

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change

D.H. Lawrence Walking Route

1. Purpose of Report

To approve the proposed extension to the D. H. Lawrence walking route to incorporate key green spaces and wider mining heritage in the north of the Borough. This is in accordance with the Council's corporate priority to protect the environment for future generations.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that the proposed D.H. Lawrence walking route be approved, with an additional budget of £5,000 being provided for this purpose to be funded from available General Fund Revenue Contingency in 2026/27.

3. Detail

The Council is proposing the development of an enhanced D.H. Lawrence walking route to strengthen connectivity between key heritage assets and green infrastructure across the Borough.

The proposal builds on the existing D.H. Lawrence Walk, which currently provides a circular route centred on Eastwood and incorporates several important literary and historic locations, including the Birthplace Museum, Beauvale School and Colliers Wood (**Appendix 1**). While this established route provides a strong foundation, it does not fully capture the breadth of heritage assets associated with D.H. Lawrence or the Borough's wider mining heritage.

The primary objective of the enhanced route (**Appendix 2**) is to create a more comprehensive and integrated walking experience. It seeks to establish a clear link to Brinsley Headstocks, where the reconstruction of the wooden headstocks structure is currently being undertaken. Subject to contractor availability, the reinstatement of this structure is anticipated by the end of the year.

The delivery of the route alongside the completion of the headstocks will provide an opportunity to support and promote the site, positioning it as a key destination within a broader heritage trail. The proposal also strengthens connections between sites of mining and literary significance, enhancing the overall visitor offer and reinforcing local identity within the Borough.

In addition, the proposal will improve connectivity between green infrastructure assets. By extending and linking existing routes, the walk will support improved access to open spaces and encourage increased levels of walking and recreation.

The scheme aligns with the Council's strategic priorities, including the Blue-Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Climate Change and Green Futures Strategy. It supports objectives relating to active travel, health and wellbeing, and the promotion of sustainable leisure opportunities.

Delivery is proposed within the current financial year, with the aim of launching the route in advance of the D.H. Lawrence Festival running from 1 August 2026 – 15 September 2026. This will enable the walk to contribute to the Council's wider cultural and promotional programme.

4. Key Decision

This report is not a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

Not applicable.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer were as follows:

Although it is anticipated that the scheme can be delivered from within existing budgets, an allocation of £5,000 has been requested from the General Fund Revenue Contingency budget, of which £16,750 currently remains available in 2026/27. This additional contingency will mitigate against the risk of additional costs, including waymarking, signage, and any minor improvement works required to ensure the route is safe, accessible, and fit for purpose.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

9. Union Comments

Not applicable.

10. Climate Change Implications

There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report, although the proposal does support the objectives set out within the Borough's Climate Change and Green Futures Strategy, particularly in relation to active travel, green infrastructure connectivity and health and wellbeing.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

13. Background Papers

Nil.