

Access and *Farming in Protected Landscapes* in the North Pennines AONB

Advice for applicants

Providing new or improving existing public access fits within the objectives of Farming in Protected Landscapes, and may strengthen an application involving other outcomes. The relevant outcomes under PEOPLE are:

- There are more opportunities for people to explore, enjoy and understand the landscape
- There are more opportunities for more diverse audiences to explore, enjoy and understand the landscape

Selecting projects to go forward

Public access falls into four categories, all of which can have elements funded through Farming in Protected Landscapes: Public Rights of Way (PROW); Open Access Land (OA); permissive rights of way; permissive access land.

Public Rights of Way

If your route is already part of the PROW network, then Farming in Protected Landscapes could fund improvements to the route which are above and beyond the statutory responsibility of the landowner.

You can check whether the access route you are thinking about is on the existing Public Rights of Way network by checking the relevant councils maps on-line. You could also consult an up-to-date Ordnance Survey Map, although it is worth bearing in mind that the routes shown are not always definitive.

Cumbria

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/roads-transport/public-transport-road-safety/countryside-access/default.asp?row=1&tab=2>

Northumberland

<https://northumberland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=59bccc5416b144a28def537994bf7d10>

County Durham

<https://maps.durham.gov.uk/OLBasic2/Index.aspx?appid=66>

If you are proposing to apply for works on, or adjacent to, the PROW network, please to talk to your Rights of Way officer for your County first:

Cumbria: countryside.access@cumbria.gov.uk

Durham: prow@durham.gov.uk

Northumberland:

Countryside@northumberland.gov.uk

Examples of improvements that could be funded through Farming in Protected Landscapes are:

- Upgrading stiles to kissing gates or hand gates.
- Upgrading the use of a PROW from footpath to bridleway (and upgrading the infrastructure appropriately).
- Installing a bridge across a stream that is difficult to cross.
- Improving a very wet section of PROW that is difficult to use.

Open Access Land

If you own land that is permanently dedicated as OA land, then Farming in Protected Landscapes could fund improvements to that access which are above and beyond the statutory responsibility of the landowner.

You can check whether your land is classed as OA land on the Natural England website <http://www.openaccess.naturalengland.org.uk/wps/portal/oasys/maps/MapSearch/>

If you are proposing to apply for works on OA land, please to talk to an access officer for your County first.

Cumbria: countryside.access@cumbria.gov.uk

Durham: prow@durham.gov.uk

Northumberland:

Countryside@northumberland.gov.uk

Examples of improvements that could be funded through Farming in Protected Landscapes are:

- Installing stiles, kissing gates or hand gates through walls or fences to improve access, particularly from existing PROW or along desire lines.
- Improving a specific route through OA land to allow access for people with reduced mobility. (Please note that surfacing a route will require planning permission)

Permissive rights of way

If your route is not already on the PROW network, or Open Access land, then FiPL could fund works to create new, permissive access and to maintain it for the duration of the FiPL agreement (until March 2024).

Examples of projects that could be funded through Farming in Protected Landscapes are:

- Creating a new permissive footpath to a feature of interest.
- Creating a new permissive bridleway to link existing public bridleways
- Upgrading a public footpath to a permissive bridleway.
- Creating a new permissive footpath linking to an area of Open Access Land
- Dedicating a permissive path as permanent public access.

Permissive access land

If your land is not already dedicated as Open Access land, then FiPL could fund works to create new, permissive access and to maintain it for the duration of the FiPL agreement (until March 2024).

Examples of projects that could be funded through Farming in Protected Landscapes are:

- Creating non-linear access to multiple features of interest.
- Creating an area of permissive access to link up existing OA land.

What would be expected from you

In order to receive funding for access improvements to the PROW network, you would be expected to show support from the appropriate County Council.

To receive funding for permissive routes or access land, you would be expected to promote the access in some way. A requirement of the funding would also be to provide and maintain signage at key points, for example places where you can access the new permissive route from existing PROW/roads. Officers at the North Pennines AONB Partnership will be able to assist in providing the maps to display.

Table 1: What Farming in Protected Landscapes might fund

	Permissive Rights of Way or Permissive Access Land	Existing Right of Way or Open Access Land
What FiPL can fund	New routes, New access areas	Improvements to existing routes
What are the rates for capital items? (e.g. kissing gates or surfacing)	100% of actual costs, including installation. Three quotes required. We are developing local standard rates we can use as the project develops. It will be important to check that the specification you are using is of an acceptable standard.	100% of actual costs, including installation. Three quotes required. We are developing local standard rates we can use as the project develops. It will be important to check with the local authority access team that the specification you are using is of an acceptable standard.
What are the maintenance payments? (until March 2024)	We are authorised to use rates which are based on the old Countryside Stewardship scheme. See Table 3 below.	Normally none – as these are existing rights, but see Table 3 below for payment for upgrading PROW for multiple users (HN6 and HN7)
What about maintenance and liability?	You should have public liability insurance and works should be maintained to a safe standard. You will be responsible for maintenance of any structures (capital items) for 5 years after installation. Thereafter it would be your responsibility to maintain any infrastructure on your land if it remains accessible to the	You should have public liability insurance and works should be maintained to a safe standard. As with all infrastructure on PROW, the landowner is responsible for its maintenance, though the local authority is obliged to offer at least 25% towards reasonable maintenance costs.

	<p>public.</p> <p>Permitting of access is only required up until the end of the FiPL programme (end March 2024). This is to prevent this funding conflicting with any new Environmental Land Management payments which may become available.</p>	
Some examples	<p>Provision of a new access route from the existing RoW network to the outside of a restored historic building with interpretation. A fenced enclosure around the building is also to be made accessible so people can see the structure from all sides. The new route requires no surfacing but will need to be kept passable by regularly strimming vegetation 2 metres wide as necessary until the path becomes established. New fingerposts or way markers are required to ensure people follow the correct route.</p>	<p>A boardwalk over some wet ground needs replacing because it is rotten. This is not something the local authority are likely to do soon, and it is not part of the statutory responsibility of the landowner or local authority because the path is still accessible, although wet.</p> <p>Upgrading a public footpath to a public bridleway</p>

Table 2: How to strengthen your application

Scoring elements	Permissive Rights of Way or Permissive Access Land	Existing Right of Way or Open Access Land
1. Meets the project outcomes	<p>Thinking about a diverse audience and different abilities. For example, gates instead of stiles, obvious fingerposts, welcoming signage or route maps</p>	<p>Thinking about a diverse audience and different abilities. For example, upgrading stile to gates.</p> <p>(Way markers and directional arrows are the responsibility of the local authority)</p>
2. Value for money	<p>Can you demonstrate that the path is likely to be well used?</p> <p>How will you make people aware of the new permissive access?</p> <p>Does the path/area allow access to important natural or cultural heritage features?</p> <p>Does the path link parts of the PROW network together?</p> <p>Explain clearly how you have arrived at your costs</p> <p>A commitment to continuing this access into a new agri-environment scheme if it goes well, or to dedicating the route as a PROW, will score highly here.</p>	<p>Can you demonstrate that this is well used PROW, or can you demonstrate that it may become one after these improvements?</p> <p>Is the improvement on an existing or planned promoted route (e.g., Isaac’s Tea Trial, The Weardale Way etc.)?</p> <p>Does the PROW allow access to important natural or cultural heritage features?</p> <p>Explain clearly how you have arrived at your costs</p>

3. Sustainability/ Legacy	<p>You will need to demonstrate that you have the ability to look after the infrastructure and signage</p> <p>A commitment to continuing this access into a new agri-environment scheme if it goes well, or to dedicating the route as a PROW, will score highly here.</p>	Adoption by the local authority of any infrastructure, such as bridges, will strengthen the application
4. Ability to deliver	<p>Have you provided a specification which meets the British Standards which would be required of infrastructure on a PROW?</p> <p>Have you secured the services of a contractor who can do the work in time for the grant claim?</p>	<p>Have you provided a specification which meets the standards required of infrastructure on a PROW?</p> <p>Have you secured the services of a contractor who can do the work in time for the grant claim?</p>

Table 3: Permissive access maintenance payments

Access Type	Payment Rate
HN1 - Base payment/ per agreement	£350/ year
HN2 - Permissive open access	£41/ ha
HN3 - Permissive footpath access (2m)	£45/100m (£0.45/m)
HN4 - Permissive bridleway/cycle path access (3m)	£90/100m (0.90/m)
HN5 - Access for people with reduced mobility	£100/100m (£1.00/m)
HN6 - Upgrading Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act access for cyclists/horses	£90/100m (£0.90/m)
HN7 - Upgrading Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act access for people with reduced mobility	£105/100m (£1.05/m)