Initial Assessment of Existing Rights of Way Network - 2017

Introduction
This assessment has been created in response to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (section 60) which requires all highway authorities to prepare a Right of Way improvement Plan. This will be the second such plan of this type developed by Stockport Council. This Initial Assessment alongside the initial Stakeholder Questionnaire findings will be used to develop the draft statement of action for 2017 to 2027. The 2007 – 2016 statement of action was reviewed in 2012, both the reviewed document and the success of its delivery can be found in Appendix A.

In preparing or amending a Rights of Way Improvement Plan, a local highway authority shall—
(a) publish a draft of the plan or of the plan as amended,
(b) publish, in two or more local newspapers circulating in their area, notice of how a copy of the draft can be inspected or obtained and how representations on it can be made to them, and
(c) consider any representations made in accordance with the notice.

This assessment is part of the development on the final draft for publication.

The Vision

Stockport intends to develop a strategic approach to the development of its Rights of Way network in order to facilitate both recreational and utility travel among a range of users, both from within the borough and those passing through it. As most of Stockport is an urban area, Stockport recognises the potential of its rights of way as a means of safer sustainable travel for utility trips, as well as the more familiar recreational use that is commonly thought of in relation to these routes. The improvement and development of these routes is also seen as an important method of reducing congestion on Stockport’s road network.

Key Objectives

- Accessible Rights of Way Network
- Efficient and Effective Maintenance of the Network
- Development of Partnership and Stakeholder Relationships
- Promotion of Use by Public

National guidance, Research and Advice

There are a wide number of documents that can be drawn on, but recently produced documents that need to be considered include:

Well Managed Highway Infrastructure – Code of Practice 2016
Key recommendations in this code of practice which relate to the ROWIP include:
RECOMMENDATION 9 – NETWORK INVENTORY
A detailed inventory or register of highway assets, together with information on their scale, nature and use, should be maintained.

RECOMMENDATION 10 – ASSET DATA MANAGEMENT
An asset register should be maintained that stores, manages and reports all relevant asset data.

RECOMMENDATION 12 – NETWORK HIERARCHY
A network hierarchy, or a series of related hierarchies, should be defined which include all elements of the highway network, including carriageways, footways, cycle routes, structures, lighting and rights of way. The hierarchy should take into account current and expected use, resilience, and local economic and social factors such as industry, schools, hospitals and similar, as well as the desirability of continuity and of a consistent approach for walking and cycling.

It is important that the hierarchy adopted reflects the whole highway network and the needs, priorities and actual use of each infrastructure asset. Whilst different asset types may have their own hierarchies, all should be related, such that each asset type can be considered in relation to others and to the whole highway network. Network hierarchy should take into account the desirability of continuity and of a consistent approach for walking and cycling.

RECOMMENDATION 16 – INSPECTIONS
A risk-based inspection regime, including regular safety inspections, should be developed and implemented for all highway assets.

RECOMMENDATION 17 – CONDITION SURVEYS
An asset condition survey regime based on asset management needs and any statutory reporting requirements should be developed and implemented.

RECOMMENDATION 19 – DEFECT REPAIR
A risk-based defect repair regime should be developed and implemented for all highway assets.

Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2017

The Government wants walking and cycling to be a normal part of everyday life, and the natural choices for shorter journeys, such as going to school, college or work, travelling to the station, and for simple enjoyment. As part of our aim to build a society that works for all, they want more people to have access to safe, attractive routes for cycling and walking by 2040. The strategy and related Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans outline how this is to be achieved.
Policy context

There are a range of policies which will relate to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The most relevant of these Greater Manchester and Stockport policies are covered below.

Stockport Council Plan

The Council’s plan is to work with the people of the borough to achieve the following outcomes:

- People will be able to make positive choices and be independent
- People who need support will get it
- Stockport will benefit from a thriving economy
- Stockport will be a place people want to live
- Communities in Stockport will be safe and resilient

The Rights of Way network would have most effect on:

- Enabling people to make positive life choices about staying active and other beneficial lifestyle approaches as part of making positive choices and being independent.
- Improving transport connectivity and supporting town centre regeneration as part of benefiting from a thriving economy.
- Improving the built and natural environment including air quality; maintaining and enhancing the highway network; and maintaining good quality parks and greenspace as part of making Stockport a place people want to live.
Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040

Connected Neighbourhoods is a spatial theme in the strategy aiming to give easy and affordable access to jobs, schools, shops and other facilities. Making neighbourhoods and town centres pedestrian and cycle friendly, and providing attractive, liveable streets and public spaces, with slower traffic speeds and safe routes, is regarded as an important part of this.

If the strategy is successful, then by 2040:

- Local neighbourhoods will be more pleasant and safe to walk and cycle around, with most short trips being made on foot or by bike. Access to local public transport services and neighbourhood facilities will be easier without a car.

Greater Manchester-wide policies identified in the strategy to apply consistently across the whole transport system include:

- “Working with partners to improve pedestrian and cycle facilities across Greater Manchester, including development of a strategic walking and cycling network, wayfinding and cycle parking.”

- “Working with partners, including the Canals and Rivers Trust, to enhance green and blue infrastructure to provide a safe and attractive environment for walking and cycling.”

These will be assisted by and assist in the delivery of the ROWIP.

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD, 2011

The Stockport Core Strategy 2011 is part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough. The LDF replaces the Stockport Unitary Development Plan as the local plan to guide development.

However, it should be noted that the Local Plan is being reviewed and so there is a need to ensure that suitable linkages are made between this new document and the ROWIP to assist in the delivery of both plans.

There are several policies within the current Local Plan which are relevant to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan with the most relevant being:

- **Core Policy CS9 ‘TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT’**
  
  - The Council will require that development is in locations which are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. The Council will support development which reduces the need to travel by car.
o Development will be required to consider the needs of the most vulnerable road users first, using the following road user hierarchy:
  ▪ Pedestrians
  ▪ Cyclists
  ▪ Public transport
  ▪ Goods traffic
  ▪ Powered two wheelers
  ▪ Private car traffic
  ▪ Long-distance freight and private car traffic.

• Core Policy CS10 'AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK'
  o Walking and Cycling Network
    o The Council will continue to provide a network of safe, good quality walking and cycling routes and other Rights of Way.

• Development Management Policy T-1 'Transport and Development'
  o To facilitate a reduction in the need to travel, development will be focused in the Town Centre in particular and also other existing centres, as these locations are the most accessible and already contain a wide provision of services and amenities.
  o [Sites]Generating significant numbers of trips will be required to maintain sustainable accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling.
  o The development of linkages between the ROWIP and the Local Plan are key to the successful inclusion of the needs of Rights of Way in all forms in future planning decisions.

Stockport Physical Activity Strategy 2015 - 2018

Objectives of the Strategy include:

1. Increasing sustainable opportunities for physical activity for all ages and abilities at a borough wide and neighbourhood level
2. Reducing levels of sedentary behaviour as an independent risk factor for health
3. Developing and supporting activities at locality level that promote engagement from targeted groups to reduce social
exclusion, celebrate cultural diversity and build strong communities
4. Encouraging active travel as a means of getting to school and work and as part of everyday life
5. Maintaining and seeking to develop the standard and safety of our parks, green spaces, play, leisure facilities and rights of way in order to encourage their use by local residents and visitors
6. Working with local employers to create healthy, active workplaces which improve the health of the working age population
7. Working with schools and colleges to create healthy, active educational environments which improve the health of the school/college population
8. Ensuring a holistic approach to the promotion and delivery of physical activity
These can all to some extent be supported through the ROWIP.

Walking Strategy April 2010

The strategy updated the Stockport Walking Strategy (2000). The strategy encourages and promotes walking as a desirable method of transport in its own right as well as a means of accessing other modes of transport, and will facilitate improvement which will make walking a more direct, safe and pleasant mode of travel. The Stockport walking strategy supports the aims of the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy with a focus on the encouragement of walking for trips to Education and Work, and for Leisure reasons. The objectives for the walking strategy can be supported through the actions of the ROWIP, already shown in the walking strategies related action plan, which includes the maintenance of the public Rights of Way network and other related works. This is an acknowledgement of the usefulness of off road routes in creating safer and more pleasant walking environments for all types of users.

The Strategy is in the early stages of being reviewed and the ROWIP must be reflected in the aims and objectives of this review.

Greater Manchester Cycling Strategy, 2014

Greater Manchester’s vision is of a city fit for the future; a healthy, safe, sustainable, city where people want to live, work and visit, and where a well-established cycling culture is integral to the region’s health and prosperity. The aim is to double and double again the proportion of trips made by bicycle over the 12 years of the strategy. That’s a 300% increase by 2025. The successful delivery of improvements to off road routes will form part of this process and the ROWIP will need to assist to achieve this aim.

Stockport Economic Development Strategy 2012 -2017
“For Stockport to build on its position as a growth economy in Greater Manchester, connecting its residents and businesses to more opportunities, and providing an ideal environment to start, grow and locate a business.”

The ROWIP can assist with Objective 7 – Enhance connectivity for businesses and residents within Stockport, especially the first and last mile linkages between public transport or parking locations and also the ability to improve congestion by provision of off-road cycling infrastructure.

**Stockport Transport Asset Management Strategy 2015 – 2034**

The Transport Asset Management Strategy document sets out key actions and processes that Stockport Council has established to ensure long term value for money in the management of its highway assets. These assets include: the Public Rights of Way Network, adopted alleyways, and routes through parks and other greenspaces. This includes the development of an asset register, as well as the planning and monitoring of maintenance of the routes based on the expected working life of the materials used and whole life costing.

**Stockport Signage Strategy 2014**

The strategy outlines the vision for signage in the borough through the vision; “To reveal, connect and communicate the diverse range of places and activities which the borough has to offer through the implementation of integrated wayfinding, visitor information and public realm design.” Its action plan includes a co-ordinated pedestrian and cycle wayfinding and information system, linking key attractions and destinations, car parks and public transport interchanges. The related town centre wayfinding plan outlines how this is to be delivered in the town centre including supportive heads up mapping and online information.

**Stockport Highway and Street Furniture Design Policy**

This document outlines the materials and street furniture to be used on the borough’s highways. This is designed to improve the public realm by making it a more legible environment and improving maintenance by focusing resources on to a smaller palette of materials. It will be useful where routes pass through and intersect with the road network. A similar document could be considered for the Rights of Way with respect to the different areas that these pass through and the users’ needs.

**Users demands based on complaints and past research**

NHT Survey Data
Satisfaction with Walking and Cycling Safety

The provision of cycle routes where needed
While some of the issues regarding satisfaction with PROW have seen little or no change there is a steady improvement in the satisfaction with information.
HFAS data for usage of off road routes within the borough

River Mersey Path W of Vale Road, Heaton Mersey Data

Average Hourly Horse Flow 2016

Average Hourly Pedestrian Flow 2016
Only Cycle users on the route potentially show they use it as a commuter route with clear increases in usage in the hours of the morning and evening peak.

The usage is clearly highest at the weekend which reflects the leisure and tourist nature of the route.

**Chadkirk Country Park River Goyt Bridge, Bredbury**

Average Hourly Cycle Flow 2016

Average Weekday Cycle Flows (By year)
The River Goyt Bridge is part of the Alan Newton Way which goes from Marple to Stockport via the Goyt Valley and provides a safe off road route towards the town centre. The usage of this route has been increasing over the last 5 years as this route has improved and expanded and is expected to continue to do so as the Town Centre Access Plan improves the off road access to Stockport. While usage is lower than on the Mersey Path Way of Vale Road there is again a perceptible peak in usage during the weekday peak periods, suggesting commuter use as well as wider usage on Sundays suggesting leisure use.

**Mill Lane, Bredbury**

**Average Weekday Cycle Flows 2016 (By Month)**

Mill lane Bredbury forms part of the connection to the Trans Pennie Trail near Haughton Green, and so despite being on road provides a proxy for off road routes in the area. Route has a steady but low flow of cyclists throughout the day.
Flow of cyclists on the Middlewood Way is reasonably steady throughout the day which is reflective of its main use as a route for leisure and exercise. This is also reflected in the higher usage at weekends. The slightly higher usage at the start and end of the day on week days could indicate a small amount of use as a route for school and commuting.

**Network maintenance – statutory duty and responsibilities**

**One Asset Approach to Maintenance and Promotion**

Through the asset management strategy the Council is looking to consolidate the way in which it treats the Rights of Way network. This is to reduce the variability in the quality of maintenance and the number of Council officers inspecting and maintaining the network.
Part of the ROWIP action plan needs to work with the asset management plan and process to ensure that the approach to managing the assets in a combined manner results in an improved maintenance regime which still reflects the needs of the different routes; both as formal public Rights of Way and other Rights of Way such as park paths.

**Current Claims and Definitive Map Issues**

The borough of Stockport has an extensive network of formal and informal paths. The public Rights of way network comprises of footpaths, bridleways and byways open to all traffic (BOAT).

**Cycle facilities**

Cyclists are increasingly becoming a significant rights of way network user group within the borough of Stockport. A number of cycle routes exist across the borough. Off road tracks are often multi-user routes providing also for walkers and horse riders, and there is often pressure to try and improve footpaths to accommodate other users as part of developments to improve access.

The Council is developing provision for cyclists both on and off road. Under the Countryside Act 1968, cyclists can also use public bridleways, although walkers and horse riders have priority. The estimated breakdown of cycle facilities within the borough is as follows:

- Recommended routes (unsigned) - 130.8 km
- Recommended routes (signed) - 31.56 km
- On road routes with cycle facilities - 10.1 km
- Traffic-free routes - 49.79 km
- Canal towpath - 14.6 km

The Council has been working to improve the cycle facilities over the last 10 years, but there is more work to be undertaken. Major off road projects have included:

- Alan Newton Bridge over the Goyt near Chadkirk Chapel and linking paths July 2012.
- Improved Trans Pennie Trail Route to run along the Mersey as part of Cycle City Ambition Grant 1 2015.
- Tangshutt Field Path improvements 2010
- Marsland Street to Underpass of Motorway near Knightsbridge 2016
- Aurora business park path 2017

**Pedestrian facilities**

The focus on improvement for cyclists does not remove the impetus to continue to improve the pedestrian facilities on the network. It is still recognised that they are the largest user group on the network. A few examples of improvements for walkers are; Stringer Street Steps, footpaths linking the Peak Forest Canal in Woodley, around Chadkirk estate, footpaths
leading to and on the periphery of Bruntwood Park and Stanley Road to Bradshaw Hall in Cheadle.

**Definitive Map and Statement**
The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 introduced a statutory duty on highway authorities to record Rights of Way in their area and produce the legal record of paths in the form of the Definitive Map and Statement. The Definitive Map and Statement for Stockport provides an inventory of the public rights of way (footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic) and their length, and sometimes their width and surface type, together with structures on the path such as bridges, gates and stiles for the five wards within the borough of Stockport. The relevant date of the current Definitive Map is 26 March 2012. The dimensions of the recorded routes are shown in Table 1.

This shows that the lengths of the routes covered by the Definitive Map have almost doubled and that 74 more paths have been identified on the statement since the 2007 ROWIP.

**Table 1 shows the different status of routes, as shown in the current Definitive Map and also described in the Definitive Map statement.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path status</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Length (km)</th>
<th>Number of paths</th>
<th>% of network by length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Footpath</td>
<td>Walkers</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridleway</td>
<td>Walkers, horse riders and cyclists</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted byways</td>
<td>Walkers, cyclists, equestrians and horse drawn carts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byway open to all traffic (BOAT)</td>
<td>Walkers, horse riders, cyclists, horse drawn carriages and motor vehicles</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>268</strong></td>
<td><strong>664</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1985. Table 2 includes a list of completed claims that have been included on the Definitive map for Stockport.

Table 2 shows a summary of the current claims processing stages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claims to process</th>
<th>Decision obtained from Area Committee</th>
<th>Claims completed</th>
<th>Evidence not supporting claim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willow Grove to Howard Street</td>
<td>Marple Old Road</td>
<td>Boddens Hill, Footpath</td>
<td>Meadows Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mauldeth Close to Beaminster Avenue</td>
<td>Field Street Diary, Footpath</td>
<td>Off Turner Lane – adjacent to Finland Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moadlock to Guywood Lane</td>
<td>Kay Avenue, Footpath</td>
<td>Gypsy Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oxford Drive to Healdwood Road</td>
<td>Wicken Street, Footpath</td>
<td>Willow Avenue to Willow Grove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paradise Farm to Higher Cliff Farm</td>
<td>Store Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gun Road to Sandhill Lane (decision deferred)</td>
<td>Green Lane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vernon Road</td>
<td>Arden Bridge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Off FP126a Stockport south to Ringmore Road, Bramhall</td>
<td>Marple Old Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BW 64BR &amp; 67BR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>175S &amp; 176S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quarry Road, Romiley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paths on the street register
In addition to the recorded Rights of Way on the Definitive map, it is also necessary to include in consideration other routes such as ginnels, alleyways and paths in housing estates that are adopted and maintainable at public expense and also, those that are unadopted including those with unclear status and so not currently maintained by the Council which are of value to the community.

A total of 3,869 adopted routes are recorded within the borough of Stockport, covering a distance of 943 km. A sample survey for the borough of Stockport conducted in (2017) indicated that there are 660 unadopted routes in existence, with a total distance of 140 km.

Access land
The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act 2000), introduced a new right that empowered users to walk freely, without staying on paths, on land classified as mountain, moorland, heath and downland, together with all areas of registered common land. Across the borough of Stockport, there are three open access areas in the following locations; Cloughend, Ludworth Quarry and Paradise Quarry.

**Permissive paths**
Permissive paths are routes which the public are allowed to use with the consent of the landowner. There are a few permissive paths in the borough that provide important links in the network. All of these routes are over Council-owned land that are either disused railway line formations, or green spaces, such as the Middlewood Way, Trans-Pennine trail and sections of Fred Perry way.

All maintained paths in parks also count as routes used with the landowner’s consent as do paths in places like Council run cemeteries. While they may not be key links in a wider transport network sense, they do form opportunities for exercise and leisure as well as providing minor local cut throughs which are important to the local population.

**Access to parks and green spaces**
Stockport parks and woodlands provide access and opportunities to walkers, cyclists and horse riders, and are important visitor attractions in their own right. In Stockport there are at least 146 recognised green spaces totalling 1816 hectares in the borough, of which only 29 green spaces are formal parks, with a total area of 360 hectares. Currently the parks include a range of paths for walkers, plus paths which allow cyclists and/or equestrians, 7 bridges, 83 footbridges, 23 culverts, 155 retaining walls, 2 tunnels and a range of seating, lighting and other assets.

The borough has some significant areas of woodland especially in the rural and semi-urban areas. These can be found in Marple, Mellor, Compstall and parts of Bramhall, which have many paths enjoyed by various user groups and visitors. Etherow Country Park for instance, has an extensive area of woodland, riverside walks, and is a haven for wildlife and conserved natural habitats. The ability to utilise the routes through these parks to provide improved links in the Rights of Way network is an important part of the ability to deliver improvements to the network through the ROWIP.

Five of the local parks are venues for park runs. These are held at Woodbank Park, Burnage Park (Mersey Vale), Brunwood Park, Bramhall Park, and Brabyns Park.

Many of the parks also benefit from Friends of Groups who assist in the maintenance and other activities in the park to make the best of the space for local people. This is an area of volunteering we hope will expand to include the wider path network.
Network condition

Public Rights of Way
The Council as a highway authority is responsible for the maintenance of Rights of Way and has a duty to assert and protect the rights of users. Field surveys are one of the best methods to implement when attempting to compile a general condition database for the Rights of Way network within a designated area.

To date, three complete surveys of the network have been undertaken. The first survey was undertaken in 2007-8 by PROW officers. The second survey was undertaken in 2012-13, and a third survey was undertaken in 2015 by Ramblers Association members. A comprehensive survey of the network was undertaken in 2012-13 and 73 routes failed the ease of access assessment. In 2015 another survey was undertaken by the Ramblers Association and the majority of faults detected were related to missing or vandalised signs and vegetation on the network. It is worth stressing that the time surveys are undertaken could influence the outcome of survey results in that, for example, during the bird nesting season, vegetation works are on hold and may be perceived as an obstruction to ease of access. However, since the surveys were undertaken, much work has been done to resolve most of the queries, although some are still being resolved because of the protracted process involved.

A move to a one public estate method of condition monitoring could improve the regularity of the monitoring of network condition especially on routes that are in high usage areas. This would help the council to bring itself in line with the Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: Code of Practice and improve the council’s ability to defend against claims and improve the quality of the network provided to the boroughs residents.

Network Distribution

The PROW areas are divided into five historical wards within the borough – Marple, Stockport, Bredbury and Romiley, Hazel Grove and Bramhall, and Cheadle and Gatley. The distribution of the different status of routes that comprise the network (footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic) vary amongst the wards with Marple having the highest number of routes reflecting its rural nature.

(a) District of Stockport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3 - Network classification and dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Path status</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footpath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridleway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byway open to all traffic (BOAT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) District of Marple

Table 4 - Network classification and dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path status</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Length (km)</th>
<th>Number of paths</th>
<th>% of total network length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Footpath</td>
<td>Walkers</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>33.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridleway</td>
<td>Horse riders, walkers and cyclists</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byway open to all traffic (BOAT)</td>
<td>Walkers, horse riders, cyclists, horse drawn carriages and motor vehicles</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) District of Hazel Grove and Bramhall

Table 5 - Network classification and dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path status</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Length (km)</th>
<th>Number of paths</th>
<th>% of total network length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Footpaths</td>
<td>Walkers</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>15.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridleway</td>
<td>Horse riders, walkers and cyclists</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byway open to all traffic (BOAT)</td>
<td>Walkers, horse riders, cyclists, horse drawn carriages and motor vehicles</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>Walkers, Cyclists, equestrians</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and horse drawn carts

(d) District of Bredbury and Romiley

**Table 6 - Network classification and dimension**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path Status</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Length (Km)</th>
<th>Number of paths</th>
<th>% of total network length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Footpath</td>
<td>Walkers</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridleway</td>
<td>Walkers, horse riders and cyclists</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byway open to all traffic</td>
<td>Walkers, horse riders, cyclists and motor vehicles</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Byway</td>
<td>Walkers, cyclists, equestrians and horse drawn carts</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(e) District of Cheadle and Gatley

**Table 7 - Network classification and dimension**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path status</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Length (km)</th>
<th>Number of paths</th>
<th>% of total network length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Footpath</td>
<td>Walkers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridleway</td>
<td>Walkers, horse riders and cyclists</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byway open to all traffic</td>
<td>Walkers, horse riders, cyclists and motor vehicles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Byway</td>
<td>Walkers, cyclists, equestrians and horse drawn carts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Network Promotion**
Promoting the network of routes within the borough is vital in informing the public about the journeys they can make via off road routes. Creating awareness of the routes that the public can use will be reassuring and instil confidence in users.

Promotion of the network was identified as an essential part of encouraging the public to use and enjoy the network that the Council provides in the last ROWIP. Information relating to promotion of the network undertaken since the last ROWIP was developed is as follows:

• The **Definitive Map and Statement** for the borough of Stockport is available on the Council website, and can be viewed by the public. The Definitive Map for Stockport is a record of all the routes within the borough that the public have a right to use at all times, and the level of use is determined by the status of the route.

• Leaflets to promote **Walkaday** and **Stockport Health Walks** which are aimed at encouraging the public to be more active by enjoying the network of routes (definitive and permissive) in the Countryside and Greenspace within the borough. Walkaday Walks are seasonal and are promoted on the Council website. Hard copies of Walkaday programmes and Stockport Health Walks are also distributed to public libraries, health services, tourism outlets and swimming baths.

• Cycling routes information is published and displayed online (Council website and **TfGM websites**). Hard copies are also distributed to tourist outlets, health services, public libraries and schools.

• User group meetings - The Public Rights of Way Forum, Cycling User Group, Disability Forum, Local Access Forum, Friends Groups, Greenspace Forum, Greater Manchester TPT officers’ meetings and Greater Manchester Public Rights of Way Officers meetings, all provide avenues for the promotion of access routes within the borough.

• A – Z maps showing walking routes with the borough are displayed on the Council website. Hard copies of the A- Z maps are distributed to public libraries.

• Life Leisure organises and promotes races that are run on sections of the Public Rights of Way network. Information of the races is displayed on the Council website.

• Information boards provide an important medium to display and disseminate information. The Trans Pennine Trail, Middlewood Way, Alan Newton Way, Chadkirk, Bramall Hall are examples of locations with information boards that promote sections of the network of routes.

• Improved direction signage. The destination information on signs helps to promote the mentioned routes and also inform and assure users of their target destinations. While still an ongoing process, work has been undertaken to improve the signage available in the borough.

• **Council Newsletter – Stockport Review**

• **Interactive maps** – The council continues to work to improve the online presence of the council including the mapping of the routes and facilities available to residents.

**Consultation**
To help inform the assessment of the network and the development of the next ROWIP a consultation was carried out. The Consultation ran from 6th February to the 17th of March 2017. As well as the emails to identified interest groups the consultation was also advertised on social media through the council and other interest groups. This included Facebook advertising of the consultation.

During consultation a report was taken to all Area Committees asking for comments from Councillors and also to the Local Access Forum, Disability Stockport Transport and Access Forum and Cycle User Group.

The consultation was responded to by 1006 individuals. This is 154 more responses than to the previous questionnaire in 2006. The full results from the Consultation can be found in the Consultation report in Appendix B.

**Assessment of different needs of users - based on the questionnaire in Feb 2017**

Indications of the different needs of users collated in the February – March 2017 ROWIP questionnaire.

**Walkers**

Primarily, pedestrian users were the largest group identified in the survey. This indicates that there is still a strong need to ensure that any changes or improvements to the network should not be to the detriment of this group of users. There is also a need to work with a range of users to improve relationship between them and other groups.

Comments from respondents particularly of note with regards to this group are:

- The need to facilitate dog walking through the provision of bins for waste.
- The maintenance of the surface, drainage and vegetation to allow passage on routes.
- Provision of information about routes.

**Horse riders and carriage drivers**

Horse riders were the 3rd largest group of users identified by the survey, and numbers responding had increased from the last survey. Therefore this leisure use has a base of users that need to be facilitated especially in areas where there are stables. There is also a need to work with a range of users to improve relationship between them and other groups.

Comments to note from respondents of this group are:
The provision of surfaces which meet the needs of the horse.

The desire for more continuous routes.

Clearer signage about users and directions.

**Cyclists**

Cyclists formed the second largest group of respondents. This group is strongly supported by a range of national and local initiatives to increase the number of cyclists, in order to increase the use of non-motorised modes of transport for journeys of 5 km or less. There is also a need to work with a range of users to improve the relationships between them and other groups.

Comments of note from respondents of this group are:

- The provision of surfaces which meet the needs of the off-road commuter rider.
- The desire for more continuous routes.
- Clearer signage about users and directions.

**People with mobility problems, blind and partially sighted people**

While responses from the survey by users identifying themselves as disabled were limited, with only 8% considering themselves to have a disability, there was interest from the disability groups in the Borough to improve the policies surrounding accessibility of routes. They were also interested in the development of signage/information that is appropriate to indicate the accessibility of routes for different users.

Comments of note from respondents of this group are:

- The need for information about access controls, steps and gradient on routes.
- The need to consider users of tricycles or adapted bikes.

**Lawful vehicle users**

There was little response from these users to the survey; however the Council is aware of their presence and the need to work with them. Some routes on the Rights of Way network including routes that are Public Rights of Way can be used by motorised vehicles. Many recorded Rights of Way also serve as the main access route for some local resident, especially in the suburban and rural parts of the borough. The local residents are allowed to drive motorised vehicles on routes leading to their properties because they have ‘Private Access Rights’. There is a need to work with a range of users to improve relationship between them and other groups.

Comments of note from respondents of this group are:

- Issues with the damage caused to routes by vehicles.

**People who did not use the path network**
The numbers reporting regular use of the Rights of Way network are increasing. However, there are still sections of the population who do not realise that the off road routes they use are part of the Rights of Way network, or even part of the legally defined Public Rights of Way network. Also, there are still sections of the population who do not use the network at all.

This issue has been the subject of a range of studies and these groups are often targeted by public health programmes to try and increase their activity levels. The public health team need to be worked with to ensure that the provisions on the Rights of Way network support their work.

**Visitors to the borough**

This group was also not well represented in the consultation however, the Council has a clear desire to increase the range and use of its leisure and tourism offer and so the Rights of Way network must ensure that it supports this.

**Landowners and farmers**

The local access forum has landowners as part of its membership and so is a key way to communicate with these groups about their desires and responsibilities.

Comments of note from respondents of this group are:

- A commitment from the Council for the speedy resolution of issues / problems was requested.