

Peak District Local Access Forum

Date: Thursday 11th September 2014

Item: 8

Title: Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan - Update

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Purpose of Report

To present Forum members with an update on progress towards delivery of Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) in 2014/15.

Progress to September 2014

Below is a summary of the main work in progress in relation to each of the five RoWIP aims:-

Aim 1: Existing network

- Work is continuing with the path condition surveys to assess the ease of use of the network. May's sample survey resulted in a 69.6% pass rate, which falls just short of the 72.5% end of year target. Overall performance is dependent on the second half of the survey which will be carried out in November.
- The Rights of Way and Greenway schemes which have been allocated funding through the Local Transport Plan and other external sources in 2014/15 are being programmed for delivery on the ground. A £200k project to repair the retaining wall at Sheep Pasture Incline on the High Peak Trail near Cromford has been completed and we are seeking additional funding to carry out some resurfacing of the trail in this location. Work has also commenced on site for several schemes, including the new footpaths across the Intakes at Little Hayfield.
- We are continuing to deliver the improvements identified in the Green Lane Action Plans. Long Causeway on Stanage Edge and a Byway Open to All Traffic (Chapel en le Frith No 182) near Whitehough have benefitted from the drainage and surfacing works which have recently been carried out.
- Annual vegetation clearance over the summer months was undertaken on approximately 480 paths, totalling 120km.

Aim 2: Definitive Map and Statement

- In terms of dealing with the backlog of legal orders, since the beginning of June 2014, 18 cases have been reported to committee, 13 progressed to order making stage and 6 orders have been confirmed and brought into effect, including Bradley Lane, near Pilsley which is now a public bridleway and Blakemere Lane, near Bonsall which is now a Byway Open to All Traffic.

Aim 3: An improved network

- Pedal Peak II Cycling Project, White Peak Loop - in conjunction with URS Consultants, the County Council is currently carrying out a community consultation on the 7 mile extension of the Monsal Trail from Coombs Lane, Bakewell into Matlock. During the last week of August, a travelling exhibition toured five different venues in the vicinity of the proposed route. There is still an opportunity to comment on the proposals until 15 September. Further details and a short online questionnaire can be found on our website at: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/cycling/pedal_peak/default.asp
- Two new concessionary bridleways have recently been opened, connecting National Trust's Longshaw Estate to the wider landscape and helping to expand the network of routes across the Eastern Moors for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- Easy access – meetings have been held with the High Peak Walk for Health Officer and walk leaders to explore ways to promote and improve the accessibility of routes, especially those aimed at the “very easy” level where people are looking for some gentle exercise along a short, stile free route.
- Open access land – at the beginning of October, the LAF's Access Sub Group will be visiting an area of open access land on the outskirts of Buxton to investigate potential access improvements.

Aim 4: Provision of information

- The Cycle, Horse Ride and Access Derbyshire leaflets and display banners were put to good use at the L'Eroica Britannia and Tour de France cycling events which took place over the summer months. These will continue to be made available at a variety of shows and other events to highlight the opportunities Derbyshire has to offer.
- A new leaflet has been produced for the Sett Valley Trail which runs between Hayfield and New Mills.
- Through the County Council's cycling web pages, it is now possible to sign up to receive regular Pedal Peak II electronic newsletters.

Aim 5: Greater community involvement

- Our Countryside Officer for community engagement has been working closely with Groundwork up in the High Peak. The continuing Service Level Agreement has enabled the group of volunteers to complete a range of rights of way maintenance tasks in the area, including vegetation clearance and the installation of gates and signposts. The group is also focusing its efforts on the Pennine Bridleway National Trail in conjunction with our Maintenance Officer.

Recommendation

That Forum members note this interim progress report for delivering Derbyshire's RoWIP in 2014/15.