



# LUTON RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN: LUTON'S GREAT OUTDOORS



**JULY 2008**

**LUTON**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

In conjunction with

**Catherine Bickmore Associates**  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANCY

Luton is a thriving multi-ethnic town. It is surrounded on three sides by the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, accessed from the fringe of the town by a number of public footpaths and bridleways. There are a number of excellent parks and green spaces within the town, connected by a network of other paths and cycleways.

However, the town has a number of deprived areas, and a recent study has indicated that it has the lowest rates of life expectancy in the East of England.

The public rights of way network, together with other paths and cycleways in the town, therefore forms an important resource for leisure and informal sports, as well as travel to meet our everyday needs. Information on the use of the network, on which this Plan is based, was obtained from extensive research of adults and young people carried out in Spring 2007.

This has highlighted five key themes of Luton's Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The most important themes to encourage greater use of the network are the need for a better signed, maintained and accessible network, and improved safety and security.

This Plan includes a number of actions, building upon recent improvements to the network of paths and cycleways in and around the town, together with various initiatives to encourage greater use of them. This should lead to healthier, more cohesive local communities in the town.

Get out and enjoy, Luton's great outdoors!



Hazel Simmons  
Leader of the Council



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## Introduction

Walking and other pursuits in the countryside are good for our health as they give the chance for physical exercise as gentle or strenuous as each of us wishes to make it. Using local rights of way give the opportunity for socialising with family or friends and helps people to appreciate the scenery, wildlife, plant life and history of an area. Also access to green space and nature has a positive effect on mental health and is important for general well-being (Bird, 2007).

The Government requires local highway authorities to prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP), which should cover:

- the extent to which rights of way in Luton meet the present and likely future needs of the public;
- the opportunities rights of way provide for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and for enjoying Luton and its surrounding area; and
- how accessible rights of way in Luton are to blind or partially sighted people and others with mobility problems.

Rights of way are vital for gaining access to the countryside around Luton, which is one of the town's prime assets. To the north, east and south of the town, the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) has

some of the finest scenery in southeast England and is served by many footpaths and bridleways. Some of these are linked together to provide longer distance trails such as the Icknield Way and Chilterns Way. To the southeast the Upper Lea Valley has attractive riverside walks, that extend into the town. The National Cycle Network (NCN) route 6 largely follows the course of the river Lea through Luton.

Public Rights of Way are paths with public access that include:

- Footpaths for pedestrians only (and mobility buggies);
- Bridleways for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders;
- Byways open to all traffic (BOATs);and
- Roads used as public paths (RUPPs).

They can be paths on their own, or may pass through an area of public open space, but they do not generally refer to pavements along the edge of roads or to cycleways.

There are a number of parks, playing fields and other green spaces that are an important resource for the enjoyment of people who live in the town. Some of these attract visitors from further afield, such as the Museum at Wardown Park, and the Discovery Centre/Mossman Collection at Stockwood Park.

In areas defined as 'open access' land, people have a right to undertake recreational activities on foot. The town is well served by such areas of varying levels of accessibility, both on the edge of and in the built up area.

The local network of pavements and cycleways, together with other paths in the town, also encourages people to use healthier and more sustainable modes of getting to work, to school, and to shops and other community facilities. These are important local routes which complement the formal public rights of way network.

This Plan, therefore, goes beyond the requirements of a RoWIP, in that it also covers access improvements to Luton's parks and open spaces as well as rights of way, an approach now recognised by the Government as good practice.



## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### How have we produced this Plan

The Government's requirements for producing a RoWIP (Defra, 2002) include a number of stages as set out in the diagram opposite. In developing this RoWIP we have taken account of 'best practice, as set out in the Institute of Public Rights of Way (IPROW) website. This Plan has been produced by the Council and consultants Catherine Bickmore Associates, assisted by the following groups with an interest in its key themes:

Active Luton

Bedfordshire County Council

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Council

Chiltern Harness Driving Club

Hertfordshire County Council

Luton & South Beds Groundwork Trust

Luton Action Against Poverty

Luton Disability Advisory and Access Forum

Luton Primary Care Trust

Luton Senior Peoples Forum

Sustrans and local cycle groups

Voluntary Action Luton

This Plan draws on extensive information collected to assess the adequacy of the existing rights of way network in Luton. It includes information from surveys about the condition of the paths, as well as the needs of people who currently use the network and others who may be future or potential users.

To investigate the current use of rights of way in Luton, a questionnaire was distributed to the 952 residents on the Citizens' Panel and 40% replied. The findings are presented in chapters 5 and 6 as representative of adults in Luton, because respondents were mainly over 25 years of age. Most socio-economic characteristics of this sample were reasonably representative of the overall adult population; however people from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups were under-represented.

To reach young people, a further questionnaire was distributed to the 1300 people on Luton's Young People's panel. Of those distributed, 203 (16%) were returned, mainly from respondents under 20 years of age, and 48% were from BME groups. The results from this survey are used in chapters 5 and 6 when referring to young people.

Questionnaires were also sent to members of the interest groups listed opposite.

Information from the above questionnaires was supplemented by other research, in particular responses to :

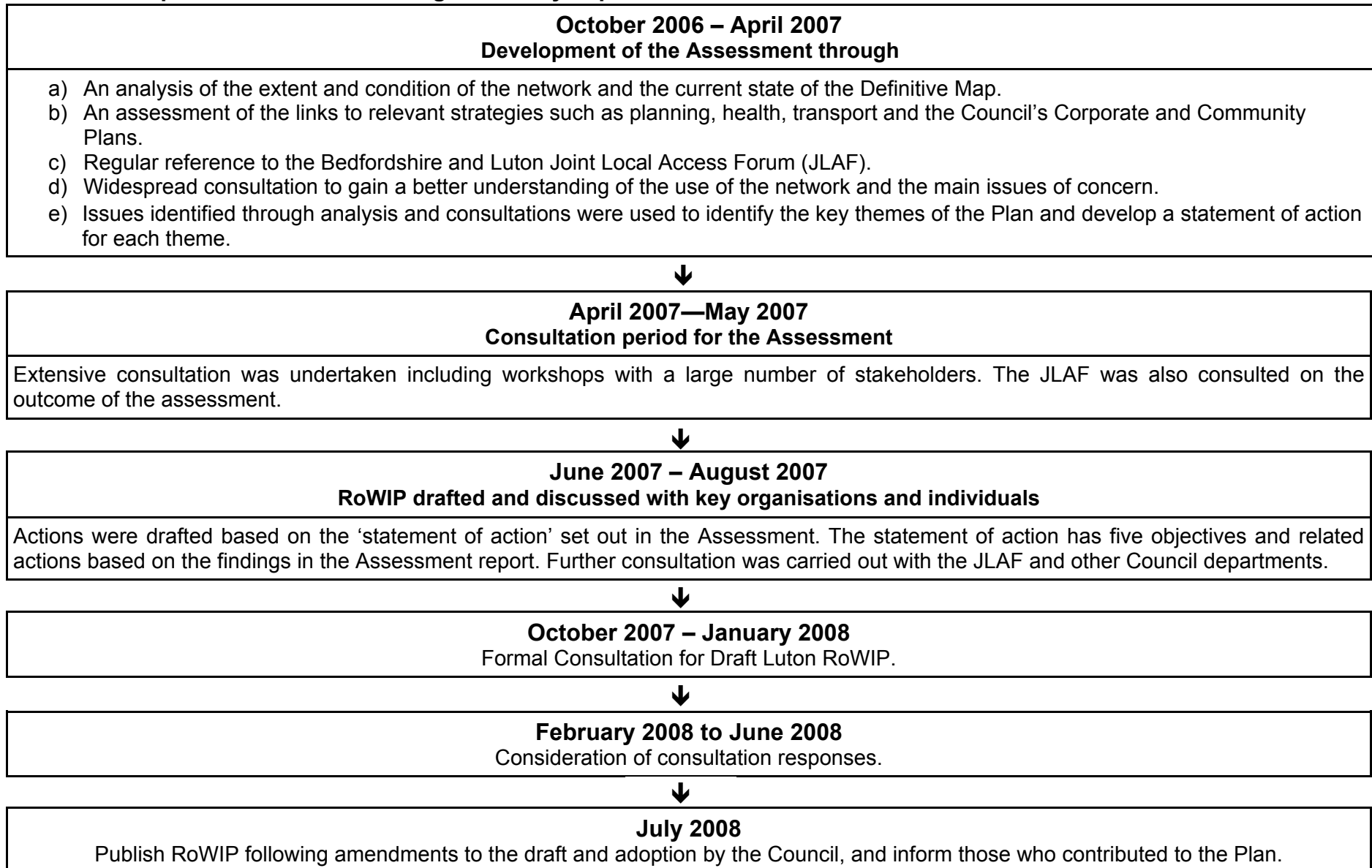
- the Council's Best Value Survey (Luton Borough Council, 2006c), which asked questions about frequency of use and satisfaction with parks and open spaces; and
- a survey of non users of the countryside around Luton & Dunstable, undertaken at various community centres in the area (North Chilterns Trust, 2006)

Other secondary research was drawn from sources such as the Bedfordshire Outdoor Access Improvement Plan (Bedfordshire County Council, 2006) and related studies, the Luton-Dunstable Local Transport Plan (Luton Borough Council et al, 2006) and related strategies, together with the Luton Community Observatory website.

The key themes of the Plan that emerged from the information collected during the assessment, and the specific action points to deal with any issues raised, were used to develop the draft action plan.

Public consultation on the draft action plan was carried out between October 2007 and January 2008. The comments received during the consultation have been reviewed, and used to inform the development of this final Plan.

**Process for production of Luton's Rights of Way Improvement Plan**



## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### Policy background

This chapter sets out the relationship between the key aims of this Plan and other relevant policies and strategies affecting Luton.

The Council's Community Plan for the period up to 2026, together with its Local Area Agreement (LAA), set out three further key themes and associated outcomes that closely relate to policies on rights of way:

- creating safer and more attractive conditions to encourage walking/cycling to nearby facilities;
- improving health and well-being; and
- protecting Luton's green spaces, natural environment and biodiversity.

The new LAA prioritises 35 National Indicators (NI's) in a number of areas such as stronger and safer communities, health and well-being (e.g. NI8 to improve participation in physical activity and NI 56 about reducing obesity among primary school age children in year 6) and the environment (e.g. NI199 about young people satisfied with parks and play areas).

#### Planning and Transport Policies

The Luton Local Plan 2001-2011 (Luton Borough Council, 2006b) includes policies aimed at encouraging people to walk and cycle to local facilities and reduce the need

to travel by car. Major development and regeneration proposals are required to provide for informal recreation including, where appropriate, access to local footpaths/bridleways and to the surrounding countryside.

The Local Plan also seeks to protect existing green space and supports the Biodiversity Action Plan for the area. It states that links from within Luton to the countryside need to be improved so that people, including those with mobility difficulties, have better access to the countryside.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new range of development plans that would form a Local Development Framework, which would work within more detailed regional and sub-regional strategies.

The framework for the future growth of Luton and South Bedfordshire beyond 2011, together with guidance on the principles of how the environmental impacts of that growth should be planned and mitigated, is set out in the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy published in March 2005, and the East of England Plan published in May 2008.

The Luton-Dunstable-Houghton Regis Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006-2011

(Luton Borough Council et al, 2006) maintains a commitment to giving priority to walking and cycling to create safe conditions for travel by these modes, to make local services accessible, and to promote a better quality of life in the towns. In this context the LTP is consistent with National and Regional policy to maximise sustainable travel, contributing to a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>.

The Luton Walking Strategy (Luton Borough Council, 2003) and Luton Cycling Strategy (Luton Borough Council, 2006a) call for promoting and improving walking and cycling routes for recreational and health users, and giving access to work and local facilities such as shops. Both strategies advocate the development of continuous routes across the town which will also link with recreational opportunities on its fringes. There are undertakings to maintain routes to a high standard, to carry out a programme of improvements and to make them usable, as far as possible, by disabled people.

In addition, the Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF) has published a vision for encouraging access to the countryside by cycle, based on a "Green Grid" of the National Cycle Network supplemented by local routes between the towns and the surrounding countryside/villages (Bedfordshire and Luton JLAF, 2006). The vision is based on three themes of improved safety, signing and information.

Strategies promoting health and well-being

Reducing the rise in overweight and obese people is a national priority. In Luton the focus is reducing year on year rise of childhood obesity highlighted by the Annual Public Health Report (Luton PCT, 2007) and the Child and Young People's Plan for Luton.

Healthy walks using the rights of way and open spaces available in Luton are one action that contributes to improved mental health, increasing physical activity and general wellbeing.

The Council's Play Strategy (Luton Borough Council, 2007) recognises the health, well-being and development benefits of play for children, together with the benefits of supervised access to play areas/parks in both improving safety and reducing antisocial behaviour. It identifies a number of ways including the need to assess the child population in the local communities to identify range of equipped play areas to meet their needs, and working with schools facilitate use of playing fields or areas of open space of recreational value. The strategy specifically identifies East Luton as an area requiring allocation of resources to develop equipped play spaces.

The Council's community cohesion group has published Neighbourhood Renewal Plans to address problems identified by the local community in five areas of the town:

Ashcroft & Ramridge, Bury Park, Dallow, High Town, and Lewsey. They all contain actions relevant to the wider LAA themes highlighted on the page opposite, including the introduction of health walks in High Town, improvements to parks and open spaces in High Town and Lewsey to make them more accessible to the community, and improving access to community facilities (eg the shops in Bury Park).

Improving parks and open spaces

Luton's parks and open spaces have multiple functions, including providing for recreational needs, contributing to the quality of life, enhancing the local area, promoting health and mental well-being and are particularly important for nature conservation and biodiversity.

Open spaces in the town include natural and semi-natural areas that provide opportunities for wildlife conservation and biodiversity. The linear nature and distribution of the parks and spaces creates green corridors, useful for walking, cycling or horse riding, as well as for wildlife migration.

A Parks, Playing Pitches and Open Space Strategy for Luton (Torkildsen Barclay, 2003) proposes connecting open spaces with a network of green ways running through the built-up areas, providing linear routes that will encourage walking and cycling to local facilities .

The Bedfordshire and Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium, published a Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan in March 2007. This sets out a spatial vision for providing for good access to open space and recreational opportunities for the existing and planned new urban development in Luton and Bedfordshire. It provides a vision for a linked network of multi-purpose open areas and corridors that will connect the new development with the existing urban area and the countryside beyond.

This strategic vision has been developed in more detail in a Luton and South Bedfordshire Green Space Strategy (Luton Borough Council and South Bedfordshire District Council, 2008) consulted on by the two Councils in the spring. When completed, this will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to inform the green space and access requirements for the future growth of Luton and South Bedfordshire.



Children at play in Wardown Park

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### What are the Council's legal duties?

As a local highway authority, the Council is required under The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to prepare and publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The Act also places a duty on the Council, in exercising and performing its functions, to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONB's. This is relevant as the Chilterns AONB adjoins Luton.

There are already duties under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Highways Act 1980 to keep a Definitive Map and statement of rights of way, and to ensure that rights of way are adequately signed, maintained and free from obstruction.

The Definitive Map shows the public's rights of way over four categories of route, which are highlighted in chapter 1. If a right of way is shown on the Definitive Map then this is evidence that there is a public right in existence on a date known as the "relevant date". However, the reverse is not true, so if a right of way is not on the Definitive Map this is not proof that the public have no rights over it. The map must be available for the public to inspect free of charge at all reasonable hours.

In Luton the public rights of way comprise 7.2 kilometres of footpath and 5.6 kilometres of

bridleway (see plan opposite); there are currently no RUPPs or BOATs in Luton. There are also a number of areas defined as 'open access' land over which people have a right to undertake recreational activities on foot.

An annual survey of the condition of these footpaths and bridleways is undertaken. The survey looks at the following:

- Condition of signing and structures (gates, stiles, bollards etc);
- Obstructions either at a specified point on or section along each; and
- Type and condition of surface.

The 2007 survey showed that on about a quarter of the 21 sections surveyed signing was missing where the routes meet the public highway, as a result of this some 25 signs were replaced. Four sections failed overall due to poor signing or obstructions.

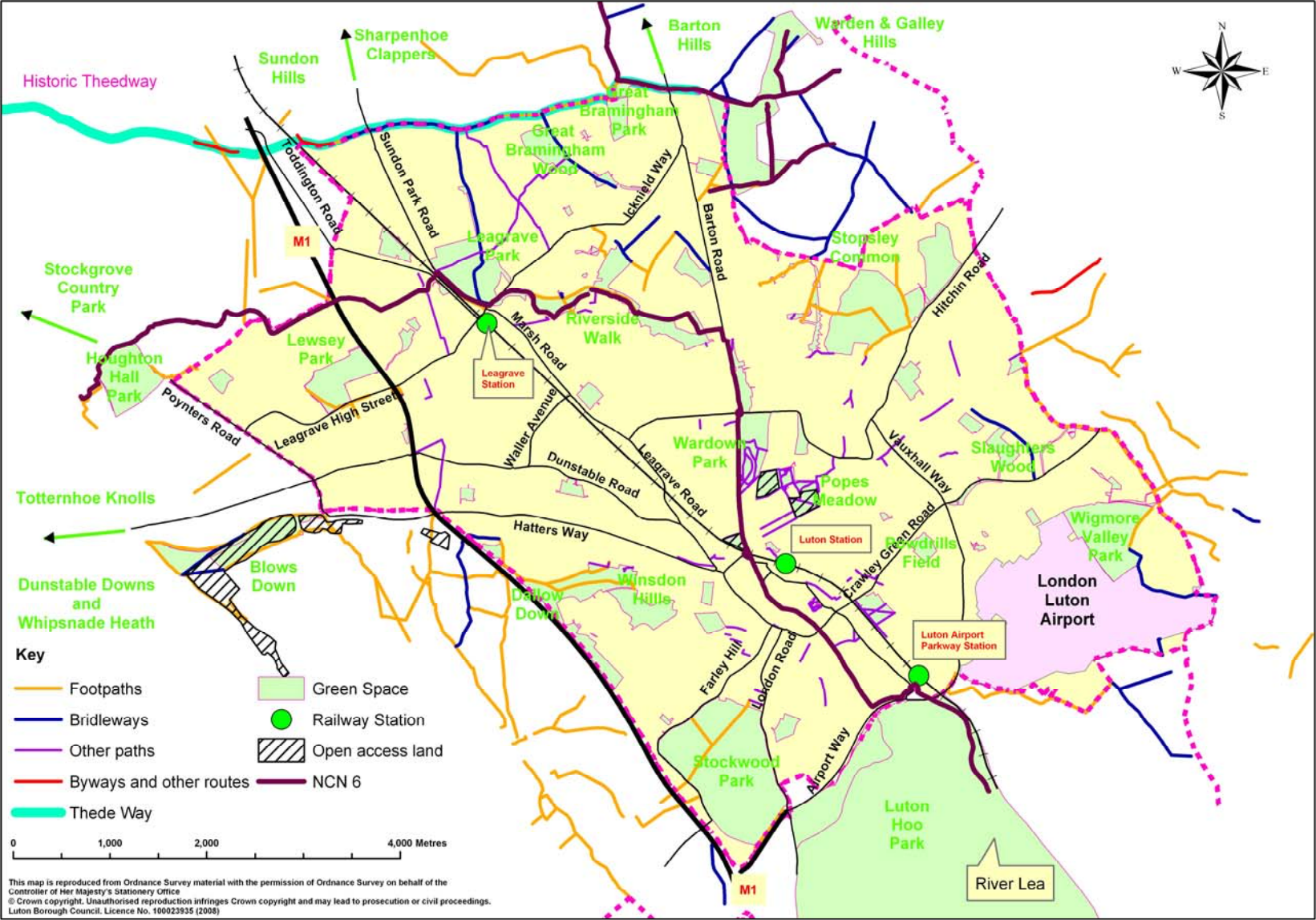
Some of these rights of way include structures to prevent access by unauthorised users. However to minimise disadvantage to legitimate users, the Council's policy would be to ensure that any structures should accord with the principles of 'Least Restrictive Access' compliant with BS5709:2006.

The Council has a number of other legal responsibilities, in its role as both local

highway and planning authority. These relate to the three wider policy themes highlighted on page 4, and include:

- The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (CNEA) 2005, with powers designed to create cleaner neighbourhoods by helping Councils to deal quickly with those who litter, fly tip and deface the local environment;
- The CNEA also introduced powers enabling Councils to address community safety concerns by restricting public access to any public highway by gating it. However the Regulations require that gating must be the last resort after other measures have been tried;
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 which places responsibility on the Council to have regard, as far as practicable, to "conserving biodiversity" in exercising these functions; and
- The Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 may require improvements to paths in the area, in particular where they provide access to facilities in parks/green spaces and other areas of the town that could be used by disabled people. Possible improvements will be identified through a range of sources such as comments from the public, consultation with disability groups, usage studies etc.

Rights of Way in and around Luton



What are the Council's legal duties?

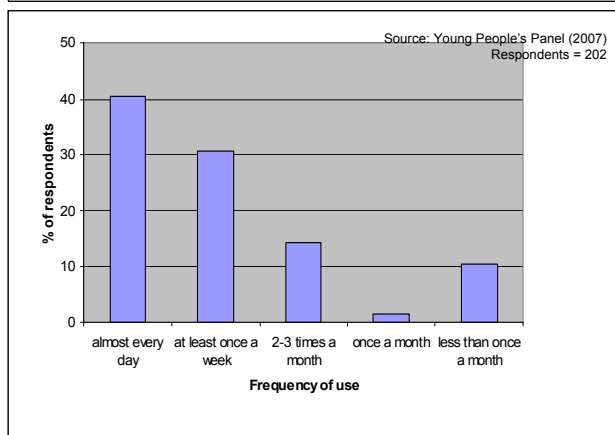
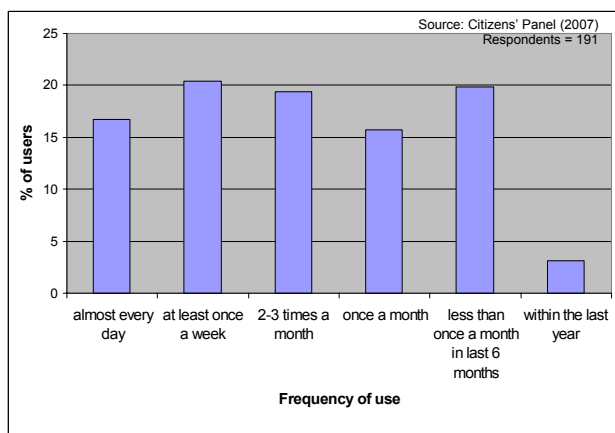
## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### Use of Luton's Rights of Way

This chapter presents the survey results on how and why people use local rights of way and their opinions/attitudes about the network.

#### Frequency of use by type of user

The following diagrams show the extent of use by adults and young people.



#### Summary:

- Walking is a frequent activity in Luton therefore a large number of residents and visitors could benefit from improvements to the network in the future
- Rights of way in Luton are generally well used; the majority of young people and adults, with and without disabilities, had used at least one path in the last year
- More people had used paths in parks and open spaces in the last year compared to other path types
- Paths in parks and open spaces are used with a similar frequency to footpaths, but bridleways and byways are used less frequently
- People with disabilities and other mobility restrictions used rights of way just as frequently as other people
- Luton's large population of young people use rights of way more frequently than the adult population

#### Travel to and on the rights of way

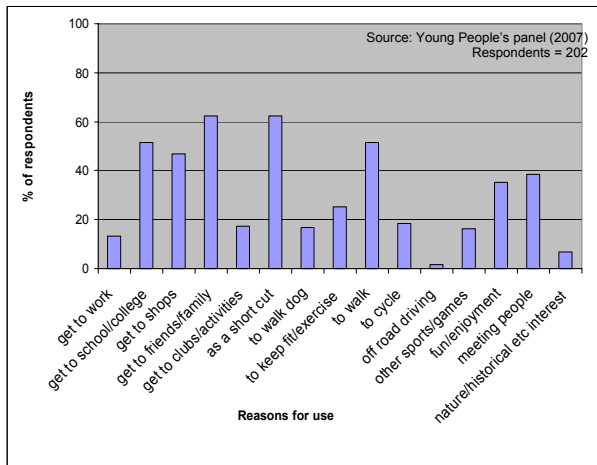
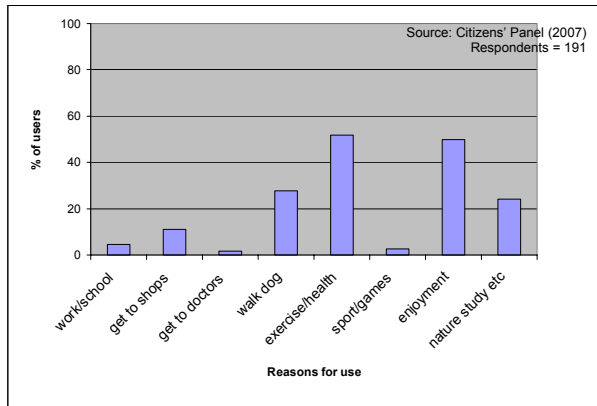
Adults and young people were asked how long it took to reach the paths in parks and open spaces that they used most often, and how much time they spent travelling on these paths.

#### Summary:

- Most people walk to reach and to travel along footpaths, bridleways and paths in parks and open spaces (use of public transport is rare)
- Private vehicles are more likely to be used to reach paths in parks and open spaces than footpaths and bridleways outside of parks and open spaces
- Compared to the adult population, a greater proportion of younger users travel by foot or public transport and a smaller proportion travel by car
- The majority of residents use local rights of way, travelling no more than 15 minutes to reach paths
- Adults travel further to reach bridleways and byways, reflecting the lack of these types of rights of way in Luton
- Adults tended to use paths for half an hour to an hour with young people using them for less than quarter of an hour

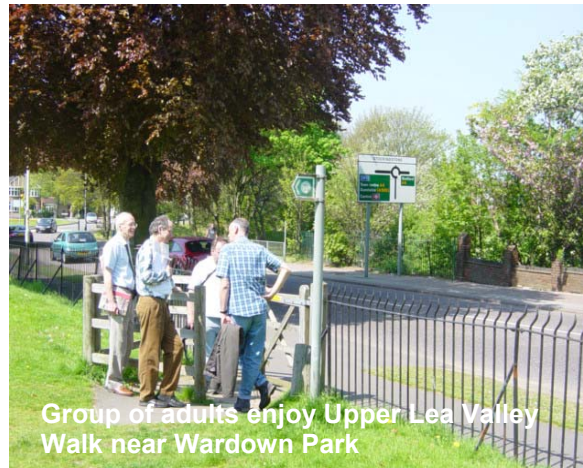
Reasons for use

The following diagrams show the reasons why adults and young people use public rights of way including paths in parks and open spaces (note that respondents could select more than one reason). These broadly fall into three categories: travel, informal recreation and formal sports or games.



**Summary:**

- Adults mainly use rights of way for enjoyment or exercise and health reasons while for young people they are a functional resource and are mostly used for travel between places
- Just under a sixth of adults and young people use paths in parks and other green-spaces to access areas for sport and games
- The majority of users were accompanied by another person, although half of young people also commonly travel alone therefore safety is paramount
- Just under a quarter of adult users were accompanied by a dog on rights of way



Finding out about the rights of way and use of specific routes and parks

Around two thirds of users first found out about the path or park they use through local knowledge. Very few follow signposts or use a leaflet or map. The most popular areas in Luton are summarised in the following table:

Area with paths/park	% of respondents Citizens' Panel (Respondents = 384)	% of respondents Young People's Panel (Respondents = 202)
Biscot and Wardown Park	54	56
New Town, Park Town, Stockwood	38	23
High Town and Pope's Meadow	32	35
Stopsley and Stopsley Common	32	26
Leagrave and Leagrave Park	31	36
Limbury and Riverside Walk	30	20
Lewsey Farm and Lewsey Park	23	36
Marsh Farm and Sundon Park	24	35
Dallow and Dallows Down	11	31

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### Summary:

- The majority of users find out about rights of way through local knowledge
- Biscot and Wardown Park was the most popular area in Luton for young and old, but was less used by those with disabilities
- Dunstable Downs was the most popular area visited around Luton and Dunstable, followed by Warden & Galley Hills, Sharpenhoe Clappers and Barton Hills
- The Icknield Way was the most popular long distance path, although use by those without access to a car was limited, suggesting lack of promotion as an accessible path running through the centre of Luton



Young people relaxing in Wardown Park

### Needs/demands of users

Information about the needs/demands of various groups of people that use the rights of way network in Luton has been obtained principally from the stakeholder workshops held in Spring 2007.

### Summary:

- **Walkers want** better continuity of paths away from roads and clearer signs, road and rail crossing to address fragmentation, a green infrastructure map, routes with sightlines for safety and public transport links
- **Cyclists want** cleaner cycleways, mixed use paths with clear codes of conduct, paths designed for a variety of uses
- **Horse carriage drivers want** secure parking with attractive, un-fragmented circular routes and good road access
- **The off-road driving group want** an area to use for off-road motorbikes
- **People with mobility restrictions prefer** wide, smooth paths with a firm surface, a gentle slope and no obstructions, stiles or steps

### Quality of the rights of way

About three quarters of adults and virtually all young people who had used rights of way over the last year were asked for their views about the condition of the network. Ratings of these aspects were generally more positive for paths in parks and open spaces and more negative for footpaths, bridleways and byways.

### Summary:

- Users were pleased about overall condition, upkeep, signposting, attractiveness, and lack of noise and disturbance
- Young users generally agree with older users, but they have a worse opinion of signposting and attractiveness of the area.
- Young people from ethnic minorities have more concerns about the attractiveness of the surrounding area, but rate cleanliness and signposting slightly more positively
- Users were concerned about cleanliness, accessibility for people with disabilities and security
- Paths forming public rights of way are generally rated as better quality than other paths in open spaces

**How to encourage more use of Luton's Rights of Way**

People who have not used any path in or around Luton during the last year made up approximately one quarter of adults in Luton , but only 1.5% of young people.

**Summary:**

- Adult use is relatively lower among Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, unemployed people, the elderly, people with a disability, people without a car and those without children at home
- Security was the main issue among adults and young people who had not used rights of way
- Lack of time, lack of transport and the site has no appeal were reasons that most ethnic groups did not use rights of way
- For around a fifth of adults, limited mobility or health was an issue

About a third of non-users did not respond to the question about which improvements would encourage them to use the paths most, but those that responded provided answers fairly similar to those of the users.



Flytipping obstructs access in north Luton

**Summary:**

- For users and non-users, young and old, factors that would make a big difference to their use of rights of way are cleaner, more secure paths with better surface condition
- Better transport would make a bigger difference to people without a car and to black and Asian ethnic groups, while more circular routes would make some difference to more people with a car
- More women and people with children in the household say better security would make a big difference
- Cleaner paths would make a big difference to people with children
- More organised events would be important for non-users

- Better accessibility for pushchairs, wheelchairs and mobility vehicles would encourage around half of those with mobility aids to use paths more, and improved condition of path surface and parking would make a bigger difference to those with mobility aids
- Non-users with a disability would be most likely to be influenced positively by organised events, parking and improved bus links
- Users and non-users feel there is a lack of information about rights of way: primarily they would like provision of information by leaflets and maps in Luton Line



Removing part of this bank at Wigmore would improve access for mobility impaired people

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### Action plan and priorities

Although approximately three quarters of Luton's adults use the local rights of way network, the frequency with which they do so could be higher, and use could also be encouraged by certain under-represented groups, such as the unemployed, those without a private vehicle, BME groups, the elderly, and people with a disability.

Therefore the general aim of the action plan set out on the following pages is to:

- develop and maintain a rights of way network, which is more accessible for all sectors of society;
- encourage use among those who currently use paths and parks infrequently or not at all in order to enhance health and wellbeing;
- make using the rights of way an altogether safer and more pleasant experience; and
- achieve improved access whilst fulfilling obligations relating to green-space and biodiversity.

The consultation on the draft RoWIP carried out between October 2007 and January 2008 focussed on the views of the local community about each of the action plan themes. A press release was issued about the consultation on the draft RoWIP, and an article was published in the November edition of

Luton Line, the Council's in-house magazine. The draft RoWIP and accompanying questionnaire were available on the consultation section of the Council's website, and 2600 copies were distributed to all libraries and community centres in Luton. Details were also sent to voluntary bodies through Voluntary Action Luton, and the Luton Disability Advisory and Access Forum (DAAF).

In particular the consultation sought views on whether each of the actions was important or not, and the responses, averaged over each theme, are summarised in the following table :

Action Plan theme	Importance of theme (rank)
Better signed, maintained and accessible network	1
Improve safety and security	2
Improve promotion of rights of way	=3
Improve health and wellbeing	=3
Enhanced maintenance	5

Each theme includes a brief statement outlining arrangements or initiatives the Council has already put in place, that will, either directly contribute to or assist with, the im-

plementation of improvements to the rights of way network or associated administrative procedures.

The action plan associated with each theme lists the actions we hope to implement and indicates which of them are 'quick fixes' that can be carried out within existing resources, and which require other partner organisations outside of the Council to either help deliver or fund particular improvements or initiatives.

The second Luton Dunstable Local Transport Plan includes capital funding in the period up to 2010/11 of about £150,000 per annum each for cycling and pedestrian improvements, which will include improvements to the rights of way network. There are opportunities to use this capital funding as a source of matched funding for other projects.

The Council will also seek sources of external funding for rights of way improvements and the creation of new rights of way, including contributions from:

- organisations such as Sustrans, the Chilterns Conservation Board, and the Chalk Arc Initiative;
- environmental stewardship schemes;
- developers of new housing areas; and
- specific funds, such as the Governments Playbuilder and Healthy Towns initiatives

## Theme 1: A better signed, maintained and accessible network for the whole community

For our public rights of way network to be safeguarded, easier to find and open to a wider range of users, it is important that the standard and level of signing and maintenance is improved. Such measures are consistent with policies in the Chilterns Conservation Board management plan (currently under review) to improve access and recreation in the AONB.

In addition, in order to establish a more useable network of routes it is important that Luton's designated highway footpaths and paths through parks are treated in the same way.

To this end works will be carried out over the next 8 years to ensure that Luton's network is brought up to and maintained at a higher standard. Signs and information will be improved to indicate where the routes are, where they go and their ease of use. Signage along rights of way will be based on the national colour codes.

One particular example promoted is the Upper Lea Valley walk ([www.lets-go.org.uk](http://www.lets-go.org.uk)) which was originally installed by Bedfordshire County Council in 1992, but its signing has deteriorated over the intervening years so that some sections of the walk are now difficult to follow and the source of the River Lea is difficult to find. This walk is

identified in the action plan to be returned to a proper standard in 2008/09.

The rights of way network is subject to an annual regime of inspection and routine maintenance. To work along-side this, the Council's Street Services Division has established a number of volunteer "street champions" to report concerns about the condition of their neighbourhood, including matters such as fly-tipping, vandalism, access problems, obstruction and general maintenance needs. The Council's website also has a 'Do-it-online' section for reporting such issues.

The Liveability project 'Parks, Plazas and Promenades' encouraged community involvement in parks and as a result there are a number of 'Friends of the Parks' groups and 'Community Caretakers'. Such groups report problems to the Parks service as they arise and actively participate in seeking improvements for their local park.

Inclusion is a key issue in improving the network as certain groups are currently under-represented amongst users. Discussions will be held with BME groups, the elderly, people with disabilities, schools and parents to help improve the suitability of sections of the network for those of all ages and abilities so that they can use the

routes confidently and safely, and particularly to improve access to the town centre and local facilities. The Council's neighbourhood renewal plans include examples of engaging with such ranges of community groups to improve access to parks and open spaces in High Town and Lewsey.

The 2007 surveys that informed this plan highlighted that parks and open spaces in the Biscot area were not accessible to mobility impaired people. In addition the consultation draft of the Green-space Strategy identified Biscot as one area of the town with a deficit of green space. The Luton Disability Advisory and Access Forum (DAAF) will have an important role to play in improving rights of way for disability impaired people.

An LAA reward target has been set in relation to green space, of a 20% improvement in the quality of eight parks in Luton and achievement of 'Green Flag' status (the national quality award for parks) for three parks, to be completed by March 2009. The condition and extent of paths through parks, signage and seating has been identified as an area requiring investment to reach these targets.

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

Theme 1 : A better signed, maintained and accessible network for the whole community

	Action	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/15	Resources needed to deliver	Other organisations involved
1.1	Establish a system of signs with distances on key routes, together with clear consistent way markers that are in keeping with the environment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Upper Lea Valley Wigmore Park Warden Hills Dallow Downs	<input type="checkbox"/> Stopsley Common Leagrave Park Lewsey Park Bram'gham Pk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓	
1.2	Improve routes to the town/district centres and other key travel attractors such as transport interchanges for pedestrians and cyclists, with particular consideration of the accessibility needs of mobility impaired people.	<input type="checkbox"/> Hightown / Luton station - town centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Dunstable Rd/Hatters Way - town centre	✓✓	The Mall First Capital Con- nect Luton DAAF Sustrans
1.3	Provide maps and accessibility information at the start of popular routes or, if appropriate, where they join parks or public open spaces/open access land.	<input type="checkbox"/> Wigmore Park Warden Hills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓	Luton DAAF
1.4	Work with the Parks service and the Council's Environment Manager to ensure that when signs are installed in parks and County Wildlife Sites they are appropriate and consistent with other site furniture in order to meet Green Flag criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	Wildlife Trust
1.5	Work with 'street seen' champions and youth workers to encourage regular users and schools to get involved in reporting on the condition of their local paths and help with keeping routes clear and tidy.	<input type="checkbox"/>				✓✓	Youth Groups
1.6	Encourage voluntary groups such as 'Friends of Parks' and 'Community Caretakers' to extend their activities to cover routes to and from parks.	<input type="checkbox"/>				✓✓	Friends of Parks Community Care- takers
1.7	Ensure that the Council's website has a category for reporting problems with rights of way and other paths.	<input type="checkbox"/>				✓✓	

	Action	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Resources needed to deliver	Other organisations involved
1.8	Create a specific revenue budget for the maintenance of rights of way.	<input type="checkbox"/>				✓✓	
1.9	Remove obstacles and other blockages along rights of way and other paths.	<input type="checkbox"/> Wigmore Park Dallow Downs Marsh Farm	<input type="checkbox"/> Great Bramingham Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	Luton & South Beds Groundwork Trust Landowners
1.10	Maintain path surfaces of rights of way to a good and appropriate standard.	<input type="checkbox"/> Slaughters Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓	Luton & South Beds Groundwork Trust
1.11	Investigate circular routes for horse riders/carriage drivers on the eastern fringe of the town.		<input type="checkbox"/>			✓	Bedfordshire CC Hertfordshire CC British Horse Society Local stables
1.12	Investigate a 'byway link' to the recreational area for off-road four wheel drive vehicles in the quarry at Barton cutting.		<input type="checkbox"/>			✓	Bedfordshire CC Sustrans
1.13	Work with user groups, organisations representing disabled people, pensioners, ethnic minorities, the unemployed, and schools/parents to develop a programme of improvements to enhance the accessibility of the network (see also Theme 2).	<input type="checkbox"/> Biscot Ward	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	Luton DAAF Luton Race Advisory Forum Luton Older Peoples Forum
1.14	Work to improve rights of way and transport links as stated in the Chilterns AONB management plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓✓	Chilterns Conservation Board Train/bus operators

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## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### Theme 2: Improved promotion of rights of way

With the better signed, maintained and accessible network set out under Theme 1, it is important that the promotion of the network is also improved to gain the full benefit of the work carried out.

Accordingly, in the next 8 years the network, along with parks and areas of public open space, will be widely promoted so all sectors of society are well informed about the opportunities available and know where they can go for further information. Information and promotion material will be available at certain bus stops, all three railway stations, London Luton Airport, public buildings, libraries, museums, and health centres and doctor's surgeries.

There will be promotion with bus and train operators, including maps and leaflets covering selected routes plus associated ticketing.

The Borough Council regularly produce maps showing cycle and public transport routes in the town. Also Bedfordshire County Council, in combination with the British Horse Society has recently published a guide to horse rides, which includes two routes to the east of Luton.

The Borough Council will produce a map of walks in the town and surrounding area, containing information on public rights of way

providing access to the countryside as well as other paths within the town. This map will also include information about open access land and the sections of long distance paths within the area, together with connections across the borough boundary. It will also include information about how rights of way, parks and open spaces can be reached by public transport, together with information on the Countryside Code and contact details of local user groups.

Promotion of routes providing links into the surrounding countryside, including using trains and buses, can also benefit the local economy by bringing customers to village pubs, shops and other facilities. This will be encouraged as 'days out' in association with local businesses in the countryside. This can also promote access into the town from the surrounding villages.

To meet the requirements of Green Flag status, effective promotion is required; a leaflet has already been developed for Wardown Park, which provides accessibility and route information.

Discussions will be held with BME groups, the elderly, people with disabilities, schools and parents to help improve the promotion of selected/appropriate routes to such groups. The Luton DAAF will have an im-

portant role to play in promoting such routes for disability impaired people.

A number of events take place in parks and open spaces in and around the town. These include nature walks such as a bird watching walk on Warden Hill and blossom and bluebells walk on Dallows Down/Longcroft, together with monthly nature watch meetings for children aged 8-12. These events are publicised in 'Whats on in the Chilterns' and special leaflets (available in the town hall, local libraries and community centres), and also in 'LutonLine' (the Council's bi-monthly magazine delivered to local homes).

For people who do not wish to join these formal groups but still want to enjoy the parks and open spaces in and around Luton, the Council will provide maps and interpretation boards in key locations.



Examples of promotional leaflets

	Action	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/15	Resources needed to deliver	Other organisations involved
2.1	Produce a map showing the rights of way and open access land in Luton including highway footpaths and paths through parks and public open space and how accessible they are. The map will provide details of places of interest and available facilities. Ensure that this map is referred to in the Green Space Strategy and local Green Infrastructure Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>				✓✓	Bedfordshire CC South Beds DC
2.2	Work with organisations representing disabled people, pensioners, ethnic minorities, the unemployed, and schools/parents to establish ways of promoting rights of way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	Luton DAAF Luton senior peoples Forum
2.3	Promote and improve public transport links to the network of paths, particularly for the most important routes and parks.	<input type="checkbox"/>				✓✓	First Capital Connect local bus operators
2.4	Work with the Parks service and the Council's Environment Manager to provide information and interpretation boards in parks and County Wildlife Sites, and ensure these boards also show information on local rights of way and other paths.	<input type="checkbox"/> Wigmore Pk Upper Lea Vy Stopsley Com Wardown Pk	<input type="checkbox"/> Popes Meadow near Pasque Hospice	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Orchard		✓✓	Wildlife Trust
2.5	Promote circular routes, particularly to the north of Luton, which pass through local open space and provide links to the countryside and villages beyond.	<input type="checkbox"/>				✓	Bedfordshire CC
2.6	Provide information in Luton Line and on the Council's website regarding activities and events on rights of way and in parks, for example advertise a different circular route on a seasonal basis.	<input type="checkbox"/>				✓✓	
2.7	Provide all residents in new housing developments with a welcome pack including rights of way map, information on the green infrastructure and activities/events in their local area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓	Developers

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### Theme 3: Improving health and wellbeing

People in Luton will be encouraged to adopt active lifestyles using rights of way and green open spaces to improve their wellbeing. Exercise and a healthy lifestyle will be promoted in conjunction with rights of way through the medium of health walks, exercise groups, doctor's advice and organised

activities. Luton's parks cross land of different steepness providing opportunities for moderate and more strenuous exercise.

As an example of positive schemes already being implemented: the neighbourhood renewal plans (2005-2008) produced by the

Council's community cohesion group include the implementation of health walks in the High Town area. Organised walks and use of rights of way requires more promotion to stakeholders who can influence walking as part of a healthy lifestyle.

### Theme 3: Health and wellbeing

	Action	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/15	Resources needed to deliver	Other organisations involved
3.1	Encourage established walking groups such as the Hindu Mandir to use rights of way and open spaces near where communities live.	☐				✓	Hindu Mandir
3.2	Explore working with Sustrans to encourage access to rights of way and open spaces for local communities and individuals.	☐				✓	Sustrans
3.3	Work with Parks service and Luton PCT and Luton MIND to train park rangers to undertake guided walks, and to promote the health benefits of different routes.	☐				✓✓	Luton PCT Luton MIND

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## Theme 4: Improving safety and security

Concern about personal security and safety was identified as one of the main reasons why young people and adults do not use the public rights of way network. Safety concerns can arise on account of conflicts between different types of users, for example cyclists and pedestrians on the same path, poor lighting and fear of crime. These issues have been repeatedly mentioned in other surveys including a comprehensive survey of young people to determine the Council's approach to implementing the government's "Every Child Matters" strategy.

Safety on paths will therefore be improved in a variety of ways over the next 8 years.

The Council has, and will continue to, introduce community safety and other initiatives in response to the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. These give local communities around the town the opportunity to benefit from measures to improve the local environment and the reduce the concerns of local residents about crime and safety.

The Council is working with partners and seeking funding to provide on-site security in a number of areas. An example is the partnership project between Marsh Farm Community Development Trust (MFCDT) and the Council's Parks service, where a number of Wardens funded by MFCDT and managed

by the Parks service will cover Marsh Farm including Leagrave Park and the surrounding pathway network.

In summer 2007 the Council's Parks service piloted a Free Play in the Park project at Manor Road recreation ground using mobile play rangers on cycles. The Park Town Tenants and Residents Association (TARA) provided volunteer rangers, and the initiative was well received by local people. There was a published programme of times when rangers would be on-site, loan of equipment (footballs, basketballs, etc) and a number of family events to 'natural play environments'. Proposals are being developed to roll out this initiative to other areas of the town. It would target those children currently unable to use the local facilities due to parental concern over personal security issues.

In 2007/8, the Parks service piloted a 'walk in the park' project at Kidney Wood to promote a series of accompanied short/medium and long distance walks in local parks, open spaces and rights of way. This initiative addressed the fear of personal safety, a key concern of path users, particularly for the elderly, young mums, women from BME groups, and people with disabilities/mobility issues. The initiative is being extended to other areas of the town and

training of volunteer group leaders is being undertaken.

Warden Hill infant and junior schools run a 'walking bus' for schoolchildren. This initiative, which provides a safe and healthy way for children to travel to school, will be extended to other schools as part of the requirement under the Education Act 2006 for the Council to prepare a sustainable school travel plan strategy.



Walking bus

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### Theme 4: Improve safety and security

	Action	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/15	Resources needed to deliver	Other organisations involved
4.1	Ensure a code of conduct is publicised and displayed clearly on multi-user paths in appropriate locations (this may not be appropriate in areas of County Wildlife Sites or Heritage Parks).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			✓✓	
4.2	Where practicable and appropriate improve the standard of lighting on identified rights of way, highway footpaths and paths through parks and public open spaces to reduce personal security risks and make the route more attractive.				<input type="checkbox"/> M1 u/pass Kestrel Way	✓✓	Highways Agency
4.3	Encourage work with schools to provide safe activities for children on rights of ways and in public open spaces.	<input type="checkbox"/> Wigmore Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Bradgers Hill			✓	
4.4	Ensure that encroaching vegetation is trimmed on a regular basis, particularly on routes to schools, parks and public open spaces.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓	
4.5	Ensure the appropriate management of hedges and vegetation, identified in the condition survey are included in Park and Wildlife Site Management Plans and Stewardship Agreements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓	Wildlife Trust Luton & South Beds Groundwork Trust Natural England
4.6	Encourage group activities by clubs and organisations to promote regular use of rights of way, highway footpaths, paths through parks, public open space and County Wildlife Sites to improve security.	<input type="checkbox"/>				✓	Youth Groups Wildlife Trust
4.7	Encourage children to travel to school using Walking bus and similar initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	

	Action	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/15	Resources needed to deliver	Other organisations involved
4.8	Provide information to enable users to report anti-social behaviour to the Council's Community Safety team, or other local warden schemes to monitor routes where this is a problem.	☐				✓	Community Safety

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#### Theme 5: Updating the Definitive Map, and enhanced management of green space and rights of way

The Definitive Map is the necessary baseline from which public rights of way are managed and promoted. A key priority to the whole of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan will be to update and review the existing Definitive Map. This most important task is likely to be a complex exercise. Natural England has published a document that explains the status of the Definitive Map and the legal process for making any changes or updates to it..

Opportunities will also be taken to extend and improve the network by providing additional routes and links between paths to address fragmentation and enhance continuity. The two particular areas where additional links would improve connectivity between the town and the countryside are on the eastern fringes of the town, and between the two byways at Sundon and Chalton on either side of the M1.

An example of working to improve green infrastructure and access is an ongoing scheme within the Marsh Farm development area. An auditing procedure to prevent developments from encroaching on the green infrastructure of Luton and to ensure that rights of way are incorporated into development proposals is part of the process of determining planning applications in accordance with policies contained in the Luton

Local Plan.

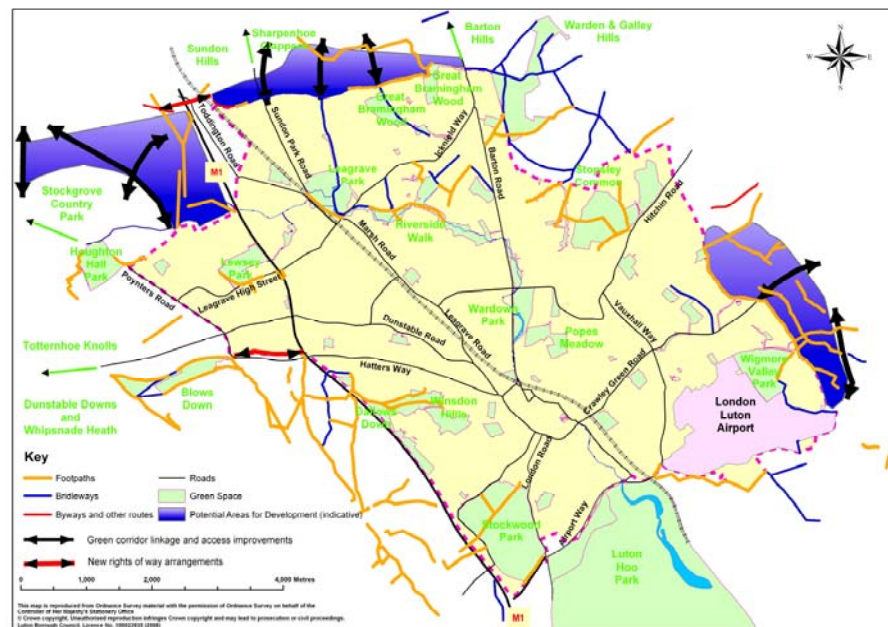
Luton and South Bedfordshire has been designated as a 'Growth Area' as part of the Milton Keynes / South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy, with a target of 26,300 new homes and 23,000 new jobs in the period 2001-2021, together with a further 15,400 homes and 12,000 jobs up to 2031.

The preferred strategy option envisages the majority of the new homes will be located on the northern fringe of Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis, and to the east of Luton.

Steps have been taken to safeguard green infrastructure and biodiversity through the production of the Luton and South Bedfordshire green space strategy. The Theedway, a trade route from Saxon times, passed east-west through south Bedfordshire. Its influence is still visible today along the northern boundary of Luton. This

historic route should be reinstated, and the green space strategy recognises the opportunity that this will provide, combined with existing rights of way to the north of the conurbation, to create circular walks and longer sections accessible to those with mobility aids, horse riders, cyclists and walkers.

However, continual careful management will be necessary to maintain and enhance existing green space and rights of way as the town's population grows and pressure from development increases, especially around Luton.



	Action	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/15	Resources needed to deliver	Other organisations involved
5.1	Update Luton's rights of way Definitive Map.		<input type="checkbox"/>			✓✓✓	CTC Ramblers Land owners Bedfordshire CC
5.2	Use the updated Definitive Map along with the layout of designated highway footpaths and other paths through parks and public open space to identify and prioritise the development of missing links in the network needed to ensure provision of continuous routes (particularly bridleways).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			✓✓✓	Bedfordshire CC Hertfordshire CC
5.3	Monitor the effectiveness of the planning process to prevent developments from encroaching on the green infrastructure of Luton and ensure that rights of way are incorporated into development proposals as part of the Green Infrastructure Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓	Bedfordshire CC South Beds DC
5.4	Continue to seek funding from external sources and planning agreements to make improvements to ensure that parks provide facilities which make them attractive destinations with connections to the rights of way network thereby encouraging use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	Developers
5.5	Use planning agreements from development in the Growth Area around Luton as opportunities to provide new, attractive paths shielded from road traffic to link with the existing network and to develop circular routes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	Developers
5.6	Investigate developing the Theedway as a circular route connecting with other marked routes such as the John Bunyan Trail, the Icknield Way Path and Chiltern Way. This would need to be accommodated within the north Luton expansion proposals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			✓✓✓	Developers

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### Theme 5: Updating the Definitive Map, and enhanced management of green space and rights of way

	Action	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/15	Resources needed to deliver	Other organisations involved
5.7	Working in partnership with neighbouring authorities, check continuity of rights of way crossing the Borough boundary, to ensure that permitted users on either sides are the same (e.g. so that a bridleway does not turn into a footpath).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			✓	Bedfordshire CC Hertfordshire CC Landowners
5.8	Increase the number of multi-user paths, where appropriate through parks to improve continuity of routes for cyclists, whilst addressing the safety of walkers.	Wigmore Pk Leagrave Pk Stopsley				✓✓	Sustrans Local cycle groups
5.9	Examine opportunities for upgrading some rights of ways from footpaths to bridleways and highway footpaths to shared walking and cycling use to increase provision of circular routes for cyclists and horse riders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			✓✓	Sustrans British Horse Society Local cycle groups Local stables
5.10	The condition of rights of way will be monitored annually, using the Local Transport Plan as a mechanism to inform future reviews of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	
5.11	Prioritise actions identified as contributing to achieving LAA Reward targets related to green space and the environment and where these are related to paths and walking routes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Wigmore Pk Stopsley Com Leagrave Pk Lewsey Pk				✓	

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**APPENDIX A: References**

<b>ADAS Consulting Ltd</b>	(2003) Market research report: Needs of Walkers survey: in connection with Bedfordshire Outdoor Access Improvement Plan
<b>Bedfordshire County Council</b>	(2006) Bedfordshire Outdoor Access Improvement Plan 2006-2011
<b>Bedfordshire and Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium</b>	(2007) Bedfordshire and Luton Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan: building sustainable communities.
<b>Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Local Access Forum</b>	(2006) Our vision for accessing Bedfordshire's countryside by bike.
<b>Bedfordshire and Luton Wildlife Working Group</b>	(2001) Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Action Plan
<b>Bird, W.</b>	(2007) Natural Thinking, RSPB
<b>Chilterns Conservation Board</b>	(2002) Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Management strategy: a framework for action 2002-07
<b>EERA</b>	(2008) East of England Plan
<b>Institute of Public Rights of Way Management</b>	(2007) Good practice guide: writing a RoWIP ( <a href="http://www.iprow.co.uk/wiki/index.php/ROWIP_Demonstration_Programme">www.iprow.co.uk/wiki/index.php/ROWIP_Demonstration_Programme</a> )
<b>Luton Borough Council</b>	(2003) Luton Walking Strategy
<b>Luton Borough Council</b>	(2006a) Luton Cycling Strategy
<b>Luton Borough Council</b>	(2006b) Luton Local Plan 2006-2011
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<b>Luton Borough Council</b>	(2007) Luton Play Strategy.

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors

### References

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<b>Luton Borough Council, Bedfordshire County Council and South Bedfordshire District Council</b>	(2006) Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis local transport plan 2006-2011.
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<b>Natural England</b>	(2008) A guide to definitive maps and changes to public rights of way
<b>The North Chilterns Trust</b>	(2006) Non-user countryside survey 2006: Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis.
<b>Torkildsen Barclay</b>	(2003) A parks, playing pitches and open space strategy for Luton Borough: Final report.
<b>ODPM</b>	(2005) Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy.
<b>HMSO:London</b>	Highways Act 1980.
<b>HMSO:London</b>	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
<b>HMSO:London</b>	Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
<b>HMSO:London</b>	Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000.
<b>HMSO:London</b>	Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
<b>HMSO:London</b>	Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.
<b>HMSO:London</b>	Disability Discrimination Act 2005.
<b>HMSO:London</b>	The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

## APPENDIX B: Glossary

Abbreviation/term	Meaning				
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty-AONB	An area legally designated as being of national high scenic quality.				
Bedfordshire and Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium	A multi-functional partnership of local authorities, government agencies and countryside and community based organisations responsible for defining a strategic vision for access to open space and recreation in the area.				
Byway Open to All Traffic-BOAT	A path over which right of way is on foot, horseback or bicycle or by wheeled-vehicles of all kinds.				
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic groups of people.				
Bridleway	A path over which the right of way is on foot, on a horse, donkey or mule or on a bicycle. Cyclists must give way to walkers and riders.				
Chalk Arc	One of 11 corridors making up Luton's green infrastructure network. Extends around the North of Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis, an area which is likely to host major housing growth .				
Citizens' Panel	A pre-selected random sample of residents, representative of the population of Luton, which the Council seeks views on various matters.				
Definitive Map and Statement	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>Definitive Map</b></td> <td><b>Definitive Statement</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A legal record of routes with public access</td> <td>Describes each right of way in detail</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Definitive Map</b>	<b>Definitive Statement</b>	A legal record of routes with public access	Describes each right of way in detail
<b>Definitive Map</b>	<b>Definitive Statement</b>				
A legal record of routes with public access	Describes each right of way in detail				
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs-Defra	Government department who produced the RoWIP guidance (responsibility for rights of way now lies with Natural England)				
Luton Disability Advisory and Access Forum-DAAF	A partnership of Luton Borough Council and groups representing the interests of disabled users and elderly people, to ensure that the implementation of strategies/initiatives and design of schemes takes account of their needs.				
Green Flag	The national quality award for standards of improvement of parks.				
Joint Local Access Forum-JLAF	Advisory body regarding the improvement of public access to land in Luton and Bedfordshire for the purposes of open air recreation and enjoyment with regard to land management, conservation and natural beauty.				

## Rights of Way Improvement Plan: Luton's Great Outdoors





Abbreviation/term	Meaning
Local Area Agreement-LAA	A three year agreement that sets out priorities for a local area as agreed between central government and a local area represented by Luton Borough Council and local strategic partnership.
Local Development Framework	A plan that outlines site-specific allocations for the future development of an area, based on regional targets for growth in jobs and homes, taking account of local environmental and other constraints.
Local Transport Plan	A plan published every 5 years setting out the strategic transport objectives for the area, and the transport schemes/ initiatives to be delivered during the plan period.
Luton Primary Care Trust-PCT	Responsible for planning, commissioning and providing health care services for the people of Luton.
National Cycle Network-NCN	A network of over 8000 miles of signed cycle routes across the UK managed by Sustrans.
National Indicator-NI	Figure returned annually to central government to measure performance against selected criteria.
Open access land	Public access rights, created under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to undertake recreational activities on foot on land managed, for example, by the National Trust, Forestry Commission and Woodland Trust.
Permissive Paths	Paths and tracks over which a landowner may permit access but which are not public rights of way.
Promoted routes	A series of connecting rights of way forming a route that has been advertised or signed to encourage use. They may have a theme and an associated leaflet or label on maps eg Upper Lea Valley Walk.
Regional routes	A promoted route that can require a day or more to complete, often arranged around a theme such as a range of hills or river e.g. Chiltern Way, Icknield Way.
Rights of Way-RoW	The network of public footpaths, bridleways and byways as defined by the Definitive Map.
Rights of Way Improvement Plan-RoWIP	Document to assess and identify improvements to be made to rights of way (required from each Highway Authority by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
Socio-economic characteristics	Population characteristics such as sex, age, employment status, ethnicity, disability.
Stakeholder	Organisations and individuals with a strong interest/link with rights of way in Luton.
Stewardship agreement	Part of the environmental stewardship scheme, an agri-environment grant scheme.
Sustrans	A National charity encouraging sustainable forms of transport. Manages the National Cycle Network and has a representative in Luton.
Voluntary Action Luton	A partnership representing the interests of voluntary groups in Luton, to ensure that the implementation of strategies and initiatives takes account of their needs.

**For further details and additional copies please contact:**

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**This information can be made available in other formats. If you require a copy in large print, on tape or a language other than English or simply want more information, please contact Mike Brightman on the above telephone number.**

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