

Peak District Local Access Forum

Date: Wednesday 4 February 2026

Item: 6

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

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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:**

Just over £627k of funding has been secured through the Highways Capital Programme in 2025/26 and 2026/27 for the installation of roadside signposts and emergency schemes/minor drainage and surfacing works to promote the safe use of the Rights of Way network. This will be discussed in further detail at the June LAF meeting when there will also be an update on repairs to routes which Forum members have been particularly interested in, such as Edale Bridleway 19 (Jacobs Ladder - Pennine Way), Bridleway 32 at Hope Cross, Chapel Gate and Bamford Clough.



Aim 2: Definitive Map and Statement

- **Project 2031 Derbyshire:** Volunteers from the British Horse Society, Ramblers, Peak & Northern Footpaths Society and other user groups are continuing to investigate historic, unrecorded routes across Derbyshire with research records now created for 418 paths and 236 Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) applications submitted to the County Council to date.
- In terms of dealing with the backlog of **DMMO applications**, details of progress made between 1 October 2025 and 31 January 2026 is set out in the table below.

Legal Order Stage	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026
New DMMO applications received (6)	<p>04873 = Add FP from Woolley Bridge Road, Glossop to Printers Park, Hollingworth (Tameside MBC)</p> <p>04876 = Add FP from between 38 & 40 Mayfield Road to Henmore Brook – Ashbourne</p>	<p>04875 = Add BW along Knab Lane to FP42 and upgrade parts of FPs 42 & 53 to BW - Darley Dale</p> <p>04877 = Vary particulars for Chesterfield FP83 Walton Road to Moorland View Road</p>	0	<p>04879 = Add RB from Mickleover Greenway (former railway) along part of Bannell's Lane to A516 south of Bannell Lane Farm – Bearwardcote</p> <p>04880 = Add FP from Highfield Road to New Station Road - Bolsover</p>
Informal consultation started (2)	04407 = Add BW from end of adopted highway Wyver Lane to FP 27 - Belper	0	0	04365 = Upgrade to BW, FP1, FP9 (part), FP63 and add BW to cross River Wye - Wormhill, Blackwell in the Peak & Taddington
Decision made by DCC (3)	0	<p>04785 = Add FP from Pilhough Lane to Stanton Hall Lane - Stanton in the Peak</p> <p>02853 = Upgrade New Mills BW50 to BOAT (Decision is for RB)</p>	<p>04825 = Vary particulars of FP31 Kirk Langley - Rejected</p>	0
Orders made (3)	0	<p>04312 = FP from Commonside Road to FP30 and from FP30 to Springfield Road - Barlow</p> <p>04333 = Upgrade FP98 off Woodseats Lane, Charlesworth to BW</p>	<p>02853 = Upgrade New Mills BW50 to RB (Sitch Lane to Spinnerbottom – Birch Vale)</p>	0
Cases to PINS (3)	<p>04274 = Upgrade FP102 Hartington Upper Quarter to BW (A5004 Long Hill to Bunsal Cob)</p> <p>04269 = Upgrade FPs 26,33 & 34 to BW – Doveridge</p>	0	<p>04837 = Add BOAT along NCH between Garner House and Highlow Hall – Offerton & Highlow. Statement of Reasons</p>	0
Decisions from PINS (2)	04729 = Vary particulars of FP3 – Hayfield. Order confirmed by SoS	04574 = Add RB & FP Upper School Lane – Dronfield. Order confirmed by SoS	0	0
Orders confirmed (0)	0	0	0	0
FP = Footpath BW = Bridleway RB = Restricted Byway BOAT = Byway Open to All Traffic NCH = Non-Classified Highway SoS = Secretary of State NB: Those in the Peak District LAF area are shaded in grey.				

- Further information about each of these applications, including decisions made by DCC and the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) can be found through the County Council's on-line register:
<https://apps.derbyshire.gov.uk/applications/right-of-way/>
- With regard to the recommendations put forward on behalf of both Derbyshire LAFs for the prioritisation of DMMO applications, a response has now been received from the County Council's Director of Legal and Democratic Services. The letter concludes that the Authority is unable to adopt the LAFs recommendation to prioritise applications for multi-user routes ie those for bridleway and above. After further consideration it has been decided to maintain the system currently in place for determining applications in chronological order of receipt. The current system is based on the Council's attempt to fulfil its statutory requirement to determine applications within 12 months of receipt, something it is unable to achieve at present but is working towards, and to maintain fairness to the applicants in its approach. The Council's response was discussed at a recent meeting of the Joint LAF Sub-Group for Public Rights of Way, Open Access and Unrecorded Ways held on 26 January. Given that there are now 2.5 full time members of staff working exclusively on DMMO applications, it was agreed to monitor progress over the coming months and to invite an officer from Legal and Democratic Services to provide an update at a future LAF meeting.

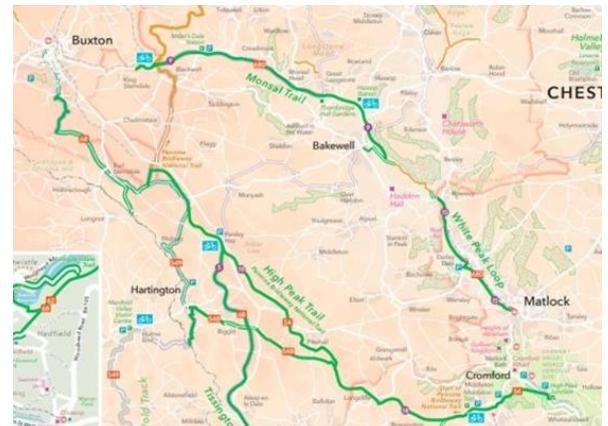
Aim 3: An improved network

- **Investment:**
 - On 16 October 2025 (Item 122/25), Cabinet approved the Regeneration Pipeline and list of prioritised projects which include sections of the Key Cycle Network (KCN) and work relating to the Active Travel Masterplans. It also approved the allocation of 2025/26 East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) funding for the Market Towns and Active Travel Programmes, totalling just over £2.8m. In addition to public realm improvements and footway resurfacing, this will also enable feasibility studies, preliminary/ detailed design and construction to be undertaken on KCN pipeline priorities, including sections of the White Peak Loop/ Derwent Valley Trail, Pennine Bridleway National Trail and the Trent Valley - Shardlow Greenway. On 13 November 2025 (Item 138/25), Cabinet also approved the Highways Capital Programme for 2026/27 which includes schemes within the Sustainable Transport Function, providing a further £406k for the continued development and maintenance of the KCN/ local connections and a Service Level Agreement with Groundwork Five Counties. Both reports can be accessed here: [Browse meetings - Cabinet - Derbyshire County Council](#)

- In early December it was confirmed that the County Council had been awarded a Level 2 **Active Travel Capability Rating** by Active Travel England, an improvement on its previous Level 1 status. This is in recognition of progress made in creating/ improving routes for walking, wheeling and cycling (which will also accommodate horse riding wherever possible) and promoting active travel as a safer, healthier and more sustainable mode of transport for everyday journeys and leisure. It follows recent successes including completing further sections of the White Peak Loop and the Chesterfield East-West cycle route, connecting Holymoorside and Chesterfield Royal Hospital through the town, with significant progress also being made on emerging projects such as the Little Eaton Greenway which is transforming a former railway line into a 5km multi-user route between Little Eaton and Rawson Green. This is due to open in Summer 2026 as part of the Derby City to Ripley Active Travel Route. The higher rating means the County Council is eligible for increased funding opportunities and technical support from Active Travel England. The total award for Derbyshire over the four-year period starting 2026/27 will be £6.5 million, approximately three times higher than if the Authority had remained at Level 1.
- **Pennine Bridleway National Trail (PBW):** A 205-mile, multi-user National Trail running from Middleton Top, near Wirksworth to Ravensdale in Cumbria.
 - Grant offers from Natural England allocated through the Pennine National Trails Partnership, combined with match funding from the County Council, are being used to support the on-going maintenance of the existing 60 miles of the PBW through Derbyshire in 2025/26. These also fund a Project Officer to oversee and undertake works on the ground. This autumn/winter has seen general maintenance being focused on vegetation clearance with the continued help of Groundwork volunteers working at various locations, primarily at Wormhill, along with essential drainage on steeper sections of the route at South Head, near Hayfield. The replacement of anti-slip surfaces is being progressed for road crossings on the A6 at Blackwell in the Peak and the A515 at Pomeroy, with funding provided through the Highways Capital Programme. Surface and drainage improvements are also being planned for Highstool Lane near Chelmorton, along with the clearance and resurfacing of a short section of the onward route alongside the A515 to the west of Street House Farm.

- On the development side, work is continuing for one of the three missing sections of the PBW around the west side of Glossop, again with funding from Natural England allocated through the Pennine National Trails Partnership. Engineers assigned to the River Etherow section between New Road at Tintwistle and Woolley Bridge Road in Hadfield are continuing to progress the preparatory work and initial designs for this 1.7km section. The route includes proposals for a multi-user bridge over the river and signalised crossings on the roads at either end. Officers continue to liaise with the various landowners and further surveys are planned for the winter period, including flood risk assessments and trial pits/boreholes at the proposed location for the bridge to help better understand the underlying ground conditions.

- **White Peak Loop (WPL):** An iconic 54-mile circular route around the White Peak area of the Derbyshire Peak District, linking the National Park with the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. Once complete it will connect the High Peak and Monsal Trails with the market towns of Buxton, Bakewell and Matlock, catering for both active travel and leisure use, helping to support the visitor economy.



- A 42-mile predominantly traffic-free route is now open and signed.
- During the remainder of 2025/26 and into next financial year, work will continue to extend and make further improvements to the whole WPL, including design and preparatory work for the missing sections in and around Buxton, which also meet local needs as part of the Buxton Walk and Ride Network.
- As far as local connectivity is concerned, there are also plans to improve the A6/A53 junction in Buxton, which is an important gateway into the town. The County Council is currently seeking people's views on what improvements they would like to see to help address issues such as congestion, air quality and accessibility for all road users and inform the next step in the design process. The Engagement Survey is open until 20

February 2026 and can be accessed here: [A6/A53 – Buxton Gateway consultation - Derbyshire County Council](#)

- For the WPL itself, we will be exploring the options at Rowsley to provide a better connection between the section of the route which emerges in the car park at Old Station Close and Church Lane; undertaking surface/ drainage improvements along Highstool Lane, near Chelmorton (a section shared with the Pennine Bridleway National Trail); further surface upgrades on Coombs Road, near Bakewell, as well as progressing the extension of the route into and through Buxton linking with the railway station.
- A contract has been awarded for the refurbishment of the boardwalk on a popular section of the route near Rowsley. This is expected to start in February and take approximately 3 to 4 weeks to complete. A temporary closure will be in place while the repairs are underway to protect the safety of the workforce and members of the public. Every effort will be made to keep the length of closure to a minimum.
- Preliminary designs and high-level costings have been completed for a section of the WPL between Green Lane, next to Buxton Community School and the A6 Hogshaw Roundabout in Fairfield. The route will now be taken forward in stages, with funding available from Active Travel England to progress the section between Buxton railway station and the A6 Hogshaw Roundabout to detailed design.
- For the section between the A6 Hogshaw Roundabout and the Monsal Trail at Topley Pike, detailed designs are being finalised ready for further discussions with stakeholders to improve the surfacing and drainage of the Byway across Fairfield Common during 2026.
- More information about the WPL, including updates on future developments for various sections of the route can be found here: [White Peak Loop - Derbyshire County Council](#)

- **Derwent Valley Trail:** Following completion of the feasibility study in 2024, we are continuing to develop recommendations for how to progress delivery of the five different sections of this 68km multi-user route between Shardlow to the SE of Derby and Hathersage, working in partnership with key stakeholders, such as the Derwent Valley Trust. We are also working to support community groups in Matlock and Matlock Bath to investigate the East Bank Track which coincides with a missing section of the WPL and other route options for walking, wheeling and cycling.

- **Active Travel Masterplans (ATMs):** Work is continuing to progress several of the recommendations in the ATMs which have been produced to improve connectivity within the market towns of Belper, Glossop and Ilkeston. Capability Funding from Active Travel England is being used to help



progress several strategic KCN routes, which include producing preliminary designs and high-level costings for a section of the Derwent Valley Trail between Belper and Duffield, as well as investigating possible routes for the Great Northern Greenway through Ilkeston. In Glossop work is continuing on the missing River Etherow section of the Pennine Bridleway/ Trans Pennine Trail and the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (the new name for Sustrans) has recently been commissioned to identify preferred alignments and undertake initial design work for active travel routes to Glossopdale School. As well as the longer-term strategic interventions, funding is also available to deliver more short-term interventions/ quick wins, such as dropped kerbs, footway resurfacing and cycle parking.

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

- **Walk Derbyshire:** Information about the programme of regular guided walks and ideas for self-led walking routes throughout Derbyshire can be found here: <https://walkderbyshire.org.uk/>
- **Cycle Derbyshire:**
There are now over 450km of traffic free trails across the county. The popular Cycle Derbyshire leaflet/ map has been updated to reflect this. An additional 20,000 copies have been printed, with distribution underway. Copies can be obtained from local libraries, visitor hotspots, accommodation providers, cycle hire and information points.



Aim 5: Greater community involvement

- **Volunteer contribution:** The Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Groundwork Five Counties is continuing in 2025/26. There were 270 volunteer days delivered between April and December 2025, estimated to be worth around £53,865. During Q3 (October to December 2025) work was undertaken across multiple sites, including the Pennine Bridleway, Clowne Greenway and Archaeological Way sections of the Bolsover Loop, Little Eaton Greenway and former canal. Volunteers



contributed to vegetation clearance, habitat creation, litter picking, as well as the annual sweep of leaves off the boardwalk on the White Peak Loop which is due to be refurbished in February/ March 2026.

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