



The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

These require that officers keep and publish a written record of decisions which are made, either:

- a) under a specific express authorisation or
- b) under general delegated authority, where the effect of the decision is to
 - i) grant permission or licence;
 - ii) affect the rights of an individual; or
 - iii) award a contract or incur expenditure which, in either case ,
materially affects the Authority's financial position (£50,000 or over).

Temporary Traffic Regulation, Bridleway 543049, Oak Howe Bridge, Lakes (Langdales) Parish

Relevant section of Scheme of Delegation

PART 4 - DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS TO OFFICERS - ANNEX 4 - Functions delegated to Head of Ranger Service and sub-delegated to Ranger Team Leaders.

Rights of Way and Access Matters - All functions of the Authority under the Highway Acts (whether acting pursuant to its own functions or in pursuance of functions delegated to it by Westmorland and Furness Council) except for the making and confirmation of Definitive Map Modification Orders (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) and the decision to refer to the Planning Inspectorate of the confirmation of any orders under the Highway Acts where formal substantive representations have been made. "Substantive representations" are those which explain adequately the nature of the concerns and meet the legal considerations defined by the Highways Acts and the Planning Acts.

Background

One of the beams of the bridge over Great Langdale Beck near Oak Howe is failing. Until further assessment can be undertaken this report discusses temporarily closing the bridge to all users except walkers due to the likelihood of danger.

Details of Decision

That we issue a Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice for bridleway 543049, and, if it appears there is still a likelihood of danger to the public on the expiry date of the initial 21-day closure period, we issue a further Notice, or make an Order, continuing the closure.

Details of alternative options considered and rejected

Do not issue a Notice

Where a decision is made under an express authorisation, names of any Member(s) who have declared a conflict of interest

None

Lead Director	Steve Ratcliffe, Director of Sustainable Development
Author and contact details of report	Will Hinchliffe, Rights of Way Officer
Background Papers	Case file 1410.003.299
Date of Report	28 May 2026
Authorising officer	Steve Tatlock Ranger Team Leader (South)
Date	28 May 2026



Lake District
National Park

Lake District National Park Authority
Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice & Order – Authorisation Report: 28 May 2026
Bridleway 543049, Oak Howe Bridge, Lakes (Langdales) Parish

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TEMPORARY TRAFFIC REGULATION, BRIDLEWAY 543049, OAK HOWE BRIDGE, LAKES (LANGDALES) PARISH

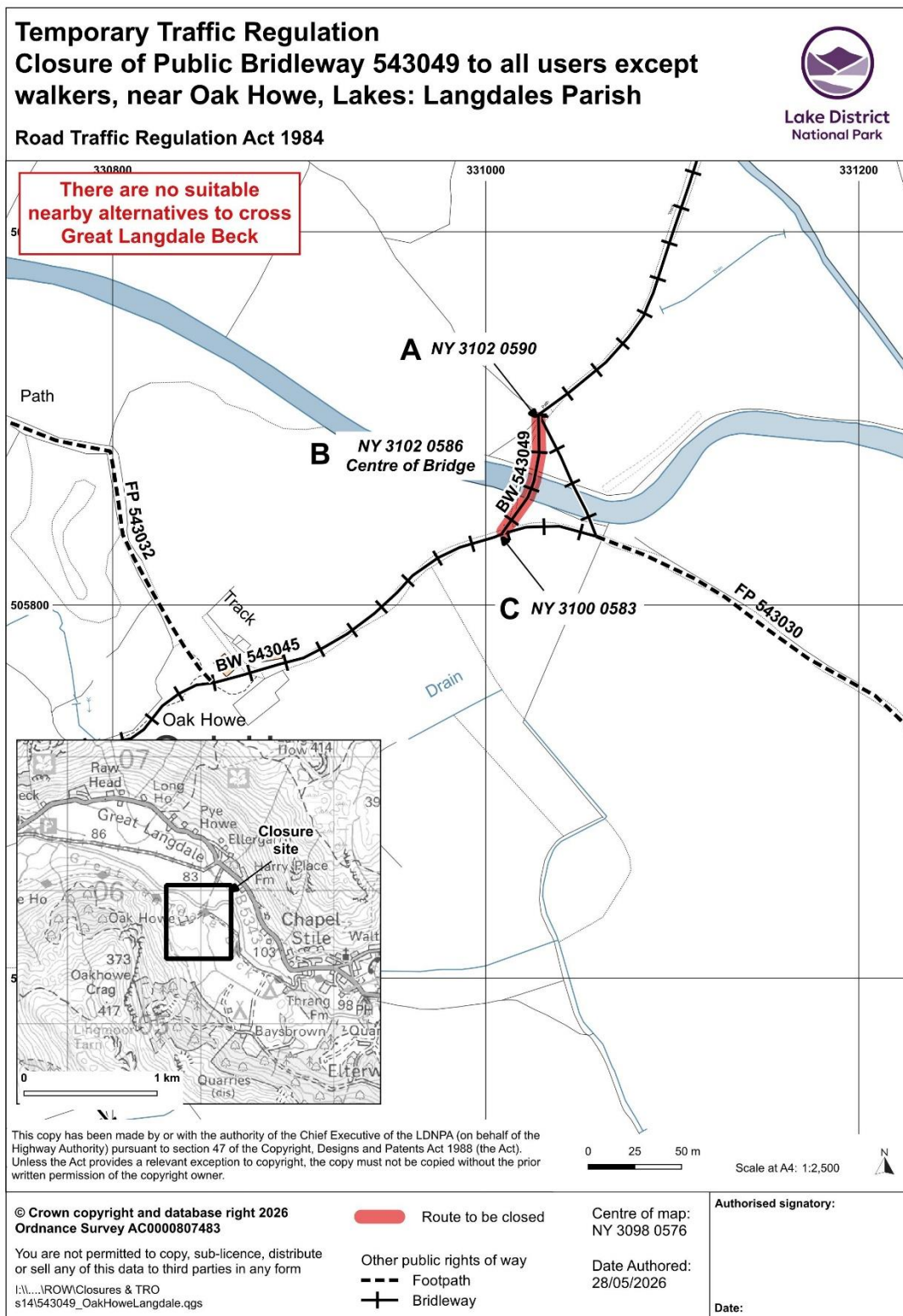
Summary

1. This report recommends the temporary prohibition of all traffic except walkers on bridleway 543049 over the bridge at Oak Howe, due to the likelihood of danger resulting from the deterioration of one of the bridge beams.

Recommendations that:

- a) **We issue a Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice for bridleway 543049, as shown between points A and C on the plan, and, if it appears there is still a likelihood of danger to the public on the expiry date of the initial 21-day closure period, we issue a further Notice, or make an Order, continuing the closure**

Map 1: Location Plan



Background

2. Our Ranger has inspected the bridge over Great Langdale Beck near Oak Howe (at NY 3102 0586), and identified that one of the bridge beams is sagging (see photos below), indicating that it is reaching the end of its safe lifespan. The sagging of the beam has also pulled the handrail out of shape – which may affect the strength of this element of the bridge too. Our Ranger’s initial assessment is that the bridge should be closed to all users except walkers – due to the potential compromised loading the bridge can now safely support.



Photo 1 – the beam has visibly deformed



Photo 2 – the handrail uprights are attached to the beam, which has pulled the handrail out of shape

3. Our Ranger will contact the Council's bridge engineer to request they inspect the bridge as soon as possible and offer their advice on whether the bridge can remain open to all or some classes of bridleway users. In the meantime a precautionary closure for users with horses, bicycles and mobility equipment appears expedient to safeguard the public.

4. If the bridge engineer assesses that the bridge remains safe for all bridleway users for the time being we will end the closure. In that scenario our team would continue to monitor the bridge's condition regularly (monthly) to check it remains safe. However, it is possible that the engineer will advise that there is a likelihood of danger if the bridge continues to be used by certain user groups (most notably horse riders due to the weight of their horses and relatively low distribution of weight). If this is the case it will be necessary to continue the closure through either a second notice or an order. In any case we will aim to replace this bridge as part of our bridge works programme as soon as possible.

5. Unfortunately there are no nearby usable alternative public bridleway crossings of Great Langdale Beck. Adjacent bridleway 543045 also crosses the river nearby but is not suitably fordable to act as an alternative.

Policy context

Links to Vision and Management Plan

6. A key outcome of the Vision for the Lake District National Park 2006 – 2030 is a landscape which provides an irreplaceable source of inspiration, whose benefits to people and wildlife are valued and improved. Our Partnership's Plan is the Management Plan for the Lake District National Park which contains our policies for achieving the aims and desired outcomes for the Vision.

Links to Business Plan

7. There is no specific action or policy relating to temporary closures within the Business Plan, but they are a fundamental part of managing the rights of way network and ensuring efficient service delivery.

Options

8. The options are to:
 - a) Issue a Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice, and, if there still appears to be a likelihood of danger at the end of the 21-day period of the Notice, either issue a second Notice or make an Order, depending on which appears most appropriate
 - b) Do not issue a Notice

Proposals

9. I recommend option 8 a) for the reasons set out in the Background and Risk sections. A closure of the bridleway to these users will reduce the likelihood of the bridge collapsing. Our initial assessment is that use by walkers appears less likely to lead to the bridge beam failing, but use by users combined with heavy animals or equipment presents an increased risk of failure. Further

assessment is needed by a bridge engineer to fully understand the likelihood of this occurring but given the sagging of the beam, an initial closure to these users appears necessary as a precaution.

Stakeholder consultation

10. There is no requirement to consult when issuing temporary closure notices. We will give notice to interested parties (Parish Council, Highway Authority, user groups and so on) to make them aware of closure, and notices will be erected to make the public aware of the closure.

Demonstrating best value

11. **Challenged** – the challenge is for us to effectively manage the network and inform the public of relevant issues.
12. **Compared** – we have compared our processing of temporary closures to other similar organisations. We have no specific targets relating to them, but aim to process all requests in a timely fashion, without significant financial or staff implications.
13. **Consulted** – there is no requirement to consult when issuing temporary closure notices, and given the potential likelihood of danger we must prioritise the closure as soon as possible.
14. **Compete** – processing Temporary Traffic Regulation Notices is not a competitive procedure. Westmorland and Furness Council can also process temporary closure notices and orders, but we are the best-placed organisation to make this closure as we have initially identified the issue. We expect to work with the Council's bridge engineer to further assess the likelihood of danger.

Finance considerations

15. The cost of issuing a temporary closure Notice is approximately £340 (which covers staff-time, stationery and postage) and the cost of subsequently making an Order would be approximately £1,060, plus the cost of a newspaper advert. Given the circumstances that this bridge is LDNPA maintained and an aid to passage along the bridleway, I consider that it is appropriate that we meet these costs.

Risk

16. The major risk associated with this is if we do not close the bridleway. If the bridge were to collapse there would be a high likelihood of severe injury to any users on the bridge given its height above the beck. We hope that the Council's engineer will be able to more fully assess the loading which the bridge can now safely support. Our Ranger's initial assessment is that the bridge may not be safe for horses, or the combined weight of users with mobility equipment or bicycles – and that these types of use could increase the likelihood of the beam failing.

Legal considerations

17. The relevant grounds for restricting or prohibiting traffic on this bridleway are within Section 14(1) or (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984; namely because of the likelihood of danger to the public. A Notice issued for this reason can last for 21 days, and can then either be continued by a second Notice for a further 21 days, or an Order made for a closure of up to six months.
18. The Head of Strategy and Ranger Service has delegated powers to authorise the issue of Notices and making of Orders for the temporary closure of paths under the provisions of Section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. These have been sub-delegated to the Ranger Team Leaders.

Human resources

19. The (legal) work involved in this proposal is approximately 4 hours from members of the Ranger team, and 0.5 hours from the GIS Officer. The work involved is part of our day-to-day duties, and most of it has already been undertaken.

Diversity implications

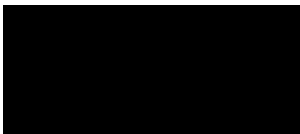
20. I have not identified any issues relating to diversity which would result from this proposed temporary closure, or a decision not to.

Sustainability

21. I have not identified any significant environmental, economic or social effects that will affect sustainability relating to this proposal.

Authorisation

Authorised by:



Date: 28 May 2026

Background papers:	Case file 1410.003 (299)
Author / Post:	Will Hinchliffe, Rights of Way Officer
Responsible Director:	Steve Ratcliffe, Director of Sustainable Development
Date written:	28 May 2026