

Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006-2016

Statement of Intent
April 2010 – March 2011
Year 5



Implementation of CAROWIP targets poses a particular challenge due to increasing pressure on available resources. It is accepted that not all actions can be taken forward, given existing commitments and resource/budget implications, but there is still a considerable challenge in adapting the work of the Countryside Access Team to achieve as much as possible from the CAROWIP.

Progress towards CAROWIP targets is monitored by the Warwickshire, Solihull and Coventry Local Access Forum (the LAF), and this Statement of Intent has been through a consultation process with the LAF as well as being included in the internal service planning process within the Countryside Access Team.

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2010 - 2011 Planned Actions

A 'Business as usual'

These are the fundamental building blocks which govern our day to day work. Actions are generally underway and CAT officers already carry out this work as part of their day to day roles.

B Specific actions (underway – to be continued)

These are specific projects being undertaken or supported by CAT officers.

C Specific actions (on hold or not yet started, requiring reallocation of resources)

These are specific projects which have been identified as a priority but which would need resourcing before they could be started. It is hoped to carry out some of these in 2010-2011

D The following actions have been postponed indefinitely

There are no plans to start these in 2010-2011.

A 'Business as usual'**Bridges**

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| N02f P05a | Undertake a programme of works to deal with the 6 large (over 8 metre span) missing bridges |
| P05b | Continue the programme of bridge repair |
| P05c | Develop an inspection programme for all known bridges on the public path network |

Practical works and maintenance

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| A01a | Continue to remove stiles and unnecessary structures from the rights of way network |
| H02a | Continue to remove stiles and unnecessary structures from the rights of way network to allow access for more people |
| P02a | Identify field edge paths which require regular clearance |
| P02b | Develop a seasonal field edge path clearance programme |
| P02c | Identify utility paths which require regular spraying or clearance programme |
| P02d | Develop a utility path clearance and spraying programme |
| P04a | Follow the policy on 'Gaps, Gates and Stiles on footpaths and bridleways' when replacing or repairing existing boundary crossings |
| P04b | Follow the policy on 'Gaps, Gates and Stiles on footpaths and bridleways' for boundary crossings when authorising new structures |
| P04e | Seek landowners' consent for installation of dog-gates alongside stiles especially surrounding centres of population (NB only if unable to install gate or gap instead) |

Ensuring compliance

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| N03b | To ensure that all classes of NMUs are catered for in the design of road crossing and road junctions |
| P01b | Continue to take legal action against persistent non compliance with legislation |
| R05b | Work with district and borough planners to ensure applications affecting existing rights of way are advertised and treated as a material planning consideration |

Promoted routes and promotion activity

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| S01a | Maintain a list of Recognised Promoted Routes ('the List') |
| S02a | Develop a procedure for adding routes to the List |
| S02d | Support and assist the development of the North Arden Trail |

Supporting and working with others

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| E02a | Free talks will be given to any group willing to work to manage, promote or improve the path network |
| E07a | Provide support and training for volunteers and other partners |
| N01a | Support applications for agri environment schemes which include constructive access elements |
| N05d | Work in partnership with Safer Routes to School Officers to develop and secure improvements to the utility path network |
| P07a | Continue with the existing P3 Scheme and encourage other parishes to join the Scheme |
| P08a | Support voluntary groups which undertake practical, promotional and research work on the path network |
| S02b | Support and assist the development of Sustrans routes |
| T01b | Support A Coventry Way Association in supporting their annual event, and offer similar support for other key events. |

| Administrative or internal | |
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| A02a | Publicise appropriate routes once improvements have been carried out |
| E03b | Maintain up to date web pages including network changes and closures |
| E07b | Share training and best practice, and ensure that some within the team have the skills to train others |
| P06a | Make reporting defects and other obstructions as easy as possible for path users |
| P11a R08a | Develop written working practices to formalise internal procedures |
| R04a | Continue and complete the digitised data checking process towards a digital record |
| R04b | Establish IT framework to allow full network survey, including inventory information, and input data into GIS |
| Legal orders and improvements to connectivity | |
| R01a | Progress the review in accordance with the Policy covering the Definitive Map Review at the current rate |
| R02a | Offer reduced fee PPOs on paths newly recorded or upgraded by DMMOs for applications made within 3 months of confirmation |
| R02b | Pursue PPOs where they can be made in lieu of DMMOs |
| R02c | Offer reduced fees to landowners who are willing to create additional paths or links as part of a "New Paths for Old" package |
| R02d | Give priority to all PPO applications which remove or improve crossings of railway lines or heavily trafficked roads or which remove the need for excessive road walking |
| R05a | Seek additional routes and improvements to existing paths commensurate with increase in population or vehicle movements on large development sites |
| R05d | Seek developer contributions associated with all large developments |
| R06a | Seek agreements which add routes constructively to the path network |
| R06b | Seek agreements in lieu of DMMO's |
| R07a | We will use schemes under the 'New Paths for Old' umbrella to improve and develop the rights of way network for the public by combining public path orders and other legal agreements |

B Specific actions (underway – to be continued)

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| E05a | Arrange publicity campaign to highlight the importance of dog worming, effects of livestock worrying and impact on wildlife etc. |
| S03b | Relaunch the existing Avon Valley Way between Stratford upon Avon and Marlcliff |

C Specific actions (on hold or not yet started, requiring reallocation of resources)**Practical works and maintenance**

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| A01d | Develop at least one wheelchair accessible circular route of at least 3 miles in the countryside, outside Country Parks |
| A01f | Work with Fieldfare Trust to receive accessibility accreditation for a number of routes within Warwickshire (3 by year 4 and 10 by year 10) |
| A01i | Identify key routes for accessibility improvements |
| P02e | Carry out a survey, and develop an overhead vegetation clearance programme, for all routes with equestrian rights |
| P04f | Survey all routes with equestrian rights and develop a programme for improving gates and gate latches |
| P09d | Develop programme of surface improvements for access to school routes |
| S01b | Ensure that routes on the List are periodically inspected |
| S01c | Continue seeking improved infrastructure on routes on the List |

Promoted routes and promotion activity

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| A02b | Countryside for All - Build on success of existing walks pack and develop pack of longer, more challenging routes and develop additional publicity material to promote them |
| E01a | To publish a countryside access magazine twice a year to inform users of the countryside, share best practice and promote rights and responsibilities |
| E03a | Develop website to educate and inform all countryside users |
| H05a | Countryside for All - Build on success of existing walks pack and develop pack of longer routes |
| S03a | Work with others to identify and improve a number of suitable waterside routes, and promote them as easy access walks |
| T02a | Develop series of gateway information boards in key tourism locations to promote local circular routes and other countryside attractions and businesses |
| T02b | Further develop use of the Warwickshire Web to provide information for visitors about the Warwickshire countryside |
| T02e | Develop a "Two Castles Walk" between Warwick and Kenilworth Castles |

Supporting and working with others

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| S02e | Support and assist the development of a strategic equestrian route through the County |
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Administrative or internal

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| E07d | Provide training for the Countryside Access Team in understanding overlapping disciplines e.g. agriculture, planning, ecology etc. |
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Legal orders and improvements to connectivity

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| N02a | Identify and use key sections of roadside verge to create safe links for all NMUs |
| N02c | Identify key equestrian and cycling links and desired links, and prioritise and secure them |
| N03a | Establish safer crossings of major roads, 'LTP heavy traffic routes' other roads and railway lines for all NMUs |
| N08d | Survey all WCC landholdings and review and develop the countryside access path network |
| N08f | Assess provision of horse-riding routes in North Warwickshire and develop and progress a programme of enhancements |
| R02e | Promote creation orders to create links between existing paths or to improve strategic recreational routes over WCC land |
| R02f | Promote creation orders to create links between existing paths or to improve strategic recreational routes over land in non-WCC ownership |

D The following actions have been postponed indefinitely**Accessibility****A01h** Provide four new sensory trails**Education****E05b** Liaise with dog wardens to promote the responsible use of rights of way and the countryside by dog owners.**Health, wellbeing and social benefits****H01a** Encourage people to sign up to volunteering with existing practical groups**H01d** Promote existing Health Walks Schemes and support the growth of the Scheme**H01e** Provide led walks and walks with a theme e.g. history**H01f** Publicise the availability of information in order to increase the confidence of potential users**H02b** Targeted publicity for appropriate routes (*gap gate stile*) once improved**H03a** Work with existing "Walking the Way to Health" groups to establish and improve suitable routes**Paths on the ground****P01a** Continue annual ploughing and cropping campaign**P03b** Develop a trial of improved roadside signage including fingerposts with destinations and route times, stile free routes, etc and monitor public response**P03c** Encourage P3 groups and other partner groups to sign paths with fingerposts displaying destinations and route times**P04g** Develop a strategy to exclude illegal motorised users from public footpaths and bridleways**P08b** Encourage other voluntary and community groups to undertake practical works on the path network**Strategic development and promotion****S01d** Identify key road links on the List and seek to create alternative routes**S04a** Develop and organise an annual walking festival, building on the success of the 2005 event**S06d** Work with heritage and environmental professionals on promotional material which links together topics e.g. history, archaeology, wildlife**S07a** Develop a series of stile free circular routes with information explaining the health benefits, timed circuits, etc from centres of populations**S08c** Promote family cycling on named trails**S11b** Develop the existing walks and events programme to include guided cycling events**Tourism and leisure****T01a** Publicise the annual walking festival throughout the UK**Country Parks****A03b** Promote use of Country Parks and greenways as safe gateways to the countryside**H05c** Promote use of Country Parks and greenways, for health benefits**N06a** Develop 2 new greenways – Kenilworth Berkswell and Leamington to Rugby**S02g** Develop the two proposed greenways (Leamington-Rugby and Kenilworth-Berkswell)**S08a** Promote the opportunities for safe cycling in Country Parks and greenways and bridleways