

Peak District Local Access Forum

Date: Thursday 19th March 2015

Item: 7

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 (RoWIP) in 2014/15.

Progress September 2014 to March 2015

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

Aim 1: Existing network

- Path condition surveys to assess the **ease of use** of the network continued in 2014. November's sample survey returned a 76.2% pass rate, which combined with the results from May (69.6%) produced an overall pass rate of 73% for the year, exceeding the 72.5% target
- The contract to install 307 **roadside signposts** across the county, with details of destinations and distances where appropriate, is nearing completion and Countryside Service area teams are dealing with a further 110 requests
- **Funding bids** have been submitted for prioritised Rights of Way, Green Lanes and multi-user Greenway schemes from within the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Programme for 2015/16. This will be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 24 March, before being presented to Full Council in April

Aim 2: Definitive Map and Statement

- In terms of dealing with the **backlog of legal orders**, since the beginning of September 2014, 15 cases have been reported to committee, 6 progressed to order making stage and 16 orders have been brought into effect, including Red Lane near Creswell Crags confirmed as a public bridleway and Black Harry Lane in Stoney Middleton confirmed as public bridleway following a public inquiry

Aim 3: An improved network

- Work is continuing to deliver various aspects of the **rights of way improvements and Greenway schemes** for which funding has

already been secured. These include Phase 3 of the Hipper Valley Greenway in Chesterfield, the Clowne and Little Eaton Branch Lines, sections of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail and Trans Pennine Trail around Glossop, the Five Pits Trail and Cromford Canal towpath

- **Pedal Peak II Cycling Project**

- **Hope Valley Link** - Sustrans has been commissioned to carry out a scoping report and public consultation exercise on Phase 2 between Bamford and Hope, as well as looking at other local improvements and connections
- **White Peak Loop West** - Following the Health and Safety Laboratory decision to withdraw, the County Council is still pursuing the remainder of the route from Dale Head Road over Staker Hill to Harpur Hill. Final details are being negotiated with High Peak Borough Council and individual landowners, with a view to starting work on site this summer
- **White Peak Loop East** - the results of the public consultation for the extension of the Monsal Trail between Bakewell and Matlock are now available on the County Council's website at: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/pedalpeak. Three planning applications have been submitted to DCC for the majority of the section between Matlock and Rowsley. Negotiations are continuing for the remainder of the route, including with Haddon Estate and the bridges at Rowsley. Additional funding has been secured from the Department for Transport (DfT) for an extra cycle link alongside the A6 in Matlock between Sainsbury's roundabout and the Arc Leisure Centre. Work is due to be finished by April 2015.
- The additional £430k DfT funding has also allowed the scope of the **National Park Cycle Fund** to be extended to include two projects aimed specifically at enhancing the visitor experience for cyclists – Cycle Friendly Hostels (with improved facilities focused at Edale, Eyam, Ravenstor and Youlgrave) and the Bike Bus (providing transport connecting Matlock, Bakewell and Buxton with the Trails network). Counters being installed on Pedal Peak routes provide data to help quantify the economic benefits of cycling and support future funding bids
- On 23 December 2014, Cabinet gave its approval in principle for a **Cycling Strategy for Derbyshire** to be developed with partner organisations, including the Peak District National Park Authority. www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/meetings_decisions/meetings/cabinet/23122014_cabinet.asp This work is being coordinated by Derbyshire Sport and a draft Vision Statement should be available for comment by partners at the end of March
- A draft strategy is also emerging for the development of **strategic walking and cycling routes** in Chesterfield and its surrounding area in the Districts of Bolsover and North East Derbyshire to support

sustainable economic growth and enhance connectivity. It is being developed through collaboration between local authorities and stakeholders and the emerging document will form the basis for wider consultation. Funding for its implementation is being sought from different sources including D2N2 Growth Deal

Aim 4: Provision of information

- A Countryside **volunteering banner** has been produced for use at events and exhibitions. An accompanying promotional flyer/ leaflet with relevant contact information should be available later in 2015/16
- We are in the process of redesigning the volunteer elements of our **website** which will hopefully become a portal for all aspects of volunteering in the longer term for both groups and individuals alike, with lots of useful information and guidance documents available to download
- A new leaflet has been produced by National Trust on behalf of the Sheffield Moors Partnership. It features five **bridleway routes** across the moors, varying in length between 4 and 33kms, along a mixture of existing public rights of way and recently created concessionary links

Aim 5: Greater community involvement

- Derbyshire Countryside Service staff and key volunteers have been consulted on the draft **guidance being produced for volunteers**. Some good feedback has been received and will be incorporated into the final versions of the documents going for Cabinet Member approval in the summer
- Several voluntary groups which have continued to be supported by our Countryside Officer for community engagement are gaining momentum and becoming increasingly self sustaining
- A presentation has also been given to the Derbyshire Older People's Advisory Group (50+) in response to its idea of exploring the setting up of an intergenerational group of volunteers to assist with countryside and rights of way tasks. This was one of the most popular ideas to emerge from a recent DOPAG workshop to look at how working in partnership with the County Council could help reduce the effects of the proposed budget cuts on local communities. As well as recognising the health benefits of volunteering, it was also seen as a good opportunity to share skills and life experiences with the younger generations.

Recommendation

That Forum members note the contents of the progress report for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan in 2014/15.