

Peak District Local Access Forum

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Item: 10

Title: Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Author: Gill Millward/ Claire O'Reilly, Countryside Access Improvement Officer, Derbyshire County Council

Purpose of Report

To present Forum members with an outline of the annual work programme for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) during 2013/14.

Background

The annual work programmes identify how the Authority intends to progress delivery of the RoWIP in each year. The new five year Statement of Action for the RoWIP for 2013 -17 has now been produced following a three month public consultation and is being presented to Cabinet and Council for approval.

The Outline RoWIP Work Programme for 2013/14

This report highlights the key areas of work which will form the focus for delivery in 2013/14 under each of the five RoWIP aims. In addition projects have been identified and budgets set within the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) programme and within the Environmental Services Department Service Plan for 2013/14 to help with this delivery.

Aim 1: Ensure that the Public Rights of Way network is open and available for use

- Continue to carry out path condition surveys to report on the ease of use of the network. Target of 72.5% in 2013/14
- Work to the Rights of Way Charter and publish a copy on the website
- Signposting: let a contract to install at least 200 roadside signposts with details of destinations and distances where appropriate
- The revenue budget for routine public rights of way maintenance work has been cut by 18% in 2013/14 (£50,000) in line with reductions across the whole highways revenue maintenance budgets
- Path furniture: £20,000 is available to improve the quality of path furniture on the network, including the installation of more gates to replace stiles
- Surfacing: deliver a programme of £241,000 of capital surfacing improvement work through the LTP programme on six paths

including: Stoney Middleton Bridleway 13, Eckington Bridleway 147, Holmesfield Bridleway 54, New Mills Restricted Byway 45, Rowland Restricted Byway 6 and a section of the Trans Pennine Trail between Wheeldon Mill Lock and Bilby Lane on the Chesterfield Canal

- Surfacing: deliver a programme of repairs for those routes identified in the Green Lane Action Plan for 2013/14

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

- Legal status: finalise priority framework for dealing with legal orders
- Information: publish a register of applications to extinguish, divert and create public rights of way
- Definitive Map and Statement: keep the digital mapping up to date as further legal changes take place and finalise the on-line statements for each path

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

- Bridleway routes: continue to build the new section of Pennine Bridleway National Trail between Monks Road and High Lane (delayed from 2012/13) and draw up a scheme for the section between High Lane and Green Lane
- Connected routes: three schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme (cost of £73,000) to improve walking routes to provide links to local services. Cromford Footpath 30 (links two parts of the village), Glossop Footpath 129 (link to services) and South Normanton Footpath 9 (link between Westhouses and Alfreton railway station)
- Other work associated with improving access is for LAF sub groups to help with improving access provision on open access land around the Buxton area and on land in Derbyshire to the south and east of the Peak District National Park
- Greenways: targeted 10km of new Greenways to be delivered including Great Northern Greenway (Broomfield section), Castlefields Greenway (delayed from 2012/13), Hipper Valley Phase 3 (delayed from 2012/13), Batley Lane Bridge, Swadlincote to Rosliston Phase 1 through Tunnel Woods (delivered with help from Natural England and Paths for Communities Grant), Archaeological Way (Langwith Branch Line and Shirebrook sections – linked to European Regional Development Fund bid)
- Other Greenway/Cycle projects include developing a cycle route through to Chesterfield Station from Lordsmill Street, continuing to work on the White Peak Loop (awaiting decision on major grant application) and the purchase of Creswell to Clowne and Little Eaton Branch Lines. We will also be reviewing the Greenway Strategies,

revising the maps for the East Derbyshire Greenway Strategy and doing some work to identify ongoing maintenance and management liabilities for the Greenway network

- Easy access: improvements costing £50,000 to be carried out to the Cromford Canal towpath between Gregory Tunnel and High Peak Junction (linked to Heritage Lottery Fund bid for DerwentWISE project)
- Safer network: two schemes identified at a cost of £31,000 to improve footpaths as part of the Safe Routes to Schools programme: Chesterfield Footpath 118 and Ockbrook Footpath 11
- Investment: £778,000 allocated to Rights of Way and Access Projects within the 2013/14 LTP programme. External grant offers have already been received this year from Natural England for delivery and maintenance of the Pennine Bridleway and from Sustrans for the Chesterfield Station Link and delivery of the Broomfield section of the Great Northern Greenway. There are also substantial grant bids awaiting decisions for the Archaeological Way through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme and for the Cycling in the Peak District National Park bid to the Department for Transport

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

- We are providing support to other organisations for the delivery of two new longer distance routes - the National Forest Way and Ecclesbourne Valley Way. We do not have the resources to lead on these projects but we will provide support and advice. We will also be working with other partners such as National Trust, the Sheffield Moors and Eastern Moors Partnerships to promote wider access
- We are represented on the Active Derbyshire Partnership and input into the Active Derbyshire Plan to promote the access network for healthy/active living. A briefing note about recent public health reforms and links with the RoWIP/ Local Access Forums is attached at the end of this report
- Availability and quality of information: we are improving our web pages to provide interactive mapping to promote our countryside sites and trails. We are also generally upgrading the information that we provide to the public both on our web pages and on information boards at festivals and shows (including the Food and Drink Fair at Elvaston Castle, Ashover Show, Chatsworth Country Fair and the Woodland Festival at Elvaston Castle)
- We will be updating and reprinting our suite of Cycle/Horse Ride/Access Derbyshire Leaflets

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

- We will be producing a new Countryside Service Volunteer Policy during 2013/14 and providing more support to existing volunteers - both individuals and groups. This will include the formation of new groups and the provision of some training events
- We will be working with local groups and councils to carry out access improvements through our programme of Service Level Agreements with The Conservation Trust, Groundwork and the Peak District National Park Authority, as well as honouring existing Minor Maintenance Agreements with Parish/ Town Councils

Recommendation

That Forum Members note the key areas of work which will form the basis for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan in 2013/14.

Briefing note on recent developments in relation to the Public Health Agenda in England

Claire O'Reilly/ Gill Millward

Background – Health and Social Care Act 2012

Recent major reforms to the Health Service under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 have resulted in upper tier local authorities (which includes Derbyshire County Council) taking on new roles in relation to Public Health from April 2013.

Public Health responsibilities previously undertaken by Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts have been divided between a new body - Public Health England, upper tier local authorities and the NHS (through new Clinical Commissioning Groups). Public Health England has been created within the Department of Health to strengthen health protection, advice and emergency preparedness. It will be responsible for allocating funding to upper tier local authorities.

New Directors of Public Health

The County Council has been required to have a Director of Public Health to be "the strategic leader for public health in local communities to achieve the best possible public health outcomes across the whole local population". Appointments to these new posts have been made jointly between Public Health England and the local authorities. Professional accountability for Directors of Public Health will be to the Chief Medical Officer and both the Council and Secretary of State for Health will have the power to dismiss Directors.

Health and Wellbeing Boards and Strategies

Health and Wellbeing Boards made up of representatives from a range of organisations including local councils, the NHS and patient groups have been established to take on a statutory role from April 2013. These boards existed in shadow form for one or two years in the lead up to this date in order to establish a smooth changeover of responsibilities. The purpose of these boards is to lead and advise on work to improve the health and wellbeing of local people through the development of improved and integrated health and social care services. One of the key tasks of these boards has been to develop and implement Health and Wellbeing Strategies to ensure a more strategic and holistic approach to the commissioning provision and integration of local NHS, social care and public health services. The Strategies include themes and priorities to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities, to achieve this by taking actions across the whole life course focusing on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and through commitments to working collaboratively and in partnership.

The situation in Derbyshire

The Health and Wellbeing Board in Derbyshire is led by Derbyshire County Council and was one of the first boards to be established in shadow form in 2011. The County Council has appointed a **Director of Public Health** – Elaine Michel.

The Derbyshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-2015 was approved by the Derbyshire Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2012 and can be found on the Derbyshire Partnership Forum website: http://www.derbyshirepartnership.gov.uk/thematic_partnerships/health_wellbeing/strategy

The Strategy sets out the priorities that partners across Derbyshire will focus on to achieve the aims to “reduce health inequalities, strengthen investment in prevention and deliver high quality care”. There are five priorities:

- **Improve health and wellbeing in early years** – through early intervention and identification of vulnerable children and families
- **Promote healthy lifestyles** – focusing on preventing and reducing alcohol misuse, obesity and physical inactivity
- **Improve emotional and mental health** – by improving access to primary care psychological therapies and other local services that support recovery from mental health problems
- **Promote the independence of people living with long term conditions and their carers** – through community based support, self-care and care close to home including telehealth and telecare
- **Improve health and wellbeing of older people** – focusing on strengthening integrated working between health and social care providers and housing related support services

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Derbyshire is an overarching strategy and will be underpinned by other more detailed strategies and action plans.

Links with the RoWIP/Current work in Derbyshire

- The new Statement of Action for the Derbyshire RoWIP 2013-17 has several references to the public health agenda, particularly throughout Aims 3 and 4. The key link between the RoWIP and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Derbyshire is through the Healthy Lifestyles priority and the section on tackling physical inactivity. There are also links to the mental health priority as it is well documented that there are considerable mental health benefits to be gained from access to greenspace and the countryside.

- Officers are also represented on the 'Active Derbyshire Partnership', a strategic partnership working to increase the levels of physical activity of people in Derbyshire through active recreation and active living. Partners include Derbyshire County Council, all tier 2 authorities, Derbyshire Sport, Derbyshire NHS, the Peak District National Park Authority and voluntary sector partners. All partners have signed up to work towards delivering the actions in the Active Derbyshire Plan which is currently being revised. The new Active Derbyshire Plan will focus on the actions required to deliver the relevant priorities in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the refreshed Plan for Sport 2012-2015. We are working to align this Plan with Derbyshire's RoWIP.
- Officers within the Countryside Service have produced an internal paper which identifies possible linkages between the work of the Service and the contribution that could be made towards the health agenda within the County Council. A summary of this paper is attached for information (Appendix 1).

The Challenges for the LAF

This topic provides much that is relevant to the work of the LAF in advising on and promoting opportunities to do with outdoor recreation, rights of way and access to the countryside. The LAF needs to discuss this topic and decide what it would like to do next in terms of working with and approaching other organisations and bodies.

The challenge is to raise the profile of access to the countryside in general and the RoWIPs in particular within the health agenda and to try and tap into extra resources.

Summary of ideas to support how the Countryside Service can make a positive contribution to the County Council's Public Health responsibilities in Derbyshire – March 2013:

Background / Context:

The Countryside Service can play an important role in this agenda particularly in encouraging physical activity and wellbeing. The “Natural Health Service” that we manage through our Countryside sites, facilities and access network offers enormous potential to deliver public health benefits and improve outcomes at a local level.

The Countryside Service:

- promotes use of natural greenspace, parks and access network
- is free, convenient, accessible to all, with widespread benefits and health outcomes– helping to remove some of the barriers
- promotes inter-generational and family activity
- acts as an advertisement to promote healthier lifestyles
- provides excellent forms of Ecotherapy
- has a proven track record of delivering the schemes described.

The relevant areas of work could encompass:

- Information provision, events and promotion
- Enabling community and volunteer involvement in practical outdoor activities and initiatives
- Developing and improving the provision of outdoor resources to provide healthier green landscapes and improve the infrastructure/facilities

1. Improved Information/Interpretative provision

To raise people's awareness of the opportunities for healthy outdoor activity in Derbyshire's Countryside. Items that this could cover include:

Providing and packaging information about the use of the countryside/ access network for:

- anyone wanting to be more active both local people and visitors
- use by people for everyday journeys to increase activity levels
- targeted groups (with specific needs or in specific geographical areas to reduce areas of inequality)
- people in the health referral scheme
- use in all the doctors surgeries/health centres in the county
- use by Walking for Health groups (or cycling, jogging groups)
- providing links to established web sites such as walk4life

Providing events and activities to encourage more healthy and active lifestyles:

- continuing with the events programme but ensuring that more health links are identified and involving targeted groups/marketing

2. Providing opportunities for local communities and individuals to get involved in healthy outdoor activities

To encourage more structured involvement and increase the volunteer numbers involved in healthy outdoor activities and in greening their local environment. Items that this could cover include:

- Managing the existing Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with The Conservation Volunteers and Groundwork – to increase the capacity to involve more volunteers and to provide work parties for specific targeted health groups
- Increasing the number of volunteers that we work with through the new Volunteer Project Officer post
- Develop more contacts and expand existing schemes aimed at providing health benefits such as the mental health 'Rethink Green Health' Projects at Shipley, Green Gym etc
- Increase the provision of Forest Schools to encourage young people, their families/carers to experience a more active/healthy lifestyle, with capacity to improve social, emotional and mental health
- Support the current Walking for Health programme in the County using the experience gained from setting up and running the successful Walk this Way project in Chesterfield

3. Improving the Provision of Green Infrastructure

Developing and improving the provision of our outdoor resources to provide healthier green landscapes and improve the infrastructure and facilities to encourage healthier lifestyles and increase levels of physical activity. Items that this could cover include:

- Developing the natural play provision – to increase levels of physical activity in young people and its associated health and wellbeing benefits
- Providing outdoor exercise/fitness trails and trim tracks
- Identifying wider improvements to the PRow and Strategic Greenway network that increases use of the network by targeted groups or that improve physical access to services etc
- Expanding the hire provision of tramper mobility scooters across the county including new sites