2008 – 09 ROWIP DELIVERY REPORT

Introduction

Cumbria’s Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) was launched in July 2007 and was a significant milestone in developing access to the countryside across our county. It shows how we might improve the extensive network of paths, tracks and other means of public access across Cumbria to meet the needs of the county’s residents and its many visitors both now and in the future.

Whilst it is a requirement under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) to prepare and publish a ROWIP, there is no statutory requirement, or specified funds to implement one. The initial focus of work during 2008-09 was therefore to seek to deliver projects where a reasonable amount could be achieved at a small cost.

An Annual Action Plan sets out detailed project work to be undertaken and was compiled by the three partner organisations (Cumbria County Council, the Lake District National Park and Yorkshire Dales National Park) and supported by other organisations in the Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership including the three Local Access Forums.

Effective and inclusive partnership working has ensured delivery on projects including provision of access information at shows and events, removal of restrictive countryside barriers, development and funding of routes for people with limited mobility, surveying and mapping over 200 recreational routes across the county, identifying and installing interpretation on Open Access land and working to fill gaps in the strategic cycle network.

Equally impressive benefits have been derived from a whole host of partners who acknowledge and understand the importance of countryside access. Success stories here are wide ranging, including the National Trust opening up bridleway networks around Tarn Hows, Carlisle City Council contributing to barrier removal through their parish programme, development of walking routes through Natural England’s Higher Level Stewardship Scheme and promotion of the access network through the publicity work of the Ramblers Association, Parish Councils, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Friends of the Lake District and Cumbria Tourism.

This Annual Delivery Report captures the essence of these successes under the seven broad areas for improvement (listed below), identifies areas where difficulties were encountered and looks forward to the work required to seek external funding and the proposed project work for 2009-10:

- Better information, interpretation and route maps
- Improvements for walkers
- Improvements for equestrians
- Improvements for cyclists
- All-ability improvements which serve wider needs
- Guided and group activities
- Other improvements – public transport promotion, advice to land managers, access to water
1. Better information, interpretation and route maps

Open Access information boards
Through Natural England’s Access Management Grant Scheme Cumbria County Council (CCC) delivered:

- Two local sign boards adjusted for improved public interpretation at Seaton Common and Drigg.
- One local sign board ordered and two secondary information points ordered and installed at Dalton Crags
- Interpretation panels for local sign boards amended, reprinted and installed at Flinty Fell

Overall, CCC has installed more that 180 signs at key locations across the county giving specific local Open Access information. Also CCC has installed 70 stiles and other structures to enable people to move around on open access land, providing a valuable addition to the access network.

The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) has installed information panels at 24 of its properties. Many of these are semi natural ancient woodlands in the south and west of the National Park and the panels detail recommended walks through the properties as well as providing information on cultural and natural history.
The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) provides four Open Access Information Points in the Cumbria part of the National Park at Dent, Sedbergh, and Garsdale and Dent railway stations. As well as giving general information about open access these give up-to-date information about exclusions and restrictions in the area. During 2008/9, all gates and stiles giving access to, and within open access land have been mapped by Dales Volunteers, and this information will be made available to the public in 2009/10.

**Hierarchy of Trail Route maps for carriage drivers and mpv users**

Recreational vehicles in the countryside such as 4 wheel drives (4WDs) or motorcycles raise emotive issues regarding noise, pollution, erosion and conflicts with other users. We have therefore produced the Hierarchy of Trail Routes as guidance to highlight routes where mechanically propelled vehicles can sustainably go for recreation. "Mechanically Propelled Vehicles" means all motorised vehicles, mostly 4WD and trail bikes, but also quad bikes. All these vehicles should be road legal, taxed, insured and registered - by law.

The hierarchy manages sustainable levels of activity on routes through voluntary restraint where possible, rather than statutory measures such as Traffic Regulation Orders. At the same time, the use and condition of routes is monitored. Some routes in sensitive areas can become badly eroded, and in such places recreational motor vehicle users are asked to comply with management measures. For example, one-way traffic systems for 4WD vehicles, or a route permit system. User organisations are involved in the decision-making and monitoring.

More than 220 unsurfaced routes have been surveyed to assess how sustainable use of the route is. A colour-coded system for each route has been developed and applied to each route:
• Red – the route has a lot of use, proceed with great care and follow advice or
  signs explaining special controls in place. These routes are under the greatest
  pressure or conflict between different users and the environment
• Amber - the route has moderate use, proceed with special care - there may be
  a lot of other users or land management issues. It may not be passable in all
  weathers.
• Green - the route is passable at all times but proceed with caution

People can then access this information from the County Council’s website by
downloading pdfs for them to match up with their own Ordnance Survey (OS) maps.
The idea is that people can "know before they go" and understand some of the
reasons behind the decision-making and why routes are red, amber or green.

Of all the 220 routes surveyed;

• 17% were found to be unsuitable for mpv use
• 66% were given a green code (minimal use and management intervention
  needed)
• 22% were given an amber code (moderate use and management intervention
  needed) and
• 12% were given a red code (significant use and active intervention
  needed)

The Hierarchy is dynamic and routes can change colour codes for a variety of
reasons – a change in levels of use, sustained erosion for example. Any feedback
from recreational vehicle users, or landowners, farmers, local people, walkers,
cylists and horse-riders would be greatly appreciated.

Cycle maps
A number of cycling guides and maps have been developed which promote cycling
opportunities from west coast Cumbrian towns, around Carlisle city centre and
around the quieter lanes and stone tracks around Coniston. These guides provide
information on shorter routes that can be used by families or those new to cycling.

The YDNPA has re-launched the popular websites for mountain bikers and cyclists
(www.cyclethedales.org.uk and www.mtbthedales.org.uk) which now include
downloadable maps and files for GPS and digital map users. Both sites include
routes in the Cumbria part of the National Park.

2. Improvements for walkers

Barrier reduction
Cumbria County Council’s Parish Paths Initiative (PPI) worked on 13 projects which
made furniture less restrictive in the parishes of Dalston, Allhallow, Barbon, Thursby,
Kirkby Ireleth, Kirkbride, Lower Allithwaite, Stanwix Rural and St Bees.
There were also PPI projects that improved surfacing of Public Rights of Way. These were in the parishes of Alston, Thursby, Yanwath & Eamontbridge, Kirkbride, Lower Allthwaite, Tebay, Stanwix, Gilcrux and St Bees parishes.

The CCC Parish Paths Initiative will continue in 2009/10.

Capita Symonds Limited (CSL) also undertake an annual Parish Programme of maintenance and improvement. 46 items of Public Rights of Way furniture were upgraded or removed altogether in 2008-09 through the CSL Parish Programme.

The LDNPA administers the Access Improvement Fund which supports capital schemes within the Lake District National Park that extend the countryside path network or make it more accessible for everyone to enjoy. During 2008 – 09 the fund allowed for 25 pieces of rights of way furniture to be made less restrictive. 23 stiles of various types were replaced with gates and two bridges were improved and made easier to cross.

An example below is the replacement of a ladder stile at Swinburn’s Park, Matterdale. The work was carried out by the NPA’s northern Field Team in September 2008.
Fingerpost destinations and distances
It has been a ROWIP action to provide ‘added value’ information such as destination and mileage on fingerposts in wider Cumbria. Fingerpost design and associated costs have been discussed through the Maintenance Task Group within the CCA Partnership.

The new fingerpost design as used by the Lake District National Park was adopted in April 2009 for use in wider Cumbria. The annual fingerpost replacement programme will now replace fingerposts with ‘added value’ information such as destination and mileage where these are appropriate.

Permitted access agreements at St Bees
Through the Capita Symonds Limited Parish Programme barriers have been made less restrictive at St Bees with a number of step and ladder stiles replaced with kissing gates. Through Higher Level Stewardship a new permissive footpath has
been created to act as a link to Rottington Common. Cumbria County Council has also installed a local sign board and way marked the route. Natural England has dedicated an Open Access corridor on St Bee’s head which has created permissive access additions to the wider network.

**Footpath links – Longlands Lake Link**

Longlands Lake lies just off the A5086 between Cleator Moor and Egremont. A link to the Lake already existed through a permissive access agreement with CCC. We received a ROWIP suggestion by the public to enhance this route. Work undertaken has included re-grading of the surface, installing steps, and an extension of the bridge approach walkway. This work was delivered and funded through the Egremont Market Towns Initiative.

### 3. Improvements for equestrians

A number of bridleway links were put forward in the 2008 – 09 annual action plan. These were all within the Lake District National Park. Their status is as follows:

- **Manesty bridleway link.** This was intended to redress an anomaly on the definitive map where a public bridleway changed status to a public footpath for the last 300 metres to the tarmac road. A landowner has objected and we are awaiting an inspector’s decision.

- **Skelghyll to Little Town upgrade to bridleway, Newlands Valley.** The funding is in place for a number of dedications on National Trust land, of which Skelghyll is one. We are awaiting formal landowner approval for this which needs to be passed by the Trust’s National Committee.

- **Buttstead Wood, Woodland Valley.** The intention is to upgrade a 1 km stretch of public footpath to bridleway to take users off an up and down section of tarmac road. One landowner of three has objected to this proposal and we are deciding on how best to proceed with this suggestion.

Although these top third scoring projects have not been completed new bridleways and byways have been added to the definitive map through ongoing legal casework. The footpath from Skelwith Bridge to Elterwater has been upgraded to bridleway while a new byway open to all traffic and a new bridleway were created at Hampsfell near Grange and Carhullan near Helton respectively. These last two routes were both ROWIP suggestions.

Cumbria County Council is commencing legal processes (including advertisement) to claim the creation of a bridleway along the track adjacent to the A66 and through the underpass at Frenchfield near Penrith. This has been a priority project in the 2008 – 09 Plan but has proved difficult to progress because of uncertainty over land ownership. It is hoped that the advertising of the notice to create a bridleway through the underpass will bring the landowner(s) forward.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority carried out some improvement work to the Craven Way Bridleway in Deepdale. The 400 metre section of the Craven Way shown in the photographs had deteriorated severely over recent years located between two stable sections of the route. The works have been a great success. The bridleway surface is stable, grass is growing back onto the surface, drainage is shedding water which is protecting this section of bridleway below.
Repair work continues on the Occupation Road above Dentdale. This was another badly damaged bridleway with repair over a three year period. The 2008/09 phase continued the process of restoring the drainage system and carrying out some re-surfacing.

**Pennine bridleway**
Progress on the implementation of the Pennine Bridleway through the Cumbria part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park took a major leap forward in 2008/9, with creation agreements and planning permission being secured for new sections of bridleway from Garsdale station to the Moorcock and from the Moorcock past Yore House to join the Lady Ann Highway section of the route. These sections are expected to open to equestrian and other users in 2010.

**In the footsteps of pack ponies**
Work has begun on the development of two day-rides aimed primarily at equestrians and cyclists. The routes, which are being delivered as part of the North Pennines AONB Partnership’s Heritage Lottery Fund supported project *Living North Pennines*, centre on Hartside and Alston Moor and are part of a set across the wider AONB. Cumbria County Council and the North Pennines AONB Partnership Staff Unit have been coordinating route surveys and obtaining landowner agreements over this reporting period and have been successful in attracting additional funding from Cumbria Tourism for infrastructure improvements. Further development will take place over the next 2 years, including restoration of the strategic Ricker Gill Pack horse Bridge and route marketing.
4. Improvements for cyclists

Penrith Cycle hub accreditation
An assessment has been made regarding the services needed to support a cycle tourism hub in Penrith. The County Council is aiming to deliver the improvements to the urban cycle network as part of the annual package of improvements in 2010-11, subject to Cabinet approval. The Newton Rigg to Penrith section of the C2C long distance cycle way has recently been upgraded, providing Penrith with a high quality family friendly route.

Ambleside to Bowness feasibility study
CCC and the LDNPA commissioned a further study of the options to link the Ambleside and Bowness section of the Kendal to Keswick Strategic Cycle Route 6 with a shared use route. The study contract was awarded to AECOM, who have completed the initial phase of the study. The final report is due in early August 2009.

Connect 2 Carlisle
The Connect2 Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Carlisle City Council and Sustrans. To aid delivery the project has been split into six phases. The first two phases are currently under construction and have received funding from the Local Transport Plan.

Flimby Cycleway
With European Regional Development Fund and North West Regional Development Agency funding CCC has constructed a cycleway from Church Road Flimby to the existing cycleway to the south of the village where St Helens Lane meets the A596. Total project costs were £320,000.

Some sections involved resurfacing of an existing bridleway, some sections are entirely new build, and some sections have involved converting an existing footway to cycleway. Match funding for the project came from landowners donating their land via a lease, and the donation by Sustrans of a second hand bridge which was used to span Cranker Beck. New hedgerows have been planted along some of the new build sections. Once other improvements are made to cycle provision in west Cumbria the route constructed with this project will form part of Hadrian's cycleway. Although Hadrian's cycleway currently officially starts/ends at Silloth many are making the journey from Ravenglass, and using the route constructed here, as well as at Maryport Coastal Park. The route is also used by local people to travel to work and for leisure, and for people in wheelchairs and with prams and pushchairs.

Thirlmere Family Friendly Cycleway
The Thirlmere Family Friendly Circular Cycleway will provide an easy grade circular cycle route around Thirlmere Reservoir and the first round a lake family friendly cycle route in the National Park. It is a flagship partnership project with the Lake District National Park Authority, Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Tourism and United Utilities. Its creation intends to promote the Lake District National Park as a centre for cycling and family adventure, which is promoted by Cumbria Tourism.

The project is in five phases (see map below):

Phase 1 – legal work to close the western shore minor road (U2007) between Armboth and Dobgill car parks. Erection of appropriate road signs and gates and improvements to both car parks
Phase 2 – improvement and repair of the eastern shore forest road from Armboth to Swirls

Phase 3 – creation of cycleway from Swirls north to reservoir dam

Phase 4 - implementation of recommendation for crossing A591 at Wythburn and Swirls (either surface road crossings or tunnels)

Phase 5 – promotion and launch of the cycleway

The closure of the western minor road is still in progress. Closure of the central 5 km of the road will provide a unique selling point for the cycleway as it will improve user safety and reinforce our commitment to more sustainable and healthy forms of transport. This, plus improvements to both Armboth and Dobgill car parks, increasing capacity to 50 cars, will cost £28000.

Improvements to the forest road between Wythburn and Swirls car park formed Phase 2 of the project. It was completed by April 2009 with the end result being 4700 metres of forest track improved for cycling and 450 metres of new track built. This cost £64500 with £33000 coming from Cumbria Tourism’s Adventure Capital Fund and £31500 from UU.

Phase 3 will cost £95000. £70000 has been secured from the Heritage Lottery Funded Bassenthwaite Reflections programme and United Utilities are contributing £25000. The outcome will be 3.2 km of new cycleway along the north-eastern shoreline of Thirlmere. £187500 has already been committed to the project and by the end of 2009 the work on the ground to construct the cycleway will be complete.
Coast to Coast Mountain Bike Route
This is a project being led by the North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority and Yorkshire Forward, but obviously has implications for Cumbria and the Lake District. The intention is to develop and promote an “iconic” mountain bike route crossing the country through Cumbria, North Yorkshire and the three National Parks.

A feasibility study highlighted the economic benefits of establishing such a route. The route is designed for intermediate mountain bikers so in Cumbria and the Lake District the route follows for the most part well surfaced bridleways and unclassified county roads. Some improvement work has been identified at three locations in the Lake District National Park at a cost of approximately £6000, and at one location in the Yorkshire Dales National Park at a cost of approximately £25 000. The ground cost which could be incurred by CCC remain at an estimate £10,000. A safety study of the A6 from Kendal to Penrith is due to be undertaken in 2009/10 which will also consider the issue of the route crossing this road.

5. All ability improvements which serve wider needs

Lake District Miles without Stiles
The LDNPA completed four or helped fund five Miles without Stiles projects in 2008 – 09.

- Pooley Bridge to Eusemere. This is a 0.4 km from the NPA car park on Pooley Bridge down to the Ullswater shoreline. An existing public footpath was widened and surfaced with crushed stone and dust to provide easier access to the lake.

- Calder Bridge Long Walk. This proposal originated from the local angling club, Calder Anglers, who approached us about upgrading the existing footpath along the river bank up towards Calder Abbey. They own part or all of the land over which the footpath crosses and they gave their agreement for the improvements to go ahead on their land. A local landowner agreed to donate large walling stone from his land – this was used for associated riverbank revetment work. The adjacent landowner allowed us have access to the site across his fields and the Calder Bridge Village Hall committee allowed us to store stone in their car park during the construction period. A local contractor from Seascale carried out the work which was completed in July 2008.

  The route starts at the church car park and follows the River Calder for 1 km to the site boundary of Calder Abbey. To achieve this a curved path has been constructed to avoid the steps from the highway, 20 metres of causeway wall rebuilt, ramps to cross a bridge constructed and wooden rails erected for safety as well as almost 1 km of new surface laid down.

- Stair Riverside phase two. This route follows the east bank of Newlands Beck and continues the improvement work started in 2007 – 08. A further 1 km extends the route to the road at Little Braithwaite. The next step is to continue northwards to the Braithwaite caravan and campsite, providing a well surfaced route for over 3 km.
- Brotherswater to Sykeside campsite. This 1.9 km route follows the wooded western shore of Brotherswater to Hartsop Hall and on to Sykeside campsite and the Brotherswater Inn. Two way opening gates were installed at key boundaries and the path was resurfaced with compacted stone.

- High Yewdale. This 0.75 km route links Shepherd’s Bridge on the Hodge Close road to High Yewdale Farm. The work was carried out by the National Trust with a £3040 contribution from the LDNPA. A crushed stone surface was put down and a new fence line constructed to keep stock off the path.
We also secured £10000 from Cumbria Tourism’s Adventure Capital fund to improve the public footpath from Lake Road, Coniston to Torver jetty on the western shore of Lake Coniston. Some surface improvement has already taken place but the bulk of the work (new bridge close to the jetty, new gates and more surfacing) will take place in summer 2009.

In addition a new Miles without Stiles booklet was produced to promote the new routes we have established over the last six years. The booklet was actually launched in June 2009 but the route audits, photography, design and production of the booklet was done in 2008 – 09. Each route has a two page description and map on thick card. The walks are contained in a ring bound folder and each one can be removed and inserted into an accompanying plastic wallet to be taken out on the walk.

Miles without Stiles booklet, route text and map
**Mile Fortlet 21 limited mobility path**

This is a project managed by the Solway Coast AONB Partnership. A number of smaller Roman forts or fortlets were built on the orders of Emperor Hadrian, to strengthen the west Cumbria coast that was beyond the defences of Hadrian’s Wall. This fortlet is just off the B5300 road north of Crosscanonby, along with some medieval salt pans. The Solway AONB partnership worked on a project to make the path to these sites fully accessible for all. The work involved clearing gorse from the line of the path and constructing a new surface and fence line.

The work was supervised and maintained by the Solway Coast Community Volunteer Group, AONB Volunteer Coordinator, and Westhouse (a charity based in Workington, helping disabled adults to achieve work skills). On arrival at the top of the path two new interpretation panels can be seen, one providing information on Mile Fortlet 21 and the other on the medieval Saltpans directly below on the beach.

![Gorse clearance and path creation, Mile Fortlet 21, Crosscanonby](image)

**6. Guided and group activities**

**CCC guided cycle rides – Watchtree and Culture Bazaar**

A guided cycle taster event involving members of an Asians Women’s Group (10 participants) was organised by CCC in conjunction with Watchtree Nature Reserve. Equipment, including the bikes were borrowed from other partners including Impact Housing and Carlisle City Council. The broad aim was to promote ideas and confidence for such groups to undertake similar events using their own initiative in the future. The event was successful and similar activities will be run 2009-10.
Additional guided cycle rides were also run at the Culture Bazaar in Carlisle in July 2008. Over 1,000 visitors attended with at least 70 individuals taking part in the cycling elements.

**CCC targeted walks with Asian Women’s Group**

Four events were planned during 2008-09 with three eventually run involving Countryside Access Rangers. A guided walk and picnic around Talkin Tarn was supported by Carlisle City Council staff, a guided walk around Allonby coast in the Solway AONB supported by AONB staff and finally a trip to Low Luckens Organic Resource Centre near Brampton. All involved interpretation and time for the group to explore their surroundings.

**Health walks**

Fifteen ‘Walking the Way to Health’ events were planned and promoted in the 2008 Lake District Events Guide. Only nine walks were actually run because of cancellations by walk leaders.

### 7. Other improvements

**Give the Driver a Break**

The 2009 leaflets were funded by the LDNPA and the Friends of the Lake District (FLD) and YDNPA. There are eight leaflets again this year in the Lake District, and a new leaflet promoting the Kendal to Sedbergh route ‘discover Sedbergh and Garsdale’. The free leaflets can be found at all Tourist Information Centres as well as hotels, libraries, restaurants and shops throughout the National Parks.

The leaflets provide straightforward guidance on how to get to and from a selected destination using sustainable transport and information about what you can expect to see or experience along the way. There is a separate panel containing all necessary transport information including ticket prices and schedules.

The leaflets can be downloaded from the LDNPA website at [http://www.lake-district.gov.uk/index/enjoying/planningyourvisit/travelandtransport/givethedriverabreak.htm](http://www.lake-district.gov.uk/index/enjoying/planningyourvisit/travelandtransport/givethedriverabreak.htm)

**Access to Nature**

Access to Nature is a £25 million grant scheme, administered by Natural England for the Big Lottery Fund’s Changing Spaces programme. It offers grants of £50K to
£500K and runs to April 2014. Applications can be submitted from now until June 2010 and projects should be completed by September 2013.

The LDNPA is the lead organisation in an ambitious partnership project to secure Access to Nature funding. Partners include the County Council, District Councils, the Primary Care Trust, the National Trust, Forestry Commission, Young Cumbria and other voluntary and social organisations. The project is called ‘Western Connections’ and the headline objectives are:

- provide improved opportunities for 10,000 people in our target communities to actively experience the natural environment.
- deliver a new learning opportunity related to the natural environment to 3,000 people.
- improve or create 12 access links/ networks to natural places that will be promoted as a network of AtN sites in West Cumbria.
- invest in improvements to 8 natural spaces of varying size and type to better meet the needs of people and wildlife.
- engage with communities (and community groups/ voluntary organisations within those communities), particularly those disadvantaged by virtue of their socio-economic circumstances. Community engagement will focus on creating new opportunities for volunteering and learning within and about the natural environment using the countryside in and around local communities, and encouraging greater exploration within the Lake District.

We have estimated project costs at £1.1 million. We have bid for £500K (the maximum amount) spread over three and a quarter years. We have developed a funding strategy to meet the £600K shortfall, of which around £80K is in place. We have just heard that our Stage 1 application has been successful. We will be looking to submit a detailed Stage 2 application before the end of 2009.

**Environmental Land Management Service**

The LDNPA has entered into a partnership with Natural England and local land managers to pilot the introduction of an integrated Environmental Land Management Service (ELMS). It will help to deliver increased agri-environment funding to enhance the landscape and increase public enjoyment in the National Park.

We have a Joint Action Plan with Natural England (NE) and as part of this they have asked us if we can help them deliver projects through their agri-environment funding schemes. We have appointed a project co-ordinator and the work on the ground is being carried out by Area Rangers with advice and specialist help coming from relevant NE and LDNPA staff. There are three main thematic areas:

- Natural environment – including peat habitat enhancement, hedgerows, river corridors, lakeshore and woodland habitat management
- Built environment – including walling, traditional farm buildings and archaeology
- Public enjoyment – including access improvements and education and interpretation

We are aiming to maximise the potential of this project by linking with existing partnership projects and work programmes, such as the Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy and the ROWIP. We will therefore be looking to use the ELMS and agri-
environment scheme funding to implement top third scoring ROWIP projects where possible.

**Kirkby Stephen Rail link**
The scheme has for some years been in the list of candidate Priority Transport Improvement schemes for possible future inclusion in Cumbria County Council’s Transport Capital Programme. The Corporate Director (Environment) commissioned Cumbria Highways to investigate potential route options to improve the links between the town and railway.

The idea is mentioned within the Local Transport Plan (LTP) under ‘Appleby and Kirkby Stephen environmental enhancement’ as a key scheme for implementation within the LTP2 Plan period – 2006 to 2011.

The feasibility study was funded through the Preparation Pool element of the Priority Transport Improvement Programme, whereby high priority candidate schemes are developed in advance of the year in which construction work is anticipated to ensure that schemes included in the programme are deliverable and supported by elected members, local people and stakeholders in the highway network.

CSL consulted with a number of stakeholders in December 2008, including the Cumbria Local Access Forum and then produced the feasibility study. Eden Local Area Committee considered the scheme details on 9 March 2009 and endorsed the plans. The project will be delivered through the Transport Capital Programme. Total costs are estimated around £300k. Suitable external funding bids will be made to secure any match funding, for example the CEMEX Communities Fund (Landfill) or Aggregates Levy.

**Access to water update – CCC Rivers Access Working Group**
The Rivers Access Working Group (RAWG) is primarily concerned with access to Cumbria’s inland waters by paddle sports practitioners, seeking to inform and enable such access while taking full account of conservation & wildlife issues, and of the interests of anglers and riparian owners. The overall aim of its work is to seek the best collective advice as to how to develop a more extended & extensive "system" of working agreements.

Its work so far has been primarily concerned with establishing the policy background to its work, seeking to document the current access arrangements in the River Eden catchment from Ullswater to Carlisle and identifying issues and possibilities.

The primary objectives in 2008/09 were:

- To improve & codify the existing access arrangements to the River Eden
- Improve public information about responsible access to the River Eden and make this much more easily available. Information to include:
- Essential information about access arrangements should also be provided on sign boards at key access points along the river, and on a dedicated leaflet, including the website details.
• Explore other parts of the river Eden where access could be responsibly taken such as opportunities for improved access to the river between Musgrave and Watersmeet and sections of the river which might be opened up to daylight hours of access for canoes

LDNPA Strategic framework for access to lakes, rivers and coast

Faber Maunsell (now AECOM) was appointed to undertake needs and preference research for access to water within the National Park. They looked at access onto or into the water, access to water from the land, access to water margins and access to the coast in order to:

• Provide greater insight into the key target audiences for access and recreation on and to water in the Lake District National Park (LDNP)
• Identify and fill any gaps in knowledge on the needs and preferences of these key audiences
• Develop a mechanism with which the LDNPA can prioritise projects or initiatives.

During Winter/Spring 2008 - 09 research was conducted with the public and organisations and clubs with an interest in water-related access and recreation in the Lake District regarding their current use and needs and preferences related to water. During this consultation over 500 clubs and organisations were consulted, over 900 on street surveys with the public were undertaken and focus groups, and in depth interviews took place with user group representatives.

The headlines for participation in water based and waterside activities at lakes, rivers and the coast in the LDNP were:

• Most respondents who took part in waterside independent activities (such as walking/cycling/horse riding near water, 81%) had done so inside the LDNP (including among respondents from elsewhere)

• Almost all activities were more likely to be done at/ on lakes in the LDNP, rather than at/on rivers or the coast. Exceptions were ghyll scrambling/canyoning and fly fishing which were more likely to be done on rivers

• The coast and the rivers of the LDNP were most likely to be used for waterside independent activities, rather than activities in/ on the water.

• Nine out of ten participants in water based or waterside activities in the LDNP said that the National Park either met their needs to a good extent or completely met their needs (on average across all activities). The activities for which the highest proportions of participants said the LDNP met their needs for, were waterside independent activities (such as walking alongside water), pleasure cruising trips, and canoeing.
**2009 – 10 Annual Action Plan**

The 2009 – 2010 Annual Action Plan is now active and we are working to deliver the actions within it. The plan is a combination of carry over (long term) projects from the 2008/09 action plan, projects that for resource issues have not yet been initiated in the previous financial year, continuing work programmes that all the access authorities undertake and new, named high scoring ROWIP projects.

The headline improvements are:

- Working on four new bridleway links, two new footpath links and five local cycle routes
- Removing unnecessary stiles and other barriers in the countryside, where improvements for people with limited mobility are identified
- Promoting links with public transport, and running guided walks or cycle ride events that tie-in with public transport
- Working with under-represented groups to increase their confidence and use of countryside access
- Identification of opportunities to improve access to water and resolve conflict between user groups
- Information provision, including better use of our web sites, and providing maps, leaflets and other interpretation
- Working with land managers to help resolve conflict and promote responsible use

Fund raising for projects is key to delivery. As stated in the introduction, there is no statutory responsibility to implement a ROWIP, so no direct government funding is available. We are constantly looking for funding opportunities to implement projects and have already been successful in attracting monies for both small and large scale projects:

- £70000 from Bassenthwaite Reflections for the Thirlmere Family Friendly Cycleway route construction
- £35000 from Bassenthwaite Reflections for Stair Riverside Miles without Stiles Phase 3
- Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust application for safer route to school, Penruddock
- £14.5K from LDNPA and CCC for Thirlmere Cycleway A591 road crossing feasibility study
- £11000 LDNPA Access Improvement Fund for least restrictive access and pump priming for larger scale projects
- £45000 from NWDA for feasibility study into cycleway from Windermere to Ambleside
- £12237 secured by CCC through Natural England’s Access Management Grant Scheme 09-10. To be used to deliver Open Access and ROWIP projects
- £4200 CCC Countryside Access budget allocated to ROWIP projects
- £200,000 secured by YDNPA from Natural England to implement, on the ground, the Pennine Bridleway from Garsdale Station to the Highway