

Peak District Local Access Forum

Date: Thursday 21 September 2017

Item: 8

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

Author: Gill Millward, Countryside Access Improvement Officer,
Derbyshire County Council

Purpose of Report

To present Forum members with an update on progress towards delivery of Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Progress to September 2017

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

Aim 1: Existing Public Rights of Way network

- **Path condition surveys** to assess the ease of use of the network are still continuing. The survey in May 2017 returned a 64.0% pass rate, with overall performance dependent on a second survey due to be carried out in November. The target for this year remains at 72.5% and we will continue to analyse why paths are failing the assessment
- **Roadside signposting:** instructions are being issued for signposts to be installed at various locations across the county, with work expected to get underway this Autumn
- **Surface improvements:** we are working with our Engineers to finalise drawings for the proposed drainage and surface improvements on Bamford Clough, Chapel Gate and Hurstclough Lane

Aim 2: Definitive Map and Statement

- In terms of dealing with the **backlog of legal orders**, since the beginning of June 2017
 - 5 cases have been reported to Committee and 3 orders have been made/advertised
 - 6 orders have been confirmed and brought into effect, including Minninglow and Gallowlow Lanes near Pikehall which have become Byways Open to All Traffic and a bridleway between Burton Road and Well Lane in Repton. Decisions are expected for a further two cases, including Derby Lane at Monyash
 - Public Inquiries have been arranged for three opposed orders, including Back Lane at Darley Dale and a bridleway at The

Ridings, Ockbrook, with a fourth case being determined by written representations

Aim 3: An improved network

- **Pennine Bridleway National Trail:** Meetings have been taking place with Natural England, the Pennine National Trails Partnership and local users to discuss the options for funding/delivering the remaining sections of the route around the west side of Glossop. Condition surveys carried out over the summer by the Rangers and Maintenance staff will be used to inform funding bids for the on-going maintenance of the Trail in 2018/19. Work is underway to repair the two remaining priority sections of the Sett Valley Trail (Hayfield - Birch Vale - Wildes Crossing), which includes part of the Pennine Bridleway
- **Greenway Development:**
 - Ilkeston Gateway Cycle Network - the Canal and River Trust has completed 2.3km of new route for Phase 2 of the Erewash Canal Towpath upgrade (1km - Bridge Street to Awsworth Road and 1.3km Potters Lock to Nottingham Road)
 - The scheme for the Broomfield section of the Great Northern Greenway is now complete
 - The construction of a new shared pedestrian/ cycle link is currently underway alongside Furnace Hillock Way between the B6038 and B6039 near Hasland. This will help improve connectivity between the Five Pits Trail and the new Avenue major development site at Wingerworth
 - A path connection has recently been built from the Five Pits Trail to Corbriggs car park in Grassmoor Country Park
- **White Peak Loop (WPL)**
 - **WPL East Matlock to Rowsley:** We held a high level meeting with the Rail Regulator (ORR) during the summer regarding the situation over the rail crossing at the Matlock end of the route and now have its support for the solution that we have been proposing all along. This involves diverting the existing public footpath (Matlock No. 26) with the steep uneven steps onto the line of the private vehicle crossing and will provide the opportunity to significantly improve the design at the new location to meet modern safety and accessibility standards. Approval is being sought from September's Regulatory – Licensing and Appeals Committee to progress the footpath diversion order and we are currently trying to arrange a meeting with Peak Rail to discuss how we can move things forward
 - **WPL East Rowsley to Bakewell:** Negotiations are currently ongoing with the Haddon Estate. We have submitted an application to Natural England for a licence to carry out works to the northern tunnel entrance to allow access into the tunnel for a more detailed survey to inform the final design proposals

- **WPL West Harpur Hill:** A revised route for the last section at the Parks Inn into the centre of Harpur Hill has received planning permission. Arrangements are being finalised with the two landowners concerned with a view to starting work on this section at the beginning of October 2017
- **Greenway Maintenance:** Surfacing and drainage works on the Borrowash to Elvaston cycle route (helping to improve access into Elvaston Castle Country Park) and Findern Bridleway 11 are now complete. Work is due to start on sections of the High Peak Trail in November and is on-going with regard to drainage issues on the Shallcross Incline in Whaley Bridge
- **Safer network:**
 - An all-weather surface has been provided on part of North Wingfield Footpath 4 to encourage use of this direct off-road route to the local primary school
 - Higher bridge parapets have been installed on Scarcliffe Footpath 7 to improve the safety of this route which can be used to access the local primary school from the Langwith Branch Line section of the Archaeological Way
- **Investment:** work has started on our bid for funding from the Local Transport Plan for rights of way and access related projects in 2018/19

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

- The **Derbyshire Woodland Festival** is taking place at Elvaston Castle Country Park over the weekend of the **23 and 24 September**. As well as being a celebration of traditional and contemporary woodland crafts, the event will be used to promote the work of the Countryside Service/ Local Access Forums and highlight the access and outdoor recreation opportunities which Derbyshire has to offer
- **Derbyshire Cycling Plan:** Approval has been sought from September's Cabinet meeting for a 12 week public consultation, to be arranged through Derbyshire Sport, on a draft **Key Cycle Network** (KCN) for the county. It is proposed that this will run from the autumn of 2017 into early 2018. Interested parties would be invited to comment on the draft network and, where appropriate, to make the case for any additions, amendments or deletions. The Cabinet report can be viewed here and details of the consultation will be forwarded when they are available www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/meetings_decisions/meetings/cabinet/14092017_cabinet.asp
- **Other Cycling News**
 - In addition to our existing mountain bike adventure trail for beginners at Williamthorpe in NE Derbyshire, a more challenging 1.75km 'blue grade' mountain bike route has been provided alongside the Stockley Trail in a joint venture with Bolsover District Council. The £97,000 which it cost to build was secured through Section 106 monies associated with a housing

development at nearby Bramley Vale/ Doe Lea. The facility will be managed by Bolsover District Council working with local cycling clubs and volunteers. Once the signage and snagging are complete, the route will be officially opened to the public

- Electric assist bikes or E bikes are now available to hire at Middleton Top Visitor Centre which means that the High Peak Trail can now be enjoyed by people who would otherwise find it too challenging especially on the steeper sections, such as the Hopton Incline which has a 1 in 14 gradient. A cycle repair and maintenance service is also available to visitors who are using their own bikes to explore the trails

Aim 5: Greater community involvement

- **Volunteer contribution:** In the first quarter of 2017/18, volunteers working with the Countryside Service have contributed 816 days, estimated to be worth around £170,000
- We are continuing to work with the **Peak District National Park Authority** and **Groundwork Creswell** to deliver a range of work on the network of paths and trails across the county through the existing Accord/Service Level Agreements. In the High Peak, Groundwork volunteers have been carrying out vegetation clearance and helping with repairs/ drainage investigations on the Shallcross Incline at Whaley Bridge, which has given them a great new set of skills. They have also been working on the Melandra Link of the Pennine Bridleway at Glossop and have started work on a new wildflower meadow at Hayfield
- We are also meeting with several access groups to explore ways in which they can help carry out improvements to the wider Rights of Way network

Recommendation

That Forum Members note this progress report for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan in 2017/18.