

Peak District Local Access Forum

Date: Thursday 13th March 2014

Item: 9

Title: Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan
Outline Annual Work Programme 2014/15

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Purpose of Report

To present Forum members with an outline of the annual work programme for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) during 2014/15.

Background

The annual work programmes identify how the Authority intends to progress delivery of the RoWIP in each year.

Funding bids have been submitted to help with this delivery from within the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) programme. The Economy, Transport and Environment Department Service Plan and associated capital and revenue spend for 2014/15 is being submitted to Cabinet for approval on 25 March 2014. The papers will be available on the County Council's website prior to the Cabinet meeting:
http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/meetings_decisions/meetings/cabinet/default.asp

The Outline RoWIP Work Programme for 2014/15

Further detailed information will be presented to the Local Access Forum in June. In the meantime this report highlights some of the key areas of work which will form the focus for delivery in 2014/15 under each of the five RoWIP aims.

Aim 1: Ensure that the Public Rights of Way network is open and available for use

- Continue to carry out path condition surveys to report on the ease of use of the network. Target of 72.5% in 2014/15
- Signposting: let a contract for installing roadside signposts with details of destinations and distances where appropriate
- Path furniture: continue to improve the quality of path furniture on the network, including the installation of more gates to replace stiles

- Surfacing: deliver a programme of capital surfacing improvement work through the LTP programme
- Surfacing: deliver a programme of repairs for those routes identified in the Green Lane Action Plan for 2014/15

Aim 2: Provide an up to date and widely available Definitive Map and Statement

- Information: publish a register of applications to extinguish, divert and create public rights of way (carried over from 2013/14)
- Definitive Map and Statement: keep the digital mapping up to date as further legal changes take place and finalise the on-line statements for each path

Aim 3: Provide a more connected, safe and accessible network suitable for all users

- Bridleway routes: complete construction of new sections of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail between Monks Road and High Lane and between High Lane and Green Lane
- Other work associated with improving access is for LAF sub groups to continue to help with improving access provision on open access land around the Buxton area and on land in Derbyshire to the south and east of the Peak District National Park
- Greenways: new Greenways to be delivered include Hipper Valley Phase 3 between Somersall Lane in Chesterfield and Holymoorside, the replacement of Batley Lane Bridge which will open up the Pleasley Trail network for multi-user use, Archaeological Way - Langwith Branch Line which is linked to the European Regional Development Fund, the Ladmanlow to Earl Sterndale road section of the White Peak Loop - subject to final agreement with the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL)
- Other Greenway/Cycle projects connected with the Pedal Peak II Cycling project, include consulting on Phase 2 of the Hope Valley Link between Bamford and Hope Station, as well as working up options to extend the Monsal Trail through to Matlock
- We will also be reviewing the Greenway Strategies, revising the maps for the East Derbyshire Greenway Strategy and doing some work to identify ongoing maintenance and management liabilities for the Greenway network
- Investment: External funding has been secured from the Department for Transport for the Pedal Peak II Cycling Project and is being sought from Natural England for the continued development of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail. Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (D2N2) Local Transport Body - Expressions of interest have been tabled by the County Council for future links to the Pedal Peak II Project and cycling in general.

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

- We are continuing to provide support and advice to other organisations for the delivery of two new longer distance routes - the National Forest Way and Ecclesbourne Valley Way. We will also be working with other partners such as National Trust, the Sheffield Moors and Eastern Moors Partnerships to promote wider access
- We are represented on the Active Derbyshire Partnership and input into the Active Derbyshire Plan to promote the access network for healthy/active living.
- Availability and quality of information: we are improving our web pages to provide interactive mapping to promote our countryside sites and trails. We are also generally upgrading the information that we provide to the public both on our web pages and on information boards at festivals and shows (including the Derbyshire Food and Drink Fair at Elvaston Castle, Ashover Show and the Woodland Festival at Elvaston Castle)

Aim 5: Encourage greater community involvement in managing local rights of way

- The new Countryside Service Volunteer Policy is being submitted to Cabinet for approval on 25 March 2014. Following its adoption we will be continuing to provide more support to existing volunteers - both individuals and groups. This will include the formation of new groups and the provision of some training events
- We will be working with local groups and councils to carry out access improvements through our programme of Service Level Agreements with The Conservation Trust and the Peak District National Park Authority, as well as honouring existing Minor Maintenance Agreements with Parish/ Town Councils

Recommendation

That Forum Members note the key areas of work which will form the basis for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan in 2014/15.