plan will detail the steps the Council intends to take in respect of this commitment.

4.8.3 Definition of disability

The definition of a disabled person used in the DDA is contained in the 1995 Act, that is: "where a person has a physical or mental impairment

that has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

4.8.4 Disabled Access to the rights of way network

The rights of way network in Telford & Wrekin accesses a wide variety of landscapes and environments; from moderately difficult terrain like the Wrekin Hill, through woodland and farmland, to structured and surfaced paths in the urban areas. Clearly the provision of a rights of way service needs to take these natural limitations to access into account when complying with the requirements of the DDA.

The two key approaches that the Council will take to make the network more accessible to disabled people is improve the provision of structures and surfaces on public rights of way to provide the greatest possible opportunity for access, and provide information to increase awareness of the facilities that are available.

The Council will promote the route as both an important part of the accessibility network to key services and facilities, and as a leisure and recreational facility in itself.

4.9 KEY ACTION POINTS TO IMPROVE ACCESS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

- 1. To make all parts of the network as accessible to disabled people as possible with particular emphasis on providing access to key services and facilities.**
- 2. To improve leisure and recreation opportunities for disabled people on the rights of way and access network.**
- 3. To provide information and promote the rights of way network as a key access and recreational facility for disabled people.**

4.10 ACTION PLAN – DISABILITY ACCESS

AIM	ACTION	INDICATOR	STAFFING & TIMESCALE	FUNDING SOURCE CORE/NEW	PRIORITY 1/2
<p>1. To make all parts of the rights of way network as accessible to disabled people as possible with particular emphasis on providing access to key services and facilities</p>	<p>a. Wherever possible kissing gates will be installed on footpaths where maintenance of an existing structure is required.</p> <p>b. Where maintenance of a gate on a bridleway is required the replacement furniture will be accessible from horseback.</p> <p>c. Wherever possible dropped kerbs will be installed where there is access to a ROW from a vehicular road.</p> <p>d. Wherever possible steps on ROW will be replaced with an appropriate slope or ramp.</p>	<p>Amount of gates, bridges, steps and surfaces improved.</p>	<p>HM staff to survey routes.</p> <p>Term contractor to undertake maintenance.</p> <p>All current maintenance provide the appropriate structures when replacing existing furniture.</p> <p>Pro-active replacement of unsuitable furniture will commence April 2008 and continue until 2012.</p>	<p>New funding will be sought from external funding providers.</p>	<p>1</p>

	<p>e. Wherever possible bridge structures will be installed with suitable ramped access and egress and be of a sufficient width for wheelchair and mobility vehicle access.</p> <p>f. Where the ROW provides access to an important service or facility consideration will be given to improving the surface of the path if appropriate.</p> <p>g. Undertake a pro-active programme of replacing unsuitable furniture on ROW.</p>				
<p>2. To improve leisure and recreational opportunities for disabled people on the rights of way and access network</p>	<p>a. Identify routes that are easily accessible from community settlements and car parks that provide recreational access into the countryside.</p> <p>b. Develop and implement a programme of works to upgrade paths where</p>	<p>Amount of identified routes that are suitable for disabled access into the countryside.</p>	<p>HM staff to identify and survey routes and devise programme.</p> <p>Term contractor to undertake maintenance.</p>	<p>New funding will be sought from external funding providers.</p>	<p>1</p>

	necessary based on surveys of identified routes.				
3. To provide information and promote the rights of way network as a key access and recreation facility for disabled people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Publish a series of leaflets promoting access for disabled people. b. Provide information on disabled access on the Council's website. c. Attend appropriate forums to keep groups informed of progress. 	<p>Leaflets published and information audit.</p> <p>Attendance at forums.</p>	<p>D&P to publish leaflets starting in April 2010.</p> <p>HM to provide website information and attend forum meetings starting Nov 2008.</p>	Core with additional new funding sought from external funding providers.	2

5. The Rights of Way Service in Telford & Wrekin Council and Partnership Working

5.1 How rights of way are managed by Telford & Wrekin Council

Telford & Wrekin Council is a unitary authority and as such is the relevant highway authority and order making authority responsible for the management of rights of way in the administrative area that it covers.

Rights of way are managed by the Environment & Regeneration Portfolio from the Network Management & Policy Business Unit. The Council employs two full-time Rights of Way Officers in the Highways Management Team, which is also responsible for Development Control, Highways Adoptions and Land Charge Searches.

The Rights of Way Officers are responsible for:

- The Review of the Definitive Map
- Maintenance
- Enforcement
- Public Path Orders, including those published under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Publicity for public rights of way and associated access is managed by the Development & Promotions Team in the Transport Business Unit.

Responsibility for publishing Modification Orders and Public Path Orders lies with the Legal Services Team.

5.2 Partners

A number of partners significantly contribute to the development and management of rights of way in Telford & Wrekin. These include:

5.2.1 Parish and Town Councils

Local councils have played a significant role in developing and improving access in Telford & Wrekin. The Council has worked with local council partners to develop two projects: the South Telford Rights of Way Project (STROWP) and the North Telford Parish Paths Partnership (NT3P).

Local council partners on both projects have allocated substantial funds to employing Project Officers. The Project Officers have played a key role in adding over 300 new footpaths and bridleways to the

definitive map since 1998 and, in the case of STROWP, assisted with maintenance. The work of NT3P concluded in March 2007, partners having agreed that the objectives of the project had been achieved.

Additionally all local council partners play a valuable role in highlighting local concerns and involvement in the access network as well as providing feedback to consultations in respect of Modification Applications, Public Path Orders, and the Alley-gating strategy. The Community and Parish Plans and direct consultation with local Councils have helped inform the ROWIP.

5.2.2 South Telford Rights of Way Partnership (STROWP)

South Telford Rights of Way Project was initiated by five south Telford parish councils (Dawley Hamlets, The Gorge, Hollinswood & Randlay, Madeley and Stirchley & Brookside) and Severn Gorge Countryside Trust (SGCT) in 1995. The aim of the Project was to identify local paths that did not have any public status for inclusion on the Definitive Map.

Having largely concluded this process by 1998, STROWP concentrated on improving maintenance in the STROWP partner's area. STROWP, which had been managed by Shropshire County Council and Telford & Wrekin Council became a separate organisation in 2003, and changed its focus to concentrate on promoting use of rights of way, and less on maintenance.

STROWP is currently managed by the three member parishes of The Gorge, Madeley and Stirchley & Brookside, and employs a full-time Project Officer. STROWP significantly contributes to the promotion and development of access in the member parishes.

5.2.3 Interest and User Groups

National organisations such as the Ramblers Association, The British Horse Society, Cyclists Touring Club and the Trail Riders Fellowship have local representatives that are consulted when processing Modification Order applications, Public Path Orders and other access issues. Additionally these organisations assist the council in keeping abreast of local access issues.

Additionally Telford Bridleways are a local user group representing the interests of local horse riders. A lot of work is done by this organisation to identify new bridleway routes and improvements.

The Council runs two forums: the Telford & Wrekin Walking Group (T&WWG) and the Telford & Wrekin Bike Users Group (TBUG). These groups were set up as part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) consultation and monitoring process.

5.2.4 Landowners and Farmers

Landowners and farmers form an integral part of local rural communities. The majority of rural paths cross land in their ownership, and they have an important role in maintaining this access: they are responsible for maintaining stiles and gates, reinstating paths after ploughing, keeping paths clear of crops and cutting back overhanging vegetation.

Additionally some landowners in Telford & Wrekin have provided permissive access that has improved the access network in rural areas.

5.2.5 Developers

Telford & Wrekin is a key area for development in the West Midlands Region. A significant amount of land that has been allocated for development is affected by rights of way. Developers play a key role in retaining the integrity of the access network on these sites, working with the Council to identify alternative and additional routes that improve and enhance the network.

5.3 What partners have told us about partnership working

Partners have been consulted to find out how the Council can work better with them to improve and enhance the access network in both urban and rural areas. The suggestions made by partners are as follows:

- Better liaison with parish and town councils to promote local interests and recognise the needs of local communities
- Better liaison with user and interest groups, particularly with horse rider and carriage rider groups who feel that they have little representation at present
- More regular and detailed information about developments and progress on rights of way issues should be made available to partners
- Forums should be available for different interest groups to meet and discuss ideas
- Rights of way and access issues should have a higher profile in other areas of Council work, such as Planning and Highway Maintenance.

5.4 KEY ACTION POINTS FOR PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 1. To ensure that parish and town councils are regularly consulted and updated in respect of rights of way and access issues.**
- 2. To ensure that all user groups have a forum specific to their needs, and are regularly consulted and updated in respect of rights of way and access issues.**
- 3. To set up the Local Access Forum for Telford & Wrekin.**
- 4. To review and revise the Council's web page for rights of way to ensure that it provides relevant and up-to-date information, and ensure that there are suitable links to allow people to respond to the Council via the net.**
- 5. To provide regular newsletters for parish and town councils and interest groups.**
- 6. To ensure that rights of way issues are represented in appropriate forums such as the Local Access Partnership (LAP).**

5.5 ACTION PLAN – PARTNERSHIP WORKING

AIM	ACTION	INDICATOR	STAFFING & TIMESCALE	FUNDING SOURCE CORE/NEW	PRIORITY 1/2
1. To ensure that local councils, user groups and other partners are regularly consulted and updated in respect of rights of way and access issues.	<p>a. To attend at least one meeting of each local council each financial year.</p> <p>b. Newsletters as in 8d of the Consultation feedback Action Plan.</p>	<p>Local council meetings attended.</p> <p>Annual information audit.</p>	<p>HM staff to attend local council meetings from September 2008.</p> <p>HM to publish newsletters from Nov 2008.</p>	Core	1
2. To ensure that user groups have a forum specific to their needs, and are regularly consulted and updated in respect of rights of way and access issues.	<p>a. Set up forums for horse riders, carriage drivers and off-road vehicle users.</p> <p>b. Newsletters as in 8d of Consultation Feedback Action Plan</p>	<p>Number of forum meetings.</p> <p>Annual information audit.</p>	<p>User Forums to be set up by HM by Nov 2008.</p> <p>Newsletters as above.</p>	Core	1
3. To set up the Local Access Forum for Telford & Wrekin.	<p>a. As in Aim 9 in the Action Plan – Consultation Feedback.</p>	As in Aim 9	As in Aim 9	As in Aim 9	1
4. To review and revise the Council's webpage for rights of way to ensure that it provides relevant and up-to-date	<p>a. Publish the modification orders application register on the Council's website.</p> <p>b. Publish information as in</p>	<p>Register published and updated</p> <p>Enquiries</p>	Register to be published by HM and ICT on web by Dec 2008.	Core	1

<p>information, and ensure that there are suitable links to allow people to respond to the council via the internet.</p>	<p>Action 8c of the Action Plan – Consultation Feedback.</p> <p>c. Set up a web link on the rights of way web page for enquiries.</p>	<p>resulting from web link</p>	<p>Rights of way page to be updated by HM and ICT by Nov 2008</p>		
<p>5. To provide regular newsletter for local councils, User groups and other partners.</p>	<p>a. As in Action 8d of the Action Plan – Consultation Feedback</p>	<p>As in Action 8d</p>	<p>As in Action 8d</p>	<p>As in Action 8d</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>6. To ensure that rights of way issues are represented in appropriate forums such as the Local Access Partnership (LAP)</p>	<p>a. Attend and give presentations at appropriate forums.</p>	<p>Forum meetings attended</p>	<p>HM staff when appropriate</p>	<p>Core</p>	<p>2</p>

5.6 ACTION PLAN – NETWORK PROVISION

AIM	ACTION	INDICATOR	STAFFING & TIMESCALE	FUNDING SOURCE CORE/NEW	PRIORITY 1/2
<p>1. To investigate and promote additional access in the parishes in the Weald Moors area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consult with parish councils and user groups to determine existing use. b. Investigate archive records for the area to determine any historical use. c. Make orders in respect of any existing evidence of highway use. d. Negotiate with landowners for additional ROW or permissive access. 	<p>New routes added to the definitive map and other additional access in the Weald Moors area.</p>	<p>HM staff in consultation with partners to begin April 2010.</p>	<p>Core</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>2. To investigate and promote additional bridleway access in the parishes of The Gorge, Lilleshall & Donnington, Little Wenlock, Rodington, Waters Upton and Wrockwardine.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Draft a programme for a parish-by-parish investigation. b. Consult with horse users groups, local councils and landowners to determine existing use. 	<p>New definitive bridleways and permissive routes</p>	<p>HM staff in consultation with partners. Draft programme to be published by Nov 2008.</p>	<p>Core</p>	<p>1</p>

	<p>c. Investigate archive records to determine historical use.</p> <p>d. Make orders in respect of any existing evidence of bridleway rights.</p> <p>e. Negotiate with landowners for additional ROW or permissive access.</p>		Review to be over 10 year period.		
3. To investigate and promote additional restricted byway access in the parishes of The Gorge, Lillehall & Donnington, Rodington and Wrockwardine.	a. Co-ordinate investigation with bridleway programme.	New definitive restricted byways or permissive access.	As above.	Core	2
4. To investigate and promote options for off-road access in the Borough for vehicle users	<p>Draft a programme for investigation of Borough.</p> <p>Investigation procedure as above.</p>	New definitive or permissive BOATS	As above.	Core	2

6 Establishing The Need – What People Have Told Us

To establish what the public need from the rights of way and access network the Council has consulted with the public through the use of questionnaires as well as meetings and correspondence with user groups, parish councils and other partners.

6.1 Rights of way user surveys - Footpaths

The survey was undertaken by questionnaire in 2005. The aim of the survey was to assess the needs of walkers in the Borough against the current provision of routes, and the expectation for improvement.

70 000 copies of the questionnaire were circulated to residents throughout the Borough by including copies in the Telford & Wrekin Council publication "Insight". A total of 1,600 responses were returned to the Council giving a response rate of 2.3%.

The current distance of the footpath network shown on the definitive map in the Borough is 306 kilometres. The total rights of way network for the Borough measures 406 kilometres meaning that the percentage of the total network that has the status of footpath is 75%.

Additionally urban areas in the Borough have an extensive network of adopted footpaths and footpath/cycleways that compliment the existing rights of way network and provide valuable off-road routes for the public. There is also an extensive network of footpaths for use by the public on land owned and managed by the Council, but which do not have any legal status as highways.

There are a number of rural parishes that have little or no rights of way provision, these include: Eyton on the Weald Moors, Preston on the Weald Moors and Kynnersley.

6.2 Results of the survey

6.2.1 Users

The vast majority of respondents (82%) stated that they used the footpath network weekly or more, with 50% of respondents stating that they used the network 4-5 times a week or more. 38% of respondents use the network daily.

69% of respondents most regularly made use of defined footpaths, while 12.5% made regular use of rights of way in woodlands and

nature reserves, 4% in open land such as the Town Park or Granville Country Park, 2.5% in fields and farmlands, and 3.2% along riverside paths and canal tow paths. 6.7% of walkers regularly used bridleways.

The most common reason given by respondents (27%) for using the rights of way network was for health. The next most common uses of the network were: to walk pets (20%), to visit specific places (18%) and to access local facilities (14%). Relatively few respondents used the network to take children to school (4%) or get to work (5%).

For 46% of respondents the route that they frequently use starts by their house; additionally 33% of respondents walk to the route that they most frequently use. 16% of respondents access the route they most frequently use by motorised transport, and only 1.5% of respondents use public transport to access the network.

94% of respondents are able to access the routes that they most frequently use in less than 25 minutes, while 63% of respondents are able to access the routes that they most frequently use in less than 5 minutes.

The most common duration of a walk is between 31-60 minutes (29% of respondents walked between 1 and half and three miles), followed by 16-30 minutes (22%), and between 1-2 hours (16%). Only 8% of respondents spent less than 15 minutes on a walk, and 6% over 2 hours. 20% of respondents spent a varying duration walking.

The majority of respondents (63%) most usually made a journey taking a circular route, with 37% of users travelling back and forth along the same route.

6.2.2 Access and highway use

The majority of respondents (45%) have to break their journey on the footpath network by crossing or walking along quiet roads, while a further 21% of respondents are able to complete their journeys without using a road at all. 33% of respondents have to break their journey by crossing or walking along a busy road.

40% of respondents felt to some extent that they did not feel safe using busy roads on their journey, while 33% of respondents did feel safe to some extent using them. 27% of respondents did not have any opinion one way or the other.

70% of respondents showed some level of agreement that there were sufficient footpaths in the Borough. 11% of respondents thought that the network was insufficient, and 19% either had no opinion or did not know.

In total 51% of respondents agreed to some degree that there should be different categories of path for different users. A total of 24% of respondents disagreed that there should be different categories of path, while 24% of respondents had no opinion one way or the other.

6.2.3 The condition of the network

A total of 20% of respondents expressed a level of dissatisfaction with the condition of the network because of overgrowth, poor surfaces and dog fouling. A total of 39% of respondents were satisfied that routes were generally in good condition, while 41% of respondents did not have any opinion one way or the other.

A total of 54% of respondents expressed some level of dissatisfaction with the signposting of routes within the Borough, while 23% of respondents stated that they were satisfied. A further 23% did not have any opinion one way or the other with the quality of signposting.

A total of 29% of respondents expressed some level of dissatisfaction with the standard of gates, stiles and bridges on the rights of way network, while 29% of respondents stated that they were happy to some extent with the standard of furniture. 42% of respondents did not have any opinion one way or the other, or did not know.

64% of respondents felt that there was insufficient information regarding routes available in the Borough, while 15% of respondents felt that the information was adequate. 21% of respondents had no opinion one way or the other or did not know.

6.2.4 Health, age and disability

8% of respondents stated that to some extent they felt unable to use the footpath network because of ill health, while 76% of respondents stated that this was not the case. 16% of respondents did not express an opinion one way or the other.

56% of respondents felt that to some extent that not all footpaths were suitable for the needs of the elderly and disabled people, while 5% of respondents felt that none of the routes were suitable for this use. 21% of respondents felt that almost all routes were suitable for use by the elderly and disabled, while 18% did not know.

The perception of respondents of those problems faced by the elderly and disabled using footpaths in the Borough are:

- Unsuitable terrain – 18%
- Poor surface conditions – 17%
- Lack of public toilets – 15%
- Paths overgrown with vegetation – 14%

- Not knowing where to find route information – 13%
- Difficulty reaching routes – 8%
- Too many stiles / stiles difficult to use – 6%
- Gates that are narrow or difficult to open – 6%
- Other – 3%

Encouraging use of the network

Respondents were invited to suggest factors that would encourage them to make more use of the footpath network in Telford & Wrekin. The responses were sorted into ten different categories which are listed as follows together with the percentage of respondents that raised the issue:

Publicity – 14%

More information about walking routes in a variety of formats and delivered through a number of suggested Council outlets is required. Information about routes should include: length and time to complete, difficulty of use, gradients, types of surface, scenery and aesthetic features, sites of interest, history, geology, amenities, and disability issues. The information should be updated and distributed regularly.

Routine maintenance – 12%

More pro-active maintenance needs to be undertaken by the council on footpaths including cutting back and tidying up tree branches, roots, shrubs and grass.

Safety and security – 12%

The Council needs to increase user confidence in respect of safety issues. Some suggestions included: use of wardens and police, CCTV, and emergency telephones.

Remove dog fouling - 10%

Suggestions to improve this issue include: more dog waste bins, more warning signs, more enforcement and making scoop bags available.

Removing fly-tipping – 10%

Suggestions to improve this issue include: more bins emptied regularly, more notices about litter, regular litter patrols and more prosecutions for offenders.

Better/more street lighting – 9%

Better signposting/way marking – 8%

There is a need for improved signposting with missing posts replaced more speedily. The council should provide more information on signs including: destinations, distances and time required to walk the route. There is also a need for interpretation boards to be installed at key locations.

Improved footpath surfaces – 6%

The Council should provide better surfaces and widths for footpaths. Surfaces should be durable, even and suitable for all weather conditions.

Better overall maintenance of paths – 6%

The Council should maintain paths to a higher standard and should do so more regularly.

Prevent motorbikes and quad bikes from illegally using paths – 4%

6.3 Conclusions

6.3.1 Extent of the footpath network

Relatively few respondents felt that the footpath network should be extended. This is corroborated by the small amount of applications made to the Council to modify the definitive map to add footpaths.

An analysis of the Definitive Map and the Council's highway records indicate that there are a large number of strategic routes and local paths available to walkers in the urban area: there are few areas that are not accessible from the footpath network.

There are few adopted footpaths in the rural areas, there is a need to explore the demand and the potential for developing rights of way access in rural parishes (such as Chetwynd, Eyton on the Weald Moors, Kynnersley, Preston on the Weald Moors, Tibberton & Cherrington and Waters Upton) where there are obvious gaps in the network.

6.3.2 Condition of the footpath network

The main concern of respondents was in respect of routine maintenance of paths – cutting back undergrowth, tidying litter and fly-tipping and removal of dog fouling. The resolution of these issues was also perceived to be a significant factor in making routes more accessible to elderly and disabled people.

The Rights of Way function is unable to undertake a pro-active maintenance programme on any of the network, and only undertakes maintenance in response to a request from the public or a parish council.

Another significant concern raised by respondents was the need to improve the quality of signposting and waymarking on public rights of way in the Borough. The Council have a duty under the Countryside Act 1968 to signpost all rights of way where there is a junction with a vehicular highway and to provide waymarks throughout the length of the route.

This facility is also recognised to be important by national advisory groups.

6.4 Rights of way user surveys – bridleways

The survey was undertaken by questionnaire in 2005. The aim of the survey was to assess the needs of horse riders in the Borough against the current provision of routes, and the expectation for improvement.

In total roughly 250 copies of the questionnaire were circulated to known horse riders in the Borough who were asked to pass them on to fellow bridleway users. 82 questionnaires were returned to the Council.

The current distance of bridleway network available in the Borough in Telford is 53 kilometres. The total rights of way network for the Borough measures 406 kilometres meaning that the percentage of the total network that has the status of bridleway is 13%: the national average is 17%.

Restricted Byways are also important routes for horse riders as they preclude vehicular traffic. The current distance of these routes available in the Borough is 43 kilometres, which is approximately 10% of the total network: the national average is 3%.

The parishes in Telford & Wrekin providing the best provision for horse riders are: Chetwynd Aston & Woodcote, Chetwynd, Edgmond, Great Dawley, Ketley and Little Wenlock. Those parishes where there is little or no bridleway provision are: Church Aston, Ercall Magna, Eyton on the Weald Moors, Kynnersley, Lilleshall & Donnington, Preston on the Weald Moors, Waters Upton, Wellington and Wrockwardine.

6.5 Results of the survey

6.5.1 Users

Roughly half of the horse riders that responded to the survey were members of a riding club or a pony club. Of those people responding to the survey 60% owned or had use of a trailer or horsebox.

Virtually all respondents hacked out from their yards. The frequency of hacking out is high with 89% of respondents doing so several times a week during the summer with a reduction to 63% in the winter.

Only 1% of users hacked out less frequently than once a week during the summer, increasing to 11% during the winter.

95% of respondents hacked out for periods in excess of one hour, while 43% of respondents hacked out for periods in excess of 1.5 hours.

10% of respondents stated that they had a disability that made use of some of the bridleway network difficult.

6.5.2 Access and highway use

Of those people that responded to the survey, 60% had access to bridleway facilities within 1 mile of their yards, with a further 22% having access within 2 miles of their yards.

23% of respondents were only able to spend less than 15 minutes of their hack off-road, while a further 54% were able to make use of off-road routes for between 15 minutes to one hour of their hack.

59% of respondents typically used 'B' class roads during a hack, while a further 33% typically used 'A' class roads. 8% of respondents stated that a typical hack crossed or used dual-carriageway.

6.5.3 Hazards and accidents

7% of respondents stated that they had been involved in an accident involving a motor vehicle. The police had been involved in all cases in respect of these incidents. 2 users reported having also being involved in a near miss.

67% percent of respondents reported having suffered physical or verbal intimidation whilst hacking out.

Those hazards on the bridleway network that most concerned respondents are:

- Undergrowth, side growth and low trees (29%)
- Blockages and obstructions (27%)
- Poor signing and way marking (13%)

Those hazards resulting from using the highway network that most concerned respondents are:

Speed of motor traffic (30%)
Attitude of motorists (20%)
Slippery road surfaces (14%)

Common issues raised by respondents about the bridleway network

There needs to be more bridleways – 39% of respondents stated that there was a need to increase the amount of routes available to horse riders. Suggestions included upgrading footpaths and cycleways to bridleway status. The major reason stated is to provide an alternative to using an increasingly busy and dangerous road network.

Existing bridleways need to be linked – 21% of respondents stated that the bridleway network was fragmented, and that links were needed to provide cohesive routes preferably circular that avoided busy roads.

Better maintenance of existing bridleways – 21% of respondents were concerned about the level of maintenance on routes: the major concerns were undergrowth, side growth and low branches. Respondents stated that they would like to see routine maintenance undertaken on routes without the necessity of having to report these issues.

Better signposting and way marking – 17% of respondents stated that inadequate signposting off roads and way marking along the routes made using the routes more difficult.

Lack of information – 16% of respondents stated that there was little information provided by the Council regarding routes that can be accessed by horse riders. Suggestions regarding improved information included: providing information on the Council website, publishing leaflets showing routes and updated information being made available on a regular basis through newsletters.

Traffic – 9% of respondents stated that increasing levels of traffic were a concern.

Ploughing and cropping – 5% of respondents highlighted ploughing and cropping as a concern.

Abuse and confrontation – 4% of respondents stated that confrontation with members of the public and motorists was a concern.

Barriers – 3% of respondents stated that barriers erected to prevent illegal use of routes by motorcyclists were a problem.

Horse warning signs – 3% of respondents stated that there were not enough triangular warning signs erected on roads to warn motorists about horse riders.

6.6 Conclusions

6.6.1 Fragmentation of routes

There is a need to develop a cohesive network of bridleways in both the urban and rural areas of the Borough. Development of the network should have particular regard to the location of those routes that already carry bridleway status and should give consideration to the status of logical links.

In the urban area availability of land to provide links is limited. Consideration should be given to upgrading some footpaths and cycleways to bridleway status providing that it can be demonstrated that this will not lead to conflict with existing users.

Applications to modify the definitive map by adding bridleways or upgrading footpaths to bridleway status should be given priority where it can be demonstrated that a successful outcome to these applications would provide an important link.

An audit of bridleway rights should be undertaken of all Council land providing access to the public. Consideration should be given to providing additional bridleway access where it can be demonstrated that these facilities are inadequate and do not conflict with existing users. Particular regard should be given to providing routes where it can be shown that to do so will provide a useful link.

Consideration should be given at outline planning stage to providing additional bridleways on all developments where it can be demonstrated that such use will be beneficial and result in providing an important link.

Where the only options to provide additional bridleway access to meet an established need and important links involve land owned by third parties, and where there is little or no evidence on which to base an order to modify the map, Council officers should approach landowners to negotiate additional bridleway rights. Where this is not an option officers should investigate the possibility of permissive rights.

6.6.2 Maintenance

There is a need to improve signposting and waymarking on existing bridleways. Appropriate signing displays the existence of routes on the ground for all users, emphasises a landowners legal obligations and gives legitimate users confidence to use the routes.

There is a need to review the Council's programme of routine maintenance for the bridleway network. The Council should undertake annual pro-active clearance on those routes where overgrown vegetation is known to be persistent.

Gate furniture on bridleways is often inadequate for the needs of horse riders. In all cases when remedial maintenance is undertaken by the Council existing furniture should be replaced with appropriate furniture that can be opened from horseback. Additionally the Council should instigate a pro-active programme of replacing inadequate furniture.

6.6.3 Publicity and information

The Council shall publish a map showing horse routes in the Borough similar to the current Walking & Cycling guide published by the authority. Similarly the Council should seek to publish leaflets showing localised circular horse routes.

The Council should initiate and host a horse users forum similar to the current walking and cycling focus groups supported by the authority. The purpose of the group should be to provide a forum to exchange information on more localised, specific issues rather than the broader, strategic issues that will be the main focus of the Local Access Forum.

6.6.4 Traffic and highways

An audit should be undertaken of those parts of the highway that provide crossing points for bridleways or provide linear connections between horse routes. The audit should review the adequacy of horse warning signs on these sections of the highway, and should subsequently inform a programme of installing any additional signs that may be required.

The installation of barriers on adopted footpaths, cycleways and routes managed by the Council should be subject to the appropriate consultation with Rights of Way staff, although approval of schemes by these officers should not be a requirement of the work being undertaken.

6.7 Consultations with User Groups

6.7.1 What walkers have told us:

Coverage of the rights of way and access network for pedestrians in the Borough is generally good. There is a need to investigate the potential for additional routes in the area around the Weald Moors (including the parishes of Eyton, Preston, Kynnersley and part of Tibberton & Cherrington).

Signposting and waymarking is generally poor throughout the Borough. There is a need to improve both and, following that, to instigate a rolling programme of checking routes and replacing deficient and missing posts.

There is a need to improve and update furniture on paths with particular emphasis on improving facilities for elderly and disabled people. The installation of kissing gates is preferable to stiles. There is a need to improve and update literature and publications encouraging people to walk. A great deal of information is out of date, as routes have altered due to factors such as development in the area.

Existing long-distance routes in the area such as: The Shropshire Way, The Hutchison Way and the Silkin Way should be inspected regularly, and particular emphasis should be given to keeping these routes in good condition and free of obstruction.

There is a need to ensure that the needs of footpath and rights of way users are given appropriate consideration where development is taking place on land affected by rights of way. Although it is often necessary that existing routes be altered to allow development to take place, alterations should not just be accommodated by pavements adjacent to vehicular roads.

6.7.2 What horse riders have told us:

There is a need for circular routes in Telford & Wrekin to provide 5-10 mile circuits, and connecting with existing long distance bridleways such as the Jack Mytton Way, the Sabrina Way and the Bishop Bennett Way.

There is a specific need for new routes to be created as follows: The Silkin Way, a circular route round the Wrekin, The Ercall and Short Woods, The Cockshutt, and Granville Country Park.

Lower status routes (footpaths) that commence where bridleway rights (bridleways and restricted byways) end on the Definitive Map should be investigated to see what opportunities there are to extend bridleway rights along these routes: especially where these would provide important links.

There is a need to provide safe routes for horses on the vehicular highway network. The Council should investigate providing safe access on wide verges, classifying some routes as quiet lanes, and negotiating field headland access with landowners.

Maintenance and provision of furniture on bridleways should be improved including: better signposting and waymarking, making gates accessible from horseback, ensuring that horse stiles meet British Horse Society recommendations, improvement of muddy and unsuitable surfaces, and cutting back and regular maintenance of undergrowth.

6.7.3 What cyclists have told us:

Cycling is the second most popular leisure activity carried out on the access network in Telford & Wrekin. Most cyclists use the formal adopted cycle network in the urban areas, and strategic routes such as the Silkin Way. In the rural areas most cyclists use the highway network, with few riders taking advantage of bridleway and restricted byway facilities.

There are a number of reasons why cyclists do not take advantage of the bridleway and restricted byway network in Telford & Wrekin:

- Poor sign posting and waymarking
- Little publicity and information detailing what is available
- Surfaces are often unsuitable for all but experienced mountain bike riders
- Undergrowth makes cycling difficult.

Additionally cyclists had concerns about the lack of routes around the area of the Wrekin, and in some rural parishes.

6.7.4 What carriage drivers told us:

Telford & Wrekin has a high percentage of restricted byways compared to the national average (11.5% of the network is available compared to the national average of 3%).

Restricted byways are often concentrated in particular areas (such as the Parish of Edgmond), while there is little provision in other rural parishes (such as Wrockwardine and Ercall Magna).

Many restricted byways are unsuitable for carriage drivers due to insufficient widths, inadequate surfaces and unsuitable terrain, while routes that are suitable for carriage drivers only have status as footpaths and bridleways.

Many restricted byways are anomalies ending in footpaths and bridleways that do not provide an outlet to vehicular highways.

Signposting for restricted byways routes is very poor.

6.7.5 What motorised vehicle users told us:

Many motorised vehicle users derive great pleasure from being able to ride and drive in off-tarmac situations, and this is a legitimate enjoyment of rights of way in the same way as walking, horse riding or cycling.

The Council should ensure that motorist rights are protected on byways open to all traffic as well as on other vehicular highways that are not made-up.

Organisations that represent vehicular users do not condone illegal use of footpaths and bridleways by vehicles, but do recognise that this may be symptomatic of a lack of legitimate facilities. The Council should investigate ways to provide for off-road facilities wherever possible.

6.7.6 What disabled and elderly people told us:

Information on use of rights of way by disabled and elderly people has been gathered with reference to specific questions on user surveys, analysis of complaints and enquiries by people stating a disability, and attendance at workshops run to give greater understanding of those needs to officers managing access.

More information is needed on this subject at a local level and accordingly arrangements have been made to consult with local focus groups.

Feedback to date has highlighted the following areas as needing improvement to facilitate better access for disabled and elderly people:

- Improvement and better maintenance of surfaces, including cutting back undergrowth.
- Stiles, poorly maintained gates, and some other furniture on rights of way are impediments to less mobile users. There is a need to ensure that all barriers are as fully-accessible as possible.
- Kerbs are often a barrier to users when they have to cross roads to access routes.
- There is a need for better information about access that gives details about ease-of-use for less mobile users.

6.8 KEY ACTION POINTS IN RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATIONS

- 1. To improve signposting and waymarking on all routes, and ensure that surveys are regularly undertaken so that missing signs and waymarks can be quickly replaced.**
- 2. To identify routes that have regular maintenance issues, and initiate a regular maintenance programme on these routes.**
- 3. To ensure that all furniture on all routes is well maintained and complies with recommended guidelines appropriate to the needs of the user, with particular regard to the needs of less mobile users.**

- 4. To ensure that all surfaces are maintained and improved commensurate to the needs of the users with particular regard to the needs of less mobile users.**
- 5. To investigate gaps in the network with particular regard to the bridleway and restricted byway network, and take the appropriate action to develop and extend the network.**
- 6. To investigate opportunities to improve safe and easy access for all categories of users on roads and vehicular highways where it is necessary to use such routes.**
- 7. To develop and promote a network of routes suitable for the needs of disabled and elderly people.**
- 8. To promote and provide information on access for all categories of users.**
- 9. To set up and run the Local Access Forum for Telford & Wrekin, and provide opportunities for user groups and partners to regularly liaise with the Council and each other.**

6.9 ACTION PLAN – CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

AIM	ACTION	INDICATOR	STAFFING & TIMESCALE	FUNDING SOURCE CORE/NEW	PRIORITY 1/2
<p>1. To improve signposting and waymarking on all routes and ensure that missing posts and waymarks are replaced</p>	<p>a. To draft a rolling programme for surveying rights of way on a parish-by-parish basis.</p> <p>b. To identify and work with partners to survey routes as per the programme.</p> <p>c. To note the results of surveys and undertake installation of signposts and waymarking as appropriate.</p> <p>d. To put national grid references on signposts to help access for emergency services.</p>	<p>Number of routes that have adequate signposts and waymarks.</p>	<p>Surveys initially to start in April 2008, and ongoing thereafter.</p> <p>Surveys will be undertaken by Highway Management staff along with partners from user groups, local councils and volunteers.</p> <p>Maintenance to be undertaken by term contractor starting April 2008</p>	<p>Core, although the Council will also try to secure external funding to meet the backlog of issues.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>2. To identify routes that have regular maintenance issues, and initiate an appropriate pro-active maintenance programme</p>	<p>a. To liaise with local councils and users groups to identify maintenance issues.</p> <p>b. To implement a programme of regular maintenance on identified routes.</p>	<p>Routes that are regularly maintained by the Council.</p>	<p>Consultation will be undertaken by the Council by November 2008, and a programme will be put in place for April 2009.</p>	<p>Core, although additional resources may have to be identified within the</p>	<p>1</p>

				Council.	
3. To ensure that all furniture on routes is well maintained and complies with the recommended guidelines appropriate to the needs of the user with particular regard to the needs of less mobile users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Survey routes as in 1A. b. To note stiles on public footpaths and implement a programme to replace structures with kissing gates. c. To note inadequate gate structures on bridleways and initiate a programme to replace with BHS recommended structures. 	Number of new structures installed on ROW	<p>Surveys undertaken as in 1A.</p> <p>Maintenance as in 1C</p>	Core and new funding to be identified.	2
4. To ensure that all surfaces are maintained and improved appropriate to the needs of the user with particular regard to the needs of less mobile users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Survey routes as in 1A. b. To note routes that require improvement and implement maintenance programme. 	Number of surfaces maintained	<p>Surveys undertaken as in 1A</p> <p>Maintenance as in 1C</p>	Core and new funding to be identified.	2
5. To investigate gaps in the network with particular regard to the bridleway and restricted byway network, and take the appropriate action to develop and extend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To audit the definitive map for anomalies on a parish-by-parish basis. b. Audit existing applications to modify the definitive map and publish a register. 	Number of new routes added to the definitive map.	<p>Definitive map audit to begin April 2009 by Highway Management Staff.</p> <p>High Management staff to publish modification order</p>	Core	1

<p>the network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Consult with user groups and local councils to determine need. d. Pro-actively investigate evidence to establish any definitive map modification issues. e. Negotiate with landowners to create new routes or permissive access. 		<p>application register November 2008.</p> <p>Consultations to be carried out by Highway Management staff starting April 2009.</p> <p>Investigate evidence to start April 2009 to be undertaken by HM staff along with partners.</p> <p>Negotiation with landowners by HM staff and local council partners to begin July 2009</p>		
<p>6. To investigate opportunities to improve safe and easy access for all categories of users on roads and vehicular highways where it is necessary to use such routes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Initiate a safety audit of vehicular highway connections between rights of way. b. Investigate and implement options to improve safety 	<p>Number of safety improvements undertaken</p>	<p>Safety audit to be undertaken by HM staff starting in April 2009 and concluding March 2012.</p>	<p>Core</p>	<p>2</p>

<p>7. To develop and promote a network of routes suitable for the needs of disabled and elderly people</p>	<p>a. Consult with disability and senior citizens forums, local councils and users groups and landowners to establish local needs.</p> <p>b. Survey potential routes to establish improvements required.</p> <p>c. Undertake improvements to furniture, surfaces and signposting as required.</p> <p>d. Publish a series of leaflets on disability and impaired mobility routes centred on settlements and communities.</p> <p>e. Publish information on disabled and mobility impaired access on the Council website and Insight magazine.</p>	<p>Number of routes upgraded.</p>	<p>Consultations to be started in January 2009 and undertaken by HM staff.</p> <p>Survey of routes by HM staff to be undertaken April 2009.</p> <p>Improvements to be undertaken by term contractor starting June 2009.</p> <p>Publicity to be published starting September 2009.</p> <p>Programme to continue for duration of ROWIP.</p>	<p>Core with additional funding being sought from external providers</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>8. To promote and provide information on access for all categories of users</p>	<p>a. To continue the publication of access promotion leaflets for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>b. To publish local and Borough maps for horse riders.</p>	<p>Number of leaflets published.</p> <p>Annual information audit.</p>	<p>Publication of leaflets has already started and is ongoing.</p> <p>Developments & Promotions Team.</p>	<p>Core</p>	<p>1</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. To publish information about access developments on the Council's webpage. d. To publish regular newsletters to be sent by e-mail and post to local councils, user groups and partners. 		<p>Webpage information will begin Jan/Apr 2009. HM team to publish.</p> <p>Newsletter publications will begin Nov 2008. HM Team to publish.</p>		
<p>9. To set up and run the Local Access Forum for Telford & Wrekin, and provide opportunities for user groups to regularly liaise with the Council and each other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adverts and invitations to join the LAF to be published. b. Selection of Forum members. c. Inaugural meeting and agenda for future meetings. d. Horse riders' forum to be established. e. Annual user forum conference to be set up. 	<p>LAF meetings.</p> <p>Horse rider forum meetings.</p> <p>Conference meetings.</p>	<p>Adverts and invitations sent by HM in June 2008.</p> <p>Inaugural meeting of LAF Jul/Aug 2008.</p> <p>Horse riders forum set up by HM Nov 2008.</p> <p>Annual forum conference set up by Policy Team and HM March 2009</p>	Core	1

Appendix 1

Permissive Access in Telford & Wrekin