

Heading in the Right Direction Delivering rights of way improvements in 2009/10

Aim 1: Making your way easier

We have continued to focus on making the existing public rights of way network easier to use

- Almost three quarters (73.4%) of public rights of way passed the “ease of use test” in our May and November surveys, exceeding the target for the year
- The Rights of Way team carried out a successful stile and gate campaign during the Autumn, improving access to over 390 paths
- 549 new signposts were installed across the network, helping to make these paths easier to find from the roadside



- We also redesigned our metal public bridleway signs to include more information about who can use these routes. When you are using any bridleways, please remember that cyclists should always give way to walkers and horse riders

Aim 2: Mapping it out

Efforts are underway to complete our digital record of public rights of way, otherwise known as the Definitive Map and Statement

- We secured funding for four extra members of staff (two within the rights of way team and two in Legal Services) to assist with this work over the next two years
- Information about any paths which may be closed for repairs or to allow work to be carried out was made available on our website to help people plan their routes or visits. Go to http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/Access/rights_of_way/path_closure_register/default.asp

Aim 3: An improved network

The £1.5 million of capital funding we received during the year has enabled many access improvements to be carried out

- Natural England agreed to fund the Pennine Bridleway National Trail for a further two years so we can continue to negotiate the route through Glossop
- Horse riders and cyclists have also benefitted from the 7 miles of new routes which were added to the Definitive Map



- More people have been given the opportunity to get out and enjoy Derbyshire's countryside with the purchase of four all terrain mobility scooters. These can be hired from Middleton Top Visitors Centre near Wirksworth and at Shipley and Elvaston Castle Country Parks. For more information visit our Access for All web page

- Over 6.5 miles of new multi user Greenways were completed on the ground, bringing the total length of Greenways across the county to 186 miles
- Two of our most significant Greenway projects included:



Putting into place the last piece of the **Trent Valley Greenway** jigsaw, with a new 12 tonne steel bridge over the River Erewash at Trent Meadows. This provides walkers, horse riders and cyclists with a safer, more direct link from Long Eaton



The Forge Lane ramp leading down from the Trans Pennine Trail to the west of Killamarsh cost around £50,000 and achieved a significant phase of the wider Connect 2 scheme. The Connect 2 scheme is due for completion in 2012 and will see Sheffield Halfway linked to Killamarsh and Rother Valley Country Park

- We delivered 8 other schemes across the county to improve the safety and quality of routes to schools and local amenities: in South Normanton, Matlock, Wirksworth, Glossop, Doveridge, various locations around New Mills and within the Peak District National Park between the villages of Elton and Winster

Aim 4: Promoting our paths



- The County Council produced a new leaflet to promote horse riding opportunities in Derbyshire. It also provides useful information for anyone wanting to get started and can be found on our website at

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/Access/horse_riding

- Thanks to funding from Natural England, youngsters from Amber Valley spent a day on the Pennine Bridleway National Trail, many of them experiencing horse riding for the first time



- We have been in discussions with several organisations to make sure our network of paths is promoted as widely as possible for a range of other activities, such as healthy walking, jogging and cycling

- We supported the use of new technology to promote access to the countryside through a project to develop an audio trail for a 5 mile circular route starting from Alfreton Leisure Centre. This can be downloaded onto an MP3 player or mobile phone from: www.audiotrails.co.uk/downloads

Aim 5: Working together

- The Countryside Service worked directly with 13 parish councils across the county to improve local path networks. A further 71 councils used funding allocated under the Minor Maintenance Scheme to carry out vegetation clearance, surface repairs and way marking of paths
- Volunteers contributed 981 days on access projects (worth almost £200,000), working with our own countryside service staff or other groups such as BTCV Enterprises, Peak Park Conservation Volunteers and Groundwork Derby and Derbyshire

We shall be reviewing our Rights of Way Improvement Plan in 2011/12 to make sure it still meets the needs of users. There will be further opportunities for you to have your say on what our priorities should be and what improvements you would like to see in the future. If you have any specific suggestions for paths that could be improved, then please let us know.