

## PART 1 – SETTING THE SCENE

### **Chapter 1 - Introduction To Rights Of Way**

- 1.1 The ability or opportunity to walk, ride a horse or bicycle along certain off road routes through the countryside or in towns is often taken for granted. We use these routes to get to work, shops, bus stops and schools, and during our leisure time for relaxation and enjoyment. These routes form links between villages, streets, natural features or places of interest and the majority of us use them without conscious thought.

The rights of the population to use specific routes across land have evolved and passed down through the centuries. From ancient drovers roads and coffin routes, through to the development of a formal highway network maintained from the public purse. The majority of these routes were used as access to farms & factories, places of worship or other services used by local people and knowledge of these routes were passed down through the generations and experience of use. Up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century the use of paths and bridle roads for leisure was virtually unheard. Few publicly available records were kept of these ancient routes until the 1900's.

Since the passing of the National Parks and Countryside Act 1949 Local Authorities have been required to investigate and map the walking and riding routes known to be public. These Public Rights of Way (PROW) are shown on a legal document known as the Definitive Map and Statement, and were classified as:

Footpath – a right of access on foot.

Bridleway – a right of access on foot or horseback.

Road used as a Public Path – a highway used by the public mainly for the purposes for which footpaths or bridleways are so used (but may have rights for vehicles etc).

Byways Open to All Traffic – a right of access on foot, horseback and with vehicles.

The 1968 Countryside Act allowed cyclists to use bridleways, and 1972 Road Traffic Act added a right for invalid carriages to use footpaths and bridleways which has been clarified to include electric mobility scooters.

The 1980 Highways Act added in a requirement for Local Authorities to assert and protect the public's right to use public rights of way. This includes legal duties to take enforcement action when routes are blocked, undertake elements of maintenance and to change the status or alignment of a route when proved it was incorrectly designated on the Definitive Map.

All PROW's are now classified as highways even those not accessible by vehicles, and subsequently have been affected by changes to highways legislation. Other legislation also affects the way PROW's and the Definitive Map are managed and updated.

Many local authorities have struggled to maintain and protect their mapped PROW network. The difficulties faced by local authorities were clearly identified in the work by the Countryside Agency and Ramblers Association in the 1990's. To encourage Local Authorities to ensure all PROW open and useable by the year 2000, the Countryside Agency provided funding for the Milestones Project. This project required each Local Authority to survey all their recorded PROW, identify the

number of problems relating to maintenance, improvements and obstructions and worked out how much it would cost to resolve all the problems. With some funding support from the Countryside Agency most local authorities achieved some improvement of their rights of way but only one actually reached the target of all routes open and useable by 2000. In Barnsley difficulties remain including the extensive nature of the network and associated maintenance required especially during the summer months coupled with the increasing demands to add routes to the Definitive Map.

Whilst the majority of PROW's across the country were mapped to some extent, there was still no public right to access the wider moors and mountains (outside of any National Park Agreements) which was one aim of the Mass Trespass in 1932. This wider 'right to roam' was finally secured by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW).

## 1.2 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

The headlines of this legislation were those elements that allowed public access to mountain, moor, heath and downland and hence it has become known as the 'right to roam' legislation. However the CROW Act placed other important new duties on the Local Authorities.

There are five key elements to the CROW Act:

- Identification and mapping of Open Access Land (mountain, moor, heath & downland) then subsequent management of the public access to these areas.
- The requirement for each Local Authority to produce a 10 year strategic document for public access known as a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) and amendments to existing Rights of Way legislation.
- Changes to the legislation for nature conservation and wildlife protection.
- New legislation on Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- Miscellaneous including the requirement for Local Authorities to set up Local Access Forum's – an group made up of volunteers from user groups, landowners and others interested in countryside access and Rights of Way.

These elements of the CROW Act will be referred to during this document but the key issue is the requirement to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP).

## 1.3 What is a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)?

It is a ten year strategic document prepared by each Local Authority. It identifies the current situation with regards to Rights of Way and public access, and what improvements or other developments the authority wants to have achieved by the end of the plan period in ten years. There is a legal requirement to review the document at least every 10 years and update it.

This is Barnsley Council's draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan. It is designed to guide Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council in the performance of its statutory duties and the delivery of improvement of the Public Rights of Way network and the development of public access over the next ten years.

This draft plan is available for public consultation between June and August 2007, with the final document to be published in October 2007.

There are two parts to Barnsley's ROWIP

Part One. The draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan which sets out:

- the aims and objectives of the plan;
- it identifies the existing situation and any issues that are currently faced;
- it identifies the current and future needs of different types of users;
- what BMBC wants to achieve over the next ten years; and.
- identifies a series of Action Plans as to how the network needs to change and improve to meet the needs of future users across the authority.

Part Two: Schemes of Work

These will identify practical, legal or development work on the Rights of Way or public access that meet the aims and objectives of this plan. They can include quick fixes that can be done within existing resources, through to large schemes that may need a multi-agency approach and external funding. This section will be under constant review as priorities change or funding becomes available and will be outlined in the final Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

It is intended that Barnsley's ROWIP will be a living document. It will be adaptive and will change as circumstances require and it will contain new policies for Rights of Way as they are approved. It will be used to raise awareness internal to BMBC and externally to organisations and communities about what BMBC is planning to achieve, and help focus the development of joint projects.

In preparing the ROWIP, BMBC has assessed the following:

1. The extent to which the current network meets the present and future needs of all users.
2. The opportunities to develop the network for utilitarian purposes not just for leisure and recreation.
3. The extent of the network that is available to those with mobility or sensory impairments and how to improve the level of access.

The results of local and some of the national research gathered for this assessment can be found in Chapters 3 to 5.

#### 1.4 Why are Public Rights of Way Important?

Often the general perception of PROW's are that they are grass paths or muddy routes through fields and woodlands that only a few people use during their leisure time or to walk the dog. They are often regarded as being of little economic value and as such are unimportant. However during the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in 2001 the sudden closure of most rights of way brought home to the public, local and national governments how well used and important PROW are to the well being and health of people and their consequent value to the local economy.

PROW and other areas of public access exist in towns and villages as well as the countryside, and as such are of value not only as leisure routes but also utilitarian journeys (i.e. journeys to work, to education and shopping facilities).

#### 1.4.1 Economic Value

The UK Tourism Survey in 2001 estimated that annually 3.4million tourist day trips had walking as the main activity with an average spend of £214 per trip. The survey also estimated that 65.5million tourist trips included walking as one of the activities taking place. Table 1.1. shows the volume and spend associated with walking.

Table 1.1 Volume of visits and spend on trips associated with walking.

Trip type	Volume of walking trips by domestic tourists on holiday		Spending of domestic tourists on walking during holiday	
	Yorkshire	Total England	Yorkshire	Total England
Short walks (up to 2 miles)	4 million	46 million	£196 million	£2,342 million
Long walks (more than 2 miles)	1.7 million	19.5 million	£83 million	£990 million
Hiking or hill walking	0.5 million	5.2 million	£25 million	£270 million
Rambling	0.6 million	6.7 million	£29 million	£348 million
Other type of walking	0.7 million	8.7 million	£34 million	£441 million
All Walks	5.7 million	65.5 million	£279 million	£3,332 million

Source – UK Tourism Survey 2001 (cited in Ramblers Association 2003)

The potential economic benefits for Barnsley from walkers are substantial from day trips and longer holidays. The rural economy, farm diversification projects, public transport and local services can all benefit from encouraging walking tourism into Barnsley. However one poor experience on a right of way that suffers from low maintenance can deter all users for a significant time.

#### 1.4.2 An Environmental Friendly form of transport

For short and medium journeys for leisure or utilitarian use, an increase in walking or cycling reduces the use of cars and subsequently reduces air pollution and congestion. As such PROW are an integral part of the Local Transport Plan 2 and a means of achieving its shared priorities, particularly those relating to reducing congestion and improving accessibility and air quality by achieving a modal shift away from reliance on the car for local trips.

#### 1.4.3 Utilitarian Value

As a means of accessing work, shops and schools etc, rights of way provide an off-road and free means of walking or cycling to your destination. Not only reducing the vehicles on the roads but with the added health benefits for users. They can also be used in conjunction with public transport by gaining access to bus routes and railway stations. Opportunities for this type of use are being increased by the implementation of initiatives to develop school and work travel plans as well as implementing Safe Routes to School. An integrated network in which on road cycle lanes and pavements are linked directly with off-road Rights of Way is vital to further successful delivery of the shared priorities.

#### 1.4.4 Socially Inclusive

It doesn't cost anything to use a PROW whether it is for utilitarian or leisure purposes. Use does not necessitate the cost of driving a car or paying a public transport fare and provides an opportunity for exercise that doesn't require expensive gym membership or personal equipment. Walking as a member of a local group also enables users to meet new people and helps remove the sense of isolation and loneliness felt by some members of the community.

#### 1.4.5 Leisure

Whether it's walking, cycling, horse riding, using a disabled mobility vehicle or legally using an off road vehicle, Rights of Way and Open Space has the capacity to provide a diverse range of experiences. From formal parks and stately homes, woodland and riverside paths, restored pit heaps and nature reserves, ancient roads and the new Open Access Land to routes through agricultural land and exposed moorland. Rights of Way and the countryside can play a central role in the leisure experience, whether its looking at wildlife, relaxing away from work, enjoying the views, walking the dogs or spending time with family and friends.

#### 1.4.6 Physical Health

Exercise is proven to help reduce weight, and improve physical health and fitness. The current Primary Care Trust guidelines for improving your health are to walk for 30 minutes at least five times per week without exerting yourself. To improve fitness the recommendation is at least 30 minutes three times per week, walking at a medium to high exertion rate.

Many people already use the Rights of Way network and open spaces for walking, running, horse riding and cycling for health reasons but there is capacity to accommodate a substantial increase in usage.



Members of Carr Gomm on one of their regular guided walks

#### 1.4.7 Mental & Emotional Health

Increasingly health services are successfully using walking in a group as part of a treatment programme, especially for mental illnesses such as depression. Research carried out by the University of Essex in 2004/5, identified that the use of Rights of Way and green open space also provides mental and emotional wellbeing. Participants in the 10 schemes analysed across the country experienced

a reduction in feelings of stress, depression and anxiety and a general improvement in feelings of well-being and self-esteem.

#### 1.4.8 Historical Value

Many Rights of Way have a historical value. Roman roads and drovers roads cross the countryside and were once the main means of moving livestock, troops and other goods. The oldest rights of way were important enough to be shown on original maps of landowning estates, enclosure awards, canal and railway acts and are traceable through these documents. In doing so they can show how settlements and patterns of human behaviour have changed.



Willow Bridge at Oxspring

An old pack horse bridge over the River Don, now part of the Trans Pennine Trail.

#### 1.5 Summary

Rights of Way are important not only in themselves as a network of off-road highways but also for the benefits they can provide for users and the local community. They cannot be viewed in isolation as they have a key role to play in any Local Authority strategy that deals with health, transport, tourism, economic regeneration and communities. This Rights of Way Improvement Plan will identify the issues and develop potential solutions in this wider context.

## **Chapter 2 – Strategic Context and Corporate Strategies**

2.1 BMBC's responsibilities for PROW are exercised through the Planning & Transportation Service's Countryside Team. The Team works closely with colleagues in other services and link into corporate and service delivery strategies to secure the full development of the network of rights of way and open spaces for the benefit of local residents and visitors alike. The objectives of the ROWIP reflect, support and are integrated with those of other Council Strategies and Plans.

### **2.2 Corporate Strategy.**

#### **2.2.1 Barnsley Community Plan**

The overarching corporate strategy that guides Barnsley to a better future. It incorporates national, regional and local strategies across the full range of plans to improve the social, economic and physical environment of Barnsley. The key initiatives are shown below and rights of way can play a direct role in helping to achieve the aims of most of them.

- Barnsley and the Wider Economy (economic regeneration)
- Remaking Barnsley
- Reconnecting Barnsley (Transport)
- Remaking Learning
- Creativity, Culture and Leisure
- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities and Older People
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Clean and Green Communities
- Reducing Social exclusion
- Transforming Communities (Neighbourhood renewal)
- Citizenship

#### **2.2.2 Remaking Barnsley**

The long term strategy looks to redefine how Barnsley looks, feels and is perceived. It is a fundamental rethink of existing approaches to regeneration and is focused on transforming Barnsley into a 21<sup>st</sup> Century market town. By retaining the strengths of its buildings and people whilst improving the environment in which it exists, Remaking Barnsley aims to improve opportunities for employment, places to live, leisure opportunities, retail, culture and arts within a high quality public realm.

All other plans and strategies can exist within this corporate vision as it is focused on transforming expectations and aspirations as well as the built environment. It is therefore not limited to planning issues for new buildings but also changes the way Barnsley operates in engaging communities, improving education, encouraging a healthier lifestyle and protecting, enhancing green spaces.

From a Rights of Way perspective the remaking of Barnsley Urban Centre gives an ideal opportunity to identify and enhance pedestrian and cycle links across the town centre to public buildings, the transport interchange, retail outlets, Barnsley College and green space/ leisure. One focus of this is the Green Sprint – an off-road walk/cycle way going east-west eventually across Barnsley town centre to the Metrodome leisure centre and beyond. Phase one is proposed to link Mandela Gardens through the new transport interchange to the redeveloped site of the

former npower Depot. The intention is that the Green Sprint will be fully accessible for mobility impaired users.

By linking cycle and walk routes up to the Green Sprint at either end the opportunities are immense for local residents to access the town centre and its facilities by walking or cycling and helping to remove the congestion, poor air quality and parking issues that bring cars into the centre produces. It will also allow workers and visitors to safely and conveniently access Dearne Valley Park as their local green space.

## 2.3 **Transport**

### 2.3.1 Local Transport Plan 2 (2006 – 2011)

The LTP2 is a statutory document for the four authorities in South Yorkshire: Barnsley, Sheffield, Rotherham and Doncaster. It is assessed by the Department of Transport who then supply funding for the planned work programmes. This document forms the basis on which all four authorities are trying to secure a better transport system that meets the needs of the people and businesses of South Yorkshire. Again it does not stand in isolation and its aims can only be achieved by developing partnerships with private and public organisations and integrated working within and between each of the four local authorities.

Accessibility Planning is a new element of the LTP2 and looks at resolving the priorities by partnership working through a wider remit than just transport issues. In South Yorkshire the initial priority for this work focuses around the housing market renewal area in the Dearne. Accessibility planning includes rebuilding communities by improving access to work, schools and services, creating partnerships with Job Centre plus and other employment and development agencies and dealing with issues causing social exclusion. The Barnsley CROW Act officer sits on the Accessibility Planning working group which helps to integrate PROW and the ROWIP into the LTP2.

The shared priorities for LTP2 are:

- tackling congestion
- improving air quality
- improving accessibility
- improving road safety
- overall quality of life issues
- an additional local priority for South Yorkshire is economic regeneration in both urban and rural areas

Improvements and development of Rights of Way can have a substantial impact on meeting some of these priorities. Many potential solutions will affect more than one priority e.g. a new route between a residential area and a school or large workplace, well promoted can increase the number of journeys by bicycle or walking, have a subsequent effect on congestion and air quality issues whilst improving the health and quality of life for users.

The South Yorkshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan officers have identified where the proposed objectives for each of the four Rights of Way Improvement Plan's could support and be integrated with those of the LTP2.

### Improving Accessibility

#### Mobility Impaired Use (compliance with ROWIP & DDA requirements)

1. Access Audit the PROW network, adopted footpaths and Public Open Space within 5 years.
2. Identify and carry out works on strategic routes for utilitarian and leisure use for upgrading to full accessibility standard.
3. Improve access across the PROW network, adopted footpaths and Public Open Space using Least Restrictive Access Guidance (DEFRA guidance and British Standards), especially in relation to maintenance of network.
4. Promoting the accessible network to local residents and tourists (access for all).
5. Improve the maintenance of PROW network, especially those routes for mobility impaired users.

#### Wider accessibility (especially in relation to Social Inclusion).

6. Identify and develop strategic routes in line with LDF and public consultation.
7. Expanding and promoting the Trans Pennine Trail, its links and other cycleways / bridleways (within and across South Yorkshire borders) to increase off road access for walkers, horse-riders, cyclists and mobility impaired users between urban centres for utilitarian and leisure use (having positive impacts on social inclusion, air quality, congestion & road safety).
8. Expanding and promoting the network for utilitarian and leisure use in combination with public transport routes (having a positive impact on social inclusion, air quality, public transport patronage and congestion).
9. Promoting routes in a variety of information formats (utilising the internet as well as more traditional methods).
10. Reducing fears/ concerns of using the routes (including better signage and maintenance).
11. Develop volunteer schemes such as Adopt A Path and utilise public consultation where appropriate.
12. Continue to improve performance relating to e-government and customer service aims by developing rights of way internet sites. This includes identifying promoted walks, access for all routes along with general information about Rights of Way, volunteers and problem report forms etc.

#### Road Safety (particularly casualty reduction)

13. Identify, develop and promote linked cycling routes in support of the emerging Cycle Strategies for each Local Authority.
14. Identify, develop and promote Safe Routes to School (from homes and public transport).
15. Identify, develop and promote other walking and cycling routes for utilitarian journeys to work, shops, places of worship, health facilities and other amenities.
16. Identify, develop and promote the upgrade or creation of new bridleway links, creating off road routes especially in areas where there is a high density of liveries/stables.
17. Assess the safety of road crossing points particularly bridleways.
18. Identify, develop and promote the use of Quiet Lanes.
19. Work with stakeholders to identify and manage vehicular use of the countryside Rights of Way network.

### Economic Regeneration

20. Develop and promote the TPT for tourism and local use, providing links into Urban Centres and public transport systems.
21. Develop South Yorkshire as a recreation tourist destination, horse riding centres, cycling routes, mobility impaired users etc (building on TPT, Pennine Cycleway, Pennine Bridleway). Improved maintenance will be integral to achieving this aim.
22. Work with Stakeholders (e.g. Business Link and Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group) to improve farm diversification (accommodation, tourist attractions, increased Rights of Way network etc.) Making maximum use of any changes in legislation.

### Quality of Life (also includes those under Accessibility)

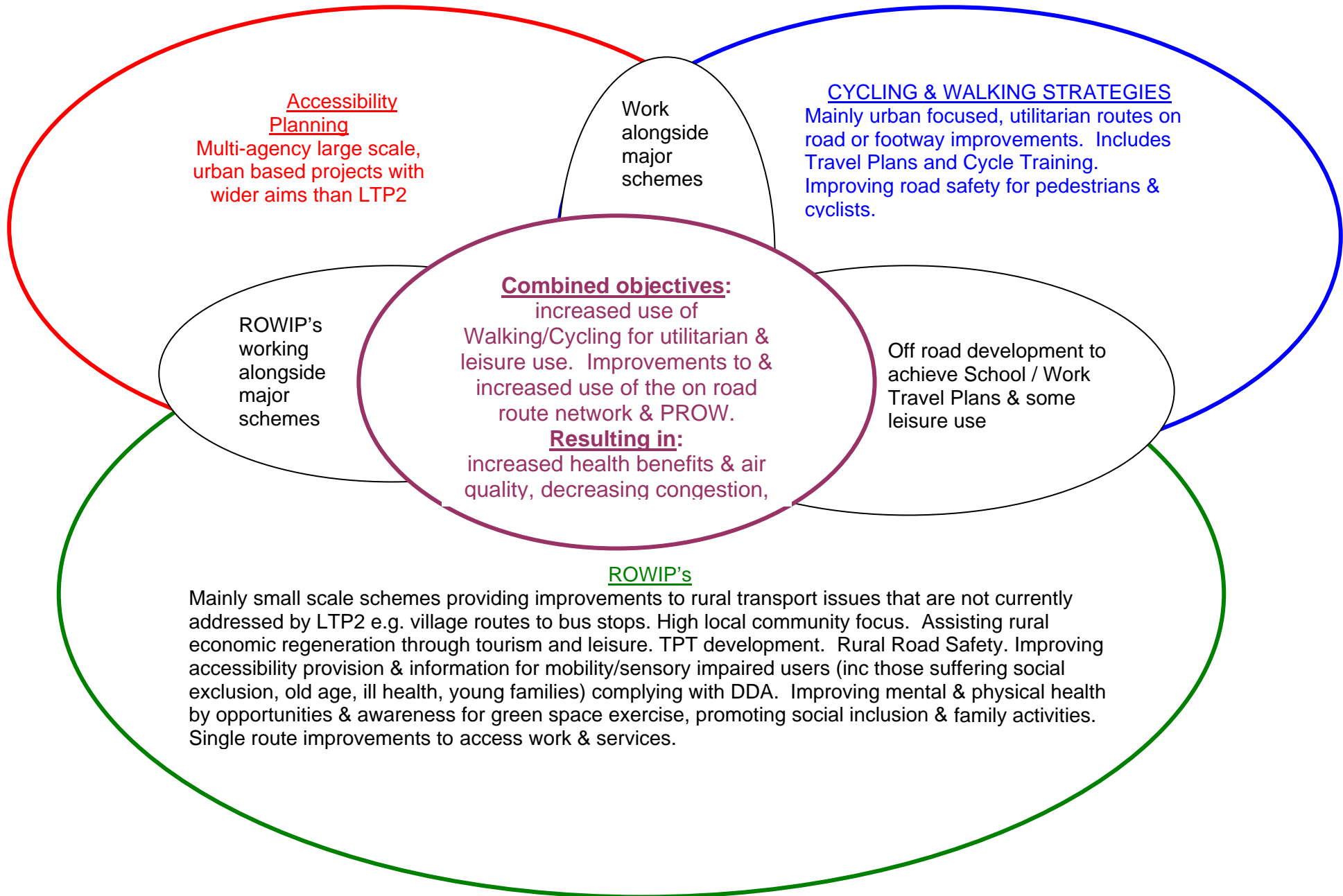
23. Increase use of the network as part of a healthier lifestyle.
24. Develop volunteer programmes (surveying, access auditing with disabled users, adopt a path and practical work, leaflet production etc) to encourage use, activity, sense of ownership etc.
25. Work with the Primary Care Trust and other bodies to develop a selection of promoted routes for different levels of ability across South Yorkshire (Healthy Walks Programme), and with local providers who are prescribing exercise alternatives to develop a local accessible network.

In addition to the links with the LTP objectives the South Yorkshire ROWIP officers identified three key strategic priorities for South Yorkshire Rights of Way:

1. Ensure the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act legislation, where it applies to the countryside and rights of way are addressed.
2. Develop the network of multi-user routes.
3. Increase the maintenance of the network.

These priorities will be discussed in later chapters.

Figure 2.1 Overlapping roles between Accessibility Planning, cycling & walking strategies, and the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.



### 2.3.2 Walking & Cycling Strategies (part of LTP2)

Barnsley has produced a draft cycling strategy and a walking strategy is being prepared. This draft strategy has identified core aims and an action plan setting out options for delivery of these aims and identifies some priority works.

The four main aims of the draft cycle strategy are:

- to improve infrastructure for cycling;
- to encourage cycling from a young age;
- to improve attitudes towards cycling; and
- to reduce cyclist casualties and cycle related crime.

A stakeholder group has been established called the Barnsley Bicycle User Group. It is made up of volunteers from interested user groups, BMBC officers responsible for the delivery of appropriate services etc, and has a consultative role in relation to cycling issues and the strategy.

There is a significant overlap in both the development and schemes of work within cycling and ROWIP strategies (see Figure 2.1). Some of the aims of the ROWIP can be met through the cycling strategy and vice versa, e.g. continued co-operation will improve the integration of on and off road routes.

Public consultation on the draft cycling strategy will be completed by June 2007 and with the walking strategy is currently being developed. The expectation is that as the ROWIP, walking and cycling strategies develop towards their final documents and publication stage greater integration will occur.



Cycling on the Trans Pennine Trail at Dunford Bridge

### 2.3.3. Work Travel Plans

As part of LTP1 businesses were encouraged to develop travel plans for their workers. A travel plan requires employers to look at and encourage use of public transport, walking and cycling as alternatives to the private car, and include issues such as bicycle storage and changing/shower provision. This requirement continues in the LTP2.

For large businesses or new industrial estates the changes are often far greater but can be achieved by greater co-operation between stakeholders. For example: work on travel plans was ongoing prior to planning permission being granted for Shortwood Industrial Estate on Dearne Valley Parkway at Hoyland. As a result the site has a new bus stop and bus turning circle with buses being rerouted to link to nearby residential areas. Existing Rights of Way are being improved and where necessary upgraded, to create convenient walking and cycling links between Hoyland residential areas and both Shortwood and Ashroyd Industrial Estates on the outskirts of the town.

By identifying the key issues and planning ahead during early development stages, additional funding can be acquired from developers through section 106 and section 38 monies which can then be focused on Rights of Way issues in the area to meet the needs of PROW users.

#### 2.3.4 School Travel Plans

The Department for Transport set the target of 40% of schools having travel plans, however Barnsley has exceeded this expectation by having 58% of all its schools with registered travel plans by 31 March 2006. By March 2007 this had increased to over 70%.

School travel plans are designed to:

- reduce traffic congestion, air pollution and enhance road safety especially in the vicinity of school entrances;
- encourage sustainable modes of transport;
- increase the health benefits and reduce the risk of obesity; and
- where possible provide cycle training for year 6 pupils.

The travel plans are only stage one, the next requirement is to create the infrastructure and support necessary to implement the plan. This may require the establishment of walking buses, development of new or improvement of existing routes, changing road markings or layouts etc.



Improvements to encourage walking to school

'Building schools for the future' is part of Remaking Learning and will focus on the development of new and existing schools within Barnsley. By being involved at this early stage issues such as diverting rights of way to accommodate the new sites,

improvements to rights of way to enhance opportunities to walk and cycle to school and travel plans, can influence these private finance initiatives rather than being merely reactive.

## 2.4 **Planning**

### 2.4.1 **Local Development Framework (LDF)**

Central Government requires all Local Authorities to produce a development plan to be used when considering all proposals for development. It amalgamates planning based policies and strategies including Barnsley Core Strategy, general development policies, housing and employment sites, transport, education and the Town Centre Action Plan.

The key policies influencing the ROWIP are those identified in the Greenways section. The LDF clearly defines these routes.

- Greenways are one type of green space. They are paths and other open routes that provide links between housing, countryside and services. In many cases they go through the countryside.
- They are used for leisure and for access to work and services.
- We are developing a greenways network for Barnsley and the major routes are shown on the proposals map. Some are based on existing long-distance, regional or other routes. Others are part of the wider public rights of way network.
- This section also covers the extensive network of public rights of way.  
(from the Draft LDF sections 207 – 210)

Policy GW1 - protects greenways from development or the developers provide an equally attractive and convenient alternative if the route is affected by a development.

Policy GW2 – any new housing developments over 10 units and business developments over 1000sqm which are close to a greenway may need to provide a link to the greenway, contribute to a new greenway or improve an existing one.  
Policy GW3 – allows for small-scale tourism and leisure development along the greenway network; e.g. cafes' bike hire centres, art or sculpture trails.

Policy GW4 – Where a Right of Way is affected by a development, developers must either protect the route within the site or provide a convenient and attractive alternative. Where appropriate new routes will be created within the site and linking to nearby areas or the wider Rights of Way network to encourage use for leisure and utilitarian journeys.

Other policies that relate to the work of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, cycling and walking strategies include:

Policy T2 – requires all large retail, office, leisure and industrial units over a specified size to produce a travel plan as part of the planning application.

Policy T3 – requires developers to take action or make contributions to:- link the site to public transport, cycling and walking opportunities, improve services, improve facilities and encourage people to use public transport, cycling and walking where existing levels of accessibility are unacceptable.

Policy OS1 – protects existing areas of green space, including woods, parks etc.

Policy OS2 – requires developers to create new and improved green spaces in developments of more than 10 houses.

Policy HE9 – protecting parks and gardens of special historic interest; including Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park (Grade 1), Wortley Hall, Cannon Hall, Bretton Park (Part) and Locke Park (Barnsley) all grade 2.

#### 2.4.2 Green Space Strategy

The Green Space Strategy develops the green spaces and greenways elements of the LDF. It has five objectives:

- To protect important green spaces from development;
- to create new green spaces and improve existing ones;
- to create and protect a network of greenways that forge links between green spaces, towns and villages and the countryside;
- to encourage everyone to use green spaces by making sure there are enough of them, of the right type and quality, in places where people can easily get to them; and
- to make sure we look after and maintain our green spaces so they continue to be used by everyone now and in the next generation.

Part one of the strategy sets out the standards we want to achieve and consultation has been completed on the draft plan. Part two looks at each Neighbourhood and judges the existing green spaces against those standards and identified where and what improvements need to be made.

### 2.5 Health Strategies

#### 2.5.1 Fit for the Future

One in four of the Barnsley population report a limiting long term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or the work they can do. This is the 4th highest proportion in England.

Fit for the Future sets out a borough wide strategy to tackle the health inequalities that affect Barnsley residents. Poor health can affect an individual's ability to work or receive an education, whilst increasing the likelihood of social exclusion. The highest areas of poor health are in deprived neighbourhoods and addressing this wider issue is on the Remaking Barnsley, Remaking Education and Neighbourhood Renewal agendas.

Fit for the Future seeks to improve levels of physical activity, promote a healthier lifestyle, better diet and reduce smoking to help address the large numbers of diseases triggered by poor lifestyles such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and coronary heart disease. Rights of Way can help meet the physical activity objectives and others such as a reduction in obesity especially child hood obesity.

The Health Promotion Team leading the Fit for the Future strategy seek not only to positively influence individual and group behaviour on the range of health issues but also to provide opportunities to enable them to do so. These opportunities include providing walk leader training and setting up local walking groups, to developing circular routes around health centres especially where doctors are prescribing exercise to patients. The Countryside Team is fully involved in helping to provide the opportunities including running events during the walking festival and bike week,

creating health walking routes and several officers are qualified under the walk leader training scheme.

## 2.5.2 Physical Recreation Strategy

The Physical Recreation Strategy seeks to address the issues limiting physical recreation. Although the strategy document focuses on more formalised activities such as a coached sport or leisure opportunities such as gym membership, the action plan also includes the informal recreation and activity opportunities provided by use of the Rights of Way network and countryside sites.

The Action Plan is updated every six months with the partners from education, culture sport and tourism, Fit for the Future, leisure providers etc working together to meet the objectives. Rights of Way are helping to achieve some of these objectives, e.g. health and surgery walks meet action point 1.5. To promote and develop physical activity for people with specific health needs.

## 2.6. Tourism

### 2.6.1 Local Culture Statement

‘This is an opportunity to achieve an integrated approach to the planning and provision of cultural services of the highest quality, and provide a framework that enables all groups, societies, organisations and individuals to prosper and participate in the culture life of Barnsley’. (Local Culture Statement, 2003)

The statement covers provision and information on cultural issues for residents and tourists alike. The arts, sports, libraries, heritage & museums, tourism and countryside plans are all integrated into the Local Culture Statement. Like other strategies it can only be achieved by services working closer within Barnsley Council and developing links and partnerships with external organisations such as parish councils.



Nabs Wood Memorial near Silkstone Common

Considerations for the ROWIP include tourism and promotion of Barnsley, the strategic priority within the plan of creating access and enabling inclusion for all, and creating/promoting footpath and bridleway routes to the cultural locations such

as Cannon Hall, Elsecar Heritage Centre. It also links to tourism issues of promoting the long distance and local trails and walks within Barnsley.

#### 2.6.2 Barnsley Canal Consortium

The Barnsley Canal Consortium are investigating the opportunities to reopen the Barnsley Canal. Whilst much of the original line has been protected from development should the route be reopened, the majority is infilled and aqueducts removed. The consortium's ultimate aim is to link the River Calder with the South Yorkshire canal system via a navigable inland waterway in order to regenerate the area economically, environmentally and socially. Many of the towpaths on the remaining sections of canal are already used as rights of way and there is emphasis to integrate any works to reopen the canal with network improvements.

A commissioned study in 2006 estimated that the canal could be reinstated for between £200 and £300million.

#### 2.7 Summary

The role that Rights of Way can play in meeting the targets in the strategies and plans above varies, but in all cases is important. The impacts vary from providing alternative modes of transport, improving mental and physical health, enhancing the cultural and green environment to economic regeneration through tourism, addressing social exclusion and areas of deprivation especially the rural economy through farm diversification projects and rural businesses. How it currently meets them and potential future developments are examined in the following chapters.