



The Vale of Glamorgan Council

ROWIP Workshop: Principles and Aims

Local Access Forum Sep 2018

1. Vision

The 2007 ROWIP introduced the following *Vision* for public rights of way and countryside access in the Vale of Glamorgan

Vision

To provide, maintain and improve the network of Public Rights of Way and countryside access for everyone.

AND

To enable and encourage increasingly convenient and responsible use and enjoyment of the Vale's countryside and coast

Questions

Through discussion as a LAF:

1.1 Do the LAF still agree the *Vision* as stated or does it require amendment?

- a. Is there anything that is not encapsulated within the vision that should be
- b. Is there anything that is in the current vision that should not be

c. Is there anything that is in the current vision that should remain subject to alteration

Considerations

The following considerations emerge from the assessment and may inform the above questions.

Vale of Glamorgan Wellbeing Objectives:

- To enable people to get involved, participate in their local communities and shape local services
- To reduce poverty and tackle inequalities linked to deprivation
- To give children the best start in life
- To protect, enhance and value the environment.

Vale of Glamorgan Wellbeing Plan key links to ROWIP

- Volunteering (loneliness, skills, physical and mental wellbeing)
- High quality environment (encouraging physical activity, biodiversity)
- Tourism & destinations (supporting economic well-being)

Active Travel

- Links to plans and aspirations to encourage active travel on routine journeys

Corporate Plan Well Being Objectives

- An inclusive and safe Vale
- An environmentally responsible and prosperous Vale
- An aspirational and culturally vibrant Vale
- An active

and

healthy

Vale.

2. Principles

During the process of producing the 2007 publication the LAF and the VoG PROW team developed a set of principles intended to provide guidance for the development and implementation of the ROWIP.

The principles provided a context within which aims and actions could be framed. Six principles were agreed:

No.	Principle	Description
1	Access for all	Improvements and changes to the ROW network and access land surfaces, multi-use where practicable and have regard to safety issues for users and occupiers. Availability of parking, access by public transport and on site facilities are important considerations. The benefits of access to the countryside to other interest groups and organisations should be promoted.
2	Management strategy	The network will be managed with a strategic, long-term view which underpins annual workplans. Day to day management will be based on the best available information. Management criteria will be used to help select priorities. The Council will promote a participatory approach to management, encouraging stakeholders such as Community Councils, local interest groups and volunteers to become actively involved in the monitoring and management of the network.
3	Sustainable improvements	The future shape, condition and use of the network depends on how it is used and supported by its stakeholders. Access improvements should also be sympathetic to nature conservation and the environment, and be appropriate for both landowners and users. New or improvement schemes must be affordable and maintainable. Best use of resources should be made through assuring viability, partnership working, seeking grant sponsorship, and through promoting local and voluntary help.
4	Better information	Use of the network, as well as its day-to-day and longer-term management, is dependent on accurate, appropriate and available information. This includes the Definitive Map and on- and off-site route information. The Council will strive to create, maintain and make available this information base for the managers of the network and its users.
5	Improved network of routes	Changes to the existing provision and any additional routes should be based upon agreed management criteria. Potential for multi-use, permissive paths and access agreements should be considered in investigating

		new routes for bridleways and cycle routes. The ultimate aim is for a coherent network of routes, meeting the needs of its users, with minimal impact on landowners and occupiers.
6	Wider context.	Proposals in the ROWIP should accord with, and feed into other policy documents including the Community Plan, the Local Development Plan, the Local Transport Plan and the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy. Relationship to other ROWIPs, other relevant regional and national strategies, other thematic areas and cross boundary linkages are important considerations.

Questions

By working in groups, focussing on two principles, each:

1.1 In what ways, if any, should each principle be expanded, amended or refined

Through discussion as a LAF:

1.2 Are any of the principles better reflected as aims of groupings of work

1.3 Do the LAF still agree the *Principles* as stated?

- a. Are there any *Principles* that are missing which should be developed
- b. Are there any *Principles* that are currently included that need not be

Considerations

The evaluation of future needs and opportunities undertaken within the assessment highlighted the following emerging messages:

- Users of the Vale's ROW appreciate the opportunity that the ROW offer to be able to enjoy many positive aspects of being outdoors in the countryside.
- The coast is a great draw for residents and visitors alike, but favourite and frequently used routes are spread across the Vale.
- The importance of signage throughout the length of a route, not just at the point it leaves the highway.
- The value of the promoted routes leaflets, both online and in hard copy, for providing ideas and guidance of routes.

- Community Councils are seen as having potential in several ways – helping provide volunteer resource, providing information about routes, reporting problems, maintenance etc.
- Volunteers are seen as very important for maintaining the future condition of the network.
- There is an appetite for more opportunities to use the ROW network to provide better connections between settlements, enabling people to avoid increasingly dangerous roads, providing for purposeful journeys without using a car.
- It needs to be easy for anyone to report a problem and know what happens as a result of their reporting. At present, the situation is complicated for users because of the number of actors, i.e. Vale of Glamorgan ROW team, Valeways, Heritage Coast rangers, Ramblers Big Path Watch.
- There is a wish to make it quicker and simpler to deal with modifications, particularly where it is a ‘common sense’ matter.
- Participants want landowners to be more pro-active in relation to their responsibilities for ROW; to do this, information needs to be available for them on the web, but face-to-face workshop-type approaches are also favoured.
- Although cars are frequently used to get to the start of routes, public transport is also used and should not be ignored.
- The financial constraints on the Council’s ROW team are recognised, with suggestions of how to increase resources available for ROW improvements, in particular through volunteering and increased Community Council support.
- The barriers to using the ROW in the Vale which are faced by users and non-users at this time are similar to those identified in the first ROWIP, and reflect those identified more generally, e.g. in the Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey, i.e. physical barriers such as stiles, personal health and disability, lack of time, weather.
- There have been noticeable improvements over the period of the first ROWIP, including replacing stiles with kissing gates, improved signage and new bridleways, but there are still a lot of improvements needed.
- There is a demand for more bridleways, both from riders and mountain bike users, particularly along the coast.
- Women from BME communities are more likely to visit known locations and attractions, and in a group rather than as individuals. Personal safety and issues with dog behaviour are their biggest concerns.

3. Aims

Within the 2007 ROWIP three main groupings of work were identified. Within each of the main groupings several themes were collected and within those these key aims identified. Actions were developed beneath these aims.

The structure of the 2007 ROWIP from groupings to aims is shown below.

Group	Theme	Types of work	Aims
Management	Legal work	Definitive Map Enforcement Modification Orders	To bring the Definitive Map up to date To maintain the Definitive Map as a basis for timely and effective legal processes.
	Maintenance	Hierarchy of routes Surfacing Furniture Clearance	To maintain the Vale's Public Rights of Way network in a condition suitable for the intended type and level of use. To create and maintain an effective information base to inform maintenance planning. To adopt a county-wide policy/standard for maintenance of furniture and surfaces.
	Resourcing	Funding Staffing Awareness-raising about PROW	To harness enough resources – financial and manpower – to enable high quality maintenance and improvements. To raise awareness of the ROWIP to generate support for its implementation
	Volunteer involvement	Valeways Opportunities for other volunteer input	To enable greater involvement by volunteers and stakeholders in the management and improvement of the network.
Stakeholders	The range of users	Changes/additions to the network Meeting needs unique to particular user groups	To ensure that the Vale has a network which is welcoming to and fit for all different types of users. To implement the principle of least restrictive access wherever practicable.
	Landowners and occupiers	Sharing information and good practice, investigating a more	A network which meets the needs of its users, whilst minimising the impacts on landowners and occupiers.

		coherent network of routes.	
	Organisations / interest bodies and neighbouring authorities	Making links with other organisations and interest bodies, including neighbouring Authorities.	To increase the number and range of potential partners. To build relationships with external bodies that can contribute to improving and maintaining the network.
Information, Communication & Promotion	Off-site	Websites Leaflets & booklets Media Other awareness-raising	To create and maintain an up-to-date information resource about the network which is available to all stakeholders, especially current and potential users.
	On-site	Signage and waymarks Information boards Awareness-raising	To ensure that all users have the information they need to enjoy the network and use it responsibly

The new ROWIP will include an annex delivery plans enabling actions to be revised periodically.

Questions

Through discussion as a LAF:

1.1 Can the groupings or themes be refined in any way

1.2 Are there any types of work that

- a. Are missing which should be developed
- b. Are currently included that need not be

1.3 Are there any headline aims that are missing

