

Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (2025-2035)

Consultation Outcome (May – August 2025)

To help ensure the Rights of Way Improvement Plan meets the needs of communities within Leicestershire, a consultation on the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan and associated Action Plan took place for 12 weeks from 22 May to 14 August 2025. This provided the opportunity for residents, visitors, partners and stakeholders to review the draft document and actions set out for the next 10 years. This also included seeking the views of all the parish and district councils within Leicestershire in addition to other statutory consultees.

Consultation Process

Survey:

An online survey (also available in paper format) was launched between 22 May to 14 August 2025. The survey was made available to the public via the Council's Have Your Say webpage, as well as being shared directly with stakeholders who were identified in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Statutory Guidance. There were 254 survey responses.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan Roadshows:

A total of seven roadshows were held across the County at local libraries where all members of the public were invited to ask questions relating to the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan, speak to Public Rights of Way specialists and complete paper copies of the survey.

Social Media:

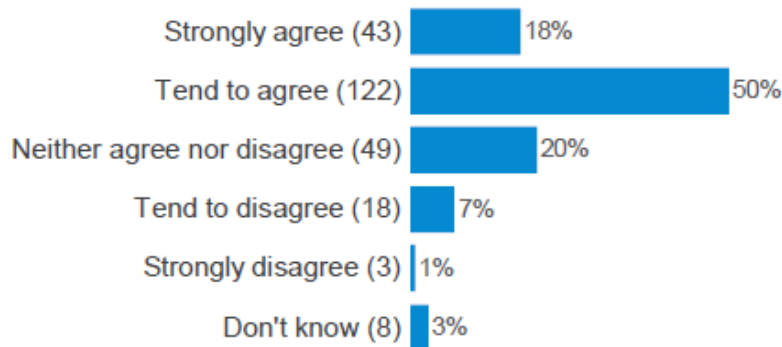
The Council promoted the online survey and roadshows through social media channels: posts received 1208 clicks and 127 shares across all platforms.

Public Rights of Way Consultation Outcome Summary

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan as a whole

Overall, 68% agreed with the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, 18% strongly agreed and 50% of respondents tend to agree. It is noted that 20% were neutral.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan overall?

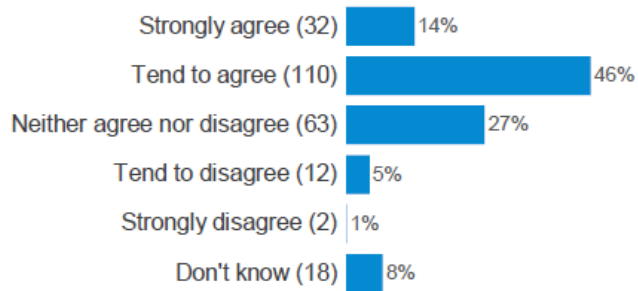


The Rights of Way Improvement Plan - Action Plan

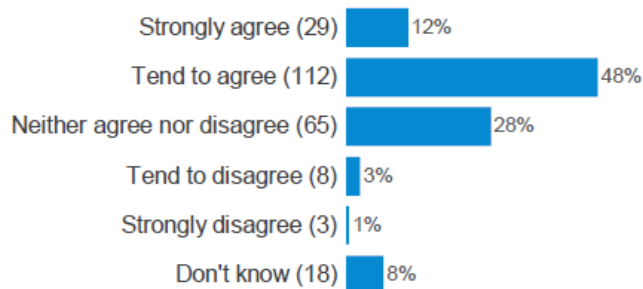
In terms of the actions identified in various areas (i.e. Highway Authority, Surveying Authority, Planning and Development, and Access Authority):

- 60% agreed with the actions identified in 'Highway Authority' (14% strongly agreed and 46% of respondents tended to agree) .
- 60% agreed with the actions identified in 'Surveying Authority' (12% strongly agreed and 48% of respondents tended to agree).
- 54% agreed with the actions identified in 'Planning and Development' (11% strongly agreed 43% of respondents tended to agree).
- 57% agreed with the actions identified in the 'Access Authority' (13% strongly agreed and 44% of respondents tended to agree).

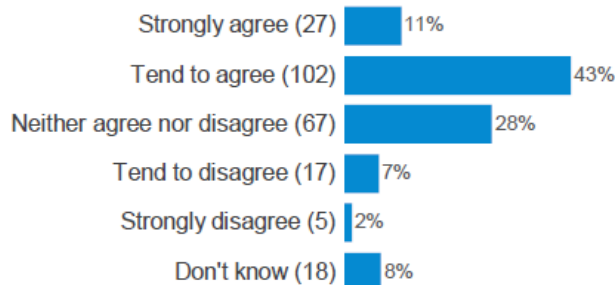
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the actions identified in the following areas? (Actions listed under 'Highway Authority')



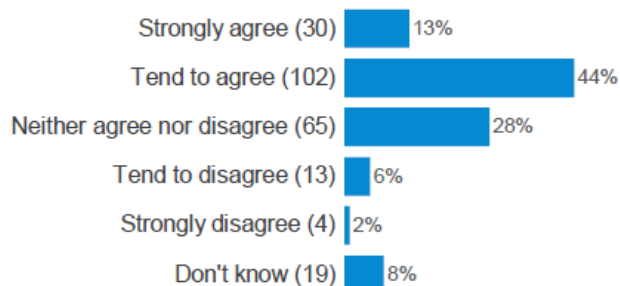
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the actions identified in the following areas? (Actions listed under 'Surveying Authority')



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the actions identified in the following areas? (Actions listed under 'Planning and Promotion')



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the actions identified in the following areas? (Actions listed under 'Access Authority')

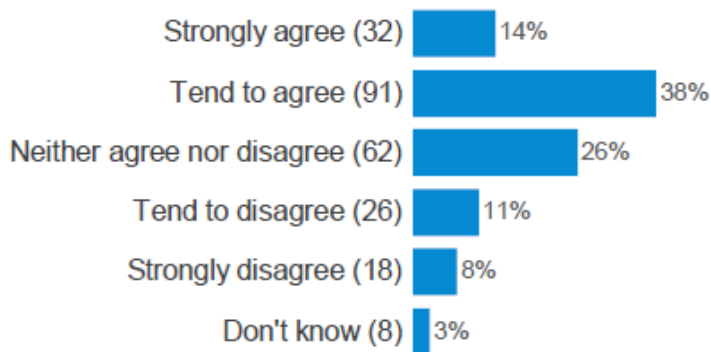


*Note: Actions listed in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Action Plan under Planning and Development, were referred as 'Planning and *Promotion*' in the survey – this was a misnomer in the survey question and did not affect the Rights of Way Improvement Plan or its Actions.

Priorities

A total of 38% of respondents tended to agree that the priorities identified from the initial engagement reflect their views and needs as users, 14% strongly agreed and 26% were neutral. (The priorities identified are shown in section '5.3 Engagement Analysis' of the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan).

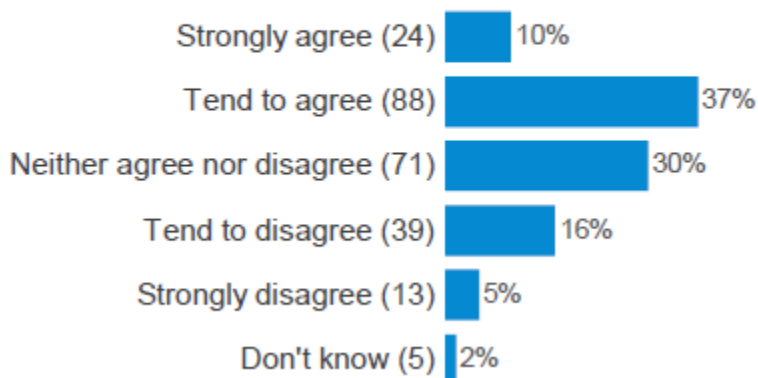
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (The priorities identified from the initial engagement reflect my views and needs as a user.)



Achievements

47% agree that the achievements noted within the Plan reflect what they see when using the network, and 10% strongly agreed and 37% of respondents tended to agree.

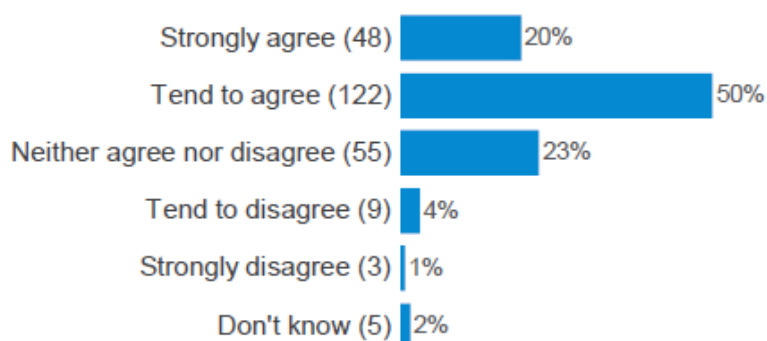
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (The achievements noted within the plan reflect what I see when using the network)



Information in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan

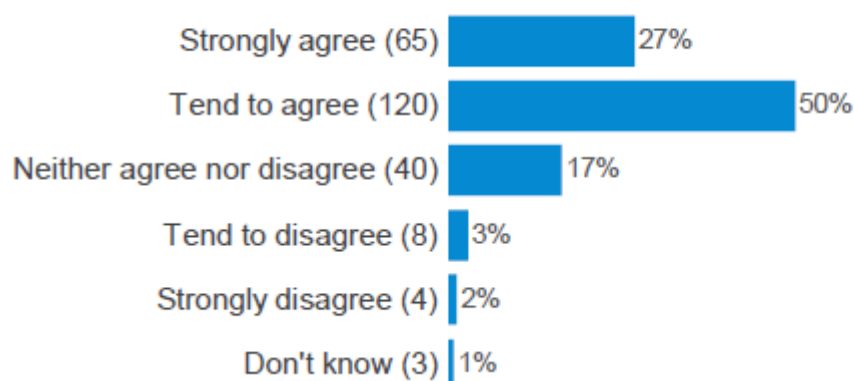
For the information in the 'Policy Content' section, 50% of respondents tended to agree that the section makes it clear how the draft plan aligns with key policies and strategies, and 20% strongly agreed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (The information in the 'Policy Content' section makes it clear how the draft plan aligns with key policies and strategies)



For the information in the 'What we do' section, 50% of respondents tended to agree that the section is clear on what Leicestershire County Council's responsibilities are when it comes to managing the Rights of Way network, and 27% strongly agreed.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (The information in the 'What we do' section is clear on what Leicestershire County Council's responsibilities are when it comes to managing the Rights of Way network)



Themes of Other Responses

The survey offered respondents the opportunity to provide any other comments on the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The consultation revealed concerns about the **maintenance** and **accessibility** of public rights of way across Leicestershire. Many respondents reported issues with overgrown vegetation, poor surface conditions, and missing signage, which make paths difficult or unsafe to use. There is a strong call for improved access for wheelchair users, horse riders, cyclists, and dog walkers, including replacing stiles with gates and ensuring paths are wide and well-drained.

However, the consultation also highlighted **conflicts between different user groups**, such as tensions between horse riders and pedestrians, or between motorcyclists and other non-motorised users, particularly where shared use leads to erosion or safety risks. There is also concern about **road safety**, especially for vulnerable users, and a desire for **more connected routes** between villages to support active travel.

Respondents urged **better collaboration** between councils, landowners, volunteers, and developers, and stressed the need for developers to maintain connectivity and avoid blocking existing routes. Many felt the consultation **documents** are overly complex and lack clear, measurable actions, suggesting the need for simpler summaries and improved digital **mapping tools**.

Finally, respondents emphasized the importance of adequate **resources and funding**, improved **reporting** systems, and a more ambitious **transport-focused vision** for the public rights of way network that prioritizes everyday use over leisure.

Demographics

Role in Responding to Survey

253 respondents stated their role in relation to the survey, 205 (81%) of the respondents to the consultation stated that they were Leicestershire residents. Another 25 (10%) said that they were County, district or parish/town councillors. Six stated that they were visitors to Leicestershire for either work or pleasure, a further six stated that they were public sector representatives. Four respondents stated that they were voluntary sector representatives and five were Council staff with these categories each making up approximately 2% of survey respondents. Two (1%) respondents stated that their role was outside of these categories.

Employment Status

207 survey respondents declared their employment status. 68 (33%) stated that they were in full-time employment, 21 (10%) stated they were in part-time employment (less than 30 hours per week) and 5% were self-employed or part-time. 92 (44%) of these respondents were retired from work with one (1%) stating they were unemployed and available for work and four (2%) stating they were permanently sick and disabled. Six (3%) respondents stated that they were looking after their home and four (2%) were doing activities outside of these categories.

Parental or Caring Responsibilities

Of the 205 survey respondents to answer this question, 30 (15%) said they were either a parent or full-time carer for a person aged 17 or under and 175 (85%) said they were not.

Gender Identity

Of the 206 survey respondents who answered this question, 109 (53%) identified as male and 93 (45%) identified as female, with a further four (2%) respondents stating that they used another term to describe their gender identity.

Sexual Orientation

Of the 196 survey respondents to state their sexual orientation, 170 (87%) stated that they were heterosexual, eight (4%) identified as gay or lesbian, six (3%) identified as bisexual and another 12 (6%) stated that they use another term to describe their sexual orientation.

Age

The age range of the 198 survey respondents who stated their age was between 28 and 94 years of age with the mean age amongst these respondents being 61 years old.

Disability

205 out of the 254 survey respondents stated their disability status, with 58 (28%) respondents stating that they were disabled or suffering from a long-standing illness or infirmity, and 147 (72%) stating they did not.

Ethnicity

206 out of the total 254 survey respondents stated their ethnic identity with 199 (97%) respondents stating that they were White, 2 (1%) stating that they identified as Asian or Asian British and 5 (2%) declaring they were part of another ethnic group.

Vehicle Ownership and Use

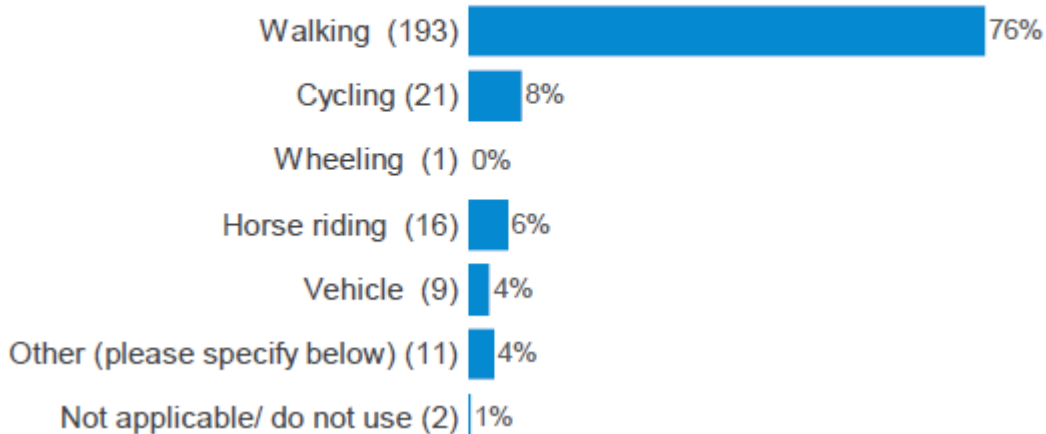
204 respondents to the survey stated the number of car or vans either owned or in use by members of their household. Of these respondents, eight (4%) said their household used or owned neither a car nor a van, 72 (35%) stated that they had one car or van in the household, 90 (44%) said they had two cars or vans and 22 (11%) said they had three. There were nine respondents (4%) who stated that their household had four or more cars, and three (2%) respondents did not know the number of cars and vans in their household.

How respondents use rights of way

- Walking 76%
- Cycling 8%
- Horse riding 6%
- Wheeling <1%
- Vehicle 4%

- Other 4% (these 11 responses included: eight running, one motorcycle, one walker and wheelchair, one powerchair and scooter)
- 1% (two responses were N/A / do not use)

When using the Rights of Way Network what is your main mode of transport? (Please select one option only which best reflects your most used mode)



Fraction of respondents in this survey who had responded to previous survey

59% of respondents in this survey had not responded to previous survey. 19% of respondents in this survey had responded to previous survey.

Earlier this year we ran a separate public engagement survey to help inform the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP). Did you respond to that previous survey?

