

PART FOUR – DELIVERY OF THE ROWIP

Chapter 9. Action Plans and Delivery Options

- 9.0 The statutory guidance for the ROWIP requires the production of Action Plans that would guide and direct improvements to the rights of way and public open space for the life of the document.

The original nine Action Plans in the Draft ROWIP document were very detailed and were devised from the research and information gathered to produce the Draft ROWIP. They go beyond the four strategic priorities and are an aspiration of what the Countryside Team would like to see improve on Rights of Way and public access in the next ten years. Designed to guide progress and development for anyone involved in providing or improving Rights of Way /public access rather than be a statement of what will occur.

- 9.1 Appendix E contains the original nine Action Plans. They are flexible and under constant review as new funding opportunities arise, new resources become available or government / local priorities and user needs change. They are the ideal vision of what could be possible but it is unrealistic to expect Barnsley MBC even with support from partners, to achieve all elements of the action plan, given the costs involved.
- 9.2 Using the strategic priorities as a start point, including the responses from the consultation and political/statutory priorities within the authority, a revised Action Plan has been drawn up covering the issues that have been deemed to be the most important for the next two years. The revised Action Plan is shown in Table 9.1a, b, c and have been divided into practical works, processes and projects. However to enable many of these actions to be achieved, additional resources will have to be found and these minimal levels of required resources are also identified in the table.
- 9.3 This is not to say that other works to improve the network in the area of Local Communities, Local Transport Plan projects, Health agenda, regeneration projects, and neighbourhood renewal schemes are being ignored. These projects and opportunities are being taken when they arise as part of the daily work of the Countryside Team.

Table 9.1.a Revised Action Plan – Practical Works

The detail methods within steps to delivery will be discussed in more detail in the new Performance Management Plan

Action	Reason for inclusion	Steps to Delivery	Resource Implications	Timeframe	Key Partners
Improve the condition of the network Halt decline in BVPI results over next two years, then increase pass rate in following years	National statistic and benchmarking measure against other authorities	Identify any efficiency measures tied to new structure, resources for additional 1040 man days.	Equivalent to £100,000 pa	Within next yr if want to halt the decline	Other services within BMBC, poss area forums
	Largest single reason for BVPI failure therefore focus on this across three years should raise BVPI results	As above Utilise existing or other available staff resources for 2-4 week focus on installing signage	Equivalent of £15,000 pa for materials. Including bulk purchasing	Needs doing urgently to help halt decline. Ideally within 18 months	Neighbourhood services/ highways/ volunteers/ user groups
Signage Blitz					
Improve pass rate of TPT annual inspections. 2006 pass rate only 2 out of 10, then 1 further failure from flood damage	Millennium Commission survey benchmarking with other authorities, Risk to tourism, health, sustainable transport benefits. Financial penalties may be incurred	Pass rate could go up to 5/10 with one off injection of resources, but long term maintenance and other major failures still an issue	£50,000 capital	Estimated pass rate in 2007 survey 1 out of 10. Within next yr if want to minimise costs to repair	BMBC Services/ volunteer networks for these works. Yorkshire Forward if looking for large sums to repair other sections
Utilise Volunteers	Community involvement important to protect routes, valuable resource for work & Information provision + lots of interest. Would supplement additional staff resources	Set up and run volunteer scheme /support existing volunteers including training, equipment, materials etc	£25,000 pa plus project could be run within new team structure	Established ideally within 2 years	Parish Councils, volunteer organisations, friends groups, Local Access Forum (LAF), external organisations

Action	Reason for inclusion	Steps to Delivery	Resource Implications	Timeframe	Key Partners
Improve provision for mobility and sensory impaired users.(MI users) Develop accessible routes / sites available Provide information on route/site accessibility	Legal requirement under DDA At least 50% of Barnsley residents are in this group Tourism potential Health benefits	Access audit routes and sites Prioritise routes Assess requests for works Carry out work within staff, volunteers, contractors	10% done pa by team + support from MI users £150,000pa	Auditing started 2005/6 Small scale works carried out where possible Larger practical works need to be started this year	Other BMBC services, external funders for specific projects, Volunteers, Primary Care Trust
	Legal requirement & majority of users only need information to make their own decisions about use	Auditing is start point Greater use of website Provision of leaflets inc large print versions	£5,000pa for leaflets	2007/8	P&T graphics, volunteers, user groups, LAF
Repair Flood Damage	8 bridges and many routes damaged including TPT Routes closed or only passable with care – weekly costs of closure	Prioritisation of routes completed Possible resources from govt & Bellwin scheme, resources needed up front and reclaimed.	£250,000 pa would repair most bridges and worst sections of TPT. Total cost est £3.3m	By Christmas 07 if claiming back through Bellwin, Within 18 months	Central Govt,

Total Cost £600,000pa or equivalent.

b. Revised Action Plan – processes

Action	Reason for inclusion	Steps to Delivery	Resource Implications	Timeframe	Key Partners
Review Draft Prioritisation Matrix	Trialling for last 12 months as method of prioritising work backlog, needs assessing and submitting for formal adoption.	On hold as changes expected in next 6 months due to service and directorate restructuring. Local Access Forum (LAF) & Cabinet	Within existing resources, although resources required to reduce backlog	2008/9	Highways service, Neighbourhood Services, Volunteers
Develop Definitive Map Modification Order Priority Matrix	Backlog and no formal method to prioritise work. Increasing numbers of Direction Orders from Secretary of State changes priorities we do have.	Develop and test matrix Take before users groups and LAF Cabinet Approval	Within existing team, although additional resources in team and legal would help to reduce backlog	Developed & testing by Christmas 07 Cabinet approval by April 08	Legal Services, Local Access Forum (LAF), User Groups
Implement Enforcement Policy	Statutory Duty to carry out enforcement Policy will ensure clear and objective processing	Integrate with Highways for similar elements. Take to LAF and cabinet for approval	Within existing resources, although would benefit from delegated powers	Cabinet approval by April 08	Legal Services. Highways
Develop Rights of Way & Anti-social Behaviour Policy	Increasing number of requests Local Area issue Considered at Housing & Community Safety Scrutiny Mt in Oct 07	Discussions with relevant services & organisations. To LAF & possibly Area Forums Cabinet Approval	Policy within existing resources. Costs of legal processes/ practical works to be part of policy	Policy draft by March 2008 LAF & Cabinet approval by end 2008	Community Safety Partnerships, Area Forums, Police Service, LAF, User Groups, Legal services

Action	Reason for inclusion	Steps to Delivery	Resource Implications	Timeframe	Key Partners
Develop cross service DDA policy on access controls and routes	Mixed action across BMBC services, need approved policy to help meet DDA requirements and motorbike implications	Discussions with relevant services & organisations. To LAF & possibly Area Forums. Cross Service report for Cabinet Approval	Policy within existing resources. Costs of practical works to be part of policy resource implications		All BMBC services, PCT, Area Forums, User Groups, LAF, Police, Legal Services, motorbike nuisance group
Integrate and complete PROW Bridge Register	Highways Structures inspect some of PROW bridges, but majority unknown Moving into Highways provides opportunity	Bridges photographed & recorded since June 2007 as seen. Move to highways & their new system would allow integration	New software within Highways Structures. Bridges recorded within existing daily work, volunteers or as project for whole route assessment if resources available	Short term integration – within 18 months. Full records may take 5 years to complete	Highways Structures & inspectors, volunteers, LAF, landowners
Integrate systems to Highways Service especially customer care, monitoring	Required for monitoring and as part of service restructuring	Issues of software licences and training	Unknown depends on systems used	Restructuring within 6 months, completion 12 months	Highways service
Annual Performance Management report	Good Practise, Part of ROWIP review, Feedback to users/ members on effectiveness of resource utilisation Link to LAF	Outline of content in Chapters 7-9 of this document. Will develop over time	Minimal as proposed web publication and printed off as required.	First report due November 2008	

c. Revised Action Plan – Priority projects for 2007/8 & 2008/9

Action	Reason for inclusion	Steps to Delivery	Resource Implications	Timeframe	Key Partners
Resurface & resolve flooding on FP407 Barnsley - Carlton Industrial Estate	Important link for residents accessing to work on industrial site.	Works requested via Highways	From LTP budget – ROWIP implementation	By March 08	Highways
DDA requests	Legal requirement to be proactive & to consider requests	Assessment of work request Seek appropriate resources Complete works	Minimal projects available within existing resource,	ongoing	Highways, area forums, volunteers
Flood Damage projects					
Bridleway Link at Cote Bank Bridge, Langsett	Priority for horseriders, Links TPT to major network development at Langsett	Legal assessment ongoing.	Minimal required,	Report to PRB expected in 6 months	Legal services, property & procurement, landowner, Yorkshire Water
Langsett Development	Major development of new bridleways and mobility impaired access routes funded by Yorkshire Water. Local use and tourism potential	Ongoing, legal processes including dedication to be before PRB	Minimal to BMBC although some maintenance if take on routes when created. Yorkshire water spend over £400,000	Ongoing, reports to PRB when dedicating sections	Yorkshire Water
Verge cutting project	Investigating opportunities available to change verge/hedge cutting for walkers & horse riders to improve rural road safety	Identify potential sites: where rd use required between PROW, junctions/bends	To be considered as part of exiting programme	LAF & Users asked to identify locations before Dec 07 for consideration	Highways, Neighbourhood Services

Action	Reason for inclusion	Steps to Delivery	Resource Implications	Timeframe	Key Partners
Make maximum use of section106 funding /development projects / major schemes to improve local network	Improving routes for sustainable transport, health & green links meets LTP, LDF, ROWIP targets	Need to be involved at prelim planning stage to ensure maximum opportunities are realised	Staff time within existing resources – need to be kept up to date	Ongoing and developing	Planning Officers, Developers, area forums, LAF, external organisations
Protect and develop network as part of major and minor road schemes & associated developments	Opportunities available QBC – Burton Rd Cudworth /West Green Bypass	Work closely from Planning stage through to implementation	Within existing resources	Ongoing	Transportation, Planning, Highways
Advance Preparation on projects for future funding	Would make best use of any resources that become available at short notice, with short deadline for spend.	Identify & work up projects including materials, costs etc.	Within existing resources although for tarmac & major structural work design costs would need to be included in project	Ongoing	Highways, structures

9.4 Where should we start?

Firstly it must be accepted that the Countryside Team cannot achieve all the work objectives at once even if sufficient resources become available.

Within each area of work further priorities must be set. For example all the multi-user routes that meet the interconnected network priority need to be identified then further prioritised in order of processing or developing. These priorities will have to be flexible as funding may become available where only a scheduled low priority route may meet the funding criteria.

9.4.1 The role of the Local Access Forum and local communities will be invaluable in identifying potential projects/routes, setting the priority criteria and then prioritising them. Talking to other services and organisations is also essential to ensure that there is no duplication of work, that there is consistency in approach to similar projects, to raise awareness of everyone's ideas and ensure cross service working occurs to meet a range of objectives and provide maximum match funding for external resources.

9.4.2 Given the interconnected nature of Rights of Way, several projects are ongoing at any one time with Countryside sometimes leading a project and for others being part of a larger partnership.

Many of the urban based walking & cycling routes are being identified in the Local Transport Plan or cycling and walking strategies. Transportation officers are seeking funding for these projects through school and work travel plans, planning for the Private Finance Initiative Schools and Barnsley Schools for the Future projects, with countryside being involved in the project discussions but not leading.

9.4.3 The strategic routes for future development are in the LDF and Green space strategy with external funding or works being sought by planning, transportation and landscape officers. Many of these are linked to major road schemes, restoration projects or adjacent development sites including new schools, residential or industrial estates.

9.4.4 The Countryside Team currently work with planners and transportation officers to achieve maximum benefits to the Rights of Way network across or adjacent to any development site. Improving surfacing or upgrading the legal status of existing routes and creating new routes where appropriate, are processes that are continually ongoing through the Countryside Team.

9.4.5 Working in conjunction with other BMBC services in urban areas means the Countryside Team can focus on the more rural issues and access to Rights of Way on the urban fringe and beyond. Other community based groups and landowning organisations work with the Countryside Team in partnership to provide funding, support and information for improvements in these more rural areas.

9.5 How can we deliver an interconnected network of well maintained routes with sufficient route information for users to make a choice, and that fulfils the diverse needs of Barnsley residents and visitors alike?

Whilst the ROWIP can identify where improvements are needed, all those identified require resources to enable progress. These resources may be in personnel or

financial terms but may equally be knowledge based, require approved policies or greater partnership working.

Prior to any improvement works being carried out, consideration has to be given to the long term nature of the works. Capital funding for resurfacing and large scale improvements is available from external funding sources, however an increase in revenue funding for subsequent annual maintenance is far more difficult to acquire and would usually be sought from within Barnsley MBC. Therefore any improvements must be carried out to the highest standards and the new route or improvements be sustainable over time.

Outlined below are the four main means of gaining additional resources. These will need to be used as part of a package of opportunities rather than the single options source.

9.5.1 Maximising existing resources

Elements of the Action Plans are already being carried out within the Countryside Team on a day to day basis, especially those relating to maintenance and legal processes. However, the backlogs of work within both maintenance and legal orders are resulting in a less than satisfactory service delivery to the public within these areas.

In an attempt to manage the maintenance backlog a priority matrix is being tested. Each request for work is being scored against a range of criteria and then the highest scoring work is being carried out. This ensures that work affecting the largest number of users and that which may affect the health and safety of users is carried out first, e.g. repairs to stiles, bridges etc is a higher priority than signing a route.

Each officer within the team has different areas of expertise that enables further elements of the Action Plans to be carried out in their day to day work. Many of these are with external organisations and developing into partnerships, such as health walks, disability access and community involvement. Others include detailed knowledge of the legislation and case law that allows faster determination of legal problems, or a background in biodiversity, conservation and wildlife that enables works to be identified for species protection or development of a particular site.

To maximise the existing resources the Countryside Team are in the process of reviewing all aspects of their work and investigating alternative methods of service delivery. Targets for practical works, legal processes and projects have been identified in chapter 10 and will form the basis of an Annual Performance Management report.

The impending restructure of Environment and Development Directorates in 2007/8 will combine the Countryside Team resources with those of Highways and Neighbourhood Services. This process is still in the early stages as the final ROWIP is submitted for approval however it should have a positive impact on the network.

A further means to maximise existing resources is to work in partnership with other organisations, combining budgets and knowledge.

9.5.2 Partnership Working

Partnership working is an increasingly useful means of accessing additional funding, especially with organisations external to Barnsley MBC. Partnerships including the Countryside Team range from informal support networks and information exchanges, through joint working on a particular project to more formal partnerships involving regular meetings and work across a range of issues.

External Partners include the Local Access Forum, Fit 4 the Future team, Parish/Town Councils, Rights of Way user groups, Community organisations, a range of volunteer groups, Natural England and Yorkshire Water. Partnership working can allow access to resources for capital works or often maintenance schemes.

Often joint working enables limited resources of all partners to be combined thereby enabling a specific project and/or objectives to be achieved, where it may not be possible for only one organisation. For example, in an effort to improve the health of Barnsley residents funding from Sport England is contributing to the reprinting of the Trans Pennine Trail Barnsley leaflet as it is a suitable route for sedentary people. Reprinting the leaflet meets tourism, promotion, local needs as well as the health agendas.

Information exchange and closer working both internal to BMBC and with external groups enables a consistent approach to other projects. Barnsley Bike User Group, Fit 4 the Future, Penistone and District Community Partnership, Transportation Team and Countryside are all developing circular route leaflets encouraging walking and cycling for health. Each group is working within a particular region but the leaflets will be produced in a uniform way so as to be instantly recognisable by potential users. The funding is from at least five different sources, but by partnership working the leaflets will cover a greater area and reduce the preparation time spent on developing them. There will also be limited duplication of work or leaflets produced.

Community groups often have access to a range of external funding not available to local authorities. By partnership working with Barnsley MBC additional projects can be carried out, equally small amounts of partnership resources can provide match funding for the release of large sums of external funding.

9.5.3 External Funding

This option is usually focused on delivering capital schemes often following the successful submission of a grant application. National organisations such as Sustrans, Natural England (formally the Countryside Agency) or National Lottery, as well as funding from the European Union via local community groups are two obvious sources.

Preparation of external grant applications is time consuming. Seeking funding through this method requires balancing the costs of officer time and preparation of an application against the chances of success and the levels of funding involved. These applications are usually for significant sums of money and often involves seeking equally large levels of match funding which may or may not be available.

Other external funding opportunities are those relating to planning permissions and developments. Section 278 or 106 agreements and developer contributions are all

means by which developers can be asked to carry out improvement works to routes through or adjacent to their sites, or contribute to improvement works on Rights of Way. In particular those industrial sites requiring travel plans or residential sites with limited access to public transport or walking/cycling routes. It is clear as part of this process that ward councillors should be consulted at an early stage where use of Section 106 resources for Rights of Way are being discussed.

Like Partnership working, external funding opportunities sometimes become available for projects that would not be at the top of an outstanding or development works list. However, any projects submitted would meet one or more of the four strategic objectives identified within the ROWIP.

9.5.4 Provision of Additional Resources within Barnsley MBC

During the research/consultation phases for both the preparation of the Draft and on the Draft ROWIP itself, consultees and the Local Access Forum were asked what should any additional network wide resources (if available) be spent on. It is a measure of how well the Countryside Team know their 'customers' in that the priorities were similar.

All responses identified maintenance as being the most important and especially of the Trans Pennine Trail. Details of this are in earlier chapters. This type of revenue funding is only likely to be funded from within Barnsley MBC, however this is against the existing financial climate of capping the Council tax, diverse demands on limited resources and an increase in statutory duties across all services.

Bids were made into the base budget review for additional capital and revenue resources in 2007/8 and further submissions will be made for 2008/9 for maintenance and mobility impaired access routes.

- 9.6 Smaller levels of funding may be possible through consideration of and approval to accept donations or bequests to improve rights of way or countryside sites. It may be to improve a single site, gate, route, tree planting, seating area or a general improvement scheme. There may also be opportunities for sponsorship – for specific projects, route promotion etc

Chapter 10 – Performance Management Targets and Reviewing the ROWIP

10.0 The statutory requirement is that the ROWIP is reviewed at least every ten years. It is the intention of Barnsley Countryside Team that the full ROWIP is reviewed every five years, given that the information in the first five chapters is unlikely to change significantly in any time period less than that. However if significant changes do occur, these will be updated in a working copy of the document.

10.1 The ROWIP will not be just a strategic document. Chapters 6 – 9 outline priorities that will form the basis of a new Performance Management Plan. This in turn will be part of the department service plan and results reported annually through the appropriate council channels and to the Local Access Forum.

10.2 Proposed Performance Management Targets

The proposed targets shown in Table 10.1 have been taken from the original nine Action Plans and updated following feedback from the consultation process. They are a projection of what the Countryside team believes it can achieve within existing resources.

10.2.1 With the exception of the BVPI, the Countryside team has not been in a position to record the data required to establish targets. The intention is that this revised section of the ROWIP will provide the basis for a new performance management process where the targets and outcomes are reviewed and published on an annual basis.

Table 10.1 – Proposed Performance Management Targets

Ref	Target Description	Target 2008/9	Target 2009/10	Action Plan ref Appendix E
Practical				
P1	Best Value Performance Indicator 178. Length of PROW open and available for use (based on at least 5% of the network)	35%	40%	Main 4
P2	% of signing requests completed each year	25%	25%	Info 1
P3	% of network to be outline access audited and surveyed according to BVPI standards	10%	10%	User 2
P4	Number of missing links created within Bridleway and Footpath network	2	2	User 13, Rural 1
Legal Processes				
L1	% of enforcement action against temporary obstructions to be resolved within 4 months	100%	100%	ENF2
L2	Number of public path orders processed to order stage within 4 months	100%	100%	DM4
L3	Number of DMMO applications to be processed to order stage per year	6	6	DM1 & 2

Ref	Target Description	Target 2008/9	Target 2009/10	Action Plan ref Appendix E
Information Provision				
I1	Number of sites/routes with full access information available for public	10	10	User 3
I2	Number of new routes to be promoted each year, including full access information and at least 1 for horseriders/cyclists	3	3	Info3,4,5
I3	Number of guided walks/rides led by the countryside team per year	6	6	Info 2
I4	Number of local events/displays attended each year to promote the countryside and work of the team	3	3	Info 6
I5	Number of new links to community/school groups per year	4	4	Com 1-5

10.2.2 Developing the proposed action in the Revised Action Plan (Table 9.1) it is suggested that a realistic series of targets for the BVPI result is to stabilise the situation in 2007/8 & 2008/9 with a gradual increase in the pass rate during the following years. Early indications of 2007 assessment show a further fall in pass rate from 34% (2006) should be expected.

10.2.3 This goes against the targets set in the Barnsley MBC's Best Value Performance Plan gave a target for 2007/8 of 45%, 50% in 2008/9 and 55% in 2009/10. These types of figures would only be likely with a resource increase as identified in Table 9.1a that would meet the backlog of works.

10.2.4 The performance management targets have only been identified within Table 10.1 (and the nine original Action Plans in Appendix F) where the responsibility is completely or the majority is within the control of the Countryside Team. Other cross working areas such as transport, utilitarian journeys and urban issues or community involvement do not have targets within the ROWIP although the work within the Action Plan will help meet targets identified elsewhere within the authority or community sectors.

10.3 Performance Management Plan

A more comprehensive performance management plan, targets and assessment criteria will be developed over the next 6 months assisted by the impending move of the Countryside Team into Highways and Neighbourhood Services.

10.4 It is proposed that an annual report on Rights of Way is produced every November, published on the website and reported to Cabinet. This will link to the Local Access Forum annual report that is published in October each year. It will be a developing report, adapting to changing circumstances, priorities and issues, supplementing the ROWIP considerations and working to reach our ultimate aim:

An integrated network of well maintained routes with sufficient route information for users to make a choice, and that fulfils the diverse needs of Barnsley residents and visitors alike.

Further Information

If you have any queries about the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, consultation or other aspects of this project please contact:

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Getting a copy of the ROWIP

A reference copy of the ROWIP should be available in most Barnsley libraries by the end of November 2007.

A downloadable version will be published on the Barnsley Council website by 21 November 2007

If you would like a copy of the ROWIP in paper or CD format please contact the Countryside Team as above.

