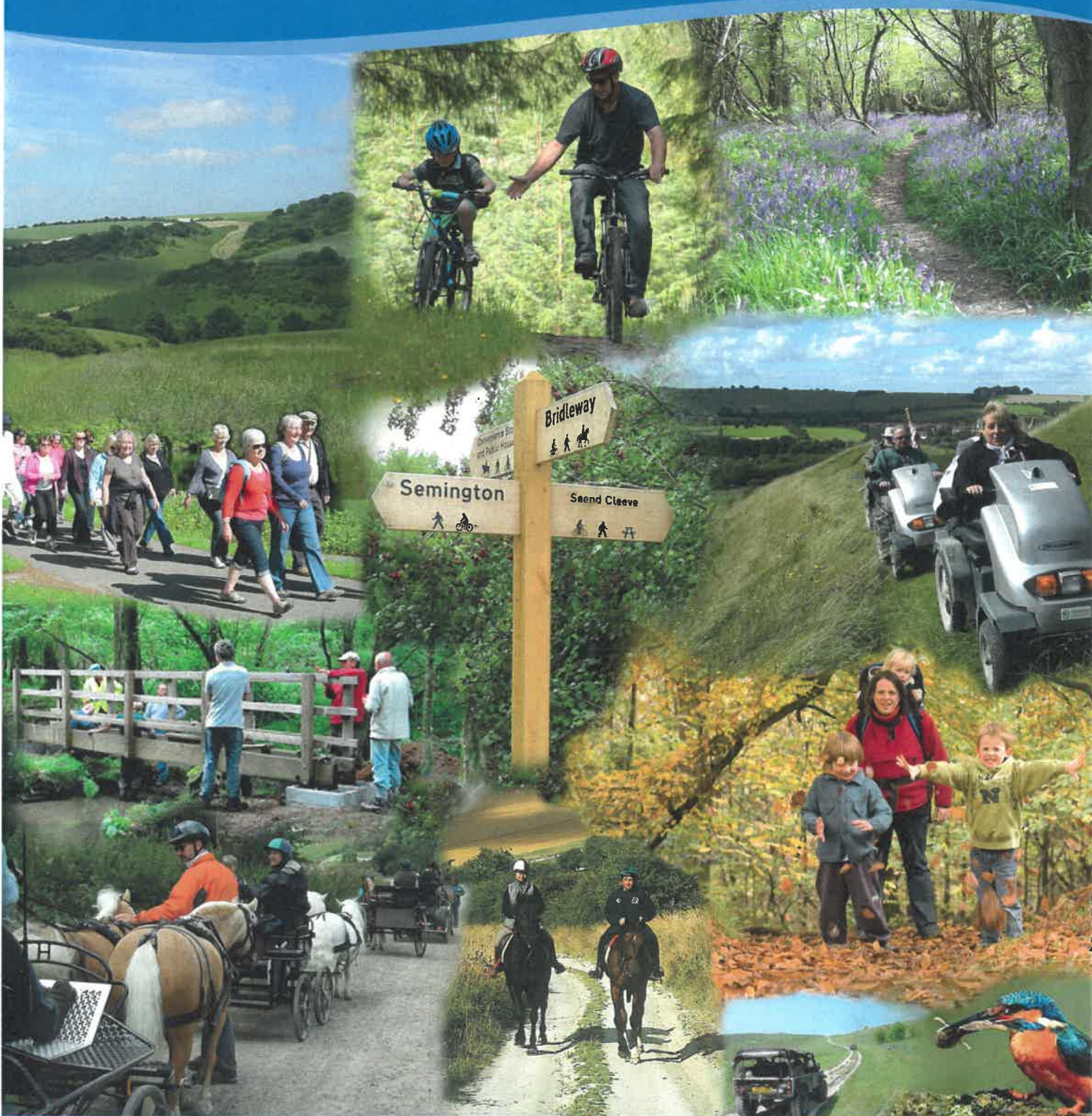


## APPENDIX 7

# Wiltshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2015 - 2025

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2



## Foreword

I am pleased to present Wiltshire Council's Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP). The CAIP sets out Wiltshire Council's proposals for managing and improving access to the countryside for the next 10 years. Progress will be reviewed annually with a view to carrying out a light touch review of the plan itself after 5 years, should it be necessary.

Wiltshire's extensive Countryside Access Network (CAN) is an invaluable resource for both residents and visitors to the county and it is free to all users. It offers people a variety of attractive routes to explore and appreciate Wiltshire's countryside and heritage and to exercise. The CAN also provides people with routes to access their local services, whether this is a footpath to a bus stop in a rural area or tarmac paths linking where people live with schools, shops or employment. It also provides habitats for wildlife.

The Government and National Health Service are increasingly emphasising the need for more preventative medical care. Evidence shows that the CAN has a key role to play in promoting good physical and mental health, whether it is for relaxation or physical activity, or to encourage active travel to local services. Relatively small investments in maintenance and enhancement coupled with initiatives to encourage its use have been shown to bring far greater savings to the NHS and wider society. The CAN also supports Wiltshire Council's Business Plan 2013 – 2017, not only in terms of its public health benefits but also supporting Wiltshire's economy and providing local people with opportunities to help maintain and shape the network to meet their needs. Wiltshire Council recognises how vital the CAN is and will continue to provide a level of funding to reflect this.

The innovative ideas within the CAIP to improve maintenance and to enhance and encourage use of the CAN have the potential to make a major contribution to the wellbeing of Wiltshire's communities. Wiltshire Council will continue to work in partnership with countryside access users, volunteers and local communities to ensure that the network evolves to meet the changing needs of both Wiltshire's residents and visitors.

Cllr Philip Whitehead, Portfolio Holder for Highways

## Contents

	Page
Foreword	1
Glossary	3
1 Introduction	5
1.1 What the Countryside Access Improvement Plan covers	5
1.2 The importance of the Countryside Access Network	6
1.3 The objectives of the Countryside Access Improvement Plan	7
1.4 Producing the Countryside Access Improvement Plan	7
2 The county of Wiltshire	8
2.1 Landscape and biodiversity	8
2.2 Archaeology	10
3 Results from Wiltshire's first Rights of Way Improvement Plan	11
3.1 Improvements made under the Rights of Way Improvement Plan	11
3.2 Areas where progress has been limited	12
3.3 Examples of schemes delivered under the Rights of Way Improvement Plan	12
3.4 Taking Rights of Way Improvement Plan successes forward	14
4 Context	15
4.1 Statutory responsibilities	16
4.2 Local Transport Plan 3	16
4.3 Improving physical and mental health	18
4.4 Planning	21
4.5 Tourism	21
4.6 Environment and biodiversity	22
4.7 Community and volunteering	22
4.8 Other plans of relevance	23
5 The rights of way and countryside service	24
5.1 Overview of the service	24
5.2 Maintenance of the rights of way network	24
5.3 Volunteers	24
5.4 Partnerships	25
6 Current provision	26
7 Use of the countryside access network (CAN)	31
7.1 Valuing the CAN	31
7.2 How the CAN is being used	31
7.3 Demographic changes	32
7.4 Disability	32
8 Action plan	33
8.1 How the action plan has been produced	33
8.2 Key issues	33
8.3 Likely funding sources for CAIP actions	34
8.4 Action plan key	34
References for main document	45
Appendices are contained in a separate document	
Polices are contained in a separate document	

## Glossary

**Access Land:** the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) (often called the CROW Act) permits the public to walk freely on mapped areas of mountain, moor, heath or downland without having to stick to paths. The Act also gives provision for landowners and tenants to restrict or exclude public access to Access Land in certain circumstances. This is to avoid potential conflicts between public access and land management, for example when shooting takes place

**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB):** a designation where an area receives special protection to conserve and enhance its natural beauty

**Area Board:** Wiltshire Council manages 18 area boards, which cover the whole of Wiltshire. They bring together a range of organisations and local groups to try to ensure that issues which are a high priority for local communities are considered and dealt with

**biodiversity:** the number and variety of plants and animals found within a specific area

**Countryside Access Forum (CAF):** see Wiltshire & Swindon Countryside Access Forum

**Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP):** Wiltshire Council's second Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

**Countryside Access Network (CAN):** all the routes and areas that members of the public can use to access the countryside. Also includes paths in urban areas which are public rights of way

**Core Strategy:** the most important part of the Local Development Framework (LDF). This sets out Wiltshire Council's plans for where development should take place in the county

**Definitive Map and Statement:** the legal record of public rights of way (see Appendix 2)

**Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO):** a legal order to modify the definitive map and statement, for example if evidence has been found that a footpath should have been recorded as a bridleway

**Green Infrastructure Strategy:** Wiltshire Council's strategy to deliver a network of routes and areas for wildlife to thrive and people to enjoy

**landowner:** this may include the person who is responsible for managing the land on behalf of the owner

**Local Nature Reserve (LNR):** district, county and unitary councils have powers to acquire, declare and manage LNRs. To qualify for LNR status, a site must be of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment. Some are also nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Management of the site can be undertaken by the local authority or "friends of" groups or organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts

**Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3):** Wiltshire Council's strategy for delivering national transport goals at a local level

**mobility impairment:** a physical disability that may make using the CAN more difficult. Examples include people who use wheelchairs, have sight loss, physical co-ordination problems, manual dexterity or learning difficulties

**National Nature Reserve (NNR):** some of the finest sites in England for wildlife and/or geology. NNRs were initially established to protect sensitive features and to provide 'outdoor laboratories' for research. Now many reserves also allow public access. Natural England can declare NNRs. Natural England manage

about two thirds of England's NNRs, the remaining third are managed by organisations approved by Natural England; for example, National Trust, the Forestry Commission, RSPB, Wildlife Trusts and Local Authorities

**National Park:** an area which is protected because of its beautiful countryside, wildlife and cultural heritage

**Natural England (NE):** the Government's advisor on the natural environment. NE provides advice on how best to safeguard England's natural environment for the benefit of wildlife and people

**New Forest Access Forum (NFAF):** the equivalent of the Wiltshire & Swindon CAF within the New Forest National Park

**permissive path:** a route where the landowner allows public access but is not a formal public right of way

**Public Path Order (PPO):** a legal order to divert or extinguish an existing right of way or to create a new right of way

**Paths Improvement Grant Scheme (PIGS):** an annual bidding process where Wiltshire Council provides funding to enable parish councils to undertake improvements to their local CAN

**public rights of way (sometimes just called rights of way):** paths and tracks which anyone can use to cross private land. Rights of way exist in towns, villages and the countryside and the public have a legal right to use them at any time of the day or night, all year round. See Appendix 3 for more information

**Ramsar:** sites protected under the 'Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat', signed at Ramsar in Iran. This is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, to recognise their economic, cultural, scientific, and recreational value

**rights of way:** see public rights of way

**Rights of way Improvement Plan (ROWIP):** Wiltshire Council's first ROWIP covered 2008 – 2012, the Countryside Access Improvement Plan is the revision of this document

**Special Area of Conservation (SAC):** an area defined in the European Union's Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), considered to be of European interest

**Scheduled Monument:** an archaeological site or historic building deemed to be nationally important. The status gives legal protection against unauthorised changes to the structure under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

**Special Protection Area (SPA):** a protected area under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds

**Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):** a UK conservation designation for an area of land considered to be of special interest due to its wildlife or geological nature. They have a strong legal protection

**Sustrans:** a sustainable transport charity which aims to enable people to travel by foot, cycle or public transport for more of their journeys

**Wiltshire & Swindon Countryside Access Forum (CAF):** this body was set up under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000). It is made up of user groups and owners and occupiers of land. It provides independent guidance to Wiltshire Council and other organisations such as Natural England on ways to improve public access, open air recreation and use of the CAN

# 1 Introduction

In 2008, Wiltshire County Council produced its first rights of way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). ROWIPs are a requirement under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. The ROWIP was an aspirational plan covering 2008 – 2012 which set out how the council would manage and improve the network to meet modern day needs. The plan continued to be taken forward by Wiltshire Council when Wiltshire became a unitary authority in 2009.

The official guidance on ROWIPs<sup>1</sup> says that they should consider;

- the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public;
- the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of outdoor recreation and the enjoyment of the authority's area;
- the accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems

Although the guidance focuses on rights of way, it also states that improvements to other routes and areas which allow people to access the countryside need to be considered. To reflect this requirement more clearly, the title of the second ROWIP has been changed to the Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP).



Rights of way give access to the countryside. Mere Down, photo courtesy of Visit Wiltshire/Chris Lock

## 1.1 What the CAIP covers

The CAIP sets out the actions Wiltshire Council will take to manage, improve and promote Wiltshire's countryside access network (CAN). The CAN includes:

- public rights of way in both rural and urban areas (footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic)
- permissive paths
- cycleways which are not adjacent to roads
- canal towpaths
- country parks
- town parks
- forests with public access (generally managed by the Forestry Commission)
- Access Land
- stretches of road and pavements or joint footway/cycleways which link the above together

Wiltshire Council does not manage some parts of the CAN itself, but it will work in partnership to improve public access to the countryside where possible at these locations.

Although the plan is largely about countryside access, the CAIP also covers rights of way within settlements. Many of these provide key links to local services and have a tarmac surface.



Some rights of way are urban paths, as here in Amesbury

---

<sup>1</sup> DEFRA (2002)

## 1.2 The importance of the CAN

The CAN is important because it:

- provides attractive routes away from roads both in the countryside and within towns. They can be used for leisure journeys, to access local facilities or to travel between settlements
- is an extensive, free at the point of use recreational resource. It helps Wiltshire's residents keep physically and mentally healthy
- is a tourism resource (e.g. for walking holidays or days out), contributing millions of pounds annually to Wiltshire's economy
- forms a significant part of our heritage
- enables people to enjoy the beauty and tranquillity of large parts of the countryside that cannot be reached by road
- can be a wildlife habitat or provide 'green corridors' between areas of habitat

England's CAN is very well used. It was estimated by Natural England that between March 2010 and February 2011, the 41.7 million adults resident in England took a total of 2.49 billion visits<sup>2</sup> to the natural environment<sup>3</sup> between them.

Figure 1 shows how many visits Wiltshire residents take each year to the natural environment and where they are going. This figure and figure 2 come from surveys undertaken with adults during Natural England's study "Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment".

Every year, Wiltshire's 371,000 adults make more than 40 million trips to the natural environment. The majority of these are to the countryside, though the surveys also show the importance of town parks for providing opportunities for people to access nature.

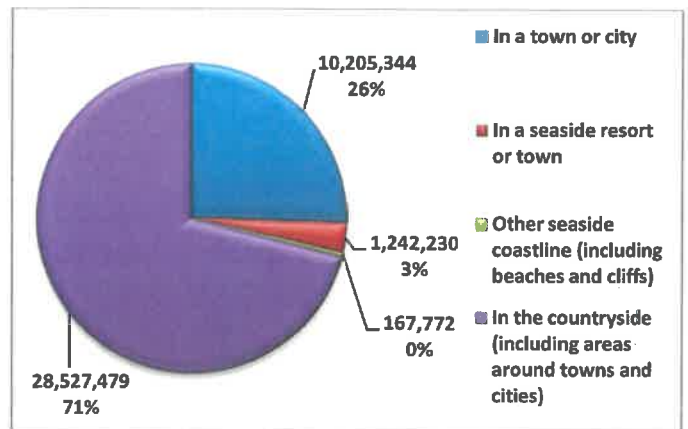


Figure 1: How many visits Wiltshire's residents take to the natural environment annually and where they go<sup>4</sup>

As can be seen from Figure 2, 43% of Wiltshire's adults visit the natural environment daily or several times a week and 66% visit at least once a week.

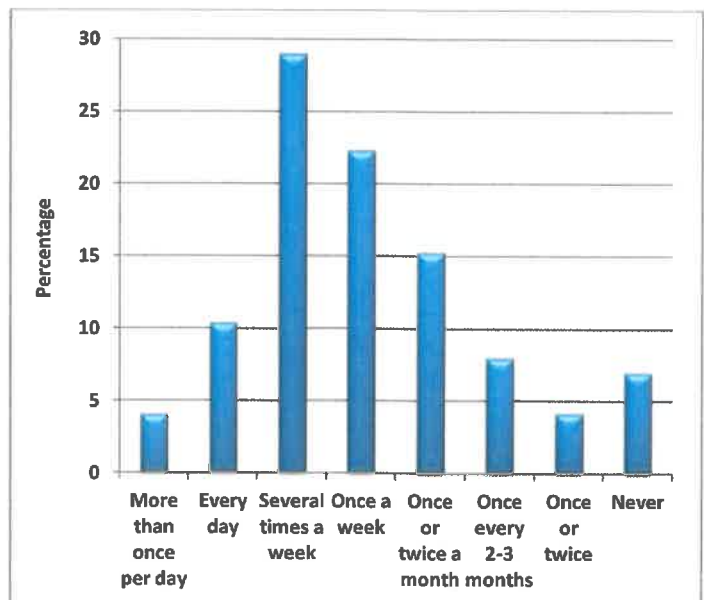


Figure 2: Frequency of visits to the natural environment by Wiltshire residents<sup>5</sup>

One of the key reasons people have cited for accessing the natural environment in Wiltshire is to meet their health and exercise needs. This is discussed in detail section 4.3.

<sup>2</sup> Natural England (2012). Figure 2.2

<sup>3</sup> Natural environment is defined as all green open spaces in and around towns and cities, the wider countryside and coastline. Private gardens are excluded

<sup>4</sup> Figure is annual average of Wiltshire adult results between March 2009 and February 2012

<sup>5</sup> From all results between March 2009 and February 2012. Sample size 882 interviews.



### 1.3 The objectives of the CAIP

The CAIP is a daughter document of Wiltshire’s Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) and will help to deliver many of the objectives of LTP3. With this in mind, the most relevant strategic objectives in LTP3 have been taken as the objectives for the CAIP. These are shown in Figure 3.

The CAIP also helps to meet the key objective in both Wiltshire Council’s Business Plan 2013 – 2017 and The Wiltshire Community Plan 2011 – 2026, which is “to build stronger and more resilient communities”. More details of this can be found in section 4.7.

### 1.4 Producing the CAIP

The research undertaken in producing the action plan is explained in section 8. Consultation with a range of organisations and individuals was undertaken on the draft document. A list of consultees is included in Appendix 1.

Two key consultees were the Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum (CAF) and the New Forest National Park Access Forum (NFAF). Access Forums are statutory bodies made up of user groups and owners and occupiers of land. They provide independent guidance to Wiltshire Council and other organisations such as Natural England on ways to improve public access, open air recreation and use of the CAN.

Figure 3: The objectives of the CAIP

The key LTP3 strategic objectives that the CAIP helps deliver	
SO1	To support and help improve the vitality, viability and resilience of Wiltshire’s economy and market towns
SO2	To provide, support and/or promote a choice of sustainable travel alternatives including walking, cycling, bus and rail
SO5	To improve sustainable access to a full range of opportunities particularly for those people without access to a car
SO6	To make the best use of the existing infrastructure through effective design, management and maintenance
SO8	To improve safety for all road users and to reduce the number of casualties on Wiltshire’s roads
SO12	To support planned growth in Wiltshire and ensure that new developments adequately provide for their sustainable transport requirements and mitigate their traffic impacts
SO13	To reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car
SO14	To promote travel modes that are beneficial to health
SO15	To reduce barriers to transport and access for people with disabilities and mobility impairment
SO17	To improve sustainable access to Wiltshire’s countryside and provide a more useable public rights of way network
SO18	To enhance the journey experience of transport users

## 2 The county of Wiltshire

Wiltshire is a largely rural county with a population of 471,000. The largest settlements are Salisbury, Chippenham and the county town Trowbridge. Swindon Borough Council is a separate authority.

### 2.1 Landscape and biodiversity

There is a great diversity of landscape in Wiltshire. In the north-east and south of the county there are chalk downlands, Salisbury Plain covers much of the middle of the county and there is wooded farmland in the west and north.

As can be seen on Figure 4 overleaf, some parts of Wiltshire have a special landscape status:

- The 3 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), covering 44% of the county:
  - The Cotswolds
  - The North Wessex Downs
  - Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs
- The New Forest National Park (NFNP), which includes a small part of south-east Wiltshire
- The Cotswold Waterpark, near Cricklade



Motorised vehicle users exploring one of Wiltshire's many Byways. Photo courtesy of Tread Lightly

The county is also very rich in biodiversity. There are:

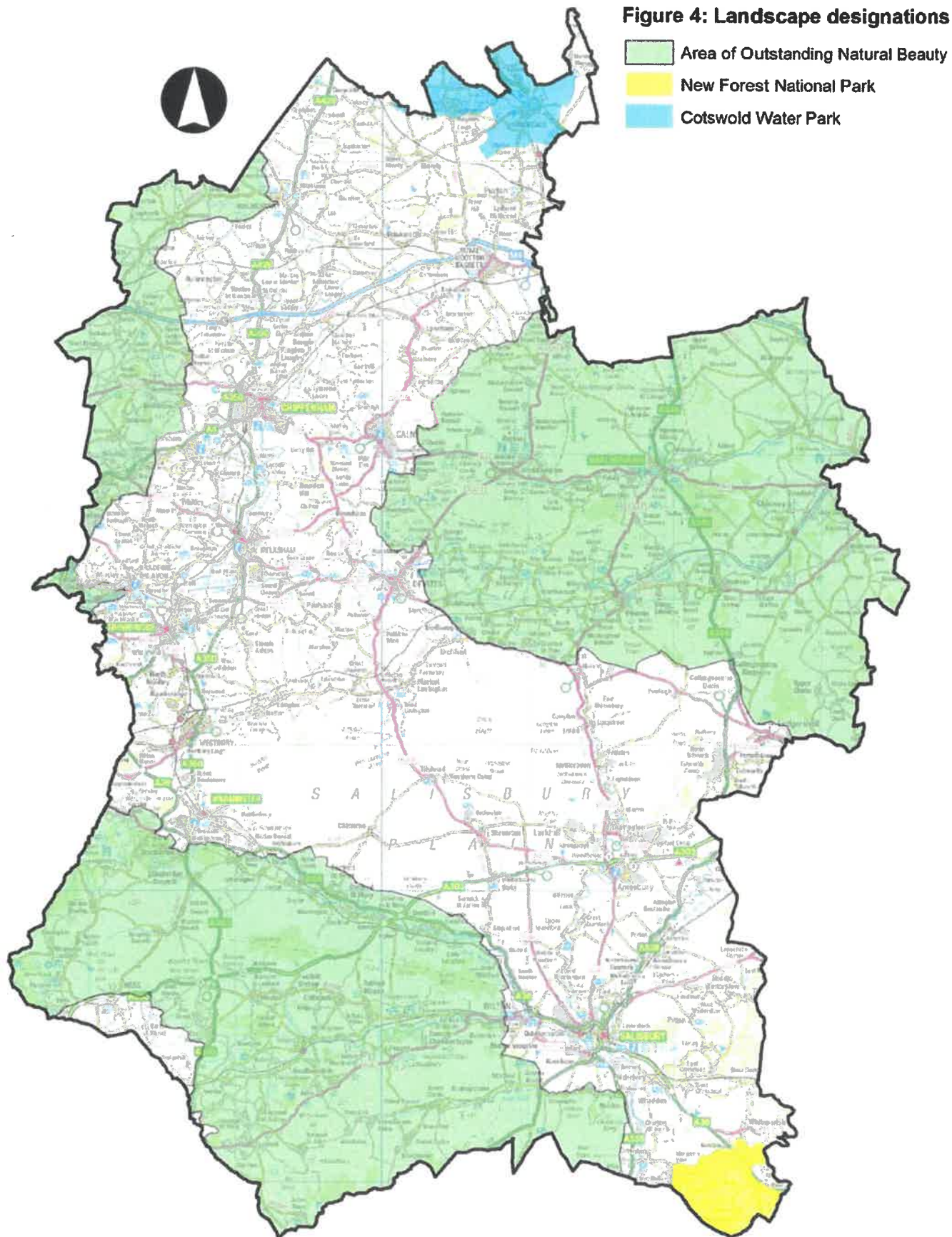
- 135 Sites of Special Scientific Interest. These cover a range of habitats for particularly important populations of British Wildlife, including calcareous grassland, lowland meadows, broadleaved woodland, streams, rivers and standing waters
- 10 Special Areas of Conservation, 3 Special Protection Areas and 1 Ramsar
- Many other areas with special designations such as National and Local Nature Reserves and County Wildlife Sites. Even outside these designated sites, legally protected flora and fauna species are found around the county

The CAN provides many opportunities for reaching and appreciating these areas but management of the CAN also needs to consider potential impacts upon them.



Bluebell wood. Photo courtesy of Peter Blyth

**Figure 4: Landscape designations**



## 2.2 Archaeology

Wiltshire has a long and interesting human history, reflected in the fact that there are more than 2,000 scheduled monuments. The most famous of these are in the World Heritage Site which covers Stonehenge and Avebury and their surrounding landscapes. There are many earthworks within the county such as burial mounds, the impressive Wansdyke and hill forts.



Avebury stone circle can be freely explored

There are also many more recent archaeological remains, for example:

- Old Wardour Castle
- industrial structures such as Dundas Aqueduct and Caen Hill Locks on the Kennet and Avon Canal
- mills in Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge

In many cases the CAN provides access to and around these historic sites. For instance, stretches of the Wansdyke and some hill forts have rights of way running along their banks and much of the Fosse Way, a Roman road, is also a public right of way.



Carriage drivers on one of Wiltshire's historic rights of way, The Ridgeway

### 3 Results from Wiltshire's first ROWIP

#### 3.1 Improvements made under the ROWIP

- 1) Reflecting the desires of local communities and investing in community led projects:
  - the Paths Improvement Grant Scheme (PIGS) gives funding to parish councils towards CAN upgrades they feel are important
  - stiles are being replaced with gaps or gates on key routes identified by local communities and where landowners give their approval. This helps make routes easier to use by people with mobility impairments



A stile being replaced by a kissing gate

- priorities for maintenance and improvements are influenced by feedback from local residents
- 2) New ways of maintaining the network:
    - machinery has been made available to the rights of way and countryside service, for example Land Rovers, a tractor and wood chipper. This means maintenance such as

- overgrowth clearance and replacing bridges can be undertaken more quickly
  - increasingly, external sources of funding are being sought to improve the CAN. Examples include the Lottery, Landfill Communities Fund, New Forest small grants scheme, developer contributions and sponsorship from private companies
- 3) Increasing the involvement of volunteers:
    - the service supports many individuals, user groups and parish councils who help to manage their local rights of way and countryside sites to meet local needs and desires
    - the estimated value of the volunteer working parties is around £200,000 per year across the county
    - nine of our countryside sites have established volunteer groups who help manage and enhance them in the interests of public access and nature conservation
    - in 2012 the Southern Area Board, which covers 16 parishes, decided that rights of way were a key issue. The board, in partnership with the rights of way and countryside service, has been encouraging parishes to take more responsibility for their networks. This led to nearly 60 stiles being replaced with gates on a number of well used routes in the area
    - work experience placements have also been undertaken within the service
  - 4) Improving information and promotion:
    - The rights of way and countryside pages on the council's website have been improved:
      - on-line mapping has been introduced which shows the most up to date information on rights of way
      - rights of way faults can now be reported on-line as well as by telephone
      - there are useful web-links, e.g. to user groups and a "where can I go?" section
      - country park locations are shown on the website
    - press releases are being increasingly used to promote the work of the service and family leisure events are organised and widely publicised
    - social media such as Facebook and Twitter is increasingly being used

#### 5) Improving partnerships:

- “waste” from Wiltshire Council's highways service is reused, for example planings taken off roads during maintenance are used to improve surface conditions on rights of way
- new links are being created with organisations responsible for health, sport and tourism
- existing external partnerships have been strengthened, for example with user groups, Wiltshire Council's Area Boards, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the New Forest National Park Authority and neighbouring authorities
- strong relationships have been maintained with most landowners, which helps co-operation when it comes to maintaining and upgrading access
- the relationship with the Countryside Access Forums is being increasingly used to support the work of the service

#### 6) Improving links with public health:

- in 2014 the Public Health team at Wiltshire Council provided funding for a volunteer co-ordinator post
- the post will improve the support the council can offer to existing volunteers and seek to increase the numbers of volunteers
- the post is funded for an initial 18 months but if it proves to be a success further funding will be sought

### 3.2 Areas where progress has been limited

These areas will continue to be progressed in the CAIP:

- 1) the rights of way database. This will help ground and office staff manage the network better
- 2) the backlog of Definitive Map Modification Orders. This has increased as the rate of applications coming in has exceeded the rate it has been possible to deal with them
- 3) “The Wayfarer”, a publication to promote the work of the service, was produced for several years and was well received. However, individual publications such as this have been discontinued largely due to costs. More use is now being made of press releases, the website and social media instead

### 3.3 Examples of schemes delivered under the ROWIP

- 1) A large volunteer scheme has been undertaken on Salisbury Plain to greatly improve the signage. Tread Lightly, a motorised vehicle user group, have been working in partnership with Wiltshire Council and the Ministry of Defence (MoD). 40 volunteers have installed over 300 signs. The MoD has also worked with Wiltshire Council to rationalise rights of way on Salisbury Plain. New routes have been created and other routes have been diverted to make the rights of way network much easier to manage and follow on the ground



Tread lightly volunteers working with the council and MoD to improve signing on Salisbury Plain

- 2) The Landfill Communities Fund charity contributed £13,000 towards a £19,500 scheme at Potterne. This improved the surfacing and drainage of several bridleways and byways at a key location on the network, making the routes useable all year round
- 3) The Friends of Biss Meadows (in Trowbridge) worked on a scheme to restore a pond for the benefit of local residents and schools. This involved replacing the dipping platform and improving paths to allow disabled access, new seating large enough to take school parties, community art and an interpretation board. Advice and a contribution of £868 from the rights of way and countryside service brought in a contribution of £7,000 for detailed design and surveys and then £50,000 from Community Spaces/The Big Lottery

4) The Paths Improvement Grant Scheme (PIGS) began in 2008 and is run in partnership with the Wiltshire & Swindon Countryside Access Forum. 30 schemes have been undertaken in its first 5 years. PIGS provides up to half the total cost of a scheme to parish councils so they can undertake changes they feel are important to their local network. Many schemes involve replacing stiles with gaps or gates to make routes around villages more accessible.



The Rowde Paths Improvement Grant Scheme provided a traffic free link between the village, canal and bus stops

A number of larger schemes have also been undertaken, for example:

- surfacing a footpath between Upper Castle Combe and Lower Castle Combe to make a good quality link for residents that can be used all year round
- constructing a new link which takes walkers away from the busy road between Rowde and the Kennet and Avon Canal, which included destination signing. This provides safer access

to bus stops, new circular walk opportunities for villagers and also good access for canal users to the community run shop in Rowde

- 5) The service has been supporting the work of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust volunteers to restore the canal and towpath. This will provide new walking, cycling and possibly horse riding opportunities. Several sections of the canal are already in place, for example Pewsham Locks near Chippenham and on the outskirts of Wootton Bassett. In 2012 the trust received the Queens Award for Volunteering Service
- 6) A volunteer group Friends of the Railway Path has been set up to improve and promote the route between Swindon and Marlborough. The group have produced promotional material, organised events and numerous workdays with a particular emphasis on improving biodiversity. The group is supported by a range of partners including Wiltshire Council, North Wessex Downs AONB, Sustrans, Wiltshire Bridleways Association and The Ramblers
- 7) The council's countryside sites are used for a number of events and groups. Examples include bat walks, badger walks, dawn chorus walks, children's activity days and tree planting to celebrate National Tree Week
- 8) Rights of Way and Countryside service staff helped to organise and support a challenging 3 day tour around the Imber Range Perimeter Path on Salisbury Plain by the Disabled Ramblers, using their motorised off-road buggies
- 9) the New Forest and South Downs National Park Authorities and local councils (including Wiltshire Council), have made a successful bid for funding through the DfT's Local Sustainable Transport Fund. The national parks have £3.8m to spend between them, which is enabling extensive surface improvements to be made to some byways and bridleways around Redlynch

## Badger Walk & Talk



### National Badger Day

Celebrate National Badger Day with a guided walk through Harnham Slope woodland to learn about the elusive badger, hosted by the Rights of Way & Countryside Team and local badger experts.

✓Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear

When: Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October

Where: Harnham Slope, Salisbury, meet at the steps near Grasmere Close, off Old Blandford Road

Time: 10am - 12 noon

Cost: Adults £2 Children/concessions £1

Booking essential

For further information please contact:

Rights of Way and Countryside Team, Environment Services, County Hall, Trowbridge

Wiltshire, BA14 8JD

Tel. 01225 718647

Email: [countryside@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:countryside@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult

**Wiltshire Council**  
Where everybody matters

The Rights of Way and Countryside service holds many events at Wiltshire Council's countryside sites

### 3.4 Taking ROWIP successes forward

The achievements of the first ROWIP have been reviewed in detail during the production of the CAIP. Many of the successful actions will continue to be progressed in the new action plan.



## 4 Context

The CAN makes a large contribution to many high priority areas of central and local government policy.

The figure below shows how the CAIP relates to other strategy areas. The following sections explain the links outlined below.

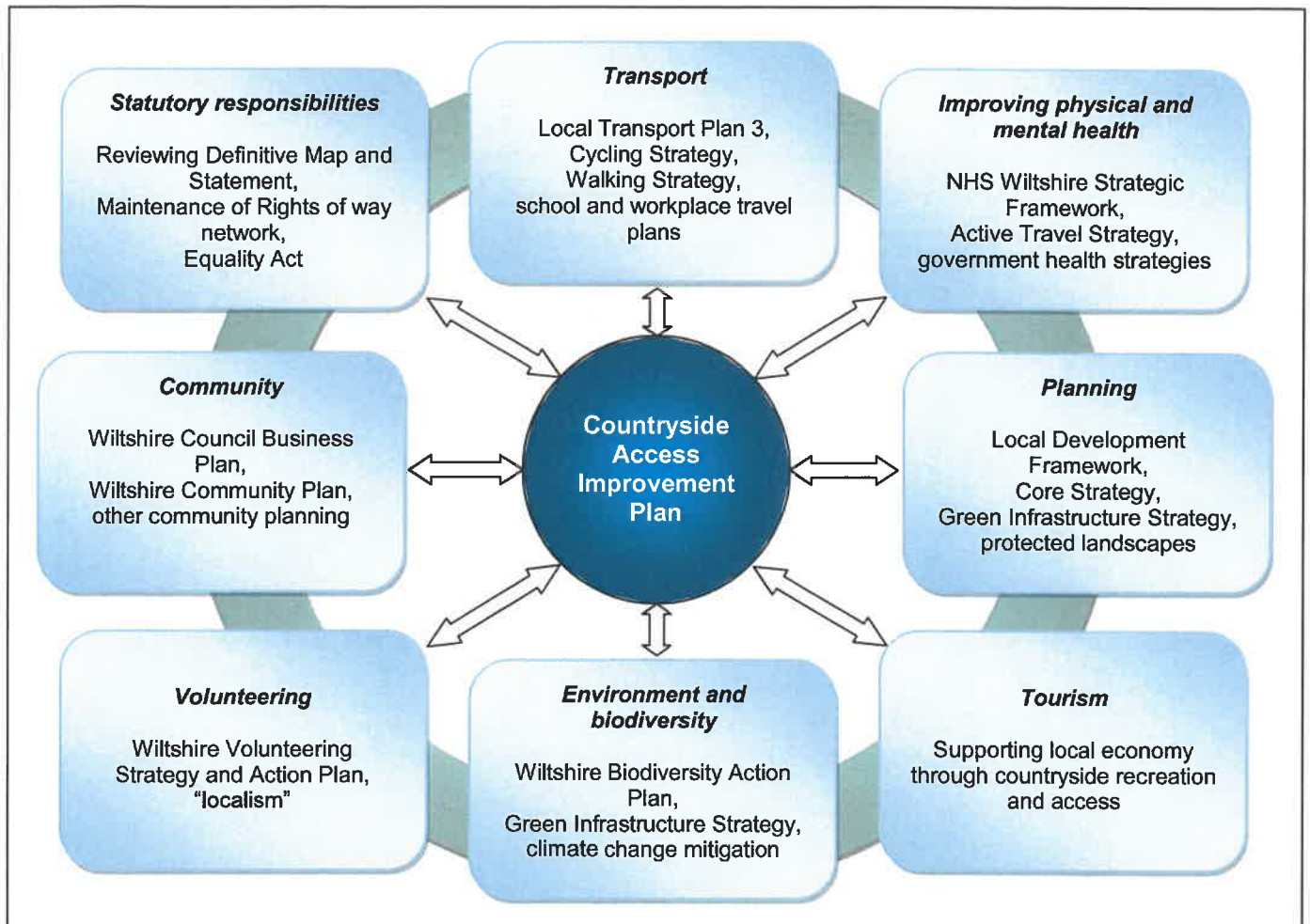


Figure 5: The relationship of the CAIP to other strategy areas

## 4.1 Statutory responsibilities

The five main statutory duties of the council relating to rights of way are to:

- protect the rights of the public by ensuring that the network is adequately signposted, maintained and free from obstruction (Highways Act 1980)
- ensure that the legal record of rights of way, the Definitive Map and Statement (see Appendix 2), is kept up to date and under constant review (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981)



An excerpt from the definitive map showing the numbered rights of way in the parish of Woodford

- consider the needs of those with mobility impairments when maintaining the network and authorising structures (e.g. stiles and gates) on the rights of way network and seek improvements to existing structures where it would be beneficial (Equality Act 2010)
- establish a local access forum
- have due regard to protecting sensitive habitats and biodiversity in managing and improving access (Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006)

Another important function undertaken is diverting and extinguishing rights of way where required to enable development to proceed (Town and Country Planning Act 1990). This is a power rather than a statutory duty.

## 4.2 Local Transport Plan 3

LTP3 is Wiltshire Council's strategy for delivering national transport goals at a local level for the period 2011 to 2026.

There are 18 strategic objectives in LTP3. The CAN has a strong role to play in contributing to 11 of the objectives and also contributes to most of the other objectives to a small extent (see section 1.3). As the CAIP is a daughter document of LTP3, these 11 objectives have been used as the CAIP objectives.

Figure 6 shows how the CAN contributes towards these objectives. It also makes a contribution towards achieving the aims of most of the other daughter documents. The relevant documents are:

- Accessibility strategy
- Cycling strategy
- Smarter choices strategy
- Walking strategy (in development)
- Network Management Plan (in development)
- Wiltshire Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy (WiSMoTSS) (in development)

	LTP3 strategic objective	How does the CAN help?
SO1	To support and help improve the vitality, viability and resilience of Wiltshire's economy and market towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CAN provides access to Wiltshire's countryside, heritage and archaeology for leisure, e.g. days out and walking holidays</li> <li>• Visitors to the countryside contribute millions of pounds each year to the economy, e.g. the National Trails attract many domestic and international visitors</li> <li>• Some rights of way are key links within and between settlements, so they provide access to local services</li> </ul>
SO2	To provide, support and/or promote a choice of sustainable travel alternatives including walking, cycling, bus and rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CAN provides attractive walking and cycling routes within and between settlements and away from roads</li> <li>• Some CAN routes provide links to bus stops and railway stations</li> </ul>
SO5	To improve sustainable access to a full range of opportunities particularly for those people without access to a car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In many places the CAN offers opportunities for countryside access, access to local services and links between settlements without the need for a car. For instance, many country parks, towpaths, rights of way and cycleways are very close to urban centres and can be accessed on foot or bicycle</li> </ul>
SO6	To make the best use of the existing infrastructure through effective design, management and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CAN is part of Wiltshire's existing infrastructure</li> </ul>
SO8	To improve safety for all road users and to reduce the number of casualties on Wiltshire's roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CAN provides routes for people to travel without having to use the road network. This can take people away from stretches of road where safety would be a concern</li> </ul>
SO12	To support planned growth in Wiltshire and ensure that new developments adequately provide for their sustainable transport requirements and mitigate their traffic impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing developments in particular bring a demand for access to local facilities and the countryside from the new residents. The CAN provides these links for walkers and often cyclists too</li> <li>• The availability of a good CAN on the doorstep is essential to encourage people to exercise more, avoid car journeys just to take dogs for a walk etc.</li> </ul>
SO13	To reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As SO5</li> </ul>
SO14	To promote travel modes that are beneficial to health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking, cycling and horse riding have been shown to be beneficial to both physical and mental health</li> <li>• The CAN provides routes and areas people can use to undertake these healthy travel modes, so its use can be promoted</li> </ul>

<b>SO15</b>	To reduce barriers to transport and access for people with disabilities and mobility impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CAN provides some opportunities for those with mobility impairments to access local services and the countryside. Examples of these opportunities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ wheelchair accessible paths</li> <li>○ Riding for the Disabled groups</li> <li>○ disabled people driving along Byways Open to All Traffic to access remote locations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reducing barriers may include replacing stiles with gaps or gates, surfacing improvements or improving maintenance on key links</li> </ul>
<b>SO17</b>	To improve sustainable access to Wiltshire's countryside and provide a more useable rights of way network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A more useable network could be developed through a number of methods including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ upgrades</li> <li>○ creating new links or areas for public access</li> <li>○ improving information</li> <li>○ involving volunteers to help shape the management of the network</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>SO18</b>	To enhance the journey experience of transport users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People using the CAN are transport users</li> <li>• The experience can be enhanced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ through maintenance (e.g. better waymarking or cutting back vegetation to make a route easier to use and reveal views)</li> <li>○ by undertaking upgrades (e.g. surface improvements or replacing stiles with gaps or gates)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Figure 6: How the CAN contributes to LTP3 strategic objectives

### 4.3 Improving physical and mental health

#### 4.3.1 The importance of regular exercise

- *69% of women and 57% of men in the south-west take insufficient physical activity to reduce their risk of disease and ill-health<sup>6</sup>*
- *One in four adults experience mental illness at some point during their lifetime and one in six experience symptoms at any one time – making mental illness the largest single cause of disability in our society<sup>7</sup>*

The importance of regular exercise is well documented (see Appendix 4A). Walking and cycling are very accessible ways for people to increase their activity levels so it is central and local government policy to promote these forms of transport (see Appendix 4B). A recent study<sup>8</sup> has also suggested that horse riding and its associated

activities can help people get the exercise they need to keep healthy.



Mountain bikers following The Wansdyke. Courtesy of MBSwindon

<sup>6</sup> Davis, Dr A (2010)

<sup>7</sup> DoH (2011)a

<sup>8</sup> University of Brighton & Plumpton College (2011)

#### 4.3.2 The CAN and physical and mental health

There have been a number of studies which have demonstrated that contact with the natural environment greatly benefits both physical and mental health (see Appendix 4C).



The National Trust says that we, and especially our children, are showing the symptoms of 'Nature Deficit Disorder' (see Appendix 4C). Photo courtesy of Forestry Commission

In 2011 central government formally recognised this link in two white papers – “Healthy Lives, Healthy People” and “The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature” (see Appendix 4D).

The CAN is the key resource to enable the aims of these white papers to be achieved as:

- it provides many of the routes and areas within Wiltshire where people take exercise through walking, cycling or horse riding. This exercise could be for leisure or as part of journeys to access services in both urban and rural areas
- it is an extensive and free at the point of use resource
- guided walks such as Walking for Health and Salisbury Bus Walks are helping to encourage people to be more active. In some cases people are being referred to these initiatives by their GPs
- the council’s countryside sites are used by several charities to help people who have experienced mental health issues

Figure 7 shows that there is a very strong link between frequency of visits to the natural environment and levels of physical exercise generally. Over half (58%) of the people who

visited the natural environment frequently<sup>9</sup> took part in at least 30 minutes of physical activity 3 or more times a week. Just 4% of the people who never visit the natural environment achieved the same level of any form of exercise.

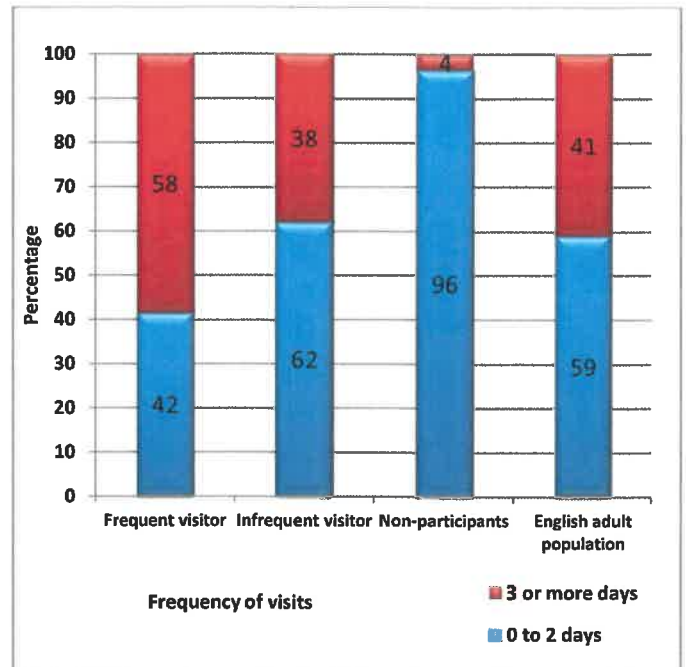


Figure 7: Number of days in the last week Wiltshire residents undertook 30 minutes of more of physical activity vs how frequently they visited the natural environment<sup>10</sup>

Following the publication of the white paper “Healthy Lives, Healthy People”, the Department of Health set up a number of indicators in order to monitor the health of the nation. Indicator 1.16 is “Percentage of people using outdoor places for exercise/health reasons”. This information is gathered through the “Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment” study by Natural England. Figure 8 shows that Wiltshire residents were among the top 10% nationally who cited exercise/health as a reason for accessing the countryside.

<sup>9</sup> “Natural environment” is defined as all green open spaces in and around towns and cities, the wider countryside and coastline. Private gardens are excluded. Frequent is defined as at least 3 times a week, infrequent is once or twice a week or less

<sup>10</sup> Annual average figure for Wiltshire adult results between March 2009 and February 2012

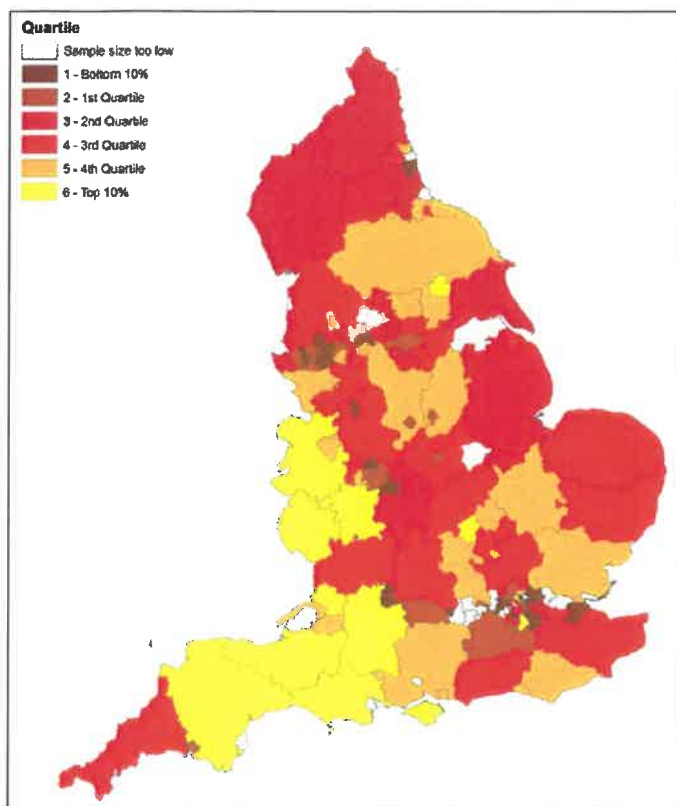


Figure 8: Levels of people citing exercise/health as a reason why they were accessing the countryside

It is clear from Figures 7 and 8 how vital countryside access, and therefore a well maintained CAN, is to meeting the health needs of the residents of Wiltshire.

#### 4.3.3 The CAN and the efficient use of limited funding

- *“It has been estimated by the Chief Medical Officer that the cost of inactivity to the NHS and the economy is £8.2 billion annually. This figure excludes individuals who are obese due to inactivity, which contributes an extra £2.5 billion annual cost to the economy”<sup>11</sup>*
- *“Mental ill health is the single largest cause of disability in the UK, contributing up to 22.8% of the total burden, compared to 15.9% for cancer and 16.2% for cardiovascular disease. The wider economic costs of mental illness in England have been estimated at £105.2 billion each year. This includes direct costs of services, lost productivity at work and reduced quality of life”<sup>12</sup>*

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix 4E for more detail

<sup>12</sup> DoH (2011b)

- *“In most health care systems, the predominant focus for both treatment and expenditure has come to be on people who have become ill... Yet the best approach, and the cheapest, is to focus efforts upstream, and try to create healthy environments in which people can flourish rather than flounder... recent years, however, have seen declines in connections between people and nature, and people and people, with resulting falls in emotional and physical well-being and increases in public health costs”<sup>13</sup>*



The CAN provides opportunities to access nature, which brings physical and mental health benefits. Photo courtesy of Forestry Commission

Some recent studies have considered the cost savings which accompany walking and cycling projects, many of which use the CAN. These projects could be physical upgrades or guided walks such as Walking for Health. These studies have shown that every £1 invested in walking and cycling projects can save the NHS and the country up to £19<sup>14</sup>.

The role of health promotion transferred from the NHS to Wiltshire Council in 2013. The key aim of this will be to reduce people’s need for medical treatment through prevention of illness. The CAN has a key role to play in both preventative care and treatment for both physical and mental health issues, so the rights of way and countryside service will be working closely with the public health team.

<sup>13</sup> Pretty, J; Griffin, M et al (2005)

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix 4F for details

## 4.4 Planning

Wiltshire has one of the fastest growing populations in the country. This growth and the trend towards smaller household sizes is fuelling demand for new homes and other development.

Wiltshire's Core Strategy is making provision for at least 37,000 new homes in the county between 2006 and 2026. Much of this growth will be focused on Chippenham, Trowbridge and Salisbury but there will also be some growth in smaller settlements, for example due to the MoD rebasing project. The CAN will play a key role in providing routes from the new developments to local services and the countryside. The integrity of the CAN must also be maintained where possible when considering other developments such as business parks or solar farm proposals.

Wiltshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy is currently in progress. It will provide a long-term vision for the natural environment in terms of both conservation and providing public access to the countryside. The linear links and green spaces that make up the CAN itself form much of the county's green infrastructure.

The Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Core Strategy also requires that when sites are being restored after extraction is complete, they should provide enhancements to the rights of way network and support the reinstatement of canals where appropriate.

In terms of special landscape designations, Wiltshire Council also supports the work of the 3 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), Cotswold Waterpark and New Forest National Park. The council is a funding partner for the AONBs.

## 4.5 Tourism

- *“An estimated £20 billion was spent in England on visits to the natural environment during 2011 – 12”<sup>15</sup>*

- *“The Kennet and Avon Canal was estimated to bring nearly £19m and 444 jobs into the economy of Wiltshire in 2009”<sup>16</sup>*

By providing both access to the natural environment for recreation and links to services in settlements, the CAN supports the county's economy by:

- helping to sustain the viability of local shops and services such as public transport and pubs
- creating jobs
- supporting the re-use of previously redundant buildings, eg as cafes



The restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal brings new opportunities for walkers and cyclists

<sup>15</sup> Natural England (2012)

<sup>16</sup> British Waterways (2010)

## 4.6 Environment and biodiversity

The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) aims to conserve the county's wildlife and its habitats.

The CAN helps deliver the BAP objectives as follows:

- it improves access to and understanding of the natural environment. Family-friendly events held at Wiltshire Council's country parks help raise awareness and interest in nature conservation
- much of the CAN itself consists of green corridors, providing habitats and 'stepping stones' between habitats for many species. For instance, the towpath alongside the Kennet & Avon Canal hosts glow worms and bats use the hedgerows and tree-lines as commuting routes between roosts and feeding areas

Raising awareness of the CAN through nature conservation work will help meet two specific BAP targets:

- to increase the number of people actively volunteering in biodiversity conservation across the county
- local authorities [should] enhance biodiversity on their land holdings<sup>17</sup>



The CAN provides habitats for wildlife like this Kingfisher. Courtesy of David White

Wiltshire also has a Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Green space such as the CAN has a small role to reduce potential impacts and it may be affected by climate change. The plan is discussed further in Appendix 5.

<sup>17</sup> there is now only one local authority as Wiltshire became a unitary authority after the plan was written

## 4.7 Community and volunteering

The two overarching plans for Wiltshire Council are The Wiltshire Community Plan 2011 – 2026 and Wiltshire Council Business Plan 2013 - 2017. Although both have slightly different key goals, they share the same vision: to build stronger and more resilient communities. For more details of these plans see Appendix 6.



Volunteers helping the Senior Rights of Way Warden replace a bridge in the New Forest National Park

The CAN contributes towards this vision in a number of ways:

- it supports the rural economy through use of local services when people visit the countryside and historic sites
- it provides an extensive network of routes and areas people can use for exercise, particularly near settlements. Local access to green space from home can help to reduce health inequalities<sup>18</sup>
- it provides access within and between settlements and to public transport services, providing alternatives to driving
- the Paths Improvement Grant Scheme (PIGS) helps to encourage individuals and groups to take an interest in their CAN by providing funding which enables them to undertake works themselves
- the rights of way and countryside service has hundreds of individuals, user groups and parish councils who help manage the network (see section 5.3)
- volunteering can provide a focus for local people, which helps to bring communities together

<sup>18</sup> Mitchell & Popham (2008).



- mitigating climate change through the provision of green space

#### 4.8 Other plans of relevance

The following also need to be taken into account by Wiltshire Council in the management of the CAN.

- Cycling strategy
- Accessibility strategy
- Motorcycle strategy
- Smarter choices strategy
- Walking strategy
- Network Management Plan (in development)
- Wiltshire Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy (WiSMoTSS) (in development)
- Economic regeneration strategy (in development)
- Energy Change and Opportunity Strategy 2011 – 2020
- Green Infrastructure Strategy (in development)
- Wilts and Swindon Historic Land Characterisation (in development)
- Open Space Study (in development)
- Climate Change Adaption Plan
- Parish plans, town plans and community visions
- Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan 2015 - 2021
- Cranborne Chase & West Wilts Downs AONB Management Plan 2014 - 2019
- North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2014 - 2019
- Cotswold AONB Management Plan 2013 - 2018
- Cotswold Waterpark Master Plan
- New Forest National Park Management Plan
- New Forest National Park Recreation Management Plan
- New Forest National Park Core Strategy and Development Management Policies
- Wiltshire's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Canal and Rivers Trust, towpath guidance

## 5 The Rights of Way and Countryside service

### 5.1 Overview of the service

Broadly, the Rights of Way and Countryside service is responsible for the following activities:

- Maintaining the legal records of:
  - rights of way
  - highways maintainable at public expense
  - common land
  - town and village greens
- maintaining the rights of way network (see 5.2)
- managing and maintaining Wiltshire Council's countryside sites for the conservation of nature and public enjoyment



Wiltshire Council is responsible for maintaining the county's extensive rights of way network

- Promoting the use of the whole of the CAN, including:
  - seeking improvements and new links, for example through the Paths Improvement Grant Scheme (PIGS)
  - seeking additional funding for specific schemes
  - organising and running public events
- managing and maintaining trees on land owned by Wiltshire Council
- supporting the reconstruction of the Wilts & Berks and Cotswolds canals and the management and care of the Kennet and Avon Canal in Wiltshire

- advising on biodiversity matters

The service is part of Environment Services, which also includes Enforcement, Fleet and Technical Services. Environment Services comes under the Associate Director for Waste and Environment.

### 5.2 Maintenance of the rights of way network

Responsibility for maintenance of the network lies with both Wiltshire Council and landowners, as set out below.

Wiltshire Council key responsibilities:

- making sure rights of way are free from obstructions
- clearing vegetation that grows from the surface of paths
- maintaining path surfaces and most bridges
- signposting and waymarking
- where requested, providing a minimum of 25% contribution towards costs incurred by a landowner in maintaining stiles and gates on rights of way

Landowner key responsibilities:

- maintaining stiles, gates and other boundary crossings
- obtaining consent from the council before erecting new stiles or gates
- cutting back hedges or overhanging vegetation
- keeping paths clear of obstructions
- making sure no misleading signs are used that might deter people from using paths
- reinstating cross field footpaths and bridleways within 2 weeks of initial ploughing and 24 hours for subsequent disturbances

Members of the public also have responsibilities, these are set out in the Countryside Code.<sup>19</sup>

### 5.3 Volunteers

The service works with many individuals, user groups and parish councils who help to manage the network to meet their needs (see Appendix 7).

<sup>19</sup> Available at [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

Examples of the support they offer include:

- volunteer groups who help with maintenance, upgrades such as installing gates, contacting landowners and seeking additional funding to enhance the network
- Parish Tree Wardens, who gather information about their local trees and encourage local practical projects to benefit trees and woods



Parish Tree Wardens at a training day

- volunteer groups in the country parks, e.g. Friends of Biss Meadows, Friends of Oakfrith Woods, Friends of Southwick Country Park, Friends of Harnham Slope
- parish councils with rights of way representatives who liaise with Wiltshire Council staff, landowners etc.
- canal restoration volunteers
- National Trail volunteers
- two Access Forums provide advice to help steer the work of the rights of way and countryside service

It should be noted that while volunteers give their time for free there are many costs associated with volunteers, including:

- organising works
- training
- providing tools and equipment
- insurance etc.

Generally these costs have previously been found from within the service budget, though the Cotswolds Conservation Board and The Ramblers have borne some of the costs in parts of the county. Reductions in budgets mean that it will be increasingly important to seek additional funding to support volunteer work. The council will encourage volunteers

who wish to work across communities to help those who find it difficult to help themselves. The service also provides work experience opportunities. A number of student placements have been undertaken and a work placement scheme to enable a wounded serviceman to gain new skills was undertaken in partnership with the MoD.



Work placement schemes with the Rights of Way and Countryside service enable people to gain new skills

## 5.4 Partnerships

As well as volunteer groups the service works in partnership with many other organisations, including:

- other teams at Wiltshire Council, including schools, planning and highways
- other local authorities, including parish councils
- user groups
- residents and village associations
- the New Forest National Park Authority, Cotswolds Conservation Board and partnerships at the other two AONBs
- the Cotswold Waterpark
- English Heritage
- interest groups such as an ornithological society, bat groups, tree wardens and badger group
- Canal Trusts
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- NHS
- Sustrans
- Ministry of Defence
- Forestry Commission

A full list of partners is shown in Appendix 7.

## 6 Current provision

Wiltshire has an extensive Countryside Access Network. The CAN includes:

- Public rights of way in both rural and urban areas (footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic)
- permissive paths
- cycleways which are not adjacent to roads
- canal towpaths
- country parks
- town parks
- forests with public access (generally managed by the Forestry Commission)
- Access Land
- stretches of road and pavements or joint footway/cycleways which link the above together

### 6.1 Public rights of way

Public rights of way, often known just as rights of way, are routes which anyone can use to cross private land. They generally reflect historic use by members of the public. Many date back hundreds of years but some have been created recently. People have a legal right to use them at any time of the day or night, all year round. There are over 6,000 kilometres (nearly 3,800 miles) of rights of way in Wiltshire, which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest network of England's counties. Appendix 3 explains the difference between the four types of Right of Way.

In Wiltshire the percentage of byways open to all traffic, restricted byways and bridleways is considerably higher than the national average. This means the county has a higher proportion of routes that can be used by cyclists, horse riders, carriage drivers and motorised vehicles than most other counties. This can be seen in Figure 9.

Rights of way can be links:

- within and between settlements, for example for people to access local services
- from settlements to the countryside
- out in the countryside

Classification	Length (km)	% of network	national average <sup>20</sup> %
Footpaths	3,578	59	78
Bridleways	1,569	26	17
Restricted Byways	205	3	3
Byways Open to All Traffic	695	11	2
Total	6,047	100	100

Figure 9 – proportions of different types of rights of way in Wiltshire compared with the national average

### 6.2 National Trails

Two long distance National Trails pass through Wiltshire - The Ridgeway and the Thames Path. The responsibility for the management and maintenance of these routes lies with partnerships which include Wiltshire Council.



Horse riders on The Ridgeway. Photo courtesy of Jos Joslin

### 6.3 Long distance walking routes

There are over 20 long distance walking routes in Wiltshire. Some, such as the Mid Wilts Way, White Horse Trail, Pewsey Avon Trail and Imber Range Perimeter Path are wholly within Wiltshire. Others are much longer distance and pass through the county, examples of these are The Monarch's Way, Wessex Ridgeway and the Kennet & Avon Canal towpath.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/access/rightsofway/prow/default.aspx>

## 6.4 Access Land

There are a number of areas of Access Land in Wiltshire, much of which is chalk grassland. Not all of this is easy to use due to steep slopes or a lack of roads or rights of way to access it.

## 6.5 Salisbury Plain Training Area

A considerable number of rights of way lie within the Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA). It is sometimes necessary to restrict public access to the area, but the Ministry of Defence (MoD) maintains a presumption in favour of public access unless there are operational or training requirements, or safety and security concerns. The SPTA bylaws also enable some additional public access other than via rights of way. The training area covers 11% of Wiltshire.

## 6.6 Permissive paths and permissive access

There are many permissive paths around the county where some public access is allowed by the landowner but they are not formal rights of way. Some of these were negotiated through schemes run by Natural England or sustainable transport charity Sustrans. In other cases a local landowner has been happy to allow public access (for example to help the local community avoid a busy road) but has not wanted to create a formal right of way. Some National Trust and English Heritage properties allow permissive access through parts of their sites. An example of this is the access allowed to the wider Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site beyond the stones themselves.

## 6.7 Cycle networks

The National Cycle Network (NCN) has several long distance routes in Wiltshire. NCN routes are a mixture of rights of way, quieter roads, canals and cycle paths. All are also available for use by walkers and some parts can also be used by horse riders. The main stretches of off-road NCN routes in the county are:

- Marlborough to Chiseldon (and onwards into Swindon) railway path
- Chippenham to Calne railway path
- Calne to Avebury

- Chippenham to Pewsham (it is hoped to take this route through to Lacock)



The CAN provides attractive routes for family leisure. Photo courtesy of Forestry Commission

The Wiltshire Cycleway also provides an on-road, signed route around the county.

## 6.8 Canals

The Kennet & Avon Canal links west to east through the county. It starts in Bath and passes through Bradford-on-Avon, Devizes, Pewsey and on to Newbury and Reading. The route was fully restored in 1990. The 64 km of towpath through Wiltshire is very well used by walkers and cyclists and the route is a big tourist attraction. It has famous structures such as:

- the 29 locks at Caen Hill near Devizes
- water pumping stations at Crofton and Claverton
- aqueducts in the Limpley Stoke valley

Work is currently underway to restore other stretches of canal and towpath in the county, the largest of which is the Wilts & Berks Canal. This canal will run from the Kennet and Avon at Semington through Melksham, past Chippenham, Calne, Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon and will finish at Abingdon in Oxfordshire. Stretches of the canal have already been restored, for example near Royal Wootton Bassett and Chippenham. The restored route will bring a further 50 km of towpath to the county.

The Thames & Severn canal is also being restored. This will bring another 6 km of towpath to Wiltshire.

## 6.9 Countryside sites and town parks

The council directly owns, leases and manages a number of countryside sites across Wiltshire that are open to the public for quiet recreation and enjoyment. Some sites are countryside destinations in their own right, whilst others such as Barton Farm Country Park in Bradford-on-Avon, Biss Meadows in Trowbridge and Drews Pond Wood in Devizes also provide gateways to the wider countryside. Biss Meadows provides a key open space in an area of high population that is also close to a deprived neighbourhood.

Many of the sites have high nature conservation, landscape, archaeological, historical or recreational value. The main sites are shown on Figure 10 overleaf.

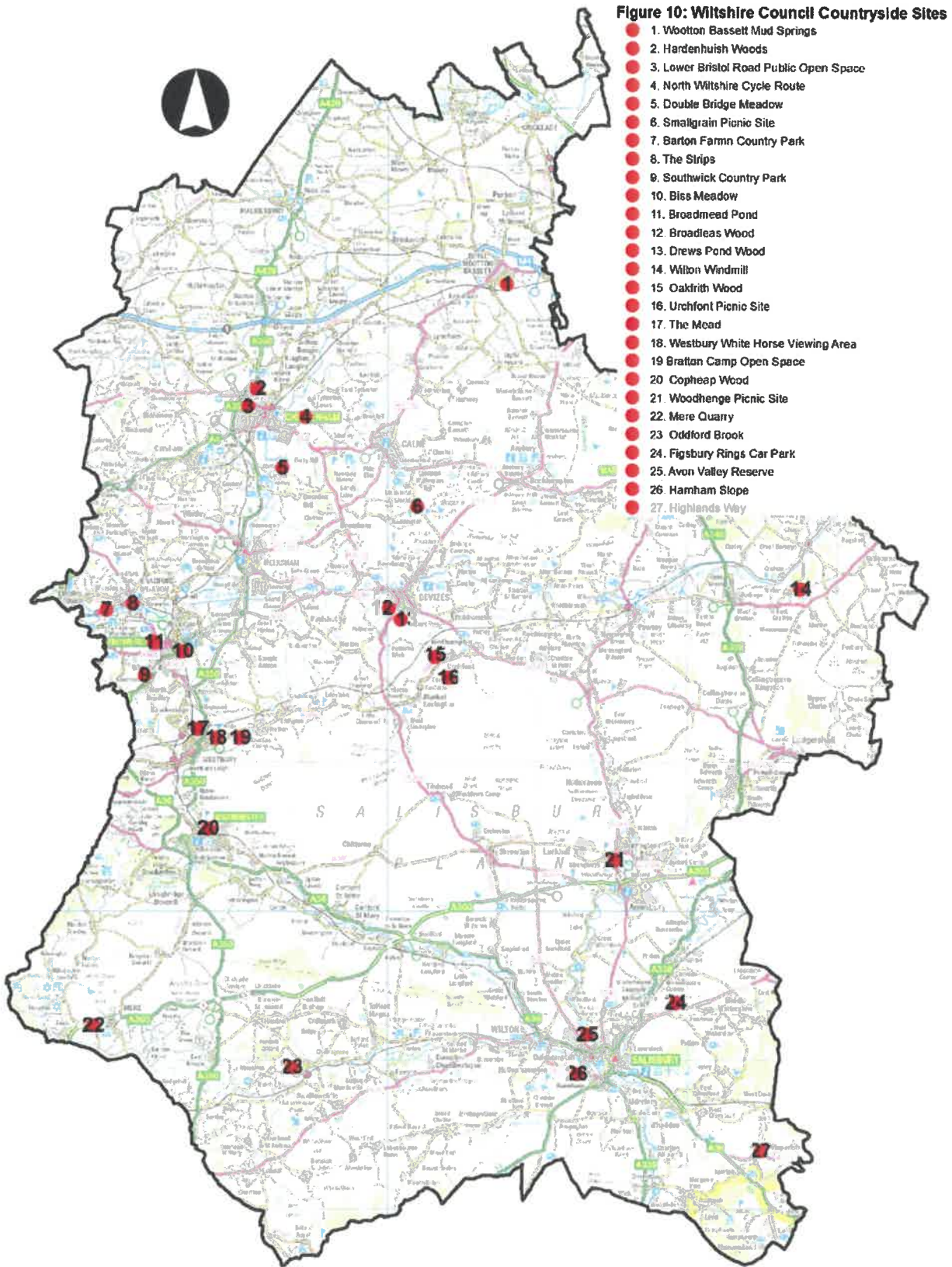
Southwick Country Park, Barton Farm Country Park and Oakfrith Wood are used by groups with particular needs in the community. These groups include The Richmond Fellowship and The Wellbeing Project who help people with stress and mental health issues; they undertake practical conservation work and also utilise nature's resources to undertake creative projects.

Other groups such as the probation service, children with learning difficulties, schools, Wiltshire Council's Youth Offending Team, Wiltshire Young Carers, scouts, guides and cubs also make use of the countryside sites.

Most towns in Wiltshire also have town parks to provide important green space on people's doorsteps. Some are managed by Wiltshire Council while others are managed by town councils.



Southwick Country Park provides good access for people with mobility problems



© Crown copyright and database rights 2012 Ordnance Survey 100049050  
Not to Scale

## 6.10 Nature reserves

There are a number of National and Local Nature Reserves around the county, some of which allow public access. Their management is undertaken by a range of organisations including Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Salisbury City Council, Natural England, community groups and individual landowners<sup>21</sup>.

## 6.11 Woodland

Many rights of way pass through woodland and there are a number of woods where permissive public access is allowed<sup>22</sup>, for example those owned by The Woodland Trust or National Trust or managed by the Forestry Commission.

## 6.12 The road network

Many rights of way are linked up by the road network. Often minor roads can be used with no real safety concerns. However, there are locations around the county where major roads have to be crossed or used to make connections, so some routes get little or no use. This issue can sometimes be resolved by either creating a new right of way/permissive link or using road verges where they exist.

## 6.13 Guided walks and cycle rides

Walking for Health is a national initiative managed by The Ramblers which aims to encourage mainly sedentary people to become more active. The short walks are free, led by trained leaders and take place weekly. Some of the walkers have been referred by their GPs. There are currently walks in 13 locations around the county and they have proved very popular. Amesbury, Calne and Chippenham walks regularly have 20 – 30 participants and every walk has at least 10 – 15 people on a regular basis.



A Walking for Health guided walk

For longer distance walkers there are local groups of The Ramblers. For mountain bikers, Salisbury Road and Mountain Bike Cycling Club and MBSwindon offer guided rides.

The service organises a number of educational events for adults and children at its country parks throughout the year. Examples are dawn chorus walks, seed collecting days and evening bat walks. Wiltshire Wildlife Trust also organises similar events at its sites.

## 6.14 “Walkers are Welcome” Towns

Walkers are Welcome is a nationwide initiative launched in 2007 to encourage towns and villages to be more welcoming to walkers. This has a number of aims including providing very good information on suggested local walks, ensuring footpaths and facilities for walkers are well maintained and promoting the health benefits of walking. Bradford-on-Avon and Corsham are both Walkers are Welcome towns.

<sup>21</sup> For further information search for “nature reserve” on:  
<http://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/>  
<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>  
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/>

<sup>22</sup> For suggestions of woods that can be visited see  
<http://visitwoods.org.uk/>



## 7 Use of the countryside access network

### 7.1 Valuing the CAN

In 2011 Wiltshire Council undertook 2 “What matters to you” surveys, one which was open to the general public and one that was specifically targeted at 11 – 18 year olds<sup>23</sup>.

The aim of the surveys was to understand what matters to residents in order to deliver services which reflect their priorities. The top 8 priorities from both surveys are shown in Figure 11.

Priority	Adult survey	%	Youth survey	%
1	Health services	56	Education provision	56
2	Access to nature	45	Job prospects	49
3	Parks, green space, countryside	42	Health services	48
4	Clean streets	40	The level of crime	48
5	Education provision	40	Access to nature	42
6	Job prospects	38	Public transport	41
7	Public transport	38	Clean streets	40
8	The level of crime	37	Decent housing that is not expensive	39
	23 categories available		18 categories available	

Figure 11: “What matters to you” surveys for adults and young people. Responses to question “Which of the things below, if any, are the most important in making somewhere a good place to live?”

NB: There was no “Parks, green space, countryside” option for youth survey

It is clear from the results of both surveys that Wiltshire residents of all ages value access to the countryside and the CAN very highly.

### 7.2 How the CAN is being used

“Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment” by Natural England gives a feel for how people use, enjoy and are motivated to protect the natural environment<sup>24</sup>. Some relevant key findings and conclusions are as follows<sup>25</sup>:

#### Finding 1:

75% of all visits were for walking and 47% were for exercising a dog while walking

#### Conclusion 1:

Actions should be particularly focused on improving conditions for walkers (including with dogs). As much of the CAN is accessible to a variety of users including walkers, improvements for walkers would often improve conditions for others



A high proportion of visits to the CAN involve exercising dogs. Photo courtesy of Forestry Commission

#### Finding 2:

- 31% of “destinations” for Wiltshire residents were within 1 mile of the starting point and 66% were within 2 miles. The starting point was almost exclusively the person’s home
- Use of the natural environment is higher in the higher socio-economic groups. Those living in more deprived neighbourhoods (in the DE socio-economic groups) tend to visit closer to home and urban destinations such as town parks rather than the wider countryside

<sup>24</sup> For the purposes of the study, the “natural environment” means all green open spaces in and around settlements as well as the wider countryside and coastline, excluding private gardens. This is a similar definition to the CAN

<sup>25</sup> Natural England (2012). Figures are from surveys undertaken in Wiltshire, not the national figures quoted in the main report

<sup>23</sup> Wiltshire Council (2011) & Wiltshire Council (2012)

### Conclusion 2:

It should be a priority to provide high quality access to the CAN right from where people live. This access appears to be especially important in more deprived neighbourhoods. People in these areas would use routes on their doorstep more than in better off areas and their health is likely to be poorer

### Finding 3:

Children were present in the group for 23% of visits in the Wiltshire surveys

### Conclusion 3:

It would be beneficial to encourage more families to increase their use of the CAN. Examples of how this could be done include continuing to host family friendly events at Wiltshire Council's countryside sites and increasing accessibility for buggies by removing stiles or replacing them with gates

## 7.3 Demographic changes

### Finding 4:

Population growth in Wiltshire:

- the population grew by 5.3% from 2002 to 2010
- this trend is expected to continue, with a 7.5% increase in the county's population from 2010 to 2021<sup>26</sup>

### Conclusion 4:

An increasing population will lead to greater use of the network. As much of the demand for the CAN is from where people live, upgrades to the network around new housing sites must be sought

### Finding 5:

Ageing population in Wiltshire:

- the population is ageing considerably more rapidly than average increases across England or the south-west. There was a growth of 20% in the number of people aged 65 or over between 2002 and 2010
- this trend is expected to continue, with a further 35% increase in the number of people over 65 in Wiltshire from 2010 to 2021<sup>27</sup>

### Conclusion 5:

If older people are to keep active and therefore healthy, they will need a more accessible network as they are more likely to find stiles (and sometimes surfacing and latches) difficult than other people. This highlights the need to replace stiles with gaps or gates on key routes, which can also benefit wheelchair users and parents with buggies and children

## 7.4 Disability

### Finding 6:

- 32% of Wiltshire's residents say that they have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity. Of these, 56% say it limits their activities in some way (i.e. 18% of the total population asked)<sup>28</sup>
- Many of those who say disability limits their activities will have a mobility impairment. This could be, for example:
  - being blind
  - a wheelchair user
  - not being able to walk very far
  - finding uneven surfaces painful to walk on
  - finding gradients, climbing over stiles or opening stiff latches or other informal gate closures difficult

### Conclusion 6:

The requirements for improving accessibility for people with these sorts of disability are generally the same as discussed in conclusion 5



The Disabled Ramblers using their rugged mobility scooters on their expedition around Salisbury Plain

<sup>26</sup> Wiltshire Council, NHS Wiltshire, Wiltshire Assembly (2013). p10

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p11

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. p29

## 8 Action plan

### 8.1 How the action plan has been produced

The action plan in the CAIP has been produced by considering the following:

- 1) statutory responsibilities (section 4.1)
  - 2) local and national strategies, particularly the strategic objectives in LTP3 (section 4.2)
  - 3) research to consider how people are using the CAN (section 7)
  - 4) a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis of the CAN. This was compiled through:
    - a workshop undertaken with user groups
    - a review of the issues raised in the first ROWIP
    - a review of the actions in the first ROWIP
- The full SWOT analysis is shown in Appendix 8.

The action plan has been formed by asking the following questions:

- 1) What are the **key issues** the action plan must address?
- 2) What **opportunities** are there to address these issues?
- 3) What **actions** need to be undertaken to fulfil these opportunities?

The CAIP is an aspirational document. The ability to achieve the actions will depend on what staff and financial resources are available in the future. However, it provides a framework broadly agreed upon by stakeholders as to the direction the management of the CAN should be taking and what opportunities should be taken when they arise.

### 8.2 Key issues

6 key issues were identified through the research. Each of the opportunities to address these issues forms a section of the action plan.

#### Key Issue 1 – public awareness

People might not use the access network fully due to lack of knowledge of their options or their legal rights.

**Opportunity 1 – promote greater use of the network for a variety of purposes. This will bring knock-on benefits for health, the rural economy and a better appreciation of the countryside.**

#### Key issue 2 - ease of use

In places the network could be easier to use. Sometimes busy roads have to be used to link up paths, some routes do not go where people want to go and parts of the CAN are difficult for people with mobility impairments to use.

**Opportunity 2 – create a more coherent network. Provide new access where people want to go, better access for all in key locations and reduce severance by busy roads.**

#### Key issue 3 – improving effectiveness

Wiltshire has a very large CAN, so the allocation of limited funding has to bring the most benefit to the most number of people and also reflect the council's legal obligations.

**Opportunity 3 – increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of the network for the benefit of users and landowners.**

#### Key issue 4 – definitive mapping

The rights of way network is constantly changing, with routes being added, extinguished or diverted. There are many inconsistencies in the recorded network.

**Opportunity 4 – prioritise changes to the definitive map which work towards a more coherent network.**

#### Key Issue 5 – development

Construction of new buildings and other infrastructure often has impacts on the CAN.

**Opportunity 5 - new developments should retain or create good links in the CAN. Provide excellent opportunities for new residents to access local services and the countryside.**

#### Key issue 6 – partnerships

It is increasingly important to work in partnership with other organisations and volunteers to maintain and enhance the network.

**Opportunity 6 – increase involvement of external organisations and volunteers to allow more local desires to be met, lever in additional funding and enable a better understanding between users of each other's needs.**

### 8.3 Likely funding sources for CAIP actions

- Much of the funding for implementing the plan will come from the service budget. However, in the foreseeable future it is expected that there will be continuing reductions in local authority funding. This will increase the need for creative solutions to be found if the aspirations of the CAIP are to be realised
- LTP3 should continue to provide a small, specific budget for CAIP improvements. This is often used to provide match funding to help lever in external funding
- Developer contributions, ie when new housing, industrial sites etc. are constructed
- Wiltshire Council Area Board funding
- Other organisations and charities whose aims overlap with those in in the CAIP, eg Landfill Community Fund, public health funding sources etc.

### 8.4 Action plan key

Policy – our approach to delivering the opportunities

Action – the specific tasks to be delivered

Strategic objectives – the LTP3 objectives each policy will deliver (see section 4.2)

Performance indicator – the measure that will be used to monitor progress

Opportunity 1 – promote greater use of the Countryside Access Network (CAN) for a variety of purposes. This will bring knock-on benefits for health, the rural economy and give people a better appreciation of the countryside

Objective	Actions to achieve objective	Performance measures	Key LTP strategic objectives
1-1 Improve signposting and waymarking	<p>Good signposting and waymarking is essential as it gives people confidence of their rights, reduces straying from routes and advertises the existence of the network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a well signposted and waymarked CAN</li> <li>• Ensure waymarking follows the legal lines of right of way</li> <li>• Consider providing destinations and distances on signs if external funding is available</li> <li>• Consider using volunteers to help maintain signs and waymarking</li> <li>• Ensure interpretation boards and signage at countryside sites are well maintained</li> </ul>	<p>1. What proportion of broken or missing signposts have been repaired or replaced?</p> <p>2. Which schemes have been undertaken that enhance signing?</p>	SO2, SO5, SO6, SO13, SO14, SO17, SO18
1-2 Promote the physical and mental health benefits of using the CAN for walking, cycling and horse riding	<p>A key government objective is to improve the health of the nation. The CAN provides an asset to help achieve this and unlike most forms of exercise, it is free at the point of use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and support (e.g. through surfacing, good maintenance and publicity) walking, cycling and horse riding initiatives which promote active lifestyles and wellbeing. e.g. Walking for Health, Riding for the Disabled</li> </ul>	Which health related initiatives have been supported?	SO2, SO5, SO6, SO13, SO14, SO15, SO17, SO18
1-3 Promote and improve the CAN for utility journeys	<p>The CAN provides links away from traffic both within and between settlements, so it can be used for accessing shops, schools, work etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with local communities and other partners to promote utility routes and undertake improvements (e.g. new links, improved surfacing, road safety measures or changing the status of a route from footpath to footway/cycleway)</li> </ul>	Which utility links have been improved, created and promoted?	SO2, SO5, SO6, SO8, SO12, SO13, SO17, SO18

1-4	<p><b>Promote and improve the CAN for leisure and tourism purposes</b></p>	<p>The network allows enjoyment of the beauty of the countryside and nature and also provides access to heritage sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form effective partnerships with tourism and heritage organisations, Town Councils, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty authorities/boards etc.</li> <li>• Support schemes which promote tourism for both visitors and residents to help boost the local economy (e.g. "Walkers are Welcome" scheme)</li> <li>• Work in partnership to undertake improvements where necessary</li> <li>• Promote tourist information such as maps and guides, e.g. through web pages and direct contact with members of the public</li> </ul>	<p>Which tourism related initiatives have been supported?</p>	<p>SO1, SO6, SO16, SO18</p>
1-5	<p><b>Promote the CAN for those with mobility impairments and parents with pushchairs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve information on the options available to those with mobility impairments and parents with pushchairs</li> </ul>	<p>What promotion of accessible routes has been undertaken?</p>	<p>SO2, SO5, SO6, SO15, SO17, SO18</p>
1-6	<p><b>Promote the work undertaken by the Rights of Way and Countryside Service</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep people informed of the work of the service through press releases, social media, user groups, events and talks where requested</li> <li>• Continually review web content, add new useful links</li> <li>• Consider improvements to the on-line rights of way mapping</li> </ul>	<p>1. Press releases are produced and events undertaken</p> <p>2. Improvements are made to the website</p>	<p>SO6, SO17, SO18</p>
1-7	<p><b>Promote use of the country parks</b></p>	<p>Wiltshire Council's country parks provide venues for events organised by the council and other organisations. They are also used by organisations such as mental health charities to help with rehabilitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to promote these uses and events and seek additional uses, e.g. to use the parks as a potential "stepping stone" to the wider CAN</li> </ul>	<p>1. What groups have been using the country parks?</p> <p>2. What events have been undertaken at the country parks?</p>	<p>SO6, SO17</p>

1-8	<p><b>Promote responsible use of the CAN</b></p>	<p>Members of the public need to be clear about their rights and responsibilities when using the CAN This can be done through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day to day contact</li> <li>• Promoting the Countryside Code</li> <li>• Signing the network well to inform users what they can and cannot do and where they can legally go</li> <li>• Reducing irresponsible or illegal use of the network (e.g. motorbikes using bridleways), including liaising with police</li> </ul>	<p>What initiatives have been undertaken to reduce irresponsible or illegal use of the network?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18
-----	--	--	---	-----------------------

**Opportunity 2 – create a more coherent network. Provide new access where people want to go, better access for all in key locations and reduce severance by busy roads**

Objective	Actions to achieve objective	Performance measures	Key LTP strategic objectives
2-1 <b>Create and promote new access where there is a strong demand or likely to be a future need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with local communities, user groups, landowners and other organisations, identify missing links and fill them where possible, particularly near settlements and "honey pot" sites</li> <li>• This could involve new links (e.g. to link housing with the countryside or to reach Access Land parcels which currently don't have a route to them), or making existing links available to wider range of users</li> <li>• Consider creating formal rights of way, permissive paths, installing bridges, initiatives on private land such as toll access etc.</li> <li>• Seek to retain useful existing permissive paths when agreements expire. These will mainly be routes created through the DEFRA "Higher Level Stewardship" scheme</li> </ul>	<p>What new access opportunities have been created and promoted?</p>	SO2, SO5, SO6, SO13, SO14, SO17, SO18
2-2 <b>Create and promote circular route opportunities</b>	<p>Generally people prefer circular routes rather than going out and back along the same route</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with local communities, user groups, landowners and other organisations, identify, create and promote circular route opportunities, particularly near settlements and "honey pot" sites</li> <li>• This could involve creating new links or making existing links available to wider range of users</li> </ul>	<p>What new circular routes have been created and promoted?</p>	SO6, SO14, SO17, SO18

2-3	<p><b>Reduce the extent to which the continuity of the network is interrupted by busy roads</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with local communities and user groups, identify locations on the CAN where road crossings and stretches of road linking up rights of way are a major safety concern</li> <li>• Consider options such as improving visibility, creating new crossing facilities, traffic management, using existing bridges/underpasses, undertaking diversions, creating new routes set back from the road or using highway verges (taking into account that some are protected for wildlife)</li> <li>• Severance can also be due to watercourses, railways etc.</li> </ul>	<p>1. Problem locations are identified and given a priority score</p> <p>2. Schemes are undertaken based on the prioritised list and achievability</p>	SO2, SO5, SO6, SO8, SO13, SO14, SO17, SO18
2-4	<p><b>Improve key entrance points to the CAN</b></p>	<p>People need to feel confident and safe at entrance points to the CAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with local communities and user groups identify key locations where the entrance points are poor</li> <li>• Consider options to overcome the issues people experience at these points</li> </ul> <p>Some attractive parts of the CAN are little used because they are difficult to get to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where feasible, provide or encourage improved access opportunities where there is felt to be "suppressed demand", eg through working with bus companies or providing new parking facilities</li> </ul>	<p>1. Problem locations are identified and given a priority score</p> <p>2. Schemes are undertaken based on the prioritised list and achievability</p>	SO6, SO8, SO17, SO18
2-5	<p><b>Improve conditions on the network for those with mobility impairments</b></p>	<p>Some people find routes difficult to use due to uneven surfaces. Stiles can be a barrier for many with mobility impairments and pushchairs, they can also be a problem for people walking dogs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where there is demand to make certain routes more accessible, improve maintenance (e.g. cut back vegetation further) and undertake surface improvements</li> <li>• Working within the framework of Wiltshire Council's gaps, gates and stiles policy, seek to replace stiles with gaps or gates where demand is greatest and landowners are willing</li> <li>• Encourage landowners to follow best practice for furniture design, as set out in the gaps, gates and stiles policy, including provision of dog access where possible</li> <li>• In partnership with user groups, promote existing and create new accessible trails where they would be well used</li> <li>• Improve surfacing on byways open to all traffic where there is demand for those with mobility impairments to be able to drive to remote locations (e.g. to enjoy views)</li> </ul>	<p>What accessibility improvements have been undertaken on key routes?</p>	SO6, SO15, SO17, SO18



2-6	<p><b>Improve surfacing in problem locations:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with local communities, user groups, landowners and other organisations, identify well used locations where surfacing is an issue</li> <li>• Seek to improve the situation through cutting back vegetation, improving drainage and/or using appropriate materials to surface</li> </ul>	<p>What surface improvements have been undertaken?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18
2-7	<p><b>Support the restoration of canals in the county</b></p>	<p>The Wilts &amp; Berks Canal and Thames &amp; Severn Canal are currently being restored by volunteers. The Wilts &amp; Berks Towpath Challenge seeks to have a publicly accessible route along the line of the future canal by 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide input into these projects to seek the best possible access for walkers, cyclists, people with mobility impairments and horse riders</li> </ul>	<p>What new access opportunities have been created along restored canals?</p>	SO1, SO15, SO17, SO18

**Opportunity 3 – increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of the network for the benefit of users and landowners**

Objective	Actions to achieve objective	Performance measures	Key LTP strategic objectives	
3-1	<p><b>Use technology to improve the effectiveness of the service</b></p>	<p>A database is being developed to help manage the CAN better</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record all the structures (i.e. gates, signs, bridges etc.) on site using hand-held computers</li> <li>• Record faults reported by members of the public or found through surveys undertaken by staff or volunteers. Use systems such as MyWiltshire to manage the faults, recording how and when these issues were resolved. This will help to improve feedback to members of the public</li> <li>• Explore the merits of using automatic counters or carrying out manual surveys in order to increase knowledge of use of the network and the impact of schemes</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Structures have been recorded on the database</li> <li>2. The MyWiltshire reporting tool is being used to record and monitor the fixing of faults on the network</li> <li>3. What before and after monitoring has been undertaken to assess scheme benefits?</li> </ol>	SO6, SO17, SO18

3-2	<p><b>Review policies and procedures to make sure they are "fit for purpose"</b></p>	<p>Systems thinking will be used to look in detail at work processes in order to take out stages which do not "add value"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review processes within the service and undertake changes to make them more efficient and effective, bearing in mind that legislation sets out how some processes must be undertaken</li> <li>• Produce management plans for countryside sites</li> <li>• Review policies when required</li> </ul>	<p>What policies and procedures have been reviewed?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18
3-3	<p><b>Protect the rights of the public</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidance to landowners to ensure they are aware of their legal responsibilities</li> <li>• Enter discussions with landowners or other parties to resolve issues and undertake enforcement where discussions are not effective</li> <li>• Liaise with police to undertake enforcement where necessary</li> <li>• Work with enforcement team to seek to reduce fly tipping on the CAN</li> <li>• Add records of public rights of way to the Definitive Map and Statement to ensure they are legally recognised</li> </ul>	<p>1. What guidance has been issued to landowners?  2. What issues have been resolved through discussions and/or enforcement?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18
3-4	<p><b>Recognise local materials, structures and character</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to retain local styles and materials in the network. In some cases this may require external funding</li> <li>• Investigate the viability of using alternative types of wood for access furniture (ie stiles, gates etc.) to increase lifespan</li> </ul>	<p>What schemes have been undertaken which recognise local character?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18
3-5	<p><b>Use partnerships and legal powers to minimise irresponsible use of rights of way and the need for Traffic Regulation Orders</b></p>	<p>Irresponsible or illegal use of the CAN sometimes causes serious and very costly damage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with user groups, police and other partners to promote responsible use of cars and motorbikes</li> <li>• Where serious damage occurs, voluntary restraint or temporary / permanent Traffic Regulation Orders will be used to stop further damage or to enable repairs to be undertaken</li> </ul>	<p>What voluntary restraint/traffic regulation orders have been undertaken?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18

3-6	<p><b>Maintain the network on a reactive basis, except where volunteers are able to undertake proactive surveys</b></p>	<p>Reactive inspections of faults will be carried out following notification of a defect. This could be ad-hoc or by proactive, structured surveys by volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the feasibility of parish councils and volunteers surveying their local network and use this system where appropriate</li> <li>Manage the issues raised in the surveys through the My Wiltshire App</li> </ul>	<p>1. How many parishes have been surveyed?</p> <p>2. What proportion of issues have been resolved within 1 month of the parish surveys?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18
3-7	<p><b>Secure an appropriate annual budget for maintenance, legal work and CAIP schemes</b></p>	<p>Studies have shown that the cost:benefits ratio of countryside access, particularly in terms of promoting tourism and healthy lifestyles, greatly outweighs the relatively small costs of maintaining the network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wiltshire Council will recognise these benefits and seek to secure the funding required to maximise these opportunities through effective maintenance</li> </ul>	<p>Has an appropriate annual budget been secured?</p>	SO1, SO2, SO5, SO6, SO14, SO15, SO17, SO18
3-8	<p><b>Protect and enhance the natural environment when managing the CAN</b></p>	<p>Much of the CAN is greenspace, which provides habitats for wildlife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage the network in a way which supports the needs of wildlife</li> <li>Follow legislation on protected species</li> </ul> <p>Old materials from road schemes are frequently re-used on the CAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road planings and the associated budget to lay them, as well as other materials, will continue to be made available for use on the CAN</li> </ul>	<p>1. Legislation is considered when managing the network</p> <p>2. What schemes have reused materials from road schemes?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18

**Opportunity 4 – prioritise changes to the definitive map which work towards a more coherent network**

Objective		Actions to achieve objective		Performance measures	Key LTP strategic objectives
4-1	<b>Maintain and update the Definitive Map and Statement</b>	<p>The Definitive Map and Statement (DMS) is the legal record of public rights of way. It is constantly being revised based on new claims and historic evidence. However, it is likely that there will be a legislation change which means in 2026 it will be closed to new claims based on pre-1949 evidence. As a result, a prioritisation scheme has been developed to deal with applications to modify the DMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Applications are determined relative to the prioritisation scheme</b></li> </ul> <p>Many problems with existing rights of way have been recorded (e.g. gaps in the network, dead-ends, changes in the status of paths at parish boundaries such as a bridleway becoming a footpath, uncertainty about the width of rights of way etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Undertake changes to reduce fragmentation of the network where it will be of most benefit to users</b></li> </ul>		<p>1. How many applications have been determined relative to the number of applications received annually?</p> <p>2. How many orders have been undertaken which resolve fragmentation issues?</p>	SO6, SO12, SO17, SO18

**Opportunity 5 - new developments should retain or create good links in the CAN, providing excellent opportunities for new residents to access local services and the countryside**

Objective		Actions to achieve objective		Performance measures	Key LTP strategic objectives
5-1	<b>Secure funds for improvements to the CAN from planning applications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with planners and developers to ensure the impact of development on the CAN is acceptable</li> <li>• Require developments to fund improvements to the existing CAN (both on-site and off-site) and provide new links to meet the needs of the new users / residents of the development</li> </ul>		What improvements and contributions have been negotiated from developers?	SO6, SO12, SO17, SO18

5-2	<p><b>Consider new access possibilities on Wiltshire Council land and disused transport infrastructure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek useful new links on council owned land where appropriate, particularly when tenancies change or land is sold off</li> <li>• Seek to retain a footpath, bridleway or byway as appropriate if transport infrastructure such as roads, railways or canals are closed</li> </ul>	<p>1. What new links have been created on council land?</p> <p>2. What rights of way links have been retained when transport infrastructure closes?</p>	SO6, SO12, SO17, SO18
-----	--	--	---	--------------------------------

**Opportunity 6 – increase involvement of external organisations and volunteers to allow more local desires to be met, to attract additional funding and to enable a better understanding between users of each other’s needs**

Objective	Actions to achieve objective	Performance measures	Key LTP strategic objectives	
6-1	<p><b>Maintain existing and develop new partnerships to help deliver projects</b></p>	<p>Partnerships help to create local ownership of projects, ensure they meet local aspirations, keep people informed, gain political support and help bids for external funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop and maintain existing effective partnerships with local residents, user groups, parish councils, other local authorities and government bodies</b></li> </ul>	<p>What projects have been delivered due to effective partnerships?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18
6-2	<p><b>Encourage community and volunteer input into the management and enhancement of the CAN network</b></p>	<p>Local communities and volunteers undertake improvements such as installing gates and cutting back vegetation or may undertake surveys, consult with landowners and offer advice. Parish councils also have some legal powers to manage the rights of way network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Seek more involvement of local communities and volunteers in the network</b></li> <li>• <b>Seek funding in addition to the normal operations budgets for supporting the work of communities and volunteers</b></li> <li>• <b>Support parish councils if they wish to use their legal powers</b></li> </ul>	<p>What schemes have been undertaken with communities and volunteers?</p>	SO6, SO17, SO18

6-3	<p><b>Assist local communities to undertake improvements they feel are important through the Paths Improvement Grant Scheme (PIGS) and other methods</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Transport Plan funding will continue to be made available for PIGS and other locally driven projects</li> <li>• Advertise PIGS and support parish councils and community groups in undertaking their own schemes (e.g. upgrading stiles to kissing gates, surfacing or creating new links)</li> </ul>	<p>How many PIGS schemes have been undertaken annually?</p>	<p>SO6, SO17, SO18</p>
6-4	<p><b>Create strong links with other policy areas</b></p>	<p>The CAN helps to meet the aims of a number of other organisations and policy areas such as transport, planning, biodiversity, health and tourism. Good policy links will help to show why the network is important, promote usage and attract external funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comment on and influence relevant emerging policy documents</li> <li>• Consider other policy documents when managing the CAN</li> </ul>	<p>What link have been made with other policy areas?</p>	<p>SO6, 12, 17 and 18</p>

## References for the main document

- British Waterways (2010). Economic & Social Impact of the restoration of the Kennet & Avon Canal. 2010 Update (draft). Economic Development Unit, British Waterways
- Davis, A (2010). An economic assessment of investment in walking and cycling, v2. DoH
- DEFRA (2002). Rights of Way Improvement Plans. Statutory Guidance to Local Highway Authorities in England
- DoH (2011)a. No health without mental health: A cross-government mental health outcomes strategy for people of all ages
- DoH (2011)b. No health without mental health: A cross-government mental health outcomes strategy for people of all ages. Supporting document – The economic case for improving efficiency and quality in mental health)
- Mitchell & Popham, The Lancet Vol 372 Issue 9650. 8 Nov 2008. pp 1655-1660
- Natural England (2012). Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: The national survey on people and the natural environment. Annual Report from the 2011-12 survey
- Pretty, J; Griffin, M et al (2005). A Countryside for health and wellbeing: the physical and mental health benefits of green exercise. Countryside Recreation Network
- University of Brighton & Plumpton College (2011). The Health benefits of horse riding in the UK. British Horse Society
- Wiltshire Council (2011). Tomorrow's Voice. Special edition – 'What matters to you' Survey results, Winter 2011. Available at: <http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/consultation/?locale=en>
- Wiltshire Council (2012). 'What Matters to You' Survey, 2011. Available at: <http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/consultation/?locale=en>
- Wiltshire Council, NHS Wiltshire, Wiltshire Assembly (2013). Wiltshire's Joint Strategic Assessment for Health and Wellbeing 2011-2012

Information about Wiltshire Council services can be made available on request in other languages including BSL and formats such as **large print** and audio. Please contact the council by telephone **0300 456 0100**, by textphone 01225 712500, or email [customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk)



## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2015 – 2025**

#### **Appendices**

1 - List of organisations consulted during production of the CAIP

2 - The Definitive Map and Statement (DMS)

3 – Public rights of way

4 – Improving physical and mental health

5 – Climate change

6 – Wiltshire Council strategies

7 – The main organisations and volunteer groups who support the management of the Countryside Access Network

8 - Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats assessment of the Countryside Access Network

9 - References for documents cited in the Appendix

## Appendix 1 - List of organisations consulted during the production of the CAIP

Age UK  
Area Boards (Wiltshire Council)  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - Cotswolds  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - Cranborne Chase  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - North Wessex Downs  
British Driving Society  
British Horse Society  
Byways and Bridleways Trust  
Campaign to Protect Rural England  
Canals and River Trust  
Carers Support North Wiltshire  
Climate Friendly Bradford-on-Avon  
Community Transport South Wiltshire (formerly Salisbury District Community Transport)  
Corsham Disabled Club  
Cotswolds Canal Trust  
Cotswolds Waterpark  
Countryside Landowners Association  
County Councils (adjacent to Wiltshire)  
CTC - The national cycling charity  
Devizes & District Blind and Partially Sighted Club  
Devizes Community Area Partnership  
Disabled Ramblers  
Dressability  
English Heritage  
Environment Agency  
Fieldfare Trust  
Forestry Commission  
Friends of the Ridgeway  
Green Lanes Association  
Independent Living Centre  
Kennet and Avon Canal Trust  
Kennet Carers  
Land Access Recreation Association  
Living Options  
Malmesbury Physically Handicapped Club  
Marlborough Downs Nature Improvement Area  
Mencap Wiltshire  
Ministry of Defence - Salisbury Plain Training Area  
Mobilise  
National Farmers Union  
National Trails  
Natural England  
Neighbouring authorities  
New Forest National Park  
Ordinary Life Project Association

Open Spaces Society  
Parish and Town Councils  
Ramblers  
Richmond Fellowship

Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID), Communication Services, South West Region  
Salisbury Greenspace Partnership  
Shopmobility  
Sustrans  
Tourist Information  
Trail Riders Fellowship  
Tread Lightly  
Trowbridge Community Sensory Garden  
U3A - University of the Third Age  
Visit Wiltshire  
Walking for Health  
Walking Forums  
West Wilts Access Group  
Wilts & Swindon Users Network  
Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

Wiltshire and Bath Independent Living Centre, (ILC) Semington  
Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum  
Wiltshire Blind Association  
Wiltshire Bridleway Association  
Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living  
Wiltshire Mind  
Wiltshire People First  
Wiltshire Primary Care Trust  
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

## Appendix 2 – The Definitive Map and Statement (DMS)

The recording of a route on the DMS is conclusive evidence, in law, of the existence and position of a right of way. It should be noted that this is without prejudice to the existence of any other rights on the route. For example, a route may be recorded as a footpath but historic use by horse riders may have led to them also acquiring a legal right to use it. The definitive map records the position and status of a right of way and the definitive statement gives a description of the route.

The DMS was produced in the early 1950s and has been subject to review and alteration since that time. Examples of the reasons for change include:

- 1) Historical evidence suggests the original record is incomplete, e.g. evidence is found that public rights subsist that are not recorded at all or that are incorrectly recorded (e.g. rights for carriage drivers exist but the way is only recorded as a bridleway)
- 2) Rights have been acquired by more recent use
- 3) A route may have been diverted, extinguished or created (e.g. as part of a planning application)

These alterations are recorded in legal orders and are reflected on the “working copy” of the definitive map, which is available to view on Wiltshire Council’s website<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/communityandliving/rightsofway/publicrightsofwaymapping.htm>

## Appendix 3 – Public rights of way

**(Public) rights of way** are paths and tracks which anyone can use to cross land. Rights of way exist in towns, villages and the countryside and the public have a legal right to use them at any time of the day or night, all year round. All rights of way should be marked by a signpost or waymark where they leave a metalled road and at points along the route where people may have difficulty finding their way.

There are four different types of rights of way:



Footpath - a highway where there is a right of way on foot only



Bridleway - a highway where there is a right of way:

- on foot
- on horseback or leading a horse
- on any pedal cycle (though cycles must give way to walkers and horse riders)



Restricted byway - a highway where there is a right of way:

- on foot
- on horseback or leading a horse
- on any pedal cycle
- on a non-mechanically propelled vehicle (e.g. horse and cart)



Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) - a highway where there is a right of way:

- on foot
- on horseback or leading a horse
- on any pedal cycle
- on a non-mechanically propelled vehicle (e.g. horse and cart)
- on wheeled vehicles of any kind (including cars and motorbikes)

The surface does not have to be maintained to a standard suitable for vehicles.

## Appendix 4 – Improving physical and mental health

### Appendix 4A - The importance of regular exercise

The level of exercise recommended by Government varies between age groups, but to stay healthy or to improve health, adults should do at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. Moderate-intensity aerobic activity means working hard enough to raise heart rate and break a sweat. This target can be achieved in a variety of ways, for further information see:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/fitness/Pages/whybeactive.aspx>

It has been medically proven that people who do regular physical activity have<sup>2</sup>:

- up to a 35% lower risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- up to a 50% lower risk of type 2 diabetes
- up to a 50% lower risk of colon cancer
- up to a 20% lower risk of breast cancer
- a 30% lower risk of early death
- up to an 83% lower risk of osteoarthritis
- up to a 68% lower risk of hip fracture
- a 30% lower risk of falls (among older adults)
- up to a 30% lower risk of depression
- up to a 30% lower risk of dementia

"If a group of 120 healthy individuals aged over 60 years become active, then over 10 years (compared to an inactive group) there will be about 20 fewer deaths, 7 less heart attacks, 3 less strokes, 2 less new diabetics, and 13 less people with osteoarthritis of the knee becoming disabled."<sup>3</sup>

### Appendix 4B – Key policies to promote active living (including walking and cycling)

Walking and cycling, whether for utility or leisure purposes, are recognised as vital to improving the nation's health, both physical and mental. Relevant strategies and initiatives include:

- *Active Travel Strategy (2010)*. The guiding principles of this strategy are that walking and cycling should be everyday ways of getting around - to improve health, tackle congestion, reduce carbon emissions and improve the local environment
- *Let's Get Moving – A new physical activity care pathway for the NHS: Commissioning guidance (2009)*. This guidance is aimed at helping NHS professionals encourage people to be more active, e.g. GPs can encourage people to join walking groups or prescribe gym membership
- *Walk4life and bike4life initiatives*. These are part of the Change4life government initiative to promote healthy eating and greater activity
- *NHS Wiltshire Strategic Framework 2009-2014*. This recognises the need to see "The NHS thinking 'outside the box' and working with organisations across Wiltshire to promote healthy living, and a sense of wellbeing"

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/fitness/Pages/whybeactive.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> Bird, Dr William (2004). pp27

## Appendix 4C - The Countryside Access Network and physical and mental health

The UK National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA) is the first analysis of the UK's natural environment in terms of the benefits it provides to society and our continuing economic prosperity. Some of the relevant results include<sup>4</sup>:

- observing nature and participating in physical activity in green spaces play an important role in positively influencing human health and well-being
- local greenspaces or nearby natural habitats are vital for all individuals
- access to nature can encourage participation in physical activity
- green exercise in all habitats results in significant improvements in both self-esteem and mood
- experiencing nature has been demonstrated to have a significant positive impact upon heart rate and blood pressure
- contact with nature at any age can derive a whole number of benefits for physical and mental health, contact with nature during youth can directly impact upon healthy adult behaviours

There have been a number of other studies which have shown that exercise and/or contact with the natural environment benefits mental health:

- several studies have indicated that physical activity is at least as effective for treating depression as psychotherapy<sup>5</sup>
- two studies have shown that physical activity can be as successful at treating depression as medication. One study showed that after 16 weeks, exercise equalled the effect of a standard anti-depressant drug and after 6 months, those who continued to exercise were more likely to recover than those solely on medication<sup>6</sup>
- a report for the Forestry Commission<sup>7</sup> reviewed a number of other studies. One study by the National Schizophrenia Fellowship reported that 85% of those surveyed who had used exercise as a treatment found it helpful to them<sup>8</sup>. In another study of people who had experienced mental health difficulties, 50% felt exercise had helped them to recover<sup>9</sup>
- an assessment of studies which considered the effects of "active participation" in the countryside (i.e. cutting back vegetation, building walls, installing gates etc.) showed a significant improvement in self-esteem in 9 out of the 10 case studies<sup>10</sup>
- children undertaking outdoor activities in nature appear to improve their symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder by 30% compared to the same activities in an outdoor urban environment and three fold compared to an indoor environment<sup>11</sup>
- The National Trust has presented compelling evidence that we as a nation, and especially our children, are exhibiting the symptoms of 'Nature Deficit Disorder'. They call for a re-assessment of how we and especially our children engage with the outdoor environment in order to achieve better physical health, mental health and improve their ability to assess risks to themselves and others<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, World Conservation Monitoring Centre (2011). Ch 23

<sup>5</sup> Bird, Dr William (2004). pp 48-9

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. pp 48-51

<sup>7</sup> CJC Consulting (2005)

<sup>8</sup> Hogman G & Sandamas G (2001)

<sup>9</sup> Baker S & Strong S (2001)

<sup>10</sup> Pretty J, Griffin M, Peacock J et al (2005). pp10

<sup>11</sup> Faber Taylor A, Kuo F and Sullivan W (2001). pp54-77

<sup>12</sup> Moss S (2012)



- The link between exercise and mental health is specifically recognised in the document “Exercise referral and the treatment of mild or moderate depression. Information for GPs and healthcare practitioners.”<sup>13</sup>

#### Appendix 4D – Government white papers relating to access to nature

The need to improve access to nature and the countryside was recognised in two white papers in 2010 and 2011:

- “The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature” shows how the value of our natural environment must be recognised and used, and states that people and nature must be reconnected. Many reasons for this are given, including the mental and physical wellbeing that contact with nature has been shown to bring
- “Healthy Lives, Healthy People” recognises that access to green space is associated with better mental and physical health across socio-economic groups. Government wants Local Nature Partnerships and Health & Wellbeing Boards to engage each other in their work and include access to the natural environment in their strategies

#### Appendix 4E - The CAN and the efficient use of limited funding

It was estimated by the Chief Medical Officer in 2004 that the cost of inactivity to the NHS and the economy was £8.2 billion annually. This included direct costs of treatment for the major lifestyle related diseases, the indirect costs caused through sickness absence and the costs of early mortality. This does not include the contribution of inactivity due to obesity which itself has been estimated to cost £2.5 billion annually<sup>14</sup>.

Another Department of Health report<sup>15</sup> has looked in detail at the economic costs of mental health issues. This highlights the huge financial savings that could potentially be made by working to reducing these issues, and access to greenspace has a significant role to play:

- mental ill health is the single largest cause of disability in the UK, contributing up to 22.8% of the total burden, compared to 15.9% for cancer and 16.2% for cardiovascular disease
- the wider economic costs of mental illness in England have been estimated at £105.2 billion each year. This includes direct costs of services (e.g. NHS costs), lost productivity at work and reduced quality of life
- in terms of what this means for the NHS itself, In 2008/9, the NHS spent 10.8% of its annual secondary healthcare budget on mental health services, which amounted to £10.4 billion. Service costs which include NHS, social and informal care amounted to £22.5 billion in 2007 in England
- by comparison, the annual direct costs of smoking to the NHS in 2008/9 was £5.2 billion. Almost half of total tobacco consumption is by those suffering from mental health disorders

---

<sup>13</sup> Mental health foundation (2005)

<sup>14</sup> DoH (2004)

<sup>15</sup> DoH (2011)

#### Appendix 4F – Cost:benefits of walking and cycling measures

A recent cost:benefit economic assessment by DoH<sup>16</sup> considered walking and cycling schemes using the same method the government uses for assessing large (and very costly) transport schemes. This method considers many impacts of schemes such as reductions in congestion and savings in travel times, health benefits, reductions in accidents etc. The review looked at studies in both the UK and beyond. Almost all of the studies identified economic benefits of walking and cycling interventions which are highly significant. The mean result for all data identified was 13:1 and for UK data alone the mean figure is higher, at 19:1. This is way in excess of the 2:1 ratio the Department of Transport considers “high value for money”. Walking and cycling schemes are very cheap in comparison to providing for most other forms of transport, yet bring very high benefits.

Another study by Natural England<sup>17</sup> estimated that every £1 spent on a health walk will save a primary care trust £7 on expenditure such as hospital admissions and medication.

---

<sup>16</sup> Davis A (2010)

<sup>17</sup> Heron C & Bradshaw G (2010). pp9

## Appendix 5 - Climate change

Climate change is expected to result in the UK experiencing hotter and drier summers (which may lead to more frequent droughts), warmer and wetter winters (which may lead to more frequent flooding), rising sea levels and more severe weather (e.g. storms). These events could create risks and opportunities, including<sup>18</sup>:

- higher summer temperatures, with implications for human comfort, overheating, heat stress and increased demand for cooling;
- higher winter temperatures possibly leading to reduced demand for fuel;
- changing patterns of rainfall may affect flood risk, water resources and its availability and water quality;
- intense rainfall events could lead to drainage systems becoming unable to cope, resulting in flash flooding;
- flooding may lead to loss of life, injury, damage to buildings and land and contamination from sewage;
- an increase in problems with pests, diseases and non-native invasive species, which could affect farming and forestry
- subsidence and heave risks may increase for clay soils, due to higher temperatures, lower summer rainfall, increased evapotranspiration<sup>19</sup> and increased winter rainfall

### **The impacts of extreme weather on the CAN and what can be done to ameliorate these impacts**

The threats and opportunities that may impact on the areas of work covered by the Rights of Way and Countryside service include the following:

- 1) *More outdoor living will mean green and open spaces/infrastructure will be used more intensively*
  - higher summer temperatures mean there could be increased pressure on the council's public open spaces, parks and countryside sites and on rights of way - particularly those close to towns and villages. There may be an increase in dog visits which could increase dog fouling and affect biodiversity both by disturbance and also nutrient enrichment leading to changes in flora (and ultimately fauna). There could also be more pollution, particularly in the form of litter
  - controls in place to deal with this include managing visitors to protect what is special on our countryside sites, more regular patrols and education events by dog wardens, dog bylaws being put in place and more frequent attendance by grounds contract personnel to remove litter
  - further action may be needed on open spaces to provide shade in summer and minimise water use (e.g. use drought tolerant plant species). Individual site management plans are being written and the effects of climate change will be considered for each open space site managed by the service. We may have to consider sacrificial areas on some sites in order to safeguard what is special. More rights of way may need to be surfaced to combat the effects of erosion caused by increased use, and there could be higher expenditure on rights of way structures due to more frequent use

---

<sup>18</sup> Town and Country Planning Association (2007)

<sup>19</sup> the transportation of water into the atmosphere from surfaces, including evaporation from soil and vegetation

## 2) *Increased soil erosion associated with more intense winter rainfall*

- periods of intense precipitation could lead to soil erosion, landslips and flooding affecting public access. It would also have an impact on biodiversity. With drier summers and wetter winters causing stress to plant species potentially throughout the year, there is more likelihood of bare ground, which would be subject to erosion through flooding
- further action may be needed to reduce activities that cause soil erosion, e.g. over-use/over-grazing. A long term solution could be to introduce plants such as grasses, rushes or deep rooting trees to bind soil (taking care on the choice of species used bearing in mind drier summers). Such careful planting could have the dual benefit of habitat creation as well as ameliorating soil erosion. A strategic approach taking into account whole catchments is needed. This must include taking into account the impact of large developments introducing extensive hard surfacing

## 3) *Biodiversity; increase in invasive species; change in native species (abundance and distribution) and changing community composition*

- hotter, drier summers, droughts and water shortages, annual temperature increases, excessive rainfall and flooding and warmer wetter winters could lead to changing numbers and distribution of native plant and animal species, which would change Wiltshire's landscape. There could be an increase in agricultural pests and a loss of some ecosystem services (i.e. the benefits provided by ecosystems that contribute to making human life both possible and worth living)
- controls in place to deal with invasive species include enforcing wildlife legislation. The River Avon Invasive Species Forum, The North Wiltshire Invasive Plants Project and the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan all have targets to take action against invasive species. If non-native invasive species are reported on Wiltshire Council owned/managed land they are eradicated. To ameliorate the effects of climate change on numbers/distributions of native plant/animal species, the Wiltshire Council Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies a GI framework that will benefit existing and new biodiversity
- further action is needed to raise awareness of invasive plants amongst all levels of staff involved with managing open spaces and rights of way. If non-native invasive species are identified there needs to be a rapid response action plan, in consultation with the GB non-native species secretariat. Management plans for open spaces must manage invasive species as well as enhance biodiversity. To protect against adverse climate change effects on biodiversity, green open spaces, habitats and ecological corridors can be enhanced via landscape scale projects and Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes
- in the longer term, further action could include measures to encourage adaptation of habitats and natural colonisation by species suited to changing climate conditions, through the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan. Pests/diseases may need to be monitored and extra resources considered to manage them. It may be that we have to accept loss of some habitats as a result of climate change

## 4) *Opportunities to use the canal network*

Opportunities to use the newly restored canal network for flood amelioration schemes should be investigated

## 5) *Communication*

All the above issues and opportunities bring the need for communication with local communities to explain why changes in management take place. The council is currently working towards the development of an adaptation action plan as part of the overarching ECO Strategy 2011-2020. This will set out:

- the risk assessment for future climate projections
- what the priority areas are
- the action being taken to address priorities
- how risks will be continually assessed and monitored in the future

Considering climate change adaptation and risk assessment is a continuous process which the council will keep under review.

## Appendix 6 – Wiltshire Council strategies

### Wiltshire Community Plan 2011 - 2026

Produced by: Wiltshire Assembly. The priorities and objectives are shared by all the key organisations in the assembly. Organisations represent the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Purpose: an overarching plan which outlines the strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wiltshire. It aims to provide a framework for all other plans produced in the county (i.e. including the CAIP).

Vision: to build stronger and more resilient communities

Key goals:

1. Creating an economy that is fit for the future
2. Reducing disadvantage and inequalities
3. Tackling the causes and effects of climate change

The CAN contributes towards the vision and goals because it:

- supports the rural economy by providing access to the countryside and historic sites for residents and tourists
- provides an extensive network of routes and areas the public can use for exercise, thereby improving people's health and saving the NHS money. It helps to reduce health inequalities as often it provides routes right from where people live. Medical journal The Lancet states that "Evidence shows that green space. . . seems to have real effects on health and health inequality, of the kind that politicians, planners and health staff should take seriously"<sup>20</sup>
- enables opportunities for local people to get involved in management of open spaces and upgrading of the rights of way network near them
- provides access within and between settlements, to local services and public transport. This helps to support local businesses
- provides some mitigation for climate change as many parts of the CAN are green space
- has been shown that green space near housing enhances property values<sup>21</sup>

### Wiltshire Council Business Plan 2013 - 2017

Produced by: Wiltshire Council

Purpose: to set out the council's key priorities and how it intends to achieve them for the period 2013 – 2017

Vision: to create stronger and more resilient communities

Key priorities:

- To protect those who are most vulnerable
- To boost the local economy – creating and safeguarding jobs
- To support and empower communities to do more for themselves

---

<sup>20</sup> Mitchell & Popham (2008). pp 1655-1660

<sup>21</sup> Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (2007)

The Countryside Access Network supports these key priorities in a number of ways:

- the countryside sites provide a resource for groups with particular needs in the community. The Richmond Fellowship and the Wellbeing Project use the sites to help adults with stress and mental health issues to overcome. Many other groups also use them – e.g. the probation services, children with learning difficulties, Forest School, Wiltshire Council's youth offending team and Wiltshire Young Carers
- stiles can be an obstruction to many people, these are being replaced on key routes with gaps or gates to make them more accessible. Some routes such as within the country parks and along canals are generally flat and useable by people with mobility impairments
- visitors to the countryside support the local economy by spending money in local shops, accommodation and food providers - whether for day trips or holidays
- many decisions on prioritising the maintenance and improvement of the network are made with input from local residents and parish councils, so it reflects their needs and aspirations
- hundreds of individual volunteers and organisations such as parish councils, "Friends of..." groups and the canal trusts, are involved in the management of the CAN. This not only helps to keep the service focused on what residents want, it also helps reduce costs
- match funding provided by Wiltshire Council to parish councils through the Paths Improvement Grant Scheme helps local communities undertake work they feel is important. It also means that more schemes can be undertaken than if Wiltshire Council provided all the funding
- Wiltshire's Area Boards are taking an interest in the maintenance of their local networks, whether through providing funding for upgrades or supporting volunteer initiatives
- to create stronger and more resilient communities:
  - people need to be in good physical and mental health, the CAN is a key (and free at the point of use) resource well used by Wiltshire's population for exercise
  - partnerships are key. Maintenance of the network requires strong partnerships, for example with neighbouring authorities, funding bodies, the voluntary sector, user groups etc.

The Business Plan also has a number of key actions and desired outcomes, the access network also supports these in a number of different ways.

## **Appendix 7 – The main organisations and volunteer groups who support the management of the CAN**

### Area Boards

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – Cotswolds Conservation Board

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - North Wessex Downs

British Driving Society

British Horse Society

Byways and Bridleways Trust

Campaign to Protect Rural England

Cotswold Wardens

Cotswolds Waterpark Trust

Country Land and Business Association

English Heritage

Environment Agency

Kennet and Avon Canal Trust

Forestry Commission

Friends of The Ridgeway

Marlborough Downs Nature Improvement Area

Ministry of Defence - Salisbury Plain Training Area

National Farmers Union

Natural England

New Forest National Park

Open Spaces Society

Parish and Town Councils

South Wilts Ramblers - Heavy Gang

South Wilts Ramblers - Light Gang

SUSTRANS

The Ramblers

Trail Riders Fellowship

The Ridgeway National Trail Partnership

The Thames Path National Trail Partnership

Tread Lightly

U3A - University of the Third Age

Visit Wiltshire

West Wilts Ramblers

Wilts and Berks Canal Trust

Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum

Wiltshire Bridleways Association

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust



## Appendix 8 - Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats assessment of the Countryside Access Network

One of the key parts of the process to produce the CAIP was to undertake a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, possible Opportunities and potential Threats) analysis of the CAN. This was done through a workshop with representatives of user groups.

Each group at the workshop was asked the 4 following questions.

For the “user group” you represent:

1. What are the strengths of the access network?
2. What are the weaknesses of the access network?
3. What threats are there to the access network?
4. What opportunities are there for improving the access network?

The user groups who attended the workshop were:

- Walkers (The Ramblers)
- Cyclists (Sustrans and CTC)
- Horse riders (British Horse Society and Wiltshire Bridleways Association)
- Carriage drivers (British Driving Association)
- Motorised vehicle groups (Trial Riders Fellowship, Green Lane Association and Tread Lightly)
- Landowners (MoD, Country Landowners Association)

Several members of the Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum also attended as independent users of the CAN.

Following the workshop the draft tables were sent to representatives of the following disability groups for comment:

- Wiltshire People 1 (an advocacy organization for people with learning difficulties)
- Wiltshire and Swindon Users’ Network (represents disabled and older people)
- Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living (represents disabled people on direct payments)
- Wiltshire Blind Association
- Disabled Ramblers
- Age UK Wiltshire

The results of this feedback were then considered by staff in the Rights of Way and Countryside service to see if they had anything to add. The tables overleaf are the outcome of this work.

<b>Strengths of the Countryside Access Network</b>	
<b>S1</b>	Wiltshire has the third longest network of rights of way in England, at 6,000 km. It is extensive in most parts of the county
<b>S2</b>	The whole network is available to walkers. Walking is free and only needs footwear appropriate to conditions underfoot and clothing appropriate for the weather. It is the most accessible form of exercise to encourage sedentary people to become more active
<b>S3</b>	There is a larger network of both restricted byways and byways open to all traffic than other counties. This provides lots of opportunities for carriage drivers and motorised vehicle users to access the countryside. People with disabilities can also drive byways to visit more remote parts of the county that would otherwise be inaccessible to them
<b>S4</b>	There is a larger network of bridleways than other counties. If these are linked up well it provides lots of opportunities for horse riders and cyclists to access the countryside
<b>S5</b>	It provides access to the beauty of the countryside and heritage sites
<b>S6</b>	It provides safe, quiet and attractive links away from traffic
<b>S7</b>	It provides many routes right from where people live into the countryside
<b>S8</b>	Some links provide opportunities for "utility" journeys for walkers and cyclists, e.g. many urban paths are rights of way and provide routes for shopping, access to school etc.
<b>S9</b>	A wide variety of routes are available with both hard and natural surfacing - through fields, up hills, next to rivers or canals, along old railways, through woodland etc.
<b>S10</b>	Country parks sites provide venues for both Council and non-Council run family events, fetes, dog shows etc. Mental health groups also use the country parks for therapy already
<b>S11</b>	Country park sites and canals are generally very accessible for those with mobility problems
<b>S12</b>	Upgrades, such as replacing stiles with kissing gates and surfacing, are being undertaken to improve ease of access for a variety of users at key locations
<b>S13</b>	The service has more machinery available than previously so can be more proactive in clearing paths etc.
<b>S14</b>	Rather than just responding to issues raised by members of the public, it is proactively surveyed by staff to check its condition and to fix problems
<b>S15</b>	Many useful partnerships have been formed which help maintain the network, including external organisations, user groups, parish councils and volunteers
<b>S16</b>	There are already groups set up who provide guided walks and cycle rides E.g. Walking for Health, The Ramblers, Salisbury Plain Area Mountain Bikers etc.
<b>S17</b>	Lots of information is already available - e.g. books and the internet have maps and self-guided walks
<b>S18</b>	There are over 20 high profile long distance walking routes within Wiltshire, as well as the National Cycle Network. Examples of walking routes include the Ridgeway and Thames Path National Trails, the Mid Wilts Way, Pewsey Avon Trail, Wessex Ridgeway, Imber Range Perimeter Path and Kennet & Avon Canal towpath
<b>S19</b>	Despite being a military training site, the MoD seek to allow access onto Salisbury Plain where possible
<b>S20</b>	Most landowners accept the public's rights and are co-operative
<b>S21</b>	It provides a variety of habitat areas and green corridors for wildlife
<b>S22</b>	There is a lot of local knowledge, experience and expertise within the rights of way and countryside service

<b>Weaknesses of the Countryside Access Network</b>	
<b>W1</b>	The network is largely historic and although it has evolved, in places it does not meet the present and likely future needs of users and potential users
<b>W2</b>	It is fragmented in many locations, e.g. route statuses changes part way along (e.g. a bridleway may turn into a footpath at a parish boundary) or the only way to link between two paths is to cross or use a busy road
<b>W3</b>	Sometimes there are no links straight into the countryside from where people live
<b>W4</b>	People prefer to use circular routes, but in many locations there are none or they are longer than users want to travel
<b>W5</b>	There are many "missing links", i.e. no route where people want to go
<b>W6</b>	Signage (both council and private) and waymarking on the network is sometimes missing, incorrect, not clear or even misleading (e.g. a sign saying "Private Road" without also saying "footpath/bridleway only" can put people off)
<b>W7</b>	Some rights of way furniture (stiles, gates, bridges etc.) is in a poor state of repair or has been not been installed well
<b>W8</b>	Surface vegetation can make routes difficult to pass if not cut back enough
<b>W9</b>	As much of the surfacing of the network is natural, in some locations and at certain times of year routes can be difficult to negotiate
<b>W10</b>	Irresponsible use of byways open to all traffic by vehicular users can lead to serious, expensive damage to the network
<b>W11</b>	It is difficult to balance the needs of all relevant user groups (i.e. walkers, cyclists, horse riders etc.), so sometimes we may not get this right from the perspective of one type of user
<b>W12</b>	The maintenance budget is insufficient to keep all routes in good condition, therefore meeting many of the desires of members of the public (particularly for upgrades) is not possible
<b>W13</b>	Countryside sites are suffering from a lack of investment due to the limited availability of funding for maintenance and improvement
<b>W14</b>	Some barriers installed to prevent illegal use may have limited impact, but can cause problems for legal users
<b>W15</b>	The use of legal restrictions reduces access for all types of user (e.g. red flags on Salisbury Plain, traffic regulation orders are sometimes used to completely close routes if severe damage occurs)
<b>W16</b>	Enforcement and education relating to the removal of illegal obstructions and dog fouling, is sometimes insufficient
<b>W17</b>	Some routes are very narrow (both the available width on the ground and the legally defined width)
<b>W18</b>	Many routes are difficult for people with mobility impairments, e.g. due to surfacing, stiles etc.
<b>W19</b>	The "least restrictive access" principle for rights of way furniture, which aims to minimise the number of obstructions people with mobility impairments face, needs to be set out more clearly so it can be applied consistently across the county
<b>W20</b>	Some individuals or groups with mobility impairments cannot access the network easily, e.g. they need someone to drive them there and/or need someone to guide them
<b>W21</b>	Parking for drivers in rural areas and public transport access to the network can be very limited
<b>W22</b>	Occasionally there is conflict between different types of users
<b>W23</b>	Animals may put some users off - e.g. farm animals or uncontrolled dogs
<b>W24</b>	The remoteness of many areas means that some people will not use the network on their own due to safety concerns
<b>W25</b>	The right information is not always available, e.g. people with mobility problems would often have problems knowing in advance whether or not they could use a specific route

<b>W26</b>	A few landowners do not recognise the rights of the public so try to obstruct routes
<b>W27</b>	Most permissive paths are not mapped
<b>W28</b>	The Definitive Map, the map showing the defined legal lines of routes, dates from 1952. Only the "working copy" represents changes since that time

### Opportunities for the Countryside Access Network

<b>O1</b>	The CAIP provides the opportunity to create a widely agreed vision and aims for the management of the network. This will then help to justify the need for the network and seek to increase external funding and help with maintenance in line with this vision
<b>O2</b>	It can be promoted for providing access to the beauty of the countryside and sites of heritage interest, or for the interest of the routes themselves (e.g. canals or old railways). Also, the good public knowledge of routes such as The Ridgeway, Thames Path and National Cycle Network can be built upon
<b>O3</b>	It can be promoted as an asset for a variety of purposes such as utility trips (e.g. access to shops, schools etc.), for tourism and for keeping people healthy
<b>O4</b>	There is a strong government policy backing for walking and cycling measures due to the physical and mental health benefits they bring. A recent study has also suggested that horse riding and associated activities helps mental and physical wellbeing.
<b>O5</b>	It helps to reconnect people with nature. Bat and bird walks, owl prowls and nature rambles can continue to be undertaken at Wiltshire Council's countryside sites. Links could be created with schools to use the CAN.
<b>O6</b>	The countryside sites could be used more as a "stepping stone" to encourage people into the wider countryside
<b>O7</b>	Walking and cycling groups can continue to be promoted and supported where necessary to attract new users and help overcome the concerns some people have with walking alone
<b>O8</b>	The work of the service could be promoted more e.g. through the website, press releases, other organisations etc.
<b>O9</b>	Permissive routes could be mapped, though this would need close monitoring to keep information up to date
<b>O10</b>	New links can be identified, prioritised and created in partnership with the community, e.g. to avoid busy roads (including the use of verges), new town to countryside links, links to desired destinations such as Access Land etc. Methods of creating new links as set out by the The Trails Trust could be trialled. Wiltshire Council's Paths Improvement Grant Scheme (PIGS) should continue, it enables local councils to make upgrades to their local networks. A desk study could be undertaken, possibly using the methods used in a study in Oxfordshire, to examine missing links either countywide or focused around settlements and future development sites.
<b>O11</b>	The restoration of Wilts and Berks Canal could bring new access opportunities for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and those with mobility impairments
<b>O12</b>	Existing routes could be upgraded in status to allow additional users - e.g. a footpath could be converted to a bridleway
<b>O13</b>	New links do not have to be formal rights of way, they could be by permissive agreement of the landowner or toll routes where users pay the landowner
<b>O14</b>	Safer road crossings could be provided, e.g. by using existing bridges or underpasses or installing formal crossing facilities

O15	More circular routes can be identified, created and promoted (e.g. through information but also good signage), particularly from settlements and honey pot sites
O16	New ways of accessing the network could be provided - e.g. through new car parking (particularly near sites which are appropriate for those with a mobility impairment), publicising existing initiatives (e.g. a scheme where horse riders pay to park their horse box at a farm so they can then use the rights of way network nearby) or working with public transport providers could promote public transport access
O17	Developments (e.g. housing) can upgrade existing routes and provide new links in the network
O18	There are external funding opportunities, e.g. developer funding, funding for health and wellbeing schemes through the NHS, Landfill Communities Fund, National Lottery, Sustrans, sponsorship etc.
O19	Improving links between the CAIP and external strategies will help to justify leveraging in external funding for new links. E.g. Green Infrastructure Strategy, Core Strategy, health strategies, tourism strategies
O20	More joint working and information sharing both internally and externally could be undertaken
O21	The partnership between the rights of way and highways services, which means waste road planings and other materials from maintenance schemes are re-used on rights of way, is invaluable and should continue
O22	User groups, members of the public etc. could continue to help to pinpoint areas where we need to provide more information
O23	Partnerships with other bodies and landowners can be improved to increase support for projects, lever in funding for joint priorities and reduce issues (e.g. to avoid need for enforcement)
O24	Where conflicts occur (e.g. between different user groups on canal towpaths or byways), a strategy to try to reduce these problems could be looked at. This might involve design standards/best practice e.g. from user groups, codes of conduct (e.g. providing a link to the countryside code on website), signing (inc little green advisory signs or signs showing which users can use a route), campaigns etc.
O25	More routes suitable for those with mobility problems could be publicised (including country parks) or created in locations which would benefit the most people - e.g. replacing stiles with gaps or gates on key links near settlements, or surfacing in some locations. Canals, old railways and locations with parking and toilets are particularly useful. Many people go out walking with dogs but have to lift dogs over stiles. If stiles are to be retained, providing flaps that dogs can pass through would be helpful
O26	Schemes for accessibility improvements would be supported by the Equalities Act
O27	If disabled groups want to use the network but cannot due to not having transport available, work with social services or volunteer transport providers to try to overcome these issues
O28	A more defined policy on "least restrictive access" could be produced. Many stiles are built by landowner rather than bought in kit form so guidance could also be provided to landowners to encourage good designs
O29	Although volunteers, user groups, parish councils and landowners already help to maintain the countryside access network, even more involvement is possible. Tasks can include waymarking, upgrading stiles to gates, bridge building, cutting back vegetation and asking landowners to keep overhanging vegetation cut back
O30	Improvements can benefit several user groups at once
O31	The rights of way database will help with analysis and maintenance of the network. It may also be possible in future to link it with the website, so people can follow a path and see what access furniture is along the route
O32	On key links where there is a desire to use them all year, surface conditions could be improved by cutting back vegetation, improving drainage or surfacing where necessary
O33	The network should continue to be maintained proactively by Wiltshire Council staff, this is currently done through the parish by parish network survey. The survey highlights issues which are then fixed where required. Potentially volunteers could help with these surveys if guided by staff to ensure consistency. This system could be parish based or at an area board level, where groups of volunteers would cover a number of parishes

O34	Investigate use of alternative types of wood for furniture - the tannelised wood normally used is not as hardwearing as some other woods might be (e.g. chestnut)
O35	Education, statutory powers and working with the police can help to reduce issues such as use of illegal use, inappropriate barriers, uncontrolled animals, problems with dog faeces etc.
O36	Processing legal orders to change rights of way brings positive changes to the network, e.g. it protects ancient routes and diverts routes to meet modern requirements
O37	Public Path Orders, which are very useful but not statutory, could be contracted out so more time could be spent on the statutory Definitive Map Modification Orders
O38	The list of Definitive Map Modification Orders could be prioritised so the routes with most public benefit are dealt with first
O39	To produce a new, consolidated Definitive Map instead of having to work with both the original 1952 map and the legal events since
O40	Changes to legislation may lead to improvements in the current lengthy and complex legal processes which have to be gone through to formally record or make changes to the network
O41	New or revised policies could help the work of the service and bring greater clarity for the public. Examples include the use of Traffic Regulation Orders, installation of barriers, cropping and ploughing, maintenance policy, "least restrictive" policy, permissive paths, enforcement, etc.
O42	The merging of the two countryside and rights of way teams is leading to new joint working and potentially may lead to the "sharing" of volunteers
O43	The proposed service review will look at procedures and make sure that the service is appropriately structured

Threats to the Countryside Access Network	
T1	Reductions in funding, staffing or materials such as road planings when road works are undertaken would lead to less maintenance, fewer upgrades and fewer legal orders being undertaken. This would lead to more complaints. The network would become less useable, potentially fewer people would use it, ultimately leading to a less healthy population and considerably increased costs to the NHS
T2	Need to get sufficient political support when required, e.g. for undertaking statutory duties or when seeking physical upgrades to the network
T3	New housing and other developments could lead to fragmentation of the network
T4	If illegal or inappropriate use which seriously damages surfacing continues, further temporary closures may be necessary - which affects all users. Funding may not be available to repair routes for some time so they may remain closed for longer. There could be an increased need to use more permanent traffic regulation orders in future
T5	Restrictions such as traffic regulation orders reduce opportunities for some users or all users on affected routes
T6	Official barriers to try to restrict unauthorised use may restrict other, legitimate users
T7	Unlawful obstructions might not be dealt with effectively and quickly enough
T8	There may be opposition to some proposals for a variety of reasons
T9	Landowners may stop permissive access agreements, particularly when routes set up through DEFRA's stewardship schemes run out
T10	Landowners might not be supportive of some proposals, e.g. due to concerns relating to rural crime, adverse effects on land management, conservation etc.

<b>T11</b>	Legislation changes could reduce the powers of the council or lead to the permanent loss of some unrecorded historic routes
<b>T12</b>	A lack of tolerance or consideration between different types of user or users and landowners could cause conflict
<b>T13</b>	Access abuses may cause conflict between different types of user and users and landowners, e.g. cyclists on footpaths, motorised vehicles on restricted byways
<b>T14</b>	High volumes of use in some locations can cause maintenance problems, equally underuse can mean routes get much more overgrown
<b>T15</b>	There could be a loss of information (e.g. if archives were destroyed) or expertise within the service
<b>T16</b>	There could be a reduction in interest or demand from the public in the network
<b>T17</b>	Climate change could cause more maintenance issues or lead to more problems with pests

## Appendix 9: References for documents cited in the Appendices

Baker, S. & Strong, S. (2001). Roads to Recovery: How people with mental health problems recover and find ways of coping. MIND

Bird, Dr William (2004). Natural Fit. Can Green Space and Biodiversity Increase Levels of Physical Activity? RSPB

CJC Consulting (2005). Economic Benefits of Accessible Green Spaces for Physical and Mental Health: Scoping study. DEFRA

Davis A (2010). An economic assessment of investment in walking and cycling. DoH

DoH (2004). At least five a week. Evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health. A report from the Chief Medical Officer

DoH (2011). Mental health promotion and mental illness prevention: The economic case

Faber Taylor A, Kuo F and Sullivan W (2001) Coping with ADD. The surprising Connection to Green Play Setting. Environment and Behaviour. Vol 33 No. 1, January 2001. pp54-77.

HM Government (2010). Healthy Lives, Healthy People. Our strategy for public health in England. The Stationary Office

HM Government (2011). The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature. The Stationary Office

Heron C & Bradshaw G (2010). Walk this Way: Recognising value in active health. Local Government Information Unit

Hogman G & Sandamas G (2001). A Question of Choice. National Schizophrenia Fellowship

Moss S (2012). Natural Childhood. National Trust

Mental Health Foundation (2005). Exercise referral and the treatment of mild or moderate depression. Information for GPs and healthcare practitioners

Mitchell & Popham, The Lancet Vol 372 Issue 9650. 8 Nov 2008

Pretty J, Griffin M, Peacock J et al (2005). A Countryside for Health and Well-Being: The Physical and Mental Health Benefits of Green Exercise. Countryside Recreation Network.

Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (2007). How nearby green spaces can enhance property values

Town and Country Planning Association (2007). Climate Change Adaptation

United Nations Environment Programme, World Conservation Monitoring Centre (2011). UK National Ecosystem Assessment. Synthesis of the Key Findings. Ch23 health values from ecosystems