

Peak District Local Access Forum

Date: Thursday 18th June 2009

Item: 7

Title: DCC Rights of Way Improvement Plan
Monitoring Report for delivering the second Annual Work Programme in 2008/09

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Purpose of Report

To present Forum members with the second annual monitoring report for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) in 2008/09.

Background

This monitoring report follows on from the one produced for 2007/08 (Year 1) which was presented to the LAF meeting in June 2008.

Monitoring Report

The second monitoring report, a full copy of which is attached, describes progress against all the proposed actions identified for countywide delivery through the RoWIP in 2008/09. Progress is also indicated visually through a "traffic light" system of colour coding.

The report sets out in detail the work that Derbyshire County Council and its partners have undertaken in relation to each of the specific actions. This includes ongoing work to improve the access network and make existing rights of way more accessible and how the RoWIP has spent the additional monies allocated through the Local Transport Plan and from other sources of funding.

Report Highlights

These are some of the highlights in relation to each of the RoWIP aims:

Aim 1: Ensure that the existing and future public rights of way network is open and available for use

- 72.5% of public rights of way surveyed under the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 178 passed the ease of use test
- This year saw the first successful prosecution for a cropping offence in Erewash

- 540 new roadside signposts were installed across the network
- Over £1.5 million in capital funding has been secured for access projects this year. The Countryside Service secured almost £589,000 of external funding towards access projects, with 50% of this being provided by emda for the Great Northern Greenway, and just over £940,000 was allocated to access work from the County Council's Local Transport Plan and general capital programmes

Aim 2: Provide an up to date and widely available Definitive Map and Statement

- Work continued to provide a more up to date and accessible Definitive Map with 2,829km of public rights of way now accurately digitised
- 237 routes (109km) have been surveyed to provide the latest details for Definitive Statements
- Digital maps are available on the website for 5 districts and boroughs within the county - High Peak and parts of Amber Valley being the latest to be added in 2008/09

Aim 3: Provide a more connected, safe and accessible network suitable for all users

- 6 schemes were delivered to provide improvements to benefit disabled people or to improve the level of easy access to paths, all at the request of local people: on the Sett Valley Trail, at locations within Shipley Country Park and on individual paths around the county
- 6 further schemes were completed to improve the quality of off road links between villages or to improve access to local schools, shops or public transport interchanges
- Improvements to signage and path furniture were carried out along the section of the Limestone Way through the Peak District National Park from Castleton to Bonsall to make it easier to use
- 14.7km of new Greenways have been completed during the year, bringing the total length of Greenways in the county to 289km. A further 9.5 km of existing Greenways were upgraded to meet modern day standards
- The West Derbyshire and High Peak Greenway Strategy was completed and approved by County Council members
- 3 new short multi-user links were created to provide local links onto the 5 Pits and High Peak Trails
- Several improvements have been delivered to benefit horse riders this year. Surface improvements have been carried out on 5 bridleways, including 2 major bridleways in Shipley Country Park and a horse box parking scheme has been successfully

trialled to provide increased access to County Council car parks in the North East of the county. Progress has also been made in negotiating the route of the Pennine Bridleway through Glossop.

Aim 4: Improve the promotion, understanding and use of the Network

- Over 625 miles of DCC promoted routes have been inspected and minor works carried out to ensure that they are in good condition
- A new promoted route was launched at Hayfield to commemorate the Kinder Trespass, which should contribute to tourism in the area
- Work has been progressing to promote the rights of way and trails network for healthy walking schemes and for use by health professionals. Contact has been made with Social Services Department to look at a countywide approach to Walking for Health

Aim 5: Encourage greater community involvement in managing local rights of way

- Path surveys have been carried out in 32 parishes around the county as part of the programme to build up an accurate picture of the condition of the network
- The Countryside Service, either directly or through its partners, has been working actively with 15 parish or town councils to improve local path networks. A further 60 local councils have been utilising funding allocated under the Minor Maintenance Scheme for vegetation clearance, surface repairs and way marking of paths
- Volunteers worked for 1,346 days on projects to help improve access to local rights of way

Recommendation

That members of the Forum note the second monitoring report for delivering the annual work programme for Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan in 2008/09.