



Rights of Way Improvement Plan Questionnaire 2016 - Town and Community Councils

Countryside Services staff are working to review and update the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Powys which has been in existence now for over 10 years. We would like your help to do so.

The purpose of the consultation is to find out:

- your views on the current state of the network i.e. surface, waymarks, signage, trails etc.
- what your priorities are so we can sustain and where possible improve those aspects

County Councillor John T Powell, Cabinet member for Countryside Services said:

"The public rights of way and open access land are a key asset to the Powys economy in terms of attracting tourists and spend in our county. They provide our residents and tourists alike with plenty of opportunities to get out and enjoy our beautiful countryside and boost their health and mental well-being whilst doing so. We'd really like to continue to enhance the network but with reducing resources we would value your views on what you feel our priorities should be."

The closing date for comments is 31 January 2017.

Privacy Statement

Before we take you to the survey, please read the Privacy Statement below. By completing this survey you state that you have read and accept it.

Powys County Council accepts the following responsibilities for personal information recorded through this survey:-

1. The information will only be used for the agreed reason and will be looked after securely
2. The information will only be kept for as long as needed or to comply with statutory requirements and will then be securely destroyed
3. If the information has to be shared with other agencies initial consent will be gathered at this point and explicit (signed) consent will be obtained by the service / department concerned as soon as possible. Unless we are obliged by law to disclose the information.

Detailed guidance can be found on our Freedom of Information Web pages or from the Information Management Team Tel 01597 827512

A note on privacy

This survey is anonymous.

The record kept of your survey responses does not contain any identifying information about you unless a specific question in the survey has asked for this. If you have responded to a survey that used an identifying token to allow you to access the survey, you can rest assured that the identifying token is not kept with your responses. It is managed in a separate database, and will only be updated to indicate that

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you have (or haven't) completed this survey. There is no way of matching identification tokens with survey responses in this survey.

The current use of the rights of way network

Background:

The public rights of way network consists of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways that are open to all traffic.

There are a number of terms and definitions which can be confusing for users. The following aims to help you understand these before you complete the survey.

- Public rights of way - these are highways that are made available for the public to use e.g. footpaths, bridlepaths and byways open to all traffic.
- Footpath - for use on foot only, may be accompanied by a dog or pushchair
- Bridleway - this is the same as a footpath but with additional rights to ride or lead a horse or ride or push a pedal cycle
- Restricted by-way - as above but with the addition of rights to drive a horse drawn carriage.
- Byway - this is the same as above but with additional rights to drive a motorised vehicle
- Open access - this allow the public right of access to registered common land and 'open land' and NRW Forestry land as shown on the OS map in yellow
- Definitive map - this is the legal record of the public rights of way showing their alignment and status. The definitive statement may record further details for each public right of way.
- Promoted or recreational trails of regional or national status e.g. Glyndwr's Way, Offa's Dyke Path, Severn Way, Wye Valley Walk and also local and circular routes
- Waymarking - Signs posted at either end and along public rights of way
- Furniture - Stiles and gates along public rights of way

Q1: Please can you state firstly which town and community council you represent?
Please write your answer here:

Q2: To what extent is your community council involved in the development and maintenance of public rights of way and countryside access. And how involved would you like to be? Please consider the aspects below and answer accordingly.

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Maintenance of existing routes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Permissive access agreements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dedication of new access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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	good	average	poor	Very Important	A bit important	Not at all important
Routes to enable people to avoid busy roads	<input type="radio"/>					
Routes used in conjunction with public transport	<input type="radio"/>					
Access to areas or features of particular interest	<input type="radio"/>					
Access to common land and open access land	<input type="radio"/>					
Routes that link with other forms of access e.g. nature reserves, forestry land	<input type="radio"/>					
Routes accessible for less mobile residents (e.g. wheelchairs, pushchairs, less agile)	<input type="radio"/>					
Routes accessible for blind or partially sighted people	<input type="radio"/>					
Attractive routes which support local tourism	<input type="radio"/>					
Routes for local journeys such as walking to the shops, work, doctors and local amenities	<input type="radio"/>					
Routes used to improve health and well-being	<input type="radio"/>					
Promoted long-distance routes in your community	<input type="radio"/>					

The network in the future

Q5: If there are any other public rights of way related activities that your community council is already, or would like to be involved with in the future please give details. Please write your answer here:

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Q6: With limited resources in the Countryside Services budget, prioritisation is an important factor. If the choice has to be made between the following areas of work, what would you consider to be of more importance or benefit. Please read the two options and choose the one that you feel should take priority.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Create new long distance promoted routes
- Create new. local circular routes

Q7: Please read the two options and choose the one that you feel should take priority. Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Keep the priority community approach
- Provide a priority rating for each individual public right of way

*The **current priority community** approach is developed by receiving a report that is given a rating. Each rating is added to each community area and the total rating for that community is then divided by the length of public rights of way. This gives a final priority rating and then work is undertaken in this community before moving onto the next.*

*There are approximately **12,000 individual public rights of way** and each one would need to be individually rated to determine its priority.*

Q8: Please read the two options and choose the one that you feel should take priority.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Negotiate wherever possible to open obstructed public rights of way
- Serve formal enforcement notices and discuss works afterwards

The landowner has a responsibility to keep public rights of way open and unobstructed. The council has enforcement powers but tends to negotiate the opening up of paths as much as possible before taking enforcement action. This does however take up a lot of time and resources.

By taking enforcement action first, rather than negotiating, this is likely to reduce officer time and resources but could well result in opening up less paths due to an increased number of prosecutions where there is non compliance by the land owner.

Q9: Please read the two options and choose the one that you feel should take priority. Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Recreational trails should be given priority over other rights of way as resources allow
- Equal priority should be given to recreational trails and other public rights of way

Q10: Please read the two options and choose the one that you feel should take priority. Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Open up routes on the definitive map, which up to the present have received no maintenance work
- Maintain routes already opened up and improve their standard

Q11: What do you think our priorities should be for the future of the rights of way network. Please number each box in order of preference from 1 to 13

- Waymarking and signage - maintaining and erecting more waymarkers to help people navigate the network on the public rights of way at entrances to access land
- Information & promotional work - doing more to publicise and promote the network to both landowners and the general public. e.g. information boards, website
- Practical improvement work - this would focus on making the network more easily accessible for people with mobility difficulties
- General maintenance - opening up and maintaining routes and trails including installing gates and stiles and clearing overgrown vegetation
- Resolving anomalies - working with landowners to resolve issues around things like access to cul de sacs paths etc.
- Unrecorded routes -discovering and recording unrecorded routes
- Definitive map work - updating and improving the definitive map where there is evidence to suggest this is needed
- Active travel work - provide paths which link to pulbic transport, places of work, shops and other amenities
- Access management - work to improve user access to common land and open country
- Health routes - target work on routes which can be used and promoted for exercise and recreation
- School routes - increase links for access to the network by and for schools and their pupils

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Education - to increase their knowledge and awareness of the countryside

Promoted routes - sustain the provision of promoted local and long distance trails

Q12: If you had to select just three aspects of work as being the most important what would they be? Please write your answer here:

Q13: Finally, if there is anything that your community council would like the Rights of Way Improvement Plan to address please use this space to tell us what this is. Thank you. Please write your answer here:

Q14: If you would like a response or would like to be consulted further on the draft Powys Rights of Way Improvement Plan please provide your name and preferred contact details in the space below. This can be a phone number, an email or postal address.

Thank you for taking the time to respond. Please write your answer here:

Thank you for completing this survey.

Please return the completed application form to:-

Mark Stafford-Tolley
Countryside Access Officer

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Llandrindod Wells
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LD1 6AA

or e-mail rights.of.way@powys.gov.uk