RIGHTS OF WAY
Improvement Plan

Kent
County
Council
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Foreword

Welcome to Kent County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). The plan sets out our objectives for Kent's Public Rights of Way (PROW) network and wider public access for the next 10 years.

I have been very pleased to see how the Public Rights of Way and Access Service and partners have managed to translate the previous plan into well informed and tangible projects. I have been called upon to cut the ceremonial ribbon on a number of occasions to celebrate projects that have contributed to the health and well-being of the public, supported the rural and visitor economy of Kent and provided alternative sustainable travel options to the car. All of these projects have contributed to delivering unparalleled access to Kent's wonderful and diverse countryside and coast.

This plan is founded on detailed research, analysis and consultation with the public and stakeholders. It sets out the very positive outcomes that are delivered through having an extensive 6,900 km of Rights of Way network, access to quality greenspace, the coast and as a high amenity alternative to footways and roads in the urban environment. The scale of the response received reflects the great value that Kent residents and stakeholders attach to being able to access the county's countryside and coast and the passion that they hold for it. It also reflects that the work of the PROW and Access Service over the past 10 years has been in the right direction, providing extensive improvements to the network. This plan provides a mandate to continue to build on these achievements over the next 10 years.

This plan is both ambitious and realistic about the challenges that Kent and wider society face. Delivery of the plan will contribute significantly to making Kent a healthy, prosperous and enjoyable place in which to live.

Mike Hill OBE -
Cabinet Member for
Community and
Regulatory Services

Our Vision

"To provide a high quality, well-maintained Public Rights of Way network, that is well used and enjoyed. The use of the network will support the Kent economy, encourage active lifestyles and sustainable travel choices that support health and wellbeing, and contribute to making Kent a great place to live, work and visit ".

Introduction

Kent County Council has a duty to prepare a ROWIP under Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and to update the plan every 10 years. The revision of the Kent ROWIP provides an opportunity to take a more integrated view of the value of the rights of way network in fulfilling the needs of the communities of Kent.

In the period 2007 – 2017 the County Council delivered a wealth of improvements to the PROW network despite the extremely challenging financial climate. This is a plan that aims to secure the best possible outcomes with the resource that is available, accepting that the current limitations on resources are set to continue. It seeks to address the future needs of Kent's PROW users through the delivery of a range of actions over the next decade.

Kent County Council's PROW and Access Service is committed to working to deliver the positive outcomes identified in the plan and has looked for innovative ways to improve the PROW network in the face of financial challenges. We aim to create a network that not only provides a safe, sustainable means of travel but also delivers the benefits that access to the network, countryside, coast and green spaces can make to improve the quality of life for Kent's residents and visitors.

The PROW network is free to all users regardless of age, race or gender and provides physical and mental health and wellbeing benefits to all. The plan will aim to encourage use of the network through the promotion of these important benefits.

The plan assesses the extent to which the PROW network meets the present and likely future need to the public in:

• **contributing towards more sustainable development;**
• **delivering active travel options;**
• **providing opportunities for exercise, leisure and open-air recreation.**

The plan will also look to address the accessibility issues and other barriers that the visually impaired, those with mobility problems and under-represented groups face when using the PROW network.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan Process

The PROW and Access Service team have followed the statutory process to create the plan, following relevant guidance and advice. The plan was completed in five stages:

1) **Review of the ROWIP 2007 – 2017 (pages 8 – 9).**

2) **Review of current policy, strategies, academic studies and completion of market research (pages 10 – 17).**

3) **Analysis of current provision, spatial data and future demand (pages 18 – 29).**

4) **Identification of key themes (pages 6 – 7).**

5) **Delivery Plan and Statement of Actions (30 – 41).**

The plan is therefore structured around the outcomes of each of these five stages. The research and analysis completed has given us further insight into the current needs and priorities of Kent's PROW network users. Six broad themes emerged, which are set out in the next section. The themes are not in order of priority or importance, each has a main objective and a number of actions and benefits which are detailed in the Delivery Plan – Statement of Actions.

The research and analysis has provided a strong validation for the work of the Service in delivering projects under the 2007-17 ROWIP. It tells us that the needs and priorities of Kent's PROW network users have not significantly changed since 2007.

Key Themes

Active lifestyles

The health and wellbeing benefits of physical activity are well recognised, especially when the activity takes place in areas of countryside and green space. This theme aims to encourage active lifestyles through making changes to the network to accommodate active travel and encourage leisure and recreational use.

We will aim to contribute towards tackling health issues and inequalities through improving access to the natural environment and green spaces.

We will promote use particularly in deprived areas where existing access is low and where there are poor health outcomes.

Evolution of the network

The need for the PROW network to evolve and to meet the future demand from Kent's growing population was identified and is well understood. Well planned new provision, including green infrastructure is required to facilitate sustainable travel patterns, with the PROW network providing an important element of this infrastructure.

The PROW network is required to evolve not to only withstand the pressures from increased use but also to provide a high quality facility to encourage a modal shift to walking and cycling; in this way the PROW network is a key contributor to getting people out of their cars to take on more active travel for everyday journeys and for recreation and leisure.

Knowing what's out there

Results from the market research showed that the most common barrier preventing use of the network is lack of information. People want to know where routes are and where they will take them.

We will continue to break down these barriers and encourage new users to the network as well as increasing current use, through targeting information, improving signage and improving provision around key leisure and recreational facilities.

Well-maintained network

Maintenance was the most common theme to emerge from our market research when we asked our customers what issues they had encountered on the PROW network. Overgrown vegetation and poor maintenance were the top answers received from stakeholders, Kent residents and online groups. Poor maintenance acted as a significant barrier, stopping people from using the network, especially for a higher percentage of the older age groups (55+). With Kent's ageing population this is a barrier we as a Service will aim to reduce.

The well-maintained network theme will improve and increase the current maintenance of the network through further targeted vegetation clearance, signage and surfacing to encourage and increase use. Maintenance on locally important strategic routes will be prioritised.

Rights with responsibilities

The PROW and Access Service has a statutory duty to ensure the network is recorded, protected and maintained. It is important that we work with the landowning community in ensuring statutory compliance and in delivering improvements to the network. We advise on and where appropriate, progress applications to amend the PROW network in the interest of the public and/or the landowner.

The PROW and Access Service will continue to promote responsible use by the public when exercising their rights.

Efficient delivery

The review of previous ROWIP's and the analysis of market research has provided us with an insight of our customers' needs and priorities.

Access to new information and advances in available technology will help us build on the significant and innovative developments already made by the PROW and Access Service.

Reflections on the delivery of ROWIP's 2007 -17

During the first phase of the production of this plan, we reviewed what had been achieved through the delivery of the award winning ROWIP 2007-2017 and the Countryside and Coastal Access Improvement Plan 2013 – 2017.

A full report 'Review of the ROWIP 2007 – 2017' providing further details of the PROW and Access Service's achievements over the last decade forms part of the evidence base and is available online and on request.
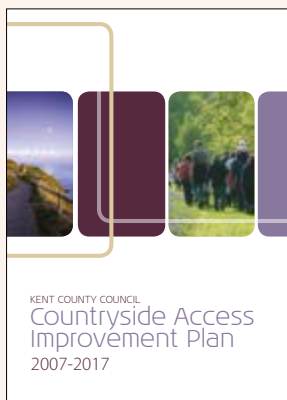
Adoption of asset management principles enabled better planned programmes of maintenance and resulted in lower levels of reporting for some elements of the asset.

Requirements attached to the regime of agricultural subsidies delivered higher levels of compliance by the agricultural community and reduced levels of reported obstructions to the PROW network by agricultural activity. Changes to the regime have the potential to deliver further benefits in the next plan period.

The adoption of a policy of least restrictive access and the removal of existing stiles, where this could be negotiated, has delivered a network that is now 70% stile free. This activity could be better targeted to deliver further improvements in accessibility.

The creation of coherent networks of higher status routes for horse riders and cyclists remains a significant challenge, particularly away from economic growth areas. Greater consideration needs to be given to using existing roads and verges to reduce the fragmentation of the network of bridleways, cycle tracks and byways.

There has been some truly innovative work completed to inform the public about the network and encourage use. In terms of securing health benefits, activity must be targeted at, and communicated in a way that encourages use by those communities where poor health outcomes are prevalent. We cannot place too great a reliance on on-line communication.

Housing and business development in the county placed significant pressure on the PROW and Access Service, but it also provided significant opportunities to secure improvements to the network, particularly connectivity, asset renewal and provision for higher rights users.

Nuisance use of PROW network is an issue raised by many stakeholders and users and generally reflects wider issues within society. There is a role for the Kent Countryside Access Forum in promoting understanding between different stakeholders and responsible use of PROW network by the public.

The Service will need to continue to embrace new technology and improve existing systems if it is to maintain or improve levels of customer service.

Policy Context

The importance of the PROW network, the countryside, riverside, coast and publicly accessible green space is recognised in many national and local strategies and is afforded strong protection in law. An estimated 4000 individual statutes, regulations and judgements have a direct relevance to its protection, use and development.

The 'Strategy and Policy Review' provides a detailed overview of associated strategy and policy forms part of the evidence base available online and on request.

Delivering Kent's Priorities

Due to the wide-reaching work of the PROW and Access Service, the ROWIP directly contributes to the delivery of many Kent policies and strategies, some of these are Kent County Council's and others are those of partner organisations. The diagram below shows the policies and strategies that share common objectives to the ROWIP.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2018-2028

- Kent & Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework
- Vision for Kent
- KCC Strategic Statement
- Inclusive Transport Strategy
- Local Transport Plan 4
- District Cycling Strategies
- Active Travel Strategy
- AONB Management Plans
- Towards an Active County
- Neighbour-hood Plans
- Equality & Human Rights Policy and Objectives
- Green infrastructure Plans
- Unlocking Kent's Cultural Potential
- Local Plans and Core Strategies
- Kent Environment Strategy
- Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Unlocking Kent's Potential
- Kent Rural Delivery Framework
- Kent Children's and Young persons Plan
- Visitor Economy Strategies and Destination Management Plan

Benefits of Using the Public Rights of Way Network

Credit: photoJB/Sustrans

There is a large and growing body of evidence about the benefits of physical activity and access to green space and coast, of which the PROW network and access land are key components. The network provides important social, recreational and sustainable travel options which support Kent's economy. This section provides a summary of the evidence gathered from the Policy and Literature Review.

The 'Policy and Literature Review ' provides detailed information on the benefits of the PROW network, forms part of the evidence base and is available online and on request.

Health and Wellbeing

- Being physically active can help towards the prevention of at least 20 different chronic health conditions, including coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, type 2 diabetes and mental health problems[1].

- Physical inactivity costs Kent £306 million and 300 premature deaths each year[2].

- NHS Digital statistics show 18,442 patients had a condition where obesity was a factor during 2016/17, compared to 14,032 the previous year - a 31% increase; around half of Kent's 1.5 million population are now said to be overweight or obese, creating huge pressure on the NHS[3].

- Increasing evidence suggests that one of the most efficient ways to manage mental health issues is through physical activity, especially in the natural environment which is associated with greater feelings of revitalisation, increased energy and decreases in tension, confusion, anger, and depression[4].

- The benefits of exercise in the natural environment happen almost immediately: only 5 minutes of exposure improves self-esteem and mood, irrespective of gender, age and health status[5].

- Health and wellbeing outcomes have historically been poorly integrated with spatial planning, creating places that do not support people to improve their health through regular activity such as walking or cycling, or which contribute to poor health through high levels of road pollution, for example[6].

- Health & wellbeing is also improved through regular horse riding[7]. It is particularly relevant to the under 16s and women over the age of 45 who would otherwise be sedentary. There is no significant difference in activity up until the age of 75.

The ROWIP has a significant role to play in helping to deliver health and wellbeing benefits and will aim to contribute to redressing some of the spatial planning deficiencies and health inequalities throughout Kent.

1   (Department of Health/Chief Medical Officers, 2011)
2   (UK Active, 2014)
3   (Kent Messenger Published 5th (April 2018))
4   (Thompson Coon, et al., 2011)
5   (Barton & Pretty, What is the best dose of nature and green exercise for improving mental health? A multi-study analysis, 2010)
6   (Barton H. , 2009), (Building Health Foundation, 2009)
7   (Barton H. , 2009), (Building Health Foundation, 2009)

Sustainable Travel Encouraging Active Lifestyles

- Walking and cycling as a means of transport to reach a destination, termed 'active travel', allows people to be physically active as part of their daily lives.

- Active travel brings a range of health and wellbeing benefits (as detailed on page 12), reducing traffic congestion, air pollution and outputs of climate change gases.

- Physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development, it increases cognitive outcomes and school attainment, and improves social interaction and confidence[8].

- In March 2018 the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published new guidance relating to the importance of physical activity in the local environment and how the PROW and cycle network and public open space can help facilitate active lifestyles.

- A lack of routes, poor availability of information about routes, concerns over safety and the speed and convenience of motorised transport can all act as barriers to people choosing active travel.[9]

The ROWIP will aim to encourage active lifestyles through:
- better promotion of the existing network;
- addressing barriers that prevent use;
- working in partnership with planning authorities and developers to create well-designed, accessible environments that encourage active travel and walking, cycling and horse riding as leisure and recreational pursuits.

Supporting Rural Economy and Economic Growth

- Kent's transport network is a vital element in facilitating economic growth and supporting the demands of a rising population.

- A well planned green infrastructure which promotes and encourages sustainable and active travel is required and the PROW network is a significant element of this.

- Working with local authorities and developers in the context of Local Plans and the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF) to identify growth areas and the infrastructure needed to accommodate this growth until 2031, we can work towards more sustainable travel patterns in Kent.

- Tourism is an important industry for Kent, with the total tourism value estimated at £3.6 billion in 2015, supporting just under 52,000 full time equivalent jobs[10].

- Kent's landscape is a key tourist attractor: it offers one of the longest coastlines in the UK, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the North Downs Way and England Coast Path national trails.

- The Natural England Monitoring Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) data indicates an average spend when visiting the countryside of £6.44 per visit; with an estimated total spend of £20bn in England between March 2014 and February 2015[11].

The ROWIP can help contribute towards a robust infrastructure that enables development and encourage economic growth leading to regeneration and attraction of new businesses. The ROWIP has a significant role in supporting sustainable economic growth, directly contributing to transport, green infrastructure and open spaces; three areas identified in Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework as critical to support growth in the period to 2031.

The ROWIP as a statutory document can inform, support and add weight to policies within Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

Sustainable rural leisure and tourism is a key way to support the socio-economic well-being of rural areas, providing jobs and supporting community services. The PROW network and the ROWIP has a critical role in this.

8   (All-Party Parliamentary Commission on Physical Activity, 2014)
9   (Lee & Moudon, 2004), (Kent County Council, 2017, Active Travel Strategy (draft))
10 Visit Kent (2016), Economic Impact of Tourism – Kent – 2015 Results.
11 Natural England – Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment Technical Report, May 2017.

Market Research & Stakeholder Engagement

Market research was used to gather information from our customers and stakeholders to understand their priorities and needs and how the network currently meets demand. The research also helped to determine how the network must evolve to meet future requirements for residents and visitors, providing services accessible to all people within the community. Through analysis of the information gathered, common themes emerged. These themes were used to guide the ROWIP's delivery plan and statement of actions.

The 'Market Research and Stakeholder Report Summary' forms part of the evidence base and is available online and on request.

Key Findings

PROW Use

- The top two most popular reasons for using the PROW and cycle network were: 'to go for a walk / run / cycle / be active / healthy' and 'visiting nature / wildlife'.
- Using PROW to take children to school or getting to work scored relatively low in our research with less than 10% using the network for this purpose. There is clearly potential to encourage increased use of the PROW network for this purpose, particularly given extensive and often high amenity PROW networks within urban areas.
- Our research showed that the vast majority of PROW users experienced positive feelings relating to vitality and happiness when using the network, showing how valuable the network is in improving our quality of life through health and wellbeing.

Barriers to PROW Use

- The top three issues that were stopping PROW use were: overgrown vegetation, cleanliness / unpleasant environment and poor maintenance of paths.
- Lack of information acted as a greater barrier for the younger age groups than older demographic.
- There was a lower frequency of PROW use for those who indicated that they had a disability when compared to those who did not, with only 11% with a disability using the footpaths at least once a week compared to 38% of able bodied users.
- The older age groups (55+) found poor maintenance of stiles/gates and surface, overgrown vegetation and difficult terrain the biggest barriers.
- Fragmentation of the PROW network, especially for higher status routes, and the volume of motorised traffic on connecting highways raises safety concerns and makes the network inaccessible.
- In line with previous Sustrans research, we found that use of cycle path / tracks was higher amongst males (33%) when compared to females (22%). Sustrans have identified the need to provide cycle paths / tracks separated from traffic to get more women cycling.

Encouraging PROW Use

- PROW non-users were less confident in their knowledge of PROW. In other words, there was a correlation between increased use of PROW and greenspace and the provision of information. Those with good access to online PROW information demonstrated higher levels of use for activities like horse riding, visiting viewpoints /attractions and geocaching. Findings showed that increased knowledge improved confidence and encouraged use.

- The top three answers to 'what will encourage use of the PROW network', related to information: knowing where routes will take me, knowing where routes are and improving signage and waymarking on routes.

- There was a correlation between age groups and the type of information they use; younger age groups 16 – 44 demonstrated a willingness to use phone apps, those over 55 used maps and guides.

- Factors identified to encourage use were: cutting back vegetation and improving cleanliness (removal of litter, animal fouling and graffiti). For the non-user groups the top two responses were 'knowing where the routes are' and 'knowing where the routes will take me'.

- Improvements to the reporting system were highlighted through the research with 60% of the stakeholder group saying that improvements relating to customer service were needed. The top three methods chosen for reporting a problem on the network were online, by phone and using a phone app, with 51% of the non-stakeholders expressing a preference for making reports by phone.

Evolution of the PROW Network

Through stakeholder engagement the following were identified as key ways in which the PROW network needs to evolve to meet future demands:

- Increase provision of traffic free routes as a safe and sustainable alternative to car travel.

- Provide links to places of work, schools and other amenities.

- Provide good circular and promoted routes for leisure and tourism.

- Remove barriers and replace stiles with gaps or gates.

- Introduce strategies and policies to ensure connectivity of the network through the consideration of PROW within new development and within transport plans.

- Protect, enhance, expand and integrate the PROW network. With the limited resources available, focus on priority routes which are promoted or provide primary access to amenities.

Credit: Photo/Wheels for All

Blind, Partially Sighted and Limited Mobility Access

Through stakeholder engagement the following were identified as key ways in which the PROW network needs to evolve to meet future demands:

- Improvements to the physical network were identified, specifically:

  Remove barriers where feasible.

  Provide smoother, wider, all-weather surfaced routes with tactile entrances.

  Use large, clear print signage on routes.

- Information facilitates informed decision making about route choice.

Improving the Accessibility to Woodland including for Equestrians and Cyclists

Through stakeholder engagement the following were identified as key ways in which the PROW network needs to evolve to meet future demands:

• Resilient surfaces are required to sustain cycle and equestrian use and to avoid conflict between users.

• A strategic overview is required to identify opportunities for cyclists and equestrians, including consideration of new bridleway routes and better connections to other PROW and the wider highway network.

• The importance of well signed, well maintained routes with improved surfaces and no stiles.

• The provision of parking at accessible woodland sites is important for those that do not live close to woodlands.

The ROWIP will use the information gathered through the market research and engagement to enhance the identification of future projects most likely to deliver positive outcomes and to inform policy and design. We will continue to build on partnerships with stakeholders over the next 10 years; ensuring delivery is aligned to our customers' needs.

Under-represented Groups

Studies have shown that people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, disabled people and younger age groups visit the countryside less frequently. The market research also showed an under representation for these specific groups. Details of the market research demographic results are included in 'The Current Network - Use and Provision' document.

'The Current Network – Use and Provision' forms part of the evidence base and is available online and on request.

People with a Disability

The term disability covers a range of conditions and impairments, each condition or impairment has a different effect on the individual's confidence and ability to use the PROW network.

• The MENE research has shown that 18% of people with a disability never visit the natural environment, compared with 8% of the non-disabled population. Reasons for not visiting the countryside are related to their condition, with 'old age', 'poor health' and 'a physical disability' given by 92% of respondents.[12]

• Providing a network for people with different disabilities proves challenging, as different requirements often result in conflict between users e.g. where a tactile pavement required by a visually impaired user is unsuitable to a wheelchair user.

• The results from the market research showed that respondents who said they were 'confident and had a basic knowledge' were significantly lower amongst those who indicated that they have a disability.

The PROW and Access Service has a good record of working closely with disabled user groups making improvements to the network. We will continue to improve routes for different types of disabled users. Following initial contact during the analysis stage of the plan, we will keep communication open with specialist user groups to share information about newly accessible routes.

We will continue to liaise with these groups and organisations to ensure the design of schemes meets their needs. We will refine guidance for specific user groups, which we will share with planners and developers.

[12] Natural England Monitoring Engagement with the Natural Environment – 2015 : 'old age' 26%, 'poor health' 42% and 'a physical disability' 34%

Under-represented Age Groups

• Other under-represented groups that are less likely to visit the countryside, are the younger and older age ranges.

• MENE research shows that those aged between 19 and 25 and those over the age of 65 were least likely to have visited the outdoors in the previous 7 days. The results from the market research also showed that the 16 – 24 age group were underrepresented.

• Market research results highlighted that younger age groups were less likely to be interested in using the PROW network or take alternative transport. It showed that a lack of information acted as more of a barrier for the younger age groups.

Breaking down barriers preventing use through better promotion, sharing of information and increasing knowledge & confidence of the PROW network will encourage these under-represented groups to visit the countryside. We will continue to provide information at gateways to the PROW network, such as country parks, to encourage wider exploration.

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Groups

• MENE research has shown that BAME populations who do visit the outdoors are more likely to visit urban locations and places closer to home.

• A higher proportion of Kent's ethnic population live in urban Dartford and Gravesend where the cost of travel, time and transport issues need to be considered when accessing the countryside. There is great value in designing housing developments where access to greenspace is available, and where access to established communities, the wider countryside and coast is retained or created.

• Overcoming barriers is key to encouraging use for these under-represented groups. The DEFRA report 'Outdoors for All?' [13] suggests various actions which include making sure promotional material is available in a range of formats and languages, avoiding stereotypes, working in partnership with a range of organisations and establishing community outreach organisations extending staff and volunteer awareness and diversifying the volunteer profile.

The PROW and Access service will continue to seek improvements in making information more accessible to increase knowledge & confidence for all under-represented groups.

[13] Outdoors for All? Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2008)

Current Resource, Provision and Use

Public Rights of Way Resource

There are a range of resources that the PROW and Access Service has at its disposal including staff, allocated budget, volunteers, PROW asset and funding raised through external sources. In the case of the latter we have had success in securing funds for improvements to the network from developer contributions through requesting Section 106 Agreements, the Single Growth Fund, PASSAGE project, Tesco's Bags of Help and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Staff and Volunteers

The PROW and Access Service has 22 full time equivalent staff members who are assisted by the Countryside Access Wardens, Kent Countryside Access Forum and various volunteers and volunteer groups who carry out a range of work from vegetation clearance, gate and step installation to completing surveys and historic research.

Volunteers are the eyes and ears in the communities of Kent and the Countryside Access Wardens are integral to the PROW and Access Service in helping keep the network free of obstructions and signposted. The Kent

Scheme is innovative and popular in that it allows volunteers to work in their own time and report back to us on their activity and findings.

Partners

There are a wide range of organisations and services that are active in the management of Kent's countryside and coast and have much to contribute towards the improvement of the PROW network. Partnership working with these organisations and services is key to the delivery of this plan.

Some of our key partners include Countryside Management Partnerships, Country Parks, District, Borough and Parish Councils, English Heritage, Explore Kent, Forestry Commission, High Weald AONB, Kent Downs AONB, KCC Highways Transportation and Waste, MOD, National Trust, Natural England, user and interest groups (listed in the glossary on page 43), Visit Kent and the Woodland Trust.

Public Rights of Way Network

Like the rest of England and Wales, Kent has a network of paths which are protected in law and known as PROW. These paths form a unique resource freely available to the public to explore the countryside and coast and provide important links between and within Kent's communities.

This section provides a summary of the current PROW network and access opportunities available to Kent's residents and visitors, looking specifically at links to areas of green space, transport hubs and growth.

Kent has a 6900km network of public rights of way. The percentage of higher status paths including Byways, Restricted Byways and Bridleways is lower than the national average, with only 16.65% of the network available to equestrians and cyclists and less still, 5.5 %, available to carriage drivers and 3.35% to motor vehicles. The table below shows the total length of PROW network available at the time this document was written.

A detailed overview 'The Current Network (Use and Provision)' forms part of the evidence base and is available online and on request.

Current Provision	PROW Length (km)	Footpaths (km)	Bridleways (km)	Restricted Byways (km)	BOATs (km)
2017	6898	5748	764	149	231

Public Rights of Way Asset

The PROW network asset comprises many elements, some of which are entirely the responsibility of the County Council, such as surface maintenance, fingerposts, waymark posts, safety barriers and many of the bridges. Other elements are the responsibility of landowners.

The value of the asset based on current replacement costs for those elements for which the County Council is responsible, is calculated at £108 million, with an annual capital and revenue requirement of £2.4 million to maintain the asset in an optimum condition.

The County Council formally adopted asset management principles for the management of the PROW network on the 8 February 2008. This approach has been beneficial in establishing the resources required to meet the County Council's statutory obligations in respect of:

i   maintaining the PROW network;

ii   identifying priorities for expenditure, and;

iii allowing procurement decisions and the standards adopted for the asset to be rigorously tested so as to achieve best value.

Key to the delivery of the positive outcomes set out in the ROWIP is the ability to take informed decisions about the PROW asset and where investment is best made to both comply with the County's statutory obligations and deliver the greatest return in respect of positive outcomes. It also enables informed decisions to be taken around design and investment commitments required to address pressure arising from climate change. The PROW and Access Service developed a simple cost benefit analysis tool, the 'Intelligent Investment Tool' to facilitate informed decision making.

The 'PROW and Access Service's Asset Management Plan' is updated on a regular basis and forms part of the evidence base available online and on request.

Removing Barriers

The use of stiles on the network as a means of stock control acts as a barrier to PROW users. People with a wide range of mobility issues from wheelchairs users, ambulant disability, those who are elderly or those with young families may find stiles impassable or difficult to use.

Figure 1 highlights how this element of the PROW asset has changed over the last decade, with the number of stiles reducing and access to the network improving as a result.

Figure 1 - Asset Shift

No. of asset

Year	Stiles	Gates
2007	12725	5751
2012	9706	8408
2017	7837	10037

YEAR

■ Stiles ■ Gates
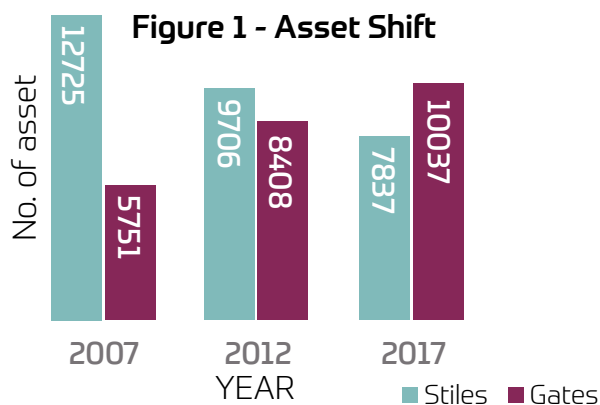
Access to Green Space

In addition to the PROW network, there are approximately 12,480 hectares of publicly accessible green space in Kent. Evidence around the health and wellbeing benefits provided by access to green space are well documented. Areas of accessible green space include Country Parks, Forestry Commission land, Woodland Trust land, Village Greens, Common Land and Open Access Land.

The Kent Nature Partnership's Health and Nature subgroup produced a natural green space needs assessment, which identified those areas where there is both a low prevalence of the population being physically active and a low level of natural green space provision.[14]   The Marmot Review[15] also recognised the importance of good quality open and green space in tackling health inequality and recognised that the availability and quality of access to green space is not evenly distributed, with those in deprived urban areas often having less access to health-improving green space.

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[14] (Bennett, Davies, Hodgson, Pett, & Witts, 2016)
[15] Fair Society, Healthy Lives (The Marmot Review) (2010)

Access to the Coast

Following the introduction of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, the County Council has been working in partnership with Natural England to establish the Kent stretches of the England Coast Path. This is a new National Trail walking route that will eventually circumnavigate the entire English coastline. In addition to the creation of a linear walking route, the project secures access rights for the public to explore beaches and land along the coastline – known as 'spreading room'.

When the National Trail is complete, the path will be approximately 2,700 miles long, making it one of the longest promoted coastal walking routes in the world. Due to the scale of the project, the trail is being developed in stretches around the country. The first stretches of the Coast Path in Kent, between Ramsgate and Camber, were opened to the public on the 19 July 2016. This provided a 106 km (66 mile) trail, connecting coastal communities and bringing tourism opportunities to the region. Work is currently in progress to develop the remaining stretches of coast path along the North Kent coast, which are planned to be open to the public by 2020.

Current Use and Value

The PROW and Access Service often uses 'counters' as a measure of the use of a route prior to and after improvement. There are further tools such as Outdoor Recreation Valuation (ORVal), Walkability and Propensity to Cycle tools that are also available.

Welfare Value

The ORVal tool is a map-based web application. It provides further evidence of the value and benefits that are derived from publicly accessible space and the PROW network. ORVal shows usage and welfare values that are generated by accessible green space either as an individual site or as a region. The welfare refers to sense of wellbeing or utility that each person feels as a result of their experience. The welfare value for green space is the figure for the monetary equivalent of the welfare enjoyed by a person as a result of having access to green space. The welfare value can be used when applying cost-benefit analysis to assess future planning applications and projects that impact on the PROW network and other accessible green space. It is supported by DEFRA and endorsed by the Treasury.

Physical Activity Data Tool

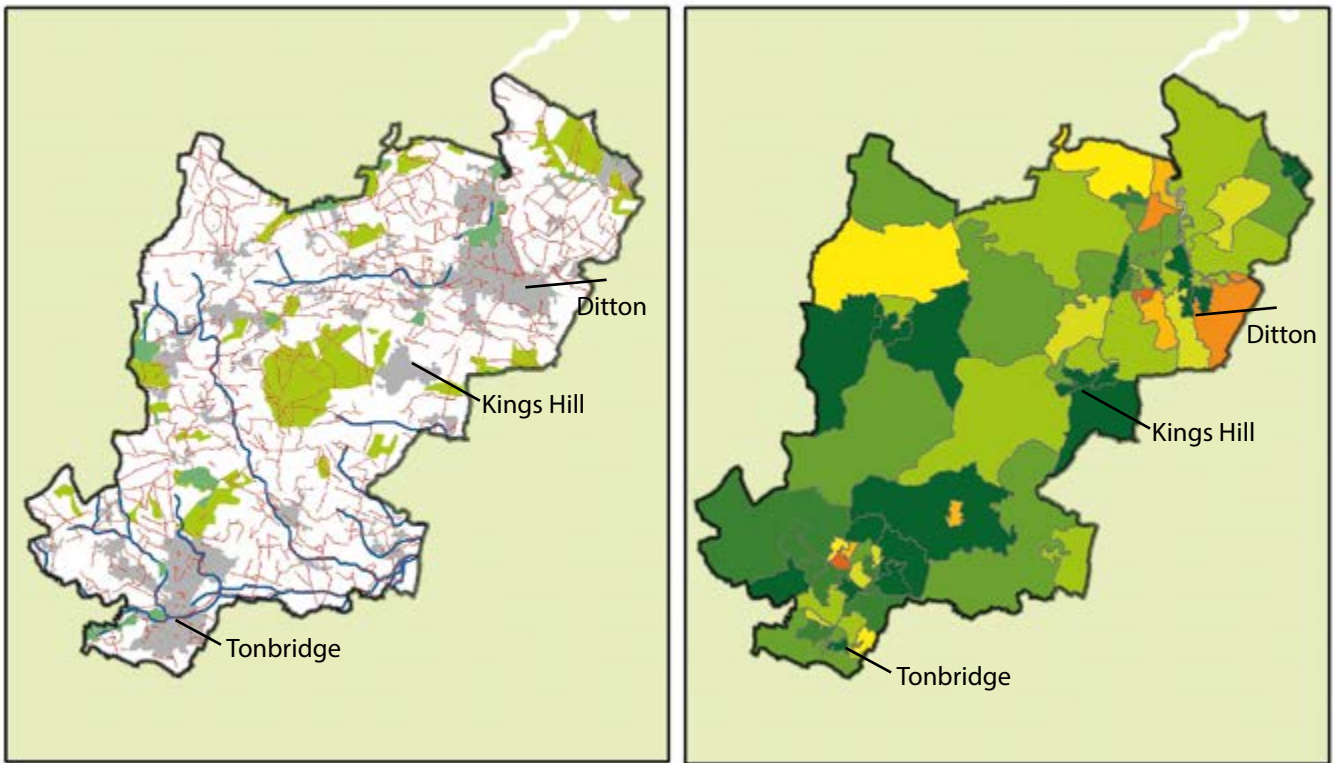The physical activity data tool published by Public Health England in April 2018, presents data on physical activities including walking and cycling with the aim of helping to promote physical activity, develop understanding and support the benchmarking, commissioning and improvement of services. It also includes information on related risk factors and conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

Kent Mental Health & Wellbeing Index

The Kent Mental Health & Wellbeing Index has been created from a wide range of aspects of wellbeing. Constructed at ward level, it provides an assessment of the relative assets and vulnerabilities of an area in respect of the mental health and wellbeing of the population within it.

In addition, the Propensity to Cycle Tool, Route Selection Tool and the Walking Route Audit Tool, as referenced in the Government's technical guidance for local cycling and walking infrastructure, help gauge the likely or relative level of use and can assist in directing investment decisions.

These assessments and data tools combined with available mapping can be used to prioritise areas for future action and investment, based on levels of population deprivation, size and need. They can be used by the PROW and Access Service to support strategic decision making with regard to service provision and to identify projects which focus on preventative action and with potential to deliver greatest value in health and wellbeing benefits.

Identifying Future Demand

It is important to look at how Kent's population is going to change in order to identify future demand and plan the Service's delivery over the next 10 years. This section summarises Kent's demographics, current travel patterns and growth and development areas and how the ROWIP intends to respond to the pressures and demands each place on the PROW network. What is clear is that if population in the county grows as predicted and house building keeps pace this decade will witness an unprecedented scale and pace of growth. Growth on this scale has the potential to bring with it increased demand and pressure on the PROW network.

Further information on these areas are available in 'The Current Network (Use and Provision)', which forms part of the evidence base and is available online and on request.

Kent's Population Demographics

"All regions of England are projected to see an increase in their population size over the next decade, with London, the East of England and South East projected to grow faster than the country as a whole. The population is also ageing with all regions seeing a faster growth in those aged 65 and over than in younger age groups." Suzie Dunsmith, Population Projections Unit, Office for National Statistics.

Kent's population is predicted to increase at an accelerated rate to the rest of the country, with the older age groups making up a larger percentage of the population than the younger groups. The Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework forecast shows an estimated population of 2,127,600 by 2031; an increase of 396,300 people, equivalent to a 23% growth in population from 2011 to 2031[16].

A predicted 178,600 homes are required in Kent between 2011 and 2031 to meet the housing demand.[17] A well-planned green infrastructure that protects important landscapes and access to amenities is key to creating sustainable communities. The demographics of Kent's population will also play an important role in making future decisions, targeting limited resources to deliver the best possible service to meet our customer's requirements and needs and deliver positive outcomes.

Current Travel Patterns

Information available from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Statistics Census 2011 on the ways that Kent's residents reach work, provides an important insight into travel patterns and where the PROW and Access Service can help encourage more sustainable options. Figure 2 (page 22) focuses on five specific modes of transport used in Kent. Driving to work is by far the most common method used. Although walking to work is the second most popular method for seven of Kent's districts, the remaining districts' second choice was to travel to work by train.

The distance to work can affect the method of travel chosen; people are more inclined to choose walking or cycling for shorter distances. Figure 3 (page 22) shows the distance travelled to work in each of Kent's districts, for a journey that is less than 10km. Encouraging people to leave their cars at home and use active travel methods for shorter journeys will not only provide health and wellbeing benefits to the participant, but will also have a positive impact on the local environment, contributing to reduced road congestion and better air quality. The provision of links that provide access to work, school and facilities is an essential element of a well-planned green infrastructure to facilitate sustainable and active travel.

Figure 2 - Method of travel to work

Source: ONS Statistics, census 2011

Driving a car or van ▪ Passenger in a car or van ▪ Bicycle ▪ On foot ▪ Train
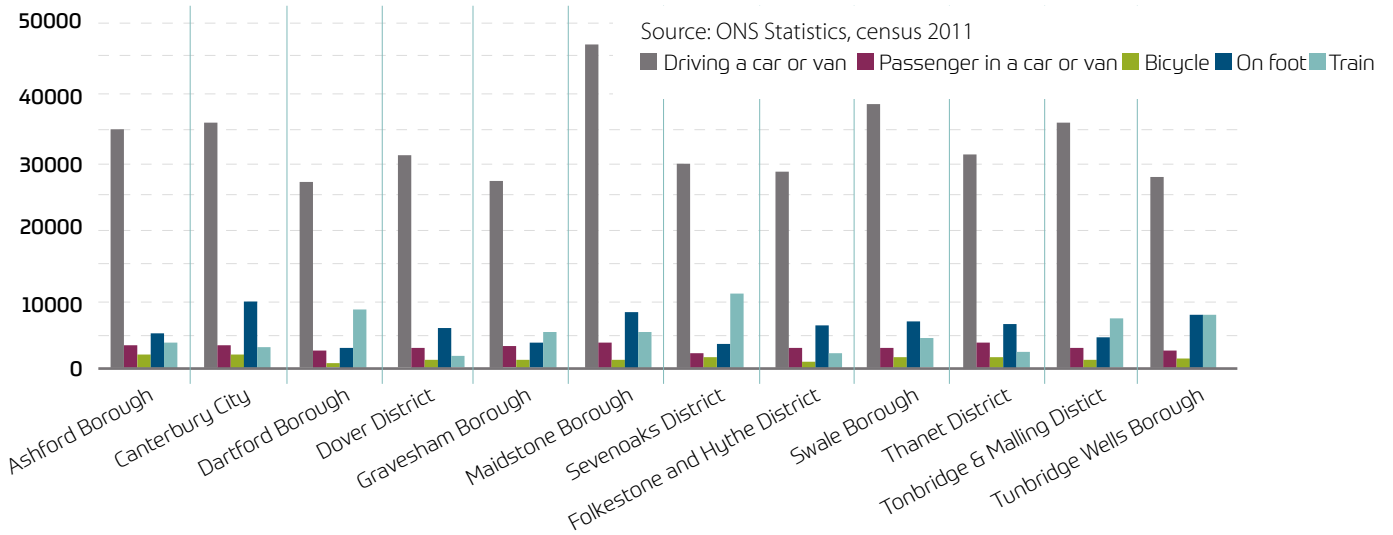
Access to Public Transport

For longer distances, walking and cycling may not be feasible and other methods of travel including bus, car and train will need to be used. The PROW network still plays an important role in providing links to these modes of transport, such as bus and railway stations.

Figures 1 and 2 relate to current travel patterns. There will, no doubt over the duration of this plan, be a continued change to working patterns; increased home working and remote working facilitated by the role out of high-speed internet connections. The continued development and improvement of electric vehicles, autonomous vehicles and even electrically assisted bicycles may revolutionise travel choices.

Through the improvement of the existing PROW network to facilitate active travel for shorter journeys and improving links to transport hubs, we can work towards more sustainable travel patterns in Kent. The PROW and Access Service will use the available transport information to make informed decisions when responding to planning applications and developing provision in growth areas. We recognise there is the potential for a rapid change to working and travel patterns over the duration of this plan and may need to further develop policies as a result.

Figure 3 - Distance travelled to work

▪ Less than 2km ▪ 2km to less than 5km ▪ 5km to less than 10km

Source: ONS Statistics, census 2011
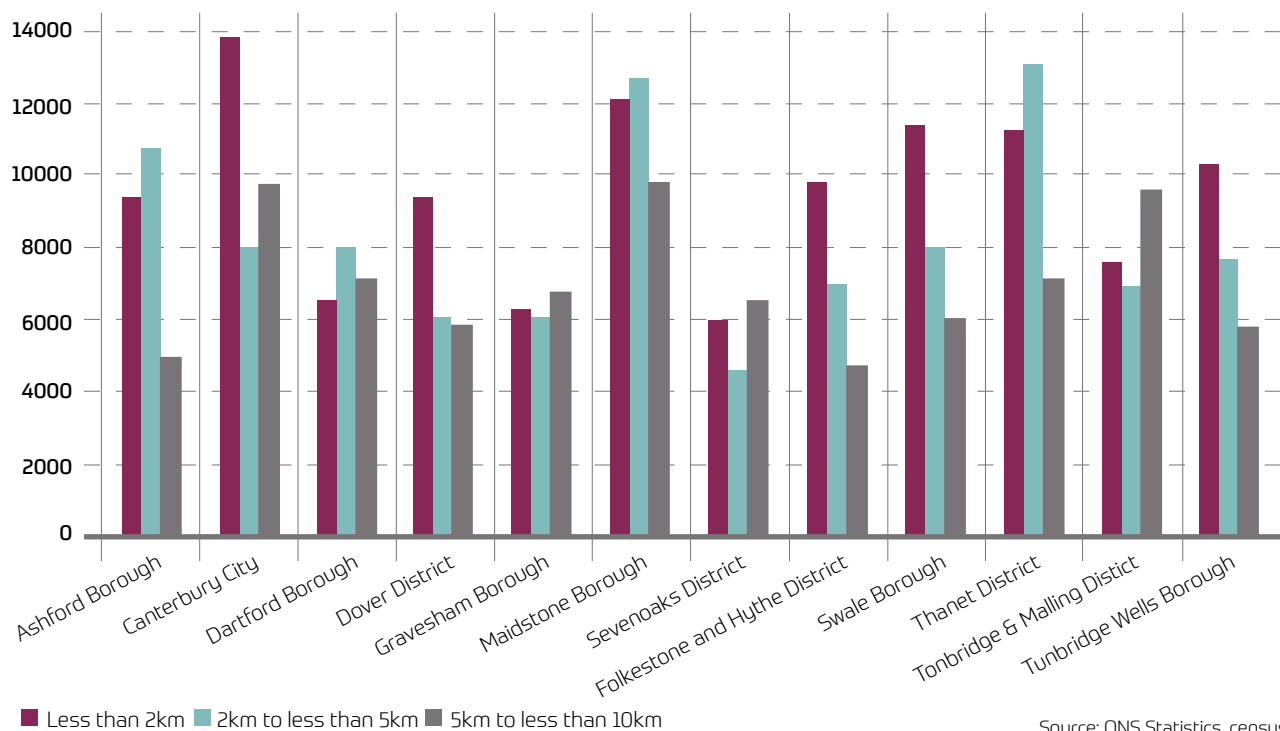
Growth Areas

The PROW and Access Service will continue to work with planners and developers to secure PROW enhancements and improvements to the network over the next 10 years in growth areas and associated developments. We will continue to comment on and influence local planning documents, land allocation and master plans through to detailed applications. Comments will reflect National Planning Policy Framework 2018 paragraphs:

- 96 'Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities' and

- 98 'Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails'.

Use of Spatial Data

The spatial data sets available to the PROW and Access Service have increased over the last 10 years:

This includes data on:

- The PROW network asset
- The PROW network
- Access Land
- Publicly accessible greenspace and coast
- Permissive access
- Highways
- Customer insight – MOSAIC.
- Health
- Multiple Index Economic Deprivation
- Travel patterns.
- Links to public transport
- Growth areas
- Flood zones
- Land use
- Points of interest
- Constraints – such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and scheduled ancient monuments

This information can be harnessed to inform decision making about which projects are likely to deliver positive outcomes and how best to design them. Examples of how information that can be used to direct activity are as follows:

Example 1: Safeguarding the PROW Asset

Using flood zone, watercourse mapping and spatial data showing the PROW bridge asset, we can identify those structures at greatest risk and direct activity to safeguard the asset through bridge anchoring, anti-scour works and other protective measures.

- Bridge Location
- Watercourse
- Flood zone 3
- Built-up area
- District boundary
- Medway

Hythe

Dymchurch

New Romney

- Bridge Location
- Watercourse
- Flood zone 3
- Built-up area
- District boundary
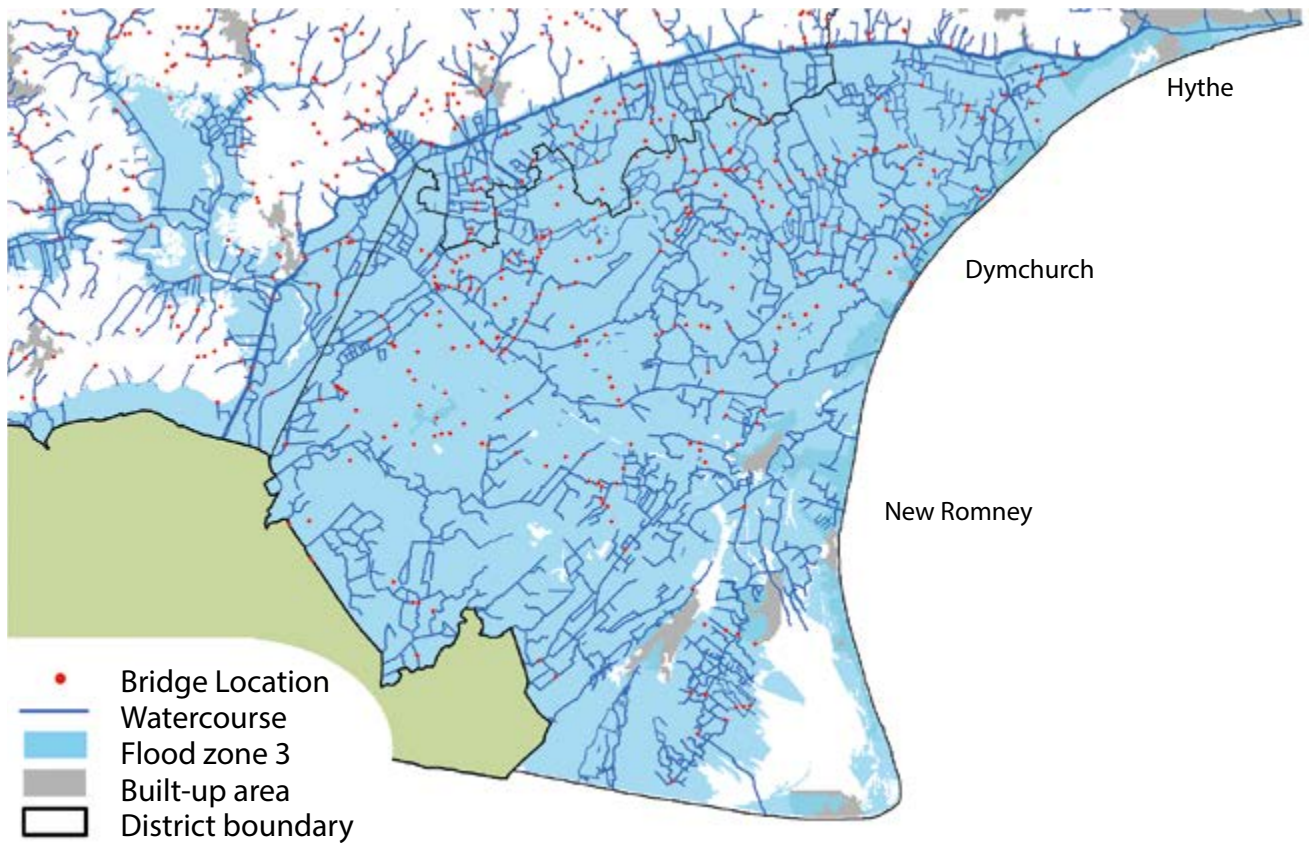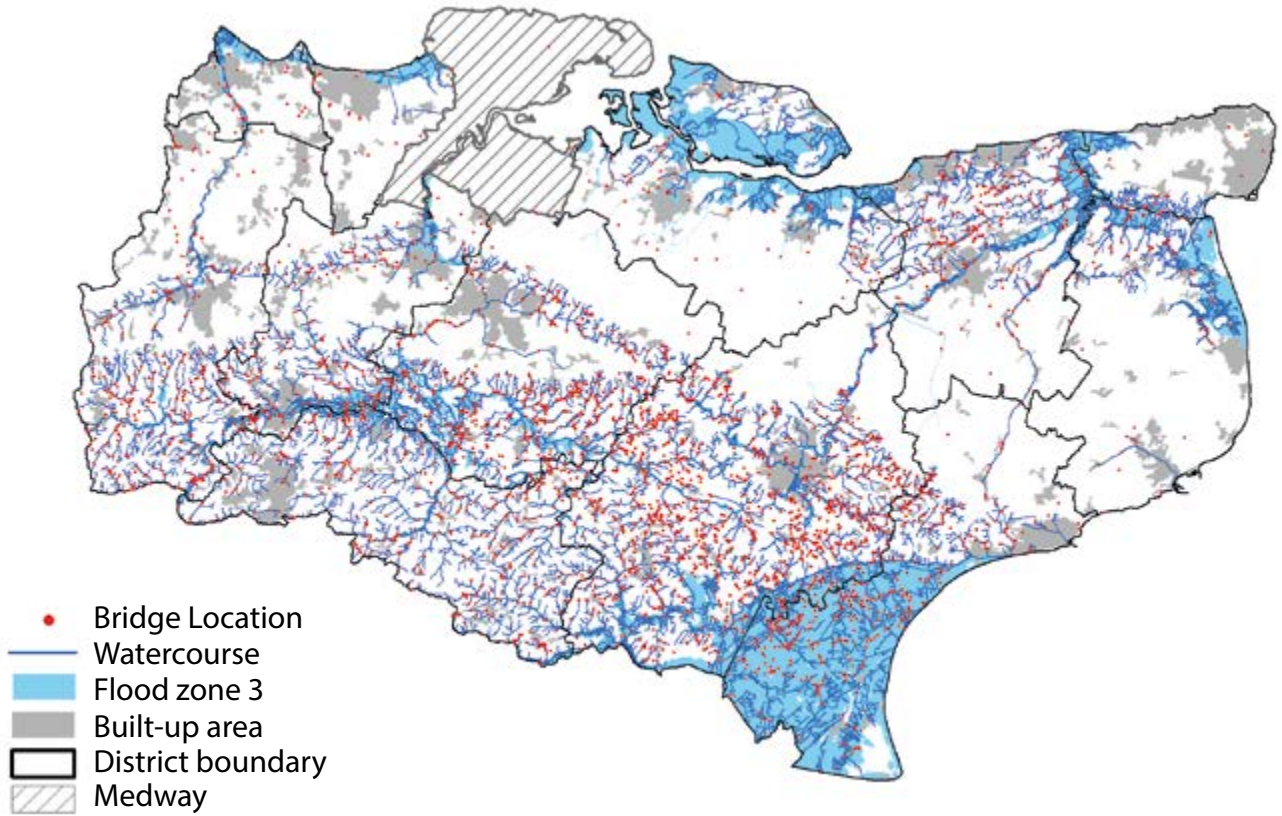
Example 2: Tackling Health Inequalities through Access to Greenspace

Research has identified a correlation between areas where there is a low prevalence of the population being physically active and low levels of natural green space provision.[18] Good quality open and green space is important in tackling health inequality and it has been recognised that the availability and quality of access to green space is not evenly distributed.

Dover District

—— PROW Network	� Coastal foreshore	▪ Other greenspace
—— River Network	▪ Woodland	

Indices of Mulitple Deprivation (2015)

Higher deprivation   Least deprivation

[18] (Bennett, Davies, Hodgson, Pett, & Witts, 2016)
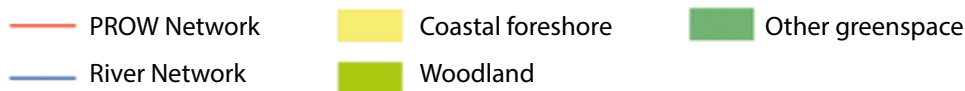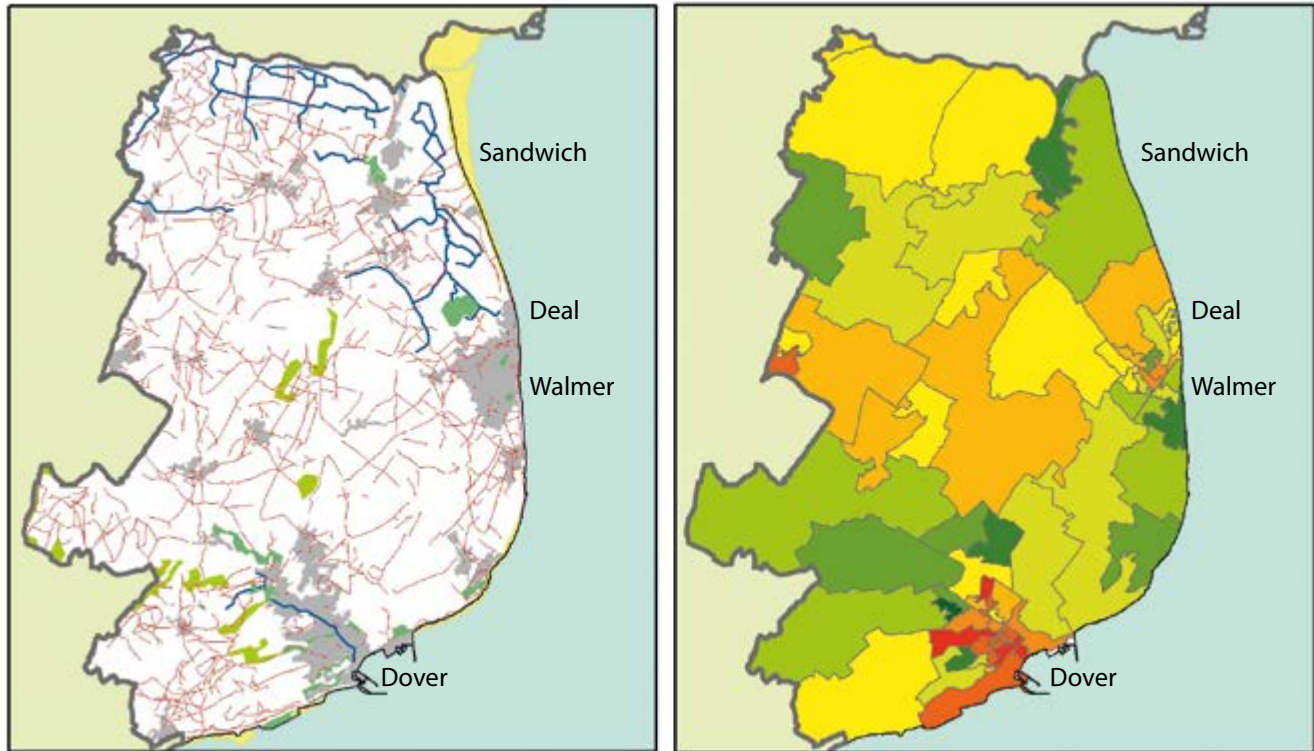
Mapping showing indices of multiple deprivation, access to open and green space and areas of poor health can be compared to inform decision making for future projects, programmes and planning responses, to help encourage active lifestyles and tackle health inequality in Kent.

Tonbridge & Malling District

PROW Network

River Network

Coastal foreshore

Woodland

Other greenspace

Indices of Mulitple Deprivation (2015)

Higher deprivation   Least deprivation

Example 3: Encouraging Active Lifestyles

Using spatial data we can identify improvements, linking schools to the wider PROW and cycle network. Information can be further scrutinised to target specific schools and potential links to the network, encouraging active travel and healthy lifestyle choices. The provision and improvement of such links has the potential to unlock great benefits in areas of poor health outcomes.
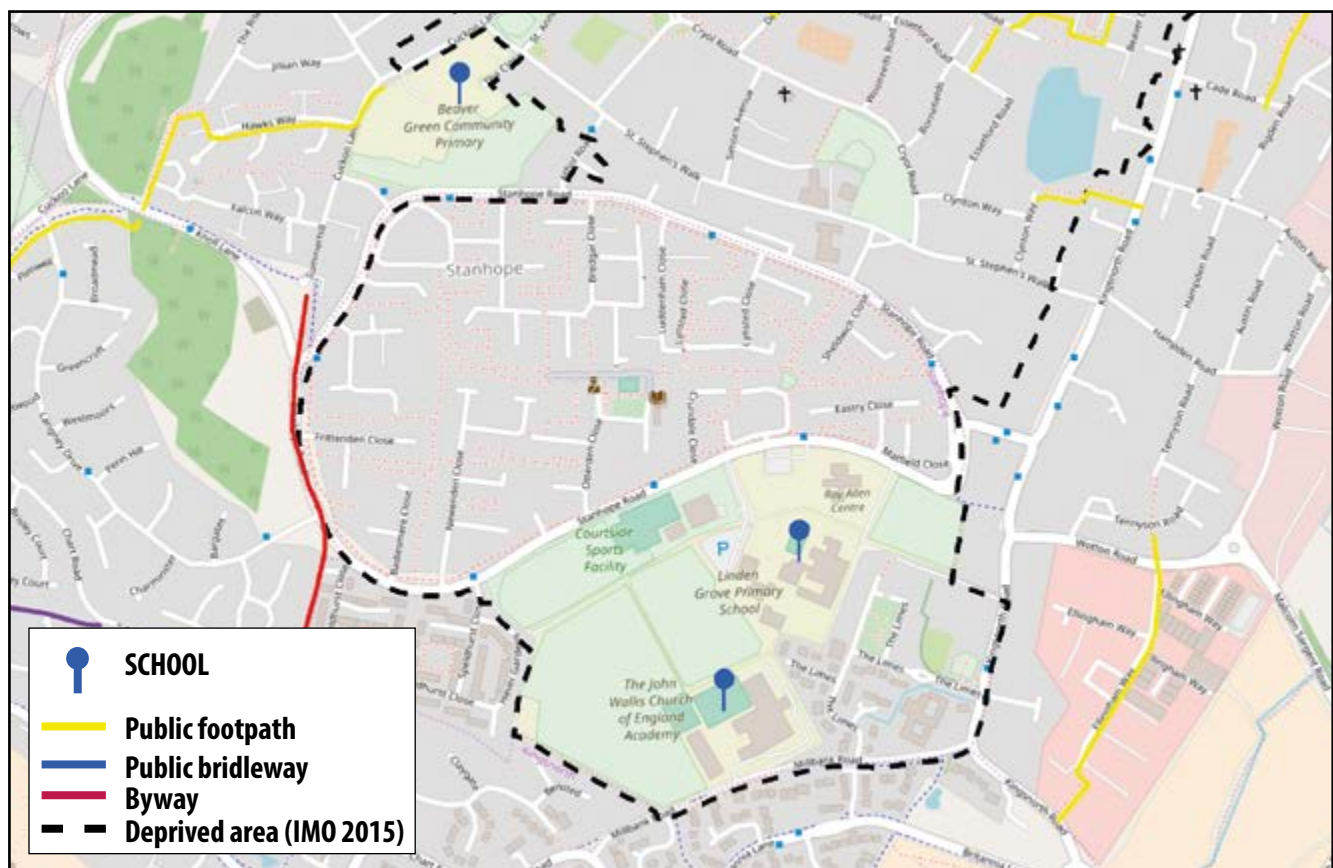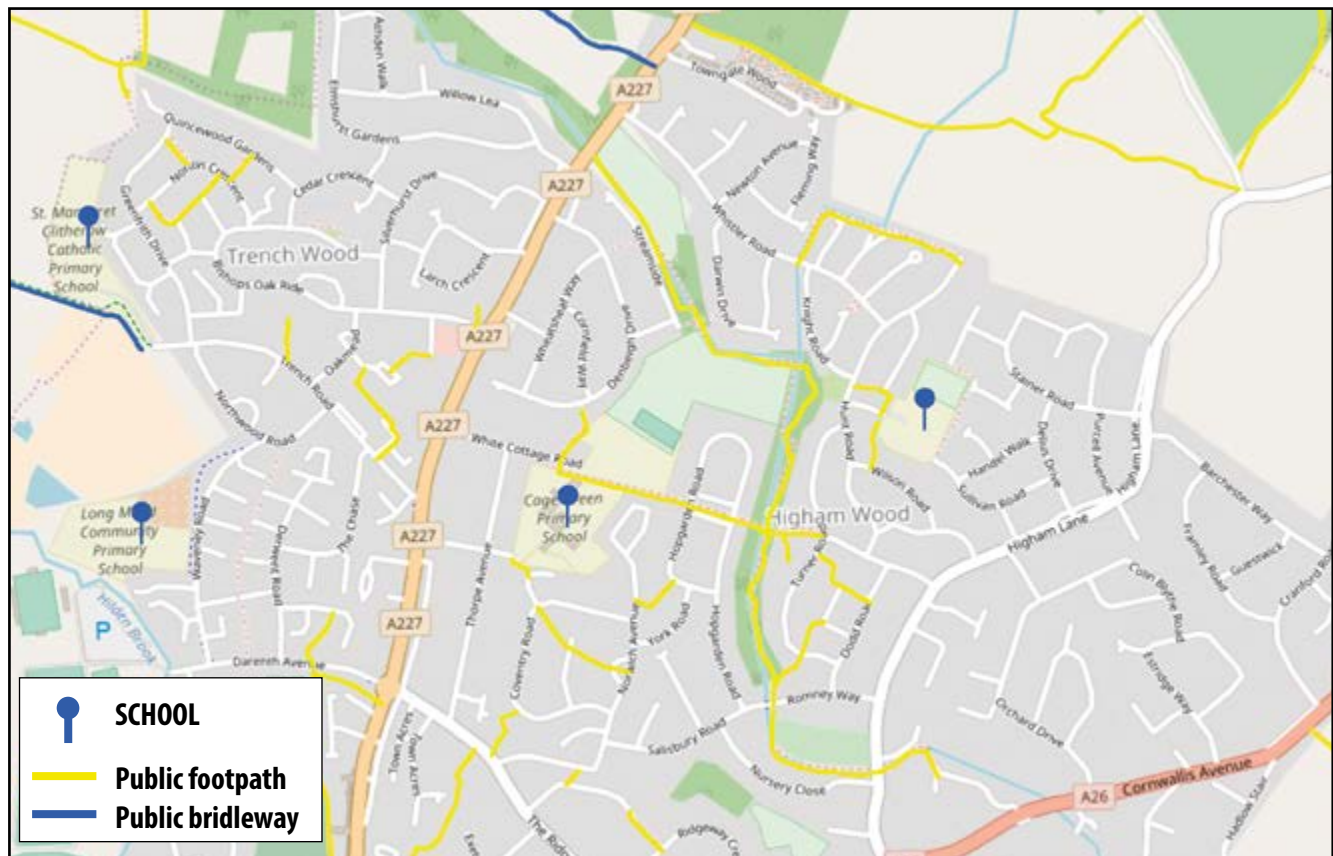
Example 4: Reducing Fragmentation of the Network and Improving Safety

The example map below demonstrates the power of spatial data in building up a picture of the 'missing links' that could deliver maximum benefit to connectivity. Using multiple datasets e.g. road data, crash statistics, cross-border assets etc. to build up an accurate picture of the local situation, allows the most appropriate options for delivering improvements to be identified. This may be improving the roadside verge; working to improve signage and traffic calming features; trying to establish behind the hedge routes; or, working for permanent or permissive upgrades to existing lower status paths.
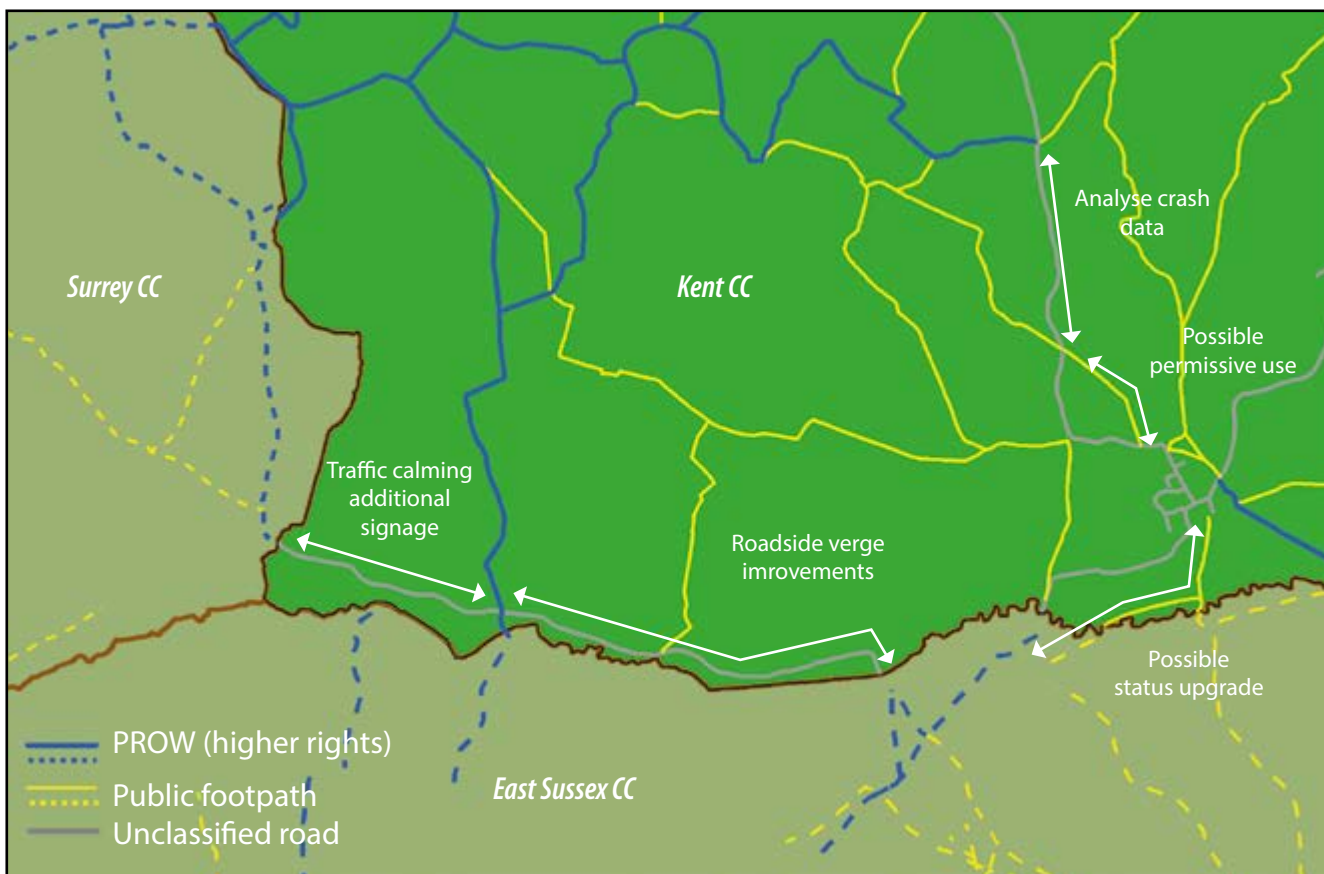
Delivery Plan / Statement of Actions

The ROWIP provides valuable insight into the needs and priorities of Kent's PROW network users, what they would like from the Service and how we can improve walking, equestrian and cycling opportunities in Kent. The six key themes that have emerged and the actions required to deliver them, sit well with the themes of the previous ROWIP and ensure the continuity of the service and the assurance that our previous work was well directed. The key themes are not in order of priority or importance, each has a main objective and set of actions that form the basis of the PROW and Access Service's 10 year delivery plan and statement of actions.

Decisions need to be made around how resources will be allocated to best meet our statutory obligations and deliver the improvements that the public desire. This is particularly important when budget and staff resources are under increasing pressure. There is a need to ensure that each programme or project delivers the greatest benefit and aligns most closely with Kent's relevant strategies and policies. Through producing the ROWIP, an evidence base has been developed to support this prioritisation, delivery plan and statement of actions. Evaluation of the plan's effectiveness is also crucial in ensuring that the service is fulfilling identified priorities and needs, both overall and on a project by project basis. The PROW and Access Service will quantify the outcomes and outputs of the plan through an annual review and report throughout the 10 years of the plan.

Key for Benefits

🚲 Supports active travel (reducing congestion, outputs of climate change gases, noise and air pollution)

♥ Increasing levels of activity leading to better physical and mental health and wellbeing

£ Supporting Kent's economy

☺ Improved customer experience

Key for Resource/Limitation

£√ Deliverable with existing resource levels

£+ Additional resource required

£g£ Potential for income generation or budget savings

Active lifestyles

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
AL01	Increase Health and Wellbeing Benefits	1.1 Target priority areas and deliver improvements to the network addressing health inequalities through increasing active travel and recreational activity. 1.2 Prioritise maintenance on those PROW providing access to natural greenspace and public open space or where providing an accessible resource for community-based activities (walking groups, health walks). 1.3 Improve connectivity and consider equestrian and other parking where reasonable to encourage recreational and leisure activity; including access to country parks, honey pot sites and other facilities of high leisure use, such as National Trails, promoted routes and routes within and leading to AONBs. 1.4 Support volunteering in greenspace and on PROW network. 1.5 Work with partners to support implementation of health improvement initiatives, such as Walking for Health, cycling and equestrian initiatives and GP referrals. 1.6 Support schemes that will contribute to a reduction of air pollution, particularly in those areas where levels are high, and measures of deprivation and health are poor.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	**£g£** **£+** **£√**	Active Travel Strategy Steering Group Countryside Access Wardens Developers Explore Kent Health Care Providers and Professionals KCC Country Parks KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Kent Sport Landowners Local Schools Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups
AL02	Active Travel	1.7 Support and influence local authority strategies and policies to ensure that active travel is firmly integrated into development planning. 1.8 Work with developers to ensure active travel routes are incorporated and link to PROW / cycle networks, transport hubs and greenspaces. 1.9 Provide motorised traffic free, safe walking, cycling and equestrian and routes linking to towns, urban and rural areas. Seek to provide longer distance links between urban centres. 1.10 Remove barriers to active travel and recreation and promote routes and opportunities. For example promote recreational routes to introduce people to active travel and work with KCC's Active Travel Strategy Group to support work with children to develop bike skills, build confidence and encourage use.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	**£g£** **£+** **£√**	Active Travel Strategy Steering Group Developers KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Countryside Access Forum Local Schools Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups

| AL03 | Tackling Deprivation & Disadvantage | 1.11 Remove barriers for economically disadvantaged communities by encouraging the use of the network as a free-at-the-point-of-use resource for active travel, recreation and leisure use.

1.12 Tackle health disadvantage by promoting access to the natural environment and green space, beyond urban areas, providing connectivity to nature and cultural landscapes.

1.13 Utilise information available on health inequalities, areas of deprivation poor health, high air pollution, and current access to green space to support measures to focus efforts on the areas that will have greatest impact.

1.14 Encourage active travel to schools through promotion and enhancing PROW and cycle networks, targeting areas of childhood obesity and deprivation affecting children. | 🚲
♥
💷
☺ | £g£
£+
£√ | Active Travel Strategy Steering Group

Developers

Explore Kent

Health Care Providers and Professionals

KCC Country Parks

KCC Highways Transportation and Waste

Kent Countryside Access Forum

Kent Downs and High Weald AONB

Kent Sport

Local Schools

Parish Councils

Planning Authorities

User and Interest Groups |

Evolution of the network

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
EN01	Modal Shift to Cycling and Walking to Reduce Road Air Pollution	2.1 PROW network to provide realistic traffic free alternative to the car especially for short journeys to keep towns moving at peak flow times. Provide routes to encourage walking & cycling as a realistic mode of transport for utilitarian purposes as well as for leisure use. 2.2 Improve and upgrade the PROW network where it links with amenities, public transport nodes, work and education to increase the attractiveness of walking, cycling and riding as an alternative to driving. 2.3 Work with planners to secure PROW within green space and green corridors which actively ameliorate air pollution. 2.4 Further develop policies and projects in line with changes in working and travel patterns over the duration of the plan. 2.5 Work to secure higher status routes (bridleway, restricted byway) to provide access for the greatest range of users.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Active Travel Strategy Steering Group Developers Explore Kent KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Countryside Access Forum Local Schools Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups

EN02	Improve Green Infrastructure	2.6 Work with planners and developers to create a planned strategic green infrastructure which incorporates the PROW network to promote and encourage sustainable, active travel and provide opportunities for leisure and recreation. 2.7 Work with stakeholders to create places where people are not impeded in undertaking physical activity, accessing nature and having low air pollution levels. 2.8 Support improved communication with planning officers to ensure access is integrated into developments and best practice is applied. 2.9 Maintenance and improvements will be designed to be in keeping with surrounding environment. For example a tarmac path would not be suitable choice through a woodland habitat.	🚲 ♥ ⊞£ ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Active Travel Strategy Steering Group Developers KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Countryside Access Forum Landowners Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups
EN03	Safe Travel	2.10 Maintain the PROW network to support safe and easy travel. 2.11 Work in partnership to provide new and upgraded routes in areas of evidenced need and to encourage use through well designed safe routes. 2.12 Look to improve safety of railway and road crossings where possible, working with Highways and PROW partners. 2.13 Maintain highway verges and unsealed unclassified highways to improve the connectivity of the PROW network. 2.14 Identify and support policies and measures that seek to reduce traffic speed and volume where this will preserve or improve network connectivity for non-motor vehicle users.	🚲 ♥ ⊞£ ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Developers KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Kent Sport Kent Wildlife Trust Landowners Network Rail Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups
EN04	High Standard Good Design Routes	2.15 iaising with disabled user groups and organisations, use expert knowledge and experience to update existing Kent Design standards for specific user groups. 2.16 Establish and share design standards for specialist users and incorporate these design standards where it is appropriate to do so for new and existing PROW. (A higher standard of maintenance programme will be required for such routes and can be applied when funding is available). 2.17 Establish and share general good design standards and guidance for use for KCC and local authorities in developing the network including access to specialist engineering skills and knowledge base in the design, improvement and upgrade of PROW.	🚲 ♥ ⊞£ ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Developers KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Countryside Access Forum Landowners Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
EN05	Strategic Overview	2.18 Looking at the available PROW network and the barriers preventing use, take a strategic overview to provide more relevant shared use routes and better links and access to facilities where needed. 2.19 Strengthen partnership working with stakeholders and planning bodies to make better sense of the network and provide a well maintained safe, pleasant environment based on customers priorities, needs and choices. 2.20 Work closely with District/Borough and Parish Councils to ensure PROW input into Local and Neighbourhood Plans.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Active Travel Strategy Steering Group Developers KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Countryside Access Forum Landowners Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups
EN06	Environmental Impact and Mitigation	2.21 Identify climate change impact and mitigation measures. 2.22 Use data available on air quality to prioritise projects and schemes to help towards improving the local environment. 2.23 Identify flood risk areas and likely impact on PROW network and put in place mitigation measures.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Active Travel Strategy Steering Group Developers KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Environmental Strategy Kent Resilience and Emergency Planning Landowners Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups

Knowing what's out there

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
KT01	Maintain the Record	3.1 Maintain and update the county's Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way, Register of Common Land and Village Greens and their associated schedules. 3.2 Ensure that the Definitive Map and Statement are easily accessible. 3.3 Encourage stakeholders to submit applications that ensure that rights of way are preserved prior to legislative changes which are due to come into force on 1 January 2026.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£√	

KT02	Better Promotion	3.4 Promote the benefits of active travel to encourage this type of use and relate it to the most popular response when we asked why PROW are used (to go for a walk / run / cycle / be active / healthy) 3.5 Promote specific types of network use, where there are suitable equestrian and cycle routes to encourage this type of use which is currently low. 3.6 Working with key partners seek to improve promotion of PROW and cycle network, highlighting new and improved routes, shared use and higher status routes. Improve type of information available online i.e. destination, length and difficulty of route.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	**£g£** **£+** **£√**	Active Travel Strategy Steering Group Countryside Access Wardens Explore Kent Health Care Providers and Professionals KCC Country Parks KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Kent Sport Libraries Local Schools Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups
KT03	Sustainable Tourism	3.7 Help to keep spend by visitors (e.g. walkers and cyclists) in the local and rural areas through linkages with local businesses, thereby supporting Kent's small business sector. 3.8 Develop access which does not conflict with nature conservation interest and support mitigation measures which may require recreational pressure to be diverted from sensitive sites. 3.9 Provide information to help support community led tourism. 3.10 Increase length of stay through packaging, linking and developing new products (e.g. new routes or new promoted routes). Promote the resource widely to target short break audiences.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	**£g£** **£+** **£√**	Explore Kent KCC Country Parks Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Libraries Local Businesses Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups Visit Kent
KT04	A Strong Brand for Kent (Encouraging visits to Kent)	3.11 Use PROW and countryside access to strengthen *Kent – The Garden of England* brand of Kent as a whole and in local areas. 3.12 Maintain primary promoted routes to a high standard to safeguard Kent's high-quality reputation for countryside access. 3.13 Developing new products (e.g. new routes or new promoted routes) taking a strategic view of Kent's needs and markets.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	**£g£** **£+** **£√**	Explore Kent KCC Country Parks Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Libraries Local Businesses Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups Visit Kent

KT05	Promotion of National Trails	3.14 Establish trail partnership for England Coast Path. 3.15 Promote National Trails, North Downs Way and England Coast Path as visitor destinations. 3.16 Using external funding Improve National Trail branded signage.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Explore Kent KCC Country Parks Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Libraries Local Businesses Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups Visit Kent
KT06	Grow New Markets	3.17 Improving priority routes which facilitate horse riding, cycling and walking for more targeted tourist leisure and recreational use. 3.18 Support development of growing sectors such as adventure sports and active leisure. 3.19 Create bespoke and "off the peg" walking itineraries for domestic and overseas markets. Promote the Kent Countryside North Downs Way as a viable day, short break or rural tourism destination.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Explore Kent KCC Country Parks Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Libraries Local Businesses Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups Visit Kent
KT07	More Accessible Information / Increasing Knowledge & Confidence	3.20 Tailor information to reach the widest range of customers (online, phone apps, maps and guides), including specific groups, young to old age groups and visually impaired and disabled user groups. 3.21 Reach specific groups that lack confidence and knowledge of PROW such as the non-users, under-represented age groups and those that indicate they have a disability. 3.22 Target approach to reach PROW non -users, improving accessibility of information to spark interest in walking / cycling and horse riding, increase knowledge and confidence to encourage use. 3.23 Make information more accessible for BAME groups and ensure promotional material will be appropriately targeted to BAME groups and provided in alternative formats and languages as necessary.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Explore Kent KCC Country Parks KCC Youth Services Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Libraries Local Businesses Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups Visit Kent

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
KT08	Keep Communica-tion Open	3.24 Retain community involvement as a key element of service delivery. 3.25 Liaise with planning authorities and developers, look at key development areas and potential gains to the network specific to each group. 3.26 Provide updates about specific improvements to user groups.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Explore Kent KCC Country Parks KCC Youth Services Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Libraries Local Businesses Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups Visit Kent

Well-maintained network

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
MN01	Better Network for Leisure and Daily Use	4.1 Further improve the performance of the vegetation clearance contract across the county. (A higher standard of maintenance will be required for higher priority routes, which can be applied when funding is available). 4.2 Work with local authorities and volunteers to target activity to improve the amenity of urban routes, remove litter, graffiti and dog fouling which acts as barrier to use. 4.3 Target surface maintenance programmes to encourage the use of PROW for daily walking, cycling, riding especially in urban areas and for short journeys. Prioritise those routes particularly suited to wider use of the network. 4.4 Improve general fingerpost and waymarking maintenance to encourage use and build confidence, prioritising areas with high leisure use. Promote and provide better signed circular routes to increase confidence in wider use.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	Contractors Countryside Access Wardens KCC Country Parks Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Landowners Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
MN02	A Strong Brand for Kent

(Priority routes include promoted routes and links to key facilities) | 4.5 Maintain National Trails, trail corridors and promoted routes to a high standard to safeguard Kent's high-quality reputation in countryside access.

4.6 Maintain high priority routes to facilitate horse riding, cycling and walking for more targeted tourist leisure and recreational use. | 🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺ | £g£ £+ £✓ | Explore Kent

KCC Country Parks

Kent Countryside Access Forum

Kent Downs and High Weald AONB

Libraries

Local Businesses

Parish Councils

Planning Authorities

User and Interest Groups

Visit Kent |
| MN03 | PROW Asset Management Plan | 4.8 Use the PROW Asset Management Plan approach to make informed decisions for programme and project delivery.

4.9 Annually review and update the PROW Asset Management Plan throughout the 10 year plan, reflecting network and structure inspections and public reports. | 🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺ | £✓ | |
| MN04 | The Intelligent Investment Tool | 4.10 Use the Intelligent Investment Tool, a simple cost benefit analysis approach to make informed decisions for programme and project delivery.

4.11 Annually review and update the Intelligent Investment Tool throughout the 10 year plan. | 🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺ | £✓ | |

Rights with responsibilities

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
RR01	Provide Advice on PROW Network	5.1 Provide advice and guidance to landowners.

5.2 Liaise with Planning Authorities and Parish Councils to provide advice on Local Plans and the inclusion of PROW improvement projects and provision in Neighbourhood Plans.

5.3 Attend meetings and workshops for large developments getting PROW input into the overall site design at early stage.

5.4 Provide advice on planning applications.

5.6 Advise on, and, where appropriate, progress orders to amend the PROW network in the interest of the public and or the landowner. | 🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺ | £g£ £+ £✓ | Country, Land and Business Association

Developers

KCC Highways Transportation and Waste

Kent Countryside Access Forum

Landowners

Land Managers

National Farmers Union

Parish Councils

Planning Authorities

User and Interest Groups |

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
RR02	Negotiate Improve-ments	5.7 Work with landowners to deliver improvements to the PROW network to increase accessibility and encourage active travel and active recreation, leisure use and the local economy. 5.8 Secure any opportunities that arise from changes to the regime of agricultural and land management subsidies.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £✓	Country, Land and Business Association Kent Countryside Access Forum Landowners Land Managers National Farmers Union Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups
RR03	Compliance	5.9 Work with landowners to ensure higher levels of compliance with their obligations in respect of PROW. Take enforcement action where required to ensure PROW is open and available to the public.	♥ 💷 ☺	£+ £✓	Country, Land and Business Association Landowners Land Managers National Farmers Union
RR04	Increase Accessibility of the PROW Network	5.10 Continue to uphold our policy of least restrictive access. 5.11 Utilise new data showing how many stiles are present on each route to target removal for the greatest impact. 5.12 Seek to reduce the number of barriers to use such as steps and narrow gates.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£+ £✓	Country, Land and Business Association Landowners Land Managers National Farmers Union User and Interest Groups
RR05	Promote Responsible Use	5.13 Working with key partners to prevent conflict between different user groups. 5.14 Work towards and support responsible use of the network to address local issues such as anti-social behaviour and dog fouling. 5.15 Support measures designed to prevent or reduce anti-social and criminal behaviour while preserving public access. 5.16 Working with stakeholders to minimise impact of use on sensitive areas i.e. SSSI and scheduled monuments.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£✓	All Partners

Efficient delivery

Ref Code	Objective	Action	Benefit	Resource / Limitation	Key Partners
ED01	Volunteers	6.1 Continue to develop the Countryside Wardens Scheme expanding the roles of individual wardens. 6.2 Link with Sustrans Rangers to ensure that the cycling network is adequately covered. 6.3 Continue to develop volunteer programmes that support the delivery of the objectives of the ROWIP.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £✓	Countryside Access Wardens Explore Kent Kent Countryside Access Forum Landowners Land Managers Parish Councils User and Interest Groups

ED02	Improved Customer Service	6.4	Through feedback identify improvements relating to customer service.	♥ ☺	£√	Countryside Access Wardens Explore Kent Kent Countryside Access Forum Parish Councils User and Interest Groups
		6.5	Deliver the needs of customers through developing new routes and improvements in areas of demand using data from CAMS and MOSAIC.			
		6.6	Continue to make improvements to reporting system in line with customer requests identified through review process.			
		6.7	Provide the customer with a range of methods of reporting an issue to the appropriate body.			
ED03	Increase Awareness of ROWIP	6.8	Raise awareness of the ROWIP to customers, non- users of the network and stakeholders.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£√	All Partners
ED04	Working in Partnership	6.9	Strengthen partnership working with key stakeholders including land managers, planning bodies, local authorities and Parish Councils to make better sense of the network and provide a well maintained safe, pleasant environment.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	All Partners
		6.10	Work in partnership with neighbouring County Councils' to ensure cross county boundary improvement projects take place where they provide benefits to the local communities.			
ED05	PROW Network Links to Encourage Sustainable Travel	6.11	Utilise the available transport information to make informed decisions when responding to planning applications and developing green infrastructure for growth areas.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	All Partners
		6.12	Establish potential links to the highway network. Make information available to Officers to assist with making informed decisions on planning applications and other projects.			
		6.13	Use fragmentation analysis to identify where higher status routes link to quieter, less well used roads to improve network connectivity.			
		6.14	Establish potential links on road verges, where quieter roads are not available.			
ED06	Programme and Project Assessment	6.15	Consider various data tools and data sets when assessing programmes and projects and when responding to development consultations. Including ORVal Welfare Value, Physical Activity Data Tool.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	£g£ £+ £√	
		6.16	In identifying programmes and projects that deliver the objectives of this plan, design will, where feasible include targets that are measurable.			

ED07	Secure Additional Funding	6.16 Seek to maintain and improve the delivery of the PROW and Access Service through charging for activity where admissible. 6.17 Seek additional funding to maintain the current network and deliver targeted improvements to routes in line with the ROWIP. 6.18 Seek opportunities work jointly to secure funding for key promoted routes, National and International trails.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	**£g£** **£+**	Active Travel Strategy Steering Group Developers Explore Kent KCC Country Parks KCC Highways Transportation and Waste Kent Countryside Access Forum Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Local Businesses Parish Councils Planning Authorities User and Interest Groups
ED08	Operational Policy	6.19 Review operational policies and priorities in light of the adopted policies and objectives in this plan. 6.20 Periodically review operational policies in response to legislative change. 6.21 Provide PROW Officers and volunteers with the training necessary to ensure effective delivery of PROW operations.	🚲 ♥ 💷 ☺	**£g£** **£+** **£√**	

Glossary

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
BOAT	Byway Open To All Traffic
CAMS	Countryside Access Management System
CAW	Countryside Access Warden
CROW	Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
DH	Department of Health
DMS	Definitive Map and Statement
ECP	England Coast Path
EH	English Heritage
FC	Forestry Commission
KCAF	Kent Countryside Access Forum
KCC	Kent County Council
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MENE	The Natural England Monitoring Engagement with the Natural Environment
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MOSAIC	Mosaic is Experian's powerful cross-channel consumer classification designed to help understand the demographics, lifestyles, preferences and behaviour of the UK adult population in great detail
NDW	North Downs Way
NE	Natural England
NHS	National Health Service
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NT	National Trust
ONS	Office for National Statistics
ORVal	Outdoor Recreation Valuation tool
PROW	Public Rights of Way
ROWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
WHI	Walk for Health Initiative

Stakeholders, User and Interest Groups

The list below includes user and interest groups (this is by no means a complete list).

AUK	Age UK
BHS	British Horse Society
BDS	British Driving Society – representative body for carriage driving
CLBA	Country Land and Business Association
CUK	Cycling UK
DR	Disabled Ramblers
KAB	Kent Association for the Blind
KCAF	Kent Countryside Access Forum
KWT	Kent Wildlife Trust
LARA	Motorised Organisations' Land Access and Recreation Association
OSS	Open Spaces Society
NFU	National Farmers Union
RA	Ramblers
SE	Sport England
SUSTRANS	Sustainable Transport Charity
TRF	Trail Riders Fellowship
U3A Groups	University of the Third Age
WfA	Wheels for All, The national Inclusive Cycling Charity
WT	Woodland Trust
WW	Wheels for Wellbeing

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