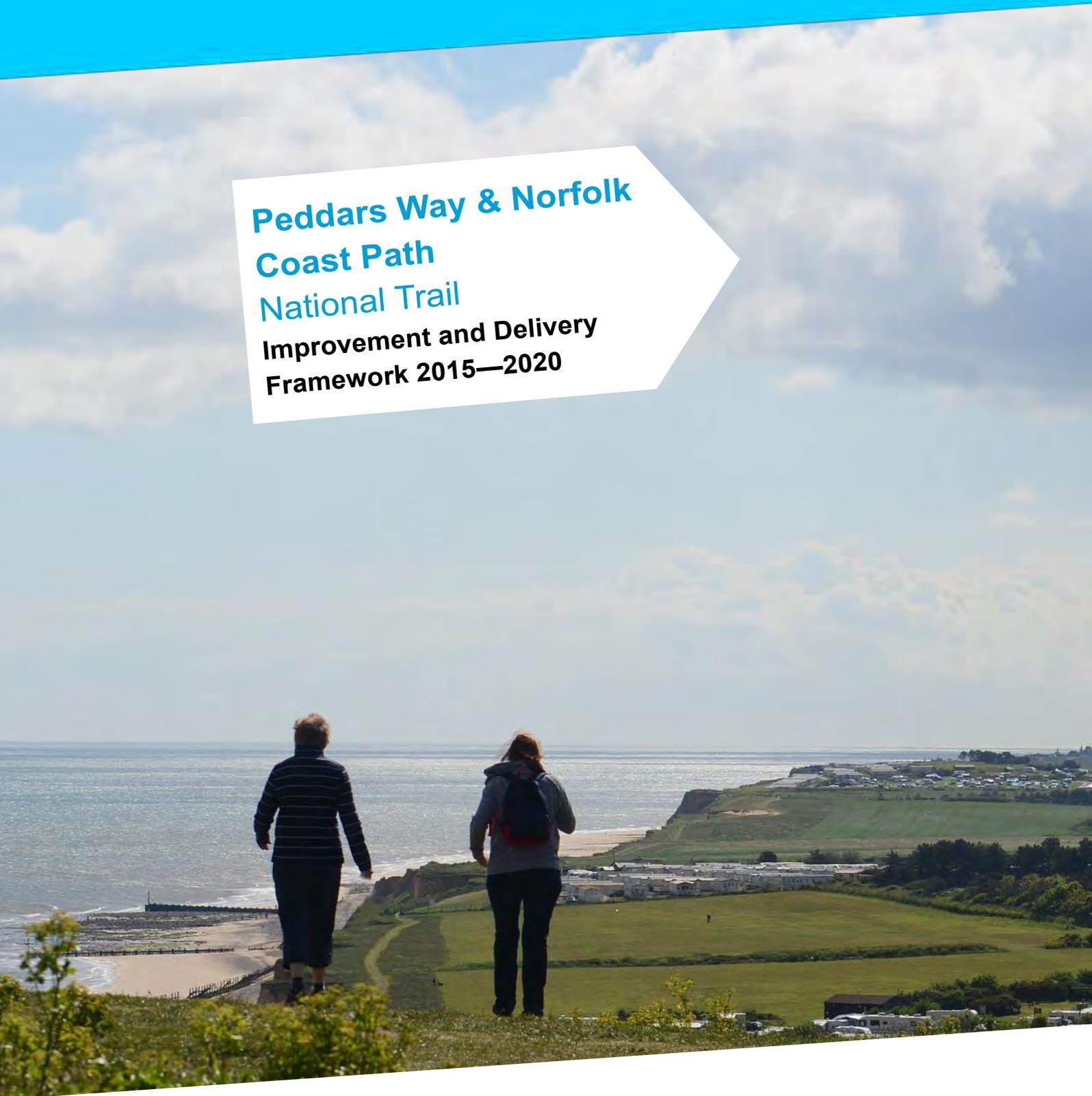




**Peddars Way & Norfolk
Coast Path
National Trail
Improvement and Delivery
Framework 2015—2020**





The Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail is changing and developing more now than ever before in its 30 year history. This is both a challenging and exciting opportunity.

The Norfolk National Trails Partnership with Natural England wants local engagement and commitment to the future development and management of the National Trails network in Norfolk.

This delivery framework sets out the arrangements which will make this happen. These have been agreed by the Norfolk National Trails Partnership for the National Trail, covering the period between 2015 and 2020 in order to include all the new coastal access that is currently underway in Norfolk.

Vision

The Norfolk National Trail Partnership will manage the National Trail to provide a high quality experience for users and for economic and environmental benefits to the area and its communities.



Aims

The Norfolk National Trails Partnership will:

- Manage the National Trail and associated access network in Norfolk so that it is better able to meet the varying demands placed upon it;
- Increase public, economic and environmental benefit associated with the National Trail;
- Actively seek the involvement of communities with the National Trail;
- Take a collaborative approach to responsibilities and resources through establishing and developing the National Trail partnership in Norfolk;
- Increase external investment in the National Trail and associated access network.

This document demonstrates how the Norfolk National Trails Partnership will:

Be accountable to Natural England;

Deliver a high quality trail;

Promote and support the family of trails both nationally and within Norfolk;

Be accountable to users and other local stakeholders;

Develop new opportunities for the National Trail and Partnership.

This development framework has been agreed by all members of the Trail Partnership in the Memorandum of Understanding.

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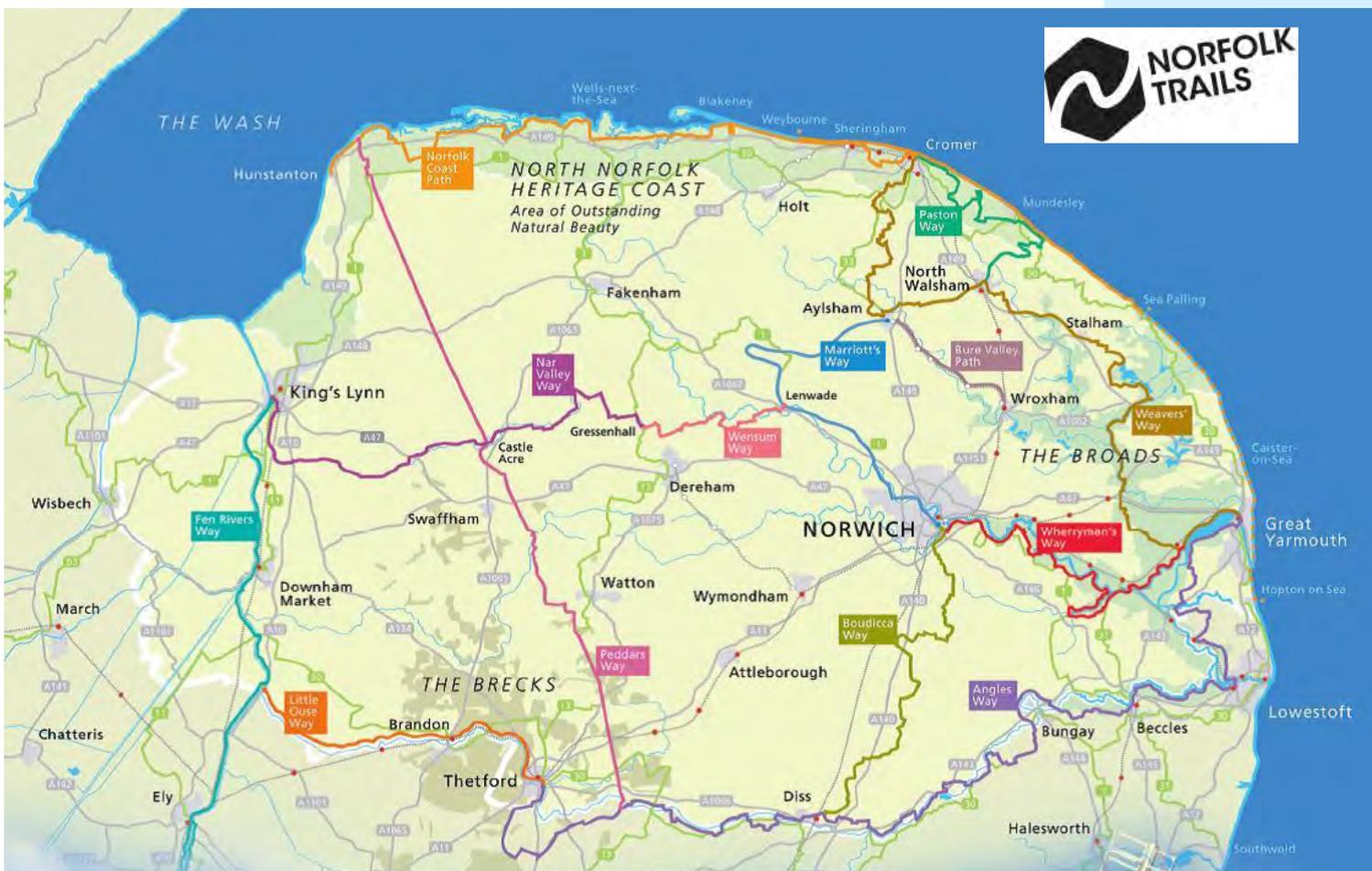


Norfolk's National Trail—route

1

The Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail in Norfolk is part of the wider network of promoted trails managed by Norfolk County Council's Environment Team under the Norfolk Trails brand.

Norfolk Trails is a network of promoted routes which together make up about 1,200 miles. Norfolk Trails comprise 11 long-distance paths, 200 circular walks and associated cycle and bridle routes. All Norfolk Trails are managed to National Trail standards.



2

Strengths & Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT)

National Trail SWOT analysis

This SWOT analysis is based on the Insight Track report that was commissioned during 2014/15 as part of the COOL Tourism project and offers some key points that may help with guiding the work of the National Trail Partnership steering group.





Strengths

- The coastline and beaches are our most visited attraction and play a key role in choosing Norfolk over other UK destinations
- The 'great outdoors' is also key to Norfolk's appeal - the picturesque scenery is frequently cited
- Walking is a key visitor attraction – the landscape offer is ideal for the outdoor visitor

Weaknesses

- A high proportion of those within a 2-hour drive time are visiting as day-trippers not stay-tripper
- Tourism is strongly weighted to the months of June to August

Opportunities

- Converting regional day trippers to become stay visitors by encouraging businesses to join forces and promote overnight stays
- Focusing promotional efforts on Autumn to Spring to try and counteract the strong seasonal visiting trend Offering suggested itineraries (segmented by audience types) to enable discovery of attractions and areas of the county
- Enabling visitors to customise their visit on the website
- New road links will open new markets for visitors to Norfolk

Threats

- The beaches, coastline and the broads are key assets, but these are likely to feed into seasonal trends; consideration might be given as to how we can promote an all-year-round offering
- The coastline and scenery are popular assets and this needs to be highlighted in future marketing
- Too much focus on particular sites: we need to spread visitor numbers across the whole of the National Trail and reduce pressure on sensitive sites.

3

Improvements for users

3.1 Improving the National Trail for walkers

The National Trail is an internationally recognised walking brand and attracts a number of visitors out of county who want to complete the whole of the National Trail family of trails.

The Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path have been managed to National Trail standard for 30 years and have benefitted from central government support during this time.





The Peddars Way has very few access points onto the route and it is very hard to walk sections of the route as there are no easy points for support services such as bus or village services. This means that it is best marketed to long-distance walkers.

The Norfolk Coast Path benefits from good public transport infrastructure with the “coast hopper” and a number of coastal villages offering a range of support services.

There is a real opportunity to use the 30th anniversary in 2016 to promote the National Trail and both the new coastal access opportunities and the Peddars Way.

Members of the Partnership have raised concerns about the increased amount of promotion for coastal access which may lead to a loss of focus on the Peddars Way. The way in which the Peddars Way is marketed and promoted is an area that the Partnership will address. A key message is the Peddars Way is ideal for providing walking opportunities in more remote rural locations.

During 2015/2016 there is an opportunity for the National Trail to be filmed on Google trekker and have this available for remote viewing which will introduce a new audience to the National Trails in Norfolk.

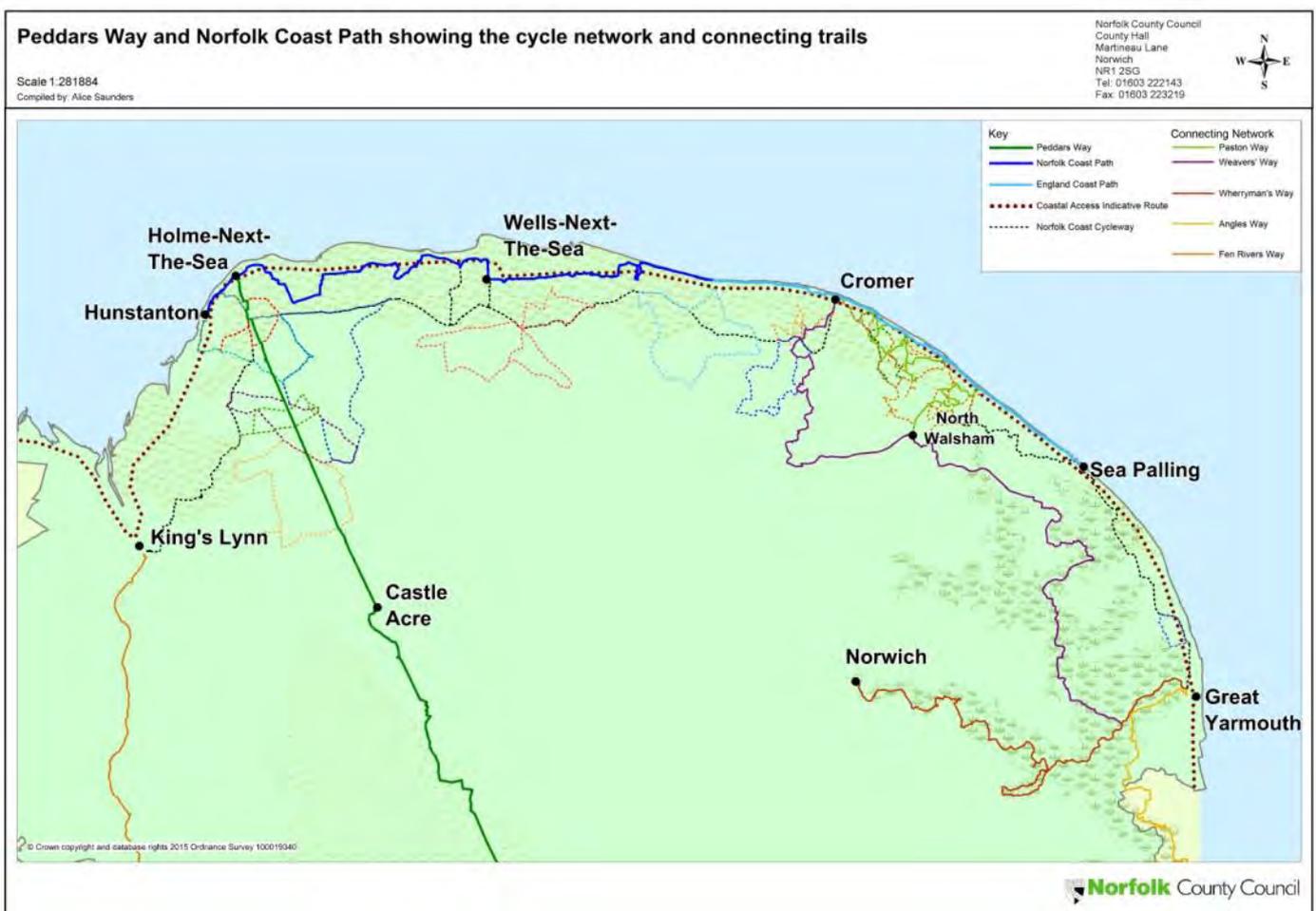
3

Improvements for users

3.2 Improving the National Trail for cyclists

The Peddars Way offers a unique way in which to see the Norfolk countryside. The route has got associated cycle and bridle routes and provides one of the best opportunities for off road cycling within Norfolk.

The Peddars Way terminates in the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and offers an opportunity to extend cycling provision in this protected landscape. Over and above this there is an opportunity to





offer cycling on or adjacent to the coast path at various locations which would help manage unauthorised cycling and offer this as an added access opportunity.

There are real opportunities to improve information for cycling access which can link directly to other promoted routes such as the AONB cycle network and the surrounding quiet lane network.

Cycling on the Peddars Way
© Norfolk Trails



3

Improvements for users

3.3 Improving the National Trail for horse riders

The Peddars Way offers bridle way access that can be used for horse riding between Hunstanton and Thetford.

There is currently limited information for horse riders using the Peddars Way. This bridleway route offers an opportunity to improve information for horse riders on a section by section approach. There is an opportunity for local businesses and liveries to provide facilities for horse-riders.



Horse riding
© Norfolk Coast Partnership



3.4 Access for all

The National Trail offers a range of easy access routes. The steering group will review and update this information and produce associated mapping as part of an access project.

Officers are working on developing a series of projects that make a physical upgrading of the National Trail i.e. highlighting areas where infrastructure is required to make them accessible to all types of user.

Natural England, as part of the England Coast Path, are looking at potential for access for all on stretches of the coast path. This approach combined with coastal defence has had a significant benefit.

By working with health and community groups and professionals the National Trail Partnership has the opportunity to ensure that we are effectively increasing access for this target audience. We will ensure that this approach is adopted by all partners throughout the National Trail corridor.

Local businesses have an opportunity to use the National Trail website to promote facilities that cater for the needs of multi-users, especially those with physical disabilities.

3

Improvements for users

3.5 Coastal access

Natural England are currently working on delivering the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. This process will open up new coastal access around the Norfolk coast line and the first stretch opened on 12th December 2014.



There are 4 stretches in all and when finished in 2020 will create a new coastal national trail for Norfolk which will form part of the England Coast Path.

Once the route has been agreed Norfolk County Council will manage the installation of all infrastructure on the route and then add this to the portfolio of national trails to be managed within the county.

- The first stretch runs from Weybourne through to sea Palling (25 miles)
- The second stretch runs from Sea Palling to Hopton on Sea (22 miles).
- The third stretch will cover the current Norfolk Coast

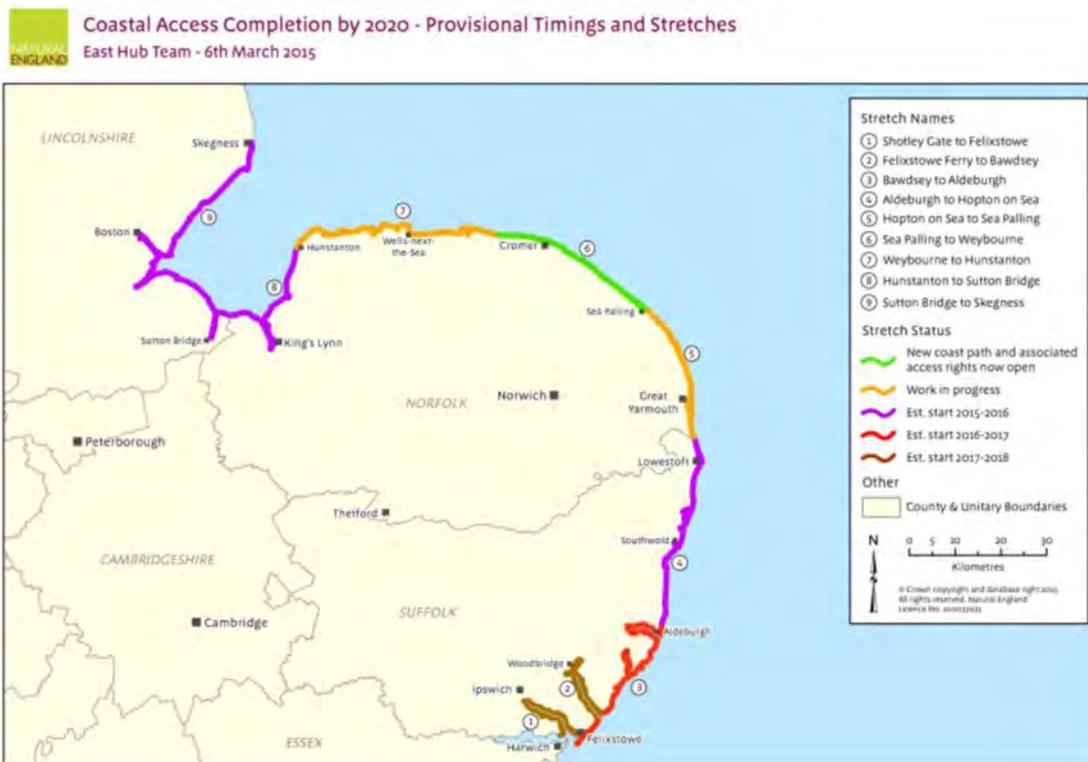


path and will run from Hunstanton to Weybourne (39 miles).

- The final stretch will run from Hunstanton to Kings Lynn

The new Norfolk coast path will form part of the management remit of the National Trail partnership and will be managed in a similar way to the current national trail.

The Explore More coast project is working closely with coastal access and will create a series of 20 circular walks from the coast path inland. In this way the new section of coastal access will provide the maximum economic benefit for the local area by linking local business and populations to the new coast path route.



4

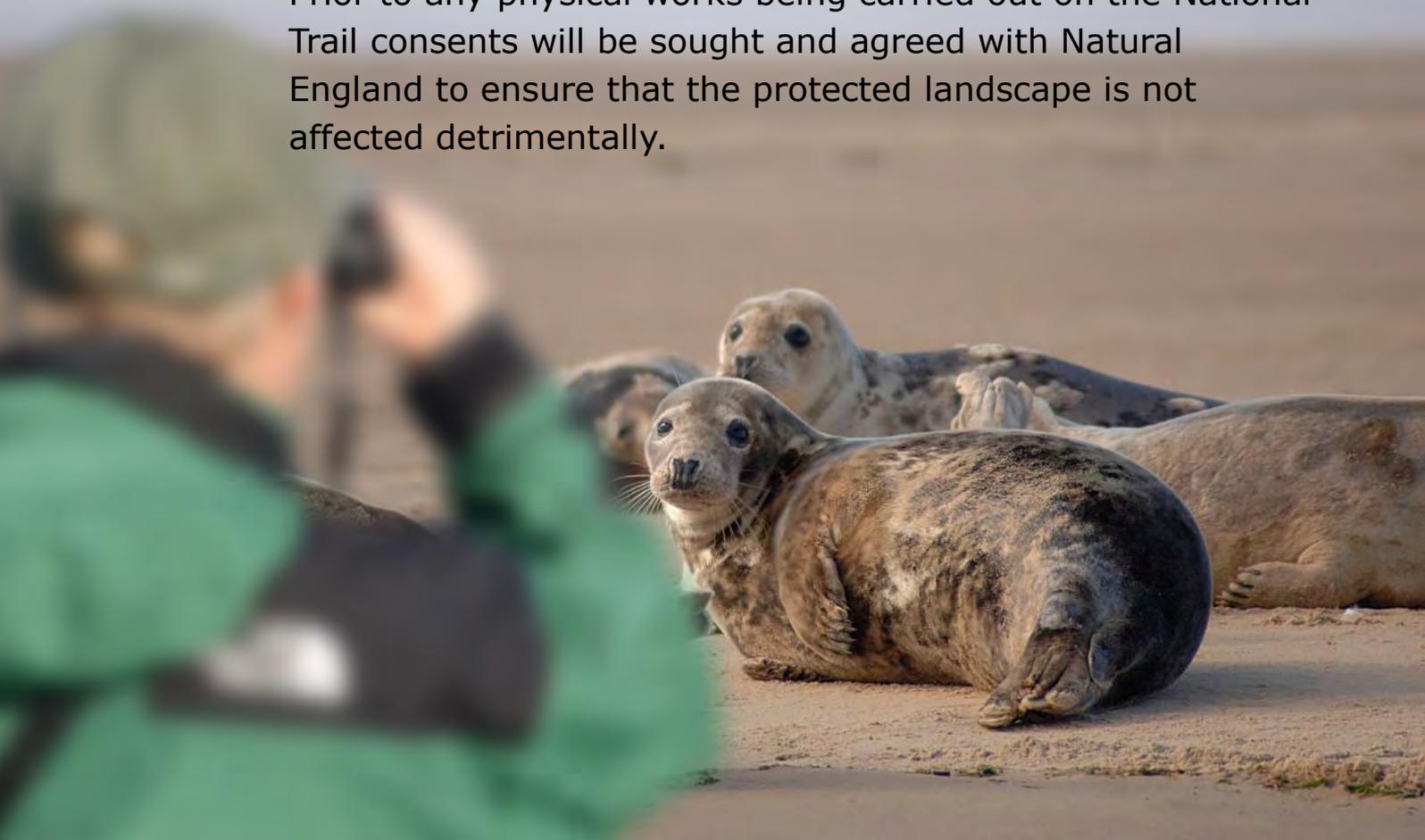
Improving the environment

4.1 Improving and protecting the biodiversity and landscape of the National Trail corridor

A major strength of the National Trail is that it runs through extensive protected landscapes and sites. The course of the Norfolk Coast Path runs through a Marine Protected Area, the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designated landscape and extensive areas of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) throughout its length.

The Peddars Way links together the Brecks with the Norfolk coast and runs through working landscapes which offer users an opportunity to experience a diverse range of landscape types.

Prior to any physical works being carried out on the National Trail consents will be sought and agreed with Natural England to ensure that the protected landscape is not affected detrimentally.





4.2 Protecting and interpreting the heritage of the National Trail corridor

The Norfolk Coast Partnership which manages the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and partners such as the National Trust already carry out extensive interpretation of heritage on the trail corridor.

An opportunity exists to create a number of themed walks in and around the National Trail linking into local heritage and interpreting the area.

It is envisaged that itineraries will encourage longer stays on the National Trail and within Norfolk. This will result in increased economic benefit from the National Trail.

The creation of the England Coast Path will open new sections of coastal access and will allow users to experience the special qualities of the landscape through which the National Trail runs. By providing a range of information we will promote better understanding of the landscape use.

A key output for the partnership will be the creation of multi day visit itineraries to the coast.



4

Improving the environment

4.3 Using green infrastructure to develop the National Trail

The National Trail is likely to have a limited opportunity to gain from Green Infrastructure funding on the route. This is due to limited development opportunities in the areas through which the National Trail runs. If opportunities exist for green infrastructure development for the National Trail outcomes that could be delivered are:

- New circular routes linking coastal access to local populations.
- Improving the quality of existing trails or paths which will be used more because of the increased local population. This approach will allow the route to benefit from increased funding to address recreational impacts from increased use.
- Green infrastructure contributions could be sought for maintaining a section of the National Trail through a Section 106 agreement or similar legal agreement.



5

Creating local opportunities

5.1 Boosting local business

The National Trail promotes links to local business through signing and through creating business links. This is a model that has been used for a long time and has created a strong relationship between local business and the National Trails

There is a real opportunity to extend this business marketing offer to businesses on the new stretches of the coast path.

Norfolk County Council is currently creating a series of circular walks linking the new coastal access stretches to local communities and business and this model is one that could be extended throughout the National Trail corridor.





Case study

Deepdale Farm

A family farm in north Norfolk has branched out to deliver successful hostel accommodation serving the nearby Norfolk Coast Path. Deepdale remains a working farm but has converted disused barns into accommodation, provides camping facilities, tourist information, shops, yurts, tipis and events all tailored to visitors who come to walk the National Trail.

Deepdale now accommodates over 50,000 bed nights each year and has a turnover in excess of £300,000. Events such as Christmas Markets attract up to 10,000 people a year.

“Focus on who your visitors are. This means thinking about the facilities and services they are looking for an offer info/services based on their needs. Don’t be afraid to diversity and try new things. Also make sure to tailor marketing to your audience—make sure different elements of the business are marketed using the right tools to reach specific people—creating a buzz in the right place.”

Jason Borthwick—Owner

Further information at: www.norfolk.gov.uk/view/NCC163310

Tipis © Deepdale Farm



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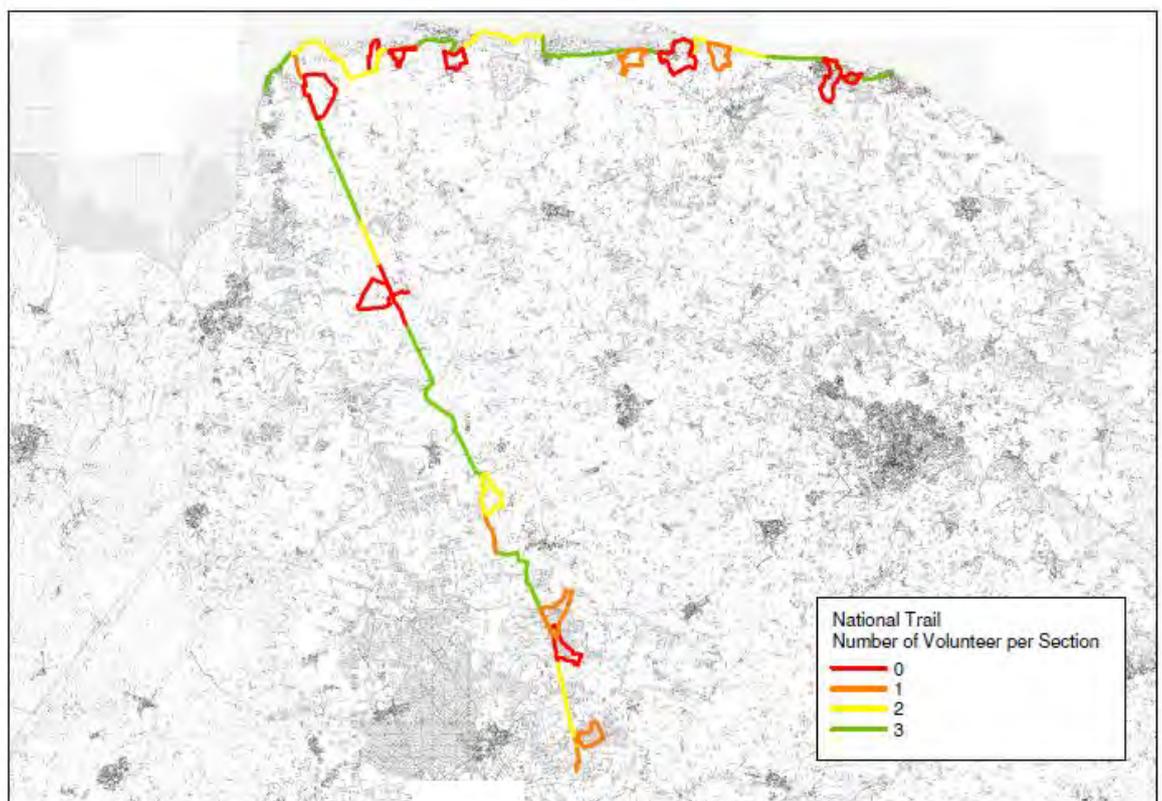
Creating local opportunities

5.2 Volunteering

The National Trail has a proud history of working with local communities and volunteers. An extensive volunteer network now exists to assist with the management of the National Trail in Norfolk.

Volunteers recruitment is currently being reviewed to ensure that there is more opportunity to volunteer from a range of potential participants.

There is real opportunity to engage with a new generation of volunteers on the national trail, for recruiting to new stretches of coastal access and also for developing our current volunteer workforce.





5.3 Improving opportunities for young people and education

Currently there are a number of smaller circular walks and Treasure Trails packages (eg. Burnham Deepdale) available on the National Trail.

There is no section for young people or for education available on the websites which support the National Trail and this presents an opportunity in and around creating curriculum linked bespoke educational packages for young people looking at the coast path and a number of issues such as:

- Coastal erosion
- Deep History Coast—archaeological finds on the Cromerian Ridge
- Conflict history—how the Norfolk coast has been used during war time.

Additionally, working with partners within the National Trail Partnership such as the National Trust, NWT and RSPB an online educational resource could be created to support younger people in their understanding of the route and landscape.

The creation of a targeted approach for younger people could be the creation and development of geocache trails on the National Trail and developing more child friendly visit itinerary programmes.

Creating local opportunities

5.4 Improving health and well-being

The benefits of health from walking are well documented and the National Trail is well positioned to provide access for remote Norfolk communities to a world class walking experience.

The National Trail is a well signed and maintained linear route and associated circular walks that spur off them encourage participation from all sections of the community.

Health improvements are linked to people engaging with the natural environment and the National Trail offers the opportunity to get involved by volunteering which leads to both physical and mental wellbeing.

The National Trail Partnership will map health outcomes over access opportunities within the National Trail corridor. This will create an improvement plan which will facilitate a targeted approach to the National Trail and associated circular walks and engagement opportunities throughout the trail corridor.



6

National Trails delivery plan

6.1 National Trail maintenance and enhancement

A consistent priority for the Trail Partnership and wider stakeholders is retaining a high quality trail corridor and where possible improving the trail for all users.

Smaller scale maintenance and improvement works may be delivered in house directly by Norfolk County Council employees, often with support from members of the partnership or volunteers.

Larger scale maintenance and improvement works will seek external funding and may be delivered externally by contractors.

The National Trail approach for route management is being copied across the portfolio of long distance trails within Norfolk. These long distance trails are managed in a separate way to the rights of way network. The approach is to deliver trails to an enhanced standard following the National Trail approach.

The National Trail has a volunteer team that walk and report on its condition. These reports can highlight management or maintenance issues which are recorded and then subsequently resolved through a number of different approaches:

- The work may be carried out by a trail officer working with volunteers
- The work may need to be contracted out to an external party for completion



- A combination of the two approaches in order to deliver projects in a timely and cost effective manner.

Currently Norfolk County Council is tendering for the delivery of the Norfolk Trails Handbook which will ensure that work is carried out to an agreed standard across both the National Trails and other trails within the portfolio.

Furthermore, there are existing relationships with the National Trail steering group members and local volunteer groups, and these are likely to contribute to small-scale improvement and maintenance of works on the Trail. The National Trail manager and trail officers will support the co-ordination and integration of these works to ensure consistency of approach and delivery.

Consultation has demonstrated that National Trail condition and quality is the highest priority for users and stakeholders. The key priority over the period of this Delivery Framework is to ensure that mechanisms are put in place to maintain the quality of the Trail and secure its continued improvement.

6

National Trails delivery plan

6.2 Projects

Natural England no longer explicitly requires the provision of a Trail Officer for individual National Trails, instead recognising that a 'shared resource' approach to Trail management is more appropriate in some cases.

The latter approach is preferred by Norfolk County Council. There will be a single point of contact for the National Trail who will be the National Trail manager and they will be supported by a team of trail officers undertaking specific roles in the development and delivery of the National Trail.

We intend to broaden the focus to be more forward thinking and enable the development of the outcomes identified within the Delivery Framework, rather than a narrower focus consisting only of maintenance.

The National Trail Partnership will seek to deliver projects with partners that may be generated from a number of sources.

Following volunteer trail audit inspections and subsequent Trail Officer involvement projects may be generated to address access issues. Alternatively projects could come forward from partners within the National Trail Partnership group and may focus on enhancing the experience of using the trail or interpreting the landscape in new and innovative ways. In order to fund projects, applications may be submitted to organisations and groups from the health, arts and private sectors, but will actively aim to create innovative partnerships with new non-recreational sector partners



where there are mutual benefits to achieve local outcomes on the Trail.

The National Trail Partnership group will review on an annual basis the trail condition report and agree the annual report which has to be submitted to Natural England. Following the annual report the partnership will agree priorities for actions which have been highlighted.



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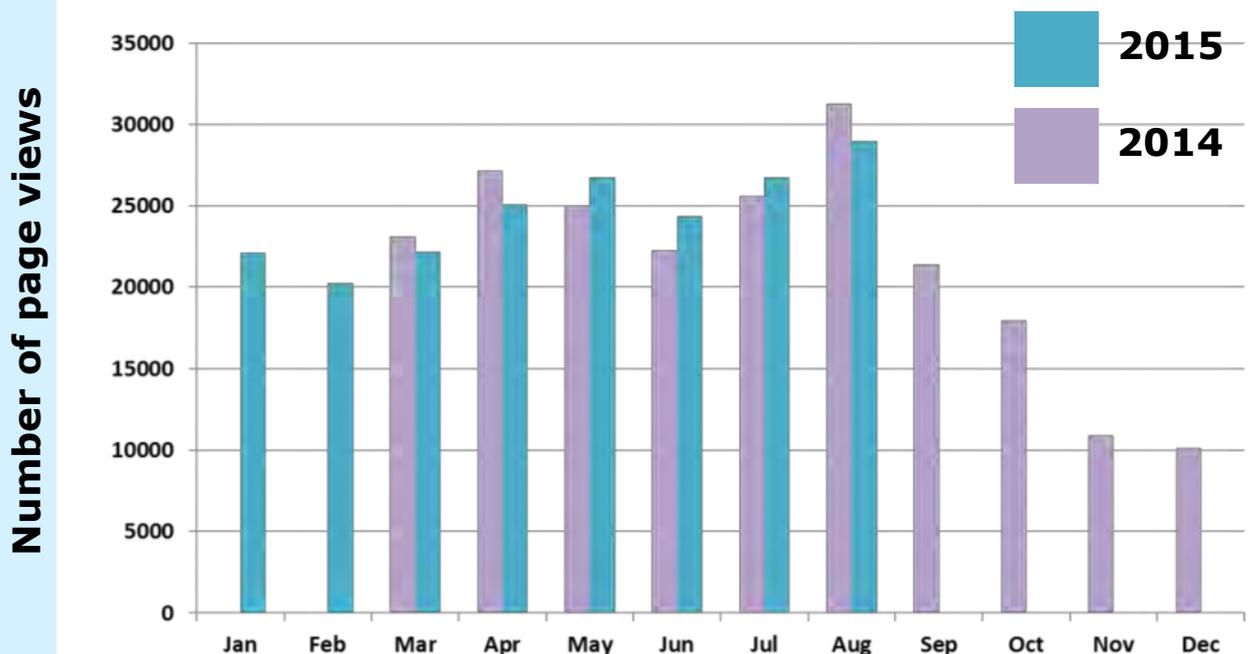
National Trails delivery plan

6.3 Marketing and publicising the National Trail in Norfolk

The Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path are represented on the Walk Unlimited supported National Trails website—
www.nationaltrail.co.uk/peddars-way-and-norfolk-coast-path

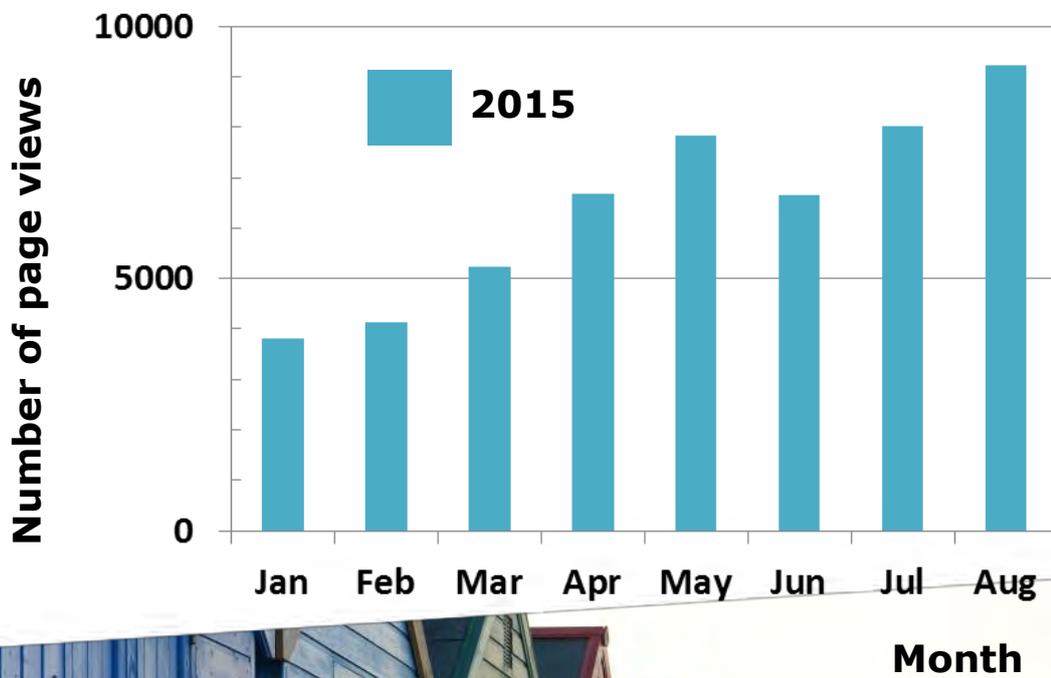
Over and above this the National Trail is also presented on the Norfolk Trails website and there is a link between the two.

Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path website page views 2014—2015 on the National Trails Walk Unlimited website (www.nationaltrail.co.uk/peddars-way-and-norfolk-coast-path)





Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path website page views 2015 on the Norfolk Trails website (www.norfolk.gov.uk/peddarsway and www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolkcoastpath)



6

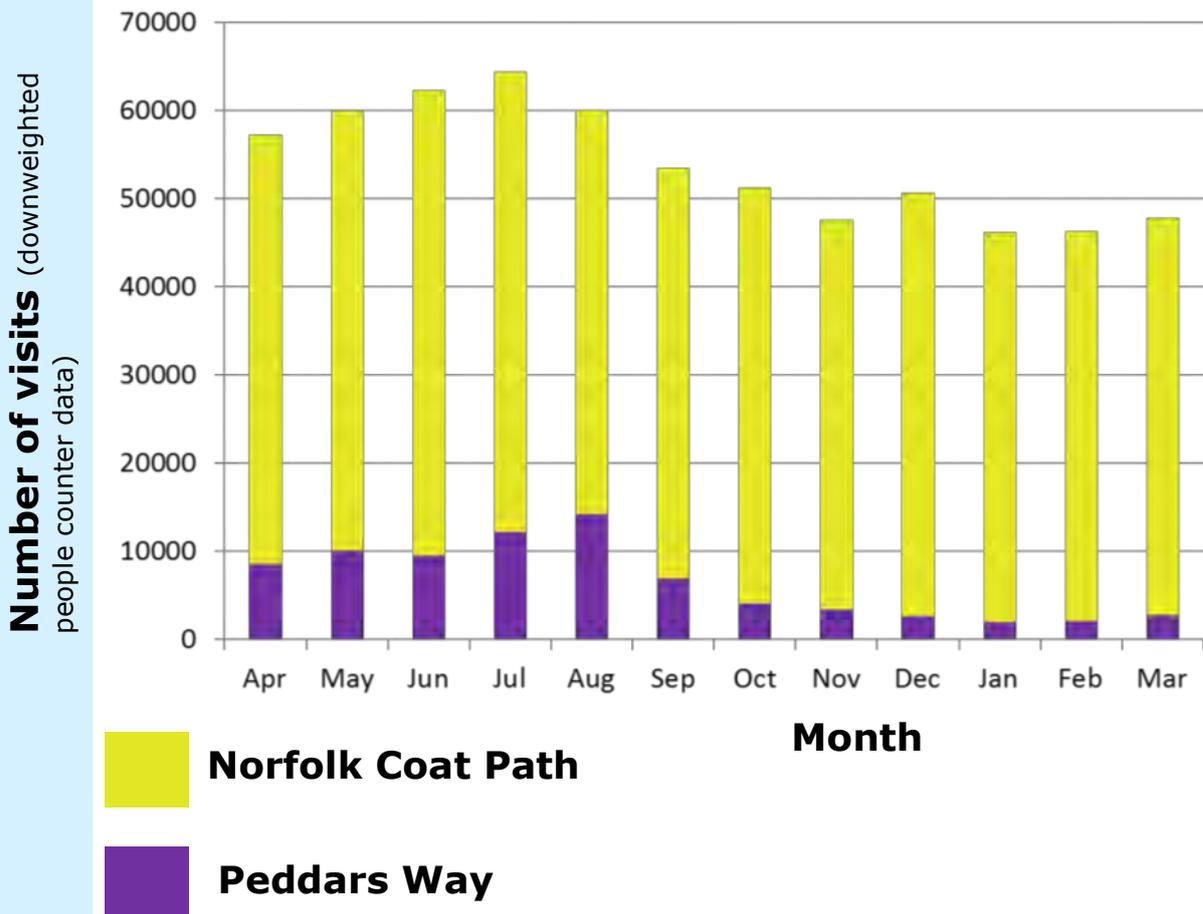
National Trails delivery plan

The National Trail manager is the 'single-point-of-contact' for the website to ensure a consistent approach.

Social media is also part of the promotional package and both Twitter and Facebook are used to promote the national trail.

All partners within the National Trails Partnership have promotion elements to their work.

Visitor numbers to the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail April 2014 to March 2015 (counter data).





6.4 Wider promotion opportunities

The Trail Partnership intends to strengthen the National Trail brand and brands of other members of the partnership.

The National Trail in Norfolk is expanding with the creation of the England Coast Path.

This will create opportunities to promote the National Trail to existing and new audiences and to maximise the economic impact of the route within Norfolk. Partners have the opportunity to support the National Trail through the co-branding of itineraries, events and activities.

The expanding Norfolk Coast Path offers an opportunity for increased provision of visit itineraries to the area promoting multi day stays rather than day visits.

The Peddars Way can be used to promote both a link between the Brecks and the Norfolk Coast and also to be a premier destination for horse or cycle riders offering a largely off road route.



6

National Trails delivery plan

6.5 Performance monitoring

The National Trail Partnership meets once a quarter and receives a number of progress reports that may cover subjects such as volunteers, condition monitoring, promotion, trail developments and projects.

At the close of each financial year there will be a report that will explicitly demonstrate key achievements and progress on the Key Performance Indicators.

Key performance indicators

This Delivery Framework is in place and sets out how the Trail Partnership will deliver on outcomes and indicators.

A recent assessment of Trail condition has been completed. As a result of this a number of project documents have been produced to look at major replacement of existing infrastructure on the National Trail.

An annual action plan for the National Trail will be produced and monitored by the Partnership which will highlight progress on the delivery of the key performance indicators.

Funding for the National Trail Partnership is provided through an agreement with Natural England. The funding ratio is 3:1 (Natural England to National Trail Partnership funding). The opportunity to seek external funding to meet this challenge needs to be explored. This will be a key function of the National Trail Partnership.

Norfolk County Council is the lead and accountable partner, and Norfolk County Council will act as host authority to



administer the Natural England grant.

All partners are committed to the Delivery Framework and have an excellent working relationship.

Trail Partnership is in place with a draft Memorandum of Understanding with a target for signing and agreeing by the end of September 2015.

The Trail Partnership, with its wider partners, is in a strong position to contribute to the evidence base on the benefits of National Trails.

The Trail Partnership is keen to receive and share best practice regarding Trail management, and is particularly willing to innovate.

The Trail Partnership would like to improve joint working with other National Trails. Discussions have been held with both Suffolk County Council and Essex County Council regarding opportunities for a joint externally funded "Coastal Treasures" project.

Community involvement is already being enhanced through the Norfolk Trails volunteer scheme. This will develop over a time period to include increased networking and training opportunities for volunteers on the National Trail.

There may be opportunities for an integrated delivery mechanism through on-going partnership work with members of the National trail Steering Group.

Trail condition

The condition survey was completed for the annual report to

6

National Trails delivery plan

be returned to Natural England. In 2013 the condition survey highlighted the issues facing the Norfolk Coast Path following a tidal surge. Work totalling over £700,000 has since been carried out to address these issues. This work was delivered by the Environment Agency as part of coastal flood management schemes and Norfolk County Council footpath improvements were delivered as an element of the scheme.

An annual survey is scheduled for 2015/2016 which will provide a Geographical Information System (GIS) and photographic survey of the National Trail and current condition.

This survey will provide a baseline from which trail improvements can be accurately worked up into project development and delivered.

Sections of the Trail have been identified as being in poor condition. These will be prioritised for action in the following year.





6.6 Delivering the four 'e's with Natural England

Other performance indicators need to be agreed within the partnership and will focus on delivering the “New Deal” for the National Trails family based around;

Experience

Economy

Enhancement

Engagement

The Trail Partnership will explore the benefits of increased use and awareness of the Trail and as well as enhancements to the local economy. All partners will have had input and have agreed the approach to the 4E's.

Experience

- Encourage all accommodation providers to take up marketing opportunity on the Walk Unlimited National Trail website.
- Developing 'experiential tourism' opportunities that engender a deeper relationship with the Trail corridor and wider landscape. Create visit itineraries for visiting the National Trail, particularly focussing on new coastal access opportunities.
- Reviewing current interpretive provision along the Trail, identifying where quality improvements are needed, working with landowners and exploring modern media techniques.

6

National Trails delivery plan

- Examine provision for Trail use for people with disabilities which will include carrying out a disability audit and providing information as a result of the audit.
- Identification of key views from the Trail. Use Google Trekker to create a trail corridor view.
- Exploring opportunities for cycling provision along or close to the Trail (possibly using the cycle routes promoted by the Norfolk Coast Partnership).
- Identification of key gateway points along the Trail and encouraging branding from all partners to raise public awareness of areas that the National Trail runs through.

Economy

- Creation of promotion and advertising design and colour palette to be used by all partners to create recognisable brand.
- Audit and subsequent identification of local businesses that may benefit from a better branded National Trail.
- Use Norfolk Trails Handbook to procure works on the trail to minimise cost and to deliver to agreed standards.
- Work with Destination Management Organisations to maximise the use of the National Trails brand and create a positive link with rural tourism.
- Promote the use of the Business Toolkit to local enterprises to maximise economic benefit.



Enhancement

- Work with motor vehicle groups to address illegal or heavy use of sections by motorised vehicles which has detrimentally affected the route.
- Undertake a full safety audit of road walking and road crossing sections and identify solutions to issues found. Particularly addressing sections of new coastal access.
- Undertake audit of habitat and heritage sites within the Trail corridor. Create heritage trail itineraries
- Continue to develop the relationship with train and bus operators to clarify public transport service and explore promotion opportunities.
- Audit existing circular walks along Trail and undertake condition survey.

Engagement

- National Trails Manager as a 'single point of contact' for users and stakeholders.
- Establish a Stakeholders Working Group to broaden local engagement in the Trail management. This could take the form of a working sub group reporting back to the Steering Group on progress.
- Investigate extension of the Norfolk Trails Volunteer scheme to enhance and maintain the Trail (particularly circular routes off the National Trail linear route).

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