

Malton - Helmsley; Path For Everyone - proposal working document for public view
Updated 5th November 2023

Dear Reader,

In planning this route, volunteers from Ryedale Environment Group and Ryedale Cycle Forum are collaborating with Parish Councils, residents, North Yorkshire Council, Community First Yorkshire, schools, local businesses, and others. If you have views or ideas; we would like to hear from you.

This is a long route, and there is much detail to look at. Our process has been first to ask for support in principal for the route from each Parish Council. Next, we are looking at the route in detail with local representatives, before taking detailed suggestions back to the Parish Council, the NYC Highways team or the NYC Rights of Way team. If you think you might be able to help in any way, please use the contact details below to get in touch.

Ryedale Environment Group (REG) have a whole route Project Steering Group to develop whole-route strategy. Ryedale Environment Group are a registered charity. REG also are establishing Parish Path Sub-Groups to work on the details on the ground in each parish. Again, please use the contact details below to get in touch.

A Path for Everyone route is for wheelchairs, walkers, cyclists of all ages, cycles adapted for disability, mobility scooters, horse-riders and runners. It is not necessarily shared. It is often possible and desirable to separate cyclists and walkers, by using signs and path markings or by laying parallel paths. Flexibility of approach is needed, depending on the geography of each section.

Where new paths are laid, they are likely to be tarmac if on a road-side verge, or rolled whinstone if on a bridleway. This is due to Government guidelines that North Yorkshire Council are obliged to follow.

Where the route uses minor roads through villages, if the speed-limit is 20mph and traffic is light, confident adult cyclists and horse-riders might be expected to use the road carriageway.

For some sections we will be hoping to upgrade existing footpath Rights of Way to become bridleways. There may be some places where there is no current Right of Way, but the road carriageway has no space for a verge path, so a new Right of Way is desired. Some landowners prefer to agree to permissive paths, not Rights of Way.

To provide a new verge path, or to upgrade a road-side footpath, requires an order approval by North Yorkshire Council, and the path must meet current Department for Transport regulations for shared path width, surface and signage. For Public Rights of Way (PROW) consultations for bridleways, there is a statutory legal process, also with specific design requirements.

As we achieve agreements for each section, we will start to fill in the detailed proposal sections below with maps and descriptions. Where only some details are entered, it means

we are still talking with landowners, residents, or North Yorkshire Council staff. You can contact us to find out details of how we are getting on with any particular section, and we would welcome your help.

Project co-ordination:- by Ryedale Environment Group, with Parish Councils.

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1. Why are we wanting to install new paths, or to upgrade existing ones?

At a time when tackling obesity and mental health is in the news, what better way to encourage an enjoyable, low cost healthy exercise than the provision of a safe, accessible, cycling and walking route between, Malton, Broughton, Swinton, Amotherby, Appleton-le-Street, Barton-le-Street, Slingsby, Hovingham, Nunnington, and Helmsley, on a fairly flat route. There could be a significant reduction in car miles, particularly on school runs. Whether for work, school, shopping, or leisure and exercise, this route would provide links between adjacent villages as well as linking the market towns, at the same time cutting our carbon emissions. It will be an asset in promoting sustainable tourism, as people enjoy the gentler pace of walking and cycling in the area, and spend more time and money at local attractions and shops. The route will also enable link up with the Malton - Pickering cycle route, the Helmsley – Pickering route, the Way of the Roses Wolds route, routes to York, and the Moors to Sea Cycle Route.

During and after the Covid-19 pandemic, to build back “stronger greener and fairer” for everyone, this route will have many benefits that are economic, and that meet social and community needs, including reduction of rural isolation. It would support local and regional aspirations, such as reducing air pollution, reducing traffic congestion and supporting a circular economy. It would provide access to friends, amenities and opportunities for those without a car. It would give access to employment and training, to three primary schools en-route, Malton High School and Norton College.

It would also be part of a regional and national movement to increase active travel. The York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership say we need to increase cycling by 900% and walking by 50%, to meet crucial carbon abatement targets. Sustrans are a national cycling and walking society, with much useful information on their sustrans.org.uk website. The National Cycle Network standard is “routes should be suitable for a nervous adult cyclist, a family with young children, or a sensible, unaccompanied 12-year-old”. Sustrans have also worked closely with the Department for Transport to produce new design guides for cycle paths.

2. Detailed proposals

Please contact us if you need help to find maps to study on-line. This document would be too big for the websites if we included all the maps in the document.

We have decided to add in here details about Helmsley – Hovingham suggested route, and then numbering will be adjusted. Please bear with us whilst we gather the details.

2.1 Map A: Travelling East from Hovingham

Starting from Hovingham village, we are suggesting a local circuit as well as a path to Malton.

The existing footpath, starting in the village centre at the entrance to The Hovingham Inn's carpark, could form a pleasant and convenient start or finish of the Hovingham-Malton Path for Everyone. From the rear of the pub car-park to the village tennis courts, the current path travels between two fences, and is approximately 3m wide and 40m long. By trimming vegetation back, and laying rolled stone or tarmac, a route accessible by wheelchairs would also be created from the village centre to the tennis courts. There is a short section where adult cyclists (apart from disabled cyclists) would need to dismount, because the path is narrow and popular with pedestrians. Improving this path would also enable wheelchair access to the tennis courts.

Following the North boundary of the tennis courts, the conifers would need to be trimmed considerably, and one, with permission, removed. The footpath then continues East through a wooded area for 56m. Just before this wooded area, a secondary path could join from the North from Pasture Lane, where there is already an unregistered footpath. The path through the wooded area could be rolled stone, laid with a slight incline up and down in one area, to avoid damage to tree roots.

Continuing after the wooded area, the current footpath follows the North side of a field boundary hedge in an Easterly direction for 500m, then North for 98m, and then East again, following more field boundaries for 350m until it joins the former railbed. The path also crosses an existing bridleway that runs North -South near the hamlet of Wath, and an existing plank bridge, across a minor drain. This bridge is of approximately 3m span and would need to be upgraded to become suitable for a variety of bicycles, wheelchairs, and for horse-riders.

Along these afore-mentioned field boundaries, a 3m wide rolled stone path could be laid, with a further metre mowed on the field side for use by horse-riders. Being arable land, extra fencing would be an unnecessary expense, unless required by the landowner.

Continuing North and then East along field edges, the existing footpath passes through a copse and joins the rail-bed, which is rather overgrown and rutted, and would need to be levelled, with an addition of rolled Whinstone, to achieve a surface good enough for most wheelchair users, for a distance of approximately 870 m, to where the path crosses Fryton Lane.

To form a circular route for village residents and visitors, starting from Hovingham village centre, the existing B1257 footpath would need to be widened and re-designated as a shared

use path, possibly marked to divide cyclists and pedestrians, as far as the existing bridleway on Socarrs Lane. Where the footpath and road currently cross Marrs Beck, the footpath is particularly narrow, and the traffic approaches at high speeds on a de-limited speed section of carriageway. The addition of a bridleway-type bridge, suitable also for wheelchairs, would make this section much safer. It might also be necessary to install gabions to support the path alongside Marr Beck, and the Heritage Lottery Ryevitalise project should be consulted about the management of the water-course, as well as consulting the property owners in the vicinity, and NYC Area 4 Highways office.

Continuing on the existing bridleway, the surface is initially too rough for wheelchairs, and would need some improvement. Closer to Tuft House Farm, the path has been tarmaced by the landowner.

There is a junction in the existing bridleway almost immediately after Socarrs Lane crosses Toft House Farm's boundary. At this point the Path for Everyone could turn right for a direct connection with Slingsby by laying a rolled stone path following one field boundary for 430m, and then turning left to rejoin the route described above at a point that is 869m from Fryton Lane.

Alternatively the route could continue on the existing bridleway, where the road is already tarmaced, then turning right onto grassy lane which currently designated as footpath, which then connects with Fryton Lane, and rejoins the route further East, at Greenacres House. The grassy lane and Fryton Lane, a combined distance of 1593m, would both require surface improvements to make them suitable for wheelchairs.

The points of the circular route converge by Greenacres House. From this point continuing East towards Slingsby, the railbed it is rather overgrown and rutted, and would need to be levelled, with an addition of rolled Whinstone, to achieve a surface good enough for most wheelchair users.

From Fryton Lane, the existing footpath crosses the Fryton Village Millenium trail, which includes mosaics and other points of local interest. The footpath continues along the former railbed, passing a large pond, and enters Slingsby Village opposite the Bakery and the Slingsby Camping and Caravan Club Site. For around 600m of this section the railbed is still rutted and overgrown, requiring levelling and more rolled stone. Closer to Slingsby, for about 400m, the surface is of railway cinders, giving a sound surface in dry weather. Local advice would be needed as to whether any extra drainage measures are needed.

2.2 Map B: Travelling through Slingsby Parish

On reaching Slingsby village, Station Road, the route would turn South, using Station Road. Slingsby, being a large village of XXX inhabitants, with two caravan parks, has lots of car movements. A traffic counting strip could be used to measure the actual frequency of movements. Also, large fast tractors frequently use Station Road, so these traffic factors combined mean that even being a 30-limit, it would not feel safe. The village residents

could be consulted about installing a “20’s Plenty” zone, which would reduce the speed of most traffic. On first joining Station Road, there is no footpath, so a footpath, or dual cycle footpath, would need to be installed for 100m on the East side or 200m on the West side. Then for a stretch further on, the existing footpaths should be widened and the surface improved, until meeting the existing wider and better quality path. For the most part, Station Road has a wide verge, which could support a path for everyone on either side of the road. However, with passing so many homes, this section of the route would be busy, and segregation, by moving faster moving cyclists and mobility scooters onto the road, is probably best, if a 20’s plenty zone can be achieved. Pedestrians, wheelchairs and child or vulnerable cyclists could be allowed on the pavements. A bespoke sign at both ends of this village section could explain this.

The route would continue out of Slingsby village, serving Robin Hood Caravan Park, and using Green Dyke Lane, which, being access to only two farms, is very quiet. Generously sized passing places at regular intervals large enough for a tractor and long trailer, would allow farm traffic and route users to pass each other safely. Lighting would need to be installed so that cycling commuters, and others who need to access amenities in Malton by bicycle, or catch trains, could use this route when daylight hours are short.

2.3 Map C: From Slingsby to Barton-le-Street

From Crabtree Gate House to Barton-le-Street, there are sections of Public Right of Way bridleway, and sections of footpath, which could take the route into the village of Barton le Street. Discussions with landowners are yet to be had.

2.4 Map D: From Barton-le-Street to Appleton-le-Street

From Barton-le-Street to Appleton-le-Street, the disused railway line is mostly still in place, but is not a public right of way. Local discussion is needed about whether the route should be following the former railway route, or whether it should follow the B1257, as separate verge paths for pedestrians and for cyclists, and negotiating the use of additional strips of land behind the hedges to achieve a safer width. For tourism and leisure, the former railway route would be more attractive than following a busy B road. To encourage more everyday journeys by bicycle and e-bike, the most direct route would be more likely to be used.

2.4 Map E: From Appleton-le-Street to Amotherby, and Amotherby Parish.

Initial discussion with Amotherby Parish Council representatives suggests that a path following the B1257 would be preferred from Appleton-le-Street to Amotherby. An opportunity has arisen to involve Yorkshire Housing, who are intending to build a new housing estate on the field between Amotherby Primary School and the B1257. The Primary school already has a cycle shelter, but parents are afraid of traffic, so not many journeys to school by bicycle are yet achieved. The new estate could include the road-side Path for Everyone, include a route to the school that avoids the busy village main street, and encourage more people to cycle to school instead of driving. Traffic concern is already high

for villagers, and the new estate is not a welcome idea. The Path for Everyone could make a big difference to travel modes and hence to reducing the impact of the new housing on local air pollution and traffic risks.

Careful design will be needed for continuing the path along the B1257, and negotiating the cross-roads junction.

Continuing towards Swinton, it would be great if a strip of land inside the field hedges could be negotiated, so that cyclists could be kept away from pedestrians and away from the B1257. With good visibility and good signage, this would also enable horse-riders to keep away from the traffic, and make useful connections between existing bridleways.

Alternatively, an upgrade of the existing public right of way footpath between Amotherby and Swinton could be considered.

2.5 Map F: Swinton Parish

Swinton Parish begins by the boundary hedge of Lime Kiln Farm. If the Path for Everyone was to follow the B1257, careful design would be needed to achieve separation of cyclists from pedestrians where possible, or a shared path that is marked to encourage these two user groups to keep apart.

There are lots of houses along the B1257 through Swinton village. There are some “pinch points”, where neighbouring buildings result in a narrow path. These sections could not legally be a shared path, because of Department for Transport regulations. There are some sections where the hedge needs to be cut back severely. There are some sections where some excavation is needed to lower the road-side bank, so that a wider and safer path can be achieved. If the path becomes very busy, further width could be achieved by land purchase in the future.

Alternatively, there is an existing Public Right of Way footpath, parallel to the B1257, as described in section 2.4 above, which could potentially be extended through the village of Swinton, to avoid the complications of changing the existing footpath structure on the B1257.

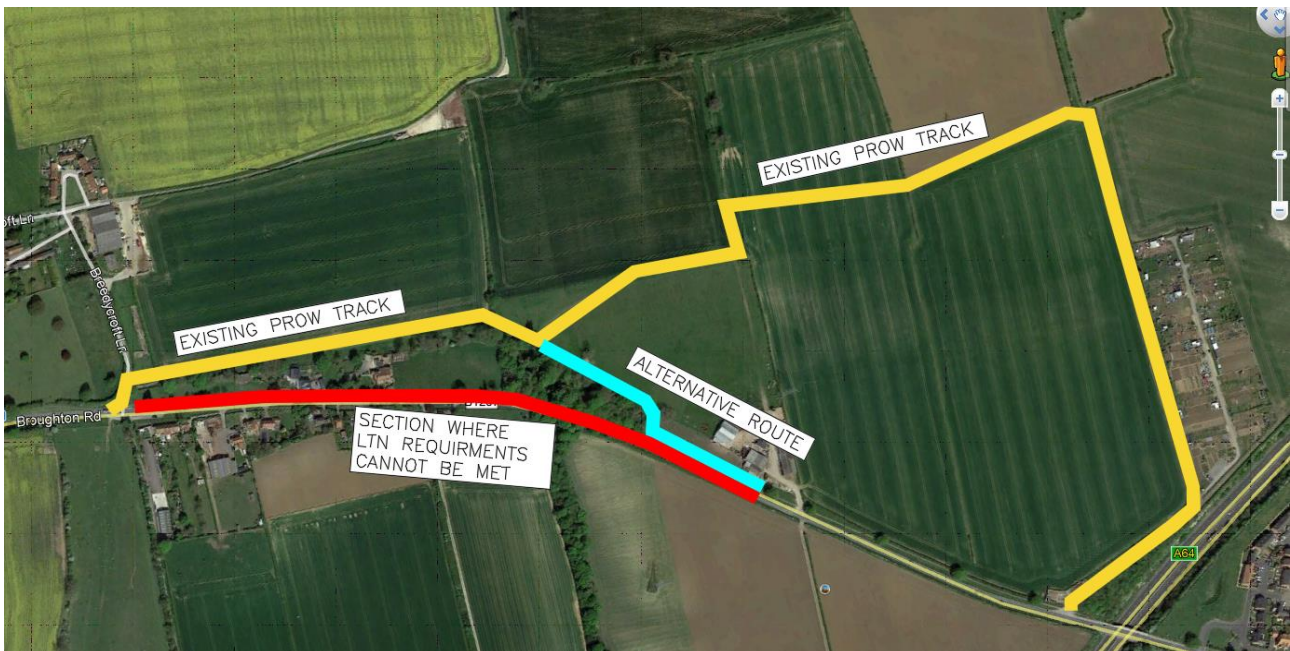
From the Eastern edge of the village, a designed and costed scheme has been produced by GGP Consult Ltd, see section 2.6 below.

2.6 Map G:

An opportunity came up in August 2020 to apply for up to £20,000 from the Police Commissioner’s AJ1 road safety fund, closing date August 31st. This is a one-off opportunity of funds resulting from the auction of the first ever car number plate registered in North Yorkshire. The grant actually awarded was £4500, which neatly covered the quote for producing a designed and costed scheme from Swinton to Malton. The Malton and Norton Area Partnership had kindly agreed to apply for the grant to fund the design work.

NYCC Highways were also asked, but they eventually replied to say they could not take on, or commission, design work where full installation funding was not already in place.

The GGP Consult civil engineer who drew up the scheme proposed that the route go off the highway for a section to avoid the steep bank between Broughton and Malton. This would be achieved by stoning and existing section of Bridleway, and then adding an additional section in order to re-join the B1257 at the farm buildings shortly before the A64 bridge. This section, that we have called Broughton Bank Safer Path, was one of the Community Infrastructure Levy bids that was thoroughly appraised and approved by the then Ryedale District Council, but then cancelled by the new North Yorkshire Council Executive. However, we also have some funding approved from the Malton and Norton Infrastructure program for Damson Lane, and we are currently looking for other funding for Broughton Bank Safer Path. On the map below the “alternative route” is Broughton Bank Safer Path; the proposed alternative to the red road-side path route.



It is proposed that the Path for Everyone joins onto the new cycleways installed for the new Taylor Wimpey estate on the Western side of Malton.

2.7 Malton and Norton, and onward journeys.

A LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan) was proposed for Malton and Norton, and funded by Ryedale District Council, and carried out by NYC’s highway consultants WSP Ltd. This will help cyclists and walkers with their onward journeys Eastwards, and wheelchair users too. Unfortunately, horse-riders have to rely on their own user groups, such as Ryedale Bridleways Group to push for safer routes.

4. Phasing

Each section completed would add momentum to achieving further sections, as funders and the public see the route starting to produce local benefits.

Potentially the sections that will take the longest are those needing the biggest compensation payments and/or installation costs due to their length. Any sections that also requires a new right of way to be created, or the upgrading of an existing right of way, will involve a NYC back-log, plus the statutory consultation process.

5. Signing

The proposed route needs to be sufficiently well signed so that it is easy to follow in both directions from/to principal origins and destinations, and to contribute to its safety.

A balance must be struck between providing clear and reliable information and avoiding visual clutter and unnecessary maintenance liability. Surface markings may provide a useful alternative to post mounted signs, and the use of existing features such as lamp columns should be maximised to avoid clutter and minimise costs.

Cyclists dismount or end of route signs are not appropriate and should not be necessary on National Cycle Network routes.

The Highway Code includes a circular sign for a shared use cycle and pedestrian route, which can be segregated or not. There are further “share the path” signs that are not permitted on a highway verge path, but could be used on bridleways.

6. Cycle parking

Cycle parking is an essential element of a route that is aiming to attract cyclists. It should cater for all destinations and be sited close to building entrances where it can be observed by passers-by and the building occupier. The preferred type of public cycle parking is the Sheffield stand, in conjunction with shelters where cycles are left for long periods. Care should be taken to avoid obstruction to pedestrians, including those with visual impairments. A standard Sheffield stand costs approximately £400 to source and install.

7. Funding

Starting at grass-roots, Parish Councils may be able to apply for small grants. Some Parishes need to keep below a £25,000 audit limit. Parish Councils could be really supportive by funding the design & costing stage of the Path for Everyone within their Parish. Help could be provided by Ryedale Environment Group to find funds for this costing work, if it is beyond the financial capacity of the Parish.

Due to cut-backs in recent years, this project cannot be taken on solely by NYC Highways or NYC Rights of Way teams, though both these teams will have essential input.

For the cross-country sections British Cycling Places to Ride funding might be available. Charitable Trusts, corporate sponsorship and public donations will also be looked at. Some sections will require professional survey and costings, but the intention is to keep consultancy fees to the minimum.

Because cycle tracks are expensive, Ryedale Environment Group are also looking at whether Parish Councils could apply for Community Infrastructure Levy. Possibly the Howardian Hills AONB could help too. The Local Enterprise Partnership, and the NYC Health team are aware of the project.

Where volunteers are involved, to cut back vegetation or put signs up, their hours can be used as donation in kind towards some types of funding.

8. Usage, benefits, local amenities and local attractions

There are many activities and amenities for residents and visitors to access using active travel options for both essential and leisure reasons; and all in the lovely surroundings of Ryedale and within reach of the North York Moors National Park. There is lots of visitor accommodation in the immediate area, including hotels, B&Bs, campsites, guest houses and self-catering.

Along the route there are pubs, restaurants, cafes, public libraries, GP surgeries, sports facilities, churches, village halls, primary schools, play areas. Malton also has barbers, hair dressers, beauty salons, art & gift shops, craft workshops, charity shops, antiques, agricultural and pet supplies, fast-food outlets, Moorsbus services to the National Park, plus clubs, societies and local events. In addition,(Castle Howard, any other local attractions?)

An off-road cycle track would improve the active travel possibilities for all the 5 (?) schools en-route, so reducing the spread of disease between pupils on school transport, and protecting them, staff, vulnerable relatives, and the NHS.

9. Future maintenance

Paths on road verges would become the responsibility of NYC highways. It is also very common for local people to help the authority by reporting damage or deterioration. By achieving National Cycle Network status, the route would then benefit from the well organised national Sustrans volunteer network. For the off-road sections, the NYC Rights of Way team would need to advise on a maintenance plan. In the short-term and also in the longer term, support and information from local people through Parish Councils, will also be important, if volunteer workdays are required.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

Provision should be made for monitoring the usage of the route and evaluating its impact for different user groups. Sustrans has pioneered the development of monitoring and evaluation techniques for sustainable and active modes of transport. The precise scope and nature of data capture, analysis of results and reporting of findings for this route would need to be discussed and agreed with North Yorkshire Council, and also with other funders who might be contributing to the route. Ideally, flows should be measured before the new route is completed, as well as afterwards.

11. Local consultation

The first partner that Josie Downs consulted, in March 2020, was Sustrans, who passed her back to Ryedale Cycle Forum. With support from Ryedale Cycle Forum, Josie then wrote to all the Parish Councils en-route, and the two County Councillors. Josie also wrote to all the schools. This was in the Covid-19 lock down period, so it took six months for all the Parishes to meet and the schools to respond. Appleton-le-Street Parish Council was dormant at that time.

The elected NYC Councillors are Lindsey Burr and Steve Mason; the lead County Councillor for Transportation is Don Mackenzie; the Area 4 Highways Development Manager is Tim Coyne; the Stronger Communities co-ordinator is Paddy Chandler. These people were informed at the outset, and are being asked for help as needed. The MP Kevin Hollinrake has expressed support, and helped to get information on DfT funding.

Other potential partners we have spoken to include the Local Enterprise Partnership, RDC Chair of Planning, Ryedale Environmental Group and RDC staff supportive of Ryedale Cycle Forum. Ryedale District Council has now been taken over by North Yorkshire Council. We have also been in touch with Community First Yorkshire, Ryedale Community Charter and Sustrans. Cycling UK have been contacted, and it is hoped they will ask their local members if anyone can help with project tasks for the route. We have also contact several of the Churches.

When landowner permissions are in place, some joint promotion through the Parish Councils will be pursued, where residents will be asked to contribute suggestions.

12. Onward routes, and a path for everyone approach.

Assistance is needed from the National Park Authority and Howardian Hills AONB, to look at long distance bridleway routes with disabled access and suitable for a range of users. Ryedale Environment Group and Ryedale Cycle Forum will be pursuing onward “path for everyone” routes through Malton and Norton to neighbouring villages, when we there is volunteer time to do so. The Wolds Way of the Roses, the Malton-Pickering Cycle Route and the Moor to Sea Network, both give many choices for cycle tourism. However, the path for everyone process needs to be wider than tourism and leisure; looking at routes to school, to work, to shops, to lower obesity, to services, and considering all ages and abilities. From July 2020, NYC have had an active travel portal, where suggestions for active travel routes can be mapped and described for consideration for Government active travel funding.

Appendix A:- Usage and benefits of the National Cycle Network in 2013 - link

Appendix B:- <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/for-professionals/infrastructure/sustrans-traffic-free-routes-and-greenways-design-guide/>

Appendix C:- Horse-riding routes in Ryedale, by William Tait

Ends.....Helen Gundry.....updated.....5th November 2023