

# Peak District Local Access Forum

**Date:** 17 March 2007

**Item:** 9

**Title:** Response to the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Derbyshire

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## **Purpose of the Report**

1. To report a summary of the LAF sub-group meeting held on 5 February to discuss the Draft ROWIP for Derbyshire.
2. To submit comments to DCC on the ROWIP, based on the sub-group report.

## **Background**

The Peak District LAF has been requested by DCC to comment on its draft ROWIP. A sub-group meeting of the LAF was held to discuss the ROWIP, and propose a list of formal comments.

The following members attended this meeting: Andrew McCloy, Henry Folkard, Terry Howard, Lorna Wilson and James Kellie. Mike Rhodes and Gill Millward also attended. Edwina Edwards was unable to be present but submitted her suggestions in writing which have been incorporated into this report.

The following report summarises the meeting. The recommendation proposes a list of formal comments.

## **Report**

### ***Overall Impressions***

The group congratulated DCC for the Draft Plan and acknowledged the amount of work involved.

A discussion was held as to the role of a ROWIP, whether it should be a pro-active plan for improvements in the network, or more of a pragmatic maintenance plan, prioritising work required on the existing network. There was a general feeling that whilst it identified well the current situation, the Plan was too re-active and was lacking 'vision'. More work was required to provide more aspirational aspects of improvement, to establish a benchmark to judge it by.

Whereas the Plan may be seen as a lobbying document for increased funding to improve the network and close gaps in it, this has to be balanced against the need for the Council to be held to account for the current condition of the network.

### ***Setting the Scene***

The table on p14 analysing the network was discussed and was generally found to be useful. In particular it was noted the need for more bridleways in Derbyshire. It was felt however that the table would be improved by a further breakdown into Districts and National Park proportions of PROWs. The percentages may confuse the picture a little.

### ***Themes and Aims***

Theme A – should read ‘Encourage *and create new* routes....’ It is more important to develop new routes than to discover lost ways that may not be relevant today.

- The bridleway network must be improved, but not at the expense of footpaths.

Theme C – Promoting the sustainable use of the network, and improving health, are not compatible with motor vehicle use. Cycle route development is important. The theme of encouraging healthier travel choices should be taken wider to include lifestyle and education, not just travel.

Greater improvements in cross-border working are required with neighbouring Highway Authorities. Could the Accord with the NPA be re-visited? The potential for the NPA to add value to the network needs to be reflected.

Aim 1 – Should read ‘Ensure that the existing *and future* PROW network....’

Aim 3 – Should promote identified routes and new links to provide a modern network.

- Better control of illegal use is required – policing not management.
- Safe crossing places are important both in urban and rural situations.
- More emphasis could be given to those people who are disadvantaged by not having access to public transport or vehicles. The voluntary, public and private sector could work better together.

Aim 4 - In order to promote a sense of ‘ownership’ from local communities, it was suggested that an annex of specific requests for improvements may be added.

Aim 5 – Should not be exclusively for recreation, but also to the benefit of education, social inclusion, creativity and well-being.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. A ‘vision statement’ should be included.**
- 2. The Key Themes and Aims should be more pro-active, and prioritised.**
- 3. An annex of specific network improvements should be listed at the end of the report, with an annual report listing improvements.**
- 4. The broader benefits of the network for a healthier society should be reflected.**
- 5. A more detailed breakdown of the network should be provided, by Districts and National Park.**