

**Derbyshire County Council - Equality Analysis  
on the new Statement of Action 2012-2017  
for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Derbyshire  
September 2012**

## **Introduction**

We are currently refreshing the Statement of Action for Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) to cover the period from 2012-2017. This Equality Analysis will help to inform the preparation and priorities of the new Statement of Action.

## **Background to the RoWIP and Statement of Action**

The RoWIP, produced in 2007, is a strategic document which sets out how we intend to improve the management, provision and promotion of the rights of way and access network in the County. Within this, the Statement of Action identifies the steps we propose to take for managing the network and securing an improvements based on assessments of existing provision and the needs of different types of users.

The RoWIP was based on extensive consultations to help assess the extent to which local rights of way meet the needs of the public and identified a series of key themes and aims which form the basis for the production of both the first Statement of Action (2007-2012) and this revised Statement of Action.

The three key themes are:

- Theme A – Seek to preserve Derbyshire's heritage, landscape and wildlife
- Theme B – Promote the sustainable use of the present and future network, encouraging healthier and more sustainable travel choices
- Theme C – Encourage and create routes that support the local economy and boost tourism

The Statement of Action is organised around five aims as follows:

- Aim 1 - Ensure that the public rights of way network is open and available for use
- Aim 2 - Provide an up-to-date and widely available Definitive Map and Statement
- Aim 3 - Provide a more connected, safe and accessible network suitable for all users
- Aim 4 - Improve the promotion, understanding and use of the network
- Aim 5 - Encourage greater community involvement in managing local rights of way

<sup>1</sup> Natural England - Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) Survey 2011/12

<sup>2</sup> Natural England - Diversity Review 2005

<sup>3</sup> Marmot Review - Fair Society, Healthy Lives 2010

The RoWIP with its Statement of Action has an important role to play in providing the physical resources and messages to encourage active healthy lifestyles and physical wellbeing for all ages. It has significant benefits for all of the Protected Characteristic Groups.

The draft Statement of Action for the RoWIP (2012-2017) has been developed in consultation with the Peak District and Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forums, each with a statutory role to provide advice on the improvement of public access for the purpose of open air recreation and enjoyment of the area. The document is the subject of a 12 week public consultation exercise from 6 August 2012 to 29 October 2012.

## **Equality Impact Analysis**

### **The Assessment Team:**

The core assessment team involved the following staff:

- Wayne Bexton (Greenways & Countryside Officer) – Divisional representative for equalities and diversity with expertise in equality assessments. Chair of Assessment Team
- Gill Millward (Countryside Access Improvement Officer – job share) – expertise in public rights of way, improving access to the countryside and diversity issues and joint lead for the production of the RoWIP
- Claire O'Reilly (Countryside Access Improvement Officer – job share) – expertise in public rights of way, improving access to the countryside and diversity issues and joint lead for the production of the RoWIP
- Alan Marsden (Project Engineer – Transport Projects) – expertise in transport planning and equality, health and mental wellbeing assessments

### **The Scope of the Analysis**

This report considered the proposed actions that are in the new Statement of Action and assessed:

- What impact the actions will have on any of the Protected Characteristic Groups (throughout the process consideration was also given to groups classed as 'social deprivation'), how well they meet the needs, requirements and expectations of the different groups?
- If there are any potential barriers whether there is scope to mitigate their effects?
- Are resources available to facilitate the proposed changes?
- A list of potential actions has been drafted to address the issues. These actions that are specific to the Equality Impact Analysis, together with the original public consultation for the Statement of Action itself will form the

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basis for the consultation. Consultation will include forums and groups representing the Protected Characteristic Groups.

- Because the document is a Strategic Plan, the assessment will be relatively broad in nature and scope
- The Equality Impact Analysis will be progressed in tandem with the public consultation exercise so that it can fully inform the final Statement of Action which is due to be produced later in the year.

### **Additional data and consultation feedback**

The following sources of data have been referred to as they are relevant to this assessment:

<b>Source</b>	<b>Reasons for using</b>
RoWIP for Derbyshire 2007-2012	Background document for the revised Statement of Action.
Consultation and Assessment of Needs Report for the RoWIP (Appendix B of the RoWIP)	This was a full analysis of the consultations that were carried out prior to the production of the RoWIP.
DCC Equality Impact Assessment for the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) 2011	The RoWIP is identified as a linked Plan within the LTP and forms a distinctive strand within it.
DCC Countryside Service - Equality Impact Assessment for Cycle Hire, Cycle Routes and Health Promotion 2009	These assessments have contributed to the actions identified in the Statement of Action

### **What impact will the actions will have on any of the Protected Characteristic Groups and what scope is there to mitigate their effects?**

#### **Religion/Belief:**

Traditionally groups from ethnic minority communities are under-represented in the countryside and levels of participation in countryside access are significantly lower than other groups<sup>1</sup>. Potential barriers faced by these groups include a lack of awareness of opportunities, language, cultural differences and a lack of confidence.<sup>2</sup>

Actions under Aims 3 and 4 within the proposed Statement of Action will try and address some of these potential barriers by providing clearer information about what is available in terms of the access network and other facilities. Actions under Aim 4 will also promote the health and wellbeing benefits of using the access network which will benefit this group.

In providing improved levels of information we need to be aware of the need to ensure that the information is available in different languages if required and that any imagery used dispels the perception that the countryside is mainly for

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white/middle class groups. Since the majority of people within this Protected Characteristic Group live in larger urban areas and visit more urban areas<sup>1</sup>, we need to make sure that any information that is produced is available in these areas and provides information about opportunities to use paths and trails within the urban/urban fringe area. Within Derbyshire this particularly applies to Derby City but the county is ringed by larger conurbations such as Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire and Nottingham so these locations need to be borne in mind.

In terms of the consultation exercise we need to promote the consultation within Derby City as well as within the County and make sure that the facility to provide the document in alternative languages is made clear.

### **Gender:**

Women do have a fear of being alone when visiting the countryside and using paths and trails and there is a perception that the countryside can be unsafe<sup>2</sup>. There are also issues for men walking alone in the countryside.

When implementing new schemes such as the Greenway development under Aim 3 we take this into consideration at the design stage and make sure that we design new routes to be as wide and open as possible to minimise safety concerns. Actions under Aim 4 will also promote the health and wellbeing benefits of using the access network which will benefit this group.

### **Age:**

There are fewer people aged over 65 and in the 16-24 age range visiting the countryside, with the majority of the 16-24 year olds staying closer to urban areas<sup>1</sup>. Younger people tend to suffer from a lack of understanding about where they can go and what they can do, have less organised or appropriate activities for them to take part in and also have less access to a car and are therefore have a lower level of access to the wider rights of way network<sup>2</sup>. Older people tend to suffer from physical access problems (including difficult stiles or steep, uneven paths), anxiety about safety, distances from help and like to have more facilities available<sup>2</sup>.

There are many actions identified in the Statement of Action to help address these issues. Aim 1 includes a section on improving access furniture to promote a least restrictive option of gaps and gates with stiles as a last resort. Aim 3 has a whole section on making provision for easy access opportunities. Aim 4 has several actions about improving information about what is available, the nature of the paths and also making more use of modern technology such as bluetooth hubs on sites, use of audio trails that can be downloaded and making much more use of the web pages and internet (including twitter and facebook) to attract younger users. Actions under Aim 4 will also promote the health and wellbeing benefits of using the access network which will benefit

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this group as well as encouraging greater involvement through volunteering opportunities.

In terms of the consultation, it needs to be promoted via facebook and twitter to try and attract younger people to engage with the consultation and also provide some targeted consultation such as to the Over 50's Forums and within the Gold Card magazine.

### **Race:**

Traditionally groups from black and ethnic minority communities are under-represented in the countryside and levels of participation in countryside access are significantly lower than other groups<sup>1</sup>. Potential barriers faced by these groups include a lack of awareness of opportunities, language, cultural differences and a lack of confidence.<sup>2</sup>

Actions under Aims 4 and 5 within the proposed Statement of Action will try and address some of these potential barriers by providing clearer information about what is available in terms of the access network and other facilities as well as encouraging greater involvement through volunteering opportunities. Actions under Aim 4 will also promote the health and wellbeing benefits of using the access network which will benefit this group.

In providing improved levels of information we need to be aware of the need to ensure that the information is available in different languages if required and that any imagery used dispels the perception that the countryside is mainly for white/middle class groups. Since the majority of people within this Protected Characteristic Group live in larger urban areas and visit more urban areas<sup>1</sup>, we need to make sure that any information that is produced is available in these areas and provides information about opportunities to use paths and trails within the urban/urban fringe area. Within Derbyshire this particularly applies to Derby City but the county is ringed by larger conurbations such as Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire and Nottingham so these locations need to be borne in mind.

In terms of the consultation exercise we need to promote the consultation within Derby City as well as within the County and make sure that the facility to provide the document in alternative languages is made clear.

### **Disability:**

There are many potential barriers to disabled groups using paths and trails around the County whether it be people with physical disabilities, visual or hearing disabilities or learning difficulties. The barriers consist of physical access problems, including stiles, gates, bridges, steep, rough or uneven paths, distances to be covered, lack of shelter, resting points or support facilities such as changing facilities, obstructions, access to information, confidence and communication issues<sup>2</sup>.

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The RoWIP is charged specifically within the government guidance to:

- Consider the needs of all users, both now and in the future
- The accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted people and those with limited mobility or other impairments

There are therefore many actions with the Statement of Action that try and address some of the barriers identified: Aim 1 includes a section on improving access furniture to promote a least restrictive option of gaps and gates with stiles as a last resort and provides for a programme of work to improve the surface condition of paths and trails. Aim 3 has a whole section on making provision for easy access opportunities and has a programme for developing the County's network of Greenways. Aim 4 has several actions about improving information about what is available, targeting that information to specific groups and also providing suitable events (with back up facilities such as changing places toilets and tramper disability scooters) to encourage more use and confidence within this Protected Characteristic Group. The topography of the county is such that there are many areas where access is difficult but it is recognised that we need to do more to identify projects that can make key paths and trails more accessible. Actions under Aim 4 will also promote the health and mental wellbeing benefits of using the access network which will benefit this group.

### **Sexual Orientation:**

No information is collected or is available in order to assess the impact of the RoWIP on this Protected Characteristic Group but it is not considered that there will be any adverse impacts on this group as a result of the actions identified in the Statement of Action for the RoWIP. Any improvements to access to the Countryside or information provision would benefit any of the Protected Characteristic Groups. Actions under Aim 4 will also promote the health and wellbeing benefits of using the access network which will benefit this group.

### **Social Deprivation:**

The Natural England MENE research has identified that people living in areas of greatest deprivation are least likely to have visited the natural environment and if they have they will stay within built up areas close to where they live<sup>1</sup>. The barriers to these people are largely connected to lack of money and transport and a perception that the countryside is dominated by white, middle class groups<sup>2</sup>. The Marmot Review<sup>3</sup> has found that there is a social gradient of health with a clear link between deprivation and poorer levels of health. Marmot also found that to reduce the social gradient of health that you should not focus solely on the most disadvantaged but that the actions should be universal which ties in well with the actions being proposed within the RoWIP Statement of Action.

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There are several actions within the Statement of Action, particularly under Aim 4 that seek to promote the use of the countryside as a resource that is free and on people's doorstep and the use of which promotes health and wellbeing. There are also actions within Aim 4 that promote the need to improve links between the use of paths and trails and public transport. Actions under Aim 4 will also promote the health and wellbeing benefits of using the access network which will benefit this group.

### **Marriage and Civil Partnership**

No information is collected or is available in order to assess the impact of the RoWIP on this Protected Characteristic Group but it is not considered that there will be any adverse impacts on this group as a result of the actions identified in the Statement of Action for the RoWIP. Any improvements to access to the Countryside or information provision would benefit any of the Protected Characteristic Groups. Actions under Aim 4 will also promote the health and wellbeing benefits of using the access network which will benefit this group.

### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

Women do have a fear of being alone when visiting the countryside and using paths and trails and there is a perception that the countryside can be unsafe<sup>2</sup>. There are also considerations around the need for easy access for heavily pregnant women or for parents with pushchairs also requiring other facilities such as toilets/baby changing.

Actions with Aims 3 and 4 will help to provide more easily accessible paths and trails and better information for this Protected Characteristic Group. Actions under Aim 4 will also promote the health and wellbeing benefits of using the access network which will benefit this group.

### **Social Relationships/Community Cohesion**

There is robust evidence that good quality social relationships across the life course protect health and are associated with a wide range of other beneficial outcomes. Rights of way enhance the provision of public space where social interaction can take place and help to strengthen community cohesion which is why it was felt that this additional element warranted consideration.

Social relationships can be affected however where conflicts occur, particularly between visitors and residents. Residents could be affected through issues such as increased/ insensitive visitor parking in rural villages or through littering/ damage/ poor behaviour of others. Visitors could be affected through similar issues such as arguments over legal parking or legal use of rights of way etc.

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There are several actions within the Statement of Action, particularly under Aims 1, 3 and 4 that seek to promote the use of the countryside that can encourage social interaction.

Actions under Aims 1, 3 and 4 will encourage more people to access public space and social interaction helping to change communities for the better and increased social cohesion. Aim 5 includes actions that will help foster community relationships in delivering other actions. To reduce conflicts, Aim 4 includes actions to promote responsible use of the countryside and Aim 3 includes actions to reduce illegal activities. To reduce conflicts over parking, Aims 3 and 4 include actions to encourage more use of public transport, including linking circular walks etc into public transport.

### **Are resources available to facilitate this change?**

We are producing the new Statement of Action during what is a very challenging time for local authorities as we are faced with significantly reduced budgets over the next five years. The delivery will be through costed Annual Work Programmes and be reported through Annual Monitoring Reports. However, it is anticipated that many of the actions that will benefit the Protected Characteristic Groups particularly around the need to improve the quality of information about the access network will still be able to be delivered.

The resources to effectively promote the consultation for the draft Statement of Action will be found from existing budgets.

### **Draft Potential Actions**

Potential actions are covered in following table

Actions	Lead Officer	Timescale
1. Target Protected Characteristic Groups to be consulted on the draft Statement of Action 2012-2017 for the RoWIP. Make sure information about the consultation is available with Derby City area and that it is made clear that it is available in different languages if required	Claire O'Reilly/ Gill Millward	August –October 2012
2. Target Protected Characteristic Groups to be consulted on specific actions as appropriate during the delivery of the RoWIP	Claire O'Reilly/ Gill Millward	2012-2017 as required
3. Large scale projects within the RoWIP Statement of Action should have their own Equality Impact Analysis if appropriate	Claire O'Reilly/ Gill Millward	2012-2017 as required

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4. Carry out a periodic review of how we are engaging with the Protected Characteristic Groups and include a section on Equalities within the RoWIP Annual Monitoring Reports to ensure that this work remains high profile	Claire O'Reilly/ Gill Millward	Annually throughout 2012-2017
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### Consultation

Consultation on this draft Equality Analysis will be undertaken during September and October 2012. Within the consultation the assessment will be raised as an agenda item at various forums identified as potential consultees and letters sent out to targeted groups.

The wider consultation is available on our website and also posters are being displayed in libraries within the County and Derby City. A press release will also accompany the consultation.

Where requested a summary document will be prepared for forums and groups to get the main issues across along with the potential actions within this Equality Impact Analysis.

### Implementation

The findings from this Equality Analysis will be incorporated into the final Statement of Action 2012 – 2017 for the RoWIP and be reflected in the Annual Work Programmes for delivery of the RoWIP. Progress will be reported to the two Local Access Forums for the County.

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