

Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme Case Studies 2015-2016.

This report highlights examples of the types of work that the funding Programme made possible during 2015-16, the eighth year of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme

It is a compilation of the examples provided by the authorities and has been structured to reflect and emphasise the key points and characteristics of the work that was undertaken.

It accompanies the '*Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme (RFP) 2015/16 Summary Report*', and the '*Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme End of Year Outputs Report*'.



On the ground...

Three quarters of the funding (£762,183) was used to make practical improvements to existing access. Here are some examples of work from across Wales:

North Wales: Denbighshire

Making ways for Cyclists at Llyn Brenig.

Significant drainage works have been completed to the popular footpath and cycle path at Gors Maen Llwyd, Llyn Brenig.

The moorland surrounding the path is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, so it was important that the works were completed sensitively.

The new drainage stoned ditches will take the water away from the path at key strategic points.

The cycle path has seen a 9% increase in use in the past year, which demonstrates the popularity of the route and the importance of the improvements.



On the ground...

South Wales: Neath Port Talbot

Bridleway 24 & Footpaths 27,34,35 (Resolven)

A local rambler highlighting access difficulties, coupled with a solar farm application, seemed the ideal opportunity to approach the landowner to implement all the works needed to the network in Resolven.

This resulted in an extensive project of way marking and removing fence obstructions.



On the ground...

South west Wales:

Pembrokeshire County Council

PP6/8 Bridell Bridleway

Thanks to ROWIP funding, and with assistance of the landowner, a safer bridleway route is now in place with the installation of fencing and new gates much to the delight of the local riders and walkers.



On the ground...

South Wales: Bridgend

Replacement of Footbridge on Footpath 106 - Garw Valley

As a result of a bridge collapse on a high priority promoted route providing footpath access into Bryngarw Country Park, work was undertaken to reinstate a bridge. Following the collapse the Council placed an emergency closure on the footpath which was followed by a temporary closure whilst it discussed the reinstatement of the footbridge with the landowners.

The work was undertaken by an independent contractor who reinstated the footbridge and erected fencing and installed a gate to prevent livestock escaping from the field.



On the ground...

South West Wales: Blaenau Gwent

Peacehaven

When the new Peacehaven housing development was nearing completion, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council received £5,000 of Section 6 money.

A community consultation and fun day was organised to gain some ideas on how the community could benefit from the funding.

The outcome of the community consultation was a wish for better links to the old housing estate, to allow short cuts to the shops and schools, and to have a link to the open country surrounding the area.

In agreement with the local community a kissing gate and a slamming gate were installed. A simple sleeper bridge was also constructed across a reen (drainage ditch), and Welsh heritage fruit trees, and edible shrubs were also planted to improve biodiversity.



On the ground...

South Wales: Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

National Park Wardens have undertaken work to preserve eroded peat bogs and footpaths.

Using a helicopter, 910 tonnes of stone along with 300 bags of heather brash, jute and heather bales have been transported onto the mountain tops of the Central Beacons and Black Mountains range using a helicopter. Heather jute and bales are used to patch up the peat bogs and slow the rate at which water is released into the water course.

Waun Fach, will have further work done on footpaths to protect the surrounding damaged peat bogs from more erosion.

The work was carried out by Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Wardens, National Park Upland Path Volunteers, and local contractors before the ground nesting bird season. Volunteers will now maintain the paths throughout the year to minimise further erosion of the popular walking routes.



On the ground...

North Wales: Anglesey

Public Footpath No. 17 Llanidan

Before 2016 this 1KM footpath had been inaccessible for more than 50 years because of a missing bridge and obstacles at field boundaries. The route forms part of a historic footpath from Gaerwen to the Talyfoel ferry on the Menai Straits.

The County Council employed a contractor to construct a new footbridge and install new gates and stiles to reopen the path. In addition, one of the landowners applied for a small diversion of the path which was in their interests for land management reasons.



Multi benefit...

Once again over half of the projects delivered under the ROWIP Funding Programme benefit more than one user group, with projects that had a “general benefit to all users” and projects that were “multi benefit” (benefiting more than one user type) together accounting for 53% of the total value of projects funded this year.

North Wales: Powys

North Radnorshire

Byway LC294 hosts the Powys on Horseback routes Golf Links, Esgair Dderw and Elan Valley and Penygarreg at Elan Valley, Rhayader.

Waterlogging caused by blocked grips and drainage pipes and areas of exposed bedrock ‘steps’ resulted in a substandard surface for a variety of users.

Poor drainage exacerbated by un-seasonally wet weather resulted in severe surface erosion from water run-off at one end.



Deep rut on byway LC294 caused by a combination of motor vehicle use and water damage before and after repair.



Exposed bedrock re-graded to provide a more accessible surface on byway LC294. Some sections were difficult to pass even in 4x4 vehicles before work was undertaken

Multi benefit...

Denbighshire: Treadlightly (DE 4)

Work has been carried out to improve the information around the promotion and education of available access for off-road vehicles under the Treadlightly project in partnership with North Wales Police, Wrexham County Borough Council, the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB, Wirral Off Road Events, and the Trail Rider Fellowship.

The RoWIP supported the production of a leaflet and pop-up banners, which have been to Llangollen Bike Festival and other local shows to highlight the need for responsible access by 4x4 and motorbike user groups.



North East Wales offers some of the best trail riding and off road events. Responsible trail use allows this sport to continue.

Irresponsible and disrespectful use of the landscape can:

- ❖ damage internationally important habitats and its wildlife
- ❖ damage historical and cultural features
- ❖ lead to loss of vehicular access in the future
- ❖ lead to your vehicle being seized and destroyed, a fine and points on your licence

Always stay legal. Only use routes with public vehicular rights.

Trail Riders Code of Conduct

- ❖ Use only vehicular rights of way
- ❖ Keep to the defined way across farmland
- ❖ Travel at a safe speed & ride quietly
- ❖ Honour the countryside
- ❖ Acknowledge the presence of other green lane users
- ❖ Leave gates as you find them to safeguard stock
- ❖ Give way to walkers, cyclists and horses
- ❖ Identify yourself

Where...can I go?

There are many routes often called green lanes. Where these carry vehicular rights they can be used for responsible trail riding.

Join a local group through the *Trail Rider Fellowship*, or for route ideas contact *Tread Lightly*, or your local authorities' rights of way team if you are unsure where to go.

Or, to fire up that competitive streak, there are some great events to get involved with, look no further than *WOR Events* (worevents.com)

For information about events:

trf.org.uk
treadlightly-uk.org
worevents.com

Project partners:

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan funding programme is funded by the Welsh Government and administered by Natural Resources Wales.

Llwybrau modur Pam?

Pam ddim?

Multi benefit...

South Wales: Torfaen

Footpath Surface Improvements in Pontnewydd, Cwmbran

This particular footpath is a well-used route that connects NCN 492 in Pontnewydd to the local industrial estate and school. Before the improvements were carried out the footpath surface was rough and even underfoot. The footpath was also showing signs of erosion in certain areas due to the poor drainage along its length.

The new surface now allows safe access for all to the estate, the school and the wider highways network.



Multi benefit...

South Wales: **Merthyr Tydfil**

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council examined the existing network to identify current public rights of way which could be easily adapted for a wide range of users.

A right of way linking a residential home with the local community was of a natural surface making it difficult for the elderly and less able users to use the route.

In partnership with the home, local councillors and ROWIP funding, a new path was constructed.

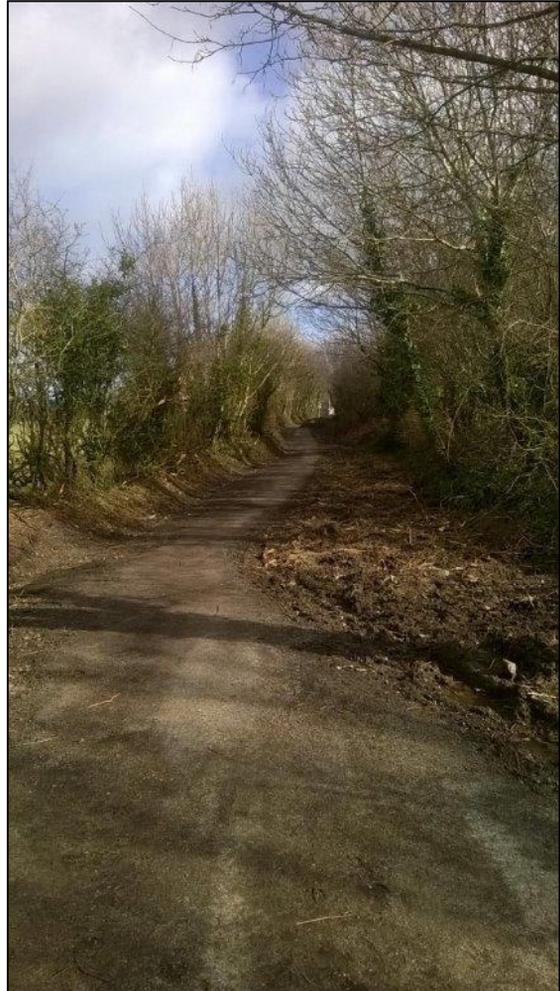


Multi benefit...

North Wales: Anglesey

Porthaethwy / Llanfairpwll

A former public road between Llanfairpwll with Fourcrosses (near Porthaethwy) had become very narrow and overgrown by 2016. The Council employed a contractor to open out the full width of the old road by removing vegetation, soil, and turf which was encroaching on the tarmac. The route is now pleasant to use all year round and is used by multiple users including cyclists and young families with prams.



Access for all...

North Wales: Denbighshire

Loggerheads Country Park

Promotional Work for projects funded through ROWIP previously through Accessible Denbighshire have continued during the year as highlighted by the visit by Flintshire Disability Forum to one of the routes promoted at Loggerheads Country Park.



Access for all...

North Wales: Powys

Priory Groves, Footpath Extension

ROWIP funding has allowed Powys County Councils to extend the all-inclusive access footpaths in the Priory Groves area of Brecon.

A circular route was completed at the town end of the Priory Groves linking up already established footpaths. This created access from Brecon Cathedral and the Pendre & Beechgrove housing estates directly into the Priory Groves woodland.

A stone pathway was also extended further up the River Honddu by approximately 70m, now allowing access right up to the boundary of our land and the adjacent farmland.



Before – The river side pathway prior to this year's work was badly eroded and narrow in places with steep drops from the raised footpath down to the river.



After – The pathway is now 1200mm wide and the path has been moved away from the drops, the pathway which was originally undulating has now been levelled to allow easier access to this area within Priory Groves.

Access for all...

South Wales: Monmouthshire

Longfellow Road, Monmouth

Longfellow Road presented an opportunity to improve a well-used footpath network. Part of the path ran as a narrow, unclean alleyway and other sections were wider public rights of way across fields.

The project meant that the path could be widened, the surface levelled and 5 kissing gates installed. The path is now available to people in wheelchairs, those with prams, or other mobility problems. The whole environment should be a much nicer place for local people to walk.



Access for all...

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Crymych

ROWIP funded accessibility improvements to public footpaths which link the village of Crymych to the countryside of the National Park.

The public footpath link begins at the centre of the village and heads west to the Preseli Hills. The grant paid for contractors to replace the existing stiles with gates and improve a footbridge. This is the first phase of improvements that should result in the route becoming stile free, easier to use and therefore encourage more residents of Crymych to explore the countryside. Anecdotally, we understand that the local creche is now using the route as a walk for its children.

While most of this route is outside the National Park area, in 2015 the National Park Authority sought the formal delegation of its maintenance from the highway authority, Pembrokeshire County Council in order to facilitate a programme of “Town to Park” access improvements.



Info and promotion...

Actions for improving information and promotion about linear access has been a consistently popular use of the funding over the lifetime of the programme.

Outdoor Cardiff

Outdoor Cardiff is a partnership and co-ordinated approach to the promotion of the wide range of outdoor amenities, facilities and groups available in Cardiff.

The Outdoor Cardiff website captures outdoor information and links aimed to give the public a single website in which to find information (www.outdoorcardiff.com).

Cardiff Walking Festival – May 2015

This was the third annual walking festival which was to raise awareness of the number of outdoor walking opportunities which occur all year round (e.g. walking groups, events, etc), promote the PROW network (e.g. trail maps, easy transport links to trails, etc), and encourage healthier more active lifestyles.



Info and promotion...

Love2Walk

South Wales: Bridgend

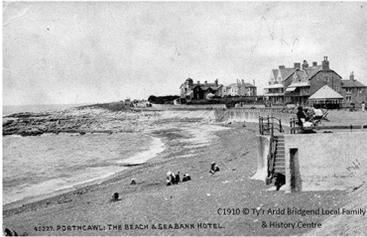
The Rights of Way team were once again involved in the 2015 Love2Walk Festival which was organised in partnership with the Bridgend Local Access Forum.

The Rights of Way team also provided direct funding from the RoWIP Funding Programme to promote the Festival. As a result the event returned to its 9-day format. This resulted in more than 25 walks being held and more than 280 people taking part in the event.



Do you Love2Walk in Bridgend?

Porthcawl Past Walk



©1910 © 1911 Arid Bridgend Local Family & History Centre
42201 PORTHCAWL: THE BEACH & SEABANK HOTEL

New for this year's Love2Walk

Join the volunteers from Porthcawl Museum on a guided tour of Porthcawl and discover its rich Historical Past.

Saturday 2nd November
11.00am

Starting at: The Old Police Station, Porthcawl Museum,
John Street, Porthcawl CF36 3DT

**All children under 16 MUST be accompanied by an adult.
☎: 01656 815078 ✉: love2walk@bridgend.gov.uk 🌐: www.love2walk.co.uk



Bridgend CB Council @BridgendCBC - Jun 16

The @Love2WalkWales walking festival starts this Saturday. Download the online brochure: bit.ly/1XRYfoC



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Info and promotion...

As well as the above examples of the range of things delivered across Wales in 2015/16 there was a noticeable increase in the number of authorities that referred to using social media to publicise their ROWIP work

In reply to National Park Warden
National Parks UK @uknationalparks · 14 Mar 2015
#whatWeDo RT @BBParkWarden: Landrover out working today in the snow, Waun Fach Airlift -getting the staff to site



Ramblers Cymru
September 8, 2015 · €

Like Page

Powys Ramblers are helping lead the way with rights of way work in Powys County Council in a new pilot scheme. New volunteer leaders will work alongside rights of way officers to lead and co-ordinate footpath maintenance work which will increase the capacity to improve access to the Powys countryside for the enjoyment of everyone. <http://buff.ly/1K3Nsv6>



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Monmouthshire Countryside

November 25, 2015 · €

Like Page

We have been out training & installing people counters today. (Funded by @WelshGovernment #ROWIP grant) ^RG <https://t.co/NLEuLcblGA>



Mon Countryside (@MonCountryside) posted a photo on Twitter

Get the whole picture - and other photos from Mon Countryside

PIC.TWITTER.COM/NLEULCBLGA | BY MON COUNT...

8

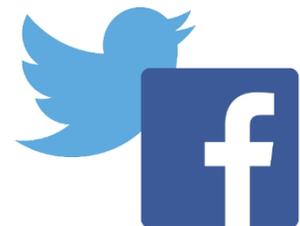
Like Comment Share

Powys County Council
July 27, 2015 · €

Like Page

Latest news item: Volunteers help lead the way with rights of way work: Improvement work to paths and parks in Powys are to be led by a team of volunteers as part of a new... <http://dlvr.it/BRXWjd>

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Improving information for management...

This year eight projects to improve records and databases for the purpose of access management were completed. This accounted for 8% of the RFP funding.

North Wales: Powys

Digitisation of Definitive Map data for former county of Radnorshire

ROWIP funding was provided in 2015-16 to allow for digitisation of the data for the former county of Radnorshire.

The Definitive Map data has now been digitised for the whole of Radnorshire, at a scale of 1:10,000 (being the scale of the Definitive Map).

As a result of the ROWIP-funded work, Powys County Council now holds:

- Digital rights of way data for all three of the former shire areas (Montgomeryshire, Breconshire and Radnorshire)
- Electronic scans of the working copy Definitive Map sheets for Radnorshire and Breconshire, as they were at the time of scanning.
- Electronic scans of all of the legal orders made in Breconshire and Radnorshire, since each of the two Definitive Maps were last republished. The digital rights of way data for the three former shire areas is in separate datasets.

Holding public rights of way information, including legal orders, in digital form makes it significantly quicker and more convenient to locate information for the team's daily work and to provide information to the public.

Similar work was also completed by Rhondda Cynon Taff Borough Council.

Improving information for management...

North Wales: Denbighshire

Network Hierarchy and Surveying Project

Denbighshire Rights of Way team have implemented a tablet system for the routine survey of rights of way and promoted routes.

This system has been rolled out jointly by rights of way and countryside services in an effort to share information and knowledge about the current state of the network and to better plan future upgrades across the network.

South Wales: Cardiff

Processing Legal Event Modification Order and updating the Definitive Map

Cardiff Council have completed all their Parish definitive map modification orders which have been presented to Legal Services and the Orders confirmed in preparation for the Omnibus Order. This will amalgamate the Excluded Area Map and newly claimed Public Rights of Way's to complete Cardiff's first Definitive Map since 1954.

The Public Rights of Way team are undertaking "Lost Byway" research with an aim to solidifying the network and providing more circular walks and strategic links.

In addition the Public Rights of Way team are involved in a Green Infrastructure Group in the Planning Service Area to safeguard the environment and provide links within green areas of the County.

Investing in Staff and People...

On the basis of information from the authorities funded under the Programme, during 2015/16 **7** people were directly employed using the ROWIP Funding Programme compared with **9.5** staff the previous year.

Some of the posts that were included:

Cardiff: Outdoor Cardiff Projects

Ceredigion : Project Coordinator

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park– Public ROW survey & Improvements Officer

Resource used for ROWIP Implementation	No of days spent on ROWIP works
Existing internal Local Authority staff (a combination of permanent and FTA)	2145
Contractors	1455
Volunteers	657
Consultants	272
Other staff related resources e.g administration	86

As well as delivering through own staff, consultants and contractors, in bringing together this casework report the involvement and contribution that volunteers make to access improvement in Wales was evident. Together with examples included earlier in this report, some specific examples are highlighted overleaf...

Managing the network and volunteers...

Mid and West Wales: Ceredigion

Llangeitho

25 Aberystwyth University students gained valuable practical experience over four days. Two new footbridges have now been installed and gates have replaced stiles, making it a more user friendly path for people of all ages and abilities.

A choice of circular walks is now available from Llangeitho including a two and a nine mile circular route incorporating the newly improved path. It is hoped that these improvements will attract more visitors to the area as well as being used by the local community.



Aeron Valley & Lledrod

Work has been carried out on a network of bridleways in the Aeron Valley, and on bridleways linking Lledrod to the Ystwyth Trail with the assistance of a volunteer group from the Lampeter Ramblers Association.

These bridleways were already accessible but they have now been upgraded to an improved standard with better way-marking.

The improvements have benefited the communities providing a much improved network of Rights of Way for horse riders, cyclists and ramblers.

The beautiful Aeron Valley can now be appreciated from several different vantage points along its length.



Thank you to all the Local Authorities who have contributed to the compilation of this report, all photographs are provided by the respective authority.

Note that the information gathered here has come directly from the Local Authorities end of year reports for the last year of RFP.

Report compiled by Rich Dearing, Recreation and Access Advisor and Susan Jackson, ROWIP Funding Officer

