The Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Improving Countryside Access in the Vale

VALE of GLAMORGAN

BRO MORGANNWG

FOREWORD

This draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) outlines the strategies that will form the basis for management of the Vale of Glamorgan's rights of way network over the next 10 years.

The 2022 draft ROWIP builds on the work contained within the Vale of Glamorgan's first Rights of Way Improvement Plan, published in 2007. The 2022 draft updates the previous plan by incorporating key pieces of legislation, guidance and strategy released since publication of the first plan and by evaluating the past, present and future influences on countryside access in the Vale.

We would very much like to know what you think, particularly about the Aims, the proposed actions and the overall timeframe within the draft. Your comments will be reported to the Local Access Forum, and the Council's Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. All of the comments will be taken into account in the preparation of the final Rights of Way Improvement Plan. Once adopted this will become a Statutory document. Please let us have your views.

XX,
Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment.

To send us your views, you can either: Email us, at
rowip@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

or
Write to us at:
ROWIP, Rights of Way Team,
The Vale of Glamorgan Council,
Dock Office,
Barry Docks,
Barry, CF63 4RT.

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael hefyd yn Gymraeg ac mewn print bras

This document is also available in Welsh and large print

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Vale of Glamorgan Council (VOG) is required to review, update and publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). The ROWIP is intended as an over-arching framework to guide the Council's work to maintain and improve the county's rights of way network and to prioritise the work that is done. The ROWIP will provide clear objectives within a statement of action and be accompanied by a delivery plan that will form the basis for annual work-planning. The Rights of Way (ROW) team has been working to prepare this ROWIP since 2017. The process that has been followed includes: a review of the previous ROWIP; an evaluation of the current condition of the network and its legal record; a review of relevant strategy documents; and an evaluation of future needs and opportunities.

With the Local Access Forum, the Council has agreed a Vision for the Vale's public rights of way network:

"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".

All of the work will be underlain by six key principles:

1. Access for all
2. Management strategy
3. Sustainable improvements
4. Better information
5. Improved network of routes
6. Wider context.

The Vale is a diverse county, including a lengthy shoreline, good agricultural land and urban centres. There are approximately 573 kilometres (km) of public rights of way (PROW) in the Vale of Glamorgan. The network includes:

- 511 km of footpaths
- 40 km of bridleways
- 22 km of Restricted Byways

In addition, the Glamorgan Heritage Coast and county's two country parks are very popular countryside attractions.
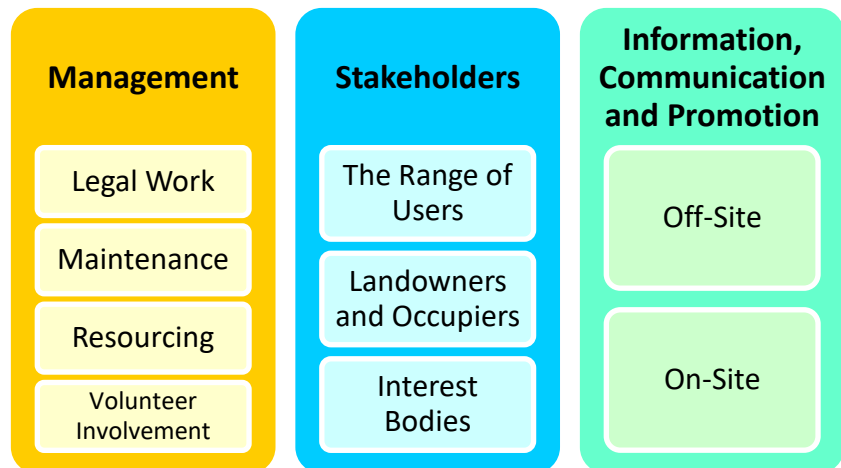
Access and public rights of way in the Vale are managed by the Council's rights of way team, currently three permanent posts. The team is supported by grant funded regional project officers working jointly across authorities, Country Park and Heritage Coast rangers. The team also work closely with the Local Access Forum, who assist officers with ideas and advice to help bring about local access improvements and a range of user and partner organisations.

The assessment undertaken as part of the preparation of the new ROWIP showed a wide spectrum of issues and opportunities. These included a need for signage beyond the roadside, efficient reporting systems, information on rights and responsibilities, and greater bridleway provision. Users highlighted an appreciation of access to the Vale's coastline, noticeable accessibility improvements since the previous ROWIP and the importance of volunteer groups and community councils in delivering work as opportunities.

For the purposes of the ROWIP, three main groupings of work have been identified and reviewed:

- Management
- Stakeholders
- Information, communication and promotion.

Each of these main groupings has been broken down into several themes, as shown below.

Management	Stakeholders	Information, Communication and Promotion
Legal Work	The Range of Users	Off-Site
Maintenance	Landowners and Occupiers	
Resourcing	Interest Bodies	On-Site
Volunteer Involvement		

For each theme, there is an overall Aim or Aims, together with a number of Actions which we hope will help the Council to achieve these Aims.

A tabular version of the Actions – the Statement of Action, outlines these including links to Delivery Plans that provide more detail on workflows to implement those actions.

Contents

ABBREVIATIONS & GLOSSARY

BHS   British Horse Society

BOAT   Byway open to all traffic – a right of way open to all types of users including horse-drawn and motor vehicles

CAMS   Countryside Access Management System – a graphical information system (GIS), designed specifically for public rights of way sections

CLBA   Country Land and Business Association

CROW   Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 – Legislation covering countryside access and protection of the rural environment, and includes the requirement for local authorities to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan

DMMO Definitive Map Modification Order – a legal order that allows changes to be incorporated into the Definitive Map.

FUW   Farmers Union of Wales.

GIS   Graphical Information System – a computer package that combines mapped data and additional information

Ha   Hectare

km   Kilometre

LAF   Local Access Forum – consultation body created under the CROW Act, consisting of interested members of the public acting in a voluntary capacity

NFU   National Farmers Union

NRW   Natural Resources Wales – the Governments statutory advisor on environmental, forestry and countryside issues (successor of the Countryside Council for Wales).

PROW   Public Right Of Way – a route where the public have 'a right of passage' to travel to and fro over land along a defined route. The Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way is the legal document that records these routes.

ROW   Public Right of Way – as above

ROWIP Rights of Way Improvement Plan

SUSTRANS Sustainable Transport organistion

LDP   Local Development Plan – Local Authorities development plan.

VOG   Vale of Glamorgan Council

WG   Welsh Government – The devolved government body that is responsible for most public expenditure in Wales, and has powers to make a wide range of legislation

1 THE RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ROWIP)

1.1 *Purpose Of Our Rights Of Way Improvement Plan*

The Vale of Glamorgan Council, as a Highway Authority, is required (under Section 60 of The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000) to develop and publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). The ROWIP is intended as a strategic document which will help the Council to manage the rights of way network for residents and visitors. Welsh Government guidance describes ROWIPs as "the prime means by which local highway authorities should identify, prioritise and plan for improvements to local rights of way".

Guidance for Local Authorities on Rights of Way Improvement Plans (2016) advises that a revised ROWIP should assess:

- The extent to which local rights of way meet the present and future needs of the public;
- The opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and the enjoyment of the authority's area;
- The accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted people and others with mobility problems.
- The degree to which the previous ROWIP has been delivered
- The present condition of the network and its record
- Opportunities to contribute to Active Travel objectives
- Opportunities to contribute to Well-being objectives
- Opportunities to contribute to the delivery of other plans and priorities

Having undertaken an assessment the ROWIP should describe a *Statement of Actions* covering long term and strategic goals for the management and improvement of the network of rights of way. In addition to a statement of actions the ROWIP should support the development of *Delivery Plans* which are focussed actions and short term commitments within

dynamic work plans that are annexed to, though outside of, the formal ROWIP document

In the Vale, we want the ROWIP to provide an over-arching framework to guide the Council's work to maintain and improve the county's rights of way network and to prioritise what we do. This draft ROWIP presents what we have found out so far through the assessment work and it outlines our ideas for our strategic approach to maintaining and improving the Vale's rights of way network.

1.2 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**

1.3 Principles

The Local Access Forum (LAF) and the Council's Rights of Way team have reviewed a set of principles, which are intended to provide guidance for the development and implementation of the ROWIP.

When policies and action proposals are presented within the ROWIP, Statement of Action and Delivery Plans, it will be important to ensure that these principles are being followed. They should also help to establish future work programmes and bids for resourcing.

Principle 1. ACCESS FOR ALL
Improvements and changes to the ROW network, access land and surfaces should be practicable and have regard to safety issues for users and occupiers. Consideration for minimisation of obstructions by applying least restrictive access principles should be embraced. The benefits of access to the countryside to under represented groups and organisations should be promoted.

Principle 2. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The network will be managed with a strategic, long-term view, which underpins delivery plans, consistent with the resources available. 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 monitoring and managing the network.

Principle 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, the environment, and be appropriate for both landowners and users. New or improvement schemes must be affordable, maintainable and appropriate within the context of agricultural and other relevant public policy. Best use of resources should be made through assuring viability, partnership working, seeking grant sponsorship, and through promoting local and voluntary help.

Principle 4. BETTER INFORMATION

Use of the network, as well as it's 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 improve awareness of and access to information and explore opportunities to integrate available technologies.

Principle 5. IMPROVED NETWORK OF ROUTES

Changes to existing provision and any additional routes should be consistent with active travel and wellbeing objectives. Potential for multi-use, permissive paths and access agreements should be considered in

investigating new routes for bridleways and cycle routes. Availability of parking, access by public transport and on site facilities are important considerations The ultimate aim is for a coherent network of routes, meeting the needs of its users, with minimal impact on landowners and occupiers.

Principle 6. WIDER CONTEXT
Proposals in the ROWIP should accord with, and feed into other policy documents including Wellbeing Plans, the Local Development Plan, the Local Transport Plan and the Corporate Plan and any revisions to access legislation that may be enacted. Relationship to other ROWIPs, other relevant regional and national strategies, other thematic areas and cross boundary linkages are important considerations.

2   INTRODUCTION TO RIGHTS OF WAY IN THE VALE

2.1   A portrait of the Vale of Glamorgan

The Vale of Glamorgan is the southernmost county in Wales, with a lengthy shoreline on the Severn Estuary. With some of the best agricultural land in Wales, the Vale appears as a rural green lung surrounded by the capital city, Cardiff to the east, the South Wales Valley towns to the north and Bridgend to the west.

The two major towns of Barry and Penarth, together with the smaller settlements of Dinas Powys, Sully and Wenvoe, make up the more urban eastern part of the Vale. The rolling farmland of the central and western Vale provides the setting for the two historic market towns of Cowbridge and Llantwit Major. There are many small areas of woodland scattered through the Vale, the biggest being Hensol Forest which covers some 227 hectares (ha).

The 45kms of varied coastline of the Vale make this the number one attraction to both visitors and residents. From the popular beaches and promenades of Barry and Penarth in the west of the Vale, to the 20 km length of the stunning Glamorgan Heritage Coast in the west, the sea proves a major magnet for recreation, including swimming and surfing, sailing and boating, and fishing, (as well as more informal pursuits). Visitors can provide a welcome economic benefit to the area, and improving access can make a contribution to this.

The beaches at Barry, Penarth, Ogmore by Sea, Dunraven Bay and Llantwit Major attract many thousands of visitors each year. At peak times, some of the more rural sites are overwhelmed by the numbers of visitors, putting a huge strain on both site management and the highway network. The Wales Coast Path opened in 2012 attracting headlines nationally and internationally as a

major walking route. The coast path continues to be supported by the Welsh Government through grant funding administered by Natural Resources Wales and is a key tourism asset attracting high visitor numbers off the back of its strong brand.

In the east of the Vale, two very popular attractions are the two country parks. Just west of Barry, Porthkerry Country Park's 89 ha of woodland and meadows also adjoin the sea, providing a link between urban Barry and its rural hinterland. The 80 ha of Cosmeston Lakes Country Park near Penarth has lakes, woodland and meadows, as well as a fascinating reconstructed Medieval Village based on the original site. One of the most popular country parks in Wales, this site attracts thousands of visitors each year. Again, this can cause local access problems and congestion.

In the heart of the Vale, Dyffryn Gardens is listed Grade 1 in the Cadw Register of Park and Gardens, with 22 ha of feature gardens and an arboretum. Part of the National Trust's estate, the gardens are a popular heritage attraction.

One element linking these disparate sites is the 574 km of public rights of way, which provide a good network of paths around communities and visitor sites. In addition, the 26 acres of common land add over 520 ha of access land providing further opportunities for recreation and leisure.

It is this network of routes and access land that is the focus for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

2.2 Who manages Public Rights of Way in the Vale?

The Public Rights of Way network in the Vale of Glamorgan is managed by the Council's rights of way team – currently three permanent posts, led by the Public Rights of Way Officer. Two additional officers delivering project work on the Wales Coast Path and on a Green Trails (Bridle and Bike) network are shared regionally. In total the team covers:

- Managing the network (including strategy, information and promoted routes)
- Maintaining the network
- Protecting the network (enforcement)
- Recording the network (definitive map)
- Changing the network (diverting and altering paths)

The rights of way team work closely with the Countryside Service's ranger teams based in the Glamorgan Heritage Coast area and the Vale's two country parks. The work includes regular clearance, maintenance and improvement of paths as well as liasing with landowners and local communities . Similarly, Valeways, the Ramblers Association and other volunteer organisations help considerably throughout the county, undertaking footpath maintenance, running walk programs and producing walk leaflets.

The Rights of Way team are supported by the Local Access Forum, which was formed in October 2003, in line with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000). It comprises people with a wide variety of interests in the county's rights of way network. Its role is to support officers with ideas and advice to help bring about local access improvements.

2.3   More information about PROW
If you would like more information on any aspects of Public Rights of Way in the Vale of Glamorgan, the members of the team can be contacted at:

Public Rights of Way
Regeneration and Planning
Vale of Glamorgan Council
Dock Offices, Barry
CF62 4RT

Telephone (01446) 700111 for general enquiries.

Email: PublicFootpaths@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

2.4   What are Public Rights of Way?
Public Rights of Way include Footpaths, Bridleways, Restricted Byways and Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs, of which there presently are none in the Vale), all of which enable people to experience the wider countryside in a variety of ways. Permissive routes may also exist for public use when agreed by a landowner. The diagram below shows what uses are allowed by law for each type of right of way.

| Footpaths (511km) | Bridleways (40km) | Restricted Byways (22km) |
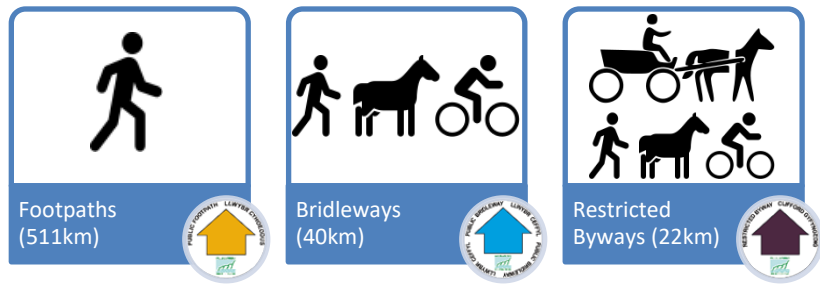
2.5   Public Rights of Way in the Vale

There are approximately 573km of public rights of way in the Vale of Glamorgan. This includes:

- 511 km of footpaths
- 40 km of bridleways
- 22 km of restricted byways

Please refer to the following page to see a map showing their distribution. As this map shows, footpaths can be found in all parts of the County, although in greater density in some areas, often close to towns and villages. Bridleways are scarce and scattered; a number of Community Council areas have none at all. The greatest concentration is found in St Bride's Major Community Council area. Restricted Byways are also uncommon and tend to run for short distances linking farm roads. Historically, routes developed based on local people's needs, primarily to link communities or along people's routes to work. Nowadays the network is used predominantly for leisure purposes. There is, as a result, a need to develop the network for a wider range of users particularly for horse riders and cyclists. There are two long-distance trails shown on the Ordnance Survey Map, The Wales Coast Path and The Valeways Millennium Heritage Trail, which is a circular route around the Vale.
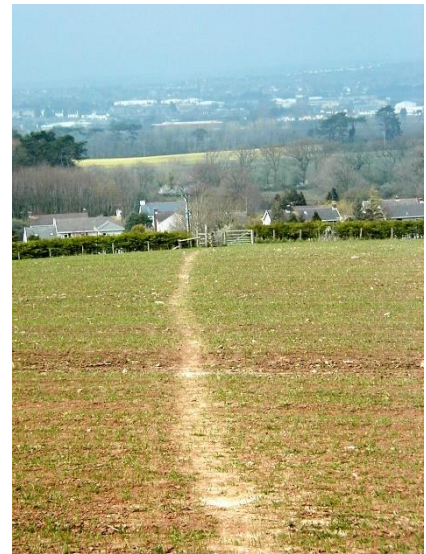
Port Talbot
Caerphilly
Llantrisant
Rhondda Cynon Taf
Bridgend
Cardiff
Cardiff

update

The Vale of Glamorgan

Barry

Public Rights of Way

Public Rights of Way

— Footpath

— Bridleway

- - Restricted Byway

— Wales Coast Path

— Millenium Heritage Trail

☐ County Boundaries

1:125000
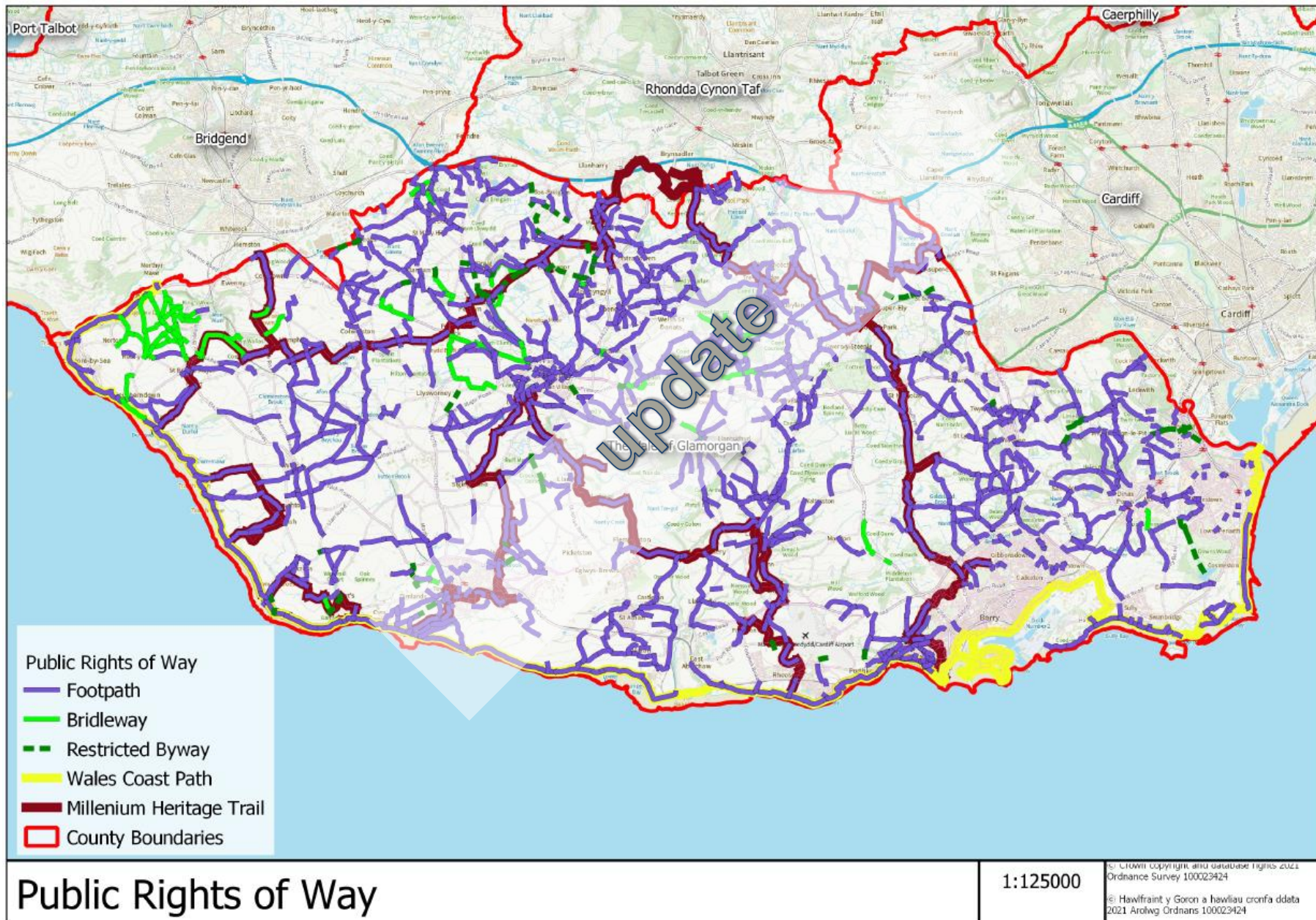
2.6 Other forms of access

The public rights of way network is not the only way to access the countryside in the Vale. In addition, there are:

- **Permissive paths** – these are mostly short stretches of path, in some cases helping to complete a longer route or circular walk by linking existing footpaths. (Permissive paths are not defined in law, but exist because of the agreement of the landowner to establish a route).

- **Green lanes** – several green lanes have been identified, found in the central and eastern parts of the county. (A Green Lane is a term with no legal meaning. It is a physical description of an (usually) unsurfaced track, normally hedged, and often, but not always, of some antiquity. It may be a footpath, bridleway or carriageway or may carry no public right of way at all. In the instances mentioned above they form part of the adopted highway network, but are no longer maintained to a standard suitable for vehicular traffic. They do not appear on the Definitive Map.).

- **Cycle routes** –The County has seen an expansion of cycling opportunities during the past decade. This has included developments to National Cycle Network route 88 through the Vale, provision of major cycling routes alongside existing infrastructure and development of links between settlements. The Active Travel Act has provided a more recent driver for identification of opportunities and promotion of cycling as an alternative means of transport with integrated network maps setting out a vision for further expansion in the future.

- **Common land** – There are over 500 ha of common land in the Vale of Glamorgan, but over 70% of it is concentrated in the west. This has been formally recognised as access land under the provisions of the CROW Act 2001. The largest single area of registered

common land comprises Ogmore Down and Old Castle Down (372 ha) around St Bride's Major, with another large area at Stalling Down and St Hilary Down (91 ha) on the eastern side of Cowbridge. Mynydd Ruthin in the north, St Lythan Downs near St Nicholas, together with the two commons in Dinas Powys, are the other sizeable areas. The remainder are smaller commons - such as those at Leckwith and Llanblethian - and the 18 village greens.

- **Forestry with public access** – there are two sizeable areas of forestry with public access: Hensol Forest, managed by the Forestry Commission and Cwm George/Case Hill Wood, which is a Woodland Trust site on the northern edge of Dinas Powys.

- **Country parks** – there are two country parks in the Vale. Porthkerry Country Park lies just to the west of Barry, and Cosmeston Lakes Country Park on the western outskirts of Penarth.

- **Access to the foreshore** – importantly for a coastal county, at least 18 important locations have been identified along the length of the county's coastline that allow access to the foreshore. This is mostly informal, but includes some promenades and slipways.

- **Nature reserves and other wildlife sites** – there are 8 small nature reserves in the Vale of Glamorgan managed by The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales, but not all of them have public access. The National Trust has only one small reserve, a bog to the west of Peterston-super-Ely.
[A map for all of these is available on request from the Rights of Way team].

3   THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The ROWIP sits within a broad context framed by national legislation and its implementation at a county level. Since the Vale's first ROWIP, two particularly important pieces of legislation have been introduced: the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) and the Environment Act (2016). In this same time period, the Active Travel Act (2013) has also brought about new requirements. Locally, this new legislation has led to the production of the Vale's Well-being assessment and draft Plan, and the implementation of a process towards Active Travel route maps and integrated network maps. As previously, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Corporate Plan is of core relevance to the ROWIP, as is the Local Development Plan.

3.1   Newly available strategies and documents

- **The Well Being of Future Generations Act** – The Act is focussed on improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It contains seven national well-being goals being a prosperous Wales; a resilient Wales; a healthier Wales; a more equal Wales; a Wales of cohesive communities; a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language; and a globally responsive Wales

  The Act also introduced the sustainable development principle and five ways of working that are seen as key to changing how organisations work to ensure that they "act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The five ways of working are long term; prevention; integration; collaboration; involvement

- **Managing today's natural resources for tomorrow's generations 2017/18**
  Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has published its first Well-being Statement, Managing today's natural resources for tomorrow's generations 2017/18. The document outlines the organisation's well-being objectives and how they contribute to Welsh Government's seven well-being goals for Wales, as well as the steps they will take to deliver them. The well-being objectives are to:
    1. Champion the Welsh environment and the sustainable management of Wales' natural resources Ensure land and water in Wales is managed sustainably and in an integrated way

2. Improve the resilience and quality of our ecosystems
3. Reduce the risk to people and communities from environmental hazards like flooding and pollution
4. Help people live healthier and more fulfilled lives
5. Promote successful and responsible business, using natural resources without damaging them
6. Develop NRW into an excellent organisation, delivering first class customer service.

In due course, the new duty on Natural Resources Wales to produce Area Statements – as a tool for bringing about sustainable management of natural resources – will be relevant to the Vale's strategic priorities for rights of way.

- **The Environment Act**
  The Environment Act is focussed on planning and managing Wales' natural resources in a more proactive, sustainable and joined up way. It covers: sustainable management of natural resources; climate change; charges for carrier bags; collection and disposal of waste, fisheries for shellfish and marine licensing; flood and coastal erosion committee and land drainage. In relation to sustainable management of natural resources, the Act provides a framework comprising The State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) – published in 2016, a National Natural Resources Policy and Area Statements

- **Vale of Glamorgan Well-being Plan 2018-2023: Our Vale – Our Future –** The Plan is published by the Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board (PSB), as a requirement under the Well-being of Future Generations Act. It is a statement of the PSB's commitment to improve local well-being for today and for future generations. It outlines a shared vision for the Vale in 2050 and describes four well-being objectives that together provide the framework for core collaborative activities. Key links with the ROWIP include promotion of volunteering; aspirations for a high quality environment; recognition of health, social and economic benefits associated with access and outdoor; links to tourist assets including the Glamorgan Heritage Coast, the Wales Coast Path, attractive countryside and Country Parks, a strong activity product including horse-riding, and a well established network of walking routes; and consideration of open spaces as they relate to biodiversity and active travel.

- **The Vale of Glamorgan Well-being Assessment -** The assessment considers wellbeing across the whole of the area and within particular communities. Data sources include statistical data, public engagement information and academic research. The assessment is structured around three key areas: Having a healthy and active future; being part of safe and inclusive communities; maximising opportunities and attainment. The assessment process

included a detailed Evidence Report on the environment from which key findings are included in the Assessment report. Key links between the well-being assessment and the ROWIP include a focus on the environment as an essential part of wellbeing; the Vale's environmental assets and heritage; positive public feedback towards coastal and green spaces; reference to the public rights of way network; and active travel opportunities.

- **Active travel -** Active travel is defined as walking and cycling (including the use of mobility scooters) for everyday journeys, e.g. to school, work, shops or to access services such as health and leisure centres.

  The Active Travel Act makes it a legal requirement for the Vale of Glamorgan Council to map and plan for suitable routes for active travel within certain of its settlements as specified by Welsh Government.

  The process saw the production of Existing Route Maps showing routes suitable for active travel and which meet the standards set by Welsh Government. The Vale's Existing Route Maps for pedestrian and cycle use were approved by Welsh Government in 2015, covering Barry, Dinas Powys, Penarth, Llantwit Major, Rhoose and Cowbridge (pedestrian only). Following this, the Council began work on developing Integrated Network Maps, which set out the Authority's aspirations for improving active travel routes across the county over the next 15 years. These include existing routes which do not yet meet Welsh Government's standards, as well as routes that do not currently exist but have been identified in other strategic plans or through consultation. Integrated Route Maps are published on the Council's website.

3.2   The Corporate Plan and the LDP

The Vale of Glamorgan Corporate Plan 2020-2025

The Corporate Plan is underpinned by four core values:
- Ambitious
- Open
- Together
- Proud

The Plan is based around four well-being outcomes and eight well-being objectives. This aims to promote a more cross-cutting approach, working as 'one council' to deliver priority outcomes. The four well-being outcomes are:
- An inclusive and safe Vale
- An environmentally responsible and prosperous Vale
- An aspirational and culturally vibrant Vale
- An active and healthy Vale.

Key links between the Corporate Plan and the ROWIP include:
- An action to implement Integrated Network and Active Travel Maps to provide residents and visitors with a comprehensive information resource to travel efficiently and safely.
- Protect, preserve and where possible enhance the built, natural and cultural heritage of the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Work in partnership to deliver a range of activities through our leisure and community facilities and parks to increase levels of participation and physical activity.
- Work with the Cardiff and Vale Health and Well-being Board to undertake a range of actions to prevent and tackle obesity and encourage healthy eating and healthier lifestyles.

Local Development Plan 2011-2026 Written Statement June 2017

The Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out the Council's strategy for future land use and development. It was formally adopted on 28th June 2017. It will be used for decision-making to ensure the most efficient use of land and other limited resources, whilst at the same time promoting the regeneration and stimulation of the local economy for the benefit of the present and future population.

Key links between the Local Development Plan and the ROWIP include:
- Strategic Policy 1.6 to protect and enhance the built, natural and coastal environment, and 1.7 to promote opportunities for sustainable tourism and recreation.
- Encouragement of walking and cycling as sustainable and practical alternatives to the private car, supporting healthy lifestyles and reducing impact on the environment.
- Reference to the Welsh Coastal Access Improvement Programme which seeks to improve access to the Welsh coast for local communities and visitor through improvements to existing paths and the development of new routes.
- Policy MG27.2 for the Glamorgan Heritage Coast restricting development to development that is essential for agriculture, nature conservation, informal recreation, low impact tourism or coastal access. Low impact tourism is described as including footpaths.
- Policy MD2 for design of new development, which includes the requirement for all new development to be highly accessible, encouraging walking and cycling, integrating with existing and potential off-site links.

3.3   Other relevant strategies and documents

- **Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey 2014 Final Report -**
  The Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey 2014 Final Report was commissioned by NRW, following previous similar surveys in 2008 and 2011.

  It focussed on public engagement with the natural environment including participation in outdoor recreation, health and economic benefits, attitudes to biodiversity and pro-environmental behaviours.

  At a national scale, this provides relevant contextual data including demographics, trends related to use and identification of barriers to undertaking outdoor recreation.

4   THE ROWIP PROCESS

4.1   How have we prepared the ROWIP so far?

The process the Council has been following is laid out within statutory guidance. It has included preparation of an assessment phase report covering a review of the previous ROWIP; an evaluation of the current condition of the network and it's legal record; an evaluation of future needs and opportunities; and consideration of the strategic context including new strategies and documents published since the previous ROWIP.

The assessment phase report has been developed via a desk exercise reviewing practices, documents and relevant data and also by consulting stakeholders via a series of workshops held around the county. Workshops were attended by representatives of user groups, community and town councils, ward councillors, landowner groups, neighbouring authorities, ethnic minority community representatives and other interested parties.

4.2   Monitoring

The ROWIP is intended to be a long-term strategy for the Vale's rights of way network, guiding maintenance and improvement work over the 10 years following its publication. Over this time, many things will change, but the Council is keen that the ROWIP remains relevant and useable. Unlike the previous ROWIP the guidance provides for the development of delivery plans. These will be provided as an annex to the ROWIP and will allow delivery of the plan to be adaptive, addressing changes and shifting priorities as they emerge over the life of the plan. In order to achieve this, the Council's rights of way team will monitor and review delivery plans annually. This process will include:

- Monitoring progress against the Statement of Action and previous delivery plan on an annual basis, by the Council ROW team. This annual review will include the removal of completed actions, the addition of new actions and the amendments of any others as necessary.
- It will also include consultation and involvement of the Local Access Forum. The LAF will be updated on the year's progress and key emerging issues and their input sought about ideas for new and revised actions.

4.3 How will we use the ROWIP?

The ROWIP provides the strategic framework for all our future management and improvement works for the Vale's public rights of way network. Out of this, we will develop delivery plans, which will provide the detail to guide our daily work.

We have reviewed the previous ROWIP and retained division of work into three main groupings:

- Management
- Stakeholders
- Information, communication and promotion.

Each of these main groupings are broken down into several themes, as we show below.

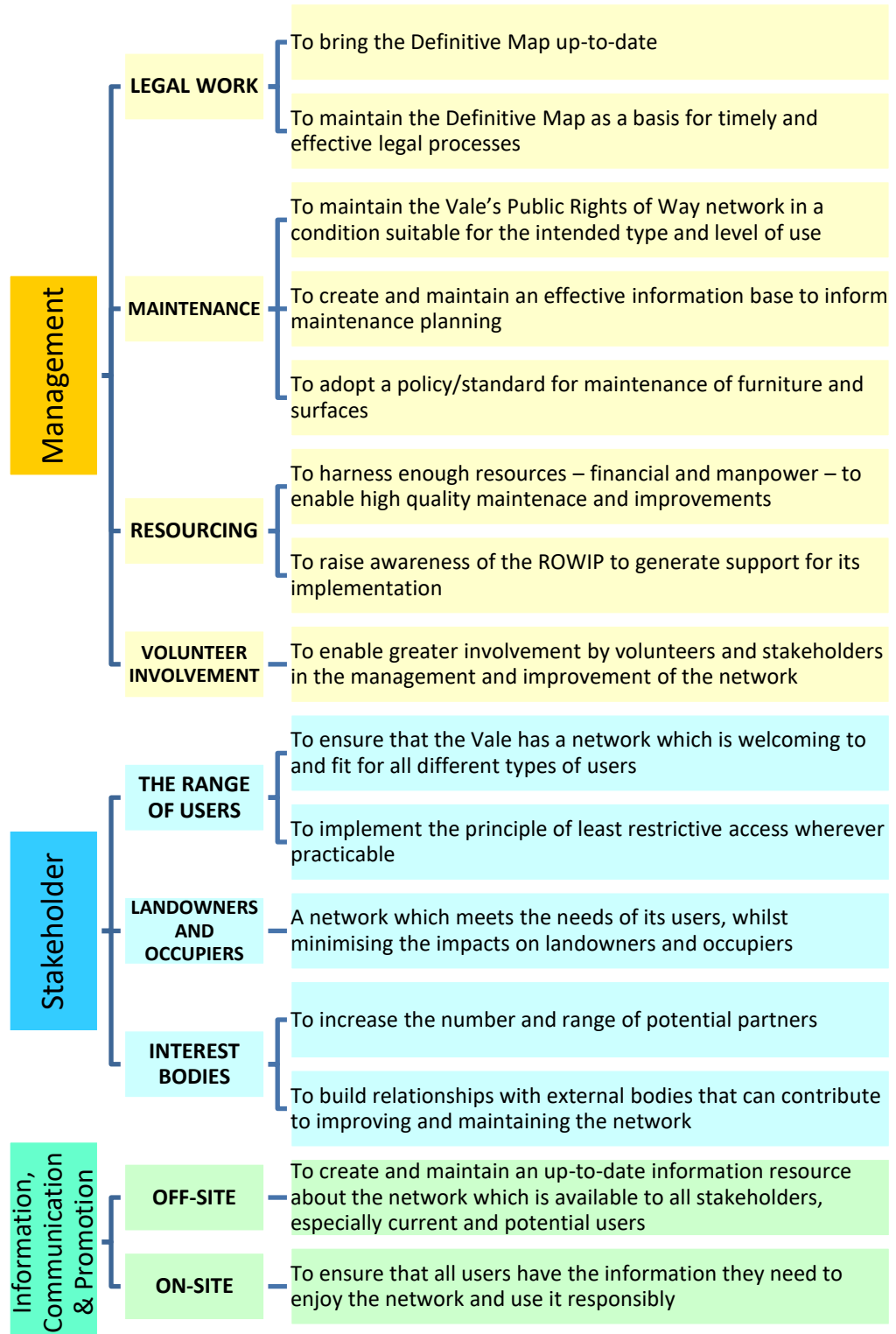| Management |
| --- |
| Legal work |
| Maintenance |
| Resourcing |
| Volunteer involvement |

Stakeholders
The range of users
Landowners and occupiers
Interest bodies

Information, communication and promotion
Off-site
On-site

5   Review of previous ROWIP

5.1 Key Matters

The approach adopted within the current ROWIP follows a similar structure that emerged from the assessment that informed the previous ROWIP. The key grouping, objectives and aims of the previous ROWIP therefore were:

Management

LEGAL WORK
- To bring the Definitive Map up-to-date
- To maintain the Definitive Map as a basis for timely and effective legal processes

MAINTENANCE
- 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 policy/standard for maintenance of furniture and surfaces

RESOURCING
- To harness enough resources – financial and manpower – to enable high quality maintenace and improvements
- To raise awareness of the ROWIP to generate support for its implementation

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT
- To enable greater involvement by volunteers and stakeholders in the management and improvement of the network

Stakeholder

THE RANGE OF USERS
- 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
- A network which meets the needs of its users, whilst minimising the impacts on landowners and occupiers

INTEREST BODIES
- 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
- 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
- To ensure that all users have the information they need to enjoy the network and use it responsibly

These aims were used to develop the statement of action that accompanied the 2007 ROWIP.

5.2 Statement of Action Review

A review of the 2007 statement of action, including achievements, work to take forward and lessons learned is provided below.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS 2007 - REVIEW				
#	**ACTION**	**ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE**	**SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT PHASE**	**LEARNING / FURTHER COMMENTS**	**DONE**
1	Complete a review of the Definitive Map	Published the definitive map.	Continue to review the definitive map on an on-going basis. Republish the definitive map again.	Quality assurance processes can become burdensome where significant time elapses between Def. Map editions.	✅
2	Improve the procedures for keeping the Definitive Map up to date	Processes have been updated. Reporting improved and Authority is much more familiar with Public Inquiry procedures.	Refresh application pack and guidance for Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 s53 orders.	Further possible amendments in future depending on Access Reform delivering changes in statute and policy.	✅
3	Develop and maintain a register of information relating to PROW applications and declarations, as required under the PROW (Registers)(Wales) Regulations 2006	Static registers available to download (pdf) and view in person though limited searchability.	Ensuring compliance with online requirements by delivering an electronic searchable architecture.	Currently achieving part compliance with regulations only.	🟠
4	Formalise the system for responding to requests to remove obstructions* (Examples of obstructions include crop growth, ploughing, fallen trees, man-made barriers, and verbal.)	Implemented GIS solution for logging and managing workload. Improved processes for specific obstructions (cropping)	Refine systems and target dates related to the database.	Internal delegatations require review	✅

MANGEMENT ACTIONS 2007 - REVIEW				
#	**ACTION**	**ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE**	**SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT PHASE**	**LEARNING / FURTHER COMMENTS**
5	Take opportunities to improve the PROW network through conditions or obligations on planning applications associated with development proposals	Advisory notices to make contact with ROW team are included. The Council's S106 officer includes ROW team on funding opporutinty consultation	Continue to take advantage of S106 and its replacement.	Scope of objective is limited. It is not possible to condition matters already required by statute (e.g. path diversions).	✔
6	Carry out a condition survey of surfaces and furniture, and review it regularly	2011 commissioned 100% survey of the network. Provided the baseline data for database. Since then database has been kept as updated as possible. Have been continuing BVPI-type data collection surveys, and also promoted routes are surveyed bi-annually.	Changing methodology on how surveys are collected. Sample over 5 years at 20% a year will give 100% over the entire network.		✔
7	Devise and introduce a county policy/standard for maintenance of furniture and surfaces, based on lifecycle analysis, environmental factors and access for all	ROW Operations Manual attempted to quantify the cost of maintaining the network through lifecycle analysis though now out of date.	Develop a contractor-facing booklet of technical specifications.	Best practice exists in other authorities that could be adopted (Monmouthshire approach may be useful.)	✔
8	Devise and implement an effective information base to ensure that environmentally sensitive areas are recognised and the appropriate agencies consulted for all works	Available through GIS, layers.	Project documentation to ensure that key constraints are checked e.g. SSSI, SAC, SAM, land ownership and watercourses.		✔
9	Full implementation of Countryside and Access Management System (CAMS) for ongoing maintenance management	Implemented though now supersceded by QGIS based system	Refinement and continuous improvement of management systems. Integration with web mapping		✔

	MANAGEMENT ACTIONS 2007 - REVIEW				
#	ACTION	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT PHASE	LEARNING / FURTHER COMMENTS	DONE
10	Carry out an annual clearance programme for priority routes and review the programme annually	Contract is let year on year. Have made significant savings over the last 10 years since seeking benchmarking costs externally	Continue to run as at present.		✅
11	Aim to remove of all obstructions on PROW within 2 months of notification	Obstructions are logged on database though approach for resolution is constrained by resources .	Develop supplementary guidance on prioirities for maintenance schemes, and for enforcement, to be clear about what forms of enforcement can be taken and the circumstances for when they'll be taken.	Future objectives to also include maintenance duties. Review of delegation scheme required to align PROW functions with relevant service head.	🟠
12	Carry out a 10% random sample survey of the ease of use of paths each year*	Survey carried out annually with help of volunteers	Survey methodology to allow for a full survey over an extended period of time.	Include less specific percentage by year to enable greater adaptivity	✅
13	Catalogue and prioritise improvements to coastal path and coastal access routes including surfacing, signage and fencing	Supported by Wales Coast Path grant in partnership with NRW	Need an action for improvements in general, not just coastal access in addition to those around maintaining the network and protecting it.	ROWIP objectives are important for grant bids and should be clear as to effect in order to facilitate them	✅
14	Extend partnership working, with Valeways and others	Numerous changes to support of Valeways including financially. Continue to work alongside partner organisation and have regular user group meetings.	Expand liaison with Community Councils.	Partnership working with third sector subject to resources available to those organisations	🟠
15	Secure suitable funding opportunities to enable implementation of the ROWIP	Lots of success with ROWIP funding, Coastal Access Fund, partnership grant, RDP, S106.	Future period likely to be tighter. Will need to be more creative for finding funding.	Objective is ongoing and can never be entirely complete.	🟠

MANUAL					
MANAGEMENT ACTIONS 2007 - REVIEW					
#	**ACTION**	**ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE**	**SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT PHASE**	**LEARNING / FURTHER COMMENTS**	**DONE**
16	Identify specific staffing needs to implement the ROWIP	Financed staff using ROWIP grant money for some of the time, in particular the republication of the Definitive Map. Significant progress made in practical terms.	Retain action point. Consider wider use of consultancy services for task and finish projects to fill gaps.		✅
17	Promote voluntary support for the network including investigating the potential for volunteer path stewards. (see Action 29)	Valeways adopt-a-path scheme is set up and working.	Approach may be expanded in future.	Volunteers are not a free resource; in order to maintain a volunteer service resources are required to administer, plan and lead the work on the day.	🟠✔
18	Instigate an annual stakeholder meeting to review ROWIP progress and opportunities*. *Starting from the end of Phase 1.	Update the LAF though no separate stakeholder group meeting has been convened.	Adapt oversight to be a function of the LAF or by project, rather than a specific separate group.	Look for opportunities to maximise value from existing forums	❌
19	Work with the LAF to identify better ways of engaging stakeholders and volunteers	Some discussions undertaken with LAF though no new programme has resulted	Adapt action in future to include working with other stakeholders and volunteers through a variety of means, do not limit to the LAF.		❌

	STAKEHOLDER ACTIONS 2007 - REVIEW				
#	ACTION	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT PHASE	LEARNING / FURTHER COMMENTS	DONE
20	Implement least restrictive access policy for all future maintenance or improvement works following WAG guidance*	Approach of favouring Gap>Gate>Stile is ordinary working practice. This is qualified by needing landowner agreement outside of order process and landscape constraints.		Two in one gates have often been welcomed by landowners	✅
21	Investigate the potential for a multi-use north-south route through the Central Vale, using the former railway line	Most of the cycling provision is handled by a different team.	Action should be adapted to support Active Travel.	Route included on plans for regional bridleway route	❌
22	Undertake a review of the feasibility of routes noted in the UDP and Walking Strategy	No specific strategy has been developed based on review of existing promoted routes	Development of promoted route standards and toolkits		❌
23	Establish a reference group to advise on opportunities to upgrade the network for people with disabilities and less mobile users and implementation of WAG guidance	Sought advice/ideas from the LAF. Also, followed other leads but have found it difficult to find representatives for a formal group. Have been able to work with individuals.	Aim to build broader relations amongst people with disabilities and less mobile users.	Stakeholder views likely to be limited to areas they can access, rather than the whole network.	🟠✔
24	Work with cycling interest groups to investigate the creation of cross Vale cycling routes and links	Has been done, but not by PROW department.	Include aims around inter-deparmental collaboration.	Potential impact from access review	✅
25	Work with equestrian groups to investigate a more coherent network of suitable routes, including potential upgrading of existing routes to bridleway status	External funding has supported the dedication of 12km of bridleways. Feasibility study for provision of a long distance bridleway route has been completed	Support for continued review of bridleway provisions and delivery of coherent bridleway network	Access reform agenda ongoing with implications for expansion of equestrian access	✅

	STAKEHOLDER ACTIONS 2007 - REVIEW				
#	ACTION	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT PHASE	LEARNING / FURTHER COMMENTS	DONE
26	Work with motorized vehicle interest groups to look at appropriate opportunities for safe driving routes within the Vale	Limited opportunities exist due to lack of Byways Open to All Traffic in the Vale and low levels of engagement from interest groups	Not a priority, uncertain what would be worthwhile.		❌
27	Establish better liaison with landowners and representatives to ensure best practice, sharing of information and practical management advice (See action idea 20)	Informal relationships with landowners exist associated with network maintenance and improvement. Landowner representation on the LAF, and also within community council forums	Continue to work within existing forums and channels.		🟠✓
28	Work with landowners and occupiers to investigate a more coherent network of routes especially for horse riders (see Action Idea 25)	Dedicated 12km of bridleways and produced feasibility for long distance route	Support for delivery of Green Trails project (long distance route connecting hubs of access) represents natural progression of this aim.		🟢✓
29	Improve partnership working with Community Councils to include investigating path stewardship, community route maps and information boards	Engagement with clusters of Community Council is undertaken regularly through forums. Ad hoc engagement with others occurs through correspondence and attendance as required.	Support expansion of community council forums in order to generate further collaborative opportunities		🟠✓
30	Extend partnership working with neighbouring Authorities, in particular with regard to crossborder routes	Good relationships with neighbouring authorities. Developed cross border promoted routes with Cardiff and Bridgend. Regional collaboration with coastal authorities from Swansea – Monmouthshire on Wales Coast Path.	Support regional collaboration according to wellbeing and area statement aims.	New collaborations being developed according to Area Statement region. Vale are lead authority for delivery of regional bridleway project.	🟢✓

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION ACTIONS 2007 - REVIEW					
#	**ACTION**	**ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE**	**SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT PHASE**	**LEARNING / FURTHER COMMENTS**	**DONE**
31	Improve the distribution of existing promotional material	Council webmapping and online provides means of disseminating promoted routes.	Unrealistic to be attending a lot of events. Ensure electronic availability.	Changes in technology and distribution methods have occurred since development of this aim.	✓
32	Improve information available on the Council website, including legislation and PROW management	Website content requires review and update	Expand information available on website and interactivity of facilities.		✓
33	Continue to produce 3 new circular walks leaflets each year*	Pursued heavily in early years of ROWIP. Intentionally stopped when sufficient routes existed in order to ensure proper management of the existing access offer. Good coverage of circular routes exists around the county.	Future attention on bridleway routes.		✓
34	Create promotional material specifically for less able users** ** Recognising the importance of advance information in respect of facilities such as refreshments / toilets / seating Action ideas 32 and 33 should be considered with action 31	Partner publications delivered this in early years of ROWIP (Valeways - Easy Walking publication). Very well received, good take-up. Sets out 10 barrier-free, low incline walks.	Review existing publication to ensure it's kept relevant and in print, or that similar is available.	Ensure any standards developed include appropriate criteria for meeting equality objectives	✓
35	Develop a variety of additional promotional material, which may relate to health initiatives, access opportunities from main visitor sites and multi use routes	Delivery has been a lower priority after statutory duties. Have undertaken projects with health partners, engaged with healthy eating and physical activity group	Develop aims around inter-connectivity between the PROW network and other areas of activity, e.g. economy, health.	Other partners contribute to this objective e.g. health initiatives	✓

	INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION ACTIONS 2007 - REVIEW				
#	ACTION	ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE	SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT PHASE	LEARNING / FURTHER COMMENTS	DONE
36	To erect 150 new road side signs per annum.	Completed subject to ongoing maintenance	Review and replace if necessary.		✅
37	Provide and maintain up-to-date information boards at key locations* * E.g. car parks, railway stations	Information boards in place at various locations.	Interpretation panels can still be important to provide information at a location. Add interest to some of the promoted routes, especially those for tourists, by doing more on-site, e.g. public art.	Information boards for live information becoming antiquated. More needed on social media, and website.	✅
38	Initiate a survey and review system for monitoring waymarks using volunteers (see Action 17)	Achieved on promoted routes. Beyond promoted routes this action is delivered through annual survey and enquiries/complaints from the public.	Continue existing method.	Important to monitor promoted routes where there is a higher level of expectation.	✅

6   MANAGEMENT: Assessment Summary, Objectives & Proposed Actions

6.1   Introduction

This grouping – management – refers to all of the work which needs to be done to manage the maintenance and development of the network.

MANAGEMENT	
Theme	**Types of work**
Legal work	Definitive Map Enforcement Modification Orders
Maintenance	Hierarchy of routes Surfacing Furniture Clearance
Resourcing	Funding Staffing Awareness-raising about PROW
Volunteer involvement	Valeways Opportunities for other volunteer input

6.2   Legal work

The legal requirement for local authorities to record public rights of way began in 1949. The recording of a right of way on the definitive map is a legal record of its existence at the date of the map. Once a right of way exists, it remains in existence unless and until it is lawfully closed or diverted. This can only be done through legal action. New public rights of way can be created in various ways: through dedication by the landowner; through public use which has been unchallenged by the landowner; through agreement between the landowner and the local authority; and by order made by the local authority. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) has specified a "cut-off date" in 2026, after which rights of way that existed before 1949 but which have not been recorded on the Definitive Map will be extinguished though the relevant section has not been brought into force in Wales at the time of writing.

6.2.1 The Definitive Map

The Vale of Glamorgan consolidated its Definitive Map and Statement, with a relevant date of 15th March 2016 following conclusion of a five-year project begun in 2011. Prior to this the County had been served by two Definitive Maps being the South Glamorgan Definitive Map with a Relevant Date of September 14th, 1954 and part of the Mid Glamorgan Definitive Map which had

been reviewed and consequently had a different Relevant Date of January 1 1971.

The consolidation and republication of the Definitive Map is recognised to have been an important success emerging from the previous ROWIP. The value of continuing to maintain it as an up-to-date record available to both Ordnance Survey and the public is also acknowledged.

6.2.2 Modification Orders

An important part of consolidating the Definitive Map was to ensure that all changes that had ever been made to the public path network were reflected by legal event Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMO). Some 423 legal event orders were made and catalogued prior to consolidation on March 15th 2016. Each new Diversion Order made in the future will also in due course require its own DMMO to be made.

6.2.3 Anomalies

The exercise to consolidate the DMS involved a rigorous review of all of the County's paths records and uncovered about 120 anomalies. These have been recorded and can be subdivided as shown in the table below.

Type of Anomaly	No.	Notes
Adopted highway	7	Where PRoW become part of the adopted highways network they will generally cease to fulfil the criteria for inclusion on the DMS
DMS alignment does not match walked route	6	A DMMO or PPO may be needed to correct the anomaly.
On parish survey but not on DMS	2	Investigation will be needed to determine if routes should be added to the DMS
Obstructions	53	Long standing and permanent features obstructing the recorded path, including: an airport; buildings; gardens and a quarry. PPO or enforcement action will be needed, as appropriate.
Errors in the Statement	30	DMMO will be required to correct the Statement.
Truncated paths	14	These occur usually where major infrastructure, such as the M4

Type of Anomaly	No.	Notes
		motorway, have cut off the path, resulting in a dead-end route of little or no public use.
Other	9	Miscellaneous problems have been noted requiring a variety of solutions.

The anomalies list represents a significant body of work if it is to be regularised. Some of the issues, such as 'truncated paths', do not demand attention. However, others, such as
statement errors and obstructions require resolution.

100 anomalies (excluding the truncated paths and adopted highways) amongst 1064 paths recorded on the DMS shows that the accuracy of path records is greater than 90%. However, 10% is a significant error level. Future progress against the list will be dependent upon specific funding being available.

6.2.4 Applications for Modification Orders

In addition to recording legal changes to routes, paths can be added or amended on the Definitive Map on the basis of historical evidence by means of a DMMO.

These are usually the result of members of the public walking a particular route for a period of time, finding it is not shown on the Map and making an application to the Council to have it added. Complex and time-consuming investigations are made by the Rights of Way Team into the claimed history and use of these routes before a decision is made by the Council to either dismiss the application or to make a DMMO thereby adding a path to the Map. Currently there are 3 outstanding applications for modification orders on claimed paths in the Vale of Glamorgan.

6.2.5 Enforcement

All furniture on a path including stiles and gates etc. is the responsibility of the owner of the land (subject to assistance by the Council). The landowner is also responsible for ensuring that paths aren't damaged or

obstructed by their actions, for reinstatement following ploughing of the route of a path and for the removal of any crops planted on it.

The Council has a duty to ensure that landowners carry out these responsibilities satisfactorily and this can require taking enforcement action against anyone not doing so. Such action can either consist of legal action in court against any offender or the direct removal of an obstruction by the Council and the recovery of the cost of so doing from the person responsible.

During the assessment phase of the ROWIP the Council received feedback that identified particular enforcement categories as problematic, particularly ploughing, cropping and incidents associated with development.

Our aims are:

- To ensure public rights are recorded correctly and in a timely manner
- To administer changes to the network using appropriate legal mechanisms
- To protect and assert public rights

We think the following actions will help us to achieve these aims:

1. Continuously review the Definitive Map and Statement
2. Develop a prioritisation scheme for the determination of definitive map modification order applications
3. Develop and implement an approach to address catalogued anomolies
4. Administer public path order applications in a timely manner
5. Review guidance within application packs associated with changing and recording legal rights.
6. Improve registers of applications and processes for recording limitations
7. Take opportunities to improve the PROW network via s106 contributions associated with development.
8. Protect the network having regard to proportionality and protocols included in relevant published guidance.

9.   Develop guidance describing typical network protection issues and protocols for remedies*

10. Adapt procedures to account for changes in statute

6.3   Maintenance

The Council is responsible for overseeing the condition of the network across the county. It is also responsible for clearing surface vegetation (other than crops) which grow across the surface of a right of way and for maintaining signposting and waymarking infrastructure. Responsibility for maintenance of other route infrastructure, such as stiles and gates, rests with the land owners.

The Vale of Glamorgan work in partnership with volunteer organisations such as Valeways and the Ramblers Association to undertake some of these

duties. Similarly, regular maintenance and clearance work is undertaken by Ranger teams based within the Vale's Country Parks and within the Heritage Coast.

6.3.1   Condition of the network

A full PRoW condition survey was last carried out during 2011 and the results have been input into the Council's digital mapping database. We maintain a 'live' system that is used to continuously record the condition of the network, works carried out, and to plan future maintenace.

As of Summer 2022, there were approximately 1215 issues awaiting resolution, breaking down into:

- 458 'maintenance' issues (E.g., stiles, gates or other infrastructure needing repairs)
- 106 'Clearance' issues
- 369 'Signage' issues
- 35 'Enforcement' issues
- 19 'Other' issues
- 107 Maintain of furniture or surfacing issues

Not all issues are deemed to be of equal priority and, in consultation with the Local Access Forum, the Council have developed the following guidelines for prioritising issues:

Priority Level	Issue
1	Immediate hazard to public safety
2	Operationally imperative issues (legal deadlines, emergency network protection)
3	Potential hazards to public safety. Inaccessible promoted route (obstructed)
4	Inaccessible non-promoted route (obstructed) Inconvenient promoted route (disrepair)
5	Inconvenient non-promoted route (disrepair) Minor detriment to use of promoted route (desirable)
6	Minor detriment to use of non-promoted route (desirable)

Breaking down the unresolved issues by their assigned priority gives the results shown below. These results suggest that higher priority issues are receiving prompt attention, ahead of those with lower priority. While not too much should be read into the assigned priorities, the results are what would normally be expected of a system working at or near to capacity; that is, high priority issues are being kept on top of but there is a backlog of less urgent issues.

Priority	Number unresolved
1	0
2	0
3	2
4	125
5	164
6	77
BLANK	847
Total	1215

From 1997 to 2011 the County, through the input of the Ramblers Association and, since 2006, the Local Access Forum, carried out bi-annual 'Ease of Use' surveys following the BVPI 178 method. Since 2010/11 the LAF has continued the surveys without input from The Ramblers.

The below graph shows the complete series of annual Ease of Use survey results, with the addition of a three-year rolling average giving a greater effective sample size and dampening year to year swings. From these results, we can be reasonably confident that there has been an improvement in the overall network condition since 1999. Over the period of the previous ROWIP the change has been positive though less marked.

Graph 1. Annual combined 'Ease of Use' pass % and 3-yr rolling average
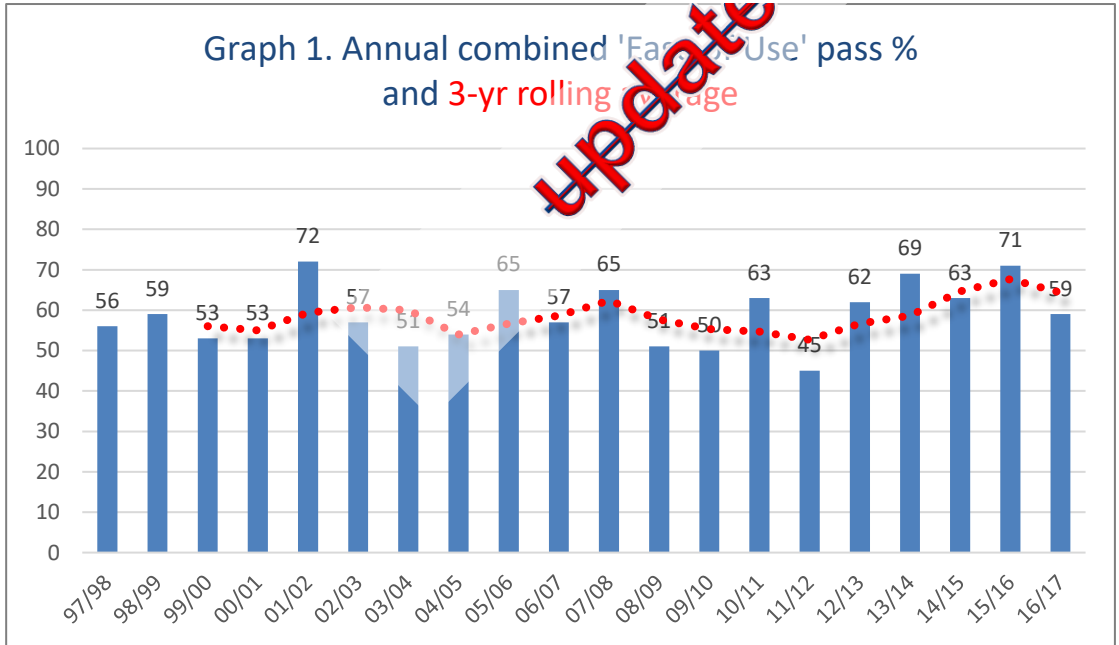
Ease of Use surveys also consider provision of signage and the nineteen-year run of report provides a graphic illustration of the changes over time. This graph shows the results for the complete sequence of surveys, and again uses a rolling average to give more confidence to the results. Since 1999 there has been a significant improvement in the provision of signs – from 43% to 77%.

Graph 2. % signposted - combined results by year and 3-year rolling average
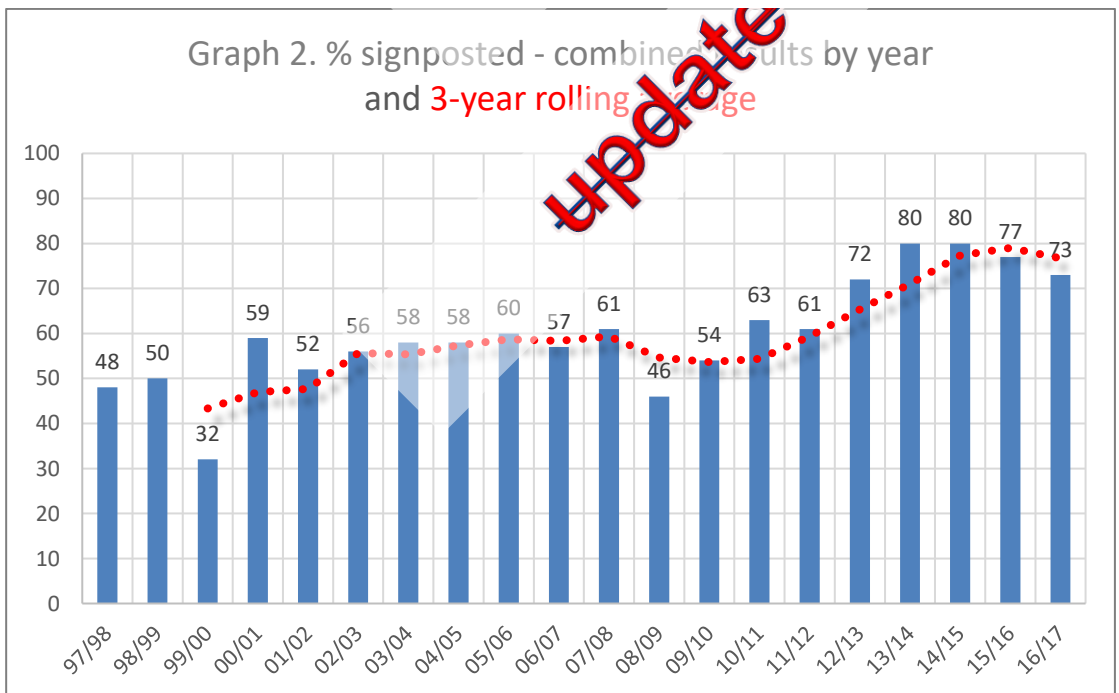
It has been clear from the consultation that maintenance is a high priority for stakeholders. The

issues that people raised include: muddy surfaces; drainage problems; overgrowth and undergrowth; poor condition of some signposts and waymarks; poor condition of some stiles and gates. Respondents recognised the changes that the Council has brought about during the life of the previous ROWIP particularly regarding replacement of stiles with more accessible structures and an increase in use on the Wales Coast Path.

6.3.2 Improvement of the network

The Public Rights of Way network within the county benefited from a number of improvement programmes that ran during the life of the previous ROWIP. These were most notably the ROWIP funding programme that provided year on year grant funding for the implementation of ROWIP actions and the Coastal Access Improvement Programme for the creation, and later continued development and maintenance of the Wales Coast Path. In addition to these funds improvements have been funded by grants associated with the Rural Development Plan and CCW/NRW partnership grants. It is recognised however that the economic climate has changed and future opportunities for improvement are likely to be more scarce.

Consultation respondents' reported noticeable improvements over the period of the first ROWIP, including replacing stiles with kissing gates, improved signage and new bridleways, but believed there are still a lot of improvements needed.

Our aims are:

- To maintain the Vale's Public Rights of Way network in a condition suitable for the intended type and level of use.
- To maintain appropriate datasets for the management of maintenance activities and customer contact.
- To improve information available on the Vale's approach to maintenance activities

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We think the following actions will help us to achieve these aims:

11. Maintain and improve the network having regard to ROWIP prioritisation guidelines and to protocols included in relevant published guidance.

12. Develop guidance describing typical network maintenance issues including protocols for remedies*
13. Promote least restricitve access principles and agree new furniture to BS5709 standard
14. Make use of appropriate ICT innovations, including spatial datasets, for ongoing maintenance management.
15. Carry out an annual clearance programme for priority routes and review the programme annually.
16. Carry out a survey each year that provides data on network condition and ease of use of paths *
17. Support public access along the Wales Coastal Path including assuring continuity in the light of erosion events or potential erosion events..

6.4 Resourcing

The resources available can be thought of in terms of staffing and finance. The current staffing is described in section 2.2.

6.4.1 Where does the money come from?

Finance for PROW work is found from a number of sources. The basic budget is the Council's annual allocation for PROW work, of some £50,000. This is used for a variety of ongoing work, including:

- The annual maintenance programme;
- Funding of materials for improvement schemes;
- Contractual works;
- Advertisements required by law;
- Production of leaflets and guides;
- Purchase of computer software and associated training.

This budget can be enhanced by offers of grant such as for improvement of the Wales Coast Path where opportunities arise. Volunteer time adds significant value to the work such as that provided by Valeways and other organisations. Considerable value is also added by the work of Countryside Rangers, who spend much time carrying out practical tasks, again often with the help of volunteers.

6.4.2 What is the money needed for?

The resourcing that is currently available has to be assessed against the need for continuing improvement, maintenance and promotion of the PROW network. The cost of this work continues to grow each year, costs

compounded not unreasonably by the public desire for a better maintained and more extensive network.

This ROWIP highlights the needs and the priorities for a whole spectrum of improvement works, as well as the continuing statutory duties on the Council.

6.4.3 Key issues

The findings from the review of the consultation responses, the desk review of relevant strategies and plans, and the evaluation of the current condition of the network can be
drawn together to show a number of emerging messages. These are

- 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-toface 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.

Our aims are:

- To harness enough resources – financial and manpower – to enable high quality maintenace and improvements.
- To raise awareness of the ROWIP to generate support for its implementation

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We think the following actions will help us to achieve these aims:

18. Extend partnership working with community councils and user groups.
19. Take advantage of funding and income generation opportunities to enable implementation of the ROWIP

20. Identify specific staffing needs to implement the ROWIP
21. Explore interdepartmental working opportunites

6.5   Volunteer involvement

Currently, volunteers are involved in surveying, maintenance and improvement works and promotion of the Vale's rights of way network. Organisations such as the Ramblers and Valeways, who run regular volunteer programmes, are important partners in delivering this.

6.5.1 Issues and opportunities

The value of volunteering is recognised within the Vale of Glamorgan well-being plan and corporate plan as a useful means of tackling social isolation, enhancing career prospects and improving mental and physical wellbeing. The assessment phase highlighted the existing use of volunteers for maintenance, surveying and promotion tasks, in particular through coordination with Valeways and other partner organisations. Consultees during the assessment phase endorsed the activities already carried out as well as suggesting a number of ways in which voluntary input could be used. Many of the stakeholder highlighted partnership work with Community Councils as an area that could be explored to help develop volunteer opportunities further.

It remains the case that volunteers are not a free option. Individuals or groups need strong management support, and there are issues of health and safety, training, supervision and insurance cover which must be dealt with.

Funding constraints have limited volunteer programmes run by Valeways in recent year though they still offer activities relating to clearnace, survey and promotion. Direct Council volunteer opportunities are typically beased around surveying or are delivered via ranger teams. The closer working relationship between rangers

and public rights of way staff that has been fostered in recent years may enable this offer to be enhanced.

Our aim is:

- To support the involvement of volunteers and stakeholders in the management and improvement of the network.

We think the following actions will help us to achieve this aim:

22. Support voluntary efforts for the maintenance and improvement of the network
23. Engage with stakeholders via user meetings and community forums
24. Work with the LAF to review ROWIP progress and opportunities.
25. Work with the LAF to identify better ways of engaging stakeholders and volunteers

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7   STAKEHOLDERS: Assessment Summary, Objectives & Proposed Actions

7.1   Introduction

This section – stakeholders – refers to all the different groups who have some kind of 'stake' or interest in the Vale's network of rights of way. They fall into three main categories: users, landowners and occupiers, interested organisations. This categorisation is reflected in our themes.

STAKEHOLDERS	
Theme	**Types of work**
The range of users	Changes/additions to the network Meeting needs unique to particular user groups
Landowners and occupiers	Sharing information and good practice, investigating a more coherent network of routes.
Organisations/interest bodies and neighbouring authorities	Making links with other organisations and interest bodies, including neighbouring Authorities.

7.2   The range of users

The rights of way network is used by people for many different activities – walking (including walking the dog), cycling, horse riding, carriage driving, off-road motor-biking and driving.

7.2.1   A network fit for a range of users?

The different types of rights of way in the Vale are able to accommodate most of the types of use legally, to varying levels. However, the assessment shows some key issues:

- Despite progress during previous years there remains a lack of bridleways for the County as a whole. They are non-existent in some areas and sparse in many more, restricting off-road opportunities for cyclists and horse-riders.
- There is a lack of off road routes available for legal use of motorbikes and motorised vehicles.

- There is a perception that accessibility generally has improved, but that more needs to be done
- There is demand for specific development of promoted routes for maximum accessibility.

7.2.2 Walkers

The footpath network in the Vale is comprehensive (see map on p.15).

The assessment showed that walkers have concerns about footpath drainage and muddy surfaces, accessibility issues relating to stiles and gates particularly when walking with a pushchair or a dog, obstructions in particular ploughing and cropping, vegetation clearance, safe access to the coast, lack of signposting and waymarking.

Opportunities identified by consultees included: creation of short circular routes close to where people live; creation of routes with particular activities in mind e.g. dog walking; improvements in design of gates and stiles.

7.2.3 Horse riders

Since the publication of the previous ROWIP the bridleway network in the Vale has been expanded and two equestrian promoted routes developed. Despite this and feedback within the assessment noting provision of off road routes the network is still very patchy (see map on p.15).

Whilst hubs of bridleway access exist, notably around Ewenny, Penllyn and Hensol there is a lack of connectivity between them and much of the rest of the County is underserved. The majority of horse owners do not own horse transport, so are limited to using the local area for riding. In comparison to surrounding counties, the opportunities associated with NRW's woodland estate, which would provide permissive riding access, are very limited.

It remains a priority to improve and extend the off-road network available to riders particularly in response to perceived increases in traffic on roads.

There is interest in a long-distance route within the region which could link existing hubs of access and form a basis for shorter, circular routes. Anticipated changes in Wales' access offer are also likely to include expansion of horse riding rights though at present the detail and extent of such a change is unknown.

7.2.4 Cyclists

Cycle routes within the Vale have expanded considerably within the last ten years. These are mostly roadside routes.
The consultation showed that there was a demand to increase the opportunities offered to cyclists by such dedicated cycle routes. There was an interest in recreational use, as well as use for everday travel e.g. to work or the shops.

A number of suggestions were made about possible new cycle routes. Sustrans are working with the Council's Planning Department with the aim of creating a national cycle route in the Vale, for which they are keen to explore the use of the existing rights of way network. Sustrans note that the route could provide a basis for a series of circular or linear routes between communities.

7.2.5 Motorised users

A demand for motorised use did not emerge from the assessment as strongly as other forms of shared access though the lack of Byways Open to All Traffic and promoted routes aimed at off road vehicular is clear from review of the extent of the network. Workshop feedback highlighted a desire for road connections between communities.

7.2.6 People with protected characteristics

The review attempted to find out specifically what needs people with different protected characteristics might have, in relation to the Vale's rights of way.

For blind or partially sighted people and others with mobility problems, including older people, the assessment identified particular issues with low branches on routes, slippery surfaces and stiles (particularly if in poor condition). Accomodating the particular needs of blind and partially sighted people with dogs through provision of appropriate furniture was also noted.

Feedback from young people suggested a lower awareness and uptake in use than adults (though dogwalking and schemes such as Duke of Edinburgh expeditions were motiving factors in making use). Third party internet based mapping, such as Bing or Google, would be the most likely information source the group would access and suggested improvements included more signage, walking clubs for young people, and improving paths where they are very muddy.

Findings from a group discussion held with female BME community members suggest that current use of the Vale's ROW is concentrated on managed locations, in particular Porthkerry Park and Cosmeston, although other locations were also identified (Barry Island, Ogmore, the clifftop path near Barry). These sites offer desirable facilities including parking, good paths, a café, barbecues and washing facilities needed for prayer in the case of Muslim participants. When the members of the group were accompanying children they appreciated having a play park and ice creams available.

The issues that they find most off-putting were concerns about personal safety and the behaviour of other users' dogs. Communications such as good mobile phone signal helped mitigate this to some extent. The participants were more likely to go out to the countryside in a group. In part, this helps them as they expect to get "odd looks and stares" because they look different. They felt that this was more likely to happen in the west of the county, as there are fewer BME communities here.

BME group participants reported that they like to have access to local walks where they don't have to get into a car, and so that they can make the most of limited time available for walking (and not using time travelling

to get to the walk). They mostly travel to the locations they mentioned by car, but would consider going by train and in some cases, would like this opportunity. Bus travel is not likely to be used.

Participants tended to go to places that friends and family had recommended to them. They did not use maps at all, and had not seen any of the printed leaflets for promoted routes in the Vale but thought that these would be useful. They were most likely to use the internet to find out about places to go, and would value seeing pictures of a place in order to help them decide where they would like to go.

Suggestions for improvements included: pathways wide enough for disability scooters; level path surfaces suitable for wheelchair users and people with mobility problems; better
promotion, including the printed leaflets. Ideas for places to distribute leaflets included: Channel View, Grangetown; the Pavilion; Canton Community Hall; Grangetown Hub;
doctors' surgeries; South Riverside Community Centre; Macintosh Community Centre, Roath. Other ideas for improving promotion included taking advertisements in local
newspapers; putting leaflets in with newspapers; stalls at local fairs and festivals e.g. Cardiff Mela, Cardiff City Hall health fair.

Our aims are:

- 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.

**We think the following actions will help
us to achieve these aims:**

26. Have regard to least restrictive access principles when undertaking maintenance or improvement works.*
27. Develop a coherent network of multi-user routes serving the County.
28. Engage with representative groups to explore opportunities to upgrade the network for people with disabilities and less mobile users.
29. Work with cycling interest groups to investigate the creation of cross Vale cycling routes and links
30. Work with equestrian groups to investigate a more coherent network of suitable routes, including potential upgrading of existing routes to bridleway status.
31. Work with motorized vehicle interest groups to look at appropriate opportunities for safe driving routes within the Vale.
32. Exploit opportunities for the improvement of wellbeing having regard to the seven wellbeing goals

7.3 Landowners and occupiers

The Vale of Glamorgan is a rich agricultural area of mixed farmland. There are a few large estates within the area, such as Penllyne, Coedarhydyglyn, Merthyr Mawr, Dunraven and the Duchy of Lancaster, which incorporate numerous tenant farms, but the majority of the land is in the ownership of smaller individual farmers in coherent blocks, and a few larger farms with scattered holdings. Within this is a relatively large proportion of arable land that has a greater potential to create conflict with path users.

The Council works closely with the people and organisations whose land is crossed by public rights of way. The assessment showed a need to improve the information available to landowners to help them meet their responsibilities in relation to rights of way. This includes both the production of guidance relevant to farming operations and also engagement with groups and representative bodies.

> **Our aim is:**
>
> - A network which meets the needs of its users, whilst minimising the impacts on landowners and occupiers.

> **We think the following actions will help us to achieve this aim:**
>
> 33. Establish better liaison with landowners and representatives to ensure best practice, sharing of information and practical management advice.
> 34. Work with landowners to investigate a more coherent network of routes especially for horse riders

7.4 Organisations, interest bodies and neighbouring authorities

There are many organisations external to the Council which have an interest in the Vale's rights of way network. Neighbouring local authorities have direct links through the match with their own rights of way networks. There are other public sector or voluntary sector organisations which are linked through their interest in the potential benefits the rights of way network can offer for their stakeholders e.g. Sustrans, environmental organisations, the Local Health Board, young people's organisations, community groups etc. Also, there are other elements of local government, such as Community Councils or other departments within the Council.

7.4.1 Neighbouring and Regional Authorities

The Council work together with other local authorities on a number of cross-border projects. The most significant of these has been around the establishment of the Wales Coast Path and ongoing governance arrangements by a regional partnership between NRW and authorities from Swansea to Monmouthshire. In addition to the Wales Coast Path the development of Area Statements, shared services and funding streams conditions means that collaborative working with other authorities is likely to be a more significant feature of actions taken within the next decade.

Where changes are made to the Definitive Map, the neighbouring authorities are statutorily notified. In general, further exchange of information between authorities is to be welcomed because it will help to meet the public's needs better. Information useful to exchange includes: promotional material, Definitive Map changes, route improvement plans.

7.4.2 Other organisations

Other organisations with whom the Council could work in future, including Community Councils, the Vale of Glamorgan Health Alliance, HM Coastguard, RAF St Athan, the Vale Physical Activity Forum, the Vale Older Person's Forum, the Marine and Coastguard Agency, and Sustrans.

Our aims are:

- To increase the number and range of potential partners.
- To build relationships with external bodies that can contribute to improving and maintaining the network.

We think the following actions will help us to achieve these aims:

35. Improve partnership working with Community Councils.
36. Extend partnership working with neighbouring Authorities, in particular with regard to area statements and the sustainable management of natural resources.

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8   INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION: Assessment Summary, Objectives & Proposed Actions

8.1   Introduction

This section – information, communication and promotion – refers to all the work that is done to inform anyone interested, including users and potential users about where the Vale's rights of way are and what they are. Information can be found on the ground e.g. signposts and is also available to people who are not out and about e.g. in a leaflet or on a website.

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION	
Theme	**Types of work**
Off-site	Websites Leaflets & booklets Media Other awareness-raising
On-site	Signage and waymarks Information boards Awareness-raising

8.2   Off-site information and promotion

8.2.1 Promoted routes

The Vale of Glamorgan benefits from a wealth of promoted routes, promoted by a number of players.

Valeways has published 19 guides as downloadable leaflets with a total length in excess of 200 miles. Several of the guides describe more than one walk option and so the total length of the network promoted will be greater than the longest route on each leaflet. Valeways also promotes the 65 mile Millenium Heritage Trail, again, details are available via the website (http://www.valeways.org.uk)

'Vale Trails' is the name given to a series of ten leafleted walks promoted through Visit the Vale – the tourism and events department of the Vale of Glamorgan Council. These are available as downloads from the website (http://www.visitthevale.com) or as printed leaflets distributed through council offices and at events. In total, the walks run for more than 70 miles. However, it should be noted that there is a degree of overlap and replication with some of the Valeways routes, and also with the Millenium Heritage Trail and the Wales Coast

Path. Approximately 24,500 printed Vale Trails leaflets are distributed every year, with the five coastal routes being in highest demand. (N. Sumner-Smith, 2017. Pers. Comm.)

Natural Resources Wales has led on the development and promotion of the Wales Coast Path, including about 38 miles of the Vale of Glamorgan coast. The majority of the Wales Coast Path is on PRoW. There is a small number of cross-border promoted routes including: part of the Bridgend Circular Walk, promoted by Bridgend County Borough Council, and part of the St. Fagan to St. Georges Circular Walk (promoter unknown).

The Vale of Glamorgan Council also promotes two bridleway routes of about 10 miles total length.

Of the nominal 3151 miles of promoted routes, there is a considerable degree of overlap, with multiple routes making use of the same individual paths. There is a net promoted length of approximately 138 miles(220km) spread across a total network of some 360 miles, that is, 38% of the network.

No equivalent figures have been found for Wales but in 2006 the then Countryside Agency (now Natural England) estimated that 12% of England's PRoW network was covered by promoted routes (Countryside Agency, 2006). Using this figure as a benchmark, we can confidently assert that the degree of promotion of the PRoW network in the Vale is well above average.

As might be expected from the high level of coverage, there is a good distribution of promoted routes

generally across the Vale and no areas are more than 2.1km from a promoted walk. The geographical distribution of the promoted routes is shown in Figure 1.

8.2.2 Other PRoW

The on-line interactive map hosted on the Council's website at http://myvale.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/ provides a versatile tool for all would-be users with access to the internet to research paths across the county. Although this is not the definitve map, the on-line map offers a complete gazeteer of all PRoW and has the advantage of offering the capacity to zoom in on target areas.

Information about the paths network is also held by each Community Council, and printed copies of the DMS have been lodged at all major libraries.

8.2.3 Specific users

Above, we have discussed the provision of information for the general user; however, it is also important that we give consideration to users with specific needs:

8.2.4 Disabled users

Very little information is available about access opportunities for disabled users. Extensive internet searches failed to bring up any substantive information about opportunities for those with any form of restrictive disability. The only significant piece of information found was a reference on the Valeways website to its guide 'Vale of Glamorgan - Easy Walking'.

This guide consists of 13 suggested short routes that are considered suitable for those with walking difficulties. The routes are not graded but are described so that users can make their own minds up as to whether or not they are likely to be suitable. The guide was published in 2009 and is no longer available in print. It is also not available on Valeways' website, although a copy was supplied as a 'pdf' upon request by email through the website.

8.2.5 Riders, cyclists and drivers

Only two routes are promoted for horse-riders, reflecting the dearth of bridleways across the network. There are no promoted off-road cycling routes, apart from very short sections of forest tracks which are not on the PRoW network. There are no promoted routes for carriage drivers or drivers of motor vehicles.

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Our aim is:

- To create and maintain an up-to-date information resource about the network which is available to all stakeholders, especially current and potential users.

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We think the following actions will help us to achieve these aims:

37. Circulate promotional material according to available resources
38. Improve information available on the Council website, including legislation and PROW management.
39. Maintain a working map and publish via webmapping
40. Work with LAF to develop criteria for endorsement of promoted routes
41. Create promotional material specifically for less able users.

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8.3   On-site information

8.3.1 Signposts and waymarking

The situation with respect to roadside signing was discussed above and it is understood that, with up to 85% coverage, this aspect of information provision is reasonably well covered. However, there is less certainty as to the situation with respect to way-marking of routes away from the roadside.

Valeways volunteers survey the promoted routes twice per annum and report or resolve any issues, including where signage is needed. Therefore, it is probable that the promoted network can be considered to be well way-marked. However, the situation on the remainder of the network is not routinely

reviewed and the level of way-marking provision is unknown.

8.3.2 On-site interpretation

Visit the Vale has recently introduced an 'app' for mobile phones and tablet computers – the Vale Tales App. This software enables users to download stories related to specific locations on the Vale Trails routes. Traditional, fixed interpretation boards are recorded at only 9 locations on the PRoW network and none have been installed for several years.

Our aim is:

- To ensure that all users have the information they need to enjoy the network and use it responsibly.

We think the following actions will help us to achieve this aim:

42. Improve roadside signage
43. Maintain interpretation resources at appropriate locations*.
44. Provide training and review system for waymarking using volunteers

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9   STATEMENT OF ACTION

9.1   Key to understanding the Statement of Action

The revised Statement of Action included in this edition of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan fulfils a slightly different role to it's predecessor. The new Statement of Action will identify strategic improvements and longer term goals derived from the objectives and aims that have emerged from the above assessment.

Detailed work plans will be included in separate documents known as Delivery Plans. These will be related but distinct plans that exist outside of the ROWIP.

Delivery Plans will provide more detailed and responsive direction and commitments for the management of local rights of way over the specified period. Whilst the plans will link to the objectives and actions of the ROWIP that are included in the Statement of Action their maintenance outside of the ROWIP itself is intended to ensure that they remain adaptive and useful as working documents. In this way Delivery Plans will not be subject to the statutory requirements involved in reviewing ROWIP content.

As such detail that appeared in the previous statement of action has not been replicated within the more rigid architecture of the ROWIP, but will instead form part of delivery planning.

The statement of action provides
- Approximate timescales associated with actions (*short, medium, long, continuous*)
- Descriptions of the delivery plan workflows under which actions will be implemented
- Indicators to enable quantification of success at the end of this ROWIP's term

MANAGEMENT

LEGAL WORK

Aims:
- To ensure public rights are recorded correctly and in a timely manner
- To administer changes to the network using appropriate legal mechanisms
- To protect and assert public rights

	Action	Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
1.	Continuously review the Definitive Map and Statement	Continuous	*Definitive Map Modification Orders Legal Event Modification Orders Definitive Map republication*	DMMO's completed (#) DMMO's determined within 12 months (%) LEMO's completed (%) Definitive Map republication
2.	Develop a prioritisation scheme for the determination of definitive map modification order applications	Short	*DMMO prioritisation scheme adoption*	Adoption of scheme
3.	Develop and implement an approach to address catalogued anomolies	Long	*Anomoly priorities and funding statement Public Path Orders*	Anomoly statement agreed Anomoly list completed (%)
4.	Administer public path order applications in a timely manner	Continuous	*Public Path Orders*	PPOs completed (#)
5.	Review guidance within application packs associated with changing and recording legal rights.	Medium	*PPO application pack review DMMO application pack review Statutory declaration guidance review*	Application packs reviewed and published (#)

			s147 application guidance review	
6.	Improve registers of applications and processes for recording limitations	Short	*Online registers* *Limitations cataloguing (s147 etc.)*	Compliance with regulations Approach for logging limitations agreed
7.	Take opportunities to improve the PROW network including via s106 contributions associated with development.	Continuous	*Planning application responses* *s106 opportunites*	s106 schemes delivered (#)
8.	Protect the network having regard to proportionality and protocols included in relevant published guidance.	Continuous	*Enforcement case work* *Seasonal enforcement programs* *Section 130 notices*	Enforcement resolution rate (%) Seasonal enforcement compliance rate (%) s130 resolution rate (%)
9.	Develop guidance describing typical network protection issues and protocols for remedies*	Medium	*Online information* *Hard copy publications (A-Z; Cropping)*	Customer satisfaction survey Publications (#)
10.	Adapt procedures to account for changes in statute	Long	*Horizon scanning, policy and legislation review*	Issue papers presented to LAF (#)

MANAGEMENT

MAINTENANCE

Aims:
- To maintain the Vale's Public Rights of Way network in a condition suitable for the intended type and level of use.
- To maintain appropriate datasets for the management of maintenance activities and customer contact.
- To improve information available on the Vale's approach to maintenance activities

Action		Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
11.	Maintain & improve the network having regard to ROWIP prioritisation guidelines and to protocols included in relevant published guidance.	Continuous	*Maintenance case work* *Improvement grant programmes*	Maintenance resolution rate (%) Grant programmes delivered (#)
12.	Develop guidance describing typical network maintenance issues including protocols for remedies*	Medium	*Online information* *Hard copy publications (A-Z; management toolkits)*	Customer satisfaction survey Publications (#)
13.	Promote least restricitve access principles and agree new furniture to BS5709 standard	Continuous	*Improvement case work*	Furniture accessibilty improvements (#)
14.	Make use of appropriate ICT innovations, including spatial datasets, for ongoing maintenance management.	Continuous	*GIS systems*	Internal appraisal

	Action	Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
15.	Carry out an annual clearance programme for priority routes and review the programme annually.	Continuous	*Annual clearance programme*	Paths cleared (km)
16.	Carry out a survey each year of that provides data on network condition and ease of use of paths *	Continuous	*Annual survey programme*	Proportion of network surveyed (%) Ease of use data (%)
17.	Support public access along the Wales Coastal Path including assuring continuity in the light of erosion events or potential erosion events..	Continuous	*Wales Coast Path grant programme*	Wales Coast Path condition survey indicators Grant programmes delivered (#)
Notes: * Currently a 20% random sample is carried out by volunteers for a statutory performance indicator.				

MANAGEMENT

RESOURCING

Aims:
- To harness enough resources – financial and manpower – to enable high quality maintenace and improvements.
- To raise awareness of the ROWIP to generate support for its implementation

	Action	Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
18.	Extend partnership working with community councils and user groups.	Long	*Community Council forums* *User group forums* *Volunteer activities*	Community Councils regularly engaged (#) User groups regularly engaged (#) Volunteer programmes supported (#)
19.	Take advantage of funding and income generation opportunities to enable implementation of the ROWIP	Continuous	*External funding opportunities* *Income generation opportunities*	Grants awarded (# and £) Income programmes developed (#)
20.	Identify specific staffing needs to implement the ROWIP	Short	*Staffing needs and opportunities*	Staff supported (#)
21.	Explore interdepartmental working opportunites	Short	*Internal liaison* *Ecological enhancement* *Active Travel*	Feasibility undertaken (#)
Notes:				

MANAGEMENT

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT
Aim: • To support the involvement of volunteers and stakeholders in the management and improvement of the network.

Action		Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
22.	Support voluntary efforts for the maintenance and improvement of the network	Continuous	*User group activities* *Volunteer training*	Organisations/programmes supported (#) Training courses run (#)
23.	Engage with stakeholders via user meetings and community forums	Continuous	*Community Council forums* *User group forums*	Community Councils regularly engaged (#) User groups regularly engaged (#)
24.	Work with the LAF to review ROWIP progress and opportunities.	Continuous	*ROWIP monitoring*	Annual progress reporting
25.	Work with the LAF to identify better ways of engaging stakeholders and volunteers	Short	*Engagement strategy*	Strategy published

<div align="center">**STAKEHOLDERS**</div>

<div align="center">**THE RANGE OF USERS**</div>

Aims:
- 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.

Action		Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
26.	Have regard to least restrictive access principles when undertaking maintenance or improvement works.*	Continuous	*Maintenance case work Improvement case work Public Path Orders*	Furniture accessibilty improvements (#)
27.	Develop a coherent network of multi-user routes serving the County.	Medium	*Green Trails project*	Trail length complete (km) Green Trails project specific indicators
28.	Engage with representative groups to explore opportunities to upgrade the network for people with disabilities and less mobile users.	Long	*Engagement strategy*	Strategy published
29.	Work with cycling interest groups to investigate the creation of cross Vale cycling routes and links	Medium	*Active Travel links Green Trails project*	Active Travel collaborations (#) Green Trails project specific indicators

Action		Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
30.	Work with equestrian groups to investigate a more coherent network of suitable routes, including potential upgrading of existing routes to bridleway status.	Medium	*Green Trails project*	Green Trails project specific indicators
31.	Work with motorized vehicle interest groups to look at appropriate opportunities for safe driving routes within the Vale.	Long	*Engagement strategy*	Strategy published
32.	Exploit opportunities for the improvement of wellbeing having regard to the seven wellbeing goals	Continuous	*Public Path Orders* *Improvement case work* *External funding opportunities*	Grants awarded (# and £) Customer satisfaction survey
Notes: * By looking at gap – gate – stile in that order, in consultation with the landowners and occupiers.				

STAKEHOLDERS

LANDOWNERS AND OCCUPIERS

Aim:

- A network which meets the needs of its users, whilst minimising the impacts on landowners and occupiers.

Action		Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
33.	Establish better liaison with landowners and representatives to ensure best practice, sharing of information and practical management advice.	Long	*Engagement strategy*	Strategy published Regular engagements established
34.	Work with landowners to investigate a more coherent network of routes especially for horse riders	Short	*Green Trails project*	Green Trails project specific indicators
Notes:				

STAKEHOLDERS

INTEREST BODIES

Aims:
- To increase the number and range of potential partners.
- To build relationships with external bodies that can contribute to improving and maintaining the network.

Action		Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
35.	Improve partnership working with Community Councils.	Long	*Community Council forums* *External funding opportunities*	Community Councils regularly engaged (#) Collaborative projects delivered (#)
36.	Extend partnership working with neighbouring Authorities, in particular with regard to area statements and the sustainable management of natural resources.	Short	*Green Trails project* *External funding opportunities* *Staffing needs and opportunities*	Collaborations supported (#)
Notes:				

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION

OFF-SITE

Aims:

- To create and maintain an up-to-date information resource about the network which is available to all stakeholders, especially current and potential users.

Action		Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
37.	Circulate promotional material according to available resources	Continuous	*Hard copy publications* *Engagement strategy*	Publications (#) Strategy published
38.	Improve information available on the Council website, including legislation and PROW management.	Short	*Online information* *Engagement strategy*	Customer satisfaction survey Strategy published
39.	Maintain a working map and publish via webmapping	Continuous	*Online information* *GIS systems*	Customer satisfaction survey
40.	Work with LAF to develop criteria for endorsement of promoted routes	Medium	*Promoted routes standards*	Route standards published
41.	Create promotional material specifically for less able users.	Medium	*Hard copy publications* *External funding opportunities* *User group forums*	Publications (#)

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION

ON-SITE

Aims:

- To ensure that all users have the information they need to enjoy the network and use it responsibly

Action		Timescale	Delivery Plan Workflows	Indicators
42.	Improve roadside signage	Medium	*Maintenance case work*	Posts in place (%)
43.	Maintain interpretation resources at appropriate locations*.	Long	*Maintenance case work*	Maintenance resolution rate (%)
44.	Provide training and review system for waymarking using volunteers	Short	*Volunteer training* *User group activities*	Training courses run (#) Organisations/programmes supported (#)
Notes: * E.g. interpretation panels, QR codes etc.				