1. **Purpose of the Report**

This report informs members of the recommendations of the Authority Review of the ‘Access and Rights of Way’ at the meeting held on 12 June 2019 and seeks endorsement for the actions planned or currently underway to address the recommendations.

2. **Recommendations**

The Authority is recommended to:

a. Note the findings of the Review of Access and Rights of Way at the meeting held on 12 June 2019;

b. Note and consider the response from Leadership Team in respect of the recommendations from this meeting; and

c. Endorse the actions planned or currently underway as set out in Appendix 1 to Report 5.

3. **Implications**

a. **Financial**: It is anticipated that some of the actions proposed in Appendix 1 can be managed within the medium term budget, however, some actions relate to a period beyond the medium term budget plan and proposals such as the renewal of signage and interpretation across the Park will require additional resources to be identified.

b. **Equality**: The implementation of the recommendations aim to enhance access to the National Park for a wider variety of people of different abilities.

c. **Business Plan**: The actions proposed and currently underway as a result of this Review contribute to Aim 1 ‘Contributing to a Welcome Park’ and specifically “Deliver a minimum of 10 projects to enhance visitor facilities and accessible sites and routes”. The actions will also contribute to Aim 2 ‘Contributing to a Distinctive Place’ and Aim 6 ‘Maintaining an Excellent Organisation that is Fit for the Future’.

4. **Background**

a. The theme for the Authority Review meeting held on 12 June 2019 was ‘Access and Rights of Way’. The review took as its key line of enquiry a review of the provision of short walks 1-3 hours within the National Park and how routes are being delivered. The review held a visit to Hareshaw Linn and took presentations on access design, provision, maintenance, promotion and interpretation in Bellingham Town Hall.

b. Members heard from the team comprising access, visitor development and ranger staff on the work they are doing to deliver the Management Plan and Business Plan targets in this area and work on the ground providing accessible routes for visitors.

c. A key area of focus was how we intend to meet our business and management plan targets for new accessible routes and a plan to promote the opportunities
available to targeted audiences including new and less experienced visitors to the Park.

d. Seeing some of the now dated interpretation panels at Hareshaw Linn highlighted the need for an audit of the current signage and information boards at locations all around the Park, as these will have been developed over a long period of time from a variety of different funding streams and for different reasons.

5. **Response to Key findings**

The findings and recommendations of the review are set out at Appendix 1 to Report 5, together with the proposed actions as agreed by Leadership Team.

6. **Conclusion**

Members are asked to note the findings of the Review of Access and Rights of Way and consider the responses from Leadership Team and endorse the actions as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

**Contact Officer:** Tony Gates, Chief Executive (National Park Officer) 01434 611516 or e-mail: tony.gates@nnpa.org.uk

**Background papers:**
Report and notes of the Authority Review meeting on Access, 12 June 2019 (Available on request)
## Leadership Team (LT) Recommendations and Proposed Actions from Meetings held on 12th June, 2019

### 1. There is a need to clarify and agree how the business and management plans targets collectively translate into actions for the access and visitor teams concerned.

- **LT Response and Actions Planned:**
  - Agreed. This will be done through the business planning sessions currently underway, and fed into the Operational Plan starting next year. It should be noted that many of the 10 routes in the Business Plan targets have already been delivered.

- **Lead:** PT
- **Timescale/Date:** By March 2020 for operational plan for 2020/21

### 2. Review what we have and where it is, i.e. the current promoted/packaged routes and what types of experience they offer. (This needs to be set out on a mapped basis that will clearly demonstrate different types of provision and where the gaps are across the Park).

- **LT Response and Actions Planned:**
  - Website geographical / demographical mapping already complete with the implementation of new website 2 years ago
  - Printed walk review underway

- **Lead:** DW
- **Timescale/Date:** Print review will be completed end of September 2019

### 3. Clarify what we want to provide and where to meet our business and management plan targets. Starting from the purposes of having the routes rather than starting from "we have all these assets all of which need to be maintained".

- **LT Response and Actions Planned:**
  - See 1 above.

- **Lead:** PT
- **Timescale/Date:** In the Operational Plan for 2020/21

### 4. Promotion – NNPA should have a plan in place to promote the range of access opportunities available to the right audiences in a targeted way, particularly with a view to attracting new users and possibly less experienced visitors to the Park.

- **LT Response and Actions Planned:**
  - We have a plan to promote 40 new walks in the coming year. We are currently developing a prioritised plan. This will be carefully considered against a range of potential audiences and any perceived gaps.

- **Lead:** DW
- **Timescale/Date:** The plan will be completed by end of October 2019. The upload of the walks will take place over the next 18 months.

### 5. Audit the current signage and information boards provided by NNPA at locations all around the Park, and then develop a prioritised plan for renew and replacement.

- **LT Response and Actions Planned:**
  - A signage audit was developed two years ago and will need updating. We will recruit volunteers to help update this. This will inform a long term strategy that will then be rolled out subject to available resources.

- **Lead:** DW
- **Timescale/Date:** Audit update complete March 2020. Plan finalised Autumn 2020. Improvements completed thereafter as resources allow

### 6. Members would like clarity on the policies relating to the extent and timescale of various forms of permissive access in the Park, e.g., S39 agreements, informal permissive

- **LT Response and Actions Planned:**
  - Small project team will look into this and report back.

- **Lead:** Farming team and LL
- **Timescale/Date:** By end of December 2019
agreements and HLS access. Members are keen to be made aware of any risk through the ending of HLS agreements.