



New Environmental Land Management Schemes in England – opportunities to boost economic growth through support for recreation and tourism

A shared approach from the Ramblers, the British Mountaineering Council, the British Horse Society and the Open Spaces Society

Introduction

1.1 The Ramblers, the British Mountaineering Council (BMC), the British Horse Society (BHS) and the Open Spaces Society (OSS) believe that the review of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and New Environmental Land Management Schemes provides an opportunity to develop new programmes which will include recreation, tourism and public access related measures. In so doing, this will help improve the nation's access infrastructure and give a significant boost to rural growth and development – one of the primary objectives of reform.

1.2 Opportunities for recreation, leisure and tourism, and enhancements to access infrastructure have enormous potential to deliver not only rural growth but a range of benefits, including improvements to public health, well-being and an increase in public understanding of and support for the environment and farming. These multiple benefits maximise value for taxpayers' money and provide demonstrable evidence of public gain from subsidies for land management.

1.3 The CAP's outline priorities for 2014-2020 and draft regulations indicate that there is potential to develop ideas around making improvements to support rural tourism to deliver more social and economic benefits (see Annex 1). Access provision is fundamental to the success of Government's Rural Economy Growth Review as well as the many Government strategies and targets to improve health, well-being and encourage physical activity (See Annex 2).

1.4 Increased public access to the countryside directly supports the Government's ambition, set out in *the Natural Choice: the Natural Environment White Paper*,¹ to reconnect people with the natural environment. The NEWP states that "*a healthy, properly functioning natural environment is the foundation of sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal wellbeing*" and that "*everyone should have fair access to a good quality natural environment*". The NEWP also highlights the findings of the UK Government's National Ecosystem Assessment,² which asserts that the social

¹ DEFRA (2011), *The Natural Choice: The Natural Environment White Paper*

² UK National Ecosystem Assessment (2011) <http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/Resources/tabid/82/Default.aspx>

benefits of people being able to access and enjoy the countryside should be valued at £484 million per annum.

2 New support needed for access

2.1 The state of our recreational access infrastructure is directly linked to the economic, health, and social well-being of the nation. This infrastructure comes at a cost to land managers. As such, there is a clear need to effectively support and adequately reward land managers to maintain and enhance recreational access, and to provide opportunities for business diversification around recreation and tourism.

2.2 The English adult population participated in an estimated 2.73 billion visits to the natural environment during 2011/12, and just over half of visits to the natural environment were taken to the countryside (52 percent).³ Our access infrastructure enables people to reconnect with nature, exercise, watch wildlife, revisit history or explore rural towns and villages.

2.3 Despite the popularity of countryside visits, our access infrastructure is not effectively or adequately supported. The extent and quality of public access opportunities is patchy; good quality access exists in some areas, but in others the recreational infrastructure is fragmented, in poor condition or access is not signposted. The last national survey on the condition of public rights of way was undertaken in 2000 and revealed that on average users were likely to come across a serious obstruction every 2 kilometres.⁴

2.4 No official assessment of the extent to which rights of way provide adequate access to land which is open for recreation under the CROW Act 2000 has been conducted. However, we know anecdotally that there is a need for additional paths to enable the public to reach areas which are currently difficult or impossible to reach.

2.5 Recent research by the Ramblers into the exact scale of the cuts to funding for public rights of way and access reveals that nearly 70% of local authorities have cut their rights of way budgets over the last 3 years, and 41% of authorities have cut their budgets by more than 20%.⁵ Under-investment and neglect of the network creates an even bigger problem for the future - as paths become more impenetrable and stiles more overgrown, people will stop using them, and the lower use will exacerbate the problem.

2.6 Lack of investment in and the subsequent deterioration of the nation's access infrastructure will have a severe negative impact upon recreation and in turn, the rural economy. The Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in 2001 revealed starkly the extent to which our countryside and farmland is used

³ Natural England (2012), *Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: The national survey on people and the natural environment - Annual Report from the 2011-12 survey*

⁴ Countryside Agency (2000), *The Rights of Way Condition Survey*
<http://www.tourisminsights.info/ONLINEPUB/COUNTRYSIDE%20AGENCY/CA%20PDFS/RIGHTS%20OF%20WAY%20CONDITION%20SURVEY%202000.pdf>

⁵ The Ramblers (2012), *Ramblers report on the reduction of funding for rights of way in England*,
<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/~media/Files/Campaign%20with%20us/Ramblers%20report%20on%20the%20reduction%20of%20funding%20for%20rights%20of%20way%20in%20England.pdf>

as a recreational amenity; the 'closure' of the countryside during the outbreak was estimated to have cost the rural economy and tourism industry £5 billion.⁶

2.7 Improvements to access have enormous potential to assist rural development and rural economies, and provide opportunities for business diversification. A small investment in improving access for visitors can bring benefits for small businesses, boost economic growth and create jobs. This effect can be particularly beneficial in remote rural and upland areas where opportunities for economic growth are limited, and helps to keep tourist related expenditure within the local area.

2.8 There is good evidence that clear, easy to use, well-promoted path and trail networks influence more people to make day trips to an area or stay for longer periods – thereby increasing visitor spend. This directly supports vital local services and businesses such as shops, pubs, hotels, and bed and breakfast businesses. For example, Hadrian's Wall path has brought in £19 million into the communities around it since it was created in 2003 and in 2010 £7.2 billion was spent visiting the countryside.⁷ It is estimated that the whole South West Coast Path National Trail, running along 630 miles of the coast from Somerset's Minehead to Poole Harbour in Dorset is worth £307 million to the regional economy.⁸ According to Outdoor Industry Association, the 'Outdoor Economy' is worth 1.2% + of the UK's GDP.

2.9 Our recreational access infrastructure is a hugely important resource in helping people to get outside and get active. More people walking, climbing, horse riding and enjoying responsible recreation could bring vast savings to the nation's health bill. Physical inactivity currently costs the NHS in England between £1billion and £1.8billion a year. Costs to the wider economy are conservatively estimated at £5.5billion in sickness absence and £1billion in premature deaths – a total of £8.3billion.⁹

2.10 Improving the accessibility of the environment also improves its 'liveability', resulting in surroundings that facilitate not only exercise but social interaction, play, relaxation, discovery and enjoyment – all of which are good for mental health. With an estimated 1 in 4 people suffering from mental health problems each year, improvements to access infrastructure could reduce the cost of dealing with mental health problems. Active people have a reduced risk of suffering from clinical depression¹⁰ and regular physical activity is at least as effective as antidepressant drugs in treating mild and moderate depression.¹¹ It is also widely recognized that spending time in the outdoors and in contact with the natural environment can have a positive effect on mental health.¹²

⁶ National Audit Office, *The 2001 Outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease*, June 2002, http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0102/the_2001_outbreak_of_foot_and.aspx

⁷ Natural England (2003-2007) *Economic Impact Study and Trail User Analysis*, <http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/HadriansWall/downloads.asp?PagelD=191>

⁸ Tourism Associates (2003). *The Economic Value of the South West Coast Path*, report for South West Tourism. Quoted in: "Tourism & Economic Development in *Towards a Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2004* http://www.devon.gov.uk/section_10_tourism_and_economic_development.pdf"

⁹ Steven Allender, Charlie Foster, Peter Scarborough and Mike Rayner 2007, 'The burden of physical activity related ill health in the UK' in *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 61

¹⁰ Department of Health 2004, *At least five a week: evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health. A report by the Chief Medical Officer*

¹¹ Mental Health Foundation 2005, *Up and running: Exercise therapy and the treatment of mild or moderate*

2.11 Measures to support access can help to achieve the government's objective to 'reconnect people with nature', as set out in the NEWP. The harmful effects from disconnection with nature – sometimes called 'Nature Deficit Disorder' - are increasingly recognised by the scientific community.¹³ The means to access nature, the recreational infrastructure must be provided and maintained for the public to benefit from it.

2.12 Access also provides the public with demonstrable evidence that taxpayer subsidies for land management are being used to deliver public services and gives farmers the opportunity directly to benefit the local and wider community and the natural environment.

3. Previous RDPE schemes

3.1 Permissive access was an option within the RDPE Environmental Stewardship, Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme. Up to 2010, farmers and landowners could receive payments to provide permissive access over a ten year period. The permissive access option was funded by the UK Government (rather than co-funded with European funds) and was subject to cuts in the 2010 spending review. The scheme continued to pay existing agreement holders until their agreements come to an end but there is no longer an option to receive payment for new permissive access.

3.2 The Ramblers, BMC, BHS and OSS argued for many years that agri-environment schemes did not deliver good value for money. Whilst they gave walkers and horse riders the opportunity of some new routes, the access options on offer were short-term and permissive; access was not publicised sufficiently; schemes were not demand-led to provide opportunities where they were most needed (it was only provided where farmers volunteered it); and the quality of routes created varied considerably, as did the level of use.

3.3 Currently, farmers have a free choice in terms of the ELS options, limited only by the features present on their farms. This has led to farmers tending to choose options which are easier or less costly to implement and provide the least interference with existing farm management. We suggest that an attractive and equally balanced complement of measures is once again developed which includes public access where the remit is best delivery of public goods for public money rather than maximum return for landowner for minimum effort. New schemes should be designed to avoid the shortcomings of previous schemes and ensure the public gets maximum value for money from subsidies.

4 Guiding principles for access options

4.1 Financial support should be made available for land managers and communities to both complement the statutory opportunities already available (exceeding any basic legal requirements), and fund the development of new access. A strong recreational / tourism / leisure based element of a new scheme(s) is important because although local authorities have duties to protect, record and maintain public rights of way and the open access network, they don't have a duty or the budgetary requirements to create new routes, make all the improvements that are required for a functioning, valuable network or identify and promote new recreational opportunities.

depression in primary care

¹² Jules Pretty, Murray Griffin, Jo Peacock, Rachel Hine, Martin Sellens and Nigel South 2005, *A countryside for Health and Well-Being: The Physical and Mental Health Benefits of Green Exercise*, Countryside Recreation Network

¹³ Oxford Farming Conference (2012), *Farming's Value to Society*, www.ofc.org.uk

4.2 Demand-led access: The RDPE and / or Growth Programme should be able to contribute to the delivery of national and local outdoor access, sustainable transport and recreation strategies and priorities as well as rural tourism. Targeted, demand-driven permanent access provision should be an underpinning principle of future schemes to ensure value-for-money, fair provision and long lasting public and economic benefit. Route or area access should be developed to deliver maximum public benefit where it is most needed.

4.3 Access proposals should take more account of the regional ‘theme’ statements which may form part of future agri-environment schemes alongside Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs). Significant work has already been done at national and local authority levels to identify strategic priorities for access through, for example, the development of ROWIPs. ROWIPs provide a strategic, demand-driven, local access planning tool and could form the basis for targeting RDPE funds, helping to ensure value for money. Unfortunately, the content of ROWIPs is not standardised across all authorities but the current ROWIP review process could provide an opportunity to assess their potential for this role. ROWIPs need not be the only way of ensuring access is targeted; the desirability of access might also be demonstrated by Local Community Plans or written support from local communities, perhaps through Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).

4.4 The application approval process should include some check to see whether the route or area does contribute to national and local priorities. It is therefore suggested the local (access) authority, Local Access Forum (LAF) and/or NE are asked to give their view as to whether the access being proposed is strategically useful, and that this is enclosed with the land manager’s application. Consideration should be given to whether any small amendments to plans could ensure that access does meet strategic priorities.

4.5 Similarly, work has already begun on identifying those ‘islands’ of open access (under Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) to which there is a statutory right of access but to which there are currently no means of accessing. Although section 58 of CROW allows for this, it is poorly understood and little used. Incentives for local landowners to create routes and link areas of open access would provide an easy, quick way of opening up more recreational opportunities.

4.6 Improvements to statutory provision: Investment in the existing rights of way and open access network could be a better way to provide public benefit. Statutory access is already shown on maps and cuts to local (access) authority and Natural England (NE) budgets mean that there is a real need to support the access infrastructure that already exists, rather than spending money on creating new, short term, permissive (i.e. non-permanent) access arrangements.

4.7 Greater financial support could be provided to enable land managers to exceed their responsibilities under the current legislation governing access (through the public rights of way network, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA)). For example, by creating and maintaining outdoor access infrastructure, such as gates, bridges, and waymarkers, particularly where use by the public is high and encouraged. The difference between standard maintenance activities, and improvement and enhancement activities (which may be more eligible for funding) would have to be clearly defined.

4.8 Options for permanent access: It is often said that landowners are not keen to sign up to provide permanent access, and prefer permissive schemes. However, we believe that permanent access provides the best value (a function of cost vs. benefit) for public money. Permanent access gives the public clarity and certainty about where they can go, and spending on infrastructure such as gates is not wasted when the access agreement ends. Permanent access can be shown on OS maps and also benefits rural businesses and tourism to continue indefinitely. Furthermore, a route

with rights of public use in perpetuity can more easily attract external funding (e.g. from HLF) than one with temporary permissive access.

4.9 We would like Government to explore further the option of permanent access by incentivising more 'taster periods' for instance, during which time landowners could become familiar with the requirements of access (as happened under previous HLS schemes). After this period, they could agree to provide access on a permanent basis if they wished, perhaps for a one-off payment. Additionally, any new scoring system could reflect the desire for permanent provision over temporary provision. We would like to express our support for NE's programme of dedicating its National Nature Reserves as open access land, with relaxation of the general restrictions affecting horse riders and cyclists where conditions permit, and would encourage other public sector bodies to adopt a similar approach with their land holdings.

4.10 We would support the continuation of permissive options only on the basis that these encourage land managers to provide a resource on a long term basis.

4.11 Promotion and information: Good promotion must be an important element of any future access scheme. Schemes which improve statutory provision are permanent and fit in with strategic objectives will make the promotion of access easier (it will be possible to show access on maps, to become part of a promoted route and so on). In addition, there should be a minimum requirement for NE to more clearly display access opportunities on their website and to make the wider public aware of this facility. The availability and information relating to on-site facilities and mobility vehicles are also important for visitors.

4.12 Standards: A country-wide standard (such as the standard documented in '*By All Reasonable Means*'¹⁴), or a series of standards that vary with circumstances, should be adopted to guarantee a minimum level of provision and promote confidence of use. The provision of high-standard multi-user routes, despite their higher costs, provides benefits for all users and can make a major contribution to the rural economy. Any scheme should seek the progressive removal of stiles - one of the major barriers to countryside access for many users across society.

4.13 The last national survey on the condition of public rights of way was undertaken in 2000 and revealed that on average users were likely to come across a serious obstruction every 2 kilometres.¹⁵

4.14 Access for other recreational users: Support for access opportunities for a wider range of different outdoor activities (including climbing, horse riding, canoeing and other water based pursuits) should be considered. Packaged activities within a location where there is a key recreational 'feature' are attractive to users and can attract new audiences, bringing significant social and economic benefits.

4.15 Farming Environment Plans must take account of access opportunities: An equally weighted scheme or farming plan which outlines the opportunities for creating environmental features and habitats, improving access, and managing land for flood management and natural resource protection must require consideration of each aspect equally, with demonstrable targets for each, particularly in areas where demand driven access has already been identified.

4.16 Being part of a multi-objective scheme must not mean that access is considered as an 'add-on' and objectives around biodiversity requirements should not automatically prevail over access considerations both

¹⁴ '*By all reasonable means: inclusive access to the outdoors for disabled people*'; October 2005
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/45015>

¹⁵ Countryside Agency (2000), The Rights of Way Condition Survey
<http://www.tourisminsights.info/ONLINEPUB/COUNTRYSIDE%20AGENCY/CA%20PDFS/RIGHTS%20OF%20WAY%20CONDITION%20SURVEY%202000.pdf>

in scheme design and application, particularly where demand driven access has been identified. We would ask that options to improve rural tourism are given equal weighting in the advice and options available to farmers in order to achieve wider ranging public benefits.

5 Applications by groups; community & demand led improvements - 'Paths for Communities'

5.1 Direct payments should be available to individual landowners for permanent improvements to the rights of way network, but also to public bodies and community groups as this would enable the delivery of strategic routes.

5.2 NE's 'Paths for Communities'¹⁶ grant scheme (which utilises funding from the RDP), has been set up to *'support local communities to work with landowners to make improvements to the public rights of way network in order to deliver benefits to rural areas'*. Local community partnerships, Local Access Forums and councils are eligible to bid to NE for funds. Support is provided for access which is permanent, fits in with local strategic plans and enhances the existing network.

5.3 Applicants are also encouraged to consider improvements to rights of way which encourage improved accessibility; access for cyclists, horse-riders and other recreational users; more use and better support for local services, businesses and attractions; and better integration with public transport services and links to popular destinations.

5.4 It is early days for the scheme but it contains many of the elements which could help to deliver permanent strategic improvements to access, providing long-lasting economic and social benefits to rural areas, as well as general public health and well-being. As such, it may provide a useful precedent which could be rolled out further by the RDPE review and new Growth Programme.

6 Cross Compliance

6.1 We know from experience that agri-environment funding is rarely, if ever, refused or withheld due to land owners not meeting their duties around existing public rights of way. Whilst 'cross compliance' is potentially a useful tool to support the maintenance and accessibility of the existing rights of way network, its effectiveness is limited by the very small inspection sample size adopted by the Rural Payments Agency, the lack of a defined process for communication between the RPA and Highways Authorities (as the relevant enforcement bodies) and the fact that the RPA won't act on or accept a report about failure to keep paths free from obstructions from a member of the public (including those representing a national organisation).

6.2 For cross compliance to be useful, more inspections are needed which take into account the condition of rights of way and the condition of other statutory access rights (CROW, MCAA, village greens etc.) as well as clear procedures for action by the RPA and local authorities.

¹⁶ <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/access/rightsofway/p4c.aspx>

Annex 1 Programme Priorities and Regulations and relationship to access

improvements This table sets out those CAP programme outline priorities and draft regulations which offer the potential to contribute to rural tourism and to develop ideas around making improvements to access to deliver more social and economic benefits.

Proposed priorities and draft regulations (most relevant to access improvements)	Relationship to access improvements – potential to support
Growth Programme themes and top priorities – ERDF, ESF, EAFRD Financed by European Regional Development Fund; European Social Fund; and a contribution from European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development	
Raising competitiveness of Small Medium Enterprise (SME)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor tourism SMEs. • Walkers are Welcome type initiatives to improve competitiveness of market towns, villages, rural areas etc. based on the outdoor economy. • Destination Management Organisations – networking and training activity. • Marketing and promotion of access to the natural environment.
Shift to low carbon economy – esp energy efficiency and renewable technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable transport through improved linear public access • Domestic tourism. • Engagement with the natural environment. • Visitor payback schemes to re-invest in the environment. • Ecosystem-based approaches. • ‘Green’ accommodation as a marketing asset
Employment and skills (inc social inclusion) <i>Reducing unemployment and social exclusion – including the development and promotion of employment in eco activity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation, leisure and tourism initiatives to sustain jobs. Need to enable more all year employment. • Outdoor tourism activity contributing to the economy through supporting rural services. • Improve social inclusion of opportunities to engage with the natural environment. • Particularly relevant for remote rural areas
Sustainable transport and removing network bottlenecks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable transport through improved linear public access
Rural Development Programme – proposed priorities Financed by European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)	
Strengthening rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access improvements delivering economic and social benefits to rural communities. • Community-led scheme bringing community cohesion.

Proposed priorities and draft regulations (most relevant to access improvements)	Relationship to access improvements – potential to support
<p>EAFRD Draft Regulations – Investment Priorities</p>	
<p>(22) Projects integrating at the same time agriculture, rural tourism through promotion of sustainable and responsible tourism in rural areas, natural and cultural heritage should be encouraged as well as renewable energy investments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green tourism, recreation and leisure. • Visitor payback. • Tourism based on local food and other agricultura/forestry products • Outdoor tourism activity contributing to the economy through supporting rural services. • Ecosystem services-based approaches.
<p>(24) The development of local infrastructure and local basic services in rural areas, including leisure and culture, the renewal of villages and activities aimed at the restoration and upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of villages and rural landscapes is an essential element of any effort to realise the growth potential and promote the sustainability of rural areas. In line with these objectives, development of services and infrastructure leading to social inclusion and reversing trends of social and economic decline and depopulation of rural areas should be encouraged.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of access routes/areas and associated infrastructure (for walking, cycling and horse-riding as per Rights of Way Improvement Plans) linking rural villages to cultural, natural and landscape destinations. • Local routes to provide walking, horse-riding and cycling for rural communities. • Linking routes from urban areas to rural bringing health and economic benefits to people living in both urban and rural areas. • Support for outdoor tourism/leisure related services and SME. • Information and promotion.
<p>(38) The LEADER approach for local development has, over a number of years, proven its utility in promoting the development of rural areas by fully taking into account the multi-sectoral needs for endogenous rural development through its bottom-up approach. LEADER should therefore be continued in the future and its application should remain compulsory for all rural development programmes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community based improvements to support tourism, leisure and recreation.
<p><i>Article 15</i> <i>Knowledge transfer and information actions</i> 1.... vocational training and skills acquisition actions, demonstration activities and information actions. ... Support may also cover short-term farm management exchange and farm visit. 2. Support under this measure shall be for the benefit of persons engaged in the agricultural,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and skills to support outdoor tourism, recreation and leisure. • Co-operation in setting up web-based information dissemination – e.g. about opportunities for recreation activities and access to services (accommodation/pubs/transport)

Proposed priorities and draft regulations (most relevant to access improvements)	Relationship to access improvements – potential to support
food and forestry sector, land managers and other economic actors which are SMEs operating in rural areas.	
<p><i>Article 18</i> <i>Investments in physical assets</i></p> <p>1. Support under this measure shall cover tangible and/or intangible investments which:</p> <p>(d) are non productive investments linked to the achievement of agri- and forest environment commitments, biodiversity conservation status of species and habitat as well as enhancing the public amenity value of a Natura 2000 area or other high nature value area to be defined in the programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question here about how Defra defines “other high nature value areas” is this an opportunity to improve public access to NPs and AONBs? • NE’s programme of dedicating land within NNRs where this is compatible with biodiversity/ geological objectives including relaxation of general restrictions affecting CROW access land with respect to horse/cycle riding where acceptable
<p><i>Article 20</i> <i>Farm and business development</i></p> <p>. Support under this measure shall cover:</p> <p>(a) business start-up aid for:</p> <p>(i) young farmers;</p> <p>(ii) non-agricultural activities in rural areas;</p> <p>(iii) the development of small farms;</p> <p>(b) investments in non-agricultural activities;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible support for outdoor tourism, recreation and leisure businesses and associated infrastructure
<p><i>Article 21</i> <i>Basic services and village renewal in rural areas</i></p> <p>1. Support under this measure shall cover in particular:</p> <p>(a) the drawing up and updating of plans for the development of municipalities in rural areas and their basic services and of protection and management plans relating to NATURA 2000 sites and other areas of high nature value;</p> <p>(b) investments in the creation, improvement or expansion of all types of small scale infrastructure,</p> <p>(d) investments in the setting-up, improvement or expansion of local basic services for the rural population, including leisure and culture, and the related infrastructure;</p> <p>(e) investments by public bodies in recreational infrastructure, tourist information and sign-posting of touristic sites;</p> <p>(f) studies and investments associated with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of access routes and associated infrastructure (for walking, cycling and horse-riding as per Rights of Way Improvement Plans) linking rural villages to cultural, natural and landscape destinations. • Local routes to provide walking, horse-riding and cycling for rural communities. • Linking routes from urban areas to rural bringing health and economic benefits to people living in both urban and rural areas. • Support for outdoor tourism/leisure related services and SME. • Information and promotion. <p>Needs to be in line with “plans” – in this case ROWIPs and possibly strategies developed by LEPs and LNPs</p> <p>(Note – support will not usually be available for public bodies carrying out their statutory duties.)</p>

Proposed priorities and draft regulations (most relevant to access improvements)	Relationship to access improvements – potential to support
<p>the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of villages and rural landscapes, including related socio-economic aspects;</p> <p>(g) investments targeting the relocation of activities and conversion of buildings or other facilities located close to rural settlements, with a view to improving the quality of life or increasing the environmental performance of the settlement.</p> <p>2. Support under this measure shall only concern small-scale infrastructure, as defined by each Member State in the programme. Investments under paragraph 1 shall be eligible for support where the relevant operations are implemented in accordance with plans for the development of municipalities in rural areas and their basic services, where such plans exist and shall be consistent with any local development strategy where one exists.</p>	
<p><i>Article 26</i> <i>Investments improving the resilience and environmental value of forest ecosystems</i></p> <p>1. Support under Article 22(1)(d) shall be granted to natural persons, private forest owners, private law and semi-public bodies, municipalities and their associations. In the case of state forests support may also be granted to bodies managing such forests, which are independent from the state budget.</p> <p>2. Investments shall be aimed at the achievement of commitments undertaken for environmental aims or providing ecosystem services and/or which enhance the public amenity value of forest and wooded land in the area concerned or improve the climate change mitigation potential of ecosystems, without excluding economic benefits in the long term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments to improve public amenity value – grants for dedication of s16 rights, EDCL, provision of hard standing for car parks, signposting, marketing?
ERDF Draft Regulations – investment priorities in Article 5	
<p>(1) Strengthening research, technological development and innovation</p> <p>(b) promoting business R&I investment, product and service development,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor tourism, recreation and leisure related innovation. • Help with market research and innovation to support promotion and marketing (e.g. use of

Proposed priorities and draft regulations (most relevant to access improvements)	Relationship to access improvements – potential to support
technology transfer, social innovation and public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation;	MENE and Active People type data to assess market potential, segmentation etc). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor business networking e.g. Walkers /Cyclists / Horses are Welcome type initiatives.
(3) Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs (a) promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms; (b) developing new business models for SMEs, in particular for internationalisation;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor tourism, recreation and leisure related SMEs to innovate and pilot new approaches to business models. International marketing business model.
(6) Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency: (c) protecting, promoting and developing cultural heritage;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting green tourism Promoting appreciation of natural environment and cultural heritage.
(7) Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures: (c) developing environment-friendly and low-carbon transport systems and promoting sustainable urban mobility;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable walking, riding and cycling and routes to reduce car dependency.
(8) Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility: (a) development of business incubators and investment support for self employment and business creation; (b) local development initiatives and aid for structures providing neighbourhood services to create new jobs, where such actions are outside the scope of Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor tourism, recreation and leisure related businesses to create new jobs and more all year employment.
(9) promoting social inclusion and combating poverty: (b) support for physical and economic regeneration of deprived urban and rural communities;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve social inclusion through investment in linear and area access infrastructure.

Annex 2

Some of the national and local government policies (supporting health, wellbeing, active travel and physical activity objectives) which NELMs support for recreational access could help to deliver:

National

- DEFRA (2011) The Natural Choice: The Natural Environment White Paper
- Public Health Outcomes Framework (Indicator 1.16 - *Percentage of people using outdoor places for health/exercise reasons*)
- Department of Health (2011). Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries' Chief Medical Officers
- Department of Health (2011) Healthy lives, healthy people: a call to action on obesity in England
- Department of Health and Department for Transport, (2010) Active Travel Strategy
- DEFRA (2013) Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement
- Department of Health (2012) No health without mental health: a cross-government mental health outcomes strategy for people of all ages
- National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), PH41 0 Walking and Cycling Guidance, November 2012
- Department of Health, UK physical activity guidelines, 11 July 2011, http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_127931

Local

- Rights of Way Improvement Plans
- Local Transport Plans
- Countryside Access Strategies
- Local Public Health strategies
- Local public Mental Health strategies