

## Peak District Local Access Forum

**Date:** Saturday 17 March 2007

**Item:** For information

**Title:** Derbyshire County Council - BVPI 178 Results for 2006/07  
(The percentage of the total length of rights of way in the local authority area that are easy to use by the general public).

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Actual value for 2006/07: 71.8%  
Target: 70.0%

### Comments:

The actual value was derived from the results of surveys carried out in May and November 2006. The survey was based on a 5.01% random sample of the total length of the public rights of way network using the national methodology. This includes a simple Excel spreadsheet programme onto which the survey data can be entered and which automatically calculates the pass rate. There are no further surveys to be carried out for 2006/07.

The survey carried out in May 2006 produced a pass rate of 65.6%, which fell short of the target for the year and appeared to be attributed to several longer paths failing on some aspect of the assessment. November's survey was much more encouraging and produced a 77.9% pass rate. This results in a cumulative performance from both surveys for the year of 71.8%, achieving the year end target of 70%.

Many aspects of rights of way which affect their ease of use for members of the public continued to show improvement from previous years. In particular the results for roadside signposts, ploughing and cropping and other obstructions all produced good pass rates for the year, varying between 81.0% and 90.3%.

Although there was a slight reduction on last year's overall performance for path furniture and surface condition, the surveys showed that a greater proportion of paths had been reinstated after ploughing and cropping. Performance in this area has improved by 25.7% on last year to produce a pass rate of 90.3%. In 2004/05 the pass rate was only 41.7%.

High priority is being given to ensure that the existing public rights of way network is open and available for use. This is one of the five aims set out within the Statement of Action for the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) which is currently out for public consultation. Through the preparation of this document, considerable progress has been made to incorporate rights of way within the Local Transport Plan process (as part of the integration of the RoWIP into LTP2). Opportunities now exist to include improvements of rights of way and other access projects into the bidding process to acquire extra funding. Maintenance and improvement expenditure will be targeted at those parts of the rights of way network that the surveys identify as being most in need of repair or which are identified as being “difficult to use”.

We will be working towards surveying a greater proportion of the network, 100% eventually, to identify and address the problems which exist. Over the past five years, resources have been directed towards providing roadside signposts. Since the year 2000 nearly 5,000 signposts have been installed or replaced.

We have also been reviewing the amount of staff time allocated to rights of way and access work within the Countryside Service. Several initiatives have been progressed over the past three years to investigate how the area ranger and warden teams can work with staff within the public rights of way section to deliver an improved service. This will include working with other partners, such as Groundwork, the Peak District National Park Authority, Parish/Town Councils, landowners and volunteers.

The Rights of Way team has re-launched its ploughing and cropping policy, which has been strengthened in terms of taking enforcement action and combined with the publication of advisory leaflets and targeted campaigns amongst the landowning community.

A new leaflet has been produced to make it easier for members of the public to report path problems. The leaflet has been distributed widely around the county and it is also possible to report problems via the County Council’s web site or through Call Derbyshire.