

Peak District Local Access Forum

Date: Wednesday 19 February 2025

Item: 6

Title: Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) - Update

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

Purpose of Report

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

Aim 1: Existing Rights of Way Network

- **Surface condition, drainage and roadside signposts/ waymarking:**
Following the completion of surfacing works on Monyash BOAT 29 (Derby Lane) back in August, the revised list of rights of way schemes to be delivered in the Peak District LAF area for the remainder of 2024/25 includes:
 - Eyam BOAT 31 drainage and surfacing. Kerbing and drainage work now finished at the top of the path on High Cliffe.
 - Chinley FP 44 drainage and surfacing. Design issued and awaiting start date.
 - New Mills BW 54 drainage and surfacing. Design issued and awaiting start date.
 - Edale BW 19 (Jacobs Ladder/ Pennine Way) stone pitching. Pre-start survey undertaken, with work due to commence imminently (scope is very similar to previous site visit with LAF members).
 - Roadside signposts have been installed/ replaced at 87 locations, with a further 192 locations issued and awaiting a start date.
 - Using the 2,000 discs already purchased, waymarking is currently underway on routes reported to be difficult to follow.

Other schemes, including Bamford Clough, Chinley FP 1 and Birchover BOAT 23/ South Darley 46 (Clough Lane) have been deferred to future years due to a need to target funds for carriageway pothole repairs. On 14 November 2024, Cabinet approved an indicative scheme list for 2025/26 which provides funding, totalling £315,052, for emergency schemes to promote the safe use of the rights of way network and continued investment in roadside signposts.

Aim 2: Definitive Map and Statement

- In terms of dealing with the backlog of **Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) applications**, details of progress made between 1 October 2024 and 31 January 2025 is set out in the table below:

| Legal Order Stage | October 2024 | November 2024 | December 2024 | January 2025 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| New DMMO applications received (6) | 04830 = Add FP from FP49 along Eades Fold, Castleton. | 04833 = Amend alignment of FP4, Elmton with Creswell. 04834 = Add FP from FP49 to Hallmoor Road, Darley Dale. | 04842 = Add FPs from adopted highway at Nags Head to FP25 and from adopted highway to meet claimed route, Edale. | 04843 = Add RB from Parwich Lane along Green Lane to Cardlemere Lane, Hartington Nether Quarter. 04841 = Add FP from Farley Hill to Greenaway Lane, Darley Dale. |
| Informal consultation started (0) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Decision made by DCC (2) | 0 | 04630 = Vary the particulars of FP40, Osleston & Thurvaston. Application approved. 04718 = Add FP from FP44 to Riber Road, Matlock. Application approved. | 0 | 0 |
| Orders made (2) | 0 | 0 | 04269 = Upgrading FPs 26 (part), 33 (part) and 34 to BW, Doveridge. | 04837 = BOAT between Garner House and Highlow Hall, Offerton and Highlow. |
| Cases passed to PINS (1) | 04526 = Add RB from Ridge Top Lane to FP4, Hayfield. | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Decisions received from PINS (2) | 0 | 04072 = Add FP from FP108 to FP107, Belper. Order confirmed | 0 | 04265 = Upgrade FP8 to BW, Abney & Abney Grange. Appeal against DCC decision dismissed. |
| Orders confirmed (1) | 0 | 04072 = Add FP from FP108 to FP107, Belper. | 0 | 0 |
| <p>FP = Footpath BW = Bridleway RB = Restricted Byway BOAT = Byway Open to All Traffic</p> <p>NB: Those in the Peak District LAF area are shaded in grey.</p> | | | | |

- Further information about each of the applications in the table above, including decisions made by DCC and the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) can be found through the County Council's on-line register.
- **Project 2026 Derbyshire:** Volunteers are continuing to investigate historic, unrecorded routes across Derbyshire with research records now created for 408 paths and 223 DMMO applications submitted to the County Council to date. Having discussed how these might be prioritised in the light of an increasing backlog and limited staffing resources to process them, the Joint LAF Unrecorded Ways Sub-Group has produced a set of recommendations. This was approved by DADLAF members when they met on 6 December 2024 and is being reported to this Forum for consideration under Item 7 to agree the advice which will be conveyed to the County Council.

Aim 3: An improved network

- **Pennine Bridleway National Trail:**

- On the Derbyshire section of the Pennine Bridleway, general maintenance has focused predominantly on essential drainage work and winter vegetation clearance, with the continued help of Groundwork volunteers working at various locations, including Roych Clough, Hayfield and Matley Moor. The replacement of non-slip surfaces is being progressed for



several road crossings, starting with the A5012 (Via Gellia Road) near Pikehall which was completed last Autumn with funding from the Safer Roads Fund. Two others, on the A6 at Blackwell in the Peak and the A515 at Pomeroy, will be rolled out in the next few months with funding provided through the County Council's Highways Capital Programme. Again, these will be treated with a buff-coloured stone to increase visibility/ awareness of the crossing for motorists and provide an anti-slip surface for trail users.

- On the development side, work is continuing on two of the three missing sections of the National Trail around Glossop, with landowner discussions underway for a feasible alternative route into Gamesley which avoids Dinting Viaduct. The engineers assigned to the River Etherow section between New Road at Tintwistle and Woolley Bridge Road in Hadfield are making good progress with preparatory work and initial designs for this 1.7km

section which will include a multi-user bridge and road crossings at either end. Contact is being made with the various landowners along the route and traffic counts are due to take place in March.

- Grant funding bids are being prepared for submission to Natural England/ Pennine National Trails Partnership to support on-going maintenance and further development work on the Pennine Bridleway in 2025/26 with match funding provided by the County Council.

- **White Peak Loop:** 62km or 71% of the White Peak Loop (WPL) is currently complete. Design and preparatory work is continuing for the missing section of the WPL from the end of the Monsal Trail at Topley Pike through Buxton to the Parks Inn at Harpur Hill with funding from Active Travel England and the County Council's Highways Capital Programme. In the meantime, a 'bronze' standard, interim route should be signed and in place by the end of March 2025. This will avoid Buxton for the time being and use part of the Pennine Bridleway to connect the Monsal and High Peak Trails to complete a circuit route of around 54 miles (86km) around the Derbyshire Peak District. Although there are some on-road sections between Cromford and Matlock, as well as through Rowsley, the interim route will provide a predominantly traffic-free walking, wheeling and cycling trail which will accommodate horse riding wherever possible.
- Other work includes the resurfacing of a previously muddy 655m



section of the proposed WPL and connecting footpath which run across Temple Fields between Fern Road and Green Lane in Buxton. The paths which have also been made more accessible for shared use are part of a popular active travel route to and from local junior and secondary schools.

- Work is underway to improve the public rights of way and parts of Coombs Road between Rowsley and the Monsal Trail near Bakewell, following on from the resurfacing of Rowsley Bridleway 2 which was completed in Spring 2021. The aim of the latest repairs is also to provide a better surface with improved drainage and accessibility, enabling users to enjoy the route throughout the year. A temporary closure is in place for the duration of the work which is expected to be completed at the end of February/beginning of March. Any closures should be restricted to weekdays, with public access being available at the weekend.

More information about the WPL can be found here:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/white-peak-loop/white-peak-loop.aspx>

- **Investment:** On 14 November 2024, Cabinet approved an indicative scheme list for 2025/26, based on the anticipated funding allocation from the Department for Transport. This identifies £883,124 for multi-user Greenway/ Derbyshire Cycle Network development and maintenance, including work with volunteers and surface improvements on the White Peak Loop, Pennine Bridleway, Nutbrook, Blackwell and Silverhill Trails. These schemes will be delivered by officers from the Countryside Service and Sustainable Travel team. Funding totalling £910k has also been identified for school and business travel plans, wheels to work and upgrades to bus stop infrastructure:

<https://democracy.derbyshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=1540&Ver=4>

- **Active Travel Masterplans (ATMs):** All three draft ATMs for the market towns of Belper, Glossop and Ilkeston have now been completed,

having been developed through engagement with stakeholders and local communities. They have also been informed by a formal public consultation exercise which took place between 29 April and 24 June 2024. On 9 January 2025, Cabinet approved



the use of the additional £0.427m grant funding from Active Travel England to develop several of the ATM recommendations relating to the more strategic routes/ interventions which will be subject to further public engagement. For Glossop this includes technical feasibility work/ option selection for a route between the town centre, Dinting, Hadfield and Hollingworth with links to schools, as well as design preparation for the River Etherow and Dinting Vale sections of the Pennine Bridleway:

<https://democracy.derbyshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=1555&Ver=4>

- **Hope Valley Active Travel Masterplan:** DCC's consultant is continuing to develop a rural/ visitor economy-based ATM for the Hope Valley based on the results of the stakeholder engagement which took place last September. Wider public engagement is planned for May 2025, with a draft ATM expected by the Summer.

- **Preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for**

Derbyshire: The results of two online surveys have recently been



published, with the findings being used to help produce the draft strategy which is due out for consultation in February/ March 2025. Over 1,000 people completed the public survey which revealed a high level of interest in nature recovery. The top 5 scoring priorities for nature recovery in Derbyshire

over the next 5 years are:

- Healthier rivers, lakes, streams, springs and wells
- Protection of endangered species
- Improved condition of habitats
- More trees and woodland
- More hedgerows

The second online survey specifically aimed at farmers, landowners and land managers attracted 134 responses. As well as being used to inform the content of the strategy, they will also help identify ways to continue to engage effectively with this sector on nature recovery and wider environmental sustainability matters. The key findings from both surveys, along with further updates for the LNRS can be found here:

<https://derbyshirenaturerecovery.co.uk/updates/>

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

- **Walk Derbyshire:** Statistics in the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024 – 2027, which was approved by Cabinet on 17 October 2024, reveal that 30% of Derbyshire’s adult population are not physically active and that the percentage of adults walking for travel at



least three days per week is worse than the England average. Walk Derbyshire’s aim is to make every day walking the norm. It works in partnership with many organisations to help make walking as accessible as possible and overcome the barriers which deter people. Steering group meetings are held every other month, involving representatives from across the county, including DCC Sustainable Travel, Public Health, Active Derbyshire., Derbyshire Carers Association, Sustrans and elected members. The meetings are also attended by walk co-ordinators from each of the boroughs/ districts, including the Peak District National Park. There is information on the website about the network of walking groups, with a programme of led walks and an expanding selection of self-guided walks where everyone is encouraged

to add their favourite route for others to enjoy. The first newsletter of 2025 is due out on 14 February: <https://walkderbyshire.org.uk/>

Aim 5: Greater community involvement

- **Volunteer contribution:** The Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Groundwork Five Counties is continuing in 2024/25. There were just over 254 volunteer days delivered between 1 April and 31 December, estimated to be worth around £50,711, with 6 new volunteers recruited during this period. Dedicated groups of volunteers have worked on rights of way in South Derbyshire, as well as on the Pennine Bridleway National Trail, White Peak Loop (pictured below), Archaeological Way, Clowne Greenway and connecting paths, carrying out much needed tasks which include cutting back encroaching vegetation, creating wildlife habitat, litter picking and essential drainage work.



Before



After

Recommendation: That Forum Members note this progress report for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan.