

Dorset Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) 2011-2021

"...on foot, with paw, on hoof, by wheel ..."

Dorset County Council



Enabling communities in Dorset to thrive,
now and for the future



If you would like to discuss or make comments about this Plan and/or get involved with the Rights of Way Improvement Plan process please contact:

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This document can be downloaded at:

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/footpaths/improvementplan>

Photo-postcard competition

This plan is illustrated with images submitted by the public for The Rights of Way Improvement Plan Photo-postcard Competitions. Competition themes to date have included "Enjoying Access" and "The Outdoor Gym". Entrants are required to send in their photos illustrating the theme, examples of where access works well and not so well in Dorset and their ideas to improve access.

All publications can be made available in audio tape, large print and Braille, or alternative languages on request.

Foreword

By Peter Finney, Cabinet Portfolio Holder, Dorset County Council

As a walker, I am keenly aware of the wonderful opportunities provided by Dorset's thousands of miles of public rights of way and open spaces. For me they represent an escape from the pressures of life, the best way to explore Dorset's lovely coast and countryside and I am told the exercise does me good!

As we face an increasingly challenging time stretching our budgets we will need to have a clear vision of how we will prioritise our resources.

History has provided Dorset not only with splendid cliff top paths, glorious downland tracks and intimate village shortcuts, but also with some unloved routes to nowhere. The County Council, with the help of many landowners and volunteers, tries to keep these paths open and easy to use. The 21st Century also conspires to limit enjoyment of many paths. Increasingly busy roads now 'fragment' what used to be a real network of routes. Some gates actually prevent the enjoyment of our routes by being more of an obstacle than a way of access.

The needs and demands upon this resource have changed. The network has a new and important role in addressing current issues such as concerns over traffic congestion and public health, whilst providing opportunities for outdoor leisure and recreation.

Making Dorset a healthy and enjoyable place to live, work and visit are important considerations and the aim of this plan is to address the new challenges and prepare Dorset for the future. The research undertaken for this Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) provides us with a better understanding of the demands and expectations of all those with an interest in public rights of way and access, building upon the feedback of both members of the general public and interested stakeholders, who have contributed through a series of consultations. It gives us a chance to assess people's needs and target improvements for walkers, cyclists, equestrians, those with mobility problems, and for those with the responsibility for managing the paths. Our aspirations are to have a network accessible to as many people as possible given the fiscal difficulties we face.

With one eye on the range of other changes happening in Dorset - to population, economy, health and transport, and plans related to these issues, this document explores their likely impacts, and responses needed to provide a countryside recreation network for the 21st Century.

Of course we cannot improve such a large network overnight, but at least we will have a vision and clear priorities for the future.

Peter Finney

"...on foot, with paw, on hoof, by
wheel ..."

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Glossary

AONB

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

BAP

Biodiversity Action Plan

BOAT

Byway Open to All Traffic

BVPI

Best Value Performance Indicator

CRoW Act

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Cycle Lane

Part of the carriageway dedicated to cyclists

Cycle Route

Continuous route for cyclists. Can be made up from a combination of "ways", for example, roads, cycle tracks, cycle lanes, multi-user routes, bridleways etc.

Cycle tracks

A way over which the public have a right of way on pedal cycles with or without a right of way on foot but not a way in or by the side of a highway consisting of or comprising a made-up carriageway (within the meaning of the 1980 Act) CRoW 2000.

DCC

Dorset County Council

DC

District Council

de facto

Exists, whether by right or not

DEFRA

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

DLAF

Dorset Local Access Forum

DMMO

Definitive Map Modification Order

DMS

Definitive Map and Statement

ES

Environmental Stewardship

ELS

Entry Level Stewardship

FWAG

Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group

GPS

Global Positioning System

HA 1980

Highways Act 1980

HAMP

Highways Asset Management Plan

HLS

Higher Level Stewardship

IMD

Index of Multiple Deprivation

LPA

Local Planning Authority

LDF

Local Development Framework

(LRow)

Local Rights of Way – Footpaths, Bridleways, Cycle Tracks and Restricted Byways)

LTP

Local Transport Plan

NE

Natural England - The body that replaced the Countryside Agency, Rural Development Service and English Nature

NCN

National Cycle Network

NMPV

Non-Mechanically Propelled Vehicles

PRoW

Public Rights of Way Footpaths (FP), Bridleways (BR), Restricted Byways and Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT)

RoW

Rights of Way

RoWIP

Rights of Way Improvement Plan

SEA

Strategic Environmental Assessment

s106 agreement

Legal agreement between developer and LPAs

TAMP

Transport Asset Management Plan

TCPA 1990

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

UCR

Unclassified County Road

UUCR

Unsurfaced Unclassified County Road

WCA

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981



Summary

The statutory Dorset Rights of Way Improvement Plan is the result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act), which placed a duty on Dorset County Council (DCC) to set out a strategy for improving its network of Public Rights of Way, wider access and outdoor public space ie Access Resource.

The RoWIP consists of two parts – an **Assessment and Action Plan**¹.

The **Assessment** considers the current strengths and weaknesses of the access resource for legitimate walking, horse-riding, cycling, horse carriage driving and vehicular use; how easy it is to use by people of all needs and abilities including people with visibility and mobility impairment and the opportunities to develop and improve the access resource to meet peoples needs today and in the future.

The **Action plan** lists the work needed to realise these opportunities and develop an improved access network.

¹ Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) guidance to Local Highway Authorities on the preparation, publication and review of ROWIPS 22 November 2002.

This plan does not override the authority's current statutory duty to maintain Public Rights of Way². However, RoWIPs are the prime means for the Local Highway Authority to identify and prioritise actions and plan for the improved management and development of the access network.

This plan provides a vision, clear priorities, focus and one reference point, – a long term management strategy for all involved in the management and development of the access network – PRoW and countryside sites.

The aim is to bring outdoor access up-to-date so that it supports and addresses not only recreation and sport but also transport, health, economy, tourism, land-management, planning and community development and fully integrates with and benefits our way of life today.

The RoWIP is a strategic plan. Following an Access Resource assessment, extensive research and consultation with local people and various organisations 5 broad themes have emerged that need to be addressed to improve Dorset Access:

Theme 1 - The RoWIP's links with wider issues and related plans

Theme 2 - Improving customer service

Theme 3 - Providing a safer and more accessible network

Theme 4 - Involving local people and Partner organisations

Theme 5 - Providing quality information about the network

This plan is specific to the needs of Dorset people but interestingly RoWIPs country wide identify similar needs, for example, the need to update and maintain the definitive map and statement and the need to develop a good network of safe, off-road routes for walkers and riders.

It will take time and a step by step approach to implement this Rights of Way Improvement Plan. It contains actions that are achievable in current and future work programmes as well as those that are aspirations for the future as resources and opportunities allow.

Depending on available resources implementation will be achieved by DCC in a variety of ways, for example, in partnership with a variety of organisations, through actions identified in other relevant plans and, most importantly, with Dorset people and will rely on securing both internal and external funding.

Annual reports will detail improvement work completed in that year and set out priority improvement actions for the following year. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise the RoWIP will be reviewed every 10 years.

2 Keep up to date the legal record of public rights of way (the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS); Ensure that routes are adequately signposted, maintained free from obstruction and fit for purpose and Assert and protect the rights of the public to use the network.

Our Vision

“Providing opportunities for everyone to enjoy using Dorset’s Public Rights of Way and countryside sites for both travel and play – helping to improve the environment and overall quality of life for people now and for generations to come”



"Thank you for coming to our Parish Council meeting to talk about the RoWIP document. We all agree that it is a great piece of work from which it will be much easier to plan for the future". Parish Council



Introducing Dorset's RoWIP

"Middleton Abbey was about a dozen miles distant by road a little less by bridle-paths and footways" Thomas Hardy *"The Woodlanders"*, Dorset 1891

Introduction

Dorset is a beautiful and interesting county much loved and enjoyed by the people who live here and those who visit. The key to its appeal is the result of an ongoing relationship between the people and their landscape which has shaped the county making it what it is today.

From high up on the chalk escarpments over rolling wooded fields down into the river valleys across open heath-land and along dramatic coastline; to numerous colourful and vibrant market and coastal towns and villages and then quieter hamlets and farmsteads – Dorset is a county of contrasts rich in history, strong in local character and diverse with things to see, do, enjoy and savour.

An integral ingredient to Dorset's character is its 2855 miles (4594 km) of Public Rights of Way - footpaths, bridleways and byways. These coupled with other public outdoor space – parks, cycle routes etc - provide the perfect way to experience all the good things that Dorset has to offer.

Public Rights of Way form part of the county's highway network and historically provided important transport routes. However, as minor "subtle" highways the development of these routes have been

overshadowed by the development of major highways such as roads due to mass car ownership and the emphasis on motorised travel when planning how people get about the county.

But the minor highway network of Public Rights of Way together with other accessible open space plays a key role in providing invaluable social, economic and environmental benefits both today and in the future.

Improvements such as appropriate surfacing and linking paths and sites to create local networks can provide:

- A great facility for outdoor play, sport, recreation, relaxation and enjoyment of the natural environment for people of all ages and abilities resulting in numerous associated **physical and mental health benefits**.
- **Sustainable transport** routes for people to travel on foot, horse or bike to access facilities such as health centres, schools, shops and work bases. This helps to **reduce congestion** and air and noise pollution helping to **protect the environment** and contribute towards slowing **climate change**.
- Opportunities for **bringing people together** – to identify improvements and develop path networks that are meaningful and attractive to use when travelling around their area and out into the surrounding countryside.
- Custom from local people and tourists who when travelling by walking or riding are perhaps more likely to use public transport, pubs, shops, post offices, B&Bs, cycle hire etc helping to sustain **local businesses** and provide opportunities for new ones.
- Local people and visitors with an enjoyable way to explore using paths local in character through good design and use of local materials. These paths also help to manage how and where people travel minimising the negative impact on the lives of local people or sensitive landscape areas – **helping to protect communities and local character**.

This plan does not override the authority's current statutory duty to maintain Public Rights of Way³. However Rights of Way Improvement Plans are the prime means for the Local Highway Authority to identify and prioritise actions and plan for the improved management and development of the countryside access network. The Dorset Rights of Way Improvement Plan is the authority's long-term management strategy for the PRoW and countryside sites' access network.

Research for this plan has established that by improving management and maintenance; providing better information; developing a network of paths that are safe and attractive to use and involving people in achieving this – that these subtle, often overlooked group of minor highways and publicly accessible green space can achieve so much more and improve our quality of life today and those of future generations.

Whilst there will be some need to create new PRoW (eg paths providing links between existing paths for network development, new sections to address road severance, paths integrated into new housing sites) – on the whole in Dorset the focus is increasing provision by improving the quality of the existing PRoW.

"Thank you for coming to our Parish Council meeting to talk about the RoWIP document. We all agree that it is a great piece of work from which it will be much easier to plan for the future". Parish Council

3 Keep up to date the legal record of Public Rights of way (the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS)); Ensure that routes are adequately signposted, maintained free from obstruction and fit for purpose and assert and protect the rights of the public to use the network.

RoWIP purpose and scope

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) required each Local Highway Authority to make an assessment of:

- The extent to which Local Rights of Way (LRoW)⁴ – footpaths, bridleways, cycle tracks and restricted byways meet the present and likely future needs of the public.
- The opportunities Local Rights of Way can provide for exercise, recreation and enjoyment of the authority's area.
- The accessibility for people with vision and mobility impairments.

and prepare an **Action Plan** proposing how we will:

- Manage Rights of Way
- Secure an improved network of Rights of Way.

Whilst legislation focuses on LRoW, Dorset has many other “pathways” and areas of land that the public can enjoy for recreation and local travel. Examples include byways open to all traffic, unclassified county roads, access land and public outdoor space. This plan considers all public outdoor access and related activities ensuring a thorough assessment and action plan.

The Dorset RoWIP covers the county of Dorset excluding the unitary authority areas of Bournemouth and Poole for which there is a joint Bournemouth and Poole RoWIP.

RoWIP process

The improvement plan has been formed by statutory guidance⁵ and extensive research and consultation leading to an assessment of Dorset's Rights of Way and wider access network including:

- the physical character and extent of the network.
- identifying the needs, concerns and ideas of local people and visitors who are associated with, who use or who would like to use the network.⁶
- the current management of the network to identify any areas that needs improvement and how to deliver those improvements.
- the wider social, economic and environmental benefits that the network can offer and identifying RoWIP actions that can help improve people's lives.
- links between the RoWIP and other strategies and plans to establish its role.
- ways to effectively and efficiently implement the RoWIP through the establishment of clear priorities and partnership working.

Appendix 1 details sources of information which have helped to shape this plan which include public and access related organisations, community, town and parish plans and an annual photo-postcard competition from which comments and images have been included in this document.

4 Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are highways over which all members of the public have a right of passage. Generally PRoW tend to be divided into four types of highway – footpath, bridleway, restricted byway and Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) providing right of passage on foot, by horseback, by bike, by horse drawn carriage and vehicle. Local Rights of Way (LRoW) exclude BOATs but add in cycle tracks. However in making a complete assessment the Dorset RoWIP considers both PRoW and LRoW.

5 Statutory guidance from DEFRA advising on the preparation, publishing and review of RoWIPs 22 November 2002. (www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/cl/rowip/rowip.pdf).

6 For example user-groups - walkers, equestrians, cyclists and motorised; non users; general public; people with disabilities, carers, younger and older people; land-mangers – agriculture, forestry and conservation, people working in wider access related areas eg public health, local economy – tourism and business, planning and development

A draft RoWIP was widely distributed for consultation⁷ and the responses showed that there was strong support for the RoWIP, assessment findings, and the issues and actions identified.

The RoWIP process also identified shortfalls in the information⁸ required to make more informed decisions about the management of the network. Consequently the need to start collating such data is actioned and findings will be used to inform future reviews of this plan.

The Dorset Local Access Forum has played a key role providing support and advising on the development of this plan and will continue to do so during its implementation.

The Dorset Local Access Forum

Local Access Forums are independent groups of volunteers established under section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. They are a statutory body advising on improving access on land and to water for recreational and utilitarian (eg. routes to school, work and other local amenities) purposes and making the links between improved access and the wider benefits that improve overall quality of life such as health, sustainable transport, economy, accessibility, tourism and enhancing landscapes.

Their role is primarily strategic and strives to achieve a consensus view taking into consideration the needs of both land-managers and access users, statutory implications and wider environmental, social and economic factors to influence and develop plans, policy and broader decision making as opposed to focusing on specific locations/paths.

The Dorset Local Access Forum (DLAF) was established in 2002 and is the joint forum of Dorset County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council and the Borough of Poole (the appointing authorities).

7 Distributed to Town and Parish Councils, District Councils and neighbouring authorities, user groups, land-management organisations, organisations representing social, environmental and economic interests; Dorset Local Access Forum; Dorset Countryside Service.

8 Eg cycling provision, permissive access, and UCR character/condition.



Assessment of Public Rights of Way and wider public access in Dorset

The County Council, as the Local Highway Authority, is responsible for recording, maintaining and protecting the 2,855 miles (4,594 km) of Public Rights of Way (PROW) in Dorset⁹ and has powers to implement and manage Access Land¹⁰. In addition Dorset County Council is responsible for managing numerous local and long distance promoted routes, conservation areas, country parks and other public space all contributing to the overall countryside access network.

⁹ Excludes Bournemouth and Poole

¹⁰ Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW 2000) granted an additional right of pedestrian access for the public to "Access Land" for the purposes of "open air recreation" increasing opportunities for walkers. Open-air recreation is defined as recreational activities carried out on foot, including walking, sightseeing, bird watching, climbing and running.

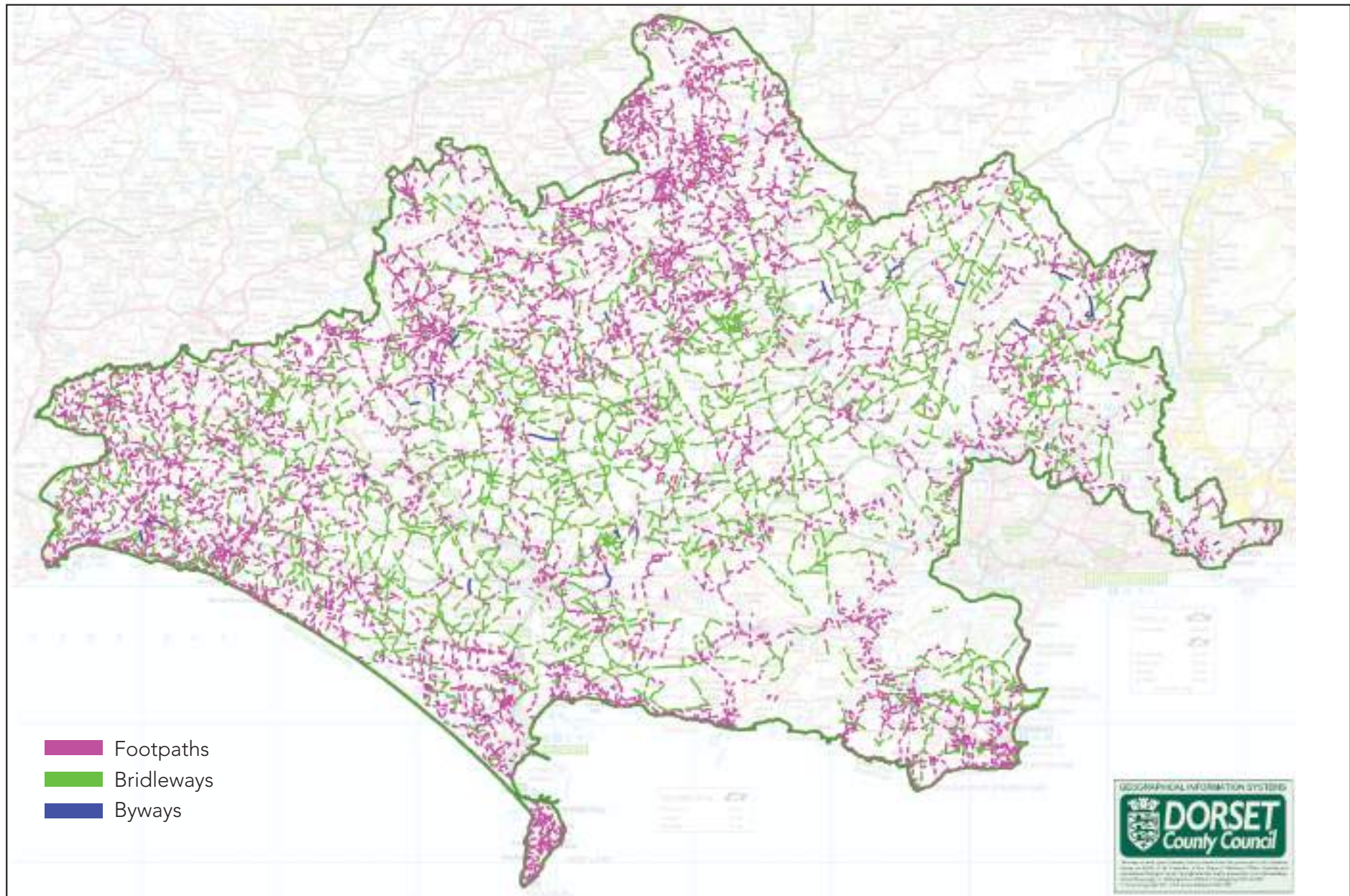
Recorded Public Rights of Way

Table 1 below shows the recorded Public Rights of Way in Dorset. Map 1 shows the distribution of the Public Rights of Way across Dorset.

Table 1 Dorset recorded Public Rights of Way

Type or Status of Public Right of Way	For use by	Length miles and (km)	Number of paths	% of Public Rights of Way total Dorset	symbol
Footpath (FP)	Walkers	1,749 m (2,814km)	4,878	61.25%	 
Bridleway (BR)	Walkers Horse-riders Cyclists	1,092 m (1,757km)	1,827	38.25%	 
Byway Open to All Traffic (BOATs)	Walkers, Horse-riders, cyclists, Horse drawn carriages and Motor Vehicles	14 m (23km)	43	0.5%	 
Restricted Byway	Walkers, Horse-riders, Cyclists, Horse-drawn carriages and non-motorised vehicles	0.06 m (100 metres)	1		 
Totals		2,855 mi (4,594 km)	6,749	100%	
NB: Users of motorised wheelchairs (Class 1, 2 and 3 if a speed restrictor fitted) are permitted on all the above categories. Use of a way by a particular class of user may be restricted by Traffic Regulation Order					

Map 1 Dorset's Public Rights of Way



From **Table 1** it is apparent that:

- Walkers can use all of the PRow in Dorset.
- Horse-riders and cyclists are limited to using approximately two fifths of Dorset's PRow.
- Horse carriage and motorised drivers can access only a nominal amount of Dorset's PRow.

Map 1 shows how Dorset's PRow distribution by type varies in density. Some areas have numerous footpaths but lack provision for cyclists and horse-riders. For example bridleways are noticeably absent on Portland and byways are sporadic across the county. Consequently opportunity to enjoy different outdoor activities depends on where you are in Dorset.

Promoted Routes

There are numerous promoted routes enjoyed by local people and visitors. Many start and finish in Dorset and a couple travel over into neighbouring counties and beyond. Most are managed by the DCC Rangers Team, for example, The Dorset section of the South West Coast Path - a National Trail with management funded by central government; The Wessex Ridgeway stretching from one side of the county to the other; disused railway lines being developed into multi-user routes such as the North Dorset Railway and various parish circular routes such as the one in Toller Porcorum. Some are managed in conjunction with, or by, other organisations for example the Ramblers' Jubilee Trail. For more information and a list of promoted routes in Dorset visit the website

www.dorsetforyou.com/386527

Trailways utilise old disused railway lines and can consist of either or both definitive PRow or permissive routes so that they can be managed for shared use by people of all abilities when walking, horse-riding and cycling – multi-user routes.

They offer great potential to provide good Countryside Access and celebrate our natural, cultural and industrial heritage.

By their very nature they link settlements, possess gentle gradients facilitating accessibility and provide off road cross-country routes. Historically they are a reminder of past forms of transport, communication networks, technologies and engineering in transporting people and goods by train.

In many instances a good basic infrastructure exists to accommodate new roles whilst celebrating old ones.

Good management and design can provide highly effective access eg well drained and durable surfacing, good path widths, and appropriate entry and exit points etc for many people to enjoy when walking, riding and cycling.

In addition Trailways can incorporate traditional railway features such as old signal posts, signage and styles of lettering, milestones, seating etc. Remaining stations have potential for renovation showcasing displays, for example, of railway and trailway, environmental interest and local history; providing space for cafés, cycle hire, and local information; and providing gateways from the trail to settlements and the facilities they have to offer.

Collectively these projects can provide wider benefits for education, environmental conservation, sustainable transport and the local economy.

The 1960s saw the closure of the branch railway lines. The Council purchased certain sections but others were sold off into private ownership. Consequently today we are left with a fragmented "disused railway" resource of varying lengths and potential.

Our continued work with private landowners makes it possible for permissive or definitive access to be established along old disused railway lines or to identify short alternative routes that deviate from and reconnect to the original line of the railway in developing Trailway routes.

Two major Trailway projects are currently running in Dorset, The North Dorset Trailway and Castleman Trailway, there are potential for others.

Access Land

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 granted additional pedestrian access to designated areas of Access Land for the purposes of "open air recreation"¹¹ increasing opportunities for walkers.

This new right of public access has been reported as a "Right to Roam". However this is incorrect as it is not permission for the public to walk wherever they wish. Access Land currently consists of "Open Country" which is "wholly or predominantly of mountain, moor, heath or down", and registered Common Land.

Where "**Access Land**" is identified people can walk freely across this land, subject to certain exceptions and restrictions, rather than having to stick to linear paths. New editions of Ordnance Survey Explorer maps¹² show all known "Access Land" by shading the areas light yellow with a light orange border.

In Dorset there are 9,205.7 hectares (22748 acres) of access land and 2,153 hectares (5320 acres) of registered common land. Various work has been done to implement Access Land in heath and downland areas of Dorset. Work is currently focusing on sites within and around urban areas and there is much scope to appraise, develop and promote Access Land across Dorset. For more information on Access Land opportunities in Dorset and links to the Natural England web-pages detailing open access information for land-managers and the public visit the website www.dorsetforyou.com/384665



Coastal Access

The government through the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 aims to improve public access to, and enjoyment of, the English coastline by creating clear and consistent public rights along the English coast for most types of open-air recreation on foot. It allows existing coastal access to be secured and improved and new access to be created in coastal places where it did not already exist. The first stretch of coastline in England where these rights will be implemented is the 'Weymouth Bay' stretch, between Portland and Lulworth. This will give a 30 km linear Coastal Access route and adjacent Coastal Access land, together with the right, where existing paths erode into the sea, for a replacement route to be quickly put in place. The aim is to have these new rights in place in time for the 2012 Olympic and

Paralympic sailing events, which will be taking place in Weymouth Bay. In the longer term, the new coastal access rights will be extended around the entire coast, joining up the whole of the Dorset coastline and ensuring a continuous route around our constantly evolving coastline. For more information on coastal access visit the Natural England website www.naturalengland.org.uk/coastalaccess

Cycling

There are cycle tracks¹³, cycle lanes¹⁴ and cycle routes¹⁵ in Dorset and where funding has been available cycling infrastructure has been improved mainly in the Urban South East Dorset Area (Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch). Overall cycling provision Dorset wide presents a fragmented network of cycle paths. By mapping and recording their character and condition we can establish the quantity, types

11 Open air recreation is defined as recreational activities carried out on foot, including walking, sightseeing, bird watching, climbing and running. It does not permit access for horse-riding, cycling or driving a vehicle or other activities such as camping unless provision for these activities already exists or if permissive access is granted for some of these activities. C123V users are permitted on access land.

12 Ordnance Survey Explorer maps for Dorset no's 116, 117, 118 129 & OL15

13 A way over which the public have a right of way on pedal cycles with or without a right of way on foot but not a way in or by the side of a highway consisting of or comprising a made-up carriageway (within the meaning of the 1980 Act) CRoW 2000. LHAs are required to include cycle-tracks as Local Rights of Way (LRoW) in their RoWIP assessments.

14 Part of the carriageway dedicated to cyclists

15 Continuous route for cyclists. Can be made up from a combination of "ways", for example, roads, cycle tracks, cycle lanes, multi-user routes, bridleways etc.

and quality of access for cyclists and the improvement work needed to develop good cycling networks providing better cycling opportunities for people of all ages, interests and abilities.

Recorded Public Rights of Way Condition

Dorset, with help from the Ramblers' Association, monitors the **condition** of its Public Rights of Way by inspecting a sample of paths in May and November to measure their 'ease of use'. This was done in accordance with the appropriate legislation until 2008 and the results collated nationally. Dorset, in common with some other south west authorities, exceeds expectation and continues to collect these figures for benchmarking purposes.

Dorset also takes part in the National Benchmarking Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey. The results show that Dorset has a high score for customer satisfaction for the provision of footpaths and bridleways, it is in the top half of all counties for customer satisfaction with signposting and overall satisfaction is within the top third.

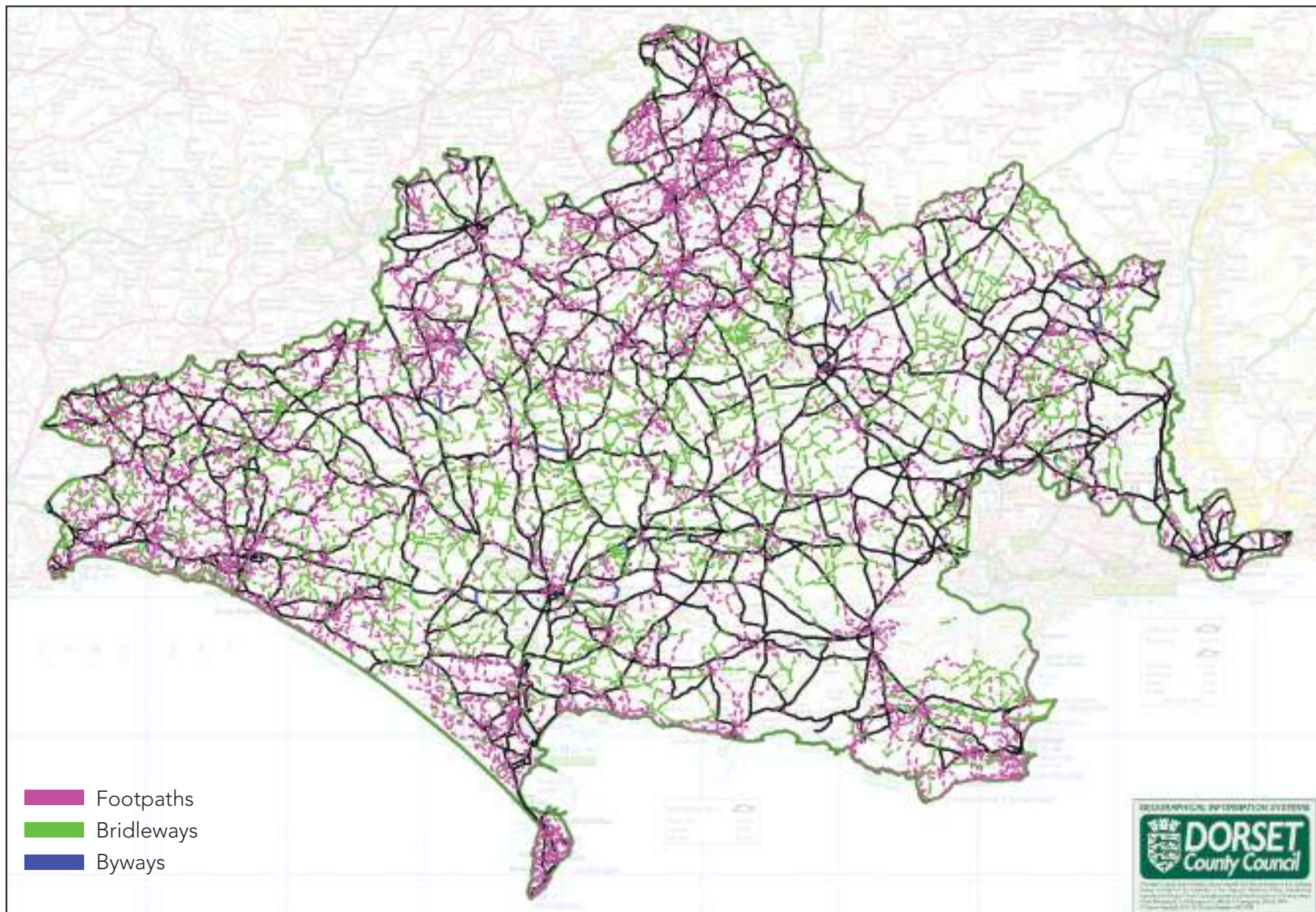
Roads

Unless a Traffic Regulation Order exists excluding their use – pedestrians, horse-riders, cyclists and horse carriage drivers can use all the **roads** in Dorset to travel along. The various types and quantity of roads in Dorset are detailed below in table 2.

Table 2 Road data for Dorset

Road type	Dorset
Motorway	0
Trunk	67.75 mi (109.04 km)
Principal classified A class	230.95 mi (371.67 km)
Non-principal classified B and C class	938.25 mi (1,509.97 km)
Unclassified County Roads (UCRs)	1,252.49 mi (2,015.68 km)

Map 2 shows how the pattern of the road network creates a patchwork of randomly grouped PRow. It is clear that the walker or rider using these paths inevitably uses roads to create an unbroken, fully linked PRow network.



Depending upon the specific character of each road and the nature of its use this dependency can either:

A Increase provision for walking, riding and cycling by safely linking PRow and creating effective networks.

Or

B Limit provision by stopping people using PRow because they feel unsafe, having to negotiate traffic when travelling along and/or crossing roads. This is known as Road Severance.

Unfortunately road severance is a major issue restricting network provision and use of PRow. (See Theme 3/page 45 - Network Development).

Roadside verges



The use of verges should be considered carefully and only used for walking, riding and cycling routes where it is safe for walkers, horse-riders and cyclists to use the verge as a refuge and when no other alternative off road route can be identified.

A highway comprises all the land contained within the boundary of that highway including any verge, margin or roadside waste.

Where a Highway Authority considers a road to be dangerous for use by pedestrians¹⁶, horse-riders¹⁷ and cyclists the Authority can manage verges, where it believes it to be appropriate, to enhance road safety.

However it is at the discretion of the Highway Authority to manage highway verges for this purpose which is not always appropriate, as often the dangers and unpleasantness associated with road severance still exists.

In addition Dorset County Council works with parishes and the Dorset Wildlife Trust managing verges as invaluable wildlife habitats and corridors providing refuge and travel routes for various plants and animals. In many instances managing these verges for access would be to the detriment of these wildlife areas.

“Residents favour selective cutting of verges to protect flora and fauna”
Broadmayne Parish Plan

Unclassified County Roads (UCRs)

Unclassified County Roads (UCRs) consist of a “road” which is not classified as an A, B or C road by the Highway Authority.

Although the use of the term “road” suggests vehicular rights this should not be taken for granted. However, with regards to Dorset’s UCRs, it is generally understood that they all do carry full access rights, increasing access provision for walkers, horse-riders, cyclists, carriage and vehicular drivers.

UCRs can be surfaced, ie tarmaced or unsurfaced, ie ranging from gravel or rough stone to grass or vegetation.

¹⁶ Highways Act 1980 Section 66

¹⁷ Highways Act 1980 Section 71 Duty on the Highway Authority to provide adequate grass/margin for horse-riders/driven livestock by the side of a carriageway where it considers such provision necessary or desirable in interests of safety.

To date records suggest that there are 237 unsurfaced UCRs in Dorset collectively totalling 138.75 miles (223.30 km) in length. They potentially provide links between PRow and additional routes increasing off road provision for all activities – especially pertinent for horse-riders, cyclists, horse carriage and motorised drivers.

However due to limited resources maintenance work is minimal and based upon the route's level of usage and the number of requests from users. Consequently the condition and use-ability of unsurfaced UCRs varies considerably.

Public Outdoor Space

The Dorset Countryside Service owns and/or manages 34 publicly accessible outdoor sites across Dorset. These sites consist of lay-bys, car parks, picnic sites and view points, Country Parks and environmental conservation areas enabling people to experience and enjoy a range of landscapes and habitats.

Many other organisations, eg National Trust, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Forestry Commission and individuals also provide publicly accessible sites.

Like Rights of Way in Dorset, the geographical spread of countryside sites varies across the county. These sites need to be reviewed to identify those that are useful, those that can be given up and locations where new sites are needed.

Work is also needed to evaluate the access role of each Dorset Countryside Service site within the wider access resource and formally build this element into all Service Site Management Plans.



"We use the footpaths for enjoyment, exercise and for transport. They are a great way to get around without using the car"

Photopostcard entrant

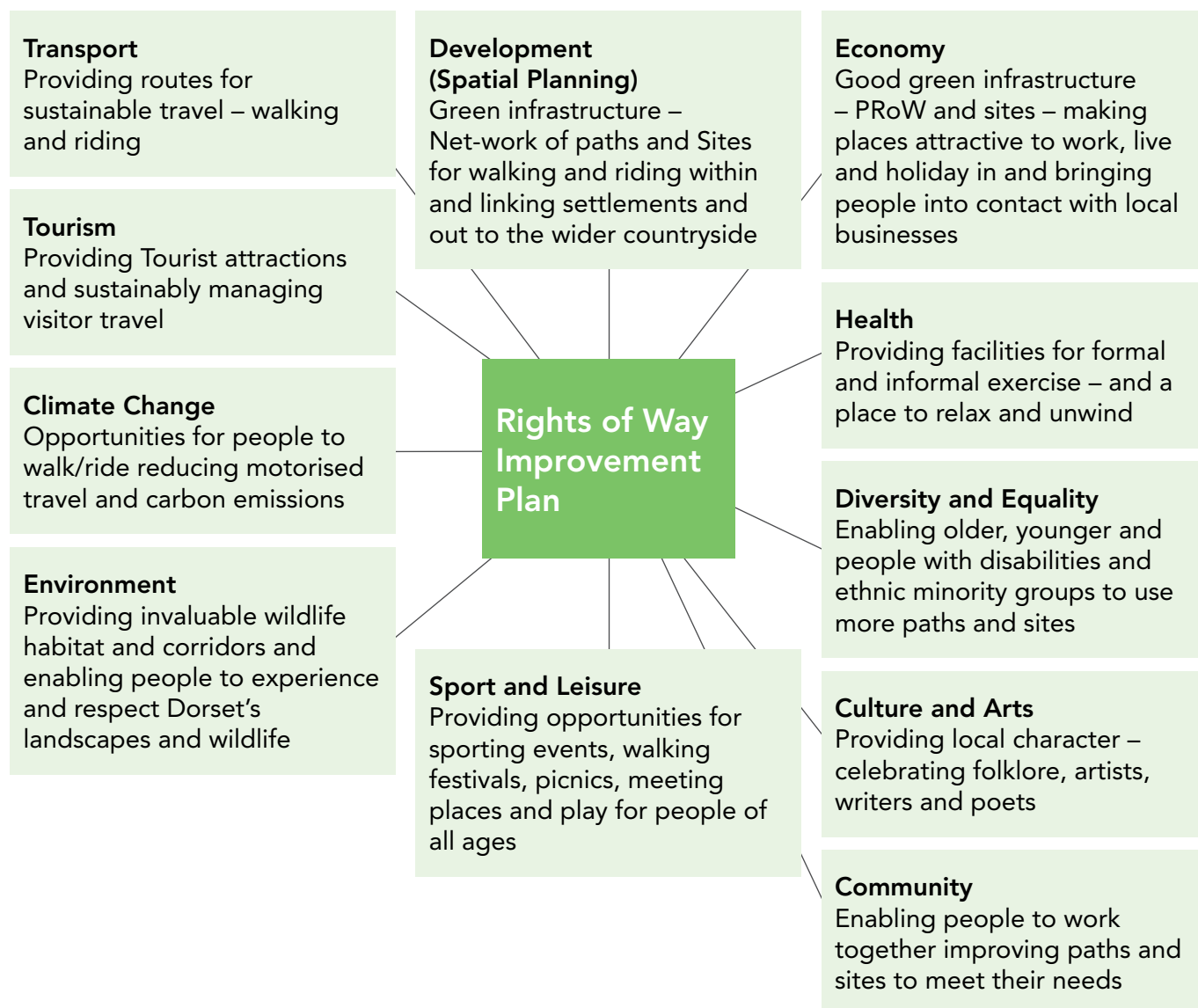


Theme 1: Links with wider social, economic and environmental Issues and related strategies

The RoWIP in context

Rights of Way Improvement Planning provides the opportunity to recognise the invaluable contribution improved Public Rights of Way and countryside sites can make to the Social, Economic and Environmental needs we face today and in the future (see Appendix 2). A selection of the key plans and issues are highlighted in this chapter.

The strategic context of the Dorset RoWIP can be summarised as shown in Fig 1 below.



Dorset County Council's Future Plans

Our Role in Dorset: The Dorset Corporate Plan 2010-14 sets out four aims:

- Improve life chances, health and independence for people within thriving and safe communities
- Improve Dorset's transport and economy
- Safeguard Dorset's unique environment
- Develop public services fit for the future

The Dorset Community Strategy 2007-2016 in combination with Local Area Agreements guides the work of the Dorset Strategic Partnership¹⁸ whose aim is:

“to improve quality of life and well being for people in Dorset in a sustainable way”

¹⁸ Established in 2002 the Dorset Strategic Partnership (DSP) consists of partners from across Dorset who together aim to ensure that all the key concerns raised through the community planning process are addressed by the right people, at the right level in a sustainable way. The DSP address the strategic issues relevant to Dorset's residents that cannot be tackled at a more local level.

Implementation of the RoWIP can help to achieve many of the targets aspired to in these plans, strategies and agreements in particular those under the themes of - accessibility, children and young people, older people, thriving communities, culture, safer communities, health and wellbeing, economic partnership, climate change and the environment. Many of these are discussed in more detail below.

T 1.1 Aim: Implement and promote RoWIP projects demonstrating how improved paths and countryside sites help to achieve targets in Dorset County Council's Future Plans.

Transport – The Local Transport Plan

The Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset¹⁹, Local Transport Plan (BP and DLTP3 2011-2026) sets out the strategy for improving transport for the next 15 years. It covers all modes of transport including walking and cycling, the management and maintenance of the highway network and the relationship between transport and the wider social, economic and environmental policy issues.

The ability to move around Dorset easily and safely, and in ways that minimise the impact on the environment whilst reducing social exclusion is key to realising LTP3's potential.



“A safe and reliable transport system for Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset that assists in the development of a strong economy, maximises the opportunities for sustainable transport and respects and protects the area's unique environmental assets” LTP3 vision

The Local Transport Act 2008 requires LTP3 to have “regard to the needs of disabled people, both in developing and implementing plans” bringing local transport legislation in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The RoWIP has researched these needs in the context of PRow.

The LTP3 is based around five national priority transport goals:

- 1. Supporting economic growth**
- 2. Reducing carbon emissions and tackling climate change**
- 3. Promoting equality of opportunity**
- 4. Contribute to better safety, security and health**
- 5. Improve quality of life and a healthy natural environment**

Improved Public Rights of Way can help achieve these goals and are discussed in more detail below. Consequently the LTP and RoWIP are closely interlinked and the Dorset RoWIP is a key supporting strategy to the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset LTP3.

T1.2 Aim: To align the RoWIP with the LTP3 and develop projects to implement PRow improvements.

¹⁹ A RoWIP report is in the current LTP2 2006-2011 with actions identified to improve management and improvement of Dorset's PRow which are being funded through the LTP annual programme of expenditure. In the BP&DLTP3 2011-2026 the RoWIP is recognised as having a significant role in developing a network of green infrastructure.

Climate Change

Improved PRow can play an important role in helping to address climate change.

Government is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the UK economy by at least 80% on 1990 levels by 2050²⁰. Changes to transport and how we travel will need to happen if we are to make a significant contribution to this target.

The Department for Transport is encouraging local authorities to help mitigate climate change by developing more sustainable transport systems, facilitating behaviour change and reducing the need to travel. Improving PRow and creating a safe and attractive environment will enable people to walk, ride and cycle for journeys and/or to use public transport and will reduce carbon emissions.

Dorset is experiencing hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters. It is predicted that there will be more frequent extreme weather events and rising sea levels - 80cm higher by 2080. These climatic trends will have an impact on people's use and enjoyment of PRow and public green space as well as to current working practice to maintain and improve them.

Table 3 Climate Change implications for management of Dorset's PRow and Countryside sites

Predicted Climate Change	Implications for RoWIP/Site management in Dorset
Warmer dryer summers	• Increased visitor numbers. • Increase in walking riding and cycling. • Increased pressure on paths/sites and communities • Dry and dusty paths prone to erosion • Possibly increase in conflict between different user activities. • Increased pressure on promoted routes esp Dorset coast path.
Warmer wetter winters	• Wet and muddy paths prone to erosion
Storms	• Increased coastal erosion and potential impact on network of paths in the coastal corridor • Obstructions – fallen trees
Flooding	• Washout of paths – gullies.
Vegetation	• Lengthening growing season requiring more frequent vegetation clearance

Path networks can be developed to accommodate and capitalise on increased pressures whilst protecting more vulnerable locations, for example, managing visitors onto more robust paths and into contact with local businesses; PRow providing wildlife corridors linking habitats.

Procedures regarding current working practice can be developed to reduce CO₂ emissions. For example use of bio-fuels and reusing/recycling waste.

T1.3 Aim: Develop and implement sustainable working procedures to address climate change

Development/planning - Green infrastructure and social inclusion

The Planning Act 2004 required Local Planning Authorities to replace their land use planning based Local plans with new, spatially based, Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). These LDFs consist of a group of documents centered around a Core Strategy. They are also interlinked with LTP3.

District and Borough Councils in Dorset have been developing their Local Core Strategy. These are based on evidence studies and outline the key principles to guide long-term planning and sustainable development in the local area which reflects the needs of the communities. One of the strands of evidence underpinning both LDF and LTP3 preparation across Dorset has been a series of Transport studies that considers all aspects of transport provision including the roles of PRow.

Research from the RoWIP has fed into the LDF process establishing the invaluable role of PRow/sites as Green-Infrastructure.

Green Infrastructure can be defined as...

“A strategic network of accessible, green spaces, both new and existing between and within our cities, towns and villages and the linkages in between them. It is multi-functional providing wildlife corridors, water and carbon management, reduces noise and air pollution, alleviates flooding and numerous opportunities to relax socialise and play! Sites include nature reserves, parks, woodland. Linkages include PRow”

Transport studies for Dorset LDFs advocates green infrastructure providing sustainable transport routes for local functional journeys to either access local services²¹ or for purposes of fitness/leisure.

The recent coalition government proposes, through the Localism Bill, to change the current planning process and introduce a more community led neighbourhood planning system. Rights of Way Improvement Planning will fully integrate with this system once it is established.

The county of Dorset covers two distinct character types of settlement pattern. South East Dorset comprising of Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, parts of East Dorset and parts of Purbeck are urban. The significantly larger remaining areas of Dorset are predominantly rural in character.

Approximately one third of Dorset's population live in remote, rural villages and hamlets. The rural facilities survey 2002 emphasises the loss of and continued decline in local services. In addition public transport provision is poor where approximately 10% of households in Dorset are not served by a frequent bus service (three or more buses a day).

Consequently in being able to easily “get about” rural areas and get to work bases, education centres, shops, formal health facilities, open spaces and countryside etc private car ownership is essential.

However this can also apply within market towns and/or villages where facilities do exist. Here infrastructure enabling easy walking, riding and cycling can be poor and people often feel it is easier and safer to use their car for even short, local journeys.

People unable to drive or without access to motorised transport can find it very difficult to reach services and outdoor recreation facilities.

All of the above contributes towards social deprivation and exclusion.

This RoWIP has identified numerous barriers that prevent people from walking/riding to access local services. These can be overcome by working with local communities to develop local path networks – ie green infrastructure - catering for people of all ages, needs and abilities to walk/ride to local facilities in their community or – where convenient – to those in a neighbouring settlement.

21 For example schools, workplace, shops, post office, pub, medical centres, village hall, church, public transport, playing field, local countryside.

“We use the footpaths for enjoyment, exercise and for transport. They are a great way to get around without using the car” Photopostcard entrant

Measures such as good design, appropriate surfacing, furniture and informative signage, creating “links” where there are gaps in existing networks, linking with public transport, providing adequate, local information and effective integrations with the wider road network can develop sustainable transport networks ie green infrastructure that people enjoy using.

T1.4 Aim: Ensure that PRow/Sites are protected and enhanced in building and road development and effectively incorporated into the LDF process as essential green infrastructure.



Health and Wellbeing

Whilst life expectancy in Dorset is 3-4 years greater than that of the national average research shows that levels of heart disease (which is 3% higher than the national average and accounts for 42% of all deaths in Dorset), asthma, cancer and obesity are increasing.

Such health problems are not exclusive to adults; increasingly they apply to our younger members of society too. For example, rates of overweight and obese school age children are high and if not addressed will lead to a massive increase in diseases in later life such as diabetes and heart disease.

Living in rural areas can lead to social exclusion and isolation resulting in many people, especially those in the older age profile, susceptible to a low sense of wellbeing and esteem and depression. Rural exclusion also contributes to limiting public access to formal leisure centres and facilities such as gyms and swimming pools.

Such avoidable health issues place an unnecessary burden on the public purse²². Throughout Dorset’s health service it is recognised that preventative measures are needed and national research demonstrates how walking and outdoor recreation are particularly effective in tackling heart disease, obesity, depression and dementia. Initiatives from GP surgeries are emerging with prescriptions for exercise – health walks backed up by the issue of “Fit” notes instead of sick notes.

A network of improved PRow and countryside sites can positively contribute towards healthier lifestyles.

“I have two Doctors, my left leg and my right” George Trevelyan 1913

**“getting out on our bikes keeps us physically and mentally healthy”
Photo-postcard entrant**

“for every 10% increase in green local space – measurable reduction in health complaints” Nature and Health 2001

It is recommended that adults are physically active for at least 30 minutes a day and young people for approximately one hour a day.

²² The combined cost of cardiovascular disease (CVD) to the NHS and the UK economy is £30 billion a year. The cost to the UK health care system in 2006 was £14.4 billion (around 48%) and productivity losses and the costs of informal care of people with CVD each account for £8 billion (26%) annually. The NHS spent 6.5 billion and LAs 1.4 billion on mental illness in 2002/03.

“Half an hour’s walking per day cuts the risk of heart disease by up to half, as well as reducing risk of cancers, diabetes, obesity, and osteoporosis and helps to improve mental health” Natural England

By developing path/site networks that are accessible, safe and a pleasure to use, within and between settlements and out into the surrounding countryside people have an incentive to leave the car at home and get outside and enjoy the walk, bike ride and possibly horse-ride to the local shop, school or pub. This enables people to build passive exercise into their daily lives! These networks also provides “doorstep gym” facilities enabling people to take up a more formal exercise routine such as regular walking, horse-riding and/or cycling.

Further more by simply having the opportunity to get outdoors, take some time out alone or interact with people, explore and get to know your surroundings, experience our wildlife and amazing landscapes, helps us to relax and unwind and improves our mental health and overall sense of wellbeing.

“Countryside access...very few other sports activities are able to provide such encouraging fulfilment to a person’s mind, spirit and body” Photo-postcard entrant

Just consider the potential impact this could have on saving and redirecting money within our health service.

“For every £1 invested in the Walking for Health Scheme, £7 worth of health benefits are delivered” Natural England

The RoWIP Planning process provides the means to work more closely with health providers (Primary Care Trusts, Exercise and Lifestyle Co-ordinators, GPs, Leisure Centres, Schools) and communities (older people, younger people, families, people with visibility and/or mobility impairment) to build upon existing initiatives (GP referral schemes, Health walks) and develop new ones and provide effective local access networks close to, for example, peoples homes, care centres, hospitals and retirement homes - enabling people to independently build a little more activity into their lives.

T1.5 Aim: Work with health service professionals to expand Natural England’s Health Walks scheme and develop other initiatives in Dorset.

Increase opportunities for people to get into the countryside and use the natural environment to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing.



Older, Younger and Disabled people and ethnic minorities

The RoWIP must have particular regard to the accessibility of Rights of Way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility impairment (CRoW 2000sec 60 (2c)). This is reinforced by the Equality Act 2010 and various other legislation²³.

People vary in their abilities and needs throughout their lives. RoWIP guidance defines “mobility impairment” in its broadest sense. For example people with either temporary or permanent

23 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) places a duty on all service providers to avoid discrimination against disabled people by taking positive steps to remove, alter or provide reasonable means of avoiding physical features which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to make use of a service this therefore includes – public space, Prow, activities and events and promotional material. Human Rights Act 2000.

mobility impairment can include older people, younger people, pregnant women, people experiencing ill health, carers of people with visibility and mobility impairment, people who use pushchairs to carry young children and people who use wheelchairs or Electrically Propelled Vehicles (EPVs).

Individuals from the above groups and people representing them in Dorset stated how they valued paths and public space as an opportunity to be able to get outside, about their local area and into the countryside. Good quality access plays an important role in enhancing their quality of life and helping to reduce social exclusion”

There is increasing concern that, due to fears for their safety, **children** today don’t get outside and “play” unsupervised in natural places as much as their parents and the generations before them did.²⁴

This coupled with the popularity and availability of technology such as television and computers can contribute to a lack of physical exercise in younger people leading to obesity and associated health problems (see Theme 1, page 30 – health and wellbeing).

Research shows how important it is for young people to have the opportunity to experience the outdoors through both formal and informal “play”, sports and other recreational activities.

This experience helps young people to maintain good overall physical and mental health and develop self awareness and social skills. For example it helps them to have fun, interact with friends, be creative, judge situations, develop confidence and independence and a greater awareness and respect for their local community and natural environment.

“Children who are allowed to play and explore outside are likely to be more adventurous, self-motivated and better able to understand risk when they grow up” Tessa Livingstone, Child Psychologist

Dorset youth group leaders organise outdoor activities such as hiking, summer camp and outdoor games.

“We use quite a lot of local paths with the Girl Guides – they know all the paths, but are not allowed to use them on their own (safety). We very much want to keep the paths open – we like using them. We make little wooden boats and drop them in the river from the bridge and then chase them up the river, which is great fun. Need to keep that facility.” 1st Sturminster Newton Guides

Parents and young people raised safety concerns about having to walk and ride along roads. However young people want to be able to travel and request paths or multi-user routes (to accommodate walkers, horse-riders and cyclists) to travel safely to school, to visit friends, get to neighbouring settlements and for leisure.

“(for children bicycles are) ... one of the most important ways of travelling to see their friends” Resident, Hinton St Mary

Numerous requests also highlight the need for outdoor public space – incorporating formal play and more natural areas.

“A place to hang out ... a park ... a playing field” Consultee

Dorset’s growing population of older people is already higher than the national average. Consequently

24 Childhood and Nature: A Survey on changing relationships with nature across generations, NE, March 2009

Dorset has an above national average population of people experiencing **long-term illness and/or disability** and higher proportion of unpaid carers.

Groups and organisations exist to provide additional support where required for the various countryside activities of walking, horse-riding, cycling, horse carriage and vehicular driving. For some, horse carriage and vehicular driving are the only way they can have access to the countryside. But people also enjoy the freedom and flexibility of having the opportunity to be independent and get out on their own. **However problems encountered on Rights of Way and countryside sites that might make an activity difficult and unpleasant to use for some people, can create actual barriers to access for others. For such people these barriers limit the opportunities and experiences that many of us take for granted.**

Consultees are frustrated at not being able to use paths or sites because of inappropriate infrastructure design. Such experiences diminish their confidence and dissuade them from using other countryside access opportunities.

Both Market Town and village residents cited personal illness, limited mobility and age preventing them from using PRoW to access local services or get out into the countryside. **However for many people it may not be their limited mobility that is preventing them from using Rights of Way, but conversely the Rights of Way that are not meeting their personal needs.**

"Please replace (old) stiles with gates – especially near villages"
Photo-postcard entrant

"We have pathways but are unable to use them as we can't use stiles, five bar gates or kissing gates" Disability Action Group, Child Okeford

Removing barriers can open up new opportunities and increase provision for a wider range of people whilst improving the overall quality of the Access Resource for everyone else.

"To get around the Blackmore Vale and access my local services I use the Nordcap bus which is a community rural bus service for people with no other way of getting about. I suffer from MS and therefore cannot drive a car. I enjoy using the local footpaths in my area to get some form of recreation, they are free and I have the right to use them!" Member of the public

The Equality Act 2010 states the need to take "reasonable" measures to avoid discrimination. Circumstances such as costs, potential benefits to other customers, resources available and practicalities will need to be taken into consideration. Actual accessibility improvements made will depend on various issues, vary from location to location and result in different levels of accessibility and types of improvements.

Contrary to common concerns, improving accessibility does not mean tarmacing the entire countryside and people with mobility and visibility impairment are the first to oppose such an idea. Measures to improve accessibility of paths and sites might include, for example, replacing stiles with gaps or gates, improvement to provide a surface suitable for disability vehicles, clear signage, sufficient width of paths to enable those with sight impairment to walk alongside a carer and graded slopes rather than steps.

Therefore, considering all the above points it is appropriate that in developing an effective countryside access resource that provides opportunities for as many people as possible, that "accessibility" is inherent in the management, maintenance, promotion and legal management of Dorset's outdoor Access resource. This should ensure that as a service provider we will "think ahead", consider the

range of disabilities and needs our customers have and where possible take steps to address any barriers that might impede customer use and enjoyment of Dorset's countryside.

"Dorset's PRow must be kept in good order and accessible to as many people as possible including the disabled and less agile" Photopostcard entrant

Dorset has a small and diverse ethnic population – 6.8%. Research suggests that people from ethnic minority groups can lack confidence using the countryside for recreation due to different cultures and languages. Any barriers such as lack of appropriate publicity and information, preventing people from ethnic minorities enjoying PRow/sites in Dorset need to be identified and addressed.

The consultation and findings for this RoWIP highlights the various needs and interests of the numerous people who use or would like to use Public Rights of Way and sites in Dorset. Dorset County Council, through its access duties and access improvement work, independently and in partnership with others, does and will continue to do what it can to meet these needs when resources are available.

T1.6 Aim: Improve accessibility of the network.



Environment – Natural and Cultural Heritage

Dorset covers 981 square miles (2,542 square km) with a population of approximately 407,800 with 47% living in urban areas, 25% in coastal and market towns and 28% in villages and rural areas.

Dorset is renowned for its amazing geology that has given it a diverse variety of stunning landscapes, interesting soil types and habitats. The coast has steep cliffs and muddy, sandy, rocky and shingle shores; heath-land with its bogs, pools and scrub; wooded areas of ancient, veteran trees, old and new coppice, hedgerows and thickets; the downlands and meadows supporting different grasslands and the variety of rivers and wetlands.

This diverse range of habitats provides perfect conditions to support a rich biodiversity. Numerous everyday and rare plants and animals can be seen and enjoyed here. Approximately 80% of all mammal species, 90% of all bird species and 80% of all butterfly species that exist in Britain can be found in Dorset.

This rich natural resource laid the foundations for Dorset's strong cultural heritage.

Dorset's landscapes and soils influenced how the land has been used and agriculture has played a major role adding to and shaping many of the habitats listed above.

Dorset also has the highest number of large, privately owned landed estates in the South West region, again influencing the character of its landscape.

Architecture of traditional construction methods and indigenous building materials, for example, local stone, brick, cob and thatch, also contribute to Dorset's distinctiveness.

A strong sense of past and present generations is readily felt through the numerous historical features that abound in the Dorset landscape. Hill forts, burial mounds, chalk hill figures, parklands, ceremonial sites and present settlement patterns resulting in today's vibrant coastal and market towns, villages, hamlets and farmsteads.

Collectively this rich resource has provided inspiration for numerous artists, writers, craftspeople and musicians who have made their homes here.

It is therefore of little surprise that the richness of Dorset is recognised at both national and international levels – nearly three quarters of Dorset is designated - but most importantly highly valued at a local level, by the people who live in Dorset. A MORI poll revealed that Dorset's residents felt that protecting Dorset's unique environment should be top priority²⁵.

Facts - Environmental, heritage and landscape designations in Dorset:

73% of the Dorset landscape is identified under landscape, heritage and/or environmental designation. For example, this includes:

135 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

12 National Nature Reserves (NNRs)

33 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)

1,225 Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs)

4 Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

14 Candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs)

4 Ramsar sites – internationally important wetlands

12,890 Listed buildings

190 Building conservation areas

1,716 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (Just over 5% of all SAMs in England)

31 Historic parks and gardens

71 miles (114km) of Dorset coast is World Heritage Status

55% of the Dorset landscape is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) where 44% is Dorset AONB and 11% made up from an area of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs (AONB)

Although Dorset is one of the richest counties for wildlife in England it has experienced widespread deterioration in habitat and populations of both everyday and rare species. Such declines have occurred during the last 80 years and intensified in the last 30 years mainly as a result of human activity.

Many people are working hard together to halt any deterioration and are dedicated to protecting Dorset's rich natural and cultural heritage. Various plans and schemes exist to support this, for example the Jurassic Coast, Dorset and Cranborne AONB management plans which the Dorset RoWIP fed into and the agricultural schemes²⁶.

The Dorset Countryside Rangers and PRow Officers have a key role to play in helping to protect

25 In the 2009 survey of Dorset residents by MORI, 85% were satisfied with the countryside and coastal conservation services, the highest satisfaction rating of public services and the most improved by 12 percentage points from the surveys in 2002 and 2005

26 The Good Agricultural Environmental Conditions (GAEC) imposed in all three levels of the scheme require adherence to all relevant legislation (cross compliance). GAEC 8 requires land managers to keep open and accessible all public rights of way. The surface of a path must not be disturbed so that it becomes inconvenient to use. Free passage along a right of way must not be wilfully obstructed and any gate or stile must be maintained in good condition. Where ploughed, the surface must be made good and the route of a reinstated cross field path clearly marked. There are penalties for non-compliance.

and enhance Dorset's natural and cultural heritage. Sites and PRow provide invaluable habitat, local character and distinctiveness and a means for people to get out into and responsibly explore, experience and enjoy the Dorset landscape and understand just how special it is – encouraging them to play a part in its conservation.

T1.7 Aim: Address infringements of GAEC 8 (single payment scheme – PRow).

T1.8 Aim: Ensure RoWIP aims are integrated into Country Park and sites management plans and continue to influence wider access schemes and landscape management plans

T1.9 Aim: Ensure that the work of Dorset County Council and partners continues to protect and enhance Dorset's natural and cultural heritage.



Economic

Improved PRow/sites providing local path networks that are safe and attractive to use by people of all ages and abilities, make it easier and appealing to walk ride and cycle helping to make financial savings or generate income as highlighted in the previous themes – for example:

- Less car dominated environments are more pleasant – safer, less noise/air pollution - for people to live and work in and visit – vitalising areas.
 - Reduced car use reduces the costs associated with congestion and climate change.
 - Local people and visitors able to safely walk/ride are more likely to use and sustain local services – shops, public transport etc
- Health care savings associated with increased outdoor activity – physical and relaxation.

Improved PRow/Sites also boosts the local economy through Tourism.

- Nationally £1.4 - £2.7 billion is generated from walking in the English countryside, supporting between 180,000-245,000 jobs²⁷.
- Britain's longest national trail and one of the regions key tourist attraction – The South West Coast Path – attracts 6 million people and contributes an estimated £307 million annually into the regional economy²⁸.
- The top two activities visitors take part in during their visit to Dorset are walking (80%) and exploring towns and villages (67%)²⁹.

Dorset provides a range of large and small outdoor attractions for visiting and local tourists to enjoy – gardens, parks, wildlife reserves, historic buildings, landscapes/views, churches. As much as the promoted long distance trails are important as attractions in themselves the development of high quality localised path networks are important in the sustainable management of visitors and providing localised areas to explore on foot, horse and bike, especially catering for the short-stay or day visitor.

T1.10 Aim: Identify, research and promote ways in which improved paths and countryside sites help to boost the local economy through financial savings and generating income.

27 The economic and social value of walking in the England" Christie and Matthews RA2003

28 South West Tourism

29 Dorset New Forest Tourism Partnership Visitor Survey 2009



Theme 2: Improving customer service

Issues:

Review the Definitive Map and Statement.

There is a statutory duty to update and maintain the Legal Record so that it provides better information and certainty for all involved in PRoW. There are mapping anomalies and a backlog of definitive map modification and public path order applications that need to be addressed.

Improved feedback to members of the public.

The public require easy access to accurate and up-to-date information about the access network.

Collating robust information about PRoW and sites.

Availability and co-ordination of robust information about the character, condition and asset value of the Access Resource – and – about the needs of land-managers and the people who use/would like to use PRoW is limited. Such information is invaluable for management, maintenance and development of PRoW/sites.

Improved working practice

Efficient management of reported access problems and queries, work programmes and good policy and procedures provide effective working practice

The assessment and consultation highlighted four key areas that need improvement to achieve an effective and efficient service.



Legal Record - Definitive Map and Statement

Integral to the management and use of the PRoW is the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS), the legal record³⁰ of the location and (minimum) status of each recorded public right of way. Dorset's current DMS was published at a scale of 1:25000 in 1989. Such small scale mapping has led to a number of anomalies arising from the difficulty in accurately interpreting the line on the map. Funding is available until 2013 to publish an updated and consolidated Definitive Map and Statement at a scale that enables accurate interpretation of the character and position of each path. The project is likely to take until 2018 and beyond.

T2.1 Aim: Review, update and correct the definitive map and statement of Public Rights of Way

The council is under a statutory duty to keep the DMS under continuous review, as set out in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 – Section 53 (WCA81). Any amendment or modification to the DMS requires a legal order. The process for making orders is a lengthy one. Reviewing the definitive map and correcting the resulting anomalies will inevitably generate many hundreds of legal orders. The Legal Record is modified or amended by legal orders – Definitive Map Modification Orders³¹ (DMMO's) and Public Path Orders³² (PPOs)

A shortage of resources has led to a significant backlog of DMMO and PPO applications.

T2.2 Aim: Speed up DMMO and PPO processes and reduce the backlog of outstanding applications.

In the interests of fairness, modification applications are dealt with in order of receipt, unless they meet the criteria to be accelerated to the top of the list.

T2.3 Aim: Review and make publicly available the Statement of Priorities

Dorset is also under a duty to produce a register of DMMO applications which is currently underway. It is an aim to transfer the existing paper format to digital to facilitate easy access by the public onto the 'DorsetForYou' website.

T2.4 Aim: Publish a digital version of the register of definitive map modification applications on the County Council Website - Dorset for You – www.dorsetforyou.com

The process of dealing with applications for PPOs and DMMOs is set out within legislation and government guidance. It has been suggested that this legislation requires updating and that perhaps the existing legal processes and legal constraints should be challenged to speed the process and thus assist in reducing local authority backlogs.

T2.5 Aim: Review, challenge and offer alternatives to the existing processes and legal constraints.

- 30 The Legal Record is invaluable for the protection, maintenance, improvement and development of PRoW but also for people who need to know where PRoW exist, for example, walkers, riders, cyclists, planners/developers, estate agents.
- 31 If evidence shows that the Legal Record is incorrect then it can be "modified" to ensure a correct record of PRoW. DMMO's can add a route to the Legal Record where it is proven to exist but not recorded; upgrade or downgrade an existing PRoW and remove a right of way that has been wrongly recorded.
- 32 PPO's can Create, Extinguish or Divert a public footpath or bridleway.

Improve feedback to members of the public

Successful customer service relies on accurate and up-to-date information on the character, condition, use and legal status of Public Rights of Way and other access. Data is collated in Cside, the countryside access team's geographical information system database, including Rights of Way problems reported by the public. This information forms the basis of officer's day-to-day work programmes and enables us to manage the network. It is soon to be available on Dorset for You – the website of most of Dorset's councils.

T2.6 Aim: Keep the public informed about progress of reported cases.

Information Base - Asset information

Robust information about the character, condition and use of PRoW and countryside sites is invaluable for their management – statutory maintenance and strategic improvement.

The Asset Management Plan is an inventory of Public Rights of Way infrastructure to which a financial value is attached to inform budgeting and prioritisation of maintenance and improvement. Relevant information is fed into the Dorset County Council Highways Asset Management Plan and other plans and strategies raising the strategic profile of Public Rights of Way and demonstrating the cost effectiveness of investing in access network infrastructure and development.

The Definitive Map Review project is recording information describing the character of each PRoW.

However information from across the countryside service needs to be collated and user monitoring³³ improved to provide a complete picture of the character, condition and use of PRoW and public space.

T2.7 Aim: Implement Strategic Access Management Planning - Quantify the value of the access asset for management and improvement planning.

T2.8 Aim: Continue to develop the information database (Cside) as a tool for management and maintenance of the Rights of Way and countryside sites network.

T2.9 Aim: To strive for continuous improvement in the relative condition of Dorset's Rights of Way network and the satisfaction of its users and customers compared to other south west authorities.

Working practice

Aspiring to the aims of the RoWIP...

"to improve and maintain PRoW and sites so that they meet the needs of a wider range of people today and in the future"

...provides the opportunity to review, update and develop policy and procedures that adhere to statutory duties but provide scope to plan PRoW/site work that it addresses RoWIP issues and develops an effective network.

"The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will be the prime means by which the Highway Authority will identify and prioritise actions and plan for the improved management and development of the countryside access network"

Statutory guidance preparation of RoWIPs DEFRA 22 November 2002

33 To include both positive and negative feedback eg helping to review quality of work done, type of user, quantities of user etc – helping to inform basic maintenance needs and wider economic, social and environmental value of the access resource

T2.10 Aim: Review, develop and implement best practice policy/procedures for all aspects of PRoW/sites management and improvement.

Dorset Direct's (Dorset County Council's contact centre) Customer Service Officers (CSOs) manage incoming calls, queries and reports for the Countryside Access team. CSOs are trained on various Rights of Way topics ensuring a quick and efficient service for the customer. On average, CSOs are able to resolve at first contact two thirds of all Rights of Way calls received with a third being transferred to the Rights of Way team. CSOs log reported problems directly on to Cside³⁴ where they can subsequently be picked up by the relevant officer. Regular training meetings are held between Countryside Access and Dorset Direct, creating a sound working relationship.

T2.11 Aim: Continue to strengthen the relationship with Dorset Direct to provide the best possible service to the public.

Countryside project programming is guided by the Countryside and Business Development Management Team that monitors and supports the overall work programme of the Access Officers and Countryside Rangers. It ensures that work/projects carried out by Access Officers and Rangers meet priorities identified in strategies/plans and are running on time and to budget.

T2.12 Aim: Maintain Countryside project programming to enable the work programmes of Rights of Way officers and countryside rangers to be strategy led and delivered on time and within budget.

Promoted routes are developed to achieve broader social, environmental and economic benefits. Therefore they are maintained to higher standards compared with that of general PRoW and often have unique signage and associated information and promotional material. Subsequently they can be more costly to maintain than everyday PRoW and are developed with the aim of being largely self-sustaining with adequate resources to maintain them.

Consultation highlighted the following improvements to increase their appeal and usage:

- Ensuring that maintenance standards are consistently high and reflect promotional material.
- Address routes severed by roads – that necessitate dangerous road crossings/use of roads.
- Route promotion needs to be sensitive to the needs of the local community and landscape. There is concern that, in areas, the facilities and landscape cannot accommodate large numbers of people, which can have a detrimental effect on the landscape and local people's quality of life.

T2.13 Aim: Strategically manage promoted routes so that they achieve social, economic and environmental benefits and meet local expectations and needs.

T2.14 Aim: Implement new coastal access rights to provide a continuous, future-proofed route, with associated coastal access land, around the whole of the Dorset coastline

34 Cside is Dorset Countryside's geographical information system.



Theme 3: Providing a safer and more accessible network

With 2855 miles of PRow in Dorset it's not so much about increasing provision by creating more PRow – but more about increasing provision by improving what we already have and developing a meaningful network..

Issues:

Maintenance

Where possible path maintenance today must be appropriate to people's needs if we are to enable use by all members of the community.

Network Development

The Dorset PRow network is fragmented due to road severance, limited provision for equestrians and cyclists and poor PRow integration with wider highway infrastructure, car parks, public transport and new development. These need to be addressed to develop community path networks providing real opportunities for people to travel sustainably on foot, horse and bike.

Maintenance

Dorset County Council manages numerous public outdoor sites and has a duty to assert and protect the rights of the public to use the Public Rights of Way network. It has a legal responsibility to sign paths at the roadside and keep PRow in good repair, safe and fit for public use (HA 1980) and statutory powers to manage access land and to undertake establishment, maintenance and management related to Coastal access rights (CRow 2000/Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009).

It is the landowners' responsibility to maintain stiles and gates on Public Rights of Way on their land. Landowners are also responsible for cutting back vegetation eg hedges, trees and shrubs overhanging a Public Right of Way. It is also a landowners' responsibility to reinstate a cross field path within 14 days after ploughing and/or cropping. Headland paths should not be ploughed or cropped.

The assessment and public consultation showed that to improve outdoor access and enable greater use of it that problems effecting signage, structures and surfacing of paths need to be overcome.

Research for this plan has shown that regardless of age, ability and interest, although for different reasons, the same or similar problems are highlighted. Therefore one solution will often improve a path/site for many different people. This plan therefore highlights the problem with examples from different users to then find the best solution to achieve high quality access for all.

Table 2 Maintenance issues raised by the public through consultation.

- **Maintenance – equality and accessibility**

Consultees said that certain surfacing, signage and structures can present a barrier to some people (disabled, older, children) and an inconvenience to others. Access maintenance today must be appropriate to people's needs making paths and sites available to a wider range of people.

"Dorset's PRow must be kept in good order and accessible to as many people as possible including the disabled and less agile" Consultee

Dorset County Council comments ...

When prioritising work Access Officers consider the types of use, the relative importance to the network and location. Currently a 7 band priority scale³⁵ is used to identify maintenance requirements.

- **Surfacing**

Consultees found that **surface conditions** can make a path difficult, unpleasant or impossible to use. Problems raised included poor drainage resulting in flooding/mud esp difficult for walkers, young children and people using wheelchairs (although some children interviewed love the mud!); deep ruts especially difficult for horse carriage drivers; slippery/sharp surfacing hard for equestrians and uneven, unstable and unnecessarily steep paths difficult for people using wheelchairs and pushchairs.

"The only footpath suitable for wheelchairs is horrendous when it rains" Consultee

"There is a lovely track that links the leisure centre with the housing estate in Sturminster Newton; the middle bit is a gravel track at the edge of the field. Whereas either end the surface is fine. It needs to be turned into a proper path. The sign says it is a cycle path as well as a footpath, but you'd get punctures cycling on it!" Mum and Guide leader

"Most visually impaired people have great difficulty with mobility so could rarely use (PRow) due to uneven surfaces" Community Care Officer

Consultees stated that impenetrable **vegetation** or overgrown paths, eg nettles/brambles are especially difficult for short, young children to walk through and people using wheelchairs, and are particular problems during spring and summer.

Dorset County Council comments ...

Improved drainage and surfacing are expensive therefore identified problem paths should be prioritised for improvement where it would be of most benefit to the public.

The Rights of Way Field Team operates a clearance programme that, due to limited resources, targets the most popular routes. This programme covers 246km of PRow and is entirely weather dependent. Work is usually carried out between April and September in response to the growing season.

• Signage

Consultees found colour coding for PRow – yellow footpath, blue bridleway, red BOAT - confusing. Ideally people prefer signs with information that can be understood by everyone such as destination; distance and activity permitted along the route.

“Better directions and/or clearer signs would greatly aid the many confused walker who ask for help” Photopostcard entrant

Comments also highlighted signage susceptible to damage and fading. Missing signs can confuse people causing them to get lost and/or reach a dead end – a point particularly raised by carers and youth group leaders taking groups out into the countryside and deciding whether to follow a route or not.

“People are unaware that there are PRowS and are unwilling to walk somewhere when there is no information about where the route takes them or whether they are able to walk that far” Consultee

Dorset County Council comments ...

Signage with detailed information would be impossible to finance and inappropriate for all routes but would be advantageous – where resources allow - for certain routes eg those linking communities, taking people to local services and attractions and promoted routes. In other locations, symbols, eg the walking person, horse, cyclist and horse carriage/vehicle are sufficient to let the public know that they are allowed to walk/ride on this path.

Consultees

• Structures

Gates, bridges, stiles etc that are in poor condition or are impractical in design pose problems for various people. Numerous comments requested the replacement of stiles with gates or gaps, particularly in and around settlements, as many people of all ages and abilities find stiles difficult to climb over.

“Please replace all (old) stiles with gates – especially near villages”
Photo-postcard entrant

Consultees requested that gates are appropriate for purpose and wide enough to enable people with rucksacks/baby carriers and driving pushchairs, mobility vehicles and horse carriages to pass through easily.

"The bridleways tend to be good because they are wider and have gates rather than stiles" Parent and pushchair user

"We have pathways and footpaths but are unable to use them as we can't use stiles, five bar gates or kissing gates" Disability Action Group, Child Okeford

Gates operational from horseback would help riders but especially those with mobility impairment or **mounting blocks** provided.

Horse carriage drivers highlight the need for edges on **bridges**.

Other requests include the provision of cycle **lock up** facilities and **dog gates**.

"More dog friendly stiles would be a great benefit" Photo postcard entrant

Dorset County Council comments ...

Gates and stiles are the property of the landowner who should maintain them in safe condition so that they are convenient to use. The highway authority may contribute 25% towards the cost of repair of gates and stiles; it may also enter into agreements with landowners to provide improvements ie to replace stiles with gates that are safer or more convenient for persons with mobility problems.

Stiles also help to provide variety in exercise – and many children love to clamber over them.

Many **bridges** are the responsibility of the County Council. There are 3500 bridges in the county which require regular inspection to meet Health and Safety. Fourteen hundred Rights of Way bridges are made of timber with an expected life span of 15 years. To maintain a healthy bridge stock, approximately 100 of these timber structures require replacement annually; we need to replace more if the network is to be improved. Currently the revenue budget allows about 30 bridges to be replaced each year. There is a clear shortfall in staff and financial capacity to achieve this target.

- **Good local design**

Whilst public need and cost effectiveness are important considerations when repairing, replacing or installing new structures it is also important to consider the design and materials used for a sign/gate/bridge etc in relation to its location and surrounding landscape. Some structures may be key local features providing variety and character in the landscape and overall outdoor experience. For example an old stone stile, stepping stones, railings etc possibly made by a local craftsman and embedded in local history.

"Regarding the removal of a stile "It hurts me to see it was gone for my affections claim a friendship with such things" John Clare 19tC

Maintenance of the access network is a daunting task for any local authority, Dorset being no exception. The procedures currently employed in Dorset are consistent with examples of good management practice elsewhere. Benchmarking with other local authorities helps to establish best practice and ensure consistency of approach to network management.

The County Council will deploy a broad range of resources to seek to maintain the public rights of way network. This will, of course, be dependent upon available resources and new ways of working will be piloted to help engage volunteers and voluntary organisations from the wider community in helping to maintain the network within future financial constraints.

The County Council has clear standards and advises landowners on the type of structures that meet the requirement of using the least restrictive option for new structures on Public Rights of Way - Gap Gate Stile (British Standard BS5709:2006).

All the following "aims" (T3.1-T3.8) to embrace access for all, local distinctiveness and environmental needs.

T3.1 Aim: Develop and implement best practice for all aspects of rights of way maintenance including review and update of the Council's maintenance and enforcement policy.

T3.2 Aim: Develop a prioritisation scheme for Rights of Way maintenance that reflects legal requirements and availability of resources.

T3.3 Aim: Produce guidance and standards for Rights of Way structures, waymarking and sign-posting, also produce a specification for a range of surface treatments.

T3.4 Aim: Develop work programmes for routine maintenance issues, eg. inspections, vegetation maintenance and signage. (Target to achieve 75% signposted ROW by 2013)

T3.5 Aim: Develop a programme of bridge inspections and other PRow structures which will feed into the database and enable a rolling programme of bridge replacements based on their condition.

T3.6 Aim: Develop a structures policy that encourages landowners to choose the least restrictive option when replacing Rights of Way furniture or putting new structures on a diversion.

T3.7 Aim: Develop policy for authorising bridges, stiles and gates etc and keep up-to-date a detailed register of authorised structures.

T3.8 Aim: Make best use of technology that supports mobile working to increase productivity.



Network Development

Consultation resulted in numerous requests and ideas for seamless networks of safe off-road routes enabling people of all ages, needs and abilities to walk/ride/cycle safely in and around their village/town, out to neighbouring settlements and into and about the wider countryside. The key issues cited preventing such networks are:

- Road severance
- In areas limited provision for equestrians and cyclists
- Poor integration with wider highway infrastructure eg lack of pavement/cycle-lane, high kerbs.
- Poor integration with public transport and car parks

The following explains the above issues.

Throughout Dorset people often have to travel along and/or cross a road to be able to reach another path or site. Be it on a main road or a country lane – out in the countryside or in the heart of a town/village having to deal with motorised traffic puts people off travelling sustainably ie walking or riding.

"Too many Dorset paths and bridleways are disconnected from a worthwhile route. It would dramatically improve Dorset if a more co-ordinated network of paths and bridleways was created" Photo-postcard competition entrant.



“It is not ... currently possible to walk, ride or cycle a complete circuit of the village without having to travel at least part of the way on one of the main village roads” Lytchett Matravers Parish Plan

Private car ownership and motorised traffic on Dorset’s roads is high and increasing in volume, speed and size³⁶. This is because Dorset is largely rural with many remote, small, communities limited in local facilities³⁷ and public transport. Owning a car gives people the convenience and flexibility to travel easily around Dorset to go about their daily lives. Again local people and tourists tend to travel by car when visiting the coast, countryside and attractions.

From main roads to country lanes you will find, for example, motor-bikes, cars, people carriers, jeeps, vans, lorries and large agricultural vehicles/machinery.

The key problem is that some drivers show little awareness of and consideration to walkers/riders and fail to slow down quickly or adequately enough if at all and/or leave ample space. Dorset County Council is working in partnership with other organisations including other local authorities and the emergency services as “Dorset Road safe”, implementing the “No Excuse” campaign targeting bad and careless drivers.

Regardless of age, ability and/or experience the pedestrian, horse-rider, cyclist and horse carriage driver often feel and often are vulnerable to the hazards associated with having to negotiate inconsiderate drivers and their vehicles³⁸. Disabled and visually impaired people, people using pushchairs and/or with young children and people supervising groups of children drew attention to their vulnerability when being forced onto roads.

When walking/riding along a road, space can be limited with no adequate refuge.

When trying to cross a road there may not be a safe place to cross and visibility, for example, on road bends, at PRoW/road junctions or in low light conditions, may be poor – and it is often the case of having to “make a quick dash for it”!

Whilst the walker/rider needs to be road safe/aware the driver also needs to be aware that a person may not be so steady on their feet or that their vision may be impaired; that children can get distracted and “forget” vehicles are there; that horses, however road safe, are easily startled and that cyclists, although seemingly more predictable than horses, can swerve/fall into traffic due to being startled, uneven road surfaces or the force from passing traffic.

In addition to the feeling of vulnerability, walkers, horse-riders, cyclists and horse carriage drivers have highlighted that having to use roads can often reduce the enjoyment of the experience of being outdoors due to motorised traffic noise, pollution and spray and an increasingly urbanised approach to road design. They can also feel anxious and pressurised when motorists feel they are inconveniently holding up traffic by being on the road.

These concerns are reinforced by the request from **equestrians and cyclists for more off-road routes** which are currently limited to them.

36 83% of households own a car in Dorset (10% above the national average). 88.4%, 86% and 83% of households own a car in East, North and West Dorset respectively all above the national average of 73% (Census 2001). Nationally car ownership has risen by 26.0% between 1991 and 2001. Over the same period car ownership in Dorset has risen even more at 28.7% (Census 2001). 89% of households own a car in Dorset, MORI Dorset resident survey 2005.

37 3 in 4 villages have no general store; 43 rural post offices, 36 rural petrol stations and 8 village pubs have shut since 1991 (Census 2001)

38 The British Horse Society National estimates – 3000+ equestrian related road accidents each year resulting in 100+ horses killed.

“More bridleways as the roads are dangerous” Shroton Parish Plan

“better off-road access for horse-riders has to be the way to help us all be safe and happy” Photo-postcard entrant

A key concern for many **Towns and Parishes**, road severance means that many people use their car even for short journeys to get to local facilities³⁹.

Danger spots and speeding on the roads in the parish were matters of serious concern” Hinton St Mary Parish Plan

“Crossing roads is a nightmare in Stalbridge” Consultee

“Too many people are driving short distances across the village and parish” Photo-postcard competition entrant

Consultees highlighted that where pedestrian and cycling facilities such as pavements and cycle lanes do exist they are sometimes poorly designed or integrated with roads and PRoW. People commented on cycle lanes coming to an abrupt end; pavements too narrow or narrowed by obstacles such as lampposts forcing people onto the road and a lack of dropped kerbs making it difficult for everyone but especially for people with disabilities, using wheelchairs and with children.

“Access to the playing field is difficult because there are kerbs” Consultee

“The telegraph pole on Wyke Street in Shaftesbury” Consultee

People consulted, especially those with a physical illness or disability, said that such initial negative experiences trying to get out and about close to home deterred them from further exploring countryside access, as the assumption was that there would be more problems to battle with.

It is roughly estimated that in Dorset there are 6,187 locations where PRoW start/finish at roads.

The A35 trunk road with road speeds ranging from 30mph to 70mph severs or isolates approximately 80 sections of PRoW

Little specific research exists for Dorset, which analyses the nature of the road network and its contribution – positive and negative – to the Countryside Access Network today and in the future⁴⁰.

When evaluating PRoW affected by highway/building development, data such as accident numbers and user counts are often used. It is inappropriate to totally rely on such information because:

- Road severance may be distorting results by making PRoW unsafe to use reducing the number of potential users.
- Use of the path may vary daily and seasonally and range from individuals to groups of people. When is the best time to do user counts?
- Lack of data does not necessarily mean lack of need or demand, or devalue the path.
- Public perception of a dangerous stretch of road or road crossing may, after further research, be concluded as inaccurate but should not be dismissed. Such perception may continue to prevent people from using such routes and action is needed to address this.

39 Facilities, for example, schools, places of employment, shops, church, pub, post office, playing field, park etc

40 One exception is a Ramblers' Association study, *The Quick and The Dead* 3rd edition 11042003, listing dangerous road crossings in Dorset at 24 locations along trunk roads, at 37 locations along A, B and C roads and at numerous locations on six promoted routes.

Work is needed to effectively integrate PRow with the wider highway network. This will be achieved through links between the RoWIP and the LTP3 and LDF and subsequent work with highways and developers.

Each location, where conflict between paths and roads exists, will need to be evaluated individually depending on, for example:

- Local need – the problem with and role of the path;
- Location – urban/rural, landscape character/designation;
- The paths strategic role within the wider access resource;
- Cost implications and resources available

And where a strong need to resolve road severance is identified improvement solutions will vary and depend on available resources, for example:

- Altering the route of a path to create routes that avoid using roads;
- The development, signage and promotion of key strategic routes;
- The use of various crossing methods from altering the route of the path to create a safer crossing point, integrating it with traffic calming initiatives or existing infrastructure (eg underpasses) or the installation of Pegasus crossings or footbridges.

Use of **Public transport** helps to reduce vehicles on the roads and better links with PRow/green space would increase use especially for tourists.

Where people do use their vehicles to get to PRow/green space unofficial car parking can damage roadside verges/hedgebanks, congest narrow lanes and obstruct access points eg farm gateways/lanes. It is therefore necessary to provide well designed car parks that sit well in the landscape and provide adequate facilities, eg cycle lock up, horse boxing bays and seating.

T3.9 Aim: Identify road severance locations and seek opportunities to make improvements.

T3.10 Aim: Work with partners to address road safety and incorporate PRow into various initiatives.

T3.11 Aim: Seek opportunities to develop community path networks of safe off-road routes enabling people of all ages, needs and abilities to walk/ride safely in and around their village/town, out to neighbouring settlements and into and about the wider countryside.

T3.12 Aim: Seek opportunities to increase cycling networks

T3.13 Aim: Seek opportunities to increase bridleway networks

T3.14 Aim: Better integrate PRow/green space with public transport and well designed car parks – facilitating sustainable transport, tourism and economy and environmental protection.

Countryside and Business Development Policy Aspiration

- The development of new or existing PRow as key strategic routes will be for multi-user use.
- That is, where possible, the route will provide access for walkers, horse-riders, cyclists and horse carriage drivers of all ages and abilities. Good reasoning must be provided where it is not possible to accommodate any one of these activities and, at the very least, good links made on/off the key route to accommodate such users either for immediate or future implementation.



Theme 4: Involving local people and partner organisations.

Issues

Community Involvement

- Local people value the role paths and outdoor sites play in improving their quality of life; have a wealth of local knowledge and ideas as to how they should be managed and developed and want to be actively involved in taking this forward.

Partnership Organisations

- There are numerous examples of good partnership projects. Local Authorities neighbouring Dorset have highlighted the need to work more closely together when managing paths that cross the county boundary

Dorset Local Access Forum (DLAF)

- The Dorset Local Access Forum is a statutory, independent, voluntary group advising on all matters linking to paths and outdoor sites and is well placed to facilitate communication by communities and organisations with Dorset County Council.

Volunteers

Volunteers do much good work but there is still scope to build on this and better coordinate the work they do. Dorset has a significant population of older people (65+) which is projected to increase. Many want to provide their experience, energy and expertise to help with access management and development. Young volunteers can gain good training and experience helping them to secure jobs and possibly stay in Dorset. The RoWIP process has provided a means for local people and partners to get more actively involved in access management and development and must continue to facilitate this process.

The implementation of many of the actions in this plan will be dependent upon the pooling of resources and focusing of effort through strong partnerships with local people and organisations.

Community Groups and local people

Research for this plan highlighted how much local people value the role Dorset's paths and outdoor space play in improving their quality of life and that they want to get actively involved in their maintenance and improvement.

In particular these points were strongly made by local people, in many community, town and parish plans, by Rights of Way Liaison Officers⁴¹, through The Dorset Local Access Forum and by user groups such as the Ramblers' Association and British Horse Society.

"...42 respondents said that they would be willing to maintain footpaths and bridleways" Hinton St Mary Parish Plan

RoWIP improvement work will necessitate local people helping to do research, work up project briefs, testing solutions and helping to secure funding.

T4.1 Aim: Consult and work with local communities through their Parish Councils and Community groups to develop and implement the RoWIP.

Parish and town councils could be offered financial support to assist them in minor maintenance works to improve their local network.

T4.2 Aim: Provide small (light-touch) grants to parish councils and other groups to carry out works in local community area.

Partnership Organisations

There are many examples of good partnerships between the Dorset Countryside Service and other organisations. One such example is the Dorset and East Devon Coastal Corridor Plan Partnership⁴² working together to develop an Action Plan to improve the management and development of the coastal corridor embracing access issues.

Dorset's neighbouring authorities raised the need for partnership working to:

- Improve management of promoted routes crossing authority boundaries and ensure consistency in route maintenance.

41 RoWLO's are Rights of Way Liaison Officers – Parishioners who volunteer to keep an eye on the parish PRoW and work with Dorset County Council to manage and maintain them.

42 The Dorset and East Devon Coastal Corridor Plan Partnership brings together numerous organisations including Devon AONB, Dorset AONB, Dorset County Council, Devon County Council, East Devon District Council, Natural England, National Trust, etc

- Resolve path status anomalies at authority boundaries.
- Determine bridge ownership and maintenance responsibility for river bridges on authority area boundaries

T4.3 Aim: Establish effective working practice with neighbouring Local Authorities.

T4.4 Aim: Establish effective working partnerships to deliver PRoW/site. improvements

Dorset Local Access Forum

The Dorset Local Access Forum (DLAF) is a statutory, independent, voluntary, advisory group on all matters relating to Rights of Way and countryside access. The DLAF play an invaluable role helping to implement actions in this plan. For example advising on best practice and policy development, strategic RoWIP projects and Access Land development not to mention continuing to provide a key link for the County Council with Dorset people, communities and organisations.

T4.5 Aim: Continue to work with and support the DLAF encouraging their involvement in implementing the RoWIP and with all aspects of countryside access

Volunteers

The work of the Dorset Countryside Service is greatly enhanced through the help and support of numerous volunteers.

Volunteers currently range from formal groups such as parish Rights of Way Liaison Officers⁴³ and Friends groups⁴⁴ to local people and visitors who report problems they see.

We really appreciate volunteers giving us their time and energy not only because of the vital work they do but also because we enjoy working with them and value the opportunity to benefit from their wealth of local knowledge and invaluable insight into the issues associated with specific locations.

Dorset has a significant population of **older, retired people**, which is projected to increase. Many want to provide their experience, energy and expertise to help with access management and development.

Good volunteering experience can provide training and experience for **younger people** in preparation for employment – possibly enabling them to live and work in Dorset.

The **RoWIP process** of research and consultation has fully engaged with local people, communities and partners helping to shape this plan and decide the priorities for outdoor access improvement and development.

Research for this plan showed that people want this process to continue as they feel it is an effective way of bringing people together to :

- address specific issues and agree good solutions.
- ensure that paths and sites are brought up-to-date to meet current and future needs.
- identify initiatives to improve access to address wider issues such as health and the local economy.

43 Parishioners who liaise with DCC, their parish council and local landowners inspecting PRoW , report problems and help to resolve access problems.

44 Local people who carry out various practical tasks, research and data gathering eg Friends of Durlston and Avon Heath, Friends of North Dorset.

“It is so good for everyone to have the chance to be looking ahead for a change; and for us all to be encouraged genuinely to think positively and constructively about the many issues that need to be considered. I am sure that the way you are pitching it is just right for everyone. And that seems so important particularly for the many people who want to play a role all around the County”.

Dorset resident

“Many thanks and congratulations for the very successful RoWIP meeting... I feel sure you are heading in the right direction to progress this very important plan”

User Group Representative

“I found the meeting informative and constructive, and I was glad to have attended. Thank you on all counts.” User Group representative

T4.6 Aim: Continue supporting and developing Friends groups.

T4.7 Aim: Enhance the existing work of Access and Ranger volunteer groups. To expand the Dorset Volunteer Ranger service into countryside access.

T4.8 Aim: Offer training opportunities for volunteers to ensure safe working practices and consistency of approach.

T4.9 Aim: Improve opportunities for all members of the local community to volunteer their expertise and time to help manage and improve Dorset’s Rights of Way network and countryside sites.



- **Rights and Responsibilities**

- Dog fouling

- **Coordination and provision of good information**

- **Market research and gaps in information**

- 53

Technology

- There is scope to develop Dorset County Council's web-pages and other technology to promote Dorset's paths and public green space.

Rights and responsibilities

RoWIP consultation highlights the need to encourage an informed and common sense approach to both the use and care of Rights of Way and countryside sites. This means people who use them understanding their rights and responsibilities and showing respect for the needs of agriculture, forestry, environmental conservation and other users. The provision of good information is vital. It lets people know where they can go, what they can do and what to expect. This enables people to get out and enjoy paths and sites confidently and responsibly – sympathetic to the needs of land management.

It also necessitates that land-managers understand their rights and responsibilities and provide good access.

Dorset County Council distributes some relevant information but the above need suggests that it is not reaching everyone therefore its format, content and distribution could be improved.

T5.1 Aim: Produce information for the public and land-managers explaining their rights and responsibilities regards PRow.

Dog fouling

One area of particular concern for both access users and land-managers is the problem of dog mess on paths and countryside sites. Dog mess is unpleasant for everyone and reduces the enjoyment of using paths and sites for both recreational and practical purposes. Dog mess is easily picked up on footwear and bike, pushchair and wheelchair wheels and therefore potentially onto hands and back into homes, it is a potential health hazard.

"Dog mess is still a problem on the footpaths" Bothenhampton and Walditch Parish Plan

"Biggest problem is dog dirt ... we can't let the children run ahead because of the dog poo!" Consultee

It can be detrimental to land-management. Enrichment of nutrient poor habitats managed for conservation and educational purposes not only threatens the delicate balance of special habitats but also poses a health hazard for anyone working on the site clearing vegetation or conducting plant and animal surveys.

Farmers highlighted in the consultation the issue of dog disturbance and worrying of livestock and game but of particular concern was the problem of un-wormed dogs. These dog owners are responsible for a range of health problems suffered by farm animals grazing land where dogs with intestinal parasites have defecated.

There is also the problem of dog litter bags being left behind.

Dogs are required to be under close control. Clear information regarding control of dogs is available via the internet - www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/enjoying/countrysidecode/keepdogs.aspx

"How do we solve the continuous problem of dog mess?" Corscombe Parish Plan

It is apparent that some people do not understand the importance of clearing up after their dog whether it defecates on paths/sites within or close to settlements or remote paths/sites, eg across fields. Sadly these dog owners give a bad name to the many responsible dog owners who keep their dogs under control, worm them, clear up their dog's mess and take it home to dispose of properly. A programme of training and events on responsible dog ownership has been provided under the remit of Open Access. The Dorset Dogs website can be found at www.dorsetdogs.org.uk

T5.2 Aim: Provide information and training to dog owners, work with local authority dog wardens in education, provision of facilities and enforcement.

Co-ordination of good information

Dorset County Council together with numerous other organisations produces literature, organises activities and installs signs and panels for the purposes of education, interpretation, information and promotion of paths and sites. Such material helps to promote the work of organisations and engage public support. However, research shows that there is duplication that may cause confusion and can unnecessarily clutter the landscape. Improved coordination of the development and installation of this material is needed.

T5.3 Aim: Better co-ordinate the development and installation of path/site information.

To make sure that resources are used efficiently it is important to monitor the effectiveness of the information we produce and its distribution. This ensures that the information is doing its job, reaching people and that the distribution outlets are the right ones.

"...often sold out of their already limited stocks and that to maintain public interest and enjoyment information needs to be up-to-date" Tourist Information Centre Staff

T5.4 Aim: Review current information provision and identify how to reach more people through design, format and distribution.

Gaps in Information

Consultation highlighted gaps in information and the need to review the path and site information and activities Dorset County Council currently provides.

Extensive information is available for walkers but there is a need for good information for horse-riders, cyclists, horse carriage drivers, vehicular drivers, young people and people with disabilities. At the very least practical details such as the condition and character of paths and sites would enable people to decide for themselves where they can go.

Research is needed to investigate whether the people who enjoy and who want to use Dorset's Public Rights of Way and countryside sites are being provided with the right information and organised activities, at the right times and in the right locations.

There is also opportunity to "theme" material and produce it in different formats so that it appeals to a wider constituency and broadens the purpose of access by catering for different interests and needs. Such information would assist Dorset in meeting the needs of various groups for example, young people, families, the elderly, schools, Dorset's ethnic community, tourists and visitors and address wider issues such as outdoor activities for better health, celebrating Dorset's cultural, environmental and historic heritage⁴⁵ and holiday packs encouraging sustainable transport, tourism and input into the local economy

⁴⁵ Themes specific to Dorset could include earth science, archaeology, wildlife, arts, folklore, local produce, land management and landscape history.

T5.5 Aim: Establish good market research and monitoring methods service wide

T5.6 Aim: Provide activities and information that meets the needs of local people and visitors to Dorset – and reflects the breadth of opportunities Dorset has to offer.

Technology

There are numerous opportunities to use technology to inform people about access opportunities in 'Dorset. For example - Face book, blogs, iphones, and GPS – which may also be good ways of engaging younger people. Research is needed to ascertain how useful this media might be in encouraging people to enjoy PRow/countryside sites.

The Dorset County Council's web-pages **www.dorsetforyou.com** promotes Dorset's access network and countryside sites. There is scope to develop 'DorsetForYou' to better meets the needs of the public in using PRow and countryside sites – and - gather information to help inform future management and improvement of paths and sites in Dorset.

"We would like to see the county website promoting activities and events to an even greater extent with more information" Photopostcard entrant

T5.7 Aim: Develop and keep up-to-date Rights of Way and countryside site information on the DorsetforYou website.

T5.8 Aim: Investigate the effectiveness of modern technology, on-line media and social networking.



Action Plan

Whilst Local Authorities are responsible for implementing their RoWIPs there is no specific funding available to do so. Therefore priorities need to be agreed and partnerships and funding sources will have to be identified for the delivery of the following actions. Some actions may be achieved relatively quickly and others are a long-term aspiration.

However in striving to improve paths and sites in Dorset the RoWIP provides a holistic approach including all the issues that need to be addressed and all the actions necessary to address them. The Dorset RoWIP provides a key reference document, especially for Access Officers and Countryside Rangers but also others, providing focus for the management and improvement of Dorset's PRow and sites, and their development in helping to achieve broader social, economic and environmental benefits. Implementation will involve a variety of people/organisations, for example various Local Authority staff - PRow, Countryside Rangers, Highways, Planning but also external individuals/organisations such as land-managers, public health bodies, tourism providers, local people, visitors and Town/Parish and District councils.

Theme 1: The ROWIP's links with other strategies

Objective

Aim	Actions	Timescale
1.1 Implement and promote RoWIP projects demonstrating how improved paths and countryside sites help to achieve targets in Dorset County Council's Future Plans.	In Access Officer and Ranger Work Programmes identify work/projects that achieve targets in Dorset County Council's Future Plans.	Ongoing
	Effectively promote this work and raise awareness and understanding of the benefits of improved paths and countryside sites.	Ongoing
1.2 To continue to align the RoWIP with the LTP3 and develop projects to implement PRow improvements	Continue to work closely with LTP officers to align the RoWIP with LTP3. Incorporate RoWIP updates into the LTP3 process	Autumn 2010 Annual
	Identify, prioritise and develop projects and initiatives that contribute to LTP3/ RoWIP goals	Ongoing
1.3 Develop and implement sustainable working procedures to address climate change	Develop local networks that provide good green infrastructure, public enjoyment and protect vulnerable locations.	Ongoing
	Feed into Dorset County Council policy.	Ongoing
	Develop procedures to mitigate cause and effect of climate change eg bio-fuels, reuse/cycling of waste (eg wood chip for boilers, road scalping for surfacing where appropriate) etc	Ongoing
1.4 Ensure that PRow/sites are protected and enhanced in building and road development and effectively incorporated into the LDF process as essential green infrastructure.	Prepare a planning guidance note for Local Planning/Highway Authorities to increase awareness of the invaluable role of PRow/Sites as green infrastructure.	September 2012
	Maintain contact and highlight access improvement needs with wider Highways teams	Ongoing
	Continue to feed into the LDF process raising the profile of PRow/sites as invaluable green infrastructure.	Ongoing

1.5 Work with health service professionals to expand Natural England's Health Walks scheme and develop other initiatives in Dorset. Increase opportunities for people to get into the countryside and use the natural environment to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing.	Work with health professionals to develop new and build upon existing health initiatives - promoting the use and benefits of local paths/sites Work with parish and town councils to identify and develop local path networks enabling people to improve their health, fitness and confidence and to retain their independence Provide a programme of volunteer-led health walks and exercise programmes Work with organisations supporting young people to develop outdoor formal and informal "play" opportunities	September 2012 Ongoing September 2012 September 2012
1.6 Improve accessibility of the network (to include younger, older, disabled people and ethnic minorities)	Develop and implement accessibility policy/procedural guidance for management, maintenance and promotion of PRoW/sites. Conduct a PRoW/sites and information Accessibility Audit. Develop the PRoW/sites information database to include condition, infrastructure, gradients, and facilities (rest points, car parking, toilets, refreshments) etc enabling people to decide where they would like to walk, ride or cycle. Continue to improve physical access eg Where possible implement gap – gate – stile policy. Identify barriers that can be removed/improved. Work with younger, older, disabled and people from ethnic minorities and their representatives to identify local networks, develop – publish and circulate - useful information, provide advice/quality control and promote use of PRoW/sites. Develop a prioritisation scheme/checklist for Rights of Way maintenance to identify appropriate Accessibility measures and reflects the access needs of diverse groups and the availability of resources. Ensure all staff attend DCC diversity and equality training	Ongoing Ongoing (Collating information as and when possible from RoW, Rangers and DWO) Ongoing Ongoing Pilot 2010/11 – Review Ongoing
1.7 Address infringements of GAEC 8 (single payment scheme PRoW)	Report GAEC 8 infringement to Rural Payments Agency	Ongoing

1.8 Ensure RoWIP aims are integrated into Country Park and sites management plans and continue to influence wider access schemes and landscape management plans	Integrate RoWIP aims into all Dorset County Council countryside site plans. Map and audit Countryside sites – relinquish unbeneficial sites – seek opportunities to secure sites where needed. Deliver Durlston Country Park Project Deliver Avon Heath Country Park 'Nature Nursery' Project Improve play facilities at Avon Heath Country Park Hardy Birth Place Project- increase and improve public access Incorporate access improvements for the public and people with disabilities into the Blackdown and Hardy's Monument project	2011/12 Ongoing 2011/12 2011/12 2011/13 2013 Aspirational
1.9 Ensure that the work of Dorset County Council and partners continues to protect and enhance Dorset's natural and cultural heritage. Biodiversity Landscapes Local distinctiveness Historic buildings	Maintain and implement Environmental and Cultural Heritage best practice guidance and check lists for management and maintenance work – for Access Officers, Countryside Rangers, Contractors and Volunteers. Maintain repeat/seasonal maintenance timetables that respect the needs of flora and fauna. Maintain/update environmental best practice training Establish criteria and guidance for selection/purchase of sustainable/ appropriate materials used for PRow/Site management.	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
1.10 Identify, research and promote ways in which improved paths and countryside sites help to boost the local economy through financial savings and generating income.	Compile research demonstrating the financial benefits of improved paths/ countryside sites in Dorset. Research ways of developing and promoting countryside access to boost the local economy. Develop walking/riding package holidays utilising local path networks for short-stay/day trips – making links with local businesses and facilities.	All Ongoing/ Aspirational

Theme 2: Improving customer service

Objective: To ensure that the Legal Record of PRoW – Definitive Map and Statement - is up-to-date and accurately maintained and to make it easier for people to engage in legal processes to change the Legal Record

Aim	Actions	Timescale
2.1 Review, update and correct the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way	Implement mobile working practices to correct the DMS through the deployment of new technologies Develop a new more detailed Definitive Statement Produce a consolidated DMS at an appropriate scale Refer to anomalies found in the 1998 Ramblers survey as part of the Definitive Map Review along with all available documentary evidence. Implement a scheme of delegation to enable simple and non-controversial corrections and modifications to the Definitive Map and Statement	December 2010 and ongoing to conclusion of Definitive Map Review project 2011
2.2 Speed up DMMO and PPO processes and reduce the backlog of outstanding applications	Prioritise applications as received Review and establish processes for determining applications Determine applications. Prioritise outstanding DMMO/PPO applications and establish resource and timetable to address them. Determine outstanding DMMOs and PPOs	Ongoing DONE Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
2.3 Review and make publicly available the Statement of Priorities	Review and agree Statement of Priorities Publish on Dorset for You	2010 2011
2.4 Publish a digital version of the register of definitive map modification applications (DMMOs) and Public Path Orders (PPOs) on the County Councils website - Dorset for You – www.dorsetforyou.com	Produce a register of DMMO applications. Digitise register of DMMO applications Produce register of PPO applications Digitise register of PPO applications	December 2011 December 2011 Ongoing Aspirational

2.5 Review, challenge and offer alternatives to the existing processes and legal constraints.	Challenge existing processes and legal constraints in order to deliver more for less	Timescale to coincide with Stakeholder Working Group consultation and implementation of proposals
Objective: Improve feedback to members of the public		
Aim	Actions	Timescale
2.6 Keep the public informed about progress of reported cases and other matters affecting PRow	Provide information electronically on Dorset for You. For example – DMMOs, PPOs, Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), Road Schemes.	June 2011
Objective: Establish a robust database of information for Management and Rights of Way Improvement Planning		
Aim	Actions	Timescale
2.7 Implement Strategic Asset Management planning - quantify the value of the access asset for management and improvement planning	Prepare an Asset Management Plan for countryside access and Rights of Way – identify the value of the PRow asset.	Done
	Identify the value of the PRow maintenance backlog	Done
	Feed into Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) (nationally known as Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)	2011
2.8 Continue to develop the information database (Cside) as a tool for the management and improvement of the Rights of Way and countryside sites network. To: enable greater understanding of the character, condition and use of PRow and sites; better understand the needs of the people who use/would like to use Dorset's PRow and...	Identify resources required to continue development of a robust database of PRow and routes/sites managed by countryside rangers	2012
	Develop the database to include site management, character, condition, infrastructure, public use; understanding of the user and their needs and wider social, economic and environmental benefits to help monitor and set priorities for management and improvement.	2012
	Collate and ensure that relevant service wide data (people/wildlife - surveys, monitoring etc) feeds into/or is linked with this database facilitating communication and efficient working.	2012
	Develop a digitised mapping layer detailing RoWIP findings – work/projects – aspirational – pending – complete.	2012/13

...2.8 continued sites; improve monitoring and review of work done; facilitate maintenance programmes and management plans and improve overall customer service.	Implement measures to maintain database	Ongoing
	Implement service wide Cside training to ensure effectiveness of system.	Ongoing
Objective: Improve Working Practice		
Aim	Actions	Timescale
2.9 Strive for continuous improvement in the relative condition of Dorset's Rights of Way network and the satisfaction of its users and customers.	Conduct a 5% annual condition survey of the Rights of Way network	Ongoing
	Continue to take part in SWHSIG annual satisfaction survey	Ongoing
	Develop and implement pertinent measures to monitor and inform RoWI Planning and the management/development of Dorset's PRow/sites and contribute to national methodology and research.	Ongoing
2.10 Review, develop and implement best practice policy/procedures for all aspects of PRow/ sites management and improvement.	List and review all policy and procedures and develop new where necessary. Inform/ train Officers.	Ongoing
	Consult/Seek advice from DLAF and, where relevant, other bodies eg landmanagers, user groups, disabled people, younger people etc when developing policy/procedures.	Ongoing
2.11 Continue to strengthen the relationship with Dorset Direct to provide the best possible service to the public	Continue the development of training programmes for staff	Ongoing
2.12 Maintain Countryside project programming to enable the work programmes of Rights of Way officers and countryside rangers to be strategy led and delivered on time and within budget.	Ensure that the work of Rights of Way officers and countryside rangers is monitored and progress regularly reported to the Countryside and Business Development Management Team drawing attention to any areas of particular support eg work in trouble timetable/ funding, training, resource opportunities etc	Ongoing

2.13 Strategically manage promoted routes so that they achieve social, economic and environmental benefits and meet local expectations and needs.	Rights of Way and Ranger Service to jointly review all promoted routes and associated material	2012
	Ascertain viability of routes and prioritise routes for maintenance and promotion	2014
	Identify problem locations eg maintenance, road severance etc and address	2012/13
	Identify how to establish the relative value of routes (strategic - social, economic and environmental) set against management costs	2015
	Complete and maintain the North Dorset Trailway and investigate extension of the trail as Coast to Coast trailway between Poole and Bristol	2013
	Complete Phase two of the Castleman Trailway	2013
	Develop the Maiden Newton to Bridport Trailway	Aspirational
2.14 Implement new coastal access rights to provide a continuous, future-proofed route, with associated coastal access land, around the whole of the Dorset coastline Established in 2006 the Dorset and East Devon Coastal Corridor Group – including DCC Access improvement and Countryside Rangers – developed a Coastal Corridor Action Plan. Continue to implement and feed into the Coastal Corridor Plan.	Implement coastal access rights (in partnership with Natural England) on the Weymouth Bay stretch Implement coastal access rights (in partnership with Natural England) around the rest of the Dorset Coast. “To conserve and enhance the environment and heritage of the coastal corridor to enable everyone to engage with, understand and enjoy its special qualities” Dorset and East Devon Coastal Corridor Plan. Support and implement access related actions where resources allow.	2012 Ongoing – as resources allow. Ongoing

Theme 3 Providing a safer and more accessible network

Objective: Improve maintenance so that it meets public needs and enables greater use of PRow/countryside sites.

Aim	Actions	Timescale
The following "aims" T3.1-T3.4 to embrace access for all, local distinctiveness and environmental needs.		
3.1 Develop and implement best practice for all aspects of Rights of Way maintenance including review and update of the Council's maintenance and enforcement policy.	Research "best practice" and consult land managers and user groups embracing all members of the community when developing best practice.	Ongoing
	Review and update the Council's maintenance and enforcement policy.	2011
3.2 Develop a prioritisation scheme for Rights of Way maintenance that reflects legal requirements and availability of resources.	Test and implement prioritisation scheme to better manage the area Rights of Way officers' workflow.	2011/12 RoW, Rangers, DWO and Highways
3.3 Produce guidance and standards for Rights of Way structures, way-marking and signposting, also produce a specification for a range of surface treatments	Agree standards and specifications for structures including liaison with landowners and user groups	2011
	Produce guidance note on specification of replacement gates including least restrictive option	2012
	Work with land-managers to replace stiles with least restrictive option where appropriate	Ongoing
	Develop standards and specification of surfacing requirements including use of recycled materials. Liaise with landowners and user groups.	2011/12 RoW, Rangers, DWO and Highways
	Develop signage that is robust, informative and easy to understand.	Ongoing
	Remove misleading and unnecessary signage	Ongoing
	Develop and implement monitoring procedures to assess work done and progress best working practice – eg assess suitability of maintenance materials/ structures used. Balancing economic, social and environmental benefits.	2012/13

3.4 Develop work programmes for routine maintenance issues eg inspections, vegetation maintenance and signage. (Target to achieve 75% signposted ROW by 2013)	Develop and implement annual maintenance programmes informed by the prioritisation scheme including vegetation clearance and signposting. Increase number of RoW signposted. 75% by 2013.	2011/12 2013
3.5 Develop a programme of bridge inspections and other PRow structures which will feed into the database and enable a rolling programme of bridge replacements based on their condition	Establish a costed and prioritised rolling programme for the inspection of bridges and other ROW structures	Ongoing
3.6: Develop a structures policy that encourages landowners to choose the least restrictive option when replacing Rights of Way furniture or putting new structures on a diversion.	Research the most appropriate structures for inclusion in the specifications and keep up-to-date Prepare policy and encourage uptake via a small grant scheme if funding is available	2012 (ongoing) Ongoing
3.7 Develop policy for authorising structures and keep up-to-date a detailed register of authorised structures	Register of authorised structure is available on Dorset for You	2016
3.8 Make best use of technology that supports mobile working to increase productivity.	Officer training and implement use of Trimble	Ongoing
Objective: Develop a seamless and safe NETWORK of PRow and Countryside Sites		
Aim	Actions	Timescale
3.9 Identify road severance locations and seek opportunities to make improvements.	Identify, map, assess and prioritise road severance locations – real and perceived.	Ongoing
	Work with partners and agree solutions for each location.	Ongoing
	Seek opportunities to make improvements – re-routing, traffic calming, signage and safety furniture, refuge areas etc	Ongoing

3.10 Work with partners to address road safety and incorporate PRow into various initiatives	Driver awareness training Traffic management and calming Accessibility planning Rural Roads protocol Cycling proficiency Pedestrian/Pegasus crossings Safe routes to school Annual road user/safety audits Work with Dorset Road Safe Partnership on initiatives to raise driver awareness of pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists. Develop best practice guidance for Developers/Highway Engineers – re integrating PRow with buildings, roads and associated infrastructure. Include road safety information on all DCC literature.	Ongoing 2012/13 Ongoing Ongoing
3.11 Seek opportunities to develop networks of paths and public outdoor space consisting of attractive, safe off-road routes enabling people of all ages, needs and abilities to walk/ride safely in and around their village/town, out to neighbouring settlements and into and about the wider countryside.	Identify path/site networks in and around settlements, between settlements and connecting settlement clusters providing opportunities for recreation, health, tourism, local economy, environmental benefits and sustainable transport to access local facilities, wider countryside and attractions.* Work with partners to ensure that PRow link seamlessly with highway pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Work with local people and seek opportunities to implement them. Investigate increased provision/PRow links through UCRs *Using all available public paths and public space where appropriate eg Public Rights of Way, Cycling routes, parks, Access Land	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Aspirational
3.12 Seek opportunities to increase cycling networks	Research and map cycling provision in Dorset – both on and off road Detail location, length, type. Compile Dorset Cyclists contacts database covering full range of cyclist for ease of consultation when seeking information/ideas. Map Cycling needs/ideas raised through RoWIP research. Conduct research to ascertain the value of cycling in Dorset Investigate opportunities to provide where appropriate cycle lock up facilities. Make links with B,P and DLTP3 Cycling strategy for RoWIP implementation	All Aspirational

3.13 Seek opportunities to increase bridleway networks	Compile an equestrian contacts database for ease of consultation when seeking information and ideas. Survey parishes to determine density of riders and horses. Map and ascertain need for potential route development Consult with equestrian centres to evaluate off-road provision and map potential routes Map equestrian needs/ideas raised through RoWIP research Work with key groups to investigate and agree opportunities for route creation. Investigate opportunities to provide, where appropriate, equestrian mounting blocks	All Aspirational
3.14 Better integrate PRow/sites with public transport and well designed car parks – facilitating sustainable transport, tourism and economy and environmental protection.	Investigate opportunities to link PRow/sites with public transport – eg request stop service. Develop information detailing walking/riding routes within settlements linked with wider countryside and links with public transport. Work with partners to identify appropriate locations for car parks with adequate facilities for walkers, riders and cyclists (as necessary) – and – linking the PRow network with existing carparks. Investigate improved cycle and wheelchair carrying facilities on public transport.	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

Theme 4: Involving local people and visitors

Objective: Enable local people to get involved in maintaining and improving their PRow and countryside sites

Aim	Actions	Timescale
4.1 Involve and work with local communities to develop and implement the RoWIP where appropriate.	Identify, develop and implement improvement projects with the help of local people/communities	Ongoing
	Set up working groups to address specific themes/issues/objectives highlighted in this plan.	Ongoing
4.2 Provide small (light-touch) grants to parish councils and other groups to carry out works in local community area	Identify funding opportunity and encourage parish councils to bid for funding to carry out routine minor maintenance tasks in their area.	Pilot 2011/12
Objective: Identify and develop effective partnerships to deliver Access improvements		
Aim	Actions	Timescale
4.3 Establish effective working practice with neighbouring Local Authorities	Agree responsibilities for bridges at county boundaries.	2013/14
	Identify and resolve path status anomalies at county boundaries.	2013/14
	Agree standards for promoted routes that cross county boundaries	2013/14
4.4 Establish effective working partnerships to deliver PRow/site improvements	Identify projects/actions and necessary partners	Ongoing
	Establish partnerships to implement	Ongoing
4.5 Continue to work with and support the DLAF encouraging their involvement in the RoWIP and with all aspects of countryside access	Engage with DLAF on RoWIP implementation and ongoing development.	Ongoing
	Continue to support the DLAF	Ongoing
Objective: Provide volunteering opportunities for people of all ages and abilities on all aspects of PRow/site management and improvement.		
Aim	Actions	Timescale
4.6 Continue supporting and developing Friends groups	Continue to support and develop Friends groups at Durlston County Park, Avon Heath Country Park, Rights of Way Liaison Officers and Adopt-a-Path volunteers	Ongoing

4.7 Enhance the existing work of access and ranger volunteer groups. To expand the Dorset Volunteer Ranger service into countryside access	Further develop volunteer provision and current groups including Rights of Way Liaison Officers and Adopt-a-Path volunteers	Ongoing
	Continue support to the DVR service volunteer coordinator in building partnerships with other organisations for joint working in the recruitment support and training of volunteers.	Ongoing
	Recruit and train ten Rights of Way volunteers from the pool of RoWLOs – March 2010	March 2011
	Build a skills database for each volunteer, eg skills, experience, interests – to effectively match them to access work.	Ongoing
4.8 Offer training opportunities for volunteers to ensure safe working practices and consistency of approach	Provide training for volunteers in aspects of maintenance and safe working practices.	Ongoing
4.9 Improve opportunities for all members of the local community to volunteer their expertise and time to help manage and improve Dorset's Rights of Way network and countryside sites	When appropriate hold RoWIP meetings/workshops to address specific RoWIP issues and feed into the overall process	Ongoing
	Develop volunteering opportunities	2010 onwards
	Provide information about existing opportunities on the Dorset For You website	Ongoing

Theme 5: Providing quality information about the network

Objective: Ensure that both User and Landowner understand and carry out their Rights and Responsibilities

Aim	Actions	Timescale
5.1 Produce information for the public and land-managers explaining their rights and responsibilities regards PRow.	Review and assess current guidance, consult with land organisations/public and consider new – more effective – methods of providing information regarding rights and responsibilities	Review 2013/14
	Guidance is available to inform the public about their rights and responsibilities.	2013/14
	Guidance is available to inform landowners about their rights and responsibilities.	2013/14

Objective: Encourage responsible dog ownership and minimise Dog Fouling on all public paths and public green space.

Aim	Actions	Timescale
5.2 Provide information and training to dog owners - work with local authority dog wardens in education, provision of facilities and enforcement.	Work with dog wardens and others to address dog-fouling issues.	2009 and ongoing
	Offer responsible dog ownership training days	2009 and ongoing
	Develop a Dorset Dogs website to encourage responsible dog owner behaviour	2009 and ongoing

Objective: Improved coordination of the production and distribution of good information

Aim	Actions	Timescale
5.3 Better coordinate the development and installation of path/site information.	Audit and enter onto C-side (PRow database) path/site interpretation/ information. Record "life expectancy" of media. Review and update as necessary.	Ongoing
5.4 Review current information provision and identify how to reach more people through design, format and distribution.	Audit/review/update current DCC information/media/activities	2011
	Work with tourism and economic development organisations to determine effective distribution of service information	2012
	Liaise with partners to establish contacts/outlets to ensure material is effectively promoted and distributed e.g. organisations representing disability groups, carers, young people, landmanagers etc	2011
	Consult with relevant organisations at the planning stage.	2011 and ongoing

Objective: Carry out market research and address gaps in information.

Aim	Actions	Timescale
5.5 Establish good market research and monitoring methods service wide	Develop and implement methodology for gathering customer/partner feedback – complaints/praise/general comments to identify trends and issues to inform RoWIP and management planning.	2012
	Research current and potential customer interests and needs to guide the improvement and management of paths and sites maximising opportunity and enjoyment for all compatible with landscape needs.	2012
	Audit and review all events and activities – theme/location/timing - provided by the service to ensure we are meeting public need.	2012
5.6 Provide activities and information that meets the needs of local people and visitors to Dorset – and reflects the breadth of opportunities Dorset has to offer	Produce, promote and distribute information to address current gaps for: horse-riders, horse-carriage drivers, cyclists, vehicular users	Ongoing
	Update/develop as “provision” for these groups is improved and developed on the ground	Ongoing
	Research and meet the needs of different groups of people eg families, younger and older people, Ethnic minorities and people with disability.	Ongoing
	Explore the benefits of producing “themed” information pertinent to Dorset eg Health, Local produce and agriculture, Earth science, Cultural, arts and folklore, Built and archaeological heritage, Natural heritage etc	Aspirational
	Work with partners to develop appropriate ways to introduce countryside access education into the curriculum of primary and secondary education.	Aspirational
	Review activities provided – content, timing, location etc	Ongoing

Objective: Utilise technology effectively.

Aim	Actions	Timescale
5.7 Develop and keep up-to-date Rights of Way and countryside site information on the DorsetforYou website	Review existing website – establish improvement needs and develop the PRow/site information on the DorsetforYou website to detail the character/condition of sites, promoted routes and PRow enabling people to plan their countryside activities appropriate to their needs	Ongoing – updates in conjunction with Definitive Map Review Project estimated completion earliest.
	Detail public transport links with PRow and Sites	2012/13
	Provide this information in a range of formats	Ongoing
	RoWIP - Enable people to submit improvement ideas and see how improvements are being implemented	2012/2013

“Children who are allowed to play and explore outside are likely to be more adventurous, self-motivated and better able to understand risk when they grow up” Tessa Livingstone, Child Psychologist



The way forward

Local Authorities are encouraged to be “innovative” in their approach to finding funding sources, identifying partnerships and engaging volunteers.

The RoWIP details the key areas that need to be addressed to bring Dorset’s PRoW up-to-date and fully functioning as a network. It is a key reference point for management and improvement of Dorset’s PRoW/sites guiding decision-making about management priorities, targeting of resources, development of policy and procedures, seeking out funding opportunities and securing them when they arise and for PRoW/site development in helping to achieve broader social, economic and environmental benefits. Some actions may be achieved relatively quickly, others are a long-term aspiration

Implementing the ROWIP

The production of this RoWIP is the start of a process to improve the Rights of Way and access network. The County Council supports the delivery of RoWIP projects. The Dorset Local Access Forum will advise on the delivery of RoWIP objectives. Implementation will be coordinated and monitored by Dorset County Council Officers. The Countryside and Business Development Service Plan will detail timescales and costs.

The RoWIP works closely alongside both LTP3⁴⁶ (of which it is a key supporting strategy) and the planning system and is linked with numerous other plans and will seek opportunities for joint initiatives to implement PRoW/site improvements. Implementation will involve a variety of individuals and organisations.

46 Local Transport Plan 3 see p27

Annual Reports – monitoring and evaluation

Annual progress reports will be provided to the Dorset Local Access Forum and Dorset County Council and will be publicly available on the Dorset County Council website. The Dorset Local Access Forum will give an independent view on progress and priorities to implement actions from the RoWIP.

Measures will be put in place to monitor improvement work and annual reports will detail and review progress made during the previous year and outline targets for the year ahead; describe and evaluate work completed and highlight lessons learnt e.g. best practice and any research carried out; and highlight any key legislative, corporate and process changes important to the delivery of the RoWIP e.g. Local planning, the Local Transport Plan, national initiatives and funding opportunities, enabling the RoWIP to be altered accordingly or highlight the need to conduct an earlier review of the RoWIP.

RoWIP1 review

Statutory guidance advises that a RoWIP is reviewed every 10 years.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Research carried out for the Dorset RoWIP

Literature Review - Ongoing	Collate and review existing research/data
Dorset Local Access Forum (joint with Bournemouth and Poole) Ongoing	Forum Meeting discussions Forum Workshops Forum topic sub-working groups
Dorset Local Access Forum Countryside Access Consultation Document "A Future for Countryside Access in Dorset". Public Consultation	See www.dorsetforyou.com/laf Written by DLAF in conjunction with Dorset Countryside examining the breadth of issues pertinent to the RoWIP process and Countryside Access across Dorset. Widely distributed, well received and generated positive and useful feedback.
User group interviews Ongoing - Public Consultation	Interviews with user group representatives supplemented by questionnaire and web based research.
Farmer and land manager interviews/ research. Ongoing - Public Consultation	Interviews with and information sent in by farmers, land managers, the CLA and NFU in response to articles in CLA/NFU publications and local press.

Focus Study Research "Access to the countryside; Access to Services". The Countryside Agency ⁴⁷ selected and funded DCC as a lead authority to pilot the RoWIP process and research the role Countryside Access plays facilitating access to countryside and services. Public Consultation	Approximately 1000 interviews with local people in villages, market towns and countryside venues. Additional interviews/focus groups with representatives from local businesses, older people, younger people, people with mobility, visibility impairment and families.
Annual Photo-postcard competition Ongoing - Public Consultation	Countywide competition encouraging local people and visitors to send in their images, issues and improvement ideas. A selection of photo entries illustrate the chapters in this document.
Dorset Countryside Service Access Officer workshop Dorset Countryside Service Ranger Workshop	Data audit and assessment of current practice – management, maintenance, promotion, legal procedures, access for all, sustainable practice and current understanding of the network and the user.
Dorset Countryside Service Access Officer Sustainability Audit Workshop	Co-ordinated by the DCC Agenda 21 Team who identified themes for the workshop from this background research and DLAF vision document.
Dorset County Council Citizen Panel. Public Consultation	Consultation on issues arising from preliminary research
Dorset County Council Officer meetings/ interviews. Ongoing	Information gathering and integrating plans/strategies. For example meetings with officers concerned with – Highways and Transportation, Local Transport Plan, Local Development Framework, Cycling, Safe routes to schools, Accident analyst, traffic management and public transport; Outdoor education, Social Services, Archaeology, Environmental Records (DERC), Digital mapping (GIS), Tourism, Coastal Policy.
District and neighbouring Council Officers - meetings/interviews/questionnaires. Ongoing	All Dorset County District and neighbouring LAs
Meetings with representatives from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty partnerships. Dorset AONB - Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB	Meetings with AONB representatives to provide information for the AONB management Plans, gather information for the Rights Of Way Improvement Plan and explore means for closer ways of working. Both Dorset and Cranborne AONB Management Plan's endorse and make clear links with the Dorset RoWIP.
Community Planning	Meetings/discussions with representatives from Dorset Strategic and Local Community partnerships. Analysis of and information gathering from the community strategy and all available community, Town and Parish Plans.
Towards a Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Dorset. Draft consultation February 2007	Town and parish Councils, District Councils, neighbouring authorities, user groups, landmanagement organisations, organisations representing social, economic and environmental interests, DLAF, DCC Officers 93% agreed with overall document,, issues and actions.

47 From 2006 the Countryside Agency are now known as Natural England

Statutory Guidance Assessment guidance. Ongoing	A study of the Definitive Map and Statement of public rights of way Consideration of the Definitive Map in conjunction with the wider highway network – cycle tracks/permissive routes/road network Consideration of applications for changes to the Definitive Map e.g. modifications, public path orders. Consideration of requests for network improvements Consideration of data detailing the condition of the network Consideration of other relevant information e.g. plans, strategies, research etc Targeted and/or general public consultation
DCC Dorset Countryside Service website Public Consultation / promotion. Ongoing	Inviting comments regards consultation documents and issues/improvement ideas for Dorset's ROWIP.

Appendix 2: Strategies, plans, policy and planning documents that link with the RoWIP

Health

- Choosing health – White Paper (DH, 2004)
- Health HIMP
- South West Dorset Primary Care Trust
- Annual Public Health Report 2003
- North Dorset Primary Care Trust Health Report July 2003
- Joint Public Health Strategy
- Healthy Weight Strategy 2009-2012

Education

- Raising Pupil and School Achievement Plan
- Inclusion (Special Educational Needs) Action Plan
- Adult Education Three Year Development Plan
- Jurassic Coast Education Strategy (under review)

Culture / Arts

- Local Cultural Strategy 2003-2008, Heritage Strategy
- Jurassic Coast Arts Strategy 2006-12
- Jurassic Coast Interpretation Action Plan

Economic Development / Tourism

- The economic and social value of walking in England (Ramblers Association, 2003)
- DCC Tourism Strategy 2004-2014
- Raising the Game, Building a More
- Competitive Economy in Bournemouth,

Dorset and Poole

- Rural Renaissance Delivery Plan
- 'Chalk and Cheese' Delivery Plan (LEADER+)

Transport

- A New Deal For Transport: Better for everyone (DfT, 1998)
- Transport 2010: The Ten Year Transport Plan (DfT, 2000)
- Tomorrow's roads – safer for everyone (DfT, 2000)
- Child Road Safety –2010 Target
- Transport in tomorrow's countryside (CA 2003)
- Local Transport Plan 2011-26
- Transport Asset Management Plan
- Highway Maintenance Policy
- Traffic Management Act 2008-11
- Traffic Safety Plan 2010-20
- Jurassic Coast Transport Strategy 2006-12

Planning

- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole – Waste Local Plan
- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan July 2004
- Waste Management Strategy
- Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-26

National Planning Policy

- PPG3 housing

- PPG6 planning for town centres
- PPS7 – Sustainable development in rural areas
- PPG17 – Planning for open space, sport and recreation
- PPG13 – Transport
- PPS12 – Local Development Frameworks
- PPS11 – Regional Spatial Strategies (no longer valid)
- PPG21 – Tourism
- Living Places – Cleaner, Safer, Greener (ODPM October 2002)
- Sustainable communities: building for the future (ODPM, 2003)

CROW Act 2000

- Open Access, Section 16 dedicated open land, access to coastal land

Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009

- Coastal trail and coastal access land

Overarching Strategies

- Sustainable development
- A Better Quality of Life, UK strategy for sustainable development (1999)

Rural development

- Our Countryside: The Future. A Fair Deal for rural England (DETR and MAFF, 2000)

Community Planning

- Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-20 (DSP)
- Local Community Plans
- Town and Parish Plans
- Connecting with our communities 2009-12

Dorset County Council

- Our Role in Dorset – Dorset County Council
- Corporate Plan 2010-14
- Environment Directorate Plan
- Countryside and Business Development Service Plan
- External Funding Strategy
- Communications Strategy
- Asset Management Plan (AMP) 2010-13
- Customer Service in Dorset 2010-13

Sustainability

- Corporate Sustainability Action Plan
- Carbon Management Action Plan 2010-15
- Best Value Performance Plan

Recreation / Sport / Leisure

- The Diversity Review, CA

Walking and cycling

- Walking & Cycling, an action plan (DfT, 2004)
- National cycling strategy (1996) (DfT)

Horse riding

- Ride-it. The national bridle route network (BHS)

Access to wildlife / open space

- English Nature standards for accessible natural green space in towns and cities (2003)
- Space for people, Targeting action for woodland
- access (Woodland Trust 2004)

Sport

- A Framework for Sport in England A vision for 2020, Sport England
- South West Plan for Sport 2004-2008, Sport
- England South West
- Dorset Sports & Physical Activity Strategy, Dorset County Council 2008-2013

Diversity and Equality

- Partnerships for Older People Projects (POPPS) Implementation Plan 2009+
- Ageing Well in Dorset 2009+
- Action Plan in Response to the Joint Inspection of Services for Older People
- Commissioning Strategy – Older People's Services
- DAT Young People's plan
- Early Years Development Plan
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Joint Commissioning Strategies for:
- People with Learning Disability
- People with Physical Disabilities
- People with Mental Health Problems
- Older People's Mental Health
- Sensory Impairment
- Carers Strategy
- Strategy on the Relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector
- Dorset Integrated Diversity Strategy

Landscape and Environmental Conservation

- Dorset Biodiversity Strategy 2003-13, Dorset
- Biodiversity Partnership
- Dorset Heathland Strategy
- Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site Management Plan 2009-14
- Dorset Coast Strategy

AONBs

- Dorset AONB Management Plan 2009-14
- Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs
- AONB Management Plan 2009-14

Appendix 3: Consultees

*Those marked with an asterix denotes those advised for consultation by RoWIP legislative guidance

Thank you to everyone who has helped shaped this plan – we look forward to working with you in its implementation.

Local Access Forums

Dorset Local Access Forum
Hampshire
Devon
Somerset
Wiltshire

Walking

*The Ramblers Association:
Dorset
National
New Forest
Beaminster Rambling Club
South West Coast Path Association
South West Coast Path Team
CAPROW Canford and Purbeck rights of way
Long Distance Walkers Association
Swanage Walking Group
The Monarchs Way Association
Wessex Orienteering Club

Equestrian

*British Horse Society
*Byways and Bridleways Trust
*British Driving Society
3 counties Bridleway Group
Corscombe and District Bridleway Group
Poole Pony Club
Wimborne and District Riding Club
Purbeck

Cycling

*Cyclists Touring Club
Purbeck Action for Cycling Team
Dorset Cyclists Network
Dorset Cycling Liaison Forum
Sustrans

Vehicular

*Auto Cycle Union
Dorset Landrovers Club
Friends of Dorset Rights of Way (FoDROW)
Land Access Recreation Association (LARA)
Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF)

Community

All Dorset Town and Parish Councils
All Dorset Rights of Way Liaison Officers (RoWLOWs)
Dorset Community Action (DCA)
Common Ground
South West Arts

Older people

Age Concern
Gillingham Senior Forum

Disability – Access for All

North Dorset Disability Action Group
North Dorset Disability Information Service
Lifestyles Dorset
Disabled Ramblers Association
Disabled Drivers Association
Riding for the Disabled
Dorset Association for the Disabled
Fieldfare Trust

Agriculture

Country Landowners Association (CLA)
National Farmers Union (NFU)
(The above organisations kindly coordinated mail-outs to members)

Forestry

Forestry Commission
The Woodland Trust

Landscape/Heritage

Dorset Archaeological Committee
Dorset Geologists' Association
Dorset Important Geological Sites Group
Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society
Dorset Chalk and Cheese
North Dorset Countryside and Heritage Panel
Purbeck Heritage Committee
South West Protected Landscapes Forum
Urban Heath Life Project
World Heritage Steering Group c/o Devon CC

National Trust
English Heritage
CPRE
*Open Spaces Society
Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre

AONB

Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs
AONB
AONB Blackdown Hills
East Devon AONB

Wildlife and Conservation

Dorset Wildlife Trust
Herpetological Conservation Trust
RSPB
FWAG
BTCV
Bridport Environment Group
Dorset Countryside Volunteers
Green Land Protection Group
The British Association for Shooting and Conservation
The Game Conservancy Trust

Health/Fitness

South West Primary Care Trust
Dorset Primary Care Trusts
Dorset GP's
NHS
Dorset leisure Centres
Sport England

Tourism

South West Tourism

Dorset County Council

Dorset Countryside
All Departments

Local Authorities

Poole Borough Council
Bournemouth Borough Council
Christchurch Borough Council
East Dorset District Council
North Dorset District Council
Purbeck District Council
West Dorset District Council
Weymouth and Portland Borough Council
Devon County Council
East Devon District Council
Hampshire County Council
Somerset County Council
Wiltshire County Council

Natural England

DEFRA
English Nature
Countryside Agency
Environment Agency
Association of National Park Authorities

Government Office South West

Ministry of Defence (MOD)
SERDA
Oliver Letwin MP
Robert Walter MP

Estates

Bloxworth
Cranborne
Drax
Duchy of Cornwall
Encombe
Ilchester
Lees and Smedmore
Lulworth
Malmesbury
Rempstone
Shaftesbury



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Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) 2006 – 2026, South West Regional Assembly

Regional Economic Strategy 2006 – 2015, South West Regional Development Agency www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/policy/res-review2005/draft-res.shtm

The Regional Sustainable Development Framework for the South West of England

Affordable, sustainable and appropriate housing

Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All, Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, 2000. www.communities.gov.uk/pub/279QualityandchoiceadecenthomeforallthewayforwardforhousingPDF361Kb_id1150279.pdf

Sustainable Communities in the South West (part of national Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future -the Sustainable Communities Plan and regional action plans), Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Communities and Local Government office 2003 www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1139868

The South West Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) 2005-2016, South West Housing Body www.southwesthousingbody.org.uk/pdf/strategy.pdf

Developing Dorset's economy

Raising the Game: Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Economic Development Strategy 2005-2016, Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Economic Partnership 2005 www.bdpep.co.uk/Eco_Partner_lo.pdf

Improved access to services, employment and leisure

The Rural Strategy 2004, Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs DEFRA www.defra.gov.uk/rural/strategy/default.htm

South West Regional Transport Strategy (sits within Regional Spatial Strategy, see previous)

Rural Dorset Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011, Dorset County Council www.dorsetforyou.com/media/pdf/g/0/Contents_1.pdf

South East Dorset Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011 www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Residents/roads/transport/LTP/

Transport in Accessing Employment and Learning in Dorset, Dorset Accessible and Responsive Transport (DART), 2004

Towards a Sustainable Transport System, Department of Transport Oct 2007

Delivering a Sustainable Transport System, Department of Transport Nov 2008

Meeting Targets through Transport, Department of Transport 2008

Safeguarding Dorset's environment now and for the future

Natural England Strategic Direction 2006-2009, Natural England www.naturalengland.org.uk/pdf/about/Natural_England_Strategic_Direction.pdf

Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, Energy Saving Trust, 2000 www.est.org.uk/housingbuildings/localauthorities/NottinghamDeclaration/

Our Environment Our Future: The Regional Strategy for the South West Environment

2004-2014, South West Regional Assembly www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/media/SWRA/Environment/ENV-strat-main.pdf

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Dorset Biodiversity Strategy, Dorset Biodiversity Partnership, 2003 www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/dorset/projects/biodiversity.htm

Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Renewable Energy Strategy, Dorset County Council and Dorset Energy Group, 2005

www.dorsetforyou.com/climatechange

Municipal Waste Strategy for Dorset, Dorset County Council, 2003

www.dorsetforyou.com/media/pdf/1/3/Strategy%20text.pdf

Better health and well-being

The NHS Plan, Department of Health, 2000

The Choosing Health White Paper www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/Modernisation/ChoosingHealth/fs/en

Choosing health in Dorset: The Dorset public health report 2005 www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=353163

Notes

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All leaflets can be made available in audio tape, large print and Braille, or alternative languages on request.