



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL CABINET
27 NOVEMBER 2007

ITEM 10

Cabinet Member for Planning and Transportation

Adoption of the Derby Rights of Way Improvement Plan

SUMMARY

1. The report sets out how we have complied with the duty on the Council in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan as part of the Council's Derby Joint Local Transport Plan. It summarises the contents of the Plan including its Statement of Action, and seeks authority to adopt the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

2. To formally adopt the Derby Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

3. To allow the City Council to comply with Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.



Adoption of the Derby Rights of Way Improvement Plan

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1.1 The Council has a duty to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan, also known as a RoWIP, under Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- 1.2 The RoWIP gave us the opportunity to stand back and look at how we would like to improve the city's path network and ensure that it meets the current and future needs of its users.
- 1.3 The legislation requires that the Plan considers:
 - “the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public;
 - the opportunities provided by local rights of way (and in particular by footpaths, cycle tracks, bridleways and restricted byways) for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of their area;
 - the accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems.”

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan

- 1.4 We have sought to prepare a plan which moves us towards the creation of a joined up network of paths across the City; in good condition; accessible to all users for their leisure and other everyday needs; which assists in increasing the levels of exercise people take; and on which people feel safe. Particular emphasis is given to assisting people in disadvantaged communities and others not using the path system at present and fully involving people in all these actions.
- 1.5 The Plan has two key sections. The first contains the assessment of the state of the path network and the present and likely future needs of the public. The second contains the Statement of Action, which lists the actions that we will take to improve the situation.
- 1.6 The Plan is an integral part of the Council's Derby Joint Local Transport Plan, also known as LTP2. The Department for Transport, DfT, has stated that the RoWIP must show clear links to the LTP2's priorities as well as meet its Quality of Life objectives.

The Assessment

- 1.7 The assessment of how the local rights of way network meets the public's needs in Derby was made in two parts.
- 1.8 First, we looked at the size and connectivity of Derby's path network and its general condition. We also examined the procedures and policies that determine how we maintain and develop the network.
- 1.9 Second, in order to identify the existing and future needs of the different types of path users, we carried out our own extensive research and looked at some of the existing local and national research. We looked at the findings from our public consultation exercise which we named the Derby Path Survey, 2005. We received over 300 completed questionnaires in response to the survey. We looked at the county-wide findings of Derbyshire County Council. We also looked at the findings of important national research such as Sport England's Active People Survey, 2005/6 which surveyed English residents who were 16 and over and the General Household Survey, 2002, which collects data on all adults in the whole of Britain.

Consultation

- 1.10 We published the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan in May 2007 and put it out for public consultation for a period of 12 weeks until 3 August 2007. We received 16 responses to the draft plan. We took into account the public comments and the advice from the Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum on the draft plan. Using the information gathered, we produced a Statement of Action..
- 1.13 We also took advice from the Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum. The Forum advised us on the preparation of the draft plan and our consultation process. We also took into account the public comments made on the draft plan. Using the information gathered, we produced a Statement of Action.

The Statement of Action

- 1.14 The Statement of Action is the most important part of the Plan and sets out the list of actions that we intend to take to improve the path network and provide greater opportunities for path users.
- 1.15 We have drawn up five main aims in the Statement of Action. Within each aim, we have identified several broad actions that need to be undertaken to achieve the aim. We have labelled these broad actions as identified needs. To meet each identified need, we have produced a number of specific actions.
- 1.16 The five aims are listed below along with a summary of what they are designed to achieve.

Aim 1: To make sure that the local rights of way network is easier to use

- 1.17 Through this aim, we have created actions to ensure that the city's path network is maintained to as high a standard as possible. We will also try to reduce the real and perceived public worries about personal safety on paths. We will also improve the accessibility of paths for people who are visually impaired or have mobility problems, or have young children with them.
- 1.18 A key action to help us do this is Action 1b1 where we will upgrade certain identified paths to make them accessible to all users.

Aim 2: To provide an up to date and widely available Definitive Map and Statement

- 1.19 Through this aim, we have created actions that will help us publish a new Definitive Map and Statement in both paper and electronic formats to replace the old Definitive Maps and Statements which cover Derby.
- 1.20 The key action to help us do this is Action 2a2 where we will publish the draft Definitive Map and Statement for Derby by 2012.

Aim 3: To provide a more connected network suitable for all users

- 1.21 Through this aim, we have created actions that will help us to create new link paths and upgrade existing routes that will improve off-road connections between important locations for the public.
- 1.22 As well as the actions to create a more joined up path network we have actions to create more walks and leisure routes with the aim of helping people get fit and giving them easy access to areas of open space and the countryside.

Aim 4: To improve the provision of information about the public path network and access to the countryside

- 1.23 Through this aim, we have created actions that will help us to provide more information for the public about the city's path network, in both printed and electronic form, and the opportunities for access to the countryside.
- 1.24 Through Action 4a4, we will publish new leaflets that will focus on leisure routes in Derby and the surrounding countryside that are accessible to disabled people.
- 1.25 We will also have actions to provide more organised events including walks and cycle rides led by local path user and heritage groups.

Aim 5: To provide greater opportunities for those groups who don't usually use paths to use them more

- 1.26 Through this aim, we will try and provide disadvantaged groups and communities within the city with greater opportunities to enjoy using the city's path network and its open spaces and countryside.
- 1.27 We have created a number of actions under this aim which will involve detailed consultation with these groups.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2. We could have chosen not to prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan because the Council has “Excellent” status. We consider, however, that the plan gives us the opportunity to draw up a clear way forward of how we can improve the city’s path network for its users.

For more information contact:
Background papers:

List of appendices:

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The Rights of Way Improvement Plan is available electronically on our web site at: <http://www.derby.gov.uk/TransportStreets/PublicRightsWay/>
Appendix 1 Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. As set out in the Plan. Many of the actions can be completed within existing resources. Where this is not the case, additional resources will be secured before the action is implemented. Extra resources are not being sought at this stage.

Legal

2. As set out in the Plan.

Personnel

3. As set out in the Plan. The vast majority of the actions can be completed within existing staff resources. Where this is not the case, additional staff resources will be secured at the appropriate time. Extra staff resources are not being sought at this stage.

Equalities impact

- 4 This is a statutory plan which is designed to benefit all those who use the path network in Derby but seeks to bring particular advantages to disabled people and those in disadvantaged communities.

Corporate Priorities

5. The Derby Rights of Way Improvement Plan takes forward the Council priorities of “Leading Derby towards a better environment” and “Helping us all to be healthy, active and independent.”