

CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2009/19 – ROWIP Consultation Written Responses Summary Table.

Following the production of the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan and approval from the Executive Board Member Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, the document along with a questionnaire was sent to 223 consultees. The consultees included:

- Local Authorities
- Parish Councils
- Natural England
- Defra
- Dft
- Prescribed Organisations
- Local User Groups
- Land Owners
- Interest Groups; and
- Other Sections within the Council

The consultation exercise was advertised in the local papers and copies of the document were available on the Council’s website and in the local libraries and direct links. Questionnaires were also deposited at nearly 100 locations inc health centres, shops, businesses, Norton Priory, visitor centres, post offices, community centres etc.

Although only 14 formal written responses were received, these responses and discussions with other consultees, were positive and reception on the whole was good with strong support for the document. Twenty seven questionnaires where also returned and a summary of these results together with our responses can be seen in Appendix 3.

The following table summarises the written responses received.

Consultee	Strategic Aim	Summary of Comments	Council’s Response/Action
Martin Harker - Chair of the Merseyside Local Access Forum	General Comment	“It seems to be clearly and logically presented and I thought the questionnaire leaflet was a particularly useful way of obtaining feedback. Unfortunately I have not had time to study the document in detail, I trust that you get some useful feedback.”	No Action required

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<p>Dave Owen – Mersey Gateway Team</p>		<p>“I acknowledge that an addendum has been issued regarding references to the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy and that this will be reflected in the final draft.”</p> <p>Suggested and additional narrative be inserted after para 6.7.2.4</p>	<p>Para 1.6 - Alteration to document made as per addendum.</p> <p>Narrative inserted as requested. (pages 66 & 67)</p>
<p>John Spottiswood – Planner – British Waterways Wales and Border Counties</p>		<p>Thank you for consulting us on this document.</p> <p>We support action P3 which promotes the use of planning gain to enhance access routes.</p> <p>We support the proposed links from Runcorn into the Weaver Valley especially the route from Clifton to Dutton. In relation to action CB4 a note of caution is required. The old bridge cannot simply be replaced on a like for like basis because I understand the old bridge was an obstacle to navigation and National Grid need to use this location for deploying their rolling bridge. A new bridge will be required on a new alignment taking account the clearances required for the river on a fixed bridge or the work required for a swing, lift or sliding bridge to ensure that navigation of large craft is not jeopardised. There may be a security issue for National Grid at this location.</p> <p>We support the proposals to improve ‘access for all’ throughout the document.</p>	<p>No Action required</p> <p>British Waterways have been added as partners to action CB4. Comments have been noted and will be considered as the scheme is progressed.</p> <p>No Action required</p>
<p>Rick Rogers – Countryside Development Officer, St Helens Council</p>		<p>“Generally the document adequately covers the range of issues affecting Rights of Way issues. However, it would benefit from including references to the following strategic initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Mersey Growth Point • South St Helens Forest Park 	<p>New paragraphs inserted to accommodate these points –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.9.1.5.5 The South St Helens Park • 6.9.1.5.6 Mid Mersey Growth Point
<p>Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)</p>		<p>Thank you for the consultation document. We are sure you will appreciate that the EHRC receives many such documents. Unfortunately we do not have the resources to respond to consultations, unless they concern matters which are directly related to the work of the EHRC.</p>	<p>No Action required</p>
<p>CYCLE WALK Mrs E S Kamellard – Dft, Cycling & Sustainable Travel</p>		<p>Thank you for your email of 6 April informing us of Halton Borough Council Right of Way Plan. I understand the Department for environment Food and rural Affairs (Defra) is the Government Department that has the lead for Rights of Way. You can contact them on</p>	<p>No Action required. Defra were a statutory consultee and therefore consulted as a matter of course.</p>

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<p>Diane Clarke - Network Rail</p>		<p>Thank you for providing Network Rail with an opportunity to comment on the above mentioned application. At this stage we have no comments to make, however, we would request that once Halton BC has made a decision as to the sites it will be developing under ROWIP that they contact Townplanning.LNW@networkrail.co.uk . Once a definitive list has been chosen of the particular sites of interest we will then be able to comment on the possible impact of those sites upon safety, integrity and operation of the railway. Please note this especially in sites where there is likely to be wider commercial issues or access over the operational railway line.</p>	<p>No further action required at this time.</p>
<p>Peter Waite – The Mid- Cheshire Footpath Society</p>		<p>On behalf of the MCFS I have reviewed the above document which I found to be well written and informative. Please accept the following comments and observations which we hope will help with the final version and its implementation.</p> <p>Pg4 - SJB is not defined any where (& not understood by the reader)</p> <p>Pg 4 - Typo error – ‘walkers, cyclists and horse riders’</p> <p>Pg5 – Implementation – This is the Achilles Heel of the ROWIP. It is hoped that Halton BC will put up the short term funding required to bring the borough’s PROW’s up to the minimum standard. It is likely that most of the funding will be required for the records side of the outstanding problem.</p> <p>Pg8 2.1.2– Typo error – ‘distribution, chemicals...’</p> <p>Pg9 2.2.2 – Last sentence – fully agree & totally supportive of this objective.</p> <p>Pg14 3.3.5 MCFS would like to be part of this activity for Halton S</p> <p>P20 4.1.8 We agree. Maps, signage and obstructions are a problem in Halton.</p> <p>Pg28 RUPP is not defined until Pg45 (& may not understood by other readers)</p> <p>Pg32 4.6.21 This also applies to non-disabled persons and is a problem in Halton.</p>	<p>Correction made</p> <p>Correction made comma added after walkers</p> <p>The Council has already spent and committed substantial sums of money on the PRoW network during LTP1 & 2 and it is intended that our commitment will continue, subject to resources being made available.</p> <p>Correction made comma added after distribution</p> <p>No action required</p> <p>No Action required at this time. Application to join the Local Access forum will have to be made during the next recruitment process, which will be advertised.</p> <p>A list of required improvements to address these issues can be found in para 9.1.2.</p> <p>No action required. RUPP is actually defined in 4.4.1</p> <p>Comment noted, these issues will be addressed through the plan.</p>

		<p>Pg34 Chart 1 – very interesting. Our survey largely mirrors these findings. Halton S has low car ownership and needs PROWs to avoid pollution, accidents etc. but personal safety (from others) is essential. Visitors have the same needs but need suitable parking at potential walk start points.</p> <p>Pg35 4.7.9 & Policy R7 We agree and welcome this policy.</p> <p>Pg42 5.6.15 Contrary to the BVPI 178 indicator, maintenance in its broader sense is variable and often poor. Walkers are being discouraged.</p> <p>Pg43 5.7.4 MCFS trying to achieve this.</p> <p>Pg44 5.8.4 Some landowners are not taking reasonable steps to reduce the problems for themselves & walkers e.g. signing, reinstatement. Pointing a gun at walkers legitimately on a PROW does not lead to good relations. Responsible walkers respect the landowner’s rights but are less fussy when the landowner makes life difficult.</p> <p>Pg44 5.8 As 57% would welcome or allow access perhaps there is an education process here for those who would not allow future access. 5.8.3 % 5.8.6 appear to contradict each other.</p> <p>Pg44 6.1.4 The Definitive map and Statement are out of date and urgently require updating.</p> <p>Pg45 6.1.7 Fragmentation is a major problem in Halton S making it difficult to create circular walks.</p> <p>Pg47 6.2.2 MCFS is actively trying to assist Halton BC achieving the three</p>	<p>No action required</p> <p>No specific action required at this time, however, the comment has been noted and will be considered when improving existing routes and developing new routes.</p> <p>No action required</p> <p>The proposed action plan identifies eight actions within Strategic Aim 1(Improve standards of maintenance across the Network) that will assist in ensuring improved and consistent standards of maintenance across the network.</p> <p>No action required</p> <p>No Action at this time – Any reports are and will continue to be dealt with as and when they are received.</p> <p>The need to work with landowners/farmers is already identified in paragraph 5.8.6. The percentages given in 5.8.3 and 5.8.6 are consistent as the 88% refers to those who would not allow new public access to be created (7 out of 8).</p> <p>This will be addressed through the action plan, in particular Strategic Aim 2 (To Maintain an accurate and up-to-date Definitive Map and Statement) Actions L1, L5, L6 and L8.</p> <p>This will be addressed through a number of actions, but particularly through Action CO7 of Strategic Aim 9 (To improve connectivity of the Network and create opportunities for walkers, cyclists and equestrians).</p> <p>No action required</p>
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		<p>national targets.</p> <p>Pg56 6.4.8.3 The BVPI 178 data appears rather optimistic compared with the 100% survey carried out by the MCFS during 2008 (albeit to a somewhat different standard but with the same aim).</p> <p>Pg70 6.8.3 Fig 5 should read Fig 8. This figure is too small to be much use. Research has been unsuccessful in revealing a location for Overhill Common without the O.S Ref.</p> <p>Pg101 Policy R8 Great care needs to be taken to minimise conflict. Pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians can share some paths but not all. When allowing multi-use of a PROW the interests of deaf walkers when confronted by cyclists or horses wishing to overtake (from the rear) are often neglected.</p>	<p>No Action required - The results were achieved using the methodology developed by the CSS Countryside Working Group, which was approved by the Audit Commission.</p> <p>Figure No. corrected in para 6.8.3 This figure is only indicative and is only provided to give the broad location of the open access land and common land. Overhill Common was wrongly drafted on the Conclusive Maps and was therefore not included in this figure to avoid any unnecessary concern to landowners.</p> <p>The comment has been noted and will be considered in the design of new paths and the improvement of existing paths.</p>
<p>James Widdop – Rights of Way Officer St Helens Council</p>		<p>With regards to the draft Halton ROWIP, the Council would like to make the following observations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. According to records held by St Helens Council, there are only two recorded public footpaths in St Helens meeting the boundary between the Boroughs of St. Helens and Halton <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. on the A57 “Union Bank Farm Cottage” and b. on the A5080 “South Lane entry” 2. According to an Ordnance survey 1:25000 map there are only two Halton public footpaths meeting the boundary between the Boroughs of St. Helens and Halton <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. on the A57 between Wilmere House and Old Brook Hall and b. on the A57 opposite the access to Union Bank Farm Cottage 3. Lack of Strategic routes between the Borough of St. Helens and Halton 	<p>This would concur with our records. No Action required at this time.</p> <p>This would concur with our records. No Action required at this time.</p> <p>The plan will address this through Strategic Aim 10 (To seek opportunities to enhance and extend the Public Rights of Way network and other access routes through cross boundary working), in particular actions CB1 and CB5.</p>

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		<p>4. With reference to para 2.2.2 pg9 – Upon examining an Ordnance Survey 1:25000 map of the area, there are two public footpaths which are shown south of the A57 in the Borough of Halton. These public footpaths are approx 520m and 715m in length between the A57 and the A557. Both of these public footpaths appear to continue south of the A557 before merging at Cranshaw Hall and finishing at Lunts Heath. Clearly, these public footpaths form a vital linkage within the Borough of Halton between the urbanised area of Lunts Heath and the rural area of Bold, and there is scope to improve this existing provision in this locality.</p> <p>It is also noted in other areas north of Widnes, there appears to be a current lack of Public Rights of Way provision and the Council believes that there is great potential for network improvement in this area to the north of the River Mersey.</p> <p>5. On page 46, figure 2, there is a map showing distribution of Public Rights of Way in Halton. The two public footpaths described above appear on Ordnance Survey 1:2000 and 1:50000 maps, yet are not shown in figure 2.</p> <p>6. It is currently noted that there is a shortage of bridleways on both sides of the two Boroughs. Anecdotal evidence obtained from site visits, liaison with user groups, Merseyside Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the Local Access Forum suggests there is a need to increase the public bridleway network in the southern area of St Helens which could have significant effects on both sides of the Borough Boundary from environmental, social and economic aspects.</p> <p>7. The disused Widnes to St Helens railway line links the Boroughs of Halton and St Helens and is one potential long distance strategic route.</p>	<p>These routes have already been identified as vital linkages as part of a feasibility study undertaken jointly with St. Helens. The plan addresses this through Strategic Aim 9 (To improve connectivity of the Network and create opportunities for walkers, cyclists and equestrians) and Strategic Aim 10 (To seek opportunities to enhance and extend the Public Rights of Way network and other access routes through cross boundary working).</p> <p>The plan addresses this through Strategic Aim 8 (To seek opportunities to enhance the network through the planning process and through the various plans and strategies developed by the Council) in particular Action P2, and Strategic Aims 9 and 10.</p> <p>The Definitive Map is currently being reviewed and updated. There are anomalies and errors on it, such as this, that will be addressed through Strategic Aim 2 (To maintain an accurate and up-to-date Definitive Map and Statement).</p> <p>This issue has already been identified and Halton has been working with St Helens Council and the Bridleway Development Group to address this matter. The plan addresses this through Strategic Aims 8, 9 and 10.</p> <p>The plan references this route in paragraph 2.2.3. The plan also addresses this route specifically through Strategic Aim 10, Action CB1.</p>
<p>Mrs M Fishwick – British Horse Society County Access Officer (Merseyside Committee)</p>	<p>Strategic Aim 1</p>	<p>Please be aware that, although I am a representative for the Merseyside branch of the British Horse Society, my comments may not always be those of the Society.</p> <p>M1 & M2 are independent, as are M5 & 8 in my view</p>	<p>Comment noted – No Action required.</p>

	<p>Strategic Aim 2</p> <p>Strategic Aim 2, 5 & 7</p> <p>Strategic</p>	<p>Owing to the lethal nature of ragwort on livestock, management of it ought to be part of the seasonal vegetation maintenance programme [M5].</p> <p>A comprehensive management strategy of all aspects of the RoW is important to both user and landowners. On a well-managed network – clearly marked, with stiles and gates in good repair users mostly keep to the proper path reducing damage to the adjoining land.</p> <p>Not a remit of Halton Council, entry points for any Access Land within the Borough need to be clear on all maps produced by Halton for public use.</p> <p>To facilitate a comprehensive Definitive Map the cut-off date for the now defunct Lost ways Project must be scrapped. It is impossible for ROW staff at Halton or the few volunteers in the Ramblers Association, the British Horse society and other user groups to have either the time or funding to locate paths and find proof of long-term use.</p> <p>The development of a network linking in with the neighbouring Boroughs is required, especially in Widnes where the bridleway network is non-existent. Links with St Helens, Warrington and Knowsley are essential to develop a network, which should create, in the long term, routes leading to Delamere, the Pennine Bridleway and the North West Coastal Path.</p> <p>An important point in the development of this network would be horse riders being able to cross the Mersey on the Silver Jubilee Bridge; which as you know is the lowest bridging point apart from Warrington and a private bridge at Moore.</p> <p>The availability of long distance Bridleway routes are very likely to bring in extra revenue from tourism.</p> <p>The use of signage and publications is useful to help users who have difficulty reading and O.S map to enjoy the network to the full.</p> <p>Disabled horse riders and carriage drivers also need to be considered in this</p>	<p>Comment noted and will be considered when developing Action M5.</p> <p>Comment noted – Strategic Aim 1, Action M7 has been amended to clarify the maintenance proposed.</p> <p>Comment noted and will be taken into consideration when preparing future promotional information. Strategic Aim 2 Action L4 and Strategic Aim 7, Actions T10, T12, T13 and T14 will help facilitate this.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The Plan addresses this through Strategic Aim 10 (To seek opportunities to enhance and extend the Public Rights of Way network and other access routes through cross boundary working). Section 6.9.2.1 Cross Boundary Issues supports this.</p> <p>The plan acknowledges the potential for horse riders to utilise the ‘downgraded’ Silver Jubilee Bridge in Section 6.9.3. The plan potentially addresses the issue of this multi-user route specifically through Strategic Aim 5, Action ST14, Strategic Aim 7, Action T8 and Strategic Aim 10, Action CB7.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>The Plan addresses this in a number of areas in particularly through Strategic Aim 1, Action M2 and Strategic Aim 7, Actions T10, T13 and T14.</p> <p>Strategic Aim 4 is targeted at all people with</p>
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	<p>Aim 4</p>	<p>section. The ability to be able to ride or drive gives a disabled person greater access to the countryside which undoubtedly improves their quality of life. Riding and driving is not just the province of the well off, some riding establishments offer riding/driving for the disabled and need to be able to access the Row network, rather than just take their clients around a paddock.</p> <p>The state of stiles in many areas is a disgrace, often with barbed wire fences where hands need placing or the wooden crosspieces in disrepair. Stiles present problems to all but the agile, older people find them difficult to climb, and where possible, gates are a better option.</p> <p>RoW should be barrier free to allow wheelchairs, prams and mobility scooters easy access. Unfortunately, illegal motorbike users are responsible for Councils erecting barriers in unsuccessful attempts at restricting them. These barriers make access difficult or even impossible for legal users.</p> <p>A well-used area tends to be self-policing; strategic Policing where the offending vehicles are removed and crushed should also be of use. The ideal would be areas for people to use scrambler and quad bikes.</p>	<p>disabilities. Action A2 has been amended to make it clear that it applies to all modes of travel that are appropriate for use on the routes.</p> <p>Any such reports are and will continue to be dealt with, if and when they are received. Halton has few stiles in the borough preferring to install kissing gates. Policy R6 (U5) Access for All supports the approach of the least restrictive option in route management. This is also identified in Policy R15 (M2) Authorising New Bridges and Associated Structures on Local Rights of Way.</p> <p>The plan addresses this through Policies R6 (U5) Access For All and R15 (M2) Authorising New Bridges and Associated Structures on Local Rights of Way</p> <p>The Plan identifies Halton's approach to this issue in paragraphs 4.5.4 and 4.5.5.</p>
	<p>Strategic Aim 6</p>	<p>This is a comprehensive strategy. You, as the local Council, are only able to make the RoW network as safe as possible and should not be expected to second-guess stupidity of some users. Individuals, whatever their mode of transport must take responsibility for their own actions.</p>	<p>Comment noted – No Action required</p>
	<p>Strategic Aim 8</p>	<p>Developers must be encouraged to include multi-user routes from their sites to link with the RoW network.</p> <p>For new housing developments, it could be regarded as an important selling point for people; equestrians, in particular look for areas that have a good bridleway network. It could encourage people to leave the car at home and walk or cycle to school, the shops and work.</p> <p>Encourage developers to contact the various advisory bodies such as Sustrans, cycling clubs, the Ramblers Association and the British Horse Society.</p>	<p>The Plan addresses this specifically through Strategic Aim 8, Action P2.</p> <p>Comment noted – No Action required.</p> <p>This is something that already happens in Halton.</p>
	<p>Strategic</p>	<p>Many bridleway networks in the Borough, especially Widnes, are so</p>	<p>The Plan addresses this through Strategic Aim 9</p>

	<p>Aim 9</p> <p>Strategic Aim 10</p>	<p>fragmented that it is impossible to ride any distance without using busy roads.</p> <p>There is no bridleway network in Widnes, the definitive bridleways here are routes through housing developments and lead nowhere suitable for equestrian use.</p> <p>It is essential to develop links with the neighbouring boroughs in this area. St Helens has several sites accessible by equestrians from Widnes if there were suitable links – via the disused railway line or Pex Hill.</p> <p>Perhaps it would be possible to come to some agreement with landowners to allow the use of field margins – diversification with funding from ICEP?</p> <p>If footpaths are upgraded to bridleways they are suitable for all non-motorised users, and as stated, make it easier to provide a complete network.</p> <p>The ideal network would enable users to choose circular routes of various distances. Equestrians generally like routes covering about ten miles.</p> <p>Segregation of users by fencing is not desirable as it can leave users with no means of avoiding other users who are on the wrong track for whatever reason.</p> <p>It is essential to re-establish links with St Helens Bridleways Association, St Helens, Knowsley and Warrington Councils to produce a good bridleway network open to all users.</p> <p>Local users will provide information of paths and tracks they use and those they would like to use to have routes linking good riding areas with their Livery Yards. The continued increase in traffic on roads makes safe off-road riding routes essential. The accident rate for equestrians averages 8 per day [the British Horse Society at Stoneleigh can provide accurate figures. Many minor incidents are not reported to either the Police or the BHS].</p>	<p>(To improve connectivity of the Network and create opportunities for walkers, cyclists and equestrians).</p> <p>The plan addresses this through its Policies R4 (U3) Horse Riders and Carriage Drivers and R9 (Imp1) Improving Network Connections and Strategic Aim 9.</p> <p>The Plan will address this through Strategic Aim 10 (To seek opportunities to enhance and extend the Public Rights of Way network and other access routes through cross boundary working).</p> <p>No action required at this time, however, the comment has been noted and will be considered on a path by path basis.</p> <p>The Plan will address this issue, where appropriate, through Strategic Aim 9, Actions CO1 and CO2, supported by its Policies R4 (U3) Horse Riders and Carriage Drivers and R9 (Imp1) Improving Network Connections</p> <p>The Plan addresses the need for circular routes in particular through Strategic Aim 9, Action CO7 and Strategic Aim 7, Action T2.</p> <p>No action required at this time however, the comment has been noted and will be considered on a path by path basis.</p> <p>This is addressed by Strategic Aim 10, Action CB1which has been implemented. Links have already been re-established and an officer's sub-group set up to take this forward.</p> <p>Comment noted no action required at this time.</p> <p>BHS figures used within the document (4.3.6).</p>
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<p>Clare Olver – The Mersey Forest Team</p>		<p>The Mersey Forest Team welcomes the opportunity to comment on Halton’s Draft ROWIP. We are happy to discuss any of these issues with you further.</p> <p>When the 12 community forests were established, the corporate objectives agreed by the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (now DEFRA) which each community forest has adopted has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase opportunities for sport and recreation, including artistic and cultural events and access. <p>The Mersey Forest Plan (reviewed in 2001) guides the development of the Forest. Networks, such as The Mersey Forest, of woodlands and other habitats are increasingly being recognised as part of our green infrastructure. The plan makes a number of recommendations and in the Access, Sport, Recreation, Tourism and Health section recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R6 The Mersey Forest Partners will aim to establish a network of greenways across the Forest area as both local level (linking people with local sites on their doorstep) and at a strategic level (providing longer routes crossing local authority boundaries). <p>There have been some recent changes under local government review which affects the wording of 6.6.10:</p> <p>6.6.10 The Mersey Forest The Mersey Forest is an environmental regeneration initiative creating woodlands and involving people across Merseyside and North Cheshire.</p>	<p>Comment noted no action required at this time.</p> <p>Comment noted no action required at this time. Halton will continue to enlist The Mersey Forest as partners, where appropriate.</p> <p>Alteration made to para 6.6.10 to incorporate the updated text.</p>

	<p>Strategic Aim 3</p>	<p>The Mersey Forest Partnership includes seven local authorities (Cheshire West and Chester, Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Warrington) as well as the Forestry Commission, Natural England and businesses including United Utilities. Since the Mersey Forest began in 1994, more than 175 hectares of new woodland has been created in Halton.</p> <p>6.6.10.2 The guiding principles remain the same.</p> <p>6.6.11 Long distance routes/Trails</p> <p>The Mersey Forest Plan makes specific reference to targeting for priority implementation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trans-Pennine Trail • A link between St Helens and the TPT at Widnes • Weaver Way. <p>Over the years has contributed towards the delivery of the Timberland Trail.</p> <p>6.6.17 The Mersey Forest recognises the importance of a well connected network of paths and open areas and works in partnership with landowners to realise those benefits. For example, assisting landowners with woodland to apply to the English Woodland Grant Scheme for funding “For the provision and improvement of facilities for free public access to woodlands where there is a need.” These funds can be applied to both existing woodlands and newly created community woodlands funded under EWGS, provided there is a need for more or improved woodland public access in that location. The woodland must be accessible for free, quiet enjoyment by the public (including dogs on leads) during daylight hours for at least 11 months of the year.</p> <p>Comments on the Action Plans The Mersey Forest Team is a key partner to a number of the strategic aims, please feel free to add where appropriate in the Partner column.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest is supportive of developing routes to encourage walking and cycling for health and pleasure, and has developed the Discover the Mersey Forest website to promote such routes across the forest area: www.discoverthemerseyforest.co.uk . Late in 2008, the Directors of public</p>	<p>No Action required</p> <p>Para 6.6.10.3 inserted to accommodate comment.</p> <p>Comment noted no action required at this time. Halton will continue to enlist The Mersey Forest as partners, where appropriate.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest have been added as partners in the following: Strategic Aim 3, Actions H2, H3, Strategic Aim 5, Actions ST13, ST14, Strategic Aim 7, Actions T7, T8, T9, Strategic Aim 8, Action P6 and Strategic Aim 10, Actions CB1, CB2, CB6 and CB7. This list is not exhaustive and the Council will seek to work in partnership with The Mersey Forest wherever appropriate to do so.</p> <p>Added as partners in actions H2 and H3. We will include this link with other useful links on the Council’s PRow website.</p>
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	<p>Strategic Aim 4</p> <p>Strategic Aim 5</p> <p>Strategic Aim 6</p> <p>Strategic Aim 7</p>	<p>health across the Mersey Forest agreed to work on a more strategic basis with the Forest team in order to try to maximise the health impacts of projects and programmes.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest is committed towards in partnership to improving and developing routes that cater for the needs of people with disabilities. A number of routes of the Discover The Mersey Forest website have been through an accessibility audit survey using criteria from the rural and working landscapes Physical Access Standards published by the Fieldfare Trust as part of the Countryside For All project. www.discoverthemerseyforest.co.uk/page.aspx?region=2&page=Accessible Routes</p> <p>The Mersey Forest is supportive of increasing the use of the network for sustainable Transport and Utility trips through working with partners and promoting the use of public transport on websites and leaflets. Through the work of the Forest Team on the Upper Mersey Forest Park project, there is support towards the creation of a cross-boundary greenway between Warrington and Halton.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest is supportive of improving the Safety and Attractiveness of routes affected by the Transport Network.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest is supportive of The Rural Economy, Local Businesses, Countryside and Tourist Sites through the promotion of Halton’s PROW network and other access routes to residents and visitors.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest Team is leading on the development of the Upper Mersey Valley Forest Park which can offer range of benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract visitors and revenue • Improve image of forest park areas • Create jobs • Make positive environmental impact • Improve health levels through green exercise <p>Aim is for all woodlands within the Forest Park to be linked and equipped with appropriate visitor infrastructure (signage, interpretation, etc) and marked appropriately. The Upper Mersey Forest Park will develop links with the tourism sector, and to market the area to a range of visitors, including those with disabilities. It is in the vision to <i>Improve access to the area with</i></p>	<p>We will include this link with other useful links on the Council’s PROW website.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest is already working in partnership with Halton and Warrington through the Upper Mersey Forest Park with a view to developing a multi-user Greenway route between Halton and Warrington. Added as Partners in Strategic Aim 5, Actions ST13 and ST14.</p> <p>No Action required</p> <p>Added as Partners in T7, T8 and T9 Halton are already working in partnership with the Mersey Forest on the Upper Mersey Valley Forest Park. No further action required at this time.</p> <p>Comment noted, no further action required at this time.</p>
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	<p>Strategic Aim 8</p> <p>Strategic Aim 9</p> <p>Strategic Aim 10</p>	<p><i>the opportunity to develop a circular route around the estuary to improve access to the Forest Park as a whole as well as between the different sites. The circular route should be made accessible for both the walker and cyclist, linking up many of the key sites around the estuary and providing and extremely attractive visitor experience.</i></p> <p>The Mersey Forest is supportive of seeking opportunities to enhance the network through the Planning Process and through various plans and strategies developed by the Council. Through the work of The Mersey Forest Partnership in contributing towards the cost of the Mersey Forest Team, Halton are enabling this strategic aim to be implemented.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest is supportive of improving the Connectivity of the network and create opportunities for walkers, cyclists and equestrians. Recommendation of the Mersey Forest Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R7 The partner authorities will seek to integrate facilities for horse riding into new and existing greenways where practical. <p>Please see above for comments re development of new greenway.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest is supportive of enhancing and extending the Rights of Way network and other access routes through cross boundary working.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest covers seven local authorities and works across all boundaries. The Upper Mersey Forest Park covers part of both Halton and Warrington. Likewise there are excellent links that can be made between the South St Helens Forest Parks and the Upper Mersey Forest, The Weaver Valley and other areas through the existing rights of way network.</p>	<p>Added as Partners to action P6 – No further action required at this time.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p> <p>No Action required.</p> <p>Added as Partners in actions CB1, CB2, CB6 and CB7.</p> <p>The plan references this in section 6.9.2.1 Cross Boundary Issues paragraphs 6.9.1.5.4 and 6.9.1.5.5 The South St Helens Park.</p>
<p>Ms D Hewitt – Planning Liaison Officer</p>		<p>Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above plan. We support the plan and have no further comments to make on the document.</p>	<p>No Action required</p>
<p>Rachel Apter - HBC</p>		<p>I thought the document was very good and had an excellent level of detail, so my comments relate mainly to very small aspects of the text. Nevertheless, I hope that they are useful.</p> <p>Pg6 – Mention “integrated network of routes” but this network is not shown pictorially within the document.</p>	<p>Pg6 1.2.1 Through the ROWIP it is intended to deliver an integrated network of routes. However, the network has not been identified or developed sufficiently at this time to be able to show it pictorially.</p>

		<p>Pg7 – Reference required for DEFRA guidance on ROWIP production</p> <p>Pg7 Mersey Gateway’s Sustainable Transport Strategy (typo)</p> <p>Pg7 PRoW / PROW and RoWIP / ROWIP inconsistencies (and throughout)</p> <p>Pg8 Is Halton the “lowest” bridging point of the Mersey? Didn’t make sense so suggest re-phrasing.</p> <p>Pg8 Vale Royal District Council is now part of Cheshire West and Chester Council.</p> <p>Pg8 Use of word “currently” means document dates quickly – suggest re-phrasing.</p> <p>Pg8 Need to give document references and evidence sources for IMD data and other Data.</p> <p>Pg9 Need to add reference for “greenway proposals”, i.e. Unitary Development Plan Policy (?).</p> <p>Pg9 Para 2.2: suggest could diagrammatically illustrate extent of countryside (and access) in Widnes and Runcorn to illustrate discussion.</p> <p>Pg9 Para 2.3.1: Halton is generally well served by open space provision, with excesses in some places (see Open Space Study 2004 and PPG17 typologies).</p> <p>Pg9 Suggest could like concept of “green corridors” to that of “green infrastructure” – relatively new concept, planning have further information or see www.greeninfrastructurenw.org.uk/</p> <p>Pg10 Para 2.4.2: what is the evidence to suggest that increased congestion is as a result of town centre regeneration?</p> <p>Pg12 Suggest could add section on emerging Core Strategy (in due course, depending on timetable for final ROWIP document).</p> <p>Pg13 Need to add reference to adopted Regional Spatial Strategy, part of the Council’s statutory development plan (published Sept 2008, replacing</p>	<p>Reference inserted as footnote on pg 7</p> <p>Pg7 1.6 Correction made already.</p> <p>Alterations made document now PRoW and ROWIP throughout.</p> <p>No Action required – this is an accepted term used by organisations and users. It is used in a number of other documents and leaflets produced by other bodies not just Halton.</p> <p>Alteration made to paragraph 2.1.1.</p> <p>Para 2.1.3 – word currently removed.</p> <p>Reference inserted as footnote on pg 9</p> <p>Para 2.2.3 amended.</p> <p>Unable to provide this information at this time. Comment noted for future documents/updates.</p> <p>Para 2.3.1 amended to reflect this.</p> <p>No action required.</p> <p>No Action – This was identified in Halton’s LTP2 parapgraph 3.1.5, p24.</p> <p>New paragraph 3.2.1.4 inserted relating to Halton’s Core Strategy.</p> <p>New section 3.3 Regional Policy added to document.</p>
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		<p>RPG13 see >documents/?page_id=4&category_id=275)and")</p> <p>Pg14 Wouldn't necessarily agree that PPG / PPS documents can assist in the development of the ROWIP, more that they provide the overarching national planning policy framework.</p> <p>Pg16/17 Question whether there is a need for a more explicit reference to opportunities afforded by the MG Project at this stage in the document?</p> <p>Pg22 (and after) Policy boxes sit slightly awkwardly within the text, is there some way of integrating them?</p> <p>Pg26 Specialist equestrian terms e.g. "hack out" may not be understandable for the lay reader</p> <p>Pg33 "Return Home" section is incomplete</p> <p>Pg35 Para 5.1.1: information is at odds with that presented regarding population numbers in the Borough earlier in the document.</p> <p>Pg51 Shropshire or Wiltshire Council – is this an inconsistency?</p> <p>Pg53 What is the Greenways Study? Is there a document reference?</p> <p>Pg54 English Partnerships is now part of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)</p>	<p>Comment noted para 3.4.6 amended to reflect this.</p> <p>Amendment made to 6.7.2.4 which clarifies the opportunities offered by the Mersey Gateway.</p> <p>This comment has been discussed and it was consequently agreed that no action was required at this stage.</p> <p>No Action required.</p> <p>This section is complete.</p> <p>Para 2.1.3 states the population figures for 2007 as reported in The State of the Borough in Halton – An economic, Social and Environmental Audit of Halton (January 2008). Pg 35 clearly states/clarifies that the statistics used within the report are based on the 2001 census population figure.</p> <p>There is no inconsistency. Para 6.3.11.2 is correct Wiltshire was chosen along with Cheshire to act as one of the pilot areas in the initial lead phase in July 2004. However, para 6.3.11.4 is also correct. Over the years the programme was rolled out to cover other areas. This paragraph reflects the results reported 6 years on at the point when the project folded. However, this paragraph has been altered to avoid confusion.</p> <p>The Greenways Study is referenced in paragraph 2.2.3.</p> <p>Alteration made in paragraph 6.6.3.1.</p>
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APPENDIX 2

		<p>Pg59-62 Maps need keys and references. Also might be helpful for maps to have some spatial context (roads and railways are helpful) to show relative location of routes.</p> <p>Pg62-64 Would it be possible to show the routes described on a map? Would be easier for the lay reader to understand their location and would also illustrate connectivity between them</p> <p>Pg65 Don't know whether I would say we have "strategic" links to Manchester Airport, though definitely to Liverpool.</p> <p>Pg65 Suggest need more information about the MGSTS here?</p> <p>Pg66 Para 6.7.3.2: brackets inconsistency</p> <p>Pg69 Para 6.7.5: should this section also include the Bridgewater Canal?</p> <p>Pg72 Para 6.9.1: Regional Parks info is out of date, see new RSS policy (RSS replaces adopted RPG13).</p> <p>Pg73 Is Coastal Trail a regional Park? Sounds a bit confusing</p> <p>Pg74 Not sure about this, but is the Upper Mersey Valley a designated regional park yet or just an area of search?</p> <p>Pg99 Some sections of bibliography are out-of-date and need expanding to</p>	<p>Keys have been added to the maps. The Definitive Map is currently being reviewed and updated and there are a number of anomalies and errors on it that need addressing. The other maps are also works in progress and the actual routes some of the paths will take have not been finalised. Therefore the maps are only indicative and spatial detail has been deliberately left out so as not to cause unnecessary concerns to property/landowners. Throughout the life of the document these issues will be addressed and more detailed plans recording routes/areas will be made available.</p> <p>Comment noted – No Action at this time.</p> <p>Comment noted – No Action required.</p> <p>Narrative provided by Mersey Gateway Team inserted at this point.</p> <p>Brackets removed.</p> <p>No the Bridgewater Canal is not relevant in the context of this section.</p> <p>No Action required – Paragraph 6.9.1 provides the background information on how the regional parks came about and what projects emerged across the North West. More detailed information is not required within the scope of this document.</p> <p>The North West Coastal trail was one of the Regional Park projects that emerged for the North West.</p> <p>No Action required.</p> <p>Bibliography updated.</p>
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		<p>include other docs referenced e.g. national planning policy.</p> <p>General - Suggest document could benefit with a few more pictures and maps throughout to break up the text.</p> <p>General – There is some repetition of information throughout which is fine to make each chapter internally coherent but could be cut to shorten the document.</p>	<p>The final document will have additional pictures inserted to break up the text. This wasn't considered necessary for the draft to keep printing costs down, and to enable circulation by email where requested.</p> <p>No Action at this time due to deadlines.</p>
<p>John Watkin North and Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society</p>		<p>I have scanned through your draft ROWIP. My initial observations are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No Mention is made of the definitive map and path statements. It is up to date? Is it available to the general public? How can we get hold of a copy? 2. Although reference is made to disabled access there are no definitions of the standards Halton will work to too meet DDA95/05. 3. Where you will get resources from and will it be sufficient to meet your statutory duties? 4. No mention is made about liaison with LAF's or even a local access forum. Both Warrington and Cheshire find these committees very useful. 	<p>These comments where sent to Steve Eccles rather than myself and although they say they are on the ROWIP I think they might actually refer to the SEA as most of the issues are referenced and addressed by the Plan.</p> <p>The plan outlines the situation regarding the Definitive Map and Statement for Halton in paragraphs 6.3.9.2 and 6.3.12. The plan addresses this issue through Strategic Aim 1 (To Maintain an accurate and up-to-date Definitive Map and Statement).</p> <p>Specific standards are not identified as they may change throughout the 10 year life of the plan. Therefore standards will be applied on a path by path basis according to the latest advice.</p> <p>The Council has already spent and committed substantial sums of money on the PRoW network during LTP1 & 2 and it is intended that our commitment will continue, subject to resources being made available.</p> <p>The plan refers to LAF's in paragraph 3.3.5 Local Access Forum. LAF's are also listed as partners in Actions L5, T7, T8, P6 and CB7. This list is not exhaustive as the Local Access Forum will be consulted/liased with whenever necessary.</p>

		5. No mention is made of volunteer groups to help maintain the PROWs.	The plan references this through paragraphs 5.2.8, 5.2.9, 5.2.10 and Action H5.
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