



Brecon Beacons National Park

Rights of Way Improvement Plan

2019 - 2029

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
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Foreword

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority published its first Rights of Way Improvement Plan in 2007. It was the first authority and the only national park authority in Wales to do so. With the agreement of the constituent unitary authorities that fall within the National Park, a review of that Plan has been undertaken. It is prepared on same basis as before in that our aim is to make it clear, concise and accessible to as many people and groups as possible; also, in accordance with the new guidance issued by the Welsh Government in July 2016.

Once again, consultation on this document has been extensive. Copies of the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan were sent to all statutory consultees as well as many user groups and individuals (see Appendix 1). A copy was made available for inspection at the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority head office and also on the National Park Authority website.

During the consultation period on the Draft Plan a relatively small number of responses were received. Some of the comments and suggestions made have been incorporated into this final Plan.

This final version of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan was adopted by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority on the 29th October 2019.

Copies of the final Plan are available for inspection at the National Park Authority head office at the address below and also on the National Park Authority website. A paper copy of the Plan can be purchased for £20.

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Abbreviations and Glossary

Access Land	Registered common land and land mapped as mountain, moor, heath or down (collectively known as ‘open country’) to which the public have a right of access on foot under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
BBNP	Brecon Beacons National Park - The area covered by the Brecon Beacons National Park.
BBNPA	Brecon Beacons National Park Authority - A special purpose local authority responsible for the management of the Brecon Beacons National Park.
BOAT	Byway Open to All Traffic - Public right of way with rights for pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists, carriages and mechanically propelled vehicles.
Bridleway	Public right of way with the right to walk, ride or lead a horse or to cycle (cyclists must give way to other users).
CROW Act	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
Definitive Map	The Definitive Map (which is accompanied by a Statement) identifies all registered public rights of way.
Footpath	Public right of way with rights for walkers and users of class 2 and 3 disabled vehicles.
Ha	Hectares
Km	Kilometres
LAF	Local Access Forum - Statutory body of local volunteers with experience of a wide variety of access issues. LAFs were established under the CROW Act to advise local authorities, national park authorities, (the former) CCW, (the former) WAG and others on improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open air recreation and enjoyment. One LAF covers the whole of the National Park. Its meetings are open to the public for observation.

Least Restrictive Option	There is no standard definition of the term but it encompasses the principle of making access as easy as possible for the greatest diversity of people and is generally applied to field furniture. The order of priority when installing furniture will be gap, gate and stile according to the expected level of use likely to be made of the route and the management of the land.
NRW	Natural Resources Wales
NERC Act	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
Public Right of Way	A way over which members of the public have a right to pass and re-pass. There are four types - see footpath, bridleway, RB and BOAT. Will be referred to as “right of way” in this Plan
ROWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan
RB	Restricted Byway – Formerly known as a Road Used as a Public Path (RUPP) and came into being on enactment of sections 47 and 48 of the CROW Act giving rights to walkers, horse riders, cyclists and carriage drivers. RUPPs no longer exist.
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government (now a defunct term)
WG	Welsh Government
WG Guidance	Welsh Government Guidance for Local Authorities on Rights of Way Improvement Plan (July 2016), a document produced by the Welsh Government to help local authorities in their production of Rights of Way Improvement Plans.

Executive Summary

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) has been produced to meet the requirements of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the relevant Welsh Government Guidance. The ROWIP must contain two statutory elements:

- i. an assessment of local rights of way; and,
- ii. a statement of action for the management and improvement of local rights of way

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority recognises, through the ROWIP, that the rights of way network and access land are key components in the delivery of its second statutory duty, that of promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park and in achieving its duty to foster the economic and social well-being of its local communities.

They are also crucial in a strategic sense as they are contributors in a number of areas which are political or legislative priorities at the present time. These include the following:

Well-being
Equality
Sustainable transport
Tourism
Recreation
Landscape
Economic development

The ROWIP demonstrates that certain forms of recreation are better served by the rights of way network and access land than others. Also, that some groups of people are not well served by the rights of way network or access land. This is either because provision is lacking or, where provision is copious, that its accessibility restricts opportunity.

The ROWIP describes a rights of way network where the majority of opportunities exist for pedestrians and where opportunities for other forms of recreation are in a minority. However, even though 70% of the rights of way network is comprised of footpaths the National Park Authority estimates that there are over 2400 stiles on those footpaths, a substantial portion of which have only one step. Given that stiles can pose problems for older people, people with both minor and major mobility problems, dog walkers and families with small children and, in some cases, is an absolute barrier to the progress of some people there is enormous scope for improving the accessibility of the network.

The Plan is presented in 5 sections culminating with a Statement of Action in Part 5. This contains the Actions which will drive the improvement of the rights of way network and

access land and provides an indication of the timescales and resources required to achieve them.

Allied to this, and presented as a separate document, is a Delivery Plan. This is a non-statutory document with the purpose of providing a more detailed and responsive direction along with commitments for the management of the rights of way network over a specified period. The Delivery Plan will be renewed at the intervals stated within it.

Implementation of the ROWIP will be dependent on several factors:

- i. the availability of resources from both internal and external sources
- ii. the Authority maintaining its current level of staff and expertise
- iii. continuing to develop partnership working
- iv. continuing to work with stakeholders
- v. continuing to maintain good relationships with the farming community

The first ROWIP was published in 2007 and was due for review in 2017. Whilst there has been a delay with the review the first ROWIP has continued to be used in the interim period.

The second ROWIP is known as the Brecon Beacons National Park Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2019 – 2029.

Introduction

Background

In June 2007 the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority published its Rights of Way Improvement Plan (“ROWIP”). The ROWIP was the means by which the National Park Authority identified, prioritised and planned for improvements to the rights of way network and access provision in the National Park for the subsequent 10 years. The ROWIP set out the priorities and objectives for access to the countryside and provided the basis for work on the rights of way network and on access land. A copy of the 2007 ROWIP is available to download here:

<http://www.breconbeacons-npa.gov.uk/environment/planning-access-and-row/rights-of-way-improvement-plan/>

The production of the ROWIP involved a fundamental review of the condition of the public rights of way network, how it was managed and how it could be improved for the benefit of its users and potential users.

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (“the National Park Authority”) does not have direct legislative responsibility for the management of all of the access resource within the National Park. Whilst it has direct responsibility for managing access land the responsibility for managing the public rights of way network lies with the unitary authorities. However, the National Park Authority has, since 1996, had formal arrangements with its seven constituent unitary authorities to manage their respective rights of way networks on their behalf. As a result, it was considered that the National Park Authority was best placed to prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan for the National Park. The ROWIP therefore included sections of, in decreasing order of area, the counties of Powys, Carmarthenshire and Monmouthshire and the county boroughs of Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.

Review Requirements

Section 60 of the Act requires that the ROWIP be reviewed every ten years and that a decision be taken as to whether it needs amendment. Welsh Government Guidance on Rights of Way Improvement Plans is available here:

<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/rights-of-way-and-wider-access/rights-of-way/?lang=en>

As part of this process, Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires the Authority to make new assessments of the matters specified in the Act. These assessments are as follows:

- a) the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public;
- b) the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and the enjoyment of the Authority's area;
- c) the accessibility of rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems.

The ROWIP must also contain a statement of the actions that the National Park Authority proposes to take for the management of rights of way and for securing an improved network of rights of way, with particular regard to the matters dealt with in the assessment.

In addition the Welsh Government Guidance requires that the following matters be addressed:

- a) an evaluation of the degree to which the previous rights of way improvement plan has been delivered;
- b) an evaluation of the present condition of the network and its record;
- c) opportunities to contribute to Active Travel objectives;
- d) opportunities to contribute to Well-being objectives;
- e) opportunities to contribute to the delivery of other plans and priorities

Further details are contained in the Welsh Government guidance.

“Local rights of way” as referred to above includes all rights of way shown on the Definitive Map as well as other footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and cycle tracks (not at the side of carriageways) within the Authority's area. The scope can also be extended to include access land and other access provision.

The new ROWIP must also include “Delivery Statements”. This is a new requirement designed so that the National Park Authority can set out its shorter-term commitments. The Welsh Government guidance recommends that these be reviewed annually.

The Welsh Government Guidance states that ROWIPs are the prime means by which local highway authorities should identify, prioritise, and plan for improvements to local rights of way and govern how they will approach their day to day management – and in doing so make better provision for the public to enjoy a range of outdoor recreational activities.

Arrangements for the National Park Authority

Since the publication of the current ROWIP changes have been made in the delegation arrangements between the National Park Authority and the constituent unitary authorities. The Welsh Government guidance states that, under section 61(5) of the Act where parts of a local highway authority's area is within a national park, the highway authority may make arrangements to carry out their rights of way improvement functions jointly with that national park authority. The provision does not allow for the national park authority to produce its own independent ROWIP but rather to work jointly in developing the highway authority's plan.

The guidance goes on to say that where there is a strong case for a dedicated plan for a national park, any such plan will be an amalgamation of the relevant parts of each of the constituent highway authority plans and that those highway authorities must take an active part in its development.

Given that the National Park Authority has recently renegotiated a delegation agreement with Powys County Council, Carmarthenshire County Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council it has agreed with those authorities that the National Park Authority will undertake a review of the ROWIP that was published in 2007.

For practical reasons, the National Park Authority and Torfaen County Borough Council have decided to terminate the delegation agreement that existed between them. The rights of way network within the Torfaen section of the National Park is very small (at 6.93km) and is more remote from the National Park Authority's office than any other part of the National Park. It was therefore considered more efficient for colleagues from the County Borough Council (who are considerably nearer to that part of the National Park) to manage this area. As a result, the Authority will not be including the Torfaen section within its review of the ROWIP beyond the provision of basic statistical information.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

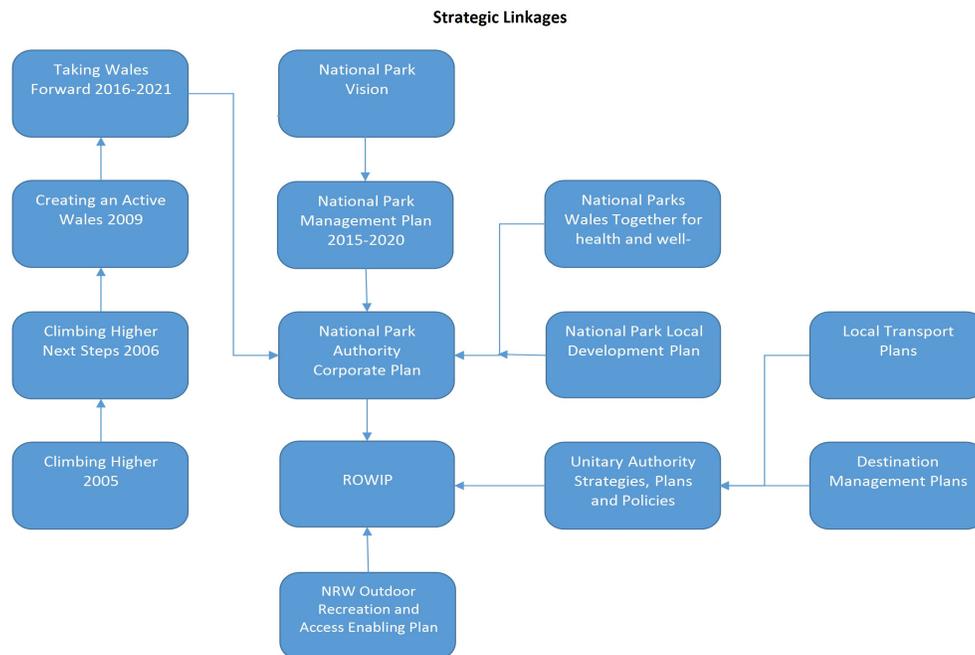
The preparation of the ROWIP falls within the scope of Article 2(a) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. The Directive states that its objective is "to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development". The Directive recognises, however, that an SEA need only be undertaken if a plan is likely to lead to significant environmental effects. After screening the ROWIP using the information contained in "A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive" it is the Authority's

judgement that the actions and policies contained within the ROWIP are not likely to lead to any significant environmental effects and that a SAE is not required.

Strategic Context

The ROWIP sits within a landscape populated by strategies, plans and policies from a variety of organisations. The most relevant of these are detailed in Appendix 2. It is important that the policies developed in this ROWIP support these documents and that appropriate linkages are made in the implementation phase with the aspirations of partner authorities and bodies.

The major strategic linkages around the ROWIP.



The majority of the strategies, plans and policies referred to in this section raise a number of consistent themes:

1. that experiences available within the National Park can reduce the negative impacts of poverty, improve opportunities for social inclusion and improve the health and well-being of the population
2. there is a need to consider walking and cycling as alternative modes of transport to the use of motor vehicles
3. walking and cycling are important as sustainable and healthy activities

4. access to the countryside on foot and by bicycle has a role in improving the health and well-being of the population
5. access to the natural environment has a role in the health and well-being of communities
6. walking and cycling combined with culture, heritage and the natural world have a role in attracting tourists

This is set against the background of an announcement by the Minister for Environment in July 2018 publishing the priorities for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. “Designated Landscapes: Valued and Resilient” calls on managing bodies to deliver on a number of Welsh Government priorities, including the Nature Recovery Plan, a refreshed woodland strategy, the decarbonisation agenda, and Cymraeg 2050. Its ten cross-cutting themes aim to improve resilience and realise the full value of Wales’ landscapes:

- Landscapes for everyone
- Exemplars of the sustainable management of natural resources
- Halting the loss of biodiversity
- Green energy and decarbonisation
- Realising the economic potential of landscape
- Growing tourism and outdoor recreation
- Thriving Welsh language
- All landscapes matter
- Delivering through collaboration
- Innovation in resourcing

It is expected that managing bodies will work efficiently, drawing on collaborative partnerships, to deliver on these priorities and drive forward the sustainable management of natural resources.

The Minister has demonstrated a commitment to ensuring that National Parks are valued for their natural beauty by our people, communities and country – and, that our National

Parks deliver rich ecosystems, vibrant and resilient communities and opportunities for outdoor recreation for all of the people of Wales.

The Vision Statement for the Brecon Beacons National Park Rights of Way Improvement Plan

The Vision for this Rights of Way Improvement Plan is as follows:

All potential users of the rights of way network and access land are enabled to appreciate and enjoy the special qualities of the National Park in a sustainable way, benefiting their health and well-being as a result

In order to realise this vision we will need to achieve the following aims:

1. Public rights of way are well maintained;
2. The rights of way network is well connected and meets the demands of users and potential users whilst accommodating the interests of land managers, the natural environment and cultural heritage;
3. The public rights of way network enables access for all;
4. Residents and visitors understand their own rights and others' rights of access and exercise them in a responsible way;
5. Rights of way and access land provide sustainable opportunities to enjoy and appreciate the natural beauty, geodiversity, biodiversity and cultural heritage of the National Park;
6. Experiencing the special qualities of the National Park contributes towards improvements in the health and well-being of residents and visitors;
7. Rights of way and access land provide opportunities to gain an understanding of the working and evolving landscape within the National Park.

Part I

Background

1.1 The Brecon Beacons National Park

The Brecon Beacons National Park covers an area of 1,347 square kilometres (520 square miles). It was established in 1957 under the terms of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and its purpose and aims, as originally laid down in the 1949 Act and, as amended by the Environment Act 1995, are:

- a) ...conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area; and
- b) ... promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.¹

Through achieving these purposes, the National Park Authority has a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of its local communities by working with those organisations that are responsible for these areas. Rights of way and access management makes a direct and indirect contribution to people's economic and social well-being.

The Brecon Beacons National Park was the third national park to be established in Wales and is important locally, nationally and internationally, attracting visitors and tourists to its spectacular scenery, its peaceful and remote environment and its various opportunities for outdoor activities, most of which depend on public rights of way and access land.

1.2 Profile

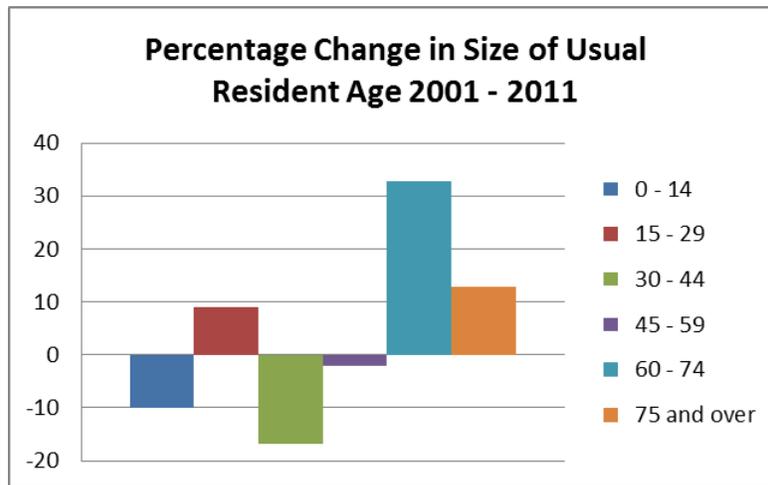
1.3 The profile of the National Park's population, as derived from census data, is one that closely reflects trends visible across national parks in England and Wales. The population recorded at the last census was around 33,000, having grown by 2.4% over the previous decade. This was slightly higher than the average of 1.9% across all national parks, though still relatively low compared to 7.1% total growth across England and Wales as a whole. The predominantly rural landscape of the National Park gives rise to a sparsely distributed population; the population density across the area covered by the National Park at the last census was amongst the lowest in Wales at 24.8 persons per km² comparative to the Welsh average of 147.7 persons per km² and lower than the mid-year figures returned for each individual local authority.

1.4 Population demographics include a higher proportion of older residents compared to totals across England and Wales. This correlates with measures of population change in the area where high increases amongst groups over 60 occur alongside decreases

¹ Environment Act 1995 s. 61 (1)

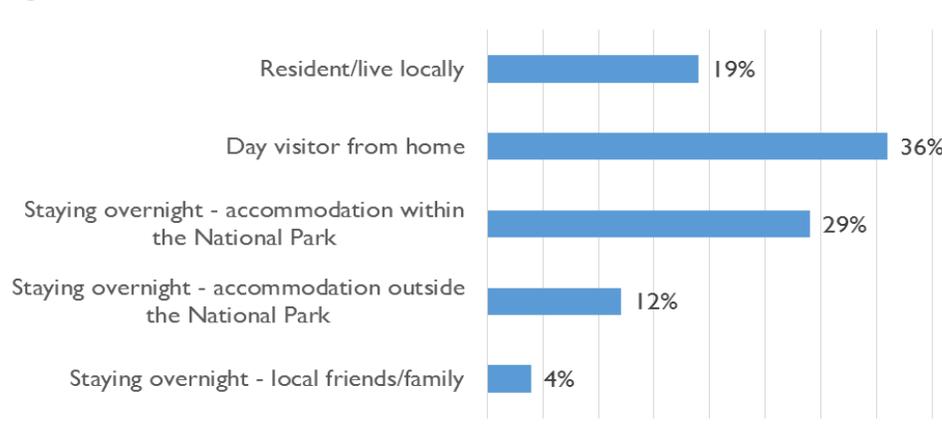
in younger groups (with the exception of those aged 15-29). Despite older populations within the National Park and within national parks in England and Wales in general, the state of National Park residents’ health, as self-reported within the 2011 census, was generally positive with 82 percent describing themselves as being in good or very good health.

Figure 1 – Percentage change in size of usual resident age 2001 – 2011



1.5 The National Park also serves as an important destination attracting some 4.1 million visitors each year and accounting for approximately 5.1 million visitor days. A high proportion of these (Figure 2) are day visitors from the urban areas of south Wales and south east England and in this respect the National Park differs from Snowdonia and Pembrokeshire Coast National Parks in that both attract higher proportions of overnight stays. Of those that are attracted to the National Park for visits longer than a day a high proportion originate from south east England.

Figure 2 – Visitor Profile



Source: Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Survey 2016-17

1.6 The tourism sector is an important part of the local economy, accounting for 12-15% of employment within the National Park. The most popular leisure activities are walking along low level routes, closely followed by hill walking. A particular feature of outdoor recreation in the National Park is the high number of organised group activities and recreational events. In the absence of detailed data on visitor numbers at individual sites, the most popular areas are thought to include the northern scarp of the Central Beacons (including Pen y Fan), the Offa's Dyke Path National Trail in the Black Mountains, Waterfalls Country, the Taff Trail and the towpath of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.

1.7 The Rights of Way Network

1.8 There are 2850 individual public right of way within the National Park extending to 1891.17 km (1175.11 miles)². The network comprises of public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic (BOATs).

1.9 The total length can be split into the different types of rights of way (Table 1, Figure 3).

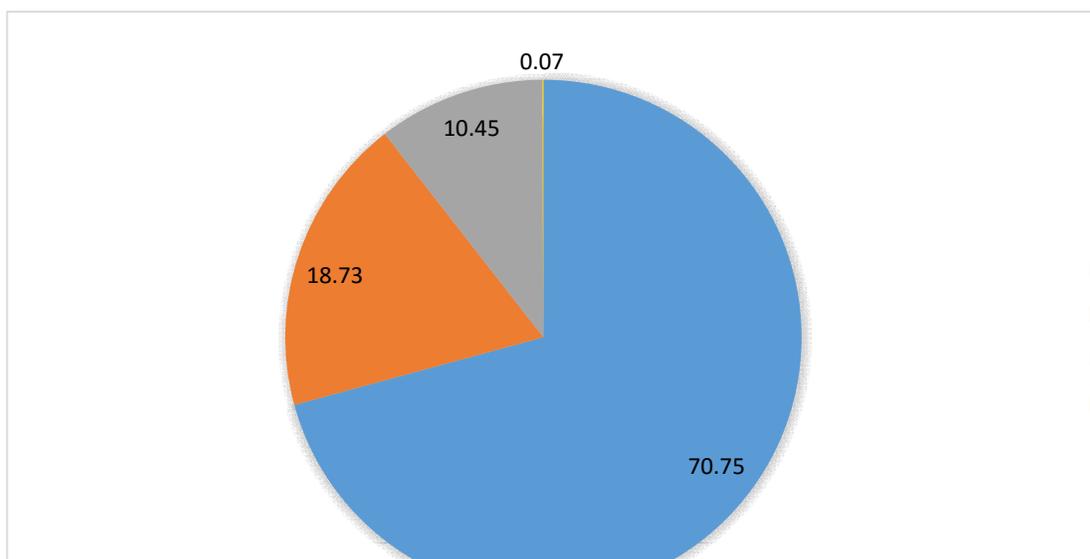
Table 1- Length of public rights of way

	<i>Public rights of way</i>	<i>Footpaths</i>	<i>Bridleways</i>	<i>Restricted Byways</i>	<i>BOATs</i>
Total number	2850	2292	313	240	5
Total length (km)	1891.17	1338.04	354.31	197.54	1.28
Percentage³	100%	70.75%	18.73%	10.45%	0.07%

² This has been calculated using the National Park Authority's Geographic Information System software in two dimensions and does not take account of height

³ By length

Figure 3 – Types of rights of way as a percentage of the total length:



These are distributed across the seven county and county boroughs that fall within the National Park (Table 2).

Table 2 - Length of public rights of way by county

County	Footpaths	Bridleways	RBs	BOATs	Total	% of total network
Blaenau Gwent	10.71	0.67	0	0	11.38	0.60
Carmarthenshire	181.98	40.90	0	0.91	223.79	11.83
Merthyr Tydfil	9.83	5.79	0	0	15.62	0.83
Monmouthshire	428.92	26.64	41.16	0	496.72	26.27
Powys	671.81	263.73	154.44	0.38	1090.35	57.65
Rhondda Cynon Taf	27.86	16.58	1.94	0	46.38	2.45
Torfaen	6.93	0	0	0	6.93	0.37
Total	1338.04	354.31	197.54	1.28	1891.17	100

1.10 The National Park Authority recognises that “public rights of way are the single most important means by which people can enjoy the countryside”⁴ and that its public rights of way network is core to its work and the fulfilment of its second purpose.

1.11 The National Park Authority also recognises that the over-arching principle in undertaking any proposed improvements must be conservation and enhancement of the National Park’s natural and cultural environment, its natural features and habitats and its special qualities as expressed in the National Park Management Plan. This is

⁴ Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Walking Tourism Strategy (2003)

consistent with the Sandford Principle⁵ which is enshrined in Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 and which states that where there is conflict between the National Park's two statutory purposes, greater weight shall be attached to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.

1.12 Administration of Access and Rights of Way

1.13 The rights of way functions of the unitary authorities have been delegated to the National Park Authority in relation to footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and BOATs. The basic duties delegated are⁶:

- the construction, maintenance, repair, signposting and inspection of all public rights of way
- enforcement of the over-riding duty to protect public rights of way
- continuous review of the Definitive Map and Statement i.e. Definitive Map Modification Orders
- orders under section 116 of the Highways Act 1980

A full list of delegated functions is shown at Appendix 4. Rights of way functions exercisable by the National Park Authority under statute i.e. not delegated, are:

- public path orders under section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- public path orders under sections 26, 118 and 119 of the Highways Act 1980 and public path creation agreements under section 25 of the Highways Act 1980
- traffic regulation orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

1.14 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act identifies national park authorities as Relevant Authorities and Access Authorities. As a Relevant Authority, the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has duties relating to applications and notifications of access restrictions and as an Access Authority, has powers to improve access to access land.

⁵ "National Park Authorities can do much to reconcile public enjoyment with the preservation of natural beauty by good planning and management and the main emphasis must continue to be on this approach wherever possible. But even so, there will be situations where the two purposes are irreconcilable... Where this happens, priority must be given to the conservation of natural beauty." (Lord Sandford, 1974)

⁶ Not all of these functions have been delegated in every case

Part 2

Statutory Assessments

2.1 Introduction

2.2 In accordance with Section 60(3) of the CROW Act 2000, and following Welsh Government guidance, the National Park Authority must undertake a new assessment of the following in reviewing the ROWIP:

- a) the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public;
- b) the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and the enjoyment of the National Park;
- c) the accessibility of rights of way to blind or partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems.

2.3 The National Park Authority has undertaken these assessments and each one of these is, in turn, detailed below. The Statement of Action contained in Part 5 of this Plan has been informed by the outcomes of these assessments. It has also been influenced by the other plans, strategies and policies referred to throughout this Plan.

2.4 The extent to which local rights of way meet the present and future needs of the public

2.5 General patterns of participation in outdoor recreation in Wales have been monitored and recorded since 2008. The Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey (“WORS”) captured data during 2008, 2011 and 2014 respectively. The survey has since been discontinued. Monitoring has, however, continued by the incorporation of questions relating to outdoor recreation and activity in the National Survey for Wales (“NSfW”).

2.6 Rates of participation in outdoor recreation across Wales have been consistently high with 81% of adults reporting in the NSfW in 2016 that they took part in one or more outdoor activity at least once in the previous 12 months. Previously reported figures are higher than this with 93% of respondents to the WORS describing similar patterns in 2014.

2.7 A wide range of activities are reported to have been enjoyed by visitors to the outdoors though the most popular, as identified in the WORS, are low input in nature. These include walking, sightseeing, taking children to playgrounds, picnicking, playing informal games, and watching wildlife (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – The most popular activities and their changing rate of participation over the life of the WORS



(Not all of these changes are significant)

Note: numbers are a percentage of the total adult population in Wales eg: in 2014, 28% of adults went running at least once in the last 12 months

Source: Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey

- 2.8 Walking has consistently remained the most popular outdoor activity. In 2016 this was reportedly undertaken by around 72% of adults in Wales at least once during the previous 12 months. As above, earlier reported figures describe higher rates in the mid 80% range. Data gathered within the Active Adult Survey in 2014, assessing participation in sport, similarly identified walking as the top activity with a projected adult participation rate of 47%. The Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Survey 2016-17 also demonstrated high rates of walking activity (Figure 21, page 44).
- 2.9 Motivations amongst people undertaking outdoor activities have most commonly been reported as 'health and exercise' though practical stimuli and specific hobby participation has also been routinely cited. Frequent participation is most likely to have been influenced by dog ownership where frequent participants were almost twice as likely to own or care for a dog (59%), compared to infrequent visitors (32%).

- 2.10 Given the demographics and geography of the National Park it is notable that respondents to the NSfW in the 65-74 age group were reported to have made more visits to the outdoors over 4 weeks than any other age group. Similarly, significantly more visits to the outdoors were made by people living in rural areas than urban dwellers. Survey data from the WORS suggests that the lowest levels of participation can be observed amongst older people (especially those over 75) who also have a disability.
- 2.11 The character of outdoor activities being undertaken is one of predominantly short, local trips. 50% of visits made last an hour or less and 77% two hours or less. Whilst evidence suggests that local opportunities are widely used and an important resource, people's aspirations are however towards areas of higher landscape value including the coast, hills and mountains. 60% of people reported a desire in 2014 to visit the outdoors more frequently with high levels of demand for walking and a more limited number desiring more sightseeing opportunities. A strong desire for active pursuits such as mountain biking and road cycling was also reported in terms of future preferences.
- 2.12 General trends emerging over the life of the WORS include a decrease in visits close to home; an increase in people who walk to their destination; a decrease in people using their cars; and a decline in short duration visits of less than 1 hour. Despite this, outdoor recreation that is short duration and close to home has remained the most popular albeit subject to a declining trend.
- 2.13 Reported barriers to participation have been said to fall into two broad categories. Absolute barriers are more commonly encountered by those who never participate in outdoor recreation and include factors such as old age, disability or poor health. Opportunity barriers are cited more frequently by rare participants and are more circumstantial. These include lack of time and bad weather.
- 2.14 Significantly it has been observed in survey results that barriers that have often been assumed to be central in preventing participation, such as lack of information or places to go, cost or transport issues, were rarely mentioned by respondents.
- 2.15 The National Park currently provides a high degree of opportunity in terms of access provision (Table 1, Figure 3).
- 2.16 Additionally, almost 50% of land within the National Park is legally accessible to the public as access land. This is either as common land, open country or forest estate, the latter managed by Natural Resources Wales.
- 2.17 A high proportion of the network is included on promoted routes. 135 discrete promoted routes exist, including Offa's Dyke Path National Trail and the Beacons Way long distance route which crosses the National Park from east to west. As a

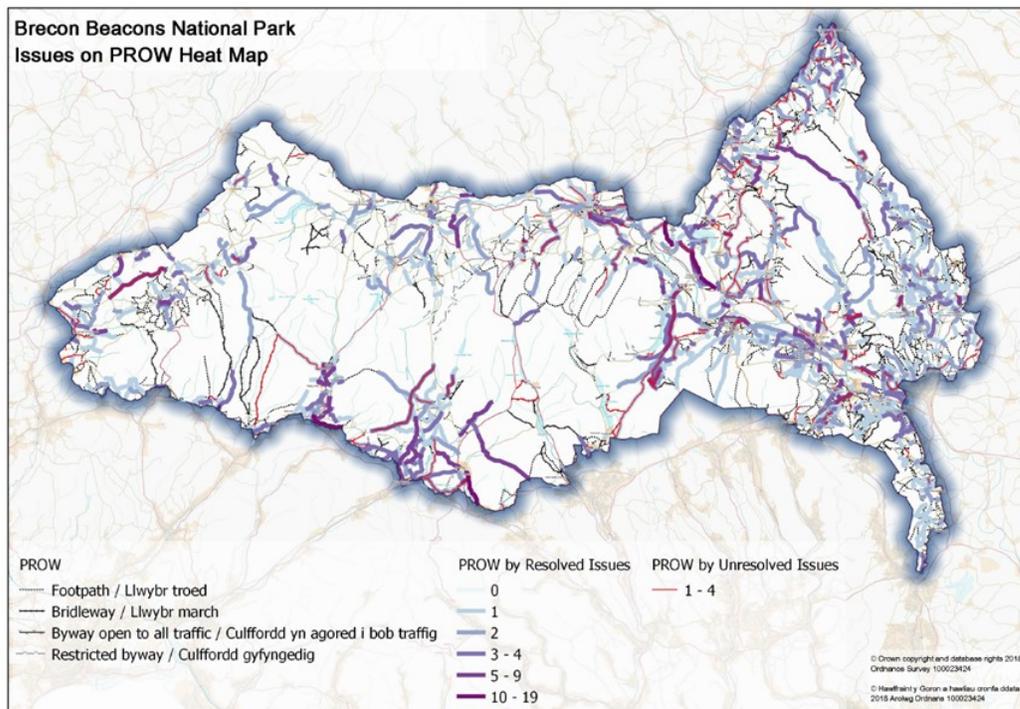
result approximately 46% of the public rights of way network (876km) falls upon a promoted route. The total length of promoted routes, at 1944km, exceeds that of the rights of way network, which reflects repeated promotions and overlapping promoted routes.

2.18 Promoted routes need to be revised and rationalised. Information for most is accessible via the web though not always in a clear downloadable format. A more detailed audit of promoted route information is likely to be necessary in order to ensure that routes are available and accessible in an appropriate format. Promotion is considered further in Part 3.

2.19 Data is not available for levels or concentrations of use and so it is necessary to consider other available indicators. The distribution of promoted routes within the National Park is particularly dense in the north near Brecon and Talgarth (Appendix 7). Members of the public might expect that promoted routes are maintained to a higher standard.

2.20 The frequency of management issues by rights of way can be illustrated as a heat map (Figure 5) where deeper blues and purples indicate a higher number of resolved issues.

Figure 5 – Issues on rights of way

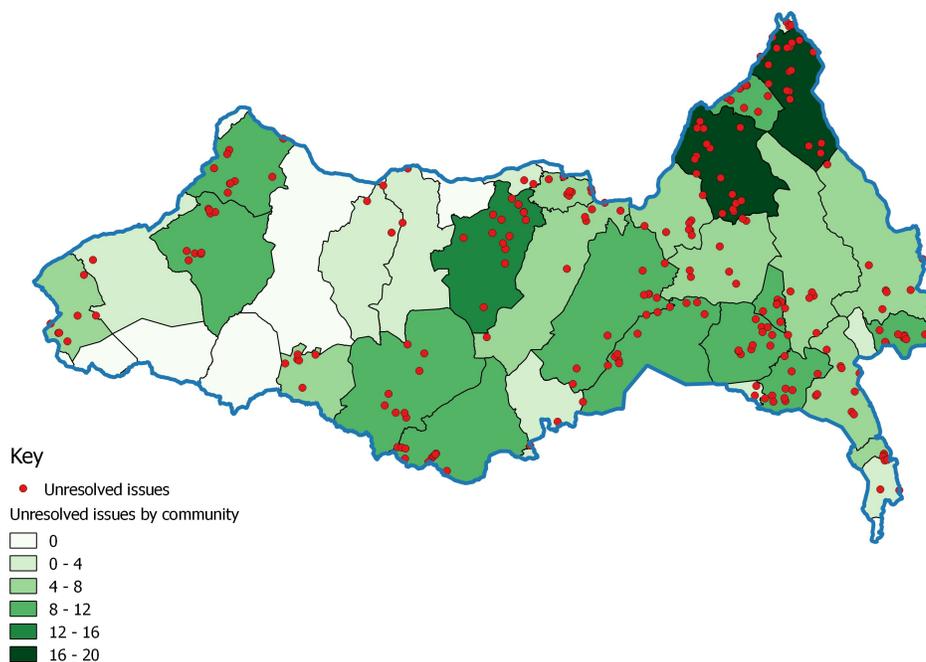


2.21 Of the total 2442 issues recorded (as at the 31 March 2018), 28 (1.14% of issues) have not been captured against a specific right of way (1 unresolved and 27

resolved). This generally results from issues being logged on promoted routes that do not coincide with a right of way.

2.22 Whilst the dataset is limited by reported and recorded data, requiring some caution in inferring degrees of use from it, Figure 5 provides a useful indication of maintenance activity on the network which is likely itself to be responsive to public demand. In particular, whilst the concentration of promoted routes exists in the north of the National Park, a lot of maintenance activity has taken place in the south east, south and west.

Figure 6 – Unresolved issues by community



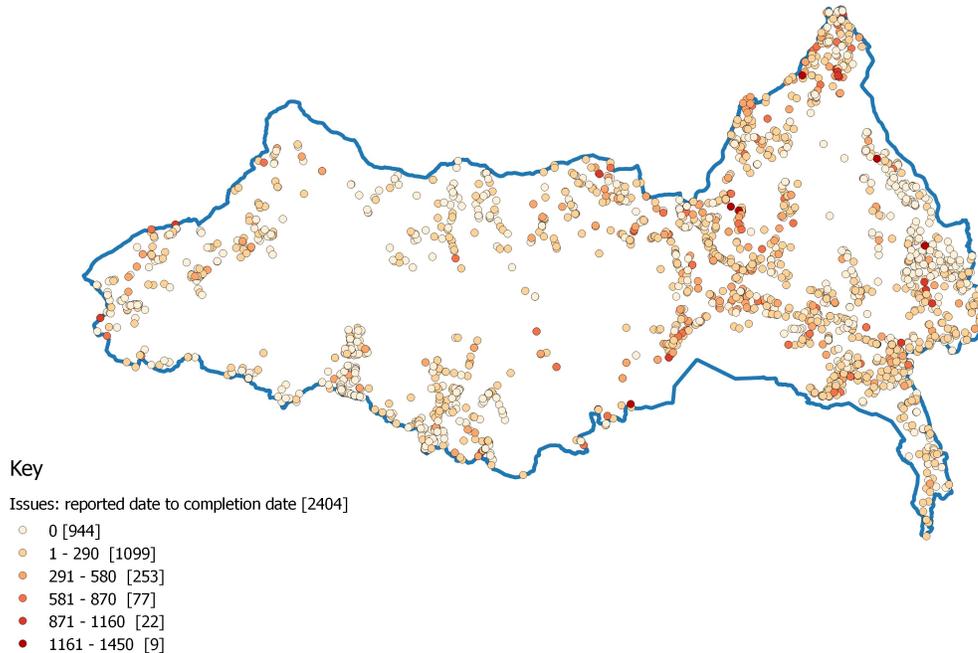
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2.23 Of the 172 issues that are still unresolved, considering them by community shows the highest concentrations around Hay on Wye, Talgarth, Brecon and Crickhowell (Figure 6). Further consideration of unresolved issues shows that 59 of the 172 unresolved issues fall on promoted routes, exceeding the ratio of promoted routes to rights of way, in general. 28 of 172 are not recorded on public rights of way and are outliers, likely subject to the factors discussed above.

2.24 Response rates to reported issues, whilst subject to the quality of data capture, have also been considered (Figure 7). In 944 instances, the log date and completion date are identical. This generally occurs when an issue has been identified and resolved by

a member of staff and then placed on the database. Nevertheless, general patterns indicate longer response times in the north east and east of the National Park.

Figure 7 – Issue resolution time (number of days)



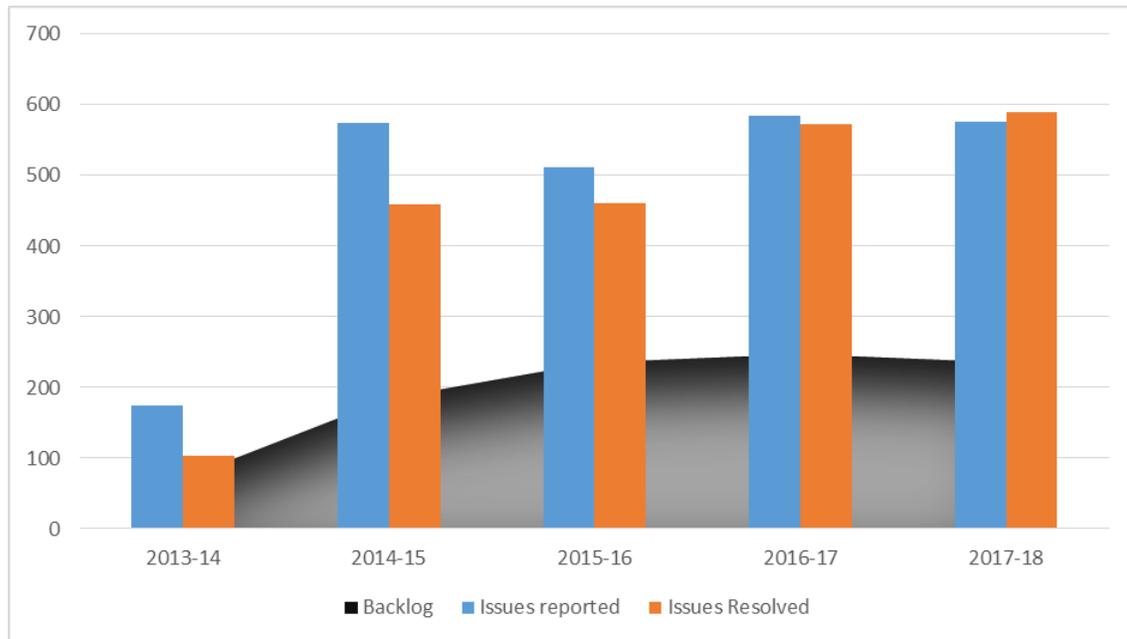
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2.25 The results of annual surveys of the public rights of way paint a positive picture of accessibility within the National Park. The present reported state of the network is approaching 90% open which continues an increasing trend that is observable over the course of the survey period. Ease of use indicators have not, however, followed the same upward trend and remain relatively static (Figure 27, page 62).

2.26 Despite this, a significant amount of work is carried out on maintaining and improving the rights of way network. Recent maintenance data, whilst only commencing part of the way through 2013-14, suggests that an average of 520 issues are resolved per annum⁷; though the number of issues being resolved falls short of those being received (Figure 8). It should be noted that in some cases an issue may consist of several individual reports so the true figure of single issues may be higher than that shown in the chart. The type of issue can also vary widely, from a missing waymarker to the replacement of a bridge.

⁷ since April 2014

Figure 8 – Issue backlog, illustrating a steady increase since 2014



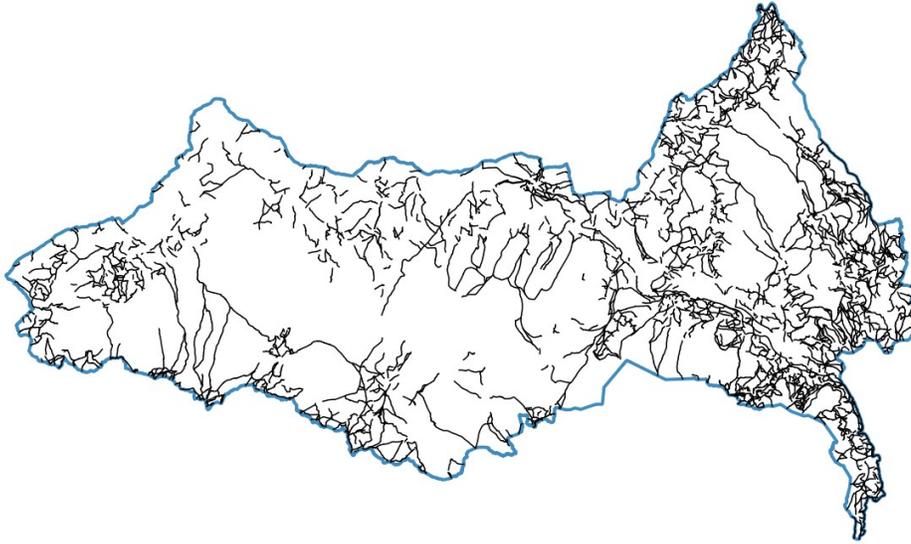
Source: Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Rights of Way Database

2.27 The opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and the enjoyment of the National Park

2.28 Adequacy of the rights of way network

2.29 Access to the countryside within the National Park is largely achieved through the use of the public rights of way network. On the basis of legal rights, walkers are entitled to use the whole rights of way network (1891km) (Figure 9). Other users may be dependent on these same rights e.g. climbers, cavers and paddlers in order to access specific locations (although there is no formal record of these locations or which rights of way are used to access them). In general, the upland areas of the National Park include very few rights of way. As a result, rights of way are concentrated in the lowland areas of the National Park.

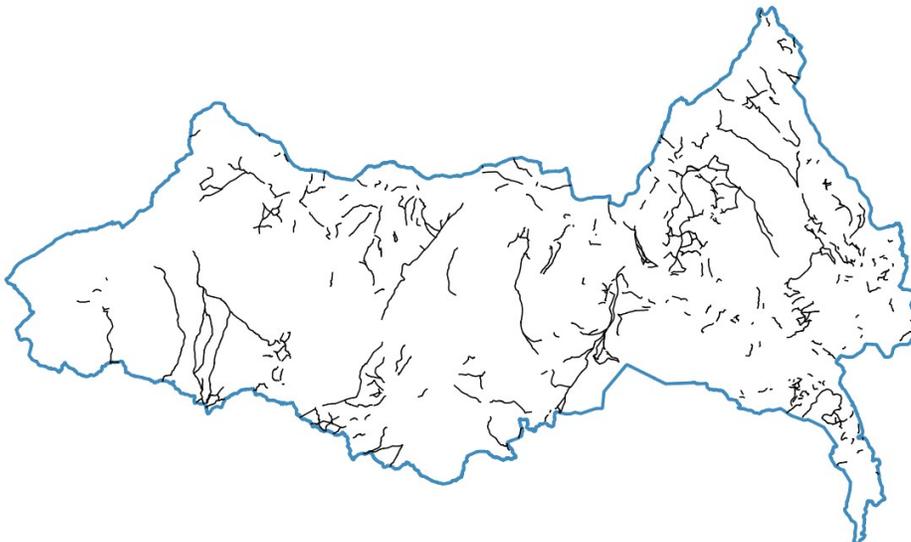
Figure 9 – The entire rights of way network



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2.30 Horse riders and cyclists are entitled to use bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic (553km or 29.25% of the whole network) (Figure 10).

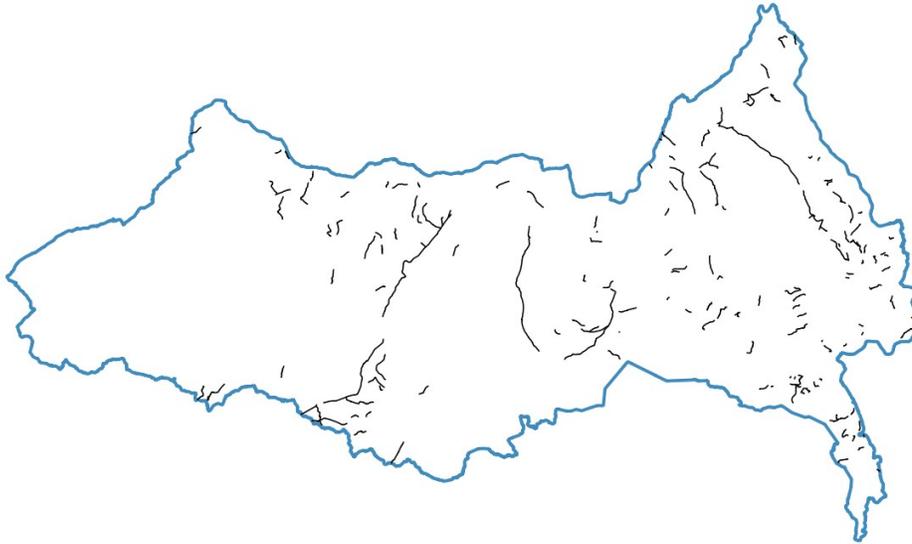
Figure 10 – The horse riding and cycling network



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2.31 Carriage drivers are entitled to use restricted byways and byways open to all traffic (199km or 10.51% of the whole network) (Figure 11).

Figure 11 – The carriage driving network



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2.32 Users of mechanically propelled vehicles are entitled to use BOATs (1km or 0.07% of the whole network) (Figure 12).

Figure 12 – The mechanically propelled vehicle users' network



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2.33 Figures 9 to 12 show that the length of rights of way available to horse riders, cyclists, carriage drivers and users of mechanically propelled vehicles compares

unfavourably with the length available to walkers. This is especially the case with carriage drivers (10.51% of the network) and users of mechanically propelled vehicles (0.07%). However, in the case of extending the network of BOATs, there is no scope to improve the situation under current legislation (see 2.132).

2.34 There are several other notable issues:

1. the rights of way network is denser in the north east and the south east of the National Park and around the Black Mountains generally (Figure 9);
2. whilst there are long lengths of bridleway and restricted byway available these are generally orientated in a north/south direction. Other routes are short and fragmented. There are no restricted byways in the west of the National Park;
3. the byway open to all traffic network is virtually non-existent.

2.35 The distribution of rights of way

2.36 The distribution of the total rights of way network and the four types of right of way can be illustrated, by length in each community in the National Park (Figures 13 to 17).

Figure 13 - Distribution of the entire rights of way network by community

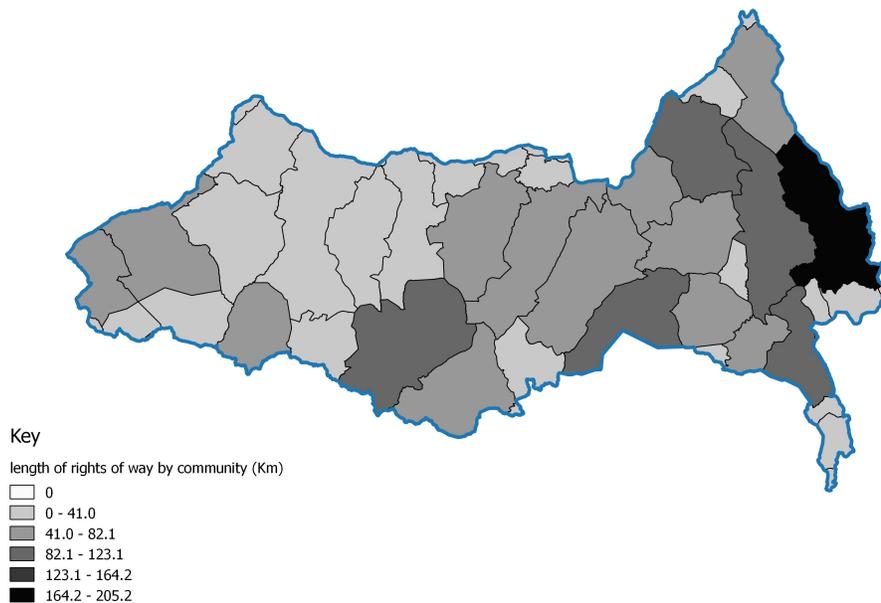
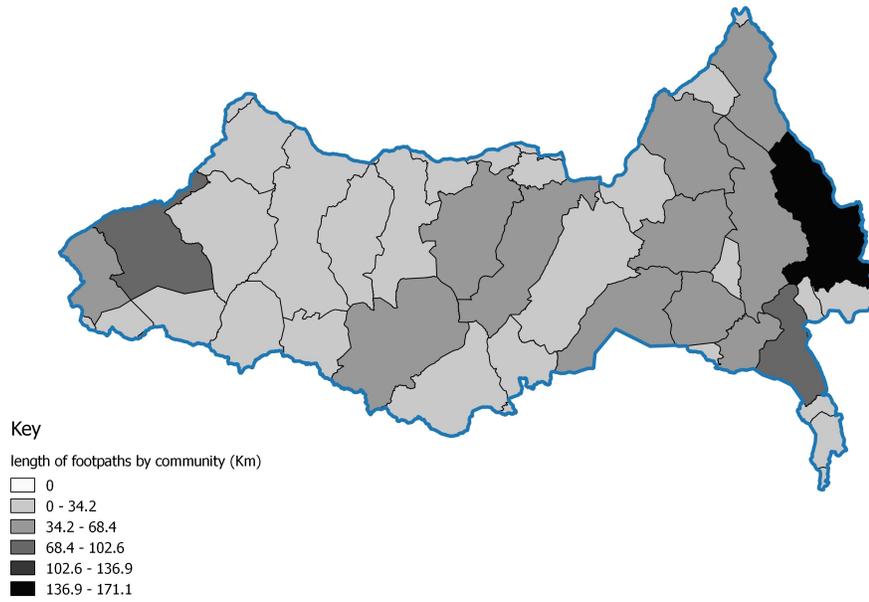
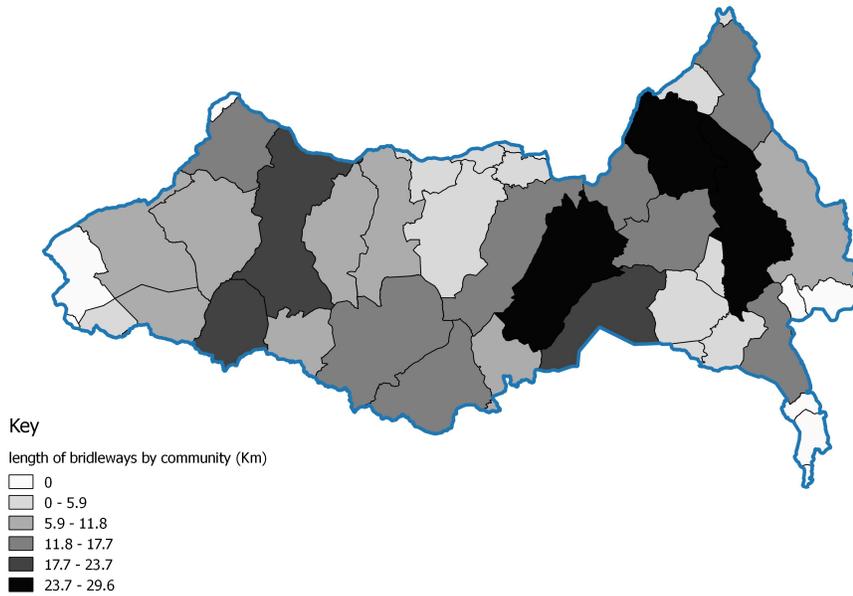


Figure 14 - Distribution of public footpaths by community



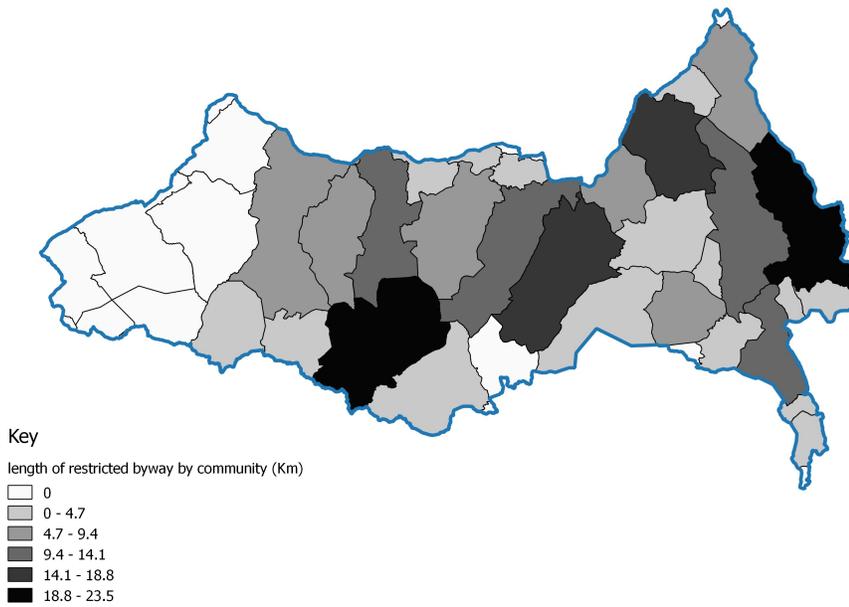
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Figure 15 - Distribution of bridleways by community



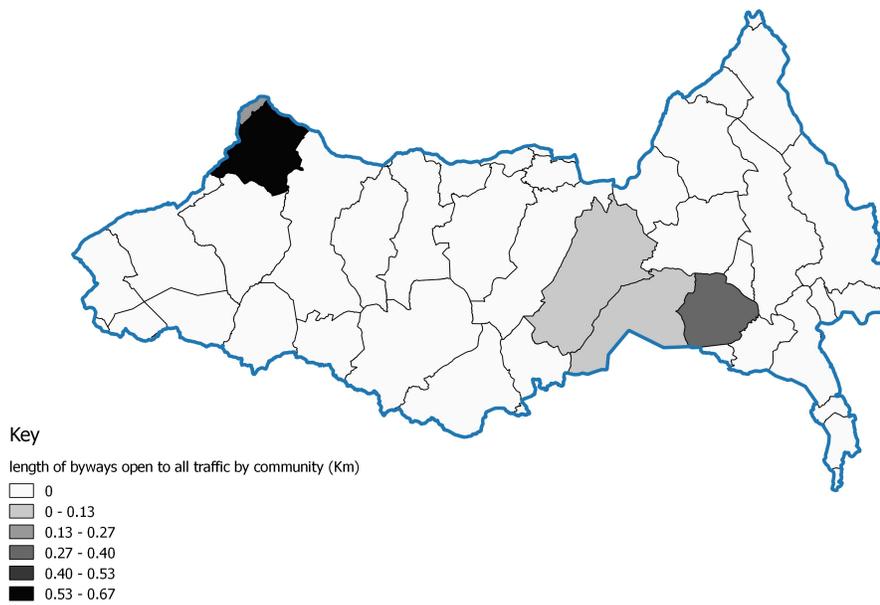
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Figure 16 - Distribution of restricted byways by community



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Figure 17 - Distribution of byways open to all traffic by community



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2.37 It can be seen that:

1. both the rights of way network as a whole and the public footpath network is denser in the east of the National Park;
2. the network of bridleways and restricted byways is more evenly distributed but there are no restricted byways in the west of the National Park;
3. the byway open to all traffic network, whilst very small, is also confined to five communities;
4. some communities have particularly large networks of rights of way when compared with others

2.38 A concentration of rights of way does not automatically imply a better network or more useful access opportunities; different densities generate different problems which need to be taken into account when developing any proposals for improvement.

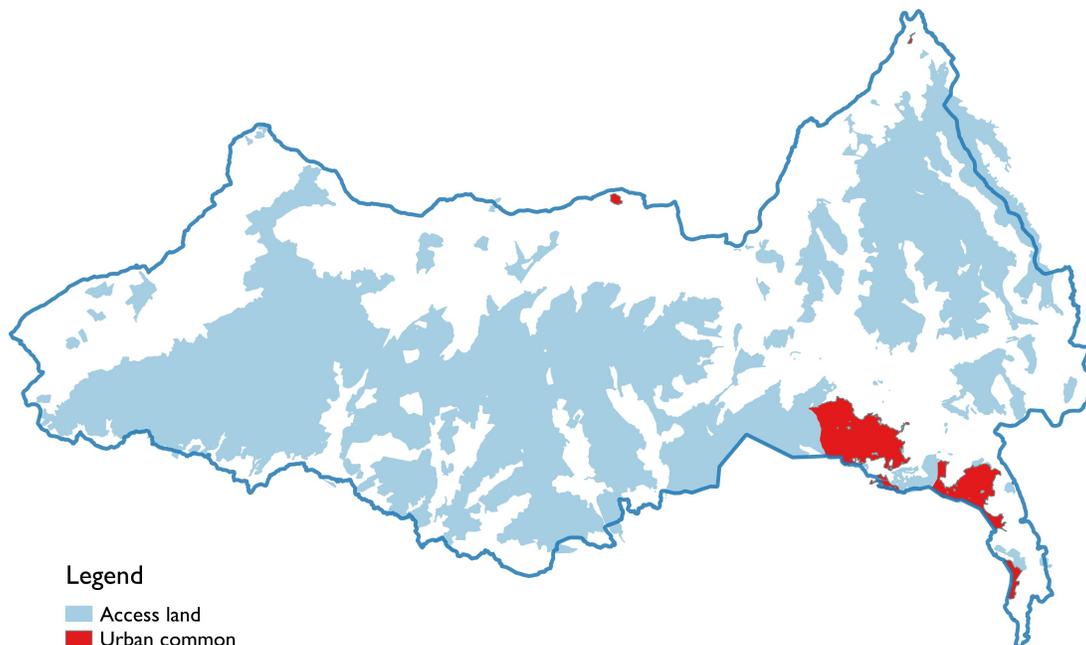
2.39 Access land

2.40 The National Park, having large areas of upland, includes large areas of land designated as “access land” under Section 1(1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Figure 18). It includes open country (mountain, moor, heath or down), common land, land above 600 metres and land dedicated for the purposes of the Act, the majority of which is Welsh Government forest estate. Access land provides a right of access on foot for the purposes of open-air recreation. More information about access land is available here:

<https://naturalresources.wales/days-out/recreation-and-access-policy-advice-and-guidance/managing-access/open-access-land/?lang=en>

2.41 In total, there are 53305ha of access land in the National Park. In addition, there are 4016ha of urban common or commons with a deed of dedication. These also have public access on foot.

Figure 18 - Access Land in the National Park also showing urban commons



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2.42 Areas of urban common within the National Park are largely confined to the south east. These are commons that were located within former urban districts the largest of which comprise Mynydd Llangatwg and the Blorengge. Several smaller urban commons straddle the National Park boundary to the east of Blaenavon, Cwmavon and Abersychan most notably Mynydd y Garn-fawr, Mynydd Garnclochdy and Mynydd Garn-wen.

2.43 Urban commons are an important resource for horse riders given that section 193 of the Law of Property Act 1925 provides that a right of access for air and exercise exists on these commons. In *Queen v Secretary of State for the Environment ex parte Robert D. Billson (1998)* it was decided that this right extended to horse riding on the basis that riding would have been a normal way of taking air and exercise in 1925.

2.44 Unsurfaced roads

2.45 The National Park Authority has endeavoured to quantify the number and length of unsurfaced⁸ public roads⁹ within the National Park (Table 3 and Figure 19) using Ordnance Survey mapping, aerial photography and data available from unitary

⁸ That is, does not have a sealed surfaced

⁹ Routes that have a dual status i.e. that appear on the List of Streets and the Definitive Map are not included

authorities. Most of these are unclassified roads and are shown on each unitary authority's 'List of Streets'. No unsurfaced roads have been identified in Blaenau Gwent or Merthyr Tydfil.

- 2.46 It is a requirement of section 36(6) of the Highways Act 1980 for every unitary authority to prepare and keep up to date a List of Streets within their area which are 'highways maintainable at the public expense'.
- 2.47 Although they are highways maintainable at the public expense, public rights of way are not generally shown on the List of Streets because they are shown on the Definitive Map.
- 2.48 The inclusion of a highway on the List of Streets is evidence that it is maintainable at the public expense. It is not evidence as to the status of the route. However, these highways are potentially open to a variety of users although each unitary authority's policy towards use and maintenance may vary.
- 2.49 There are 95 separate lengths of unsurfaced road within the National Park amounting to a length of 85.08km. These are widely distributed across the National Park and seldom provide any kind of network. Most are relatively short (less than 1km long) with the longest continuous section being 3.75km in length.

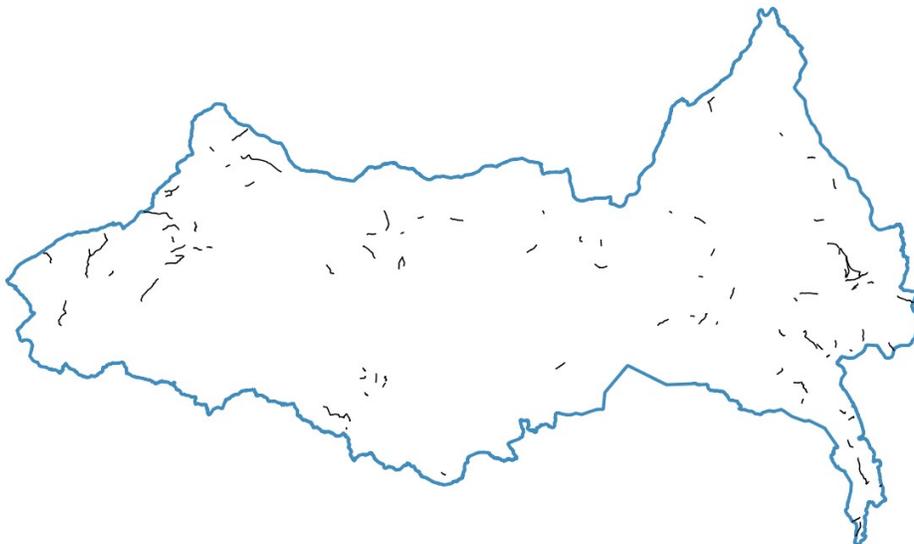
Table 3 – Distribution of unsurfaced roads by county

	<i>Carmarthen</i>	<i>Monmouth</i>	<i>Powys</i>	<i>RCT</i>	<i>Torfaen</i>
Number	21	32	40	1	1
Length (km)	27.82	26.01	29.75	0.35	1.15

- 2.50 Three main types of unsurfaced road have been recorded:
 - i. cul-de-sacs;
 - ii. links between surfaced roads;
 - iii. links from surfaced roads to rights of way
- 2.51 From a recreational point of view, the cul-de-sac unsurfaced roads identified do not contribute to the wider public access provision. They are short and generally terminate on private property where there is no continuation of public rights of any kind.
- 2.52 Unsurfaced roads that provide links between surfaced roads can be a valuable addition to the wider public access provision. They provide opportunities for those activities that are not well catered for by the rights of way network and may provide links to rights of way along their lengths. They may be especially useful for horse riders and cyclists.

- 2.53 The Carmarthenshire section of the National Park in particular, being largely devoid of bridleways in enclosed land and completely devoid of restricted byways, has several relatively long sections of unsurfaced roads. Although interspersed with surfaced roads, potential linkages are possible that could provide circular networks.
- 2.54 Unsurfaced roads are very important in the National Park where they provide links from surfaced roads to rights of way and are often crucial to maintaining connectivity in the rights of way network.
- 2.55 The National Park Authority has no responsibility for the repair and maintenance of routes shown on the List of Streets even though those routes may have more importance for recreational use as opposed to being part of the normal highway network. Responsibility resides with the unitary authorities and any issues that are reported to the National Park Authority by the public are reported to the relevant unitary authority.
- 2.56 In some areas, the National Park Authority has promoted sections of unsurfaced roads as part of wider linear or circular routes. The Beacons Way, for example, relies on several sections of unsurfaced road in Carmarthenshire to connect the Black Mountain with Bethlehem.
- 2.57 Unsurfaced roads are not always a maintenance priority for the unitary authorities and approaches differ between authorities. This will sometimes have implications for promoted routes in terms of relatively simple tasks like vegetation clearance.

Figure 19 – Unsurfaced roads in the Brecon Beacons National Park



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2.58 Cycle routes

- 2.59 Several sections of the National Cycle Network pass through the National Park and some of these provide important cycling opportunities away from the public road network (Figure 20). Most notable are route 46 between Brynmawr and Llanfoist which utilises a disused railway (part of which is known as “The Govilon Line”) and the majority of its length is off public roads; route 8 between Merthyr Tydfil and Brecon, which also utilises a disused railway and a canal towpath for part of its length (and also follows part of the Taff Trail); route 478 which utilises a disused railway (“The Arcway”) to link Hirwaun and Penderyn; route 492 which links Brynmawr and Llanelly Hill; and, route 49 which links Govilon to Pontypool via the canal towpath.
- 2.60 There are other sections of the National Cycle Network within the National Park most notable being the section of route 42 from Talgarth to Hay-on-Wye and to Abergavenny. However, this is situated entirely on the public road network or on dedicated paths next to the main carriageway.
- 2.61 The Monmouthshire and Brecon canal is also open to cyclist along its whole length¹⁰.
- 2.62 The National Park Authority also promotes a cycle touring route which is partly on-road and partly on the canal towpath.

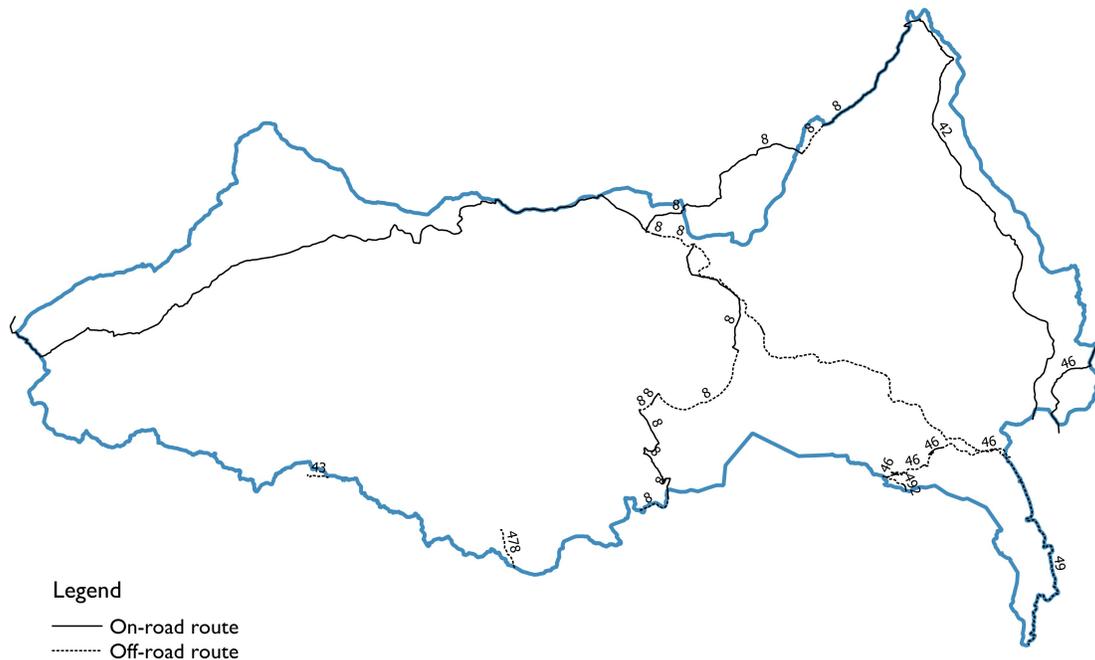
Details are available here:

<http://www.breconbeacons.org/cycleacrossthebeacons>

This has the added benefit of providing a link between National Cycle Network routes 8, 46 and 49.

¹⁰ Whilst the majority of the canal is a public footpath cycling is allowed by virtue of the Canal and River Trust’s policy of welcoming considerate cyclists on its towpaths

Figure 20 - Main cycling routes in the Brecon Beacons National Park (including the National Cycle Network)



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2.63 Permissive access

2.64 The amount of permissive access in the National Park is relatively low with the main provision being on land in the ownership of the National Park Authority i.e. Govilon Line and Arcway and land in the ownership of the Canal and River Trust. The amount of permissive access available through the Glastir agri-environment scheme is minimal compared to the previous Tir Gofal scheme where 61 permissive footpaths (42.72km), 4 permissive bridleways (2.24km) and 29 areas of permissive access (163.80 ha) were available.

2.65 The Local Access Forum reviewed permissive access provision in 2013/14 at the request of the Welsh Government and examined each of the routes and areas noted above.

2.66 The Forum advised the Welsh Government that it considered that 55 of the permissive footpaths, the 4 permissive bridleways and 19 areas of permissive access were an asset to the public and would gain the Forum's support were they to be proposed again as part of the Glastir scheme. However, only a few of these routes are now included in a Glastir contract. Less than 3km of permissive footpaths are

now available through Glastir, whilst all permissive access available previously through Tir Gofal has since lapsed.

2.67 It is understood that large sections of the Welsh Government woodland estate are subject to a concordat between Natural Resources Wales as the managing agency, and the British Horse Society, which provides permissive access for horseriders. At the time of writing this draft no information was forthcoming as the extent of this provision. This provision is potentially very useful to members of the public given that opportunities for horseriders within the National Park are limited and connectivity and status change issues are high (see Part 3).

2.68 Other access opportunities

2.69 There are some additional access opportunities remaining but these tend to be very small in comparison to what has already been discussed.

2.70 For example, the Woodland Trust has nine sites within the National Park with a total area of approximately 180ha albeit that the largest of these is 56ha. Whilst all of the Trust's woods are open and free to enjoy some are not physically accessible by the public. Both the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales and the Gwent Wildlife Trust have reserves within the National Park all of which have access on foot. The largest of these is 30ha.

2.71 Comments

2.72 There are very clear disparities between the distribution, density and connectivity of the rights of way network and other access provision between areas within the National Park, and provision for different users. Arguably, the National Park is particularly well furnished with access opportunities but these are mostly available to walkers or other activities that occur on foot.

2.73 We know that these opportunities are currently utilised by a substantial number of visitors to the National Park (Table 4, Figure 21, Figure 22) and by residents (Figure 23, Figure 25).

Figure 21 – Main reasons for choosing the Brecon Beacons National Park (Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Survey 2016-17).

Main reasons for choosing the BBNP	%
Beautiful scenery / countryside	59%
Walking in the uplands	33%
Been before / enjoyed a previous visit	28%
Peace and quiet/relaxation	25%
Walking in the lowlands	23%
To get healthy / take some exercise	21%
Sight seeing	19%
Like the area / general positive statement	19%
To undertake a challenge	17%
Visiting heritage sites	10%
Visiting attractions	9%
Wildlife/bird watching	8%
Walking along the canal	8%
Meeting up with friends/family	7%
Visiting friends/family	7%
Good variety of things to do for adults	6%
Never been / always wanted to visit	5%

Base: 1706

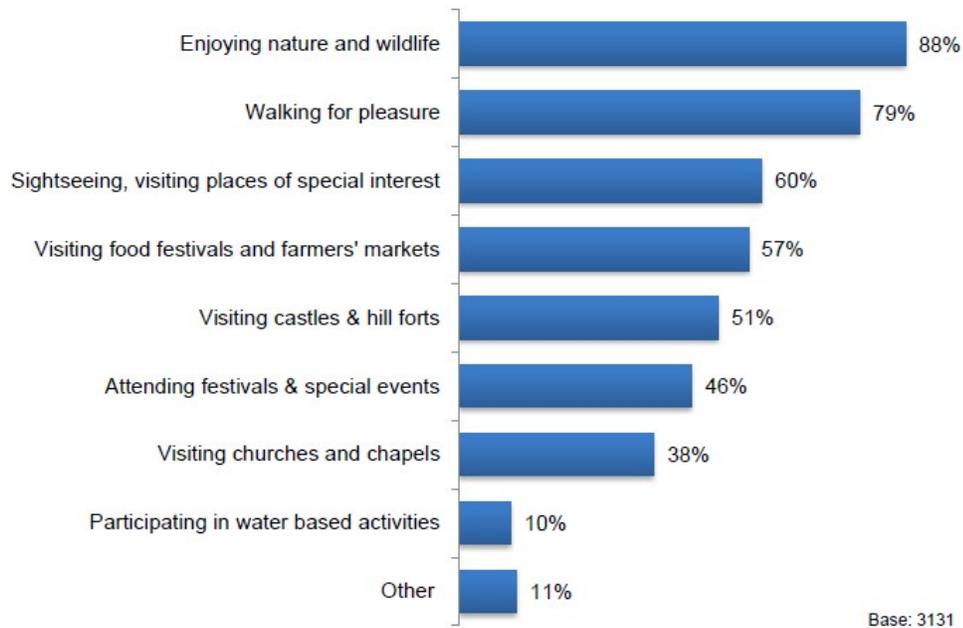
Source: Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Survey 2016-17

Figure 22 – Activities undertaken by visitors to the Brecon Beacons National Park (Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Survey 2016-17).

Activities Undertaken	%
General sightseeing/ relaxing	45%
Walking – high level	33%
Walking – low level up to 2 hours	31%
Walking – low level over 2 hours	27%
Eating out e.g. bar, restaurant, café/ pub	26%
Visiting a town or village	24%
Photography	18%
Visiting attractions	13%
Visiting a historic or heritage site	12%
Watching wildlife/ birds	11%
Shopping (other than groceries)	8%
Cycling biking	6%
Visiting friends or relatives	6%
Go to a local event	6%
Dark skies/ stargazing	5%
Strenuous exercise	3%
Canoeing/ kayaking	3%
Travel on a canal boat	3%
Mountain biking	3%
Artistic activities	1%
Other	5%

Source: Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Survey 2016-17

Figure 23 – Activities enjoyed in the Brecon Beacons National Park by residents (Brecon Beacons National Park Residents Survey 2013)

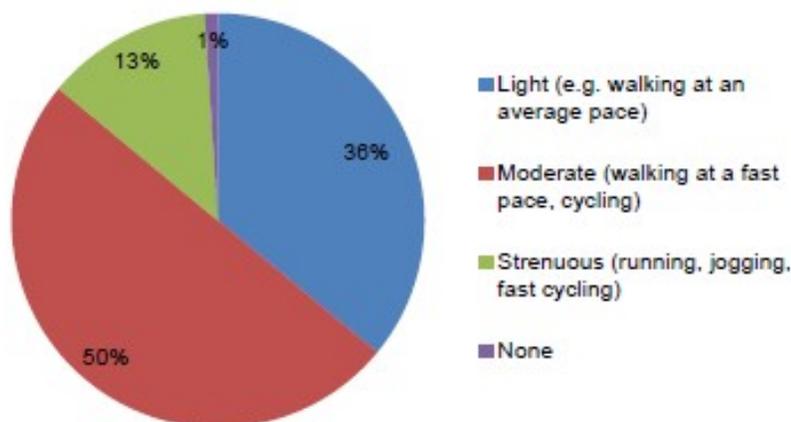


Source: Brecon Beacons Residents' Survey 2013

2.74 A substantial proportion of these activities would be dependent on the use of the rights of way network and other access resources within the National Park.

2.75 When visitors were asked what level of exercise they took whilst visiting the National Park the following were identified:

Figure 24 – Level of exercise undertaken by visitors to the Brecon Beacons National Park (Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Survey 2016-17)

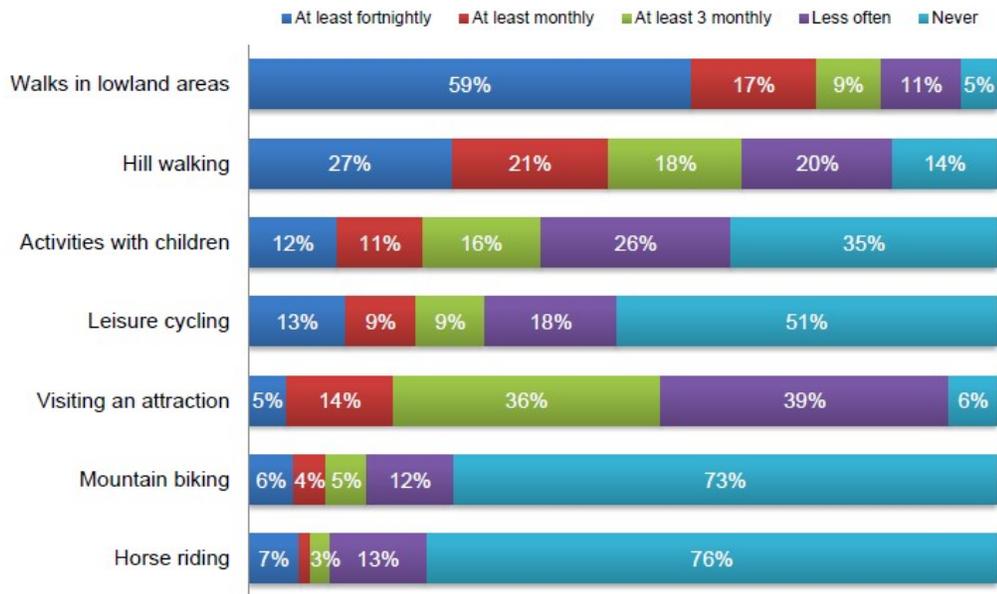


Base: 447 (online respondents only)

Source: Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Survey 2016-17

2.76 When residents were asked which activities they undertook and how often they did them the following were identified:

Figure 25 – Activities undertaken in the Brecon Beacons National Park by residents (Brecon Beacons National Park Residents Survey 2013)



Base: 2051-2859

Source: Brecon Beacons Resident’s Survey 2013

2.77 The rights of way network and other access resources within the National Park provide ample opportunity for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and enjoyment but some forms of recreation are better served than others. The accessibility of the rights of way network is discussed at 2.79.

2.78 According to the results of the National Park Authority’s ROWIP Questionnaire, the following groups are not well served by the rights of way network¹¹:

- Persons with restricted mobility
- Blind or partially sighted people
- Carriage drivers
- Motorcyclists
- 4x4 drivers

¹¹ Based on the number of poor and very poor responses being higher than the total of average, good and excellent responses

2.79 The accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted people and others with mobility problems

2.80 Sight loss

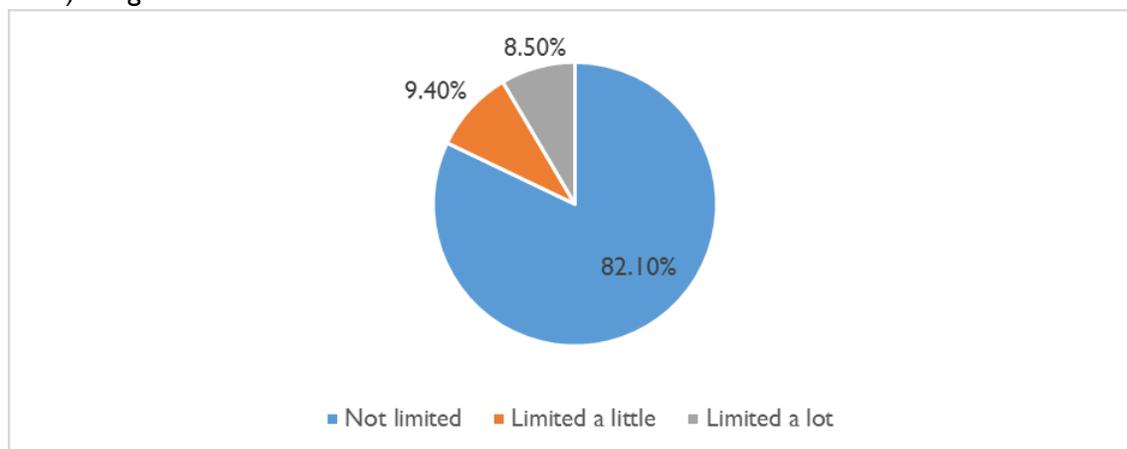
2.81 An estimated 2 million or more people in the United Kingdom live with sight loss¹². Of these, around 360,000 people are registered with their local authority as blind or partially sighted. It is predicted that by 2020 the number of people with sight loss will rise to over 2,250,000 and by 2050 the number will rise to nearly 4,000,000. This is because the population is getting older, incidents of sight loss increase, with underlying causes including diabetes and obesity.

2.82 Mobility

2.83 The activity of a substantial percentage of the population of England and Wales (based on 2011 data) is limited by health problems or disability¹³ (Figure 26a). The percentage is higher if Wales is considered alone (Figure 26b).

Figure 26 – Activity limiting health problem or disability – a) England and Wales; b) Wales only

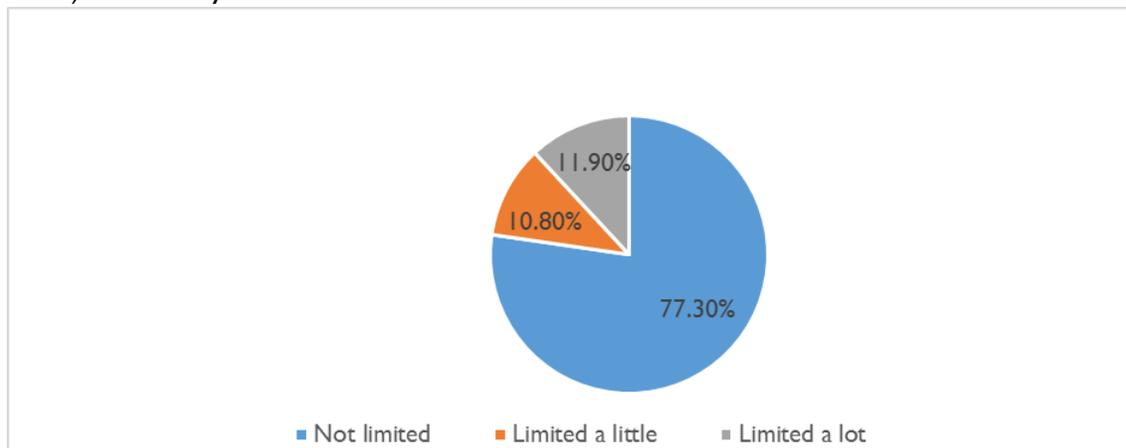
a) England and Wales



¹² <https://help.rnib.org.uk/help/newly-diagnosed-registration/registering-sight-loss/statistics>

¹³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilityinenglandandwales/2013-01-30#activity-limitations-across-english-regions-and-wales>

b) Wales only



2.84 In England and Wales, approximately 10 million people are limited in daily activities because of a health problem or disability. In Wales, activity limitations are notably higher with 12% reporting they were limited a lot and almost 11% were limited a little. However, Wales has proportionately more people aged 55 and above than England and activity limitations are more common among those above retirement age. Some unitary authorities that fall within the National Park include the highest percentages of people with limited activity: Blaenau Gwent (27.2%), Merthyr Tydfil (26.9%), Rhondda Cynon Taf (25.8%) and Carmarthenshire (25.4%). Both Powys and Monmouthshire however, reported activity limitations of 21.4% and 20.1% respectively.

2.85 Accessibility of local rights of way to blind or partially sighted people and others with mobility problems within the National Park

2.86 There are various strands to this issue as people’s abilities vary greatly. The needs of someone with very slight mobility problems differ from someone who is confined to a wheelchair or blind.

2.87 Also, “people expect better paths near towns and facilities than they do in open country or wild land where they expect to experience a greater challenge, to meet fewer people, to be more independent and to see a more natural environment”¹⁴. In terms of accessibility, this is consistent with the concept of “Management Zones” as described in the Natural Resources Wales document, “By all reasonable means”, where:

Zone A is an urban, formal and managed landscape which provides access for **most** people

Zone B is a rural landscape or farmland with public rights of way which provides access for **many** people

¹⁴ <http://www.fieldfare.org.uk/countryside-for-all/physical-access-standards/>

Zone C is wild and open country without major barriers which provides access for **some** people

The document suggests access standards for these different management zones.

- 2.88 Routes with a high level of accessibility and additional facilities nearby e.g. parking and toilets, are promoted by the National Park Authority. There are currently 27 easier access walks and details of 6 forest areas which contain easier access routes or have some nearby. These are currently promoted at:

http://www.breconbeacons.org/explore/easier_access/easier_access_walks

Some of these are also audio trails.

- 2.89 The National Park Authority has also published a booklet entitled “Places to visit with Easier Access” which lists 55 routes and sites where easier access exists. This booklet lists details with regard to surfaces, slopes and nearby facilities e.g. parking, toilets, and shops.

The information on both the website and booklet now needs updating.

- 2.90 A list of easier access attractions is also available here:

http://www.breconbeacons.org/explore/easier_access/easier_access_attractions

- 2.91 In terms of the wider rights of way network the most substantial physical barriers that are likely to be encountered are the terrain - in terms of the surface and gradient of the right of way, and furniture in terms of any stiles, gates or bridges that are located on rights of way.

- 2.92 Rights of Way furniture and accessibility

- 2.93 Across two thirds of the rights of way network¹⁵, there are 2541 unspecified gates, 609 two-step stiles, 1656 one-step stiles, 184 unspecified stiles, 187 kissing gates and 136 bridle gates. Potentially, that means that there are well over 2400 stiles on the network the majority of which will either have one or two steps.

- 2.94 Stiles can pose problems for older people, people with mobility problems, dog walkers (where there is no dog stile) and families with small children (where there may or may not be pushchairs or buggies in use and where the children cannot climb stiles without assistance). In some cases, a stile will be an absolute barrier.

¹⁵ The data set is incomplete

2.95 Meeting people's needs

2.96 These issues were also highlighted in the results of the National Park Authority's ROWIP questionnaire¹⁶. Very few respondents thought that the rights of way network met the needs of persons with mobility problems. Fewer though that it met the needs of blind or partially sighted people.

2.97 The National Park Authority, in the exercise of its functions, has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard for advancing equality and that this involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people;
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

2.98 The Fieldfare Trust advises that in “most countryside networks all the paths and trails cannot and should not be made fully accessible”¹⁷.

Also, that an accessible network is a network which:

- gives all disabled people choices in the experiences that they can enjoy in the wider countryside, the countryside immediately around settlements and urban green spaces;
- gives disabled people the same range and quality of choices as everyone else;
- includes fully accessible paths;
- includes paths where the least restrictive access has been achieved;
- has all development and maintenance work leading to increased accessibility.

It is not a network which:

- has to have all its paths fully accessible;
- just includes routes which were easy to make accessible to disabled people;
- has generally good accessibility but not necessarily at the most popular or special sites.

Natural Resources Wales advises in its document, “By all reasonable means” that “the aim is not to ensure that everyone has access to the same overall experience, but to an equal quality of experience”.

¹⁶ See 2.95 regarding the questionnaire

¹⁷ <http://www.fieldfare.org.uk/countryside-for-all/countryside-for-all-good-practice-guide/>

2.99 Assessment of needs of current and future users

2.100 In order to assess what the National Park Authority could do to improve the rights of way network and access land for users and future users an online questionnaire was devised which contained a total of 23 questions. As well as being available to the public a link to the questionnaire was sent by email or details sent by letter to over 300 individuals, groups and organisations. Details of the questionnaire and all the responses to it are contained in a separate document.

2.101 Walkers

2.102 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for walkers was good or excellent. However, there were many comments to say that signage should be improved, vegetation should be cleared and the network kept open.

2.103 Dog walkers

2.104 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for dog walkers was good or excellent. There was a strong call here for more dog-friendly stiles and more gates.

2.105 Persons with restricted mobility

2.106 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for persons with restricted mobility was poor or average. A majority of respondents called for more gates instead of stiles, better surfaces and better accessibility.

2.107 Blind or partially sighted people

2.108 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for blind or partially sighted people was poor or very poor. Suggested improvements included dedicated routes and braille information provision (including “braille trails”).

2.109 Families with young children

2.110 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for families with young children was good or average. Suggested improvements included more gates instead of stiles and better information.

2.111 Teenagers and young people

2.112 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for teenagers and young people was good or average. There was no strong preference for particular improvements but more information, use of technology and education were mentioned.

2.113 People from ethnic minorities

2.114 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for people from ethnic minorities was good or excellent. More promotion, encouragement and information were offered as improvements.

2.115 Runners

2.116 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for runners was good or excellent. More maintenance and signage were the most popular suggestions for improvement.

2.117 Cyclists

2.118 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for cyclists was good or average. Better signage and maintenance and more routes were the most popular suggestions for improvement.

2.119 Mountain bikers

2.120 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for mountain bikers was good or average. Suggestions for improvements included more signage, better gates, more trails and more access to footpaths.

2.121 Horse riders

2.122 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for horse riders was average or good. Suggestions for improvements included better gates, more access, better signage and link up routes.

2.123 Carriage drivers

2.124 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for carriage drivers was very poor or poor. Few suggestions for improvement were put forward but one of the suggestions for improvements was “anything would be an improvement on now”.

2.125 Motorcyclists

2.126 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for motorcyclists was very poor or poor. A range of suggestions were made for improvement including opening up more routes, having clearer signage and waymarking, reinstating routes that were in use before the NERC Act.

2.127 4x4 Drivers

2.128 The majority of the respondents thought that the suitability of the rights of way network for 4x4 drivers was very poor or poor. A range of suggestions were made for improvement including having dedicated areas of provision, more routes (including opening closed byways), better signage and agreement on sustainable routes.

2.129 Conclusions from assessments

2.130 The main priority identified by respondents to the questionnaire as far as the future of the rights of way and access land was concerned was “opening up and maintaining the rights of way network”. This was followed, at a distant second, by “providing more signs to help people navigate the rights of way network”.

2.131 There is a correlation with the most common problems encountered whilst using the rights of way network: overgrown vegetation, poor signage and waymarking and the poor condition of stiles and gates.

2.132 However, the majority of respondents stated that the quality and standard of surfaces on the rights of way network were good; that the quality and standard of furniture, stiles and gates was good; that signage was average; and, the quality of practical improvements was good.

2.133 People were discouraged from using the rights of way network because of obstructions and the condition or surface of rights of way. Some were discouraged because they did not know where routes were located or where they went.

2.134 The biggest deterrent to using access land was not enough signage and not knowing where access land was located.

2.135 The majority would find that information showing all the routes on the definitive map on a website would be useful as well as having routes that could be downloaded for use on a phone or tablet.

2.136 A note on mechanically propelled vehicles (motor vehicles)

- 2.137 It is very clear from the information reviewed so far that provision for mechanically propelled vehicles on the rights of way network is poor. Some respondents have reacted to this by calling for more routes and for “closed” routes to be reopened and for routes available before the enactment of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to be reopened.
- 2.138 Some of the comments made may be based on a misunderstanding of the provisions contained within the Act. The Act is designed to curtail the number of routes available to mechanically propelled vehicles on an England and Wales level. Routes that are affected within the National Park are affected because of the Act, not because of any direct action by the National Park Authority.
- 2.139 The Act specifically extinguishes any rights that may exist for mechanically propelled vehicles over routes that are not shown on the definitive map and statement and over footpaths, bridleways and restricted byways that are shown on the definitive map and statement. Exceptions apply but the intent of the Act is clear.
- 2.140 Additionally, the Act restricts the ability for new rights of way to be created for mechanically propelled vehicles.
- 2.141 As a result of the Act the National Park Authority cannot reopen or create new routes of its own volition.
- 2.142 Further information regarding the provisions of the Act are contained in a document published by Defra entitled “Part 6 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and Restricted Byways”.

2.143 Proposed actions

- i) undertake a detailed audit of promoted route information to ensure that routes are available and accessible in an appropriate format
- ii) rights of way that are used to access waterways will be identified and maintained so as to improve their use for this purpose
- iii) continue to pass reports of issues with regard to unsurfaced unclassified county roads considered to provide connectivity in the rights of way network to the unitary authorities

- iv) work with the unitary authorities to ensure that unsurfaced unclassified county roads that are promoted by the National Park Authority are maintained to a reasonable standard
- v) ensure that cycle routes on National Park Authority owned land are maintained to a high standard
- vi) continue to provide permissive access where that is appropriate on National Park Authority owned land
- vii) continue to support permissive access originating from the Glastir agri-environment scheme and assisting the Local Access Forum in its consideration of applications for permissive access under the scheme
- viii) encourage Natural Resources Wales to provide and share an easily accessible map showing the extent of Welsh Government woodland estate that is subject to permissive access by horseriders
- ix) work with Natural Resources Wales to improve connectivity between the bridleway network and areas of the Welsh Government woodland estate where permissive access by horseriders exists
- x) work to make the rights of way network more accessible for persons with restricted mobility and blind or partially sighted people
- xi) work to make the rights of way network more accessible for horse riders and cyclists
- xii) look for opportunities to increase the amount of access available for horse riders and cyclists
- xiii) work to make the rights of way network more accessible for carriage drivers
- xiv) work to eliminate one-step stiles from the rights of way network
- xv) work to eliminate stiles on bridges on the rights of way network
- xvi) work to eliminate step gates on the rights of way network
- xvii) update and refresh “Places to visit with easier access”
- xviii) work to eliminate steps from rights of way where that is feasible

- xix) where appropriate, work to eliminate steps on bridges that the National Park Authority has full responsibility for
- xx) work to replace stiles with gates whenever possible with particular focus on rights of way around and between settlements, and according to the priority hierarchy
- xxi) the National Park Authority will publish an online digital representation of the Definitive Map
- xxii) the National Park Authority will publish an online map showing access land and land with higher rights e.g. urban commons

2.144 Proposed policies and practices

- i) where a structure is no longer required as a stock control or safety measure the National Park Authority will negotiate its removal
- ii) the National Park Authority will work with farmers and land managers to promote and implement the least restrictive option and will seek to keep structures to a minimum
- iii) unless there are exceptional circumstances it will be presumed that only gates will be authorised under section 147 of the Highways Act 1980
- iv) the National Park Authority will cease to replace defective or sub-standard stiles on public footpaths with new stiles but will provide and install self-closing pedestrian gates free of charge. Where a landowner requires a stile the National Park Authority will provide one free of charge in lieu of its responsibility under section 146 of the Highways Act 1980 but will not undertake installation
- v) where a gate is not feasible (as a replacement for a stile) a dog stile shall be installed (adjacent to the stile) where a demand is proven and where the landowner has given consent
- vi) waymarkers will be erected on every new piece of furniture on the rights of way network save for signposts (at roadsides), bridges and boardwalks
- vii) where a right of way is a cul-de-sac and does not provide any useful access, access to access land or a place or feature of interest e.g. a viewing point or a historic monument or any other onward opportunities for the public the

National Park Authority will not provide signposts or waymarking on that right of way

Part 3

Supplementary Assessments

3.1 An evaluation of the degree to which the previous ROWIP has been delivered

3.2 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (“ROWIP”) for the Brecon Beacons National Park was adopted in 2007. It contained a series of actions that are listed below in their original order.

3.3 As part of the review of that ROWIP an evaluation is required of the degree to which the ROWIP has been delivered. Welsh Government guidance suggests that the new assessment should include a summary of the key matters identified in the previous Assessment, how the initial statement of action proposed to address them, and the extent to which those actions were delivered. Any outstanding actions should be itemised for consideration in light of the new assessment.

3.4 The key matters identified in the previous assessment were as follows:

- There is a need for more circular and connecting routes of varying lengths around identified hubs with particular focus on social inclusion and making routes accessible for all
- There is a need for specific routes/sites to be upgraded to make them accessible to all users
- Some of the furniture on public rights of way within the National Park needs renewal or repairs to make it suitable for all users
- There is a need to improve signs and furniture where rights of way meet main roads
- There is a need for information concerning legal routes for motorised users
- There is a need to make the Definitive Map more easily available to members of the public
- There is a need to review the Definitive Map and deal with all the anomalies
- More use of the internet is needed to provide information and report problems and complaints
- There is a need for improved links between public transport and the public rights of way network
- There is a need for more information about car parking facilities in the National Park area
- There is a need to prioritise rights of way maintenance and improvement
- There is a need for a schedule of vegetation clearance (linked with the rights of way hierarchy)
- There is a need for a system of monitoring and dealing with erosion on public rights of way and paths across Access Land
- Permissive paths created under agri-environment schemes should be made more available to the public and link with the rights of way network

- 3.5 The table at Appendix 5 demonstrates the original actions that sought to address these matters and progress against them since the adoption of the ROWIP.
- 3.6 In 2008 the Welsh Government initiated a Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme and allocated funding to each local authority in Wales that had a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. In the period between 2008 and 2017 the National Park Authority has received nearly £640,000 to improve the rights of way network within the National Park.
- 3.7 In that time, it has completed 145 projects and improved 140km¹⁸ of public footpaths, 44km of bridleways, 26km of restricted byways and 4km of cycle tracks specifically through the use of this funding. More details are contained in Appendix 5.
- 3.8 An evaluation of the present condition of the network and its record
- 3.9 The National Park Authority undertook a complete survey of the rights of way within the National Park during the preparation of the initial Rights of Way Improvement Plan and beyond and has undertaken an annual 5% random survey¹⁹ of the network since 2002.
- 3.10 From these surveys, three main measures were reported – the percentage of rights of way that were “easy to use”, the percentage of fingerposts that were in place²⁰ and the percentage of rights of way that were “open” (Table 6, Figure 23). The two former measures were derived from BVPI 178²¹. The survey (in terms of collecting data for “easy to use”) considered various issues along the network including obstructions, waymarking, signposting and fingerposting, surfaces, ploughing and cropping, stiles and gates and bridges in determining the ease of use of the network for the public. The survey also considered the Definitive Map in terms of whether the rights of way were legally defined i.e. that the Definitive Map correctly reflected the position of right of way on the ground.
- 3.11 The data for “open” was derived from the easy to use measure but only considered whether a right of way was clear of obstructions i.e. could be used from end to end without significant difficulty. It ignores whether a route is signed and whether it is correctly depicted on the Definitive Map.

¹⁸ Using the former Countryside Council for and Natural Resources Wales method of calculating length

¹⁹ Using the County Surveyors' Society methodology

²⁰ Where a footpath, bridleway, restricted byway or byway open to all traffic leaves a metalled road in accordance with section 27(2) of the Countryside Act 1968

²¹ A formerly compulsory measure that all local authorities in England and Wales reported upon. This measure is no longer compulsory

It is acknowledged that the survey had its limitations²² and some of these will be discussed further below.

Table 4 a) Condition of the rights of way network - Survey figures 2002 to 2007 (prior to the ROWIP)

Year	Easy to use	Open	Signposted
2007	46%	62%	72%
2006	53%	66%	67%
2005	62%	73%	67%
2004	72%	79%	69%
2003	73%	78%	62%
2002²³	71%	64%	56%

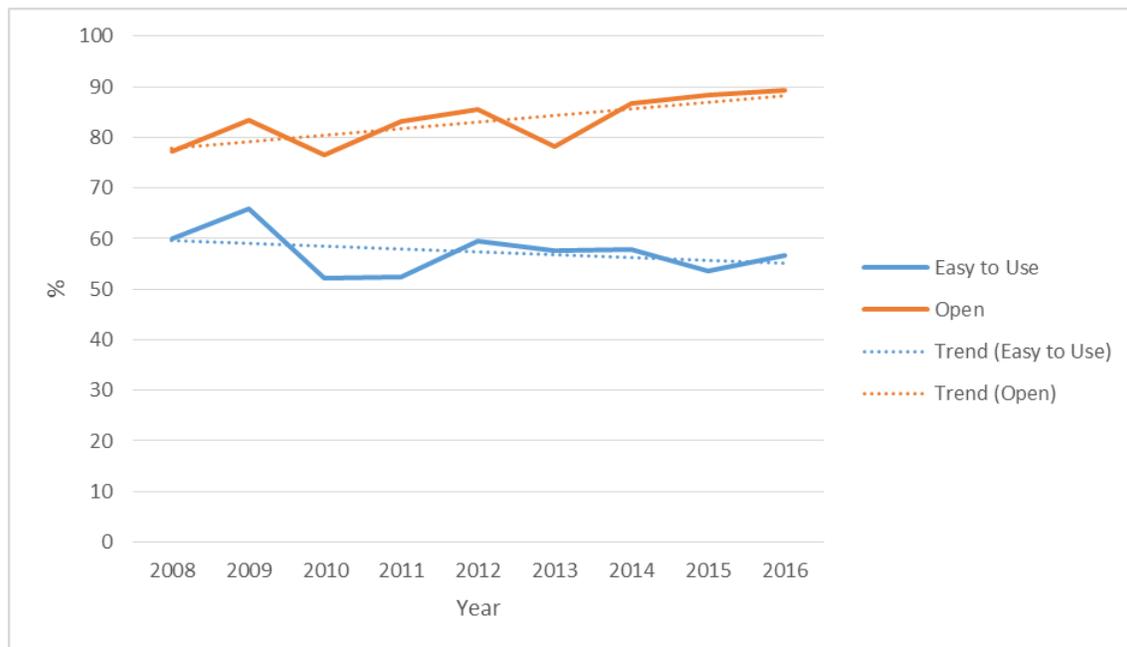
b) Condition of the rights of way network - Survey figures 2008 to 2016 (since the ROWIP)

Year	Easy to use	Open	Signposted
2016	57%	89%	69%
2015	54%	88%	70%
2014	58%	87%	73%
2013	58%	78%	71%
2012	60%	86%	81%
2011	52%	83%	77%
2010	52%	76%	71%
2009	66%	84%	73%
2008	60%	77%	71%

²² As noted in The Countryside Agency Research Notes 100

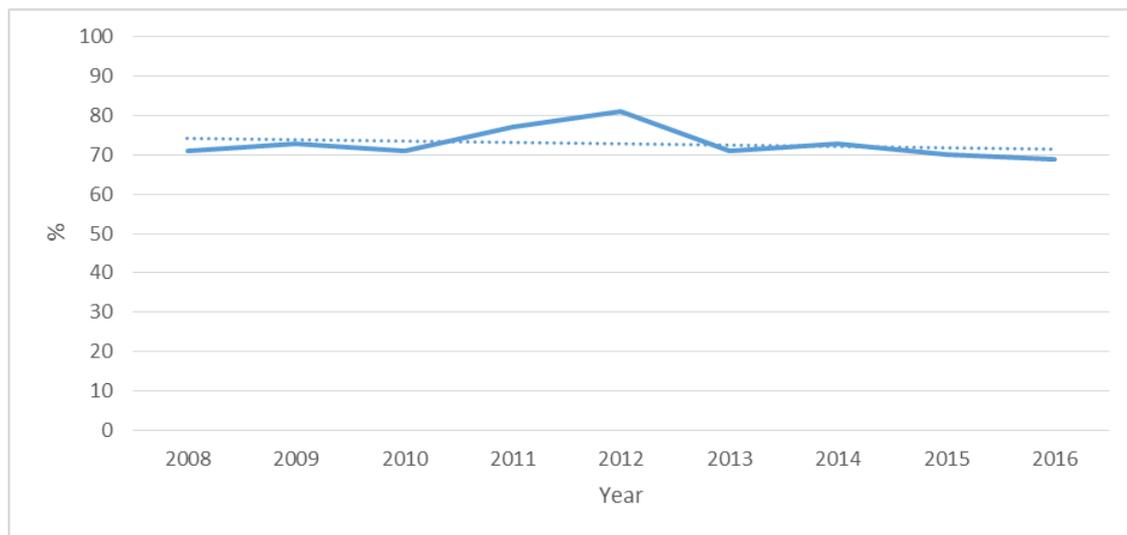
²³ There would appear to be an error in the data from 2002 in that the “easy to use” figure is higher than the “open” figure. Given how “open “ is calculated it is not possible for it to be less than “easy to use”

Figure 27 – “Easy to use” and “open” results 2008 to 2016



3.12 There is a clear upward trend in the “open” figure and a slight downward trend in the “easy to use” figure. The percentage of fingerposts in place over the same period has shown a slight downward trend (Figure 24).

Figure 28 – Fingerposts in place figures 2008 to 2016



3.13 These trends accord with the three most common problems encountered on the rights of way network reported by the questionnaire, namely poor signage/waymarking, overgrown surfaces/vegetation and poor condition of stiles/gates.

3.14 The Definitive Map and Statement

3.15 The National Park is covered by seven Definitive Maps namely Blaenau Gwent, Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen. Each has its idiosyncrasies reflecting from the way the historic county councils recorded their public rights of way in the 1950s. Inconsistencies arose from the differing interpretation and emphasis that they placed upon this task. In addition, the current network is a legacy of a period when methods of transportation were different and routes had a specific purpose and linked various destinations together. In today's context, not all of these routes may be useful for rights of way users and it may be desirable to amend them to make them more appealing to more people. Some rights of way may currently serve no useful purpose or be of very little use in recreational terms and some areas with a sparse network may have large areas of access land.

3.16 Cul-de-sacs

3.17 The number of cul-de-sac rights of way that currently exist on the Definitive Map has been calculated (Table 5). The total number found is 115 and this encompasses rights of way that terminate in such a way or at such a location that legitimate access cannot continue beyond the end of the right of way. It does not include public footpaths that terminate on access land as a right of way on foot exists regardless. However, it does include bridleways that terminate on access land as there is no continuation of access for horse riding (unless located on urban common²⁴).

Table 5 – Number of cul-de-sac rights of way by county in the Brecon Beacons National Park

County	Number of cul-de-sacs
Blaenau Gwent	1
Carmarthenshire	3
Merthyr Tydfil	1
Monmouthshire	50
Powys	58
Rhondda Cynon Taf	2

3.18 Monmouthshire in particular, given the size of its network, includes a high number of cul-de-sacs whereas Carmarthenshire, with a network just under half the size of Monmouthshire, is virtually free of cul-de-sacs.

²⁴ See Queen v. Secretary of State for Environment ex parte Robert D Billson

3.19 Cul-de-sacs affect public footpaths in particular but high instances have been found affecting bridleways and restricted byways (given the relative extent of those networks) (Table 6).

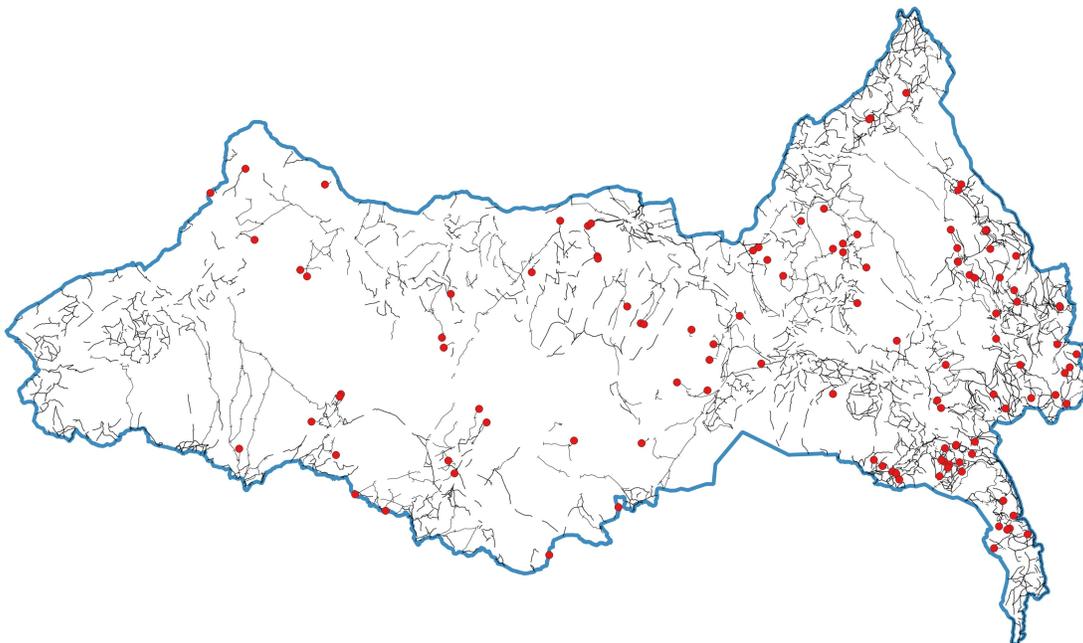
Table 6 – Number of cul-de-sacs by status in the Brecon Beacons National Park

<i>Status of right of way</i>	<i>Number of cul-de-sacs</i>
Public Footpath	61
Bridleway	29
Restricted Byway	25

3.20 To put it simply 2.6% of footpaths, 9.3% of bridleways and 10.4% of restricted byways are cul-de-sacs.

3.21 The distribution of cul-de-sacs is shown in Figure 29.

Figure 29 – Distribution of cul-de-sac rights of way in the Brecon Beacons National Park



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3.22 Status changes

3.23 The number of status changes that currently exist on the Definitive Map has been calculated (Tables 7 and 8, Figure 30). The total number is 97 and this encompasses rights of way that are contiguous but change status generally after short distances. In

effect, and depending on the status of the right of way, this renders the first right of way a cul-de-sac for some users in that the second right of way is not legally accessible to them. For instance, where a bridleway changes into a footpath, any equestrian use on the footpath will be trespass.

Table 7 – Number of status changes by county in the Brecon Beacons National Park

County	Number of status changes
Blaenau Gwent	0
Carmarthenshire	0
Merthyr Tydfil	1
Monmouthshire	59
Powys	36
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1

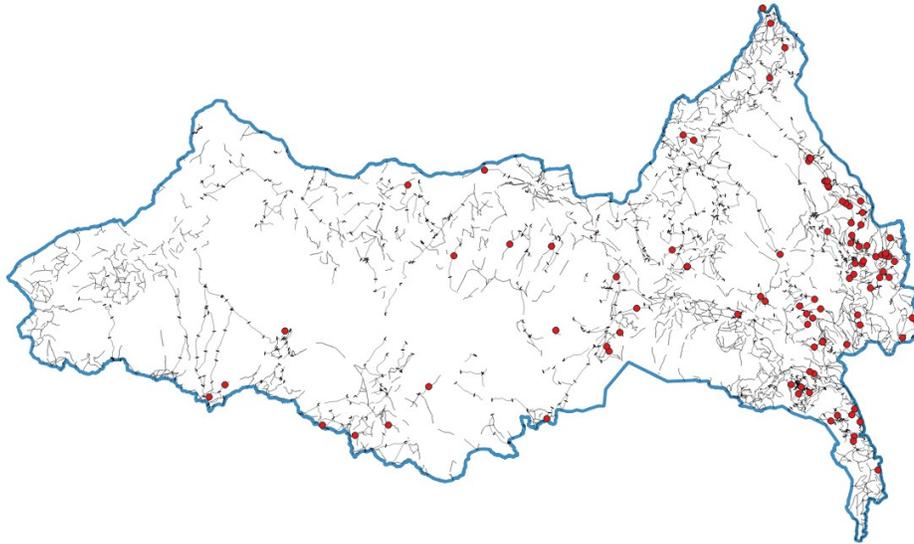
Table 8 – Number of status changes by type in the Brecon Beacons National Park

Status change	Number
BOAT to restricted byway	1
BOAT to bridleway	1
Restricted byway to bridleway	21
Restricted byway to footpath	43
Bridleway to footpath	31

3.24 Again, Monmouthshire includes a high number of status changes, particularly from restricted byway to footpath, 61% of its status changes are of this type. Whilst this has been caused by the way rights of way were originally registered on the Definitive Map it has implications in terms of contemporary use of the network. In terms of the connectivity of restricted byways and bridleways this issue potentially renders 27% of restricted byways and 10% of bridleways useless as through routes.

3.25 Combined with the number of each that are cul-de-sacs, this renders a substantial portion of the available network problematic to equestrians and cyclists.

Figure 30 – Distribution of status changes in the Brecon Beacons National Park



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3.26 Connectivity

3.27 A basic assessment has been undertaken of connectivity within the rights of way network (Tables 9, 10 and 11, Figure 31). In this study the termination point of a right of way on a public road was compared against the distance from its nearest neighbour which also had a termination point on the same or connecting road. For the sake of this study, where the distance between the two points was greater than 500 metres this was noted as a substantial break in connectivity in that a journey of 500 metres on a public road would be required to connect to the next available right of way of the same or higher status.

3.28 500 metres is an arbitrary distance for this exercise in order to demonstrate the issues. However, every user and every road is different. The chosen distance has proven to be sufficient to derive conclusions.

Table 9 – Connectivity issues by county in the Brecon Beacons National Park

County	Number of connectivity issues
Blaenau Gwent	2
Carmarthenshire	58
Merthyr Tydfil	3
Monmouthshire	59
Powys	274
Rhondda Cynon Taf	9

Table 10 – Connectivity issues by road classification in the Brecon Beacons National Park

<i>Class of road</i>	<i>Number of connectivity issues</i>
<i>Trunk</i>	24
<i>A</i>	18
<i>B</i>	26
<i>Minor</i>	316
<i>Unsurfaced</i>	21

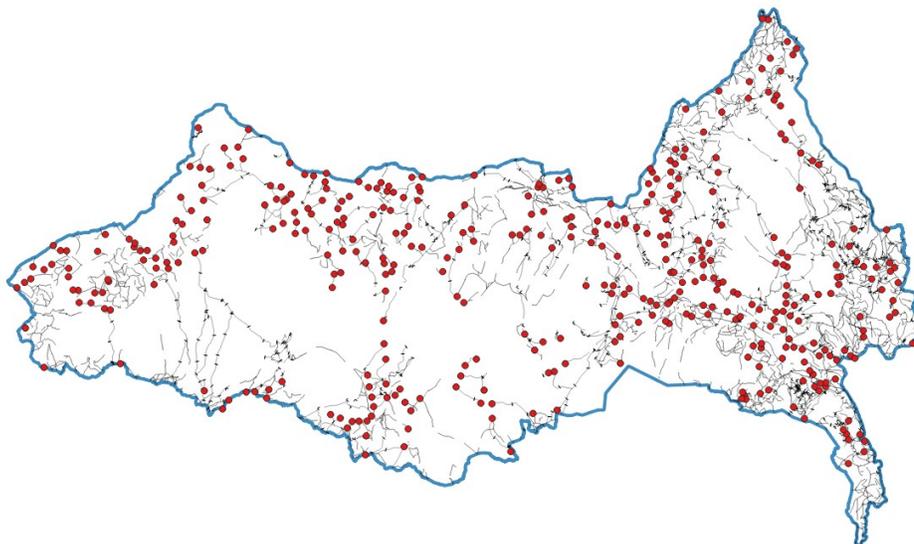
Table 11 - Connectivity issues by rights of way type in the Brecon Beacons National Park

<i>Status of right of way</i>	<i>Number of connectivity issues</i>
<i>Footpath</i>	143
<i>Bridleway</i>	134
<i>Restricted Byway</i>	127
<i>BOAT</i>	1

3.29 In summary, 14.2% of all rights of way are more than 500 metres away from their nearest neighbour of equal or higher status where they meet a public road.

3.30 The situation is exacerbated with bridleways and restricted byways as 43% of bridleways and 53% of restricted byways are more than 500 metres away from their nearest neighbour of equal of higher status.

Figure 31 – Distribution of connectivity issues in the Brecon Beacons National Park



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3.31 Anomalies

3.32 Since the publication of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan the National Park Authority has been gathering data on the numbers and types of anomalies on the rights of way network (Table 12 and 13, Figure 32). Many types of issues are considered to be anomalies which fall into several broad categories:

i. Line anomalies – where the line of the right of way on the Definitive Map is different to that on the ground. This is generally because the Definitive Map has been drafted incorrectly; the route used by the public has varied over time; or, an unofficial diversion has been put in place for whatever reason;

ii. Sheet edge anomalies – where rights of way on adjoining Definitive Map sheet do not match and an artificial gap has been created;

iii. Buildings – where a building or buildings obstructs the right of way. These tend to be historic instances where no account was taken of the right of way at the time by the planning process (assuming one existed at the time);

iv. Physical destruction – where rivers, landslips, quarries or other physical processes have caused irreparable damage to the right of way and where public use may or may not have transferred to another route.

3.33 In each case, an order or orders under the Highways Act 1980 or the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 will be required to correct the anomaly or formalise the alternative route arising because of it. In most cases, reopening the original right of way is either not possible, not practical or not desirable.

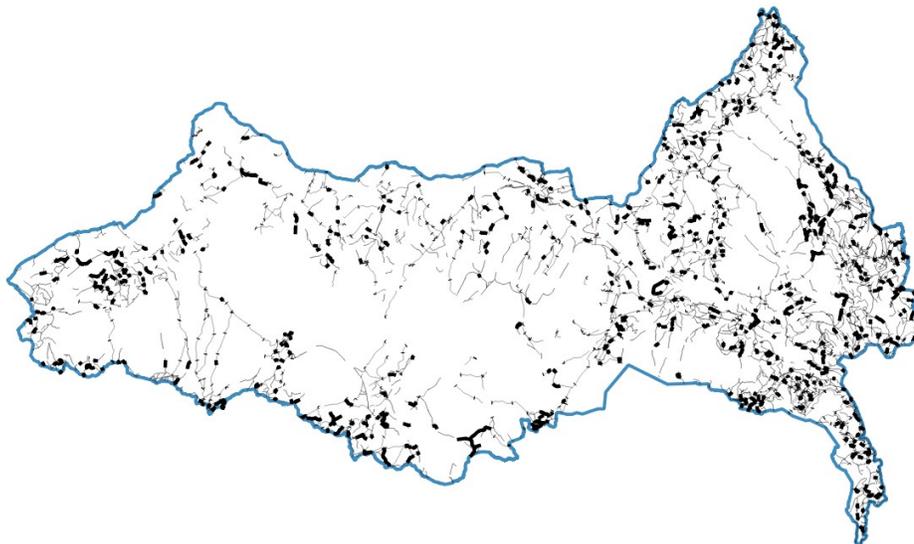
Table 12 - Anomalies by county in the Brecon Beacons National Park

County	Number of anomalies
Blaenau Gwent	4
Carmarthenshire	86
Monmouthshire	193
Merthyr Tydfil	11
Powys	337
Rhondda Cynon Taf	12

Table 13 - Anomalies by type in the Brecon Beacons National Park

Type of anomaly	Number
Line anomaly	542
Sheet edge anomaly	31
Buildings	62
Physical destruction	9

Figure 32 – Distribution of anomalies in the Brecon Beacons National Park (each anomaly is represented by a short black line).



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3.34 Effect of Definitive Map issues on measuring the condition of the network - Anomalies

3.35 There are 644 known anomalies on the rights of way network. Given that the “easy to use” measure takes account of whether the network is correctly legally defined this affects the results of the 5% random surveys.

3.36 An anomaly invariably results in the whole of the affected right of way being identified as a failure even though the experience of the public using the right of way is not affected. An estimated 25% of the network is affected by anomalies on this basis and the “easy to use” measure cannot therefore rise above 75%.

3.37 Effect of Definitive Map issues on measuring the condition of the network – Status changes

3.38 There are 97 status changes on the rights of way network. Given that the “easy to use” measure takes account of whether a right of way is signposted where it meets a metalled road, the fact that some rights of way change status after leaving a metalled road creates a quandary in terms of signposting. To signpost affected rights of way correctly guides legitimate users into a cul-de-sac where continuing along the contiguous right of way would lead to trespass. To signpost the next contiguous right of way is potentially confusing and misleading.

3.39 Each right of way is signposted according to local circumstances but some will be identified as a failure if included in the 5% survey.

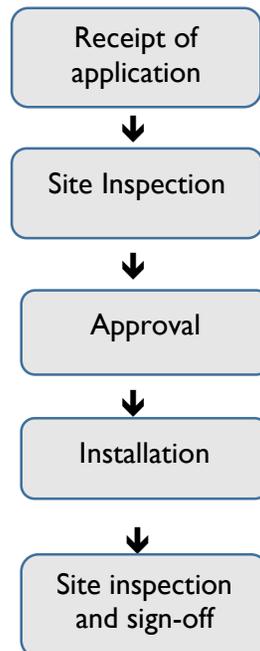
- 3.40 The combination of both these circumstances guarantees a consistently high failure rate when a 5% survey is undertaken.
- 3.41 It is noted that nearly 8% of the known anomalies on the rights of way network lie on the Welsh Government woodland estate, far in excess of any other single landowner. This has resulted from rights of way being overplanted by coniferous woodland and is a largely historic issue. In many cases, the public are using alternative routes, where they are present, but these are not shown on the Definitive Map. Given that the Welsh Government's woodland estate has a very important part to play in the provision of public access in the National Park which, in turn, contributes towards improvements in people's health and well-being, the opportunity arises to review and eliminate all the anomalies that exist on the woodland estate as well as review the rights of way network on the woodland estate generally with a view to improving access to and within the woodland estate.
- 3.42 Signposting rights of way above the hill fence
- 3.43 The National Park Authority has long exercised an informal policy of not signposting or waymarking rights of way on areas of open hill (unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise). This means that where rights of way leave metalled roads²⁵ that are located on open hill, no signpost will be present. Equally, where rights of way cross the open hill they may be waymarked on the hill boundary but not on the hill itself.
- 3.44 The purpose of this policy is to maintain the special qualities of the landscapes within the National Park by not introducing signage.
- 3.45 The combination of both these practices also contributes towards a high failure rate when a 5% survey is undertaken.
- 3.46 Limitations – Completeness of records
- 3.47 None of the Statements that accompany the Definitive Maps that cover the National Park contain details about limitations²⁶. Some of the records that were used to compile the first Definitive Maps and Statements do contain information on limitations but coverage is generally sparse and inconsistent.
- 3.48 In terms of managing the rights of way network, this is problematic because for the vast majority of rights of way, there are no records of the original limitations that existed upon them.

²⁵ Where there is a requirement under section 27 of the Countryside Act 1968 to erect a signpost

²⁶ A limitation on the right of the public. In this context generally a stile or a gate or other item of furniture

- 3.49 In some cases early Ordnance Survey maps can be useful in determining whether limitation existed when the ground was surveyed. However, whilst these maps may suggest the existence of a limitation they will not indicate its type although conclusions may be drawn from the nature of the route. The National Park Authority has not attempted to extract such data from Ordnance Survey maps and it is not, therefore, currently in a form that is readily available for the National Park Authority or members of the public to use.
- 3.50 Where evidence of historic limitations is available, this is not accessible by modern data management methods as the information will be contained in paper records that largely date from the 1950s. The information contained in these records has not been extracted into a form that is ready accessible by the National Park Authority or members of the public.
- 3.51 The National Park Authority operates a policy which seeks to deal with this issue in a practical manner. This is shown at Appendix 6.
- 3.52 Authorisation process for new structures
- 3.53 The National Park Authority has a simple process for authorising new structures under section 147 of the Highways Act 1980 (Figure 33).

Figure 33 – Process for authorising new structures on rights of way in the Brecon Beacons National Park



- 3.54 If an application is refused, there is no right of appeal. There is currently no charge made for processing an application.
- 3.55 In considering an application for a new structure the National Park Authority will have regard to the statutory guidance prepared by the Welsh Government relating to sections 147 and 147A of the Highways Act 1980²⁷.
- 3.56 The National Park Authority keeps a log of all applications authorised under section 147. These are not available digitally at the present time. However, the total number of applications received for authorising structures is very few.
- 3.57 Structures in public path and definitive map modification orders
- 3.58 The National Park Authority will routinely include structures in public path orders made under the Highways Act 1980 and definitive map modification orders made under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. These will be included as limitations and it will be specified that they conform to the extant version of British Standard 5709.
- 3.59 Orders made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 differ because The Town and Country Planning (Public Path Orders) Regulations 1993 do not specify a means where limitations can be included in orders. Although the National Park Authority makes few orders under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 it does not include limitations in those orders.
- 3.60 Outstanding applications for Definitive Map Modification orders
- 3.61 The National Park Authority currently has 20 outstanding applications for definitive map modification orders (Table 14).

Table 14 – Outstanding applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders in the Brecon Beacons National Park

Type of application	Number of applications
Upgrading of footpath to bridleway	2
Addition of footpath	14
Addition of bridleway	2
Addition of BOAT	1
Downgrading of bridleway to footpath	1

The majority of the applications are located in Monmouthshire.

²⁷ See also 2.144 (iii)

3.62 Priorities for Definitive Map Modification Orders

3.63 The National Park Authority currently processes applications for definitive map modification orders in chronological order although there are several historic applications that have not been progressed.

3.64 In response to a question in the National Park Authority's ROWIP questionnaire with regard to what type of application should be given priority the majority said "applications where adding or upgrading a right of way would add significantly to the network" followed by "applications with strong supporting evidence" and "where a possible error has meant that the public cannot use the path".

3.65 Outstanding applications for Public Path Orders

3.66 The National Park Authority may exercise powers under sections 25 to 29, 72(2) and 118 to 121 of the Highways Act 1980 due to an amendment in Schedule 9 of the Environment Act 1995. This is not a function that is delegated from the unitary authorities. The National Park Authority currently has 50 outstanding applications for public path orders.

3.67 Priorities for Public Path Orders

3.68 The National Park Authority currently processes application for public path orders as they are submitted. However, it has a backlog of historic applications as well as several unconfirmed orders that require reviewing.

3.69 In response to a question in the National Park Authority's ROWIP questionnaire with regard to the most important reason for diverting rights of way the majority of respondents cited "diversions which protect flora and fauna" followed by "farmyard diversions" and diverting "from a person's garden".

3.70 Policy concerning the recovery of costs for public path and rail crossing orders

3.71 The National Park Authority has a policy concerning the recovery of costs for public path and rail crossing orders which was last reviewed in 2009. The policy deals with charges, the circumstances where charges are partly or wholly waived and the circumstances where refunds are given.

A copy of the policy is shown at appendix 9.

The Strategic Context for the Management and Improvement of Local Rights of Way

3.72 In addition to being the main resource for the enjoyment of the countryside, public rights of way also make a wide ranging contribution to many aspects of life. Documents relating to these activities have been considered in the production of this Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The proposals contained in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan are in turn supported by, and contribute towards, plans and strategies relating to these activities.

3.73 Environmental benefits

3.74 Participation in outdoor recreation can provide the means and encouragement for people to learn more about the natural environment and thereby develop more respect for their own local environment. Walking and cycling can contribute towards local transport requirements and lessen the dependency on the use of vehicles. The role of Active Travel is considered later in this plan.

3.75 A strategic approach to visitor management can result in impacts being mitigated or directed away from 'honey pot' areas that are more environmentally vulnerable.

3.76 Health and Social benefits

3.77 The Welsh Government has consistently stated its commitment to improving the health and well-being of the population and has set its priorities²⁸ for sport and physical activity as follows:

- Wales needs to be more physically active in order to be a healthier nation
- Wales needs healthy citizens to deliver long-term prosperity
- Wales needs to maximise the synergy between sport, physical activity and the natural environment
- Wales needs its people to be more 'physically literate'
- Wales needs more physically active communities
- As well as the success of individuals, Wales needs systematic and sustainable success in priority sports.

3.78 The Welsh Government explicitly lays down targets for increased participation in sport and physical activity during the next twenty years, including:

- The percentage of people in Wales using the Welsh natural environment for outdoor activities will increase from 36% to 60%

²⁸ As contained in Climbing Higher – The Welsh Assembly Government Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2005

- 95% of people in Wales will have a footpath or cycle-path within a ten-minute walk of their home.

3.79 The National Park Authority and its contributing unitary authorities have strategies in place to support these targets and this Rights of Way Improvement Plan contains proposals which will contribute to their success.

3.80 To achieve both health and social inclusion benefits the Rights of Way Improvement Plan must facilitate methods of encouraging more people to become more active, primarily by improving the public rights of way network to make it and access land more accessible and attractive to more people.

3.81 Economic Benefits

3.82 The main employers of National Park residents are public, financial, tourism and retail followed by distribution and catering. Whilst agriculture has long been the basis of the National Park's economy, only a tenth of the working population is now directly employed in it. The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Management Plan states that "the well-being of the Park is dependent upon the vitality of local communities and the support of people who live, work in, and visit the National Park. Many businesses within the National Park derive economic benefits from their unique location and relationship with its landscape and built heritage"²⁹.

3.83 Much tourism is based upon the landscape, flora and fauna and the accessible nature of these features via the rights of way network and access land. Significant income is derived from employment opportunities and the direct spend from those who walk, cycle and ride horses on the rights of way network.

3.84 The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's Walking Tourism Strategy stresses the importance of the public rights of way network, stating "The public path network is quite simply the largest visitor attraction in the Park and is the foundation of the area's tourism income. Authorities that fail to make the necessary investment risk losing market share to competing areas that are able to offer more accessible countryside."³⁰

3.85 It envisages the Brecon Beacons National Park becoming "widely known as a lead exemplar of sustainable tourism with key partners from the statutory, commercial, voluntary and community sectors working together to develop the industry. Tourism should become an increasingly important part of the Park's local economy and

²⁹ National Park Management Plan, Theme 6 – Sustainable Economic Development

³⁰ Walking Tourism Strategy, 2.4

should contribute towards the vitality of local communities and the integrity of the environment.”³¹

- 3.86 It also recognises the need for improvement to some aspects of the public rights of way network, identifying two of the constraints on walking in the National Park as the state of the access network and control and repair of erosion damage.³²
- 3.87 Walking is a relatively environmentally sustainable mode of travel and is also the most popular and profitable tourism activity in the National Park.
- 3.88 Walking as an activity generates £562m of additional demand in the Welsh economy, £275m of Gross Value Added (GVA), and around 11,980 person-years of employment³³. This is demonstrated by the Wales Coast Path, which alone generates £32.2m of additional demand in the Welsh economy, £16.1m of GVA, and 730 FTE of employment³⁴.

3.89 Promotion of Outdoor Recreation in the National Park

Information Currently Available

- 3.90 The National Park Authority aims to raise awareness, respect for and understanding of the National Park whilst also promoting opportunities for enjoyment. However, budgetary constraints over the past several years have constrained the way in which this is done as its ability to advise the public directly, via information centres, has diminished. Compared with 2007 more use is now made of the internet and the three following websites encompass the main formal presence for the National Park and the National Park Authority on the internet:

www.breconbeacons.org
www.beacons-npa.gov.uk
www.fforestfawrgeopark.org.uk

- 3.91 The first is the main online presence for the promotion of the National Park and is a joint venture between the National Park Authority and Brecon Beacons Tourism. This site contains details on activities, accommodation, food and drink, places to visit and the International Dark Sky Reserve.

³¹ Ibid. The Vision, para.3

³² Ibid, 2.6

³³ “The Economic Impact of Walking and Hill Walking in Wales” (2011) Welsh Economy Research Unit, Cardiff University

³⁴ “The Economic Impact of Wales Coast Path Visitor Spending on Wales” (2012) Welsh Economy Research Unit, Cardiff University

- 3.92 It provides details of numerous circular walks of different lengths and difficulty. Printed leaflets of many are also available via the shop on the www.beacons-npa.gov.uk website either free or for a small charge. In addition, there are audio trails, bus walks and geotrails. They are all available at http://www.breconbeacons.org/explore/things_to_do/walking/where_to_walk?lan=en
- 3.93 There are also a number of promoted equestrian routes and cycling routes which are available at www.breconbeacons.org/horse-riding-routes and www.breconbeacons.org/cycling-mountain-biking and a number of printed leaflets (either free or for a small charge) are available at www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/shop/
- 3.94 The flagship mountain biking publication is the “Mountain biking in the Brecon Beacons” which includes twelve routes for varying abilities. This is currently sold for £8.50 through the online shop.
- 3.95 The National Park Authority has published details of 27 easier access walks and details of 6 forest areas which contain easier access routes or have some nearby. These are all available at: www.breconbeacons.org/explore/easier_access/easier_access_walks. Some of these are also audio trails.
- 3.96 The National Park Authority has also published a booklet entitled “Places to visit with Easier Access” which lists 55 routes and sites where easier access exists. This booklet lists details with regard to surfaces, slopes and nearby facilities e.g. parking, toilets, and shops. The information on both the website and booklet now needs updating. A list of easier access attractions is also available here www.breconbeacons.org/explore/easier_access/easier_access_attractions
- 3.97 Free leaflets are available at Visitor Centres and the National Park Authority office. The National Park Authority has also reviewed the route of the Beacons Way which is now downloadable as a gpx file for a small fee from <https://beacons-npa.gov.uk/shop>
- 3.98 The National Park Authority currently has two booklets of walks that are linked to bus services, Mountain Walks by Bus and Family Walks by Bus both of which are available for a small fee. These are largely a collection of linear walks, of varying length and difficulty, from one bus stop to another.
- 3.99 Maps of all routes promoted by the National Park Authority are shown at Appendix 7.

- 3.100 Certain areas and routes within the National Park are considered to be ‘flagship’ and are particularly important in terms of promotion. Most are important on a regional or national level. Details of these are contained in Appendix 8.
- 3.101 There are a number of issues arising from the National Park Authority’s ROWIP questionnaire with regard to the quality of service that the National Park Authority provides in terms of promotion and the provision of information. Whilst 58 respondents thought that the quality of promotional information about where people could go was good, 64 thought that it was poor. Whilst 72 respondents thought that information about long distance routes was good, 47 thought that it was poor and 24 very poor.
- 3.102 The majority of people get information about the rights of way network from Ordnance Survey maps (236 respondents) and from the National Park Authority (118 respondents) and local knowledge (117 respondents).
- 3.103 In response to a question about what type of information would you find useful with regard to countryside access provision, 194 (38%) respondents said information on the National Park Authority’s website showing routes on the Definitive Map and 143 (28%) said downloadable routes that could be used on a phone/tablet.
- 3.104 In response to a question asking whether the National Park Authority should be creating new, local circular walks or new long distance promoted routes, 68% of respondents chose local circular walks and 32% chose long distance walks.

3.105 Management of the rights of way network and access areas

- 3.106 The management of the rights of way network and access land within the National Park falls to the National Park Authority’s Natural Resources Management Team and specifically the Rights of Way Team (one officer and an assistant), the Countryside and Access Projects Team (one officer and an assistant) and the Wardens’ Team (one manager, four area wardens, three assistant area wardens and three estate wardens).
- 3.107 The Rights of Way Team deal with all technical and legal matters relating to rights of way and is the first point of contact for the public. They manage the rights of way database and all the mapped data that relates to rights of way.
- 3.108 The Countryside and Access Projects Team deals with the management of Access Land, flagship promoted routes and the administration of the Local Access Forum. The Team is also responsible for the management of upland erosion projects and has led on the preparation of various externally funded projects to tackle erosion due to recreational pressure.

- 3.109 The Wardens' Team deals with the day to day management of the network on the ground and is responsible for all matters associated with repair, maintenance and improvement. Work on the rights of way network comprises of up to 60% of an individual Warden's workload depending on the area in which they work. Clearly, Wardens working in the east of the National Park spend more time on the right of way work than those in the west of the National Park.
- 3.110 Since the production of the ROWIP in 2007 the number of staff in the Wardens' Team has reduced significantly and many roles that existed in the previous structure no longer exist or have been absorbed into the remaining staff resource. The Property Management arm of the structure no longer exists.
- 3.111 The National Park Authority also involves volunteers in its rights of way work and most of this is involved with the repair, maintenance and improvement of the network. The National Park Authority employs a Volunteers' Coordinator who oversees the recruitment, assignment and development of volunteers. Day to day management of volunteers is undertaken by other members of staff. The National Park Authority has also run several Heritage Lottery funded projects which offered training placements where trainees worked alongside qualified staff to gain accredited training and vital employment experience. Trainees worked on conservation, estate management and rights of way related tasks.
- 3.112 Contractors are also used for some work. This tends to be for larger tasks where specialist plant and equipment is necessary.
- 3.113 The functions that the National Park Authority exercises on behalf of the unitary authorities are shown at Appendix 4.
- 3.114 As was the case in 2007 each unitary authority makes a financial contribution as part of the delegation agreement. These contributions have been recently reviewed and in most cases, increased (Table 15).

Table 15 - Unitary authority contributions to the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Unitary Authority	New Contribution (2017/18)	Old contribution
Powys County Council	£46580	£10000 ³⁵
Monmouthshire County Council	£18248	£8000
Carmarthenshire County Council	£18000	£4000
Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC	£3323	£1000
Merthyr Tydfil CBC	£1000	£600
Blaenau Gwent CBC	£0	£0
Total	£87151	£23600

3.115 Recent calculations demonstrate that the National Park Authority spends in excess of £200,000 per annum on staff costs in managing the rights of way network and access land (which includes externally funded projects). However, the National Park Authority operates in a climate of budgetary reductions and this will continue for the foreseeable future.

3.116 Prioritisation of the rights of way network

3.117 The National Park Authority manages the rights of way network according to a hierarchical system. This hierarchy divides each individual right of way into one of five categories as detailed below. From a management perspective, there is little sense in attempting to maintain all rights of way to the same standard irrespective of their location, use and condition. The continued reductions in resources and staff makes prioritising even more important. The National Park Authority has therefore continued to work on the basis that the rights of way that provide the greatest value to local communities and visitors, in terms of the contribution to enjoyment, the local economy, tourism and potential health benefits (including opportunities for barrier-free access) should be prioritised. By prioritising these routes the National Park Authority will achieve the best value for its investment.

3.118 This does not necessarily mean that low-priority rights of way can be completely ignored. The National Park Authority cannot escape its statutory duty to assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of rights of way for which it is responsible. However, the hierarchy provides a framework for the sensible targeting of investment.

³⁵ This was the sum as stated in the Delegation Agreement. However, it was supplemented annually in recent years and increased to over £20000 in 2015/16

Category 1 (National Trail and Flagship National Park Authority promoted routes):

Offa's Dyke Path National Trail
Beacons Way
Taff Trail
3 Rivers Ride
Usk Valley Walk

Category 2:

National Park Authority promoted routes
Important community routes
Primary routes to access land
Access for All routes
Routes connecting to key public transport nodes
Routes leading to and from key parking areas
Routes providing access to visitor attractions

Category 3:

Routes considered useful within the network
Useful routes to access land

Category 4:

Routes with occasional use
All remaining routes (apart from those in Category 5)

Category 5:

Routes with no obvious benefit, potential or use;
Cul-de-sacs that do not lead to access land or any points of interest;
Anomalous routes (dependent on individual circumstances);
Dual status routes³⁶ where the route is tarmaced and part of the normal road network

3.119 The following maintenance standards³⁷ are applied to each category:

Category 1: infrastructure to comply with British Standard³⁸; easy to follow without a detailed map (where reasonably practicable and in accordance with National Park

³⁶ Appear on both the Definitive Map and the List of Streets

³⁷ The National Trails have their own standards as contained in "Quality Standards for National Trails and the Wales Coast Path"

Authority policy); least restrictive access (where reasonably practicable); subject to rolling programme of vegetation cutting

Category 2: infrastructure to comply with British Standard; easy to follow without a detailed map (where reasonably practicable and in accordance with National Park Authority policy); least restrictive access (where reasonably practicable); less intensive vegetation cutting regime than Category 1 depending on circumstances

Category 3: infrastructure to comply with British Standard; map needed to follow; least restrictive access (where reasonably practicable); reactive vegetation cutting regime where reasonably practicable

Category 4: infrastructure to comply with British Standard; map needed to follow; least restrictive access (where reasonably practical); reactive vegetation cutting regime at the National Park Authority's discretion

Category 5: infrastructure to comply with British Standard; map needed to follow; least restrictive access (where reasonably practical); reactive vegetation cutting regime at the National Park Authority's discretion

3.120 The following reaction times apply to each category:

Category 1: Proactive (reactive within 1 month if complaint received from public)

Category 2: Reactive within 3 months

Category 3: Reactive within 6 months

Category 4: Reactive within 9 months

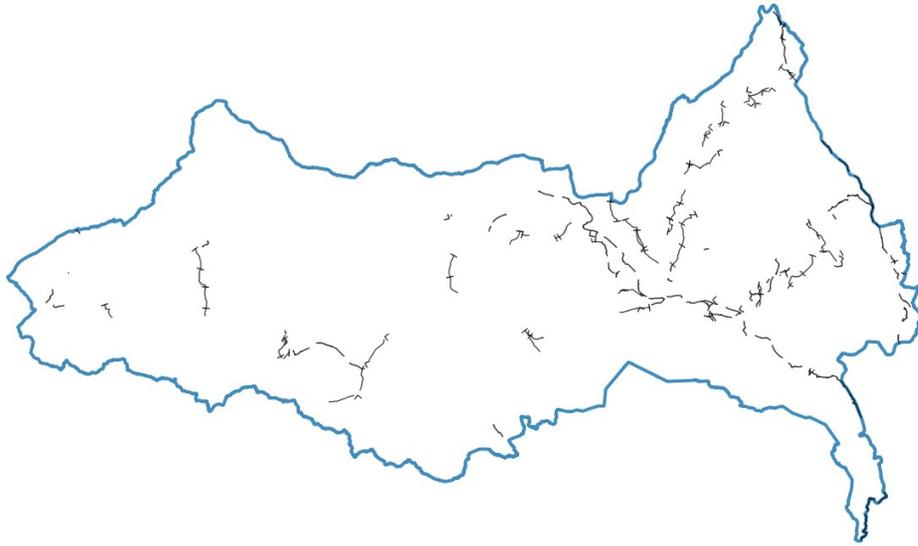
Category 5: Reactive within 12 months (but discretionary according to individual circumstances)

3.121 The hierarchy is designed to be dynamic. Routes may move up or down as circumstances dictate. As a route is improved, becomes more popular or more important it may move up the hierarchy. Alternatively, other circumstances may dictate a downward movement. Additionally, if a danger, risk or serious health and safety matter is identified on a route, that would be dealt with on an urgent basis rather than being bound to the reaction time dictated by the route's category.

3.122 The hierarchy has been mapped on the National Park Authority's Geographic Information System software (Figure 34 and 35).

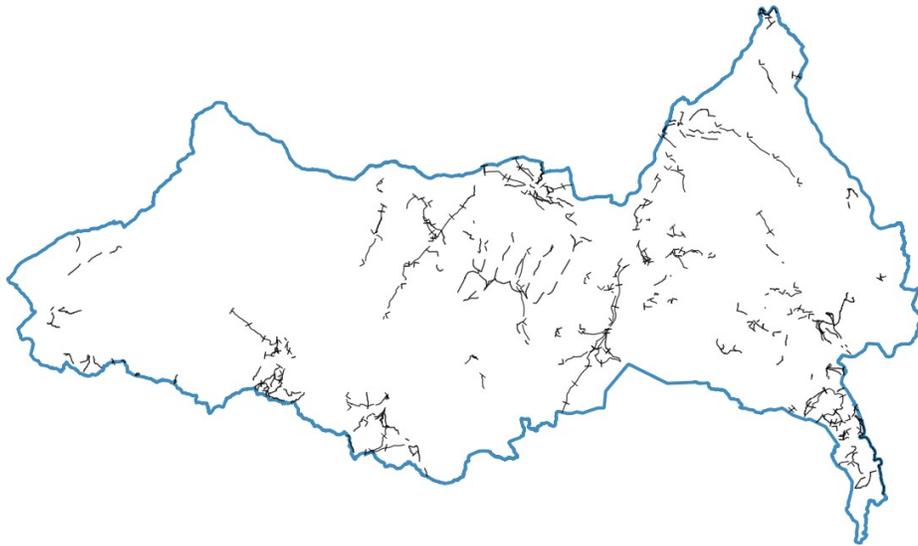
³⁸ BS5709:2018

Figure 34 – a) Category I



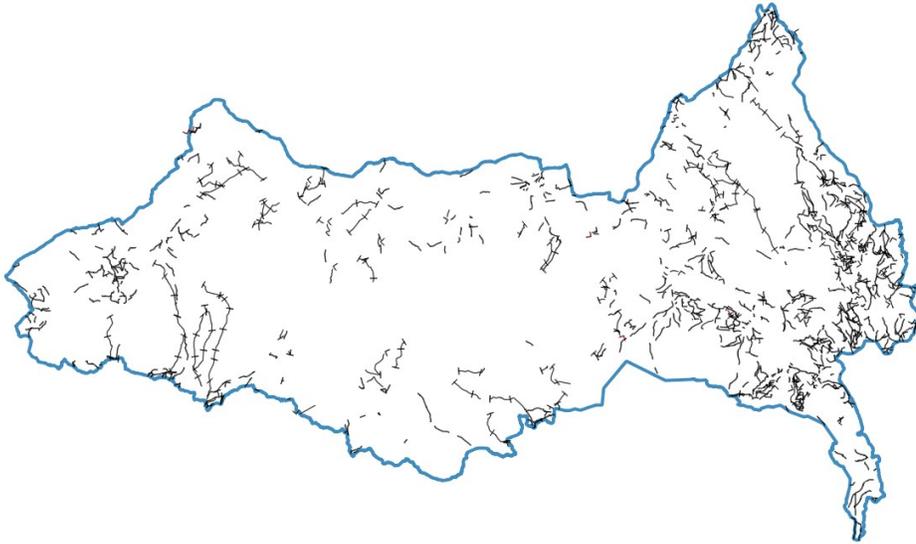
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b) Category 2



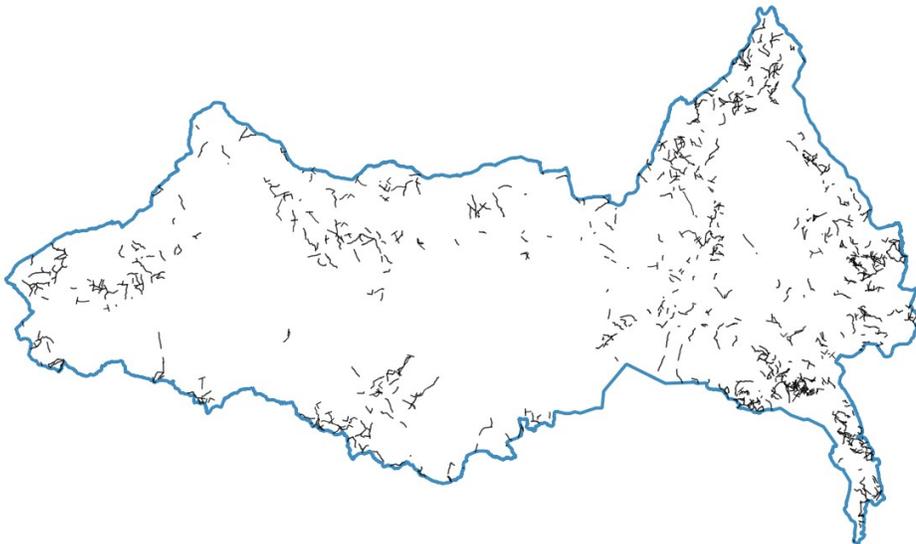
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c) Category 3



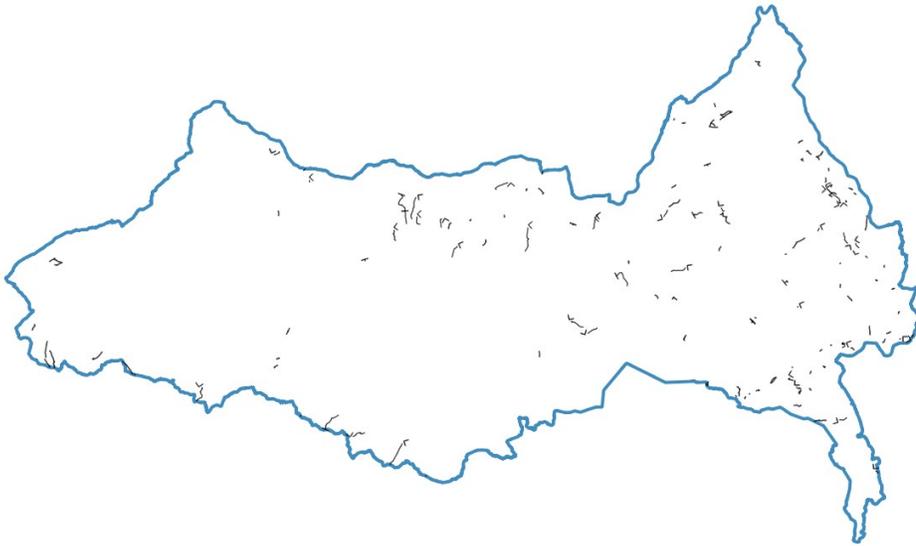
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d) Category 4



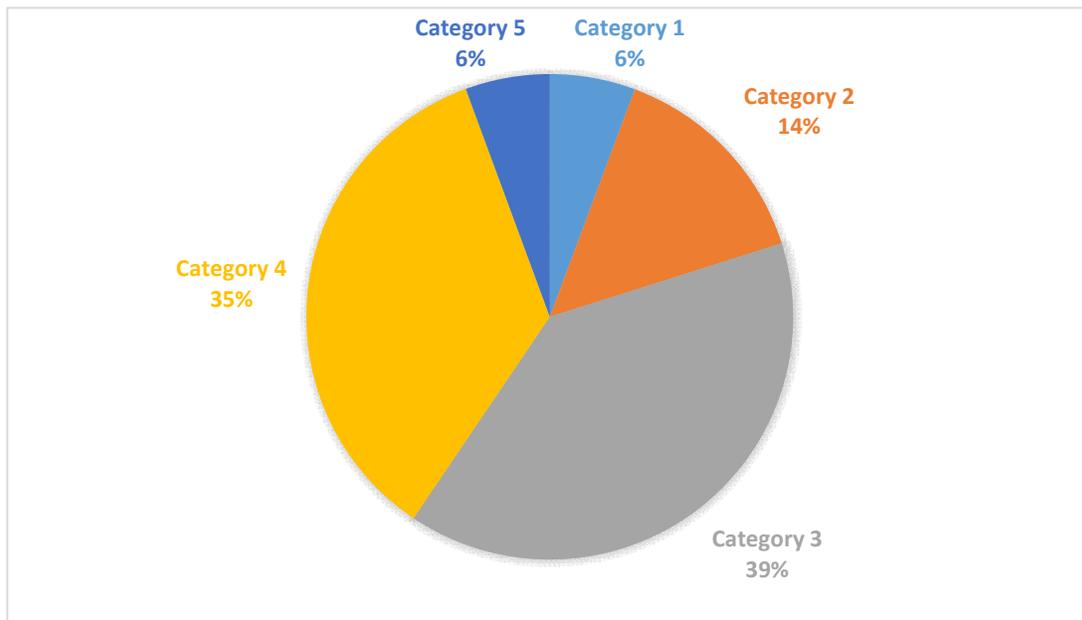
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e) Category 5



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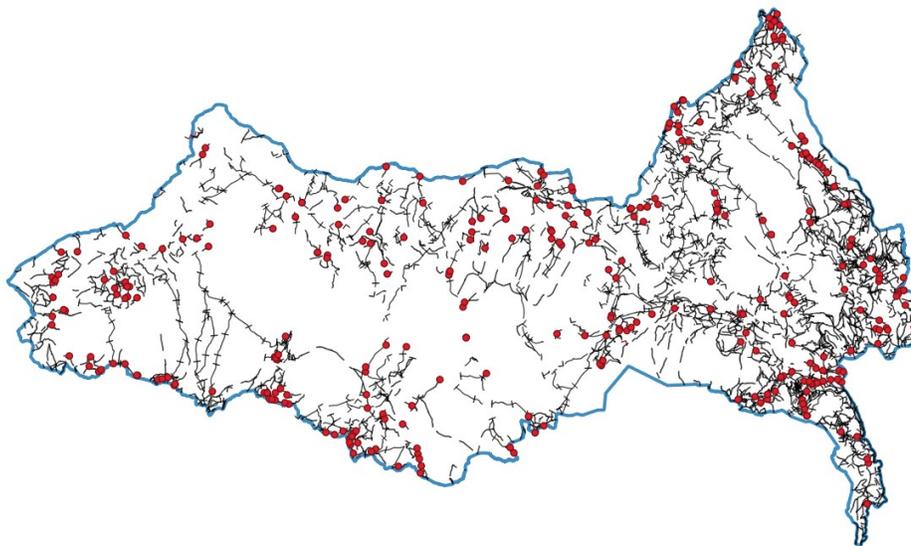
Figure 35 - Percentage of rights of way in each category



3.123 Bridges

The National Park Authority currently has a record of 330 bridges³⁹ which it is responsible for either through a delegation agreement with one of the unitary authorities, as it is located on a right of way or on land in the National Park Authority's ownership (Figure 36).

Figure 36 – Location of bridges on the rights of way network



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- 3.124 The National Park Authority undertakes an annual survey of all these bridges and any work that is identified is placed on the work programme. This is dealt with according to the category of the right of way unless the work is considered to be urgent because public safety has been compromised.
- 3.125 The National Park Authority's record of bridges consists of networked digital data, digital data on compact disc, hard copy data and uncatalogued photographic data, all of which are currently separate from each other. All such data needs to be digitised into one location so that it is easy to access.
- 3.126 The National Park Authority does not hold a complete record of bridges which it considers to be in private ownership and where it considers that it may have either a partial responsibility for repair and maintenance or no responsibility at all. Such bridges usually carry private roads but also carry a public right of way.

³⁹ These are bridges for which the National Park Authority has primary responsibility. There will be other bridges on the rights of way network where the National Park Authority has a partial responsibility or no responsibility at all.

3.127 Furniture

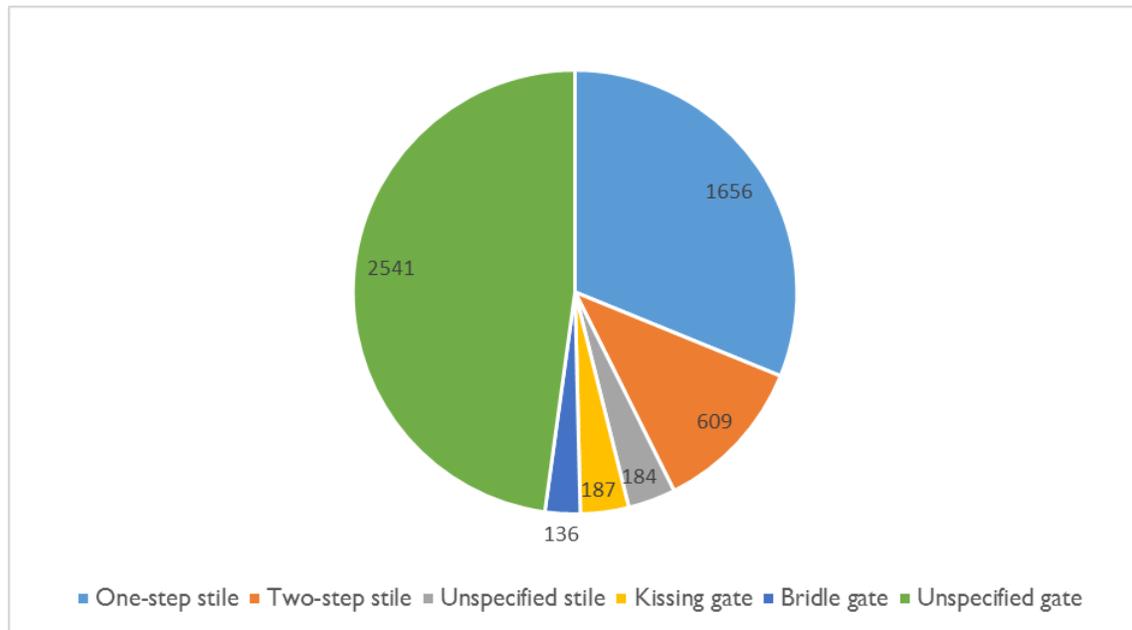
3.128 Whilst the National Park Authority has a record of the furniture on the rights of way network (Figure 37) it is largely out-of-date and is not easy to interrogate. The data is currently held on paper and is essentially a record of every rights of way survey that has been undertaken since 2004. Some rights of way will have been surveyed several times in the intervening period but some will have not.

3.129 As a result, the National Park Authority's ability to derive meaningful statistics from this record is compromised by the complexity of the task and the fact that thousands of records need interrogating.

3.130 However, some data is available for 31 of the 62 parishes that exist, partly or fully, within the National Park. These 31 parishes encompass approximately 1258km, approximately 66%, of the total network.

3.131 This data is updated through the National Park Authority's annual 5% survey. On that basis, the data is updated very slowly and any rights of way that have not been surveyed as part of a 5% survey will not have been updated at all. This does not mean that the furniture will have stayed the same since 2004 only that no record exists of it having been changed.

Figure 37 - Furniture



3.132 Some explanation is required as to some of the descriptions used in the chart:

One-step stile – self-explanatory, a stile with one step which can exist in a variety of configurations;

Two-step stile – a stile with two steps which can exist in a variety of configurations;

Unspecified stile – where insufficient data is available to determine the design of the stile. It is most likely to comprise one and two-step stiles but other designs e.g. ladder stiles and stone stiles are known to exist in small numbers;

Kissing gate – generally a gate set within a metal hoop or a timber box. A variety of configurations exist;

Bridle gate – a gate approximately 1.5 metres (or 5 foot) wide. Generally self-closing and with a variety of closing mechanisms;

Unspecified gate – where insufficient data is available to determine the design of the gate. Data will include gates of the above designs and others designed for pedestrian use but will largely comprise of field gates. Within this category is also the step gate, a small gate within a larger gate but with a step-over component.

3.133 In addition, 92 dog stiles were also in place. Dog stiles are generally installed adjacent to stiles and have a simple lifting mechanism which allows the dog access from one side to the other.

3.134 Multiple furniture items

3.135 There are many examples on the rights of way network of multiple items of furniture being present at the same location and essentially duplicating each other's function (in terms of being a stock-proof barrier that allows public access) (Figure 38).

Figure 38 - Example of multiple furniture items on a footpath showing a field gate and a one-step stile on the same right of way. The right of way passes through the gate. The gate is the original feature and the stile has been added at a later date. The gate is not locked and functions correctly. It can be seen that the stile, in this particular case, has been installed on a bank above the gate. Access to the stile is therefore made considerably more difficult than using the gate. If the gate was locked (which would constitute an offence) the public would have to use the stile or retreat (if they could not climb the stile).



- 3.136 Where this occurs on a bridleway or a restricted byway it is presumed that the intention is to draw pedestrians to use the stile on the same basis as above. However, because horse riders, cyclists and carriage drivers have no option but to use the gate the stile becomes redundant.
- 3.137 It is likely that many of the stiles included in the Figure 37 have been installed in multi-furniture locations and that the National Park Authority is expected to maintain them.
- 3.138 Enforcement
- 3.139 The National Park Authority does not have a formal enforcement policy for dealing with infringements that occur on the rights of way network. However, it places great emphasis on negotiation when infringements do occur and this has proved to be successful over the years.
- 3.140 Unlawful obstructions are the most common issues likely to arise on the network. There are times when negotiation does not work. The National Park Authority will serve a notice in such circumstances, generally under section 143 of the Highway Act 1980, requiring that the obstruction be removed within a given period of time. This will normally be 28 days.
- 3.141 On the expiration of the time period the National Park Authority will remove the obstruction itself and it can recover the expenses in doing so from the person having control or possession of the obstruction.

- 3.142 If the obstruction is something that is used to prevent the ingress or egress of stock e.g. a fence, it may be appropriate to use powers under section 147 of the Highways Act 1980 to authorise a structure on the right of way provided that the requirements of the Act are complied with.
- 3.143 Working with farmers and land managers
- 3.144 The National Park, despite its designation, is a working dynamic landscape. Farmers and land managers are key stakeholders in delivering a functional rights of way network and access land. They have a range of responsibilities that affect the usability and safety of rights of way and access land. These include a responsibility to maintain stiles and gates in a condition for normal use as well as one to keep overhanging vegetation and crops off rights of way. They also have a duty to ensure that their activities do not pose a danger or risk to the public.
- 3.145 Farmers and land managers are keen to see users made more aware of farming and countryside matters and practices and to ensure that users exercise their rights responsibly. Farmers and land owners are often the first to suffer when users behave in an irresponsible or illegal manner and will often bear the brunt of anti-social behaviour in the countryside.
- 3.146 Generally, the three issues that commonly cause problems for farmers and land managers are gates being left open, irresponsible dog owners and trespass. Whilst the National Park Authority can help to alleviate some of these problems there are limits to what it can do.
- 3.147 However, issues with gates and trespass are often linked to lack of knowledge or information and can be tackled with signage. More malicious matters may be civil or criminal in nature and should be dealt with by the appropriate authorities. Issues with dogs are more complicated as there are often behavioural factors at play. However, the National Park Authority has published a Brecon Beacons Dogs Code at www.breconbeacons.org/dogs which gives comprehensive advice on being a responsible dog owner. There is also a Dog Walking Code which has been published as part of the Countryside Code family. This is available at <https://naturalresources.wales/days-out/the-countryside-codes/?lang=en>
- 3.148 Equally, farm dogs can be a problem for rights of way users. There can be very serious consequences for the keepers of dogs that attack other dogs or people.

3.149 Upland path management

3.150 It was explained in the previous ROWIP that in addition to work on the rights of way network work had been undertaken to combat the problem of erosion on upland paths. The draft Brecon Beacons National Park Upland Erosion Strategy was produced in 2007 and has since been used as a working document to guide progress.

3.151 A survey of upland paths was undertaken in 2007 and identified repair and managements costs of approximately £1.9 million to repair the most badly damaged paths in the National Park. Significant progress has been made over the past few years with a substantial amount of funding coming from the Welsh Government.

3.152 A further survey will be undertaken in 2019 and the ensuing data will be compared with previous surveys. Management decisions will be based on the data collected and the guiding principles listed in Appendix 11. The National Park Authority will adopt these guiding principles in terms of upland path management. The principles were formulated by the Path Industry Skills group (the predecessor of the Upland Path Advisory Group) for path work in Scotland. They are based on the British Mountaineering Council's policy statement on upland path work as endorsed as "Guiding Principles" by the House of Commons Environment Select Committee in 1995.

3.153 Proposed actions

- i) seek a commitment from Natural Resources Wales to review, with the National Park Authority, the rights of way network that is present on the Welsh Government woodland estate with a view to improving access to and within the estate in order to maximise opportunities to contribute towards health and well-being
- ii) the National Park Authority will digitise its records of authorisations under section 147 of the Highways Act 1980
- iii) the National Park Authority will digitise its records of structures included in public path orders and definitive map modification orders
- iv) the National Park Authority will review its backlog of unconfirmed public path orders
- v) the National Park Authority will work to provide a suite of downloadable routes from the www.breconbeacons.org website

- vi) the National Park Authority will review the delegation agreements with the unitary authorities on an annual basis
- vii) the National Park Authority will review its prioritisation system to ensure that bridleways and restricted byways are categorised appropriately
- viii) the National Park Authority will extend its record of bridges to include bridges that it considers it may have either a partial responsibility for repair and maintenance or no responsibility at all
- ix) the National Park Authority will work towards providing a digitised layer of all furniture that exists on the rights of way network and supplement it with a photographic record of the same. This is to be made available online as it progresses
- x) the National Park Authority will seek to eliminate instances where multiple furniture items are present at the same location on a right of way
- xi) the National Park Authority will seek to eliminate instances where furniture that is present on a right of way is incompatible with the status of the right of way e.g. where a stile is located on a bridleway
- xii) the National Park Authority will produce an enforcement policy in consultation with the Local Access Forum
- xiii) the National Park Authority will seek to resolve conflicts between users and landowners to ensure a safe, usable and trouble free network
- xiv) the National Park Authority will continue to evolve its Dogs Code and provide advice on responsible dog ownership
- xv) the National Park Authority will undertake an upland path survey in 2019
- xvi) the National Park Authority will continue to manage upland footpath erosion in accordance with the Upland Erosion Strategy that was published in 2006

3.154 Proposed policies and practices

- i) the National Park Authority will support in principle and encourage applications for public path orders that connect or otherwise rectify cul-de-sacs that exist on the rights of way network

- ii) the National Park Authority will support in principle and encourage applications for public path orders that improve connectivity within the rights of way network
- iii) the National Park Authority will support in principle and encourage applications for public path orders that rectify anomalies that exist on the rights of way network
- iv) the National Park Authority will support in principle and encourage applications that rectify status changes that exist on the rights of way network
- v) the National Park Authority will continue to exercise an informal policy of not erecting signposts or waymarkers on the hill unless exceptional circumstances apply
- vi) the National Park Authority will process applications for definitive map modification orders in a chronological order but priority will be given to:
 - a. applications where adding or upgrading a right of way would add significantly to the network
 - b. applications with strong supporting evidence
 - c. where a possible error has meant that the public cannot use the right of way
- vii) the National Park Authority will process applications for public path orders in a chronological order but priority will be given to:
 - a. diversions which protect flora and fauna
 - b. farmyard diversions
 - c. diversions from private gardens
- viii) the National Park Authority will amend its policy concerning the recovery of costs for public path and rail crossing orders as follows:
 - a. “1.0 a)” to be replaced with “a standard charge of £1200 (exclusive of VAT) shall be applied to each unopposed order”

- b. add “2.0 (i) where the order connects or otherwise rectified a cul-de-sac”
 - c. add “2.0 (j) where the order improves connectivity within the rights of way network”
 - d. add “2.0 (k) where the order rectifies status changes on the right of way network”
- ix) the National Park Authority will focus on providing promotion for local circular routes suitable for targeted audiences e.g. dog walkers, families with children, people with mobility problems
- x) the National Park Authority will continue to manage the rights of way network using its prioritisation system
- xi) the National Park Authority will cease to erect stiles adjacent to field gates unless it can be shown that the stile is the legal limitation on the right of way
- xii) a. where a stile next to a gate has reached the end of its usable life the National Park Authority will decommission it. Where it can be shown that the stile is the legal limitation on the right of way it will be subject to the policy stated in 2.144 (iv)
- b. the National Park Authority will install pedestrian or equestrian gates next to field gates where it is expedient to do so on the grounds of land management or safety
- xiii) the National Park Authority will adopt the guiding principles of the Path Industry Skills Group

Part 4

Opportunities

Section I

Opportunities to Contribute to Active Travel Objectives

4.1.1 Key Principles

4.1.2 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 aims to make active travel the most attractive option for most shorter journeys. Its purpose is to enable more people to undertake more 'active' forms of travel than motor vehicles e.g. walking and cycling.

4.1.3 Background

4.1.4 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 came into force on 25 September 2013. It requires local authorities to:

- Produce maps of existing active travel routes and related facilities in their area
- Produce maps of the new and improved active travel routes and related facilities needed to create integrated networks for active travel in the area
- Have regard to integrated network maps in preparing transport policies and to ensure that there are new and improved active travel routes and related facilities
- Take reasonable steps to enhance the provision made for walkers and cyclists and to have regard to the needs of walkers and cyclists in the exercise of certain other functions
- Promote active travel journeys and secure new and improved active travel routes and related facilities.

4.1.5 The Act focuses on the urban and semi-rural environment, considering that 45 minutes is the maximum suitable time for an active travel journey to access work, goods and services (3 miles on foot or 10 miles by bike). As a result, and in order to balance affordability and practicality, the Act takes a settlement-based approach, with a current minimum threshold of 2,000 people. Only four areas qualify in the National Park:

- Brecon
- Crickhowell
- Gilwern
- Penderyn (as part of Hirwaun)

The potential benefits of Active Travel to National Park residents are therefore quite limited.

4.1.6 Integrated Network Maps have been produced for these settlements by the relevant local authority. Several areas on the periphery of the National Park boundary are also eligible under the Act.

These include:

- Abergavenny
- Pontypool
- Brynmawr
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Cwmgiedd and Ystradgynlais
- Brynamman
- Llandovery

4.1.7 Relevant information

4.1.8 The duty to produce Integrated Network Maps falls upon local authorities and not the National Park Authority. Local authorities are required to identify their active travel network and to make year on year improvements to that network. The key barriers to more people undertaking the types of journey identified under the Act on foot or by bike are considered to be safety, practicality and cultural conventions. Local authorities should undertake work that improves the safety of their network and promote its use.

4.1.9 The Active Travel network is not intended to include recreational routes or routes that do not connect to facilities and services. Integrated Network Maps should focus on routes that allow people to make every day journeys.

4.1.10 Within a rights of way context, an Active Traveller includes walkers, cyclists and other highway users, such as wheelchair users (including electric wheelchairs) and mobility scooters. Equestrianism is not considered to be part of active travel as this is predominantly a leisure activity. However, guidance suggests that these users should not be ignored and that their rights should not be compromised as a result of improving active travel. Multi-user paths are encouraged where new routes are created.

4.1.11 Overview of the Integrated Network Maps within the National Park

4.1.12 Given that the settlements within the National Park to which the Active Travel Act applies are relatively small, the Active Travel networks within them are relatively small also:

Brecon – the majority of Active Travel routes follow public roads or footpaths that have a tarmac surface. There are a few exceptions most notably the canal towpath although this has a gravel surface. Public rights of way are relatively sparse within the settlement and there is little potential for any to become active travel routes

(that are not already included). The greatest potential is for existing rights of way to provide useful links to Active Travel routes.

Crickhowell – all the Active Travel routes follow public roads or footpaths that have a tarmac surface. Public rights of way are very sparse within the settlement and there is very little potential for any to become active travel routes (that are not already included). The greatest potential is for existing rights of way to provide useful routes to Active Travel routes but this is limited by the low numbers of rights of way that exist.

Gilwern – the majority of Active Travel routes follow public roads or footpaths that have a tarmac surface. The exception is one section of the canal towpath which has a gravel surface. Public rights of way are very sparse within the settlement and there is very little potential for any to become active travel routes (that are not already included). The greatest potential is for existing rights of way to provide useful routes to Active Travel routes but this is limited by the low numbers of rights of way that exist.

Penderyn (included with Hirwaun) - no active travel network.

4.1.13 Overview of Integrated Network Maps outside the National Park

4.1.14 Most of the Active Travel routes shown on the Integrated Network Maps outside the National Park are quite remote from the National Park and it is difficult to see how any practical linkages could be made with those routes or practical improvements within the Park which would have any impact upon them. The one exception is Abergavenny where some Active Travel routes lie very close to the National Park boundary. In these cases, it would be worthwhile to investigate whether rights of way in close proximity to the Active Travel routes would be suitable for improvement.

4.1.15 Proposed actions

- i) the National Park Authority will work closely with the unitary authorities to seek opportunities to contribute towards Active Travel aims

Section 2

Opportunities to Contribute to Well-being Objectives

4.2.1 Key Principles

4.2.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act requires public bodies to think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. Public bodies need to make sure that when making their decisions they take into account the impact they could have on people living in Wales in future and do what they do in a sustainable way.

4.2.3 Background

4.2.4 The Act came into force in April 2016 and sets out a common aim for the public sector 'to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in accordance with the sustainable development principle', i.e. ensuring 'that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

Within the Act there are seven goals:

- **A prosperous Wales**

An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

- **A resilient Wales**

A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).

- **A healthier Wales**

A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

- **A more equal Wales**

A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).

- **A Wales of cohesive communities**

Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

- **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language**

A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and recreation.

- **A globally responsible Wales**

A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

4.2.5 As a result of the 2015 Act, public bodies in Wales have the following duties:

- (1) Each public body must carry out sustainable development.
- (2) The action a public body takes in carrying out sustainable development must include:
 - setting and publishing objectives (“well-being objectives”) that are designed to maximise its contribution to achieving each of the well-being goals
 - taking all reasonable steps (in exercising its functions) to meet those objectives
- (3) A public body that exercises functions in relation to the whole of Wales may set objectives relating to Wales or any part of Wales.
- (4) A public body that exercises functions in relation only to a part of Wales may set objectives relating to that part or any part of it.

4.2.6 In applying the principle of sustainable development, public bodies need to demonstrate they have used the following five ways of working:

- **Integration** - demonstrating a joined up approach to communities and people, the economy, the environment and culture
- **Long-term thinking** - balancing current and long-term needs
- **Prevention** - taking action now to prevent problems in the future
- **Collaboration** - working with others to meet our objectives
- **Involvement** - involving the people affected by our actions

4.2.7 As part of discharging their duties under the Act, Local Authorities, as public bodies, are required to produce Well-being Statements setting out their well-being objectives and explaining why they feel the objectives will help them achieve the goals and how they have applied the sustainable development principle. They must also make sure that they involve people interested in achieving the goals and that those people reflect the diversity of their areas. Each year they must publish an annual report showing the progress they have made in meeting their objectives.

4.2.8 Local Authorities must also participate in the Public Services Board (“PSB”) for their area. The PSB is responsible for undertaking an assessment of well-being in the area, and prepare and publish a Well-being Plan setting out its objectives and the steps it will take to meet them.

4.2.9 Relevant information

4.2.10 As a public body, the National Park Authority is required to publish its well-being objectives and plan to meet them. This is undertaken through the Corporate Plan.

4.2.11 An assessment has been completed of how the new ROWIP will meet the seven Well-being goals (Table 16).

Table 16 – Well-being assessment

Well-being goal	How the ROWIP will meet this goal
A prosperous Wales	By providing a more accessible and linked up rights of way network across the entirety of the National Park, the ROWIP will help to enhance the tourism product available to local businesses and will help to strengthen the industry by attracting more visitors.
A resilient Wales	By ensuring that more of the rights of way network is available and easy to use, the ROWIP will help to reduce impact in key honey pot areas, spreading visitor numbers across the National Park into less used areas.
A healthier Wales	By ensuring that the rights of way network close to settlements is open and easy to use the ROWIP will provide opportunities for local residents to use the network thus improving the health of communities.
A more equal Wales	By ensuring that provision is made to ensure opportunities for people with mobility difficulties or with other disabilities such as visual impairment to use the rights of way network, the ROWIP will make the network more inclusive.
A Wales of cohesive communities	By focusing on links between communities the ROWIP will help to strengthen the networks between them.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	By ensuring that more of the rights of way network is open and available to use the ROWIP will help to protect traditional and historic routes or accessing services which form a key part of the culture of the Brecon Beacons. All signage is bi-lingual.
A globally responsible Wales	By providing more opportunities for people to walk, particularly to access services or visitor attractions the ROWIP will help to reduce car usage and reduce the carbon footprint of local residents and visitors alike.

4.2.12 With regard to the five ways of working, the table below indicates how the ROWIP complies naturally with these requirements.

Table 17 – Five ways of working

Five Wales of Working	Brecon Beacons Rights of Way Improvement Plan
<p>Long Term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs</p>	<p>The ROWIP will cover a ten-year period and will aim to ensure that access to the countryside is protected in the long term. This will be achieved by managing and maintaining rights of way and access land to ensure that they are open and easy to use wherever possible and that they remain in this condition in the future.</p>
<p>Prevention How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives</p>	<p>The ROWIP has identified problems with the rights of way network and access land and will seek to alleviate them. Solutions will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using appropriate surfacing materials to increase the capacity of some paths • Encouraging people to use currently underutilised parts of the National Park.
<p>Integration Considering how the public body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their own objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies</p>	<p>The ROWIP has considered the well-being objectives set out by each of its constituent authorities to ensure that the new ROWIP takes these into consideration. This allows the ROWIP to complement the objectives of each authority and not be in conflict with them.</p>
<p>Collaboration Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives</p>	<p>The ROWIP was prepared in collaboration with other bodies such as its constituent authorities to ensure that the resultant new ROWIP is consistent and complementary to other ROWIPs developed in the area.</p>
<p>Involvement The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the areas which the body serves</p>	<p>The ROWIP was prepared with the involvement of interested parties. This involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial public questionnaire • Public consultation on the draft ROWIP • Discussion and consultation with the Local Access Forum.

4.2.13 The development of the new ROWIP fits comfortably with the intent of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It includes aims, objectives and actions that meet the seven goals contained with the Act as well as complying with the five ways of working.

4.2.14 Well-being Plans and Public Services Boards' Well-being Plans

4.2.15 The following Well-being Plans and Position Statement are relevant to the National Park Authority. They have been considered during the production of this ROWIP. Each have combinations of aspirations, ambitions, objectives, actions and steps that contribute towards the Well-being goals. In each case, the actions that the ROWIP can contribute towards most effectively have been listed.

4.2.16 National Park Authority Corporate Plan 2018/2019

4.2.17 The National Park Authority has identified the following objectives under four key work areas which link to the seven Well-being goals:

1. Heritage – The National Park’s historic, environmental and cultural heritage will be conserved, enhanced and promoted
2. Landscape and Biodiversity – The National Park Authority will lead on the maintenance and enhancement of landscapes and biodiversity through practical programmes and partnership work
3. Resilient Communities – the National Park Authority will lead on creating strong communities within the National Park and providing accessible physical activity for communities outside of the National Park
4. Sustainable Economic Development – The National Park Authority will lead on encouraging the development of new and existing businesses and increasing the number of jobs while promoting sustainable use of natural resources.

4.2.18 National Parks Wales: Together for Health and Well-being - A Position Statement and Priority Actions

4.2.19 Priority actions:

1. Raise awareness of the health and well-being benefit opportunities of National Parks
2. Continue to develop evidence-based policy and practice in relation to health and well-being and the natural environment and landscape features
3. Maximise opportunities for all people in Wales to access the health and well-being benefits of the natural environment and landscape features of National Parks

4.2.20 Public Services Boards' Well-being Plans

4.2.21 The Blaenau Gwent We Want 2018-2023

4.2.22 Key steps:

1. Use the skills, experiences and resources of local people to create strong, connected communities
2. Create age friendly communities
3. Promote active travel to reduce our collective carbon footprint
4. Promote healthy lifestyle behaviours like taking exercise and eating well
5. Remove the barriers that stop people making healthier choices

4.2.23 Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan: The Carmarthenshire We Want 2018-2023

4.2.24 Longer term ambitions:

1. Carmarthenshire's citizens are actively engaged in their own health and, with greater connection to nature, have increased well-being, lower stress levels and have more environmentally sustainable attitudes and behaviours
2. The people of Carmarthenshire will be economically prosperous and thriving wherever they live in the county

4.2.25 Monmouthshire Public Services Board Well-being Plan

4.2.26 Aspiration:

Realise the benefits that the natural environment has to offer

4.2.27 Objectives:

1. Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change
2. Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county

4.2.28 Our Cwm Taf: Cwm Taf Well-being Plan 2018-2023 (covering Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council)

4.2.29 Objectives:

1. To promote safe, confident, strong, and thriving communities improving the well-being of residents and visitors and building on our community assets
2. To help people live long and healthy lives and overcome any challenges
3. To grow a strong local economy with sustainable transport that attracts people to live, work and play in Cwm Taf

4.2.30 Towards 2040 The Powys Well-being Plan

4.2.31 Objectives:

People in Powys will enjoy a sustainable and productive environment

- The nationally recognised Brecon Beacons National Park, Natural Resources Wales, and other visitor centres established in Powys will promote sustainable access to our unique environment
- The rights of way network will offer local residents and visitors a selection of safe circular walks and cycle routes opening up our beautiful countryside for all to enjoy
- People’s health and well-being will improve as more residents take full advantage of the opportunities that exist to explore the countryside
- Our environment will be valued by residents and visitors for its beauty and the opportunities it offers

People in Powys will be healthy, socially motivated and responsible

- Residents will adopt healthy living habits and will be supported to take responsibility for their own mental and physical health and well-being

4.2.32 Current and completed projects

4.2.33 The National Park Authority has a number of projects which meet some of the Well-being goals which have either been completed or are in progress. Some of these are listed below.

4.2.34 “Down to the Sea”

4.2.35 A series of promoted walks to celebrate the Visit Wales 2018 theme “Year of The Sea” supplemented by a series of short animated videos that reveal the historic story of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal with the aim to encourage people to visit historic landmarks. The project was created by a partnership between the National Park Authority and the Canal and Rivers Trust and funded by the Welsh Government. The animations focus on four tram roads and demonstrate the reasons why the canal was originally built. The videos and details of the walks are available at www.breconbeacons.org/downtothesea

4.2.36 “Awesome Walks”

4.2.37 A booklet of walks around the Llangors and Bwlch areas produced by the National Park Authority in partnership with local businesses and residents. The need for a walks booklet was identified by a local sustainable tourism strategy as a product that would support tourism. The project was funded by Rural Alliances as part of a wider project to tackle the challenges of demographic change in rural areas. The booklet is available here:

http://aroundllangorselake.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Llangorse_walks_web.pdf

4.2.38 “Miles Without Stiles” – Healthy, Active and Outdoors Project

4.2.39 This project is a collaboration between the National Park Authority and Powys County Council and aims largely to remove physical barriers such as stiles and steps from rights of way within the target areas. Improvements to the surface of rights of way may also be made. The project will aim to provide opportunities for all where possible but recognises that in some cases there will be opportunities for many. This project has been offered funding of £12500 within the National Park and the National Park Authority will have to match fund £12500, 10% of which must be cash and the remaining 40% can be cash or staff time. The project will run for 18 months.

4.2.40 Communities included will be Talgarth, Crickhowell, Brecon and Bronllys. Hay-on-Wye will be covered separately by an additional grant offered to Hay Town Council.

4.2.41 The project will involve wardens consulting with community councils and disability groups where possible to identify suitable routes. Wardens will also need to negotiate with land owners.

4.2.42 The majority of the route improvements will involve changing stiles or kissing gates or narrow gates (which are unsuitable for wheel chairs) to wheel chair accessible gates.

4.2.43 Proposed actions

- i) the National Park Authority will seek opportunities to develop projects that contribute towards the Well-being goals and build upon projects that are already underway
- ii) the National Park Authority will look to collaborate with unitary authorities to develop projects that contribute towards unitary authority’s Well-being actions, ambitions, aspirations and objectives
- iii) the National Park Authority will look to collaborate with other partners to develop projects that contribute towards the National Park Authority’s Well-being objectives as well as those of partners
- iv) the National Park Authority will look to collaborate with the unitary authorities to develop projects that complement the Well-being objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and those of the unitary authorities

- v) the National Park Authority will look to collaborate with other bodies to develop projects that contribute towards the National Park Authority's Well-being objectives as well as those of the other bodies
- vi) the National Park Authority will look to collaborate with other Public Services Board partners to deliver Public Services Board objectives
- vii) the National Park Authority will support other groups where they wish to develop projects that complement the Well-being objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and, where applicable, those of the unitary authorities

Section 3

Opportunities to contribute to the delivery of other plans and priorities

4.3.1 Key Principles

4.3.2 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 sets out to position Wales as a low carbon, green economy, ready to adapt to the impacts of climate change. It has been designed to support and complement work to help secure Wales' long-term well-being, so that current and future generations benefit from a prosperous economy, a healthy and resilient environment and vibrant, cohesive communities.

4.3.3 The key parts of the act are:

- Part 1: Sustainable management of natural resources – enables Wales' resources to be managed in a more proactive, sustainable and joined-up way. It also helps to tackle the challenges we face and is focused on the opportunities our resources provide.
- Part 2: Climate change – provides the Welsh Ministers with powers to put in place statutory emission reduction targets, including at least an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050 and carbon budgeting to support their delivery. This is vital within the context of our existing UK and EU obligations and sets a clear pathway for decarbonisation. It also provides certainty and clarity for business and investment.
- Part 3: Charges for carrier bags – extends the Welsh Ministers' powers so that they may set a charge for other types of carrier bags such as bags for life. It also places a duty on retailers to donate the net proceeds from the sale of carrier bags to good causes.
- Part 4: Collection and disposal of waste – improves waste management processes by helping us achieve higher levels of business waste recycling, better food waste treatment and increased energy recovery. This will help to decrease pressure on natural resources while also contributing towards positive results for both the economy and the environment.
- Parts 5 and 6: Fisheries for shellfish and marine licensing – clarifies the law in relation to shellfisheries management and marine licensing.
- Part 7: Flood and Coastal Erosion Committee and land drainage – clarifies the law for other environmental regulatory regimes including flood risk management and land drainage.

4.3.4 Background

4.3.5 For the purposes of the development of the new ROWIP, Part I of the Act is most applicable. A Natural Resources Policy Statement has been produced by Welsh Government which sets out how the requirements of Part I of the Act will be met.

4.3.6 This document explains how the development of the State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) by Natural Resources Wales, the National Natural Resources Policy (NNRP) by Welsh Government, and Areas Statements by Natural Resources Wales will provide the framework for the sustainable management of our natural resources.

4.3.7 The Act sets out a number of principles to underpin this, as set out in the table below. It also identifies a number of challenges to achieving the aims of the Act. These are:

- Building resilience
- Managing for multiple benefits
- Adaptive management
- Long term
- Evidence
- Collaboration and co-operation
- Working at the right scale

Table 18 - Environment (Wales) Act 2016 principles

Building resilience	A resilient ecosystem is one that is healthy and functions in a way that is able to address pressures and demands placed on it, and is able to deliver benefits over the long term to meet current social, economic and environmental needs.
Managing for multiple benefits	Our ecosystems provide us with a wide range of services and benefits. We need to take all of these into account when we make decisions about how we use them, so that they provide multiple benefits for the long term. This includes taking into account their intrinsic value.
Adaptive management	Ecosystem processes and functions are complex and variable, and our approach will be adaptive with a focus on active learning derived from monitoring and outcomes and taking into account the time lags and feedback times for ecosystems to respond to interventions. It is about 'learning by doing'.
Long term	It is also important to take account of the short, medium and long term consequences of actions, and consider time lags and feedback times for ecosystems to respond to any interventions.
Evidence	This means gathering information and considering all the social, economic and environmental evidence (including evidence in respect of uncertainties) from a wide range of experts and stakeholders at the local, regional and national level as appropriate, both to identify priorities and opportunities for their management and also in delivering the management actions.
Collaboration and co-operation	It is about having a two way communication across local, regional, national and international levels and being interconnected between policy, process and people to break down silo ways of working. This approach supports the development and implementation of the new, innovative solutions that are needed.
Working at the right scale	An ecosystem is a functioning unit that can operate at any scale depending on the problem or issue being addressed.

4.3.8 Relevant information

4.3.9 Of most relevance to the development of the new ROWIP will be the Area Statements being developed by Natural Resources Wales. The Act contains no statutory timeline for the production of these statements, but Natural Resources Wales has indicated that full coverage of Wales will be achieved by the end of 2019. Three pilot areas were investigated in 2015 to see how Area Statements could be developed. All river catchment areas, these were:

- Rhondda
- Tawe

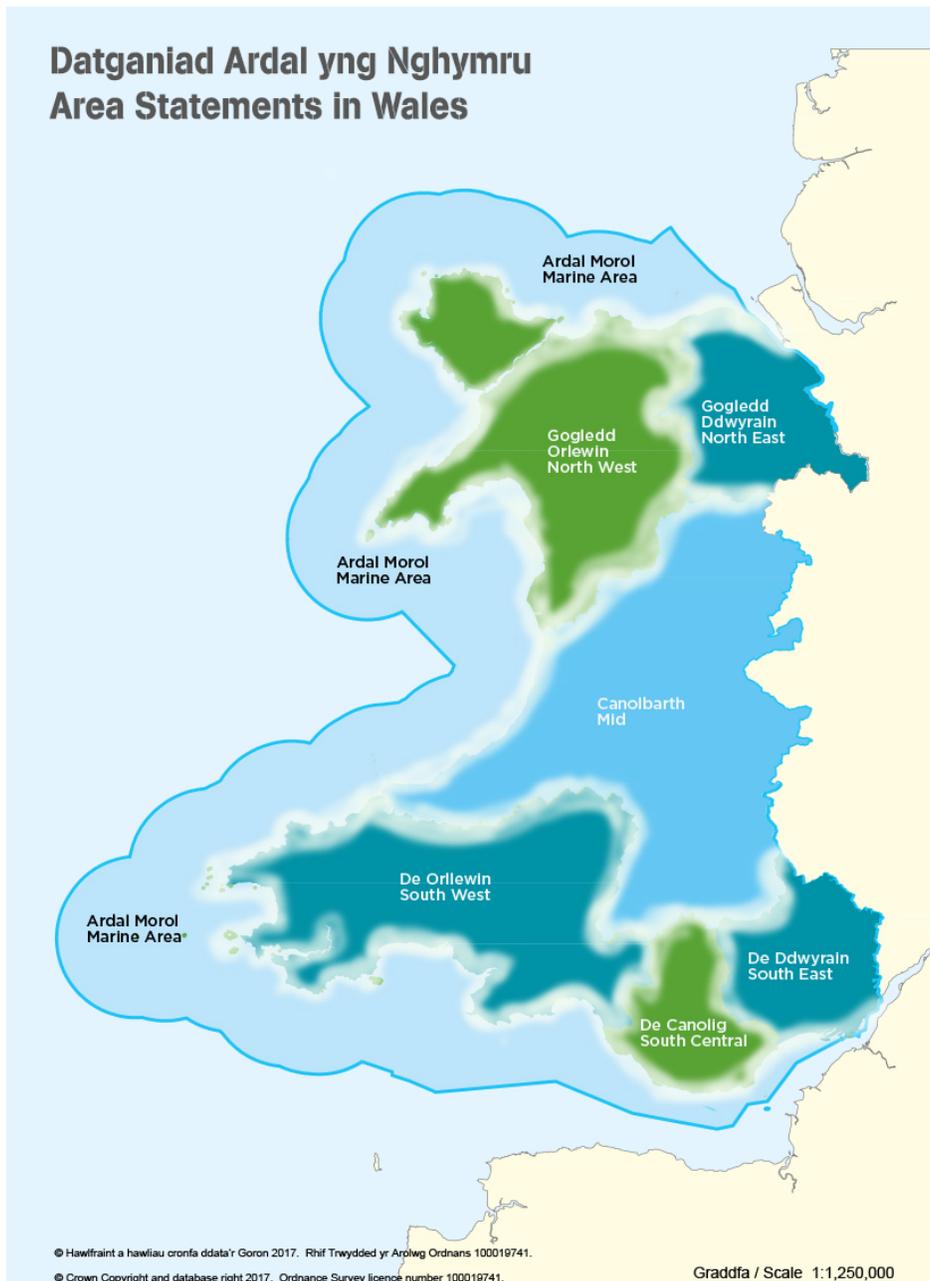
- Dyfi

4.3.10 Natural Resources Wales indicated in September 2017 that they will be taking a placed based approach to the development of the Area Statements for Wales and have identified seven geographic areas for planning and engagement purposes. These are:

- North West Wales
- North East Wales
- Mid Wales
- South West Wales
- South East Wales
- South Central Wales
- Marine Area

4.3.11 The Brecon Beacons National Park will sit predominantly within the Mid Wales Area, although Natural Resources is being careful not to draw unnecessary boundaries and will have regard to the National Park's role in looking south, west and east as well as north.

Figure 39 - Area Statements in Wales



4.3.12 Whilst Area Statements for the Brecon Beacons area are not yet available there are ways that in developing the new ROWIP regard can be made to some of the principles set out in the Natural Resources Policy Statement. In particular:

Principle	Brecon Beacons Rights of Way Improvement Plan Review
Building Resilience	In developing the new ROWIP regard can be made to the pressures and demands upon key sites and paths and how these can be managed to ensure their long term enjoyment. For example, by opening up new routes or ensuring that other parts of the rights of way network are open and easy to use may help to reduce pressure on key sites and attract people to other less used parts of the National Park.
Managing for Multiple Benefits	Ensuring that all aspects of the landscape are taken into consideration when developing the policies/priorities within the new ROWIP will make sure that any new routes identified for promotion do not include ones that cross sensitive habitats, for example.
Long Term	As with the five ways of working within the Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015, it is important that the long term is considered as part of the development of the new ROWIP. The ten year span of the new ROWIP will ensure that long term implications and impacts are considered.
Collaboration and Co-operation	By working with others and keeping in contact with relevant colleagues, both internally and externally, any progress made can be reflected in any reviews of the ROWIP in future, or when implementing specific policies/priorities.

4.3.13 Proposed actions

- i) the National Park Authority will work with Natural Resources Wales to develop work programmes and projects that contribute towards the sustainable management of natural resources

Section 4

Opportunities to Contribute to Local Plans and Priorities

4.4.1 Key Principles

4.4.2 Whilst the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority does have primary responsibility for some areas of public service delivery, such as planning, in other areas it is important to remember that the National Park comprises part of 7 other local authorities. These are:

- Powys County Council
- Monmouthshire County Council
- Carmarthenshire County Council
- Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- Torfaen County Borough Council

4.4.3 For each of these areas, some or all of the rights of way duties are devolved to the National Park Authority, with the exception of Torfaen. As a result it is important that the development of the new ROWIP takes into consideration the principles and policies of these authorities.

4.4.4 Background

4.4.5 For each of the constituent authorities the following documents have been reviewed and relevant policies considered for their impact upon the development of the new ROWIP:

- Corporate Management Plan
- Local Development Plan
- Local Transport Plan
- Destination Management Plan
- Regional Plans e.g. Growing Mid Wales

4.4.6 Where a version, or similar, of the above plans is produced by the National Park Authority this too has been considered as part of this review.

4.4.7 Relevant information

4.4.8 The table in Appendix 2 identifies the relevant policy, visions or strategy contained within the plans reviewed. From this information the following conclusions can be drawn:

4.4.9 Economic Benefits

4.4.10 The ROWIP should play a fundamental part in the National Park Authority's plans to promote and manage recreational pressures within the area. There is now growing evidence and a realisation that more needs to be done to provide opportunities for lowland walks associated with the main settlements. This creates opportunities for further self-guided trails and circular routes which would benefit local tourist businesses such as B&Bs, pubs and restaurants. The Destination Management Plans in particular reflect the need for well-maintained trails with good information and publicity to encourage responsible behaviour.

4.4.11 Further and enhanced walking and cycling opportunities to attractions and facilities will help reduce the number of visitors depending entirely on car transport, especially when routes can be linked to bus and train services. There is scope to improve the links between the ROWIP and the tourism and economic objectives of the National Park Authority. This will reflect some of the priorities for the main three local authorities of Powys, Carmarthenshire and Monmouthshire.

4.4.12 Health and wellbeing

4.4.13 There are substantial health and well-being benefits that could be derived through the establishment of high quality walking and cycling routes in the National Park. Encouraging residents to take regular exercise in the outdoors will reduce the high incidence of avoidable conditions such as diabetes. Exposure to the natural environment has also been shown to have considerable benefits in reducing stress levels, mental illness and anxiety. There are links therefore that could be developed with the Active Travel and the Integrated Network Maps that have been drawn up by the three main authorities covering the National Park.

4.4.14 Biodiversity

4.4.15 Account should be taken of sensitive ecological areas and, in the development of projects the forthcoming Area Statements to be produced by Natural Resources Wales. As well as ensuring that sensitive wildlife areas are not damaged by high levels of recreational use, opportunity for appropriate viewing of wildlife will arise and this will help enhance the appreciation and understanding of the special qualities of the National Park.

4.4.16 Landscape

4.4.17 Work arising from the ROWIP should take into account the landscape character in the National Park and provide access and recreational opportunities which are in keeping with the visual and cultural characteristics of the area. Consideration should

also be given to the sensitive design of rights of way signage, interpretation panels and furniture.

4.4.18 Community benefits

4.4.19 Local community place making has the potential to feed into the further development and improvement of local rights of way. By creating a greater sense of ownership of local recreational opportunities local communities can be encouraged to make more use of the network, to report problems and play a part in maintenance and interpretation. This will also benefit local tourism businesses, and in more remote areas play a part in ensuring that village pubs, shops and their facilities stay open.

4.4.20 Proposed actions

- i) the National Park Authority will look to collaborate with the unitary authorities to develop projects that complement the objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and those of the unitary authorities
- ii) the National Park Authority will look to collaborate with other bodies to develop projects that complement the objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and, where relevant, the unitary authorities
- iii) the National Park Authority will support other groups where they wish to develop projects that complement the objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and, where relevant, the unitary authorities

Part 5

Statement of Action for the Management and Improvement of the Public Rights of Way Network

5.1 Introduction

- 5.2 The proposed improvements are intended for all users of the public rights of way network within the National Park⁴⁰.
- 5.3 Implementation of the actions will be by means of delivery plans with specific targets.
- 5.4 Where appropriate, funding for all actions will be sought immediately after publication of this Rights of Way Improvement Plan unless there is prior commitment or a project has already commenced. Some actions will only be implemented if additional funding is available.
- 5.5 Some specific costs have been included although at this time these are approximate. These do not take inflation into account but include National Park Authority costs where additional staff are required.
- 5.6 Although an indication of priority has been given in some instances in the Statement of Action, prioritisation of specific actions will be undertaken by the National Park Authority upon the adoption of this Rights of Way Improvement Plan. Where appropriate, consultation and negotiation will then take place on the implementation of specific improvements.
- 5.7 A number of plans and strategies have already identified that improvements in the public rights of way network are necessary to achieve many of their aims. This Plan, therefore, is an opportunity for the National Park Authority to integrate work from plans and strategies that are already in progress.
- 5.8 Some improvements have already been made. For example, some projects have already commenced and have involved partnership working with groups at both local and national levels.
- 5.9 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan now gives the National Park Authority the opportunity to plan strategically for improvements over the whole network and for areas of Access Land. It is also a statutory document which can be used to argue for essential resources to implement such improvements.

5.10 Brexit

- 5.11 At the time of writing this ROWIP the United Kingdom was a few months away from leaving the European Union. The future shape of many post-Brexit policies are unknown. One of those, which will impact on rural Wales and the National Park, is the future of agricultural policy. There is a likelihood that changes will emerge in

⁴⁰ See note about mechanically propelled vehicles at 2.130

how the agricultural industry receives public funding which will impact on the current subsidy system.

- 5.12 This could impact on several areas including public access in terms of farmers and landowner providing benefits to the public.

5.13 Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

- 5.14 In 2017 the Welsh Government issued a consultation on the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources⁴¹. In that document was a section asking for comments on options on how to reform access legislation in Wales.

- 5.15 On the 19th June, 2018 the Minister for Environment issued a statement on the consultation. In relation to the access part of the consultation the Minister stated as follows:

“There were strong but differing views on how best to reform access legislation. We therefore believe that now is not the right time for substantive reform. But we are committed to exploring selected aspects of change where there was greater consensus, including on some of the administrative arrangements and multi-use paths. We will continue to facilitate further discussions through established groups such as the National Access Forum.”

- 5.16 At the time of writing this draft no further information had emerged from the Welsh Government. Clearly, any change to access legislation may have an impact on the content of this ROWIP and could impact on the actions that are included in the following Statement of Action. The actions are purposely broad and it hoped that they are sufficiently flexible to absorb any changes in legislation.

- 5.17 It is felt that some additional actions are required to pre-empt possible future scenarios arising from the above.

5.18 Proposed actions

- i) the National Park Authority will work with partners to facilitate the transition of any changes in agricultural policy or practice as a result of Brexit which may impact upon public access
- ii) the National Park Authority will work with partners to facilitate the introduction of any legislative changes or changes to policy that result from the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources consultation or from any other process

⁴¹ “Taking Forward Wales’ Sustainable Management of Natural Resources” (2017) Welsh Government

- iii) the National Park Authority will, with the unitary authorities, review the contents of the delegation agreements if any changes are required as a result of any legislative changes that result from the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources consultation

5.19 Statement of Action

Key: Estimated Costs

Staff

- † 0 Within current staff capacity
- † Some extra staff time required
- † † Significant extra staff time required
- † U Unknown

Resources

- £0 Within current budgets
- £ Less than £5,000 per annum
- ££ £5,000 to £10,000 per annum
- £££ £10,000 to £25,000 per annum
- ££££ £25,000 to £50,000 per annum
- £££££ More than £50,000 per annum
- £U Unknown

Ref	Action	Estimated Costs			
		Y1	Y2	Y3-5	Y6-10
1.1	Undertake a detailed audit of promoted route information to ensure that routes are available and accessible in an appropriate format	££	££		
1.2	Rights of way that are used to access waterways will be identified and maintained so as to improve their use for this purpose	£	£		
1.3	Continue to pass reports of issues with regard to unsurfaced unclassified county roads considered to provide connectivity in the rights of way network to the unitary authorities	£0	£0	£0	£0
1.4	Work with the unitary authorities to ensure that unsurfaced unclassified county roads that are promoted by the National Park Authority are maintained to a reasonable standard	£0	£0	£0	£0
1.5	Ensure that cycle routes on National Park Authority owned land are maintained to a high standard	£0	£0	££	£
1.6	Continue to provide permissive access where that is appropriate on National Park Authority owned land	£	£	£	£
1.7	Continue to support permissive access originating from the Glastir agri-environment scheme and assisting the Local Access Forum in its consideration of applications for permissive access under the scheme	£0	£0	£0	£0
1.8	Work to make the rights of way network more accessible for persons with restricted mobility and blind or partially sighted people	££	££	££	££
1.9	Work to make the rights of way network more accessible for horse riders and cyclists	££	££	££	££
1.10	Look for opportunities to increase the amount of access available for horse riders and cyclists	££	££	££	££
1.11	Work to make the rights of way network more accessible for carriage drivers	££	££	££	££
1.12	Work to eliminate one-step stiles from the rights of way network	££	££	££	££
1.13	Work to eliminate stiles on bridges on the rights of way network	£	£	£	£
1.14	Work to eliminate step gates on the rights of way network	£	£	£	£
1.15	Update and refresh “Places to visit with easier access”	££	££		

1.16	Work to eliminate steps from rights of way where that is feasible	££	££	££	££
1.17	Where appropriate, work to eliminate steps on bridges that the National Park Authority has full responsibility for	££	££	££	££
1.18	Work to replace stiles with gates whenever possible with particular focus on rights of way around and between settlements, and according to the priority hierarchy	££	££	££	££
1.19	The National Park Authority will publish an online digital representation of the Definitive Map	£0	£0		
1.20	The National Park Authority will publish an online map showing access land and land with higher rights e.g. urban commons	£	£		
1.21	The National Park Authority will digitise its records of authorisations under section 147 of the Highways Act 1980	£0	£0		
1.22	The National Park Authority will digitise its records of structures included in public path orders and definitive map modification orders	£0	£0		
1.23	The National Park Authority will review its backlog of unconfirmed public path orders	£0	£0		
1.24	The National Park Authority will work to provide a suite of downloadable route files from the www.breconbeacons.org website	£	£		
1.25	The National Park Authority will review the delegation agreements with the unitary authorities on an annual basis	£0	£0	£0	£0
1.26	The National Park Authority will review its prioritisation system to ensure that bridleways and restricted byways are categorised appropriately				
1.27	The National Park Authority will extend its record of bridges to include bridges that it considers it may have either a partial responsibility for repair and maintenance or no responsibility at all	£0	£0	£0	£0
1.28	The National Park Authority will work towards providing a digitised layer of all furniture that exists on the rights of way network and supplement it with a photographic record of the same. This is to be made available online as it progresses	£	£	£	
1.29	The National Park Authority will seek to eliminate instances where multiple furniture items are present at the same location on a right of way	£0	£0	£0	£0
1.30	The National Park Authority will seek to eliminate instances where furniture that is present on a right of way is incompatible with the status of the right of way e.g. where a stile is located on a bridleway	£	£	£	£

1.31	The National Park Authority will produce an enforcement policy in consultation with the Local Access Forum	£0	£0		
1.32	The National Park Authority will seek to resolve conflicts between users and landowners to ensure a safe, usable and trouble free network	£	£	£	£
1.33	The National Park Authority will continue to evolve its Dogs Code and provide advice on responsible dog ownership	£	£		
1.34	The National Park Authority will undertake an upland path survey in 2019	£0			
1.35	The National Park Authority will work closely with the unitary authorities to seek opportunities to contribute towards Active Travel aims	£	£		
1.36	The National Park Authority will seek opportunities to develop projects that contribute towards the Well-being goals and build upon projects that are already underway	££	££	££	££
1.37	The National Park Authority will look to collaborate with unitary authorities to develop projects that contribute towards unitary authority's Well-being actions, ambitions, aspirations and objectives	££	££	££	££
1.38	The National Park Authority will look to collaborate with other partners to develop projects that contribute towards the National Park Authority's Well-being objectives as well as those of partners	££	££	££	££
1.39	The National Park Authority will look to collaborate with the unitary authorities to develop projects that complement the Well-being objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and those of the unitary authorities	££	££	££	££
1.40	The National Park Authority will look to collaborate with other bodies to develop projects that contribute towards the National Park Authority's Well-being objectives as well as those of the other bodies	££	££	££	££
1.41	The National Park Authority will look to collaborate with other Public Services Board partners to deliver Public Services Board objectives	££	££	££	££
1.42	The National Park Authority will support other groups where they wish to develop projects that complement the Well-being objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and, where applicable, those of the unitary authorities	££	££	££	££

1.43	The National Park Authority will work with Natural Resources Wales to develop work programmes and projects that contribute towards the sustainable management of natural resources	££	££	££	££
1.44	The National Park Authority will look to collaborate with the unitary authorities to develop projects that complement the objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and those of the unitary authorities	££	££	££	££
1.45	The National Park Authority will look to collaborate with other bodies to develop projects that complement the objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and, where relevant, the unitary authorities	££	££	££	££
1.46	The National Park Authority will support other groups where they wish to develop projects that complement the objectives and priorities of the National Park Authority and, where relevant, the unitary authorities	££	££	££	££
1.47	The National Park Authority will work with partners to facilitate the transition of any changes in agricultural policy or practice as a result of Brexit which may impact upon public access	£U	£U		
1.48	The National Park Authority will work with partners to facilitate the introduction of any legislative changes or changes to policy that result from the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources consultation	£U	£U		
1.49	The National Park Authority will, with the unitary authorities, review the contents of the delegation agreements if any changes are required as a result of any legislative changes that result from the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources consultation	£U	£U		

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Appendix I

List of consultees for the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Abergavenny and District Tourist Association
Abergavenny Cycle Group
Abergavenny Town Council
Abergavenny U3A
Abergavenny Walkers are Welcome
Absolute Adventure
ACE Partnership
Acycling
Allt yr Esgair Graziers' Association
Amman and District Motor Club
Association of Bunkhouse Operators
Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres
Auto Cycle Union
Battery Vehicle Society
Bi Ped Cycles
Black Environment Network Wales
Black Mountain Activities
Black Mountain Graziers' Association
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Blaenavon Graziers' Association
Blaenavon Town Council
Blorengge Graziers' Association
Blue Mountain Activities Ltd.
Brecknock Access Group
Brecknock Society and Museum Friends
Brecknock Wildlife Trust
Brecon and District Mind
Brecon Beacons Commoners' Association
Brecon Beacons National Park Local Access Forum
Brecon Beacons Park Society
Brecon Beacons Tourism
Brecon Chamber of Trade
Brecon County Show
Brecon Golf Club
Brecon Motor Club
Brecon Scouts
Brecon Town Council
Brecon U3A
British Driving Society Wales
British Geological Survey
British Horse Society Wales
British Mountaineering Council
British Telecom

Bryn y Cwm Forum
Brynarw Graziers' Association
Brynmawr Town Council
Buckland Manor Graziers' Association
Builth Wells Cycles
Byway and Bridleway Trust
Cadw
Caerphilly County Borough Council
Call of the Wild Ltd.
Cambrian Caving Council
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
Canal and River Trust
Cantref Trekking and Riding Centre
Caravan and Motorhome Club
Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services
Carmarthenshire County Council
Carmarthenshire Tourist Association
Cefn Coed Community Forum
Cefn Llechid Graziers' Association
Church in Wales
Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust
Cnewr Estate
Comin y Rhos Graziers' Association
Country Land and Business Association
Cowbridge U3A
Crai Community Council
Crickhowell Adventure
Crickhowell and Black Mountains Tourism
Crickhowell and District Civic Society
Crickhowell Town Council
Crickhowell Walkers are Welcome
Crossroads Care Sir Gâr
Crucorney Community Council
Cwmamman Town Council
Cwmdu and District Community Council
Cwmfforest Riding Centre
Cyclists' Touring Club (Cycling UK)
Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd
Dementia Friendly Brecon
Disability Wales
Dragon's Back Race
Drover Holidays
Duke of Beaufort's Breconshire Estate
Duke of Edinburgh's Award
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water
Dyfed Archaeological Trust
Dyfed Powys Police
Dyffryn Cennen Community Council
EC Cycles
Ellesmere Riding Centre

Farmers Union of Wales
Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group Cymru
Fforest Fach Graziers' Association
Fforest Fawr Geopark Management Group
Freerein Riding Holidays Ltd.
Garreg Coch Graziers' Association
Gibbs Sport
Gilfach Farm Holiday Accommodation
Gilwern U3A
Girlguiding Cymru
Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust
Glanaman Pedol Twrch Graziers' Association
Glanusk Estate
Glyn Tarell Community Council
Glyntawe Outdoor Centre
Golden Castle Riding Stables
Goytre Fawr Community Council
Grange Trekking Centre
GrassRoutes Cymru
Great Forest Graziers' Association
Grosmont Community Council
Groundwork Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taff
Groundwork Wales
Gurkha Welfare
Gwalia
Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations
Gwent Police
Gwent Wildlife Trust
Gwernyfed Community Council
Hampshire Mountain Centre
Hawk Associates
Hay and District Chamber of Commerce
Hay on Wye Town Council
Hay U3A
HF Holidays
Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council
Honddu Isaf Community Council
Interactivities Outdoor Adventure
Interlink
Kevin Walker Mountain Activities
Lakeside Caravan and Camping Park
Landmarc
Llanddeusant Community Council
Llanddew Community Council
Llandovery.Info
Llandovery Town Council
Llandovery Walkers are Welcome
Llandybie Community Council
Llandyfan Graziers' Associaton

Llanelly Community Council
Llanfihangel Talyllyn Graziers' Association
Llanfoist Fawr Community Council
Llanfrynach Community Council
Llangadog Community Council
Llangattock Community Council
Llangorse Community Council
Llangorse Graziers' Association
Llangorse Multi Activity Centre
Llangorse Penthir and Bwlch Graziers' Association
Llangynidr Community Council
Llanigon Community Council
Llanover Community Council
Llanthony Riding and Trekking
Llanthony Treats
Llantilio Pertholey Community Council
Llwynon Saddlery
Llywel Community Council
Lower Common Graziers' Association
Maescar Community Council
Manor Penderyn Graziers' Association
Merthyr Tydfil Community Forum
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service
Mid Wales Tourism
Mid Wales Transportation
Mightcontainnuts
Monmouthshire County Council
Monmouthshire Disablement Association (CAIR)
Motor Sports Association
Mountain and Water
Myddfai Community Council
Mynydd Bach Trecastle Graziers' Association
Mynydd Illtud Commoners' Association
Mynydd Rheinalt Commoners' Association
Mynydd Troed Commoners' Association
Nantyglo and Blaina Community Council
National Exercise Referral Scheme
National Farmers Union Cymru
National Federation of Women's Institutes
National Grid plc
National Sheep Association
National Trust
Natural Resources Wales
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Newcourt Campsite
Offa's Dyke Association
One Voice Wales
Open Spaces Society
Palleg Graziers' Association

Parc Bryn Bach
Parkwood Outdoors Dolygaer
Pedal Power
Pencerrig Calch Commoners' Association
Penpont
Pentre Riding Stables and Accommodation
Perth-y-Pia Outdoor Activity Centre
PGL
Pontypool Community Council
Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations
Powys County Council
Powys People First
Powys Regeneration Partnership
Powys Transitions and Low Carbon Communities Network
PSM Outdoors
Pyscodlyn Farm
Quarter Bach Community Council
Ramblers Association
Rhigos Community Council
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Rhymney Town Council
Ride and Hike
Riverside Riding Centre
Royal National Institute of Blind People Cymru
Scouts Cymru
Sight Cymru
Small Farms
South and Mid Wales Chamber of Commerce
South Wales Fire and Rescue Service
South Wales Outdoor Activity Providers Group
South Wales Police
Sport Wales
Storey Arms Outdoor Education Centre
Sugar Loaf Commoners' Association
Sustrans Cymru
Swansea Valley Holiday Cottages
Taff Valley Quad Bike and Activity Centre
Talgarth Information and Resource Centre
Talgarth Regeneration Group
Talgarth Town Council
Talgarth Walkers are Welcome
Talybont Community Council
Tawe Uchaf Community Council
The Crug Graziers' Association
The Disabled Ramblers
The National Showcaves Centre for Wales
The Prince's Trust Cymru
Torfaen County Borough Council
Torfaen Livery Centre
Torfaen Voluntary Alliance

Trail Riders Fellowship
Trallong Community Council
Trallong Commoners Association
Trap and Llandyfan Graziers' Association
Treadlightly
Tredegar Town Council
Tregoe Estate
Tregoyd Mountain Riders
Trevelog Farm
Trewern Outdoor Education Centre
Vale of Grwyney Community Council
Vaynor Community Forum
Vaynor Graziers' Association
Visual Impairment Breconshire
Wales Centre for Health
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Wales Council of the Blind
Wales Environment Link
Wales Outdoors
Wales Trekking and Riding Association
Wales Young Farmers' Clubs
Welsh Association of Motor Clubs
Welsh Cycling
Welsh Games
Welsh Motor Cycle Federation
Welsh Orienteering Association
Welsh Sports Association
Welsh Trail Riders Association
Western Great Forest Graziers' Association
Western Power
Wheely Wonderful Cycling
Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales
Woodland Trust
Wye and Usk Foundation
Youth Hostel Association
Yscir Community Council
Ystradfellte Community Council
Ystradgynlais Community Forum
Ystradgynlais Town Council

Members of the National Park Authority
Members of Parliament
Assembly Members

Appendix 2

Strategic Context

I. The National Park Vision

The following vision statements describe the overarching ambitions for the National Park for the next 20 years. These statements were identified through the preparation of 'Managing Change Together' (National Park Management Plan for 2010-2015).

In 20 years' time the Brecon Beacons National Park will be:

- Recognised internationally and nationally for its value as a protected area, whose character continues to be shaped by the long-standing interactions between people and the processes of nature.
- Widely acclaimed for its natural beauty, geodiversity, biodiversity and cultural heritage while being a sought-after destination, providing an outstanding variety of sustainable opportunities for all to understand, enjoy and benefit from its tranquillity, rural character, Welsh way of life, sense of remoteness and other special qualities.
- Resilient, open and responsive to change - particularly climate change - and its stakeholders proactive in mitigating and adapting to the effects of undesirable change through local action.
- Less dependent upon external supply chains leading to increased food and energy security locally, improved quality of life, community cohesion and conservation of natural capital.
- A living landscape where people can earn a living from the land in an innovative and sustainable manner, for example through farming, but also in new ways such as through renewable energy production, for the benefit of the environment, economy and local communities.
- Managed sustainably (respecting the limits of the planet's natural resources, its environment and its biodiversity whilst having regard for social and economic concerns such that all actions taken to meet our needs today do not compromise the needs of future generations) through active partnerships. This will ensure it continues to be a source of inspiration and enjoyment for future generations.
- Monitored over the long term to improve future policy and management practice.

It should be noted that the National Park Management Plan is currently under review and, as a result, the National Park Vision may change during the life of this ROWIP.

2. The National Park Authority’s Corporate Plans

The Corporate Plans set out the National Park Authority’s annual priorities and activities in order to show how it will deliver the longer term aspirations of the National Park Management Plan within the broader national context of the “Taking Wales Forward” programme for government and key pieces of legislation such as the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act places a duty on the National Park Authority to set out its Well-being objectives and to demonstrate how these contribute to the Welsh Government’s seven Well-being Goals. The three National Park Authorities in Wales work to a common format of a Corporate Plan which complies with legislation and meets the requirements of the Wales Audit Office.

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority is committed to securing continuous improvement in the delivery of its efficient and resourceful services. Its work has a direct impact on the people who access its services and the National Park Authority wishes to be open and transparent about its priorities and how it is performing.

A copy of the Corporate Plan is available here:

<http://modgov.breconbeacons.org/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13131>

3. National Park Management Plan 2015-2020

The National Park Management Plan is the National Park Authority's leading document, which it is required to prepare under the Environment Act 1995 following wide public consultation. It sets out a vision and strategic objectives for the whole National Park. The current plan covers the period 2015-2020 and, at the time of preparing this Rights of Way Improvement Plan, it is currently under review pending 2020-2025. In the current National Park Management Plan the following themes have been identified:

Theme 1: Managing Park landscapes to maximise conservation and public benefits	First purpose
Theme 2: Conserving and enhancing biodiversity	
Theme 3: Provide opportunities for outdoor access and recreation	Second purpose
Theme 4: Raising awareness and understanding of the Park	
Theme 5: Building and maintaining sustainable communities, towns and villages	Duty
Theme 6: Sustainable economic development	

During the preparation of this Rights of Way Improvement Plan due regard has been taken to the relevant sections of the Management Plan whilst bearing in mind the fact that the plan will be superseded early in the life of the ROWIP.

A copy of the current National Park Management Plan is available here:

<http://modgov.breconbeacons.org/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13311>

4. Local Development Plan

The Local Development Plan is the most up-to-date policy framework for the National Park and is the primary document for development planning purposes.

Its vision, is derived from the National Park Management Plan, addresses matters affected by development control:

The Brecon Beacons National Park will continue to be a living working landscape with many uses, where development will be sustainable and compatible with the statutory National Park purposes. This LDP will guide development in a way which will ensure that within the lifetime of the plan, the Brecon Beacons will be a place which:-

- Continues to be recognised internationally for its value as a protected area, whose character continues to be shaped by the long-standing interactions between people and the processes of nature
- Continues to be widely acclaimed for its natural beauty, geodiversity, biodiversity, and cultural heritage which are being conserved and enhanced by its stakeholders through traditional and innovative means
- Continues to be a sought-after destination providing an outstanding variety of sustainable opportunities for all to understand and enjoy its tranquillity, rural character, Welsh way of life, sense of remoteness, and other special qualities
- Promotes an approach to development which ensure that the National Park of the future is able to be resilient, open and responsive to change – particularly climate change – and can be proactive in mitigating and adapting to the effects of undesirable change
- Promotes an approach to development which enables our communities to be less dependent upon external supply chains leading to increased food and energy security locally, improved quality of life, community cohesion and conservation of natural capital
- Continues to be a living landscape where innovative approaches to sustainable development and renewable energy are encouraged and tested for the benefit of the environment, the economy and local communities
- Managed sustainably through active partnerships among the Park's stakeholders so that it continues to be a source of inspiration and enjoyment for future generations

- Has appropriate monitoring systems in place to ensure that development and plan policies are monitored over the long term to improve future policy development.

A copy of the Local Development Plan is available here:

<http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/Brecon-Written-Statement.pdf>

Whilst there are a number general policies in the Local Development Plan that are relevant to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, two particular policies are especially relevant:

Policy 49 - Rights of Way and Long Distance Routes

Development that would prevent or adversely affect the use of a public right of way; or a route with potential to form a long-distance walking, riding or cycling path; or a promoted path will only be permitted where an equivalent alternative route can be provided;

and,

Policy 60 - Provision for Cycling and Walking

Development proposals which involve the creation of new pedestrian and/or cycle routes or will enable the implementation of specific measures to make walking and/or cycling safer and more attractive will be permitted where they:

- a) have as little adverse environmental impact as feasible, and where necessary incorporate mitigation measures;
- b) fulfil a strategic or local need (for instance forming part of or a link to the National Cycle Network);
- c) provide improved opportunities for sustainable travel;
- d) can be proven to help reduce traffic generation.

5. National Parks Wales: Together for Health and Well-being (2018)

The Position Statement and Priority Actions of the three Welsh National Parks on Health and Well-being.

The Principles are:

- Everyone is entitled to experience National Parks, this includes the opportunity for easy access to National Parks
- The experiences available within National Parks can reduce the negative impacts of poverty and improve opportunities for social inclusion and better health

- Interaction with nature for the benefit of health and wellbeing to be done sensitively so as not to compromise the special qualities and landscape of National Parks for future generations.

The Priority Actions are:

- Raise awareness of the health and well-being benefits opportunities of National Parks
- Continue to develop evidence-based policy and practice in relation to health and well-being and the natural environment and landscape features
- Maximise opportunities for all people in Wales to access the health and well-being benefits of the natural environment and landscape features of National Parks

6. Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021 – Welsh Government

The Welsh Government’s key priorities for 2016 to 2021.

Particular priorities that are relevant to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan are:

- Continue to promote exercise...
- Introduce a new Wales Well-being Bond aimed at improving mental and physical health and to reduce sedentary lifestyles...
- Work with schools, employers and other partners to improve well-being and promote better emotional health
- Ensure better access to active travel for all
- Continue our work will all protected groups to counter discrimination and ensure opportunities for all
- Work with partners across all sectors to identify more opportunities for people to volunteer

A copy of the document is available here:

<https://gov.wales/docs/strategies/160920-taking-wales-forward-en.pdf>

7. “Climbing Higher” (2005) and “Climbing Higher Next Steps” (2006) – Welsh Assembly Government

The Climbing Higher Strategy is the Welsh Assembly Government’s twenty-year vision for sport and physical activity. It sets out objectives and targets dealing with health, economy, culture, society and environment. Its Vision is as follows:

“An active, healthy and inclusive Wales, where sport, physical activity and active recreation provide a common platform for participation, fun and achievement, which binds communities and the nation and where the outstanding environment of Wales is used sustainably to enhance confidence in ourselves”.

Particular objectives and targets that are relevant to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan are:

- The percentage of people in Wales using the Welsh natural environment for outdoor activities will increase from 36% to 60%
- 95% of people will have a footpath or cycle-path within a 10 minute walk
- No one should live more than a 6 minute walk (300m) from their nearest green space
- Encourage the integration of walking and cycling into everyday life and a means of recreation and transport
- Minimise the gaps related to gender, age, disability, ethnicity and deprivation
- By increasing participation in sustainable ways that ensure that the quality of the natural environment is maintained and enhanced.

Copies of the documents are available here:

<https://gov.wales/docs/drah/publications/150311-climbing-higher-en.pdf>

and here:

<https://gov.wales/docs/drah/publications/100201-next-steps-en.pdf>

8. “Creating an Active Wales” (2009) – Welsh Assembly Government

Creating an Active Wales is central to the One Wales ambition for a healthier future for all. It recognises that physical activity and sport are beneficial to health and that a partnership across the Welsh Assembly Government, Local Authorities, the NHS, the Third Sector and communities is essential if benefits are to be gained from an active and healthy Wales.

The actions in this document seek to further support people who are already physically active and provide encouragement for those who are not. In recognising the diversity of modern Wales the plan also seeks to create and sustain an approach that is inclusive for all parts of the community in finding different routes to being active.

The strategic aim for an active environment is “to develop and maintain a physical environment that makes it easier and safer for people to choose to be more physically active”.

Priorities to achieve that aim are:

- Ensuring that the natural and built environment encourages people to be physically active, ensuring any redevelopments or new builds are accessible, safe and designed to make physical activity an attractive option

- Developing an infrastructure to support travel by healthier and more sustainable modes, such as walking, cycling and public transport
- Increasing availability, access and use of high quality local green space, waterways and countryside

A copy of the document is available here:

<https://gov.wales/docs/phhs/publications/activewales/100121activewalesen.pdf>

9. Outdoor Recreation and Access Enabling Plan 2015 – 2020 (Natural Resources Wales)

The Enabling Plan sets out Natural Resources Wales' objectives for outdoor recreation and access.

It covers the way in which Natural Resources Wales:

- manages and facilitates use of its estate for recreation and access
- enables and works with others to facilitate and promote recreation and access across Wales, reflecting its target markets and audience needs
- is a principal adviser to the Welsh Government, industry and the wider public and voluntary sector on recreation and access

It has three overarching principles that must be considered in its decision making in delivering upon its corporate priorities:

- All outdoor recreational provision delivered, facilitated or funded by Natural Resources Wales will adhere to the principles of least restrictive access and be developed and delivered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- We will align our work to deliver the benefits of recreation and access through spatial targeting, focussing first on those areas that deliver the greatest benefit for people and communities
- We will be an enabling organisation, working with partners and others to facilitate outdoor recreation and access activity both on and off our own land

The overarching aim of the Enabling Plan is that Wales has more people participating in and benefitting from outdoor recreation more often.

Natural Resources Wales wants to achieve this aim in order to:

- increase people's appreciation of and care for the environment
- improve social equity and cohesion of people and communities
- increase the economic benefits of recreation to Wales
- improve people's health and wellbeing

10. Other Visions, Strategies and Plans

Seven Unitary Authorities have areas within the Brecon Beacons National Park, Powys, Monmouthshire, Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.

The most relevant priorities from the following types of documents are listed in Appendix 3 and consist of:

Management Plans/Corporate Plan Priorities

Visions

Local Development Plan Policies

Local Development Plan Policies relating to public access

Local Transport Plans

Destination Management Plans/Sustainable Tourism Plans

Well-being Plans and Active Travel Plans are dealt with as separate topics in Part 4.

Appendix 3

Priorities from local authority documents

Management Plan / Corporate Plan Priorities	
Authority	Policy
Powys County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services delivered for less: Remodelling council services to respond to reduced funding • Supporting people in the community to live fulfilled lives • Developing the economy • Learning: Improving learner outcomes for all, minimising disadvantage
Monmouthshire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life to help them achieve better outcomes • Maximise the potential in our communities to improve well-being for people throughout their life course • Maximise the benefits of the natural and built environment for the well-being of current and future generations • Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to ensure a well-connected and thriving county
Carmarthenshire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Better Use of Resources • Building a Better Council • People in Carmarthenshire are healthier • People in Carmarthenshire fulfill their learning potential • People who live, work and visit Carmarthenshire are safe and feel safer • Carmarthenshire's communities and environment are sustainable • Carmarthenshire has a stronger and more prosperous economy
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy – building a strong economy • People – promoting independence and positive lives for everyone • Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	<p>Best Start to Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children get the best start to life • Children and young people are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals <p>Working Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making skills work for Merthyr Tydfil: Developing the workforce of the future • Developing the environment and infrastructure for business to flourish <p>Environmental Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities protect, enhance and promote our natural environment and countryside • Communities protect, develop and promote our heritage and cultural assets

	<p>Living Well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing safer communities • People have good physical and mental health • People live independently
<p>Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a better, enhanced environment and infrastructure that will benefit our communities, businesses and visitors • Continue to improve learner outcomes and well-being so that all children and young people thrive and realise their full potential • We will be a modern, smart Authority, providing leadership to enable people and communities to thrive • Take a preventative and early intervention approach to support the most vulnerable ensuring, where appropriate, they are protected and supported to achieve personal outcomes and well-being • Maximise the employability of local people through skills development at a local and regional level

Council Vision	
Authority	Policy
Powys County Council	Strong communities in the green heart of Wales
Monmouthshire County Council	We want to enable the building of sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.
Carmarthenshire County Council	Our vision is for a Carmarthenshire that enables people to live healthy and fulfilled lives by working together to build strong, bilingual and sustainable communities
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	For a County Borough that has high aspirations, is confident and promotes opportunity for all.
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	Strengthen Merthyr Tydfil's position as the regional centre for the Heads of the Valleys, and be a place to be proud of where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People learn and develop skills to fulfil their ambitions • People live, work, have a safe, healthy and fulfilled life • People visit, enjoy and return
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council <i>*LDP Vision</i>	Through collaborative working, by 2021, Blaenau Gwent will become a network of sustainable, vibrant valley communities, where people have the skills, knowledge and opportunities to achieve a better quality of life and residents will live in safe, healthy and thriving communities, with access to a range of good quality affordable homes and thriving town centres. Its unique environment, cultural and historic identity will be protected and enhanced to create a place where people want to live, work and visit.

LDP Strategic Policy	
Authority	Policy
BBNPA	SE5 Tourism To support a sustainable tourism industry that contributes to the public's enjoyment of the National Park.
Powys County Council	
Monmouthshire County Council	Policy S13 – Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment. 4. Seek to integrate landscape elements, green infrastructure, biodiversity features and ecological connectivity features, to create multifunctional, interconnected spaces that offer opportunities for recreation and healthy activities such as walking and cycling.
Carmarthenshire County Council	SP1 Sustainable Places and Spaces Proposals for development will be supported where they reflect sustainable development and design principles by: f) Promoting active transport infrastructure and safe and convenient sustainable access particularly through walking and cycling;
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	Policy CS 8 - Transportation Improvements to the strategic transportation network in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be secured through a combination of the following:- a) The safeguarding and provision of land for the improvement of the strategic highway network, including development of:- 1. The Gelli / Treorchy Relief Road; 2. The Ynysmaerdy to Talbot Green Relief Road; 3. The A4059 Aberdare Bypass Extension, and 4. A465 Abergavenny / Hirwaun Dualling. b) The implementation of a strategic transport corridor management system in the following strategic corridor areas; 1. A4119 / A473 Corridor; 2. A470 / A4059 Corridor, and 3. A4059 / A465 Corridor. Provision of additional improvements in the highway network, public transport improvements and walking and cycling provision will be sought in accordance with policies NSA 20 to NSA 23 and SSA 18 to SSA 21.
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	Policy BW16: Protecting /enhancing the network of leisure facilities The Council will protect and support the enhancement of the County Borough's network of leisure facilities including outdoor play space, public open space and public rights of way in order to ensure their continued use for recreation and amenity. Development proposals that result in the loss of an existing facility will not normally be permitted unless:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative provision of at least equivalent value to the local community can be provided nearby, or • It can be demonstrated that existing provision is inappropriate or surplus to the needs of the community and is no longer required, or • In the case of commercially based leisure facilities, it can be demonstrated there is no longer a viable leisure use for the facility.
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	SP6 Ensuring Accessibility The Council will work with partner organisations, including the Welsh Government, South East Wales Transport Alliance, public transport

	<p>operators, community transport providers, Network Rail and neighbouring Authorities to deliver a sustainable transport network which:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Increases connectivity through improving cycle, rail, bus and road links:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) With other key settlements in the South East Wales Region, Wales, the UK and Europe;b) Between the principal hub of Ebbw Vale and other identified district hubs (Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery);2) Facilitates and supports economic growth, regeneration and development priorities; whilst minimising harm to the built and natural environment and local communities3) Promotes Ebbw Vale as a regional public transport hub which integrates cycling, walking, bus and rail networks;4) Facilitates an integrated and safe system of cycle and pedestrian routes connecting settlements with employment areas and town centres;5) Facilitates the transportation of freight on the core network whilst encouraging the use of rail; and6) Secures appropriate provision for people with special access and mobility requirements.
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LDP Policies relating to public rights of way	
Authority	Policy
Powys County Council	<p>Policy DMI - Strategic Planning Matters</p> <p>All proposals for development must not compromise, or unacceptably adversely affect, either on their own or in combination with existing or approved development, the following:</p> <p>7. Important material assets and their operation including:</p> <p>ii. Important tourism assets and visitor attractions</p> <p>a. National Cycle Network routes.</p> <p>b. National Trails.</p> <p>c. Local Trails and public rights of way.</p> <p>d. Montgomery canal.</p> <p>e. Open access land and common land.</p> <p>f. Royal Welsh Agricultural showground.</p> <p>iii. Potential future routes along linear features such as former transport corridors and railway lines.</p>
Monmouthshire County Council	<p>Policy MV3 – Public Rights of Way</p> <p>Development that would obstruct or adversely affect a public right of way will not be permitted unless satisfactory provision is made which maintains the convenience, safety and visual amenity offered by the original right of way and this will be reflected in the layout and conditions / obligations on any permission granted.</p> <p>Proposals to improve or create public rights of way will be permitted where they add to the utility and enjoyment of the network, including providing missing links in otherwise continuous routes, upgrading paths to bridleways or enhancing the green infrastructure network, provided they give rise to no unacceptable amenity or environmental impacts and comply with legislative requirements. Such proposals should be designed with the convenience, safety and visual amenity of users in mind and should also take into account the needs of those with limited mobility, the impact on the adjoining rights of way network and connectivity of that network.</p> <p>Policy MV4 – Cycleways</p> <p>New cycleways will be permitted where they provide improved opportunities for sustainable travel or recreational cycling, subject to no adverse impact on pedestrian / cyclist safety and subject to detailed planning considerations. In addition, where appropriate, cycleways should provide for the needs of walkers, horse riders and those with limited mobility.</p> <p>Development that would obstruct or adversely affect a cycleway will not be permitted.</p>
Carmarthenshire County Council	<p>Policy TR4 Cycling and Walking</p> <p>Land required to facilitate the following improvements to the cycle network will be safeguarded. Proposed routes where known are shown on the proposals map. The potential opportunity for horse riding should where appropriate be considered.</p> <p>a. Towy Valley (between Llandeilo and Carmarthen);</p> <p>b. Whitland to Llanglydwen;</p> <p>c. Ammanford to the Amman Valley.</p> <p>Developments should, where appropriate seek to incorporate, or where acceptable, facilitate links to the cycle, rights of way and bridleway network to ensure an integrated sustainable approach in respect of any site.</p>
Rhondda Cynon Taf	Policy AW 7 - Protection and Enhancement of the Built

<p>County Borough Council</p>	<p>Environment Development proposals which impact upon sites of architectural and / or historical merit and sites of archaeological importance will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the site. Development proposals which affect areas of public open space, allotments, public rights of way, bridleways and cycle tracks will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that :- 1. There is a surplus of such facilities in the locality, or; 2. The loss can be replaced with an equivalent or greater provision in the immediate locality; or 3. The development enhances the existing facility.</p>
<p>Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council</p>	<p>Policy TB5: Special needs housing Development proposals for special needs such as community care provision, institutional, residential and nursing homes will be permitted subject to consideration against the following criteria:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal must not conflict with transportation considerations including access, parking, traffic generation, accessibility to public transport and enjoyment of public rights of way; <p>Policy TB6: Static caravans, residential mobile homes and gypsy/traveller accommodation Development proposals for static caravans, residential mobile homes and gypsy/ traveller accommodation will be permitted where:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal does not conflict with transportation considerations including access, parking, traffic generation, accessibility to public transport and enjoyment of public rights of way; <p>Policy TB8: Mineral proposals Proposals for mineral extraction and associated development will only be allowed where:- 4. they would not conflict with transportation considerations including access, parking, traffic generation, and enjoyment of public rights of way;</p> <p>Policy TB10: Waste management facilities Development proposals for new and expanded in-building and open-air waste management facilities other than those involving new landfill capacity/sites will be permitted subject to consideration against the following criteria:- 3. the proposal must not conflict with transportation considerations including access, parking, traffic generation, accessibility to public transport and enjoyment of public rights of way.</p> </p></p>
<p>Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</p>	<p>DM4 Low and Zero Carbon Energy The Council will encourage major development proposals to incorporate schemes which generate energy from renewable and low/zero carbon technologies. These technologies include onshore wind; landfill gas; energy crops; energy from waste; anaerobic digestion; sewage gas; hydropower; biomass; combined heat and power; and solar. These technologies will be permitted provided that: c) They can be safely accessed to permit regular maintenance without an unacceptable adverse impact to the environment or the public rights of way network;</p>

Local Transport Plan	
Authority	Policy
Powys County Council	<p>Mid Wales Joint Local Transport Plan 2015</p> <p>Vision for Transport in Mid Wales</p> <p>The Mid Wales Local Authorities will plan for and deliver in partnership an integrated and affordable transport system in the region that facilitates economic development, ensures access for all to services and opportunities, sustains and improves the quality of community life, and makes an active contribution to the management of carbon and the quality of the environment.</p> <p>Outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to Key Destinations and Markets: Economic growth in the region will have been supported, through an improvement in the efficiency, reliability, resilience, and connectivity of movement, including freight, within Mid Wales and to and from other key destinations and markets. 2. Access to Employment and Services: Social equality and employability will have been promoted through inclusive, integrated and affordable access to employment and key health, education, social services, and play and recreation facilities, with a focus on tackling access to the Enterprise Zone and Local Growth Zones and those areas particularly deprived in terms of access to services. 3. Improving Health and Well-being by Increasing Walking and Cycling: Levels of cycling and walking for both necessary active travel and recreation, by residents and visitors, will have been increased. 4. Improved Safety and Security: The actual and perceived safety and security of travel by all modes will have been improved. 5. Benefits and Minimised Impacts on the Environment: The potential for transport improvements to reduce carbon emissions and improve the local and global natural and built environment will have been maximised and negative impacts minimised, including adaptation to the effects of climate change.
Monmouthshire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy MV3 – Public Rights of Way • Policy MV4 – Cycleways <p>Issue</p> <p>Lack of cycle facilities, unsuitable facilities caused by small problems in the connection to other routes.</p> <p>Action</p> <p>Further develop active travel network using best practise; Identify routes where cycling is prohibited and shared routes with conflicts and undertake PROW reviews; Set up system so that small problems can be dealt with in timely way.</p>
Carmarthenshire County Council	<p>Joint Transport Plan For South West Wales 2015 - 2020</p> <p>Policy KS3 - improve walking and cycling links within and between key settlements, as part of delivering the ATA Action Plan</p> <p>Issue</p> <p>A high proportion of commuting trips are less than 5km and could be undertaken by active travel modes or by using public transport, thus increasing the viability of local bus services</p> <p>Action</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, develop and deliver active travel routes in and between communities • Encourage more active travel infrastructure such as cycle parking/ outdoor clothes storage • Encourage travel plan development in public, private and third sector organisations
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	<p>South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan</p> <p>Vision</p> <p>A modern, accessible, integrated and sustainable transport system for the SE Wales Valleys and beyond which increases opportunity, promotes prosperity for all and protects the environment; where walking, cycling, public transport and sustainable freight provide real travel alternatives.</p>
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	<p>Wider Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the economy, through improving connectivity for business and freight, making transport more effective and efficient, providing access to employment, education, shopping and leisure, and improving transport integration; • Promote social inclusion and equality, by providing a transport system that is safe, accessible, and affordable to all sections of the community; and • Protect the environment, by minimising transport emissions and consumption of resources and energy, by promoting walking, cycling, quality public transport, modal shift and minimising demand on the transport system.

Destination Management Plan / Sustainable Tourism Plan	
Authority	Policy
BBNPA	<p>Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proud exemplar of a sustainable destination supported by its communities • A ‘good neighbour’ adding significant value to the regional offer and economy • Vibrant private and voluntary sectors taking a lead in tourism delivery and visitor welcome • More reasons to visit more often across the National Park and across the year
Powys County Council	See Brecon Beacons Destination Management Plan
Monmouthshire County Council	<p>The objectives of the Destination Development Plan are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To grow tourism revenue to the county <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ By 10% in real terms value (from 2015 base) ○ Across the year ○ Across all parts of the County ○ Based on high quality visitor experiences • Supported by the following objectives • To consolidate Food Capital of Wales status for Monmouthshire • To consolidate and make further progress on the Walking Product Development Plan • To maximise the tourism benefits of the cultural offer as well as countryside and heritage • To establish the County’s cycling credentials on a sustainable base of events, routes, amenities and cycle friendly communities and accommodation • To encourage investment in the serviced accommodation sector (especially following development of the International Convention Centre) • To develop a seasonal programme of events which support the County’s key product offers – Food, Heritage, Arts + Culture, Walking and Cycling • To continue support for vibrant, attractive, welcoming and distinctive towns and villages • To establish Monmouthshire’s position as our ‘first’ county through an iconic intervention at the entrance to Wales • To ‘reset’ partnership arrangements with ‘neighbours’ and between stakeholders within the county • To ensure that Monmouthshire on and off-line content is distributed through all relevant channels and campaigns • Through all activities to build the reputation of the County - ‘Monmouthshire’ = high quality <p>Headline Programme The Action Offer Develop the Monmouthshire Cycling offer using the same successful and logical methodology as for Walking concentrating on a manageable number of viable routes e.g. canal, Living Levels. Consolidate and continue development of the Walking Offer</p> <p>The Monmouthshire Season Encourage events that create year-round added value, support</p>

	emerging products and celebrate the County's strengths: Walking, Cycling, Food and Drink, Culture and Heritage especially those of national status. Use events creatively to respond to Wales 'Years of...' initiative e.g. extended River Wye Festival for Year of the Sea
Carmarthenshire County Council	<p>Vision To develop a prosperous visitor economy in Carmarthenshire, based on its unique strengths and character, which generates higher spend and local income, enhances its image and reputation and improves the quality of life for local communities.</p> <p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative products and services. • High quality visitor offers. • Local distinctiveness and authentic experiences. • Partnership and collaboration. • Marketing and communication. • Business and skills development. • Addressing Seasonality. • Sustainability / Environmental Sensitivity. • Up to date and accurate Tourism data.
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	<p>Vision Rhondda Cynon Taf will be a successful visitor destination within the valleys region of Wales by 2020.</p> <p>Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop effective partnership working within the tourism industry. • To develop Rhondda Cynon Taf as a collaboration of quality visitor experiences. • To raise the profile and credibility of Rhondda Cynon Taf on the UK tourism map.
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	<p>Theme Trails Development: Merthyr Tydfil has an array of trails that run the breadth and depth of the County Borough which interlink villages and sites of interest. The Destination Management Partnership will look to adhere to Welsh Government's Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013, considering improvements to our current trail infrastructure and the identification of new routes for future use. The Local Authority will continue to work with stakeholders to evolve the current maintenance plan for the region's main trails, conduct annual audits to identify problems and enhancement opportunities whilst focussing on linking each of Merthyr Tydfil's key attractions. The 'Partnership' will make considerations relating to the proposed dualling of the A465 which should see improvements to the National Cycle Network Route 46. The trails themselves are becoming an increasing resource in terms of staging events and over the course of the next three years look to add to its portfolio of the Merthyr Tydfil Half Marathon and San Domenico Run. Additionally, the Destination Management Partnership will still continue its management of the trails, proactively reacting to instances of fly tipping and pot holes.</p> <p>Action 2.5 Ensure the Rights of Way, NCN, tracks and trails are managed effectively</p>

<p>Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</p>	<p>Vision Visitors will be attracted to a destination where vibrant businesses work together to provide a warm welcome to everyone exploring the rich heritage, dramatic landscape, captivating towns and wide range of events and activities that Blaenau Gwent has to offer.</p> <p>Transport and Trail Development Trails: The existing trails on offer continue to be well received however it is essential that we look at new opportunities to enhance the offer to niche markets and to increase accessibility, through developing new and longer trails.</p>
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Appendix 4

List of delegated functions

Act	Section	Purpose
Construction, maintenance, repair, signposting and inspection		
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	36	Highways maintainable at the public expense
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	41	Duty to maintain highways maintainable at public expense
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	62	General power of improvement
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	66(3)	Footways and guardrails for publicly maintainable highways
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	72(1)	Widening of highways
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	76	Levelling of highways
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	77	Alteration of levels
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	91	Construction of bridge to carry highways maintainable to public expense
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	92	Reconstruction of bridge maintainable at public expense
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	100	Drainage of highways
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	101	Power to fill in roadside ditches
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	102	Provision of works for protecting highways against hazards of nature
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	146	Duty to maintain stiles and gates on footpaths and bridleways
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	147	Power to authorise erection of stiles and gates on footpaths and bridleways
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	147ZA	Agreements relating to improvements for benefit of persons with mobility problems
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	150	Duty to remove snow, soil etc. from highway
<i>Countryside Act 1968</i>	27	Duty to signpost from a metalled road and waymark routes
Enforcement of the overriding duty to protect public rights		
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	130	Protection of public rights
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	130A	Notices to enforce duty regarding public paths
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	130B	Orders following notice under Section 130A
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	56	Proceedings for an order to repair highway
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	57	Default powers in respect of non-repair of privately maintainable highways
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	59	Recovery of expenses due to extraordinary traffic
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	131(1)(b)	Penalty for damaging highway – removal
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	131(1)(c)	Penalty for damaging highway – deposits
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	131(2)	Penalty for damaging highway – removal of signage
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	131A	Disturbance of surface of certain highways
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	132	Unauthorised marks on highway
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	134	Ploughing of footpath or bridleway
<i>Highways Act 1980</i>	135	Authorisation of other works disturbing

		footpath or bridleway
Highways Act 1980	135A	Temporary diversion for dangerous works
Highways Act 1980	135B	Temporary diversion for dangerous works: supplementary
Highways Act 1980	137	Penalty for wilful obstruction
Highways Act 1980	137A	Power to order offender to remove obstruction
Highways Act 1980	142	Licence to plant trees, shrubs in a highway
Highways Act 1980	143	Power to remove structures from highways
Highways Act 1980	145	Powers as to gates across highways
Highways Act 1980	146	Duty to maintain stiles and gates on footpaths and bridleways
Highways Act 1980	148	Penalty for depositing things or pitching booths on highways
Highways Act 1980	149	Removal of things so deposited on highways as to be a nuisance
Highways Act 1980	154	Cutting or felling tree that overhang or are a danger to roads or footpaths
Highways Act 1980	311	Continuing offences
Highways Act 1980	322	Service of notices
Highways Act 1980	323	Reckoning of periods
Town Police Clauses Act 1847	28	Various minor offences in streets
National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949	57	Penalty for displaying on footpaths notices deterring public use
Firearms Act 1968	19	Firearm in a public place
Road Traffic Act 1988	34	Prohibition of driving mechanically propelled vehicles elsewhere than on roads
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	59	Prohibition on keeping bulls on land crossed by public rights of way
Functions in connection with the Definitive Map		
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	53	Duty to keep definitive map and statement under continuous review
Highways Act 1980	116	Power of magistrates' court to authorise stopping up or diversion of highway
Highways Act 1980	117	Application for order under section 116 on behalf of another person
Highways Act 1980	122	Power to make temporary diversion where highway is about to be repaired or widened

Appendix 5

An evaluation of the degree to which the previous ROWIP has been delivered

SOA1 Monitoring and Assessment of ROWIP	
<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>
1.1	Establish procedure to report on the implementation of the ROWIP
<p>Progress:</p> <p>Not undertaken directly. However, partly superseded by quarterly and annual progress reports on projects funded through Welsh Government ROWIP grant.</p>	
1.2	Prepare report on the implementation of the ROWIP
<p>Progress:</p> <p>Not undertaken directly. However, partly superseded by quarterly and annual progress reports on projects funded through Welsh Government ROWIP grant.</p>	
1.3	Establish procedure for 5 year review of the ROWIP
<p>Progress:</p> <p>Not undertaken. Ultimately this is not a statutory requirement and was deemed too onerous and unnecessary.</p>	
1.4	Undertake 5 year review of the ROWIP
<p>Progress:</p> <p>Not undertaken. Ultimately this is not a statutory requirement and was deemed too onerous and unnecessary.</p>	

SOA2 Improvements to the Public Rights of Way Network	
<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>
2.1	Establish a hierarchy of routes within the PROW network
<p>Progress:</p> <p>A hierarchy was established and is now the basis of the work programme that the Warden service work to. Details of the hierarchy is included in the ROWIP and a question was included in the ROWIP questionnaire as to whether it should be changed.</p>	
2.2	Raise the % of the PROW network that is easy to use to 65% by 2013

	<p>Progress:</p> <p>The figure for 2013/14 was 57.62% but the figure for 2016/17 was 56.74%. The National Park Authority still undertakes an annual 5% survey based on the County Surveyors' Society methodology. This is considered further in the ROWIP. An evaluation of the present condition of the rights of way network is undertaken in the ROWIP.</p>
2.3	Identify and implement circular and connecting routes within the network
	<p>Progress:</p> <p>The National Park Authority has published numerous circular walks of different lengths and difficulty both online and as printed leaflets (either free or for a small charge). In addition, there are audio trails, bus walks and geotrails. There are all available at http://www.breconbeacons.org/explore/things_to_do/walking/where_to_walk</p> <p>There are also a number of promoted equestrian routes and cycling routes which are available at http://www.breconbeacons.org/horse-riding-routes and http://www.breconbeacons.org/cycling-mountain-biking and there are also a number of printed leaflets (either free or for a small charge). Details are available at https://www.beacons-mpa.gov.uk/shop/</p> <p>The flagship mountain biking publication is the "Mountain biking in the Brecon Beacons" which included twelve routes for varying abilities. This is currently sold for £8.50 through the online shop.</p> <p>Details of all routes promoted by the National Park Authority are contained in the ROWIP.</p>
2.4	Identify and implement routes and sites where barriers for disabled people can be removed where reasonably practical
	<p>Progress:</p> <p>The National Park Authority has published details of 27 easier access walks and details of 6 forest areas which contain easier access routes or have some nearby. These are all available at http://www.breconbeacons.org/explore/easier_access/easier_access_walks</p> <p>Some of these are also audio trails.</p> <p>The National Park Authority has also published a booklet entitled "Places to visit with Easier Access" which lists 55 routes and sites where easier access exists. This booklet lists details with regard to surfaces, slopes and nearby facilities e.g. parking, toilets, and shops.</p> <p>The information on both the website and booklet now needs updating.</p> <p>A list of easier access attractions is also available here http://www.breconbeacons.org/explore/easier_access/easier_access_attractions</p>
2.5	Replace furniture as necessary using the principle of least restricted option where reasonably practical

<p>Progress:</p> <p>It is known from the ROWIP Funding Programme progress reports that 41 stiles have been removed, 47 gates installed and 27 stiles replaced specifically as part of the projects funded by the Funding Programme. However, National Park Authority staff have found that there is a reluctance on behalf of many landowners/tenants who have livestock to allow stiles to be replaced with gates for fear of the livestock escaping as a result of gates being left open. As well as others concerns, liability has been highlighted especially with regard to the case of Mirvahedy v Henley [2003]. This is often cited as a reason not to install gates due to the apparent strict liability for any damage that stock might cause once it has escaped.</p>	
2.6	Renew or replace waymarkers and fingerposts as necessary, improving information depicted on fingerposts wherever possible and appropriate
<p>Progress:</p> <p>As part of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme the National Park Authority has renewed, replaced or installed 41 waymark posts, 294 fingerposts and 2555 waymarkers since 2008.</p>	
2.7	Compile a schedule of routes for periodic vegetation clearance
<p>Progress:</p> <p>This was done and is used as a basis for the annual vegetation clearance. Details appear in the ROWIP.</p>	
2.8	Take positive steps to implement the BBNP upland erosion strategy
<p>Progress:</p> <p>The National Park Authority has undertaken work on approximately 30km of upland paths since the publication of the ROWIP. Much of this work was funded by the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme. The Upland Erosion Strategy will be reviewed as part of the ROWIP review.</p>	
2.9	Replace bridges as necessary in accordance with the hierarchy
<p>Progress:</p> <p>There are 330 bridges on the National Park Authority's database that encompass everything from small ditch crossings to main river crossings. Not all are on the rights of way network but all are accessible by the public. As part of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme 35 bridges have been replaced since 2008.</p>	
2.10	Enter all information from rights of way network survey into the Authority's ROW database.

<p>Progress:</p> <p>This exercise was completed several years ago. Issues reported as a result of the National Park Authority's annual 5% random survey of the rights of way network and its annual bridge survey are entered into the database on a continuous annual cycle. These are then fed into individual Warden work programmes.</p>
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SOA3 Improvement in the Provision of Information	
<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>
3.1	Provide more information in a variety of accessible formats
<p>Progress:</p> <p>A range of promotional material has been developed since the adoption of the ROWIP along with a separate destination website produced in partnership between the National Park Authority and Brecon Beacons Tourism (www.breconbeacons.org). The website promotes a range of free and paid for books, leaflets, geotrails, audio trails and podcasts. The National Park Authority website shop (https://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/shop/) contains a range of publications for different abilities all of which attract a fee. Free leaflets are available at Visitor Centres and the National Park Authority office. The National Park Authority has also reviewed the route of the Beacons Way which is now downloadable as a gpx file for a small fee.</p>	
3.2	Establish an Access and Rights of Way section on the BBNPA website
<p>Progress:</p> <p>There has been an Access and Rights of Way section on the website for several years and contains topics such as Open Access, Recreational Events (a recent addition), Upland Path Erosion, ROWIP and Local Access Forum. The Access and Rights of Way Teams can be contacted from here.</p>	
3.3	Set up electronic method of reporting PROW problems
<p>Progress:</p> <p>This only exists in a basic form through the National Park Authority's website. Reporting is done via a webform (http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/contact-us/) or by email (http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/environment/planning-access-and-row/useful-contacts/). Issues relating to access land can be reported on a separate webform (http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/environment/planning-access-and-row/access-land-improvement-requests-and-problem-reports/) although this is commonly used to report rights of way issues.</p>	
3.4	Provide information on routes for off-road vehicles on BBNPA website

<p>Progress:</p> <p>Due to the combined effect of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 the number of routes available for mechanically propelled vehicles i.e. byways open to all traffic is very small and a minute fraction of the complete rights of way network. On that basis this action was not undertaken. Other routes exist which may be accessible by mechanically propelled vehicles and these are shown on the List of Streets which is held by each individual unitary authority. The National Park Authority advises members of the public to consult those Lists and seek advice from the appropriate unitary authority regarding the accessibility of the routes shown thereon.</p>	
3.5	Provide information on position and extent of parking areas and associated facilities
<p>Progress:</p> <p>Information with regard to the provision of parking is generally confined to promotional literature and, along with information regarding toilets, is generally walk, ride or site specific. For example, the Easier Access walks on the destination website (breconbeacons.org/explore/easier_access/easier_access_walks) details parking and toilet provision for each walk where they exist. At present, there is no one place where all the parking and public toilet facilities within the National Park can be found.</p>	
3.6	Identify information regarding public transport links to BBNPA promoted routes and incorporate into Authority publications
<p>Progress:</p> <p>The National Park Authority currently has two booklets of walks that are linked to bus services, Mountain Walks by Bus and Family Walks by Bus both of which are available for a small fee. These are largely a collection of linear walks, of varying length and difficulty, from one bus stop to another. Other publications may identify a bus service but as the life of the publication is often longer than that of the bus service this is not always the case.</p>	

SOA4 Improvements to Definitive Map and Statement	
<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>
4.1	In cooperation with the UAs bring the Definitive Map and Statement up to date
<p>Progress:</p> <p>63 orders were completed in the period between April 2007 and March 2016.</p>	
4.2	Identify and resolve all anomalies on the Definitive Map
<p>Progress:</p>	

<p>Over 700 anomalies were identified as part of the 100% network survey that was undertaken during and following the preparation of the ROWIP. 15 orders have been made since the adoption of the ROWIP specifically to deal with anomalies alone. However, making orders is expensive due to public notice requirements and combined with a small budget progress is very slow.</p>	
4.3	Clear backlog of Definitive Map Modification Orders
<p>Progress:</p> <p>The backlog of Definitive Map Modification Orders has been reduced from 21 (in 2007) to 18</p>	
4.4	Clear backlog of Public Path Orders
<p>Progress:</p> <p>The backlog of Public Path Orders has been reduced from 96 (in 2007) to 46</p>	
4.5	Deal with exceptions to NERC Act as they arise
<p>Progress:</p> <p>None have arisen since the enactment of the NERC Act 2006 and no DMMOs have been submitted.</p>	
4.6	Compile and publish statutory register of DMMOs
<p>Progress:</p> <p>This function was only delegated to the National Park Authority by Powys County Council. A list of applications has been compiled but has not been published on the National Park Authority website.</p>	
4.7	Compile and publish statutory register of PPOs
<p>Progress:</p> <p>This is a function that has not been delegated to the National Park Authority.</p>	
4.8	Compile and publish statutory register of statements deposited and declarations lodged
<p>Progress:</p> <p>This is a function that has not been delegated to the National Park Authority. However, the National Park Authority keeps a record of all statements deposited and declarations lodged with the unitary authorities.</p>	

SOA5 Improvement of Public Access through Agri-Environment Schemes	
<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>
5.1	Negotiate additions to the access network through the Tir Gofal scheme
<p>Progress:</p> <p>The Tir Gofal scheme has come to an end and all the permissive access that arose during it is now negated although some farms have retained routes outside formal agreements. At its height there were 61 permissive footpaths (amounting to a length of 42.72km), 4 permissive bridleways (amounting to a length of 2.24km) and 29 areas of permissive access (amounting to an area of 163.81ha). Take up of permissive access in the Glastir scheme is considerably less and the amount of permissive access within the National Park through this scheme is currently negligible.</p>	
5.2	Encourage partners to adequately publicise these additions
<p>Progress:</p> <p>The availability of permissive access during the Tir Gofal scheme was provided on the Countryside Council for Wales website and later the Natural Resources Wales website. It became increasingly sporadic towards the end of the scheme. The availability of permissive access in the Glastir scheme is now controlled by the Welsh Government. It is currently not easy to discover where permissive access is located.</p>	

SOA6 Parking for Disabled People and the Integration of Public Transport and Public Access	
<i>Ref</i>	<i>Action</i>
6.1	Identify suitable areas for establishment of more dedicated car parking spaces for disabled people
<p>Progress:</p> <p>The National Park Authority is largely confined to its own property in developing this action and there has been an increase in provision at various sites e.g. National Park Visitor Centre, Craig-y-nos Country Park.</p>	
6.2	Implement improvements identified in 6.1 wherever reasonably practical
<p>Progress:</p> <p>See 6.1 above</p>	
6.3	Liaise with bus companies to provide links to promoted routes and rights of way
<p>Progress:</p>	

This linked to 3.6 above. The National Park Authority currently has two booklets of walks that are linked to bus services, Mountain Walks by Bus and Family Walks by Bus both of which are available for a small fee. Such publications are dependent on the long-term stability of bus routes to guarantee the longevity of such publication. Regrettably, long-term stability cannot be guaranteed and this will constrain the development of further publications of this kind.

Appendix 6

Policy and Practice for Existing Structures

- 1 The National Park Authority, as the appropriate authority⁴², has a legal duty to contribute not less than one quarter of any expenses shown to its satisfaction to have been reasonably incurred by a landowner in maintaining a lawful stile, gate or other structure on a public footpath, bridleway or restricted byway.⁴³
- 2 If a stile, gate or other structure is recorded in the Definitive Map and Statement or there is evidence that it was a limitation when the right of way was dedicated, is well maintained, complies with minimum widths as contained in Section 145 Highways Act 1980 and provides reasonable access to the lawful user or has been authorised under Section 147 Highways Act 1980, and complies with the conditions of such authorisation, then it will be classed as being a lawful limitation on the public right of way.
- 3 The National Park Authority has undertaken a complete survey of all the public rights of way within the Park in the last several years and subsequently has a record of all the stiles, gates or other structures that existed (on the day that each individual right of way was surveyed) on the rights of way network. However, it is impossible to ascertain whether or not the stile, gate or other structure was in situ at the time of the relevant date of the Definitive Map and Statement⁴⁴ because the vast majority of records associated with the Definitive Map and Statement do not contain sufficiently detailed information to determine this.
- 4 **Consequently, it will periodically be necessary to adopt a pragmatic approach when deciding if a structure is a lawful limitation or not.**
- 5 If a stile or gate or other structure is recorded in the Definitive Map and Statement, or, has been authorised by the National Park Authority or the relevant unitary authority or its predecessor, is well maintained, and provides reasonably convenient access to the lawful user, then it will be classed as being a lawful limitation.
- 6 However, if a stile, gate, or other structure, that is recorded in the Definitive Map and Statement or, has been authorised by the National Park Authority or the relevant unitary authority or its predecessor, is:-
 - (a) found to be in disrepair; or,
 - (b) considered by officers to constitute a hindrance to the lawful user and, the owner of the land has failed to respond to a request, either verbally or in writing from an officer of the National Park Authority, to carry out the requested maintenance works to an acceptable standard, then in accordance with the provisions of Section 146 of the Highways Act 1980 it will be, after service of the proper notice, be repaired by the National Park Authority to a standard acceptable under BS 5709:2018. The full costs of so doing will be recovered from the landowner.

⁴² Under delegated powers from the Unitary Authorities

⁴³ Highways Act 1980 s146 (4).

⁴⁴ The National Park Authority manages seven Definitive Maps each with different relevant dates

- 7 If it is not possible to determine the age of an existing stile, gate or other structure but it is constructed to a suitable standard, and meets the criteria of Section 147 of the Highways Act 1980, **in the absence of evidence to the contrary**, it should be accepted as original and therefore a lawful limitation. Consequently, structures on historic boundaries shown on the Definitive Map, where no evidence is found that they are less restrictive than the original structure/gap, may be deemed to be a legal limitation and therefore not require an authorisation under Section 147.

New Structures

- 8 On representation from the owner, lessee or occupier of agricultural land under Section 147 Highways Act 1980 the National Park Authority, in certain circumstances, has the power to authorise the installation of new structures or pursuant to Section 147ZA of the Highways Act 1980 the National Park Authority may enter into an agreement for the maintenance of existing legal structures.
- 9 Pursuant to Section 147 of the Highways Act 1980 structures can only be authorised on footpaths and bridleways. Structures on any other highways rely on the Definitive Map and Statement or historical evidence to show that they are a lawful limitation.
- 10 In cases where no boundaries are shown on the Definitive Map, but there is a structure that is constructed to a standard acceptable under BS 5709:2018, then following representation to the National Park Authority and providing it meets the proper criteria, having regard to Welsh Government guidance referred to in Annex I, it may be authorised pursuant to Section 147 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 11 If a stile, gate, or other structure, is not recorded in the Definitive Map and Statement, or was not authorised by the National Park Authority or the relevant unitary authority or its predecessors, but in the view of officers meets the criteria of Section 147 of the Highways Act 1980, having regard to Welsh Government guidance referred to in Annex I, then following representation by the landholder to the National Park Authority and provided that officers consider that it is to an acceptable standard it should be authorised pursuant to Section 147 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 12 If a stile, gate, or other structure is not recorded in the Definitive Map and Statement, or was not authorised by the National Park Authority or the relevant unitary authority or its predecessors, and in the view of officers it meets the criteria of Section 147 of the Highways Act 1980, having regard to Welsh Government guidance referred to in Annex I, but it is not to the required standard, then following representation to the National Park Authority, and provided that it is satisfactorily modified to meet that standard before it is authorised, the National Park Authority may authorise the structure pursuant to Section 147 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 13 If a stile, gate, or other structure, is not recorded in the Definitive Map and Statement or was not authorised by the National Park Authority or the relevant unitary authority or its predecessors, but in the view of officers meets the criteria of Section 147 of the Highways Act 1980, having regard to Welsh Government guidance referred to in Annex I, and is:
 - (a) found to be in disrepair; or,

- (b) is considered by officers to constitute a hindrance to the lawful user because of its condition; and,
- (c) the owner of the land has failed to respond to a request, either verbally or in writing from an officer of the National Park Authority, to carry out the requested maintenance works to bring the structure up to a standard acceptable under BS 5709:2018 and fails to apply for a licence pursuant to Section 147 of the Highways Act 1980, then:

it should be classed as an unlawful obstruction and the necessary steps may be taken to ensure its removal in accordance with the provisions of Section 143 of the Highways Act 1980.

- 14 In cases where a stile, gate, or other structure is not recorded in the Definitive Map and Statement and is not authorised by the National Park Authority or the relevant unitary authority or its predecessors and **does not**, in the view of the officers, satisfy the criteria of Section 147, having regard to Welsh Government guidance referred to in Annex 1, of the Highways Act 1980, then:

it should be classed as an unlawful obstruction and the necessary steps may be taken to ensure its removal in accordance with the provisions of Section 143 of the Highways Act 1980.

- 15 The only way in which an authorisation or agreement under Section 147 or 147ZA of the Highways Act 1980 can be recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement is by an order under Section 53(3)(c)(iii) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Whilst it is the Welsh Government's view that there is no requirement for local authorities to record on the Definitive Map and Statement the effect of authorisations or agreements under Section 147 and Section 147ZA of the Highways Act 1980, authorities are encouraged by the Welsh Government to keep details of authorisations available for public inspection with the Definitive Map and Statement.

- 16 Whilst Subsection 4 of Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 makes it clear that a definitive map modification order *may* add details of limitations affecting the right of way to the statement, it is the Welsh Government's view⁴⁵ that the power to make definitive map modification orders under Section 53(3)(a) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 does not extend to *require* local authorities to record on the definitive map and statement the effect of authorisations or agreements under Section 147 and Section 147ZA of the Highways Act 1980.

- 17 Limitations may arise or be recorded through their inclusion in Public Path Orders and Definitive Map Modification Orders. It will be the policy of the National Park Authority to record all relevant limitations (where they exist or are proposed to be installed) in every order⁴⁶ made by the National Park Authority.

⁴⁵ Welsh Assembly Government Statutory Guidance March 2007

⁴⁶ Orders made under Section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 do not currently have a facility to include limitations

Associated Structures

- 18 The National Park Authority is sometimes requested to provide dog stiles adjacent to stiles to aid in the passage of dogs that accompany walkers that cannot otherwise be lifted over the stile. Where a demand is proven, the National Park Authority shall consider requests for dog stiles. However, requests shall only be approved where the landowner has agreed to the installation of a dog stile.

Annex I

Criteria to be taken into account when authorising new structures

Section 147, Highways Act 1980

Power to authorise the erection of stiles etc. on a footpath or bridleway.

(1) where the owner, lessee or occupier of agricultural land, or of land which is being brought into use for agriculture, represents to a competent authority, as respects a footpath or bridleway that crosses the land, that for securing that use, or any particular use, of the land for agriculture shall be efficiently carried on, it is expedient that stiles, gates or other works for preventing the ingress or egress of animals should be erected on the path or way.

(5) references to agricultural land and to land being brought into use for agriculture include references to land used or, as the case may be, land being brought into use, for forestry or for the breeding or keeping of horses.

Extract from Welsh Assembly Government Statutory guidance under Sections 147 and 147ZA of the Highways Act 1980 relating to the requirement for local authorities to have regard to the needs of people with mobility problems when authorising stiles and gates

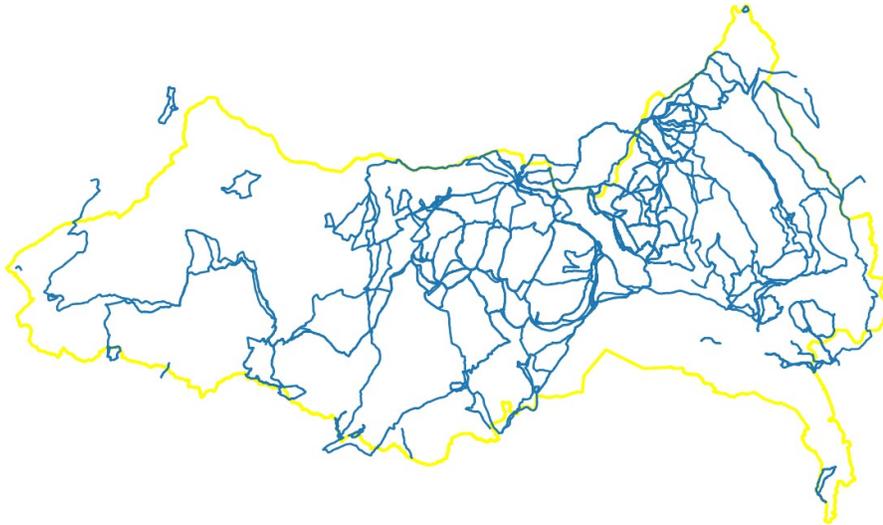
“The Welsh Assembly Government advises authorities that, before they authorise a new barrier under Section 147, they should be satisfied on three counts:

1. That the land is being used, or is being brought into use, for agriculture, forestry or for the breeding or keeping of horses;
2. That, in order for that use to be carried on efficiently, it is expedient for a structure to be erected on the path or way that crosses the land to prevent the ingress or egress of animals;
3. That the barrier being authorised is the least restrictive barrier that is consistent with the need to contain or exclude animals.”

Appendix 7

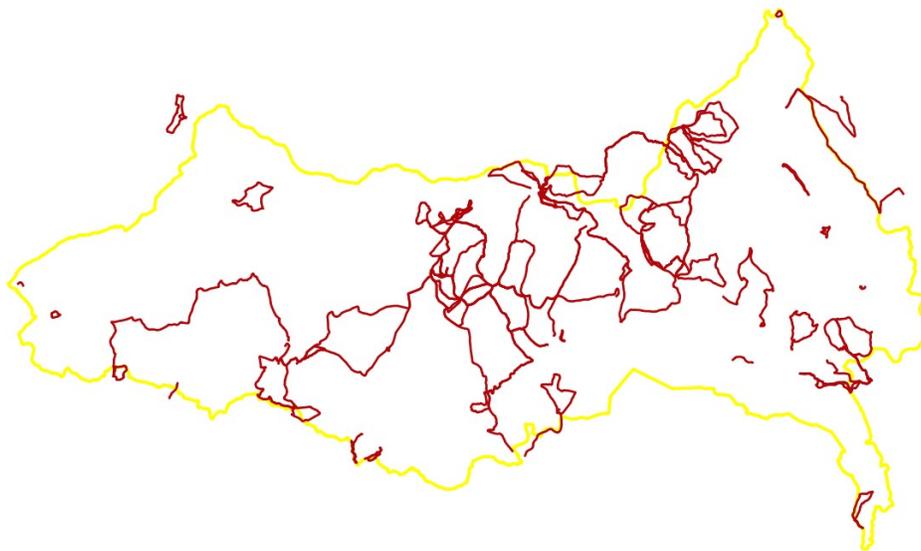
Promoted Routes

Figure PR1 – All routes promoted by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority



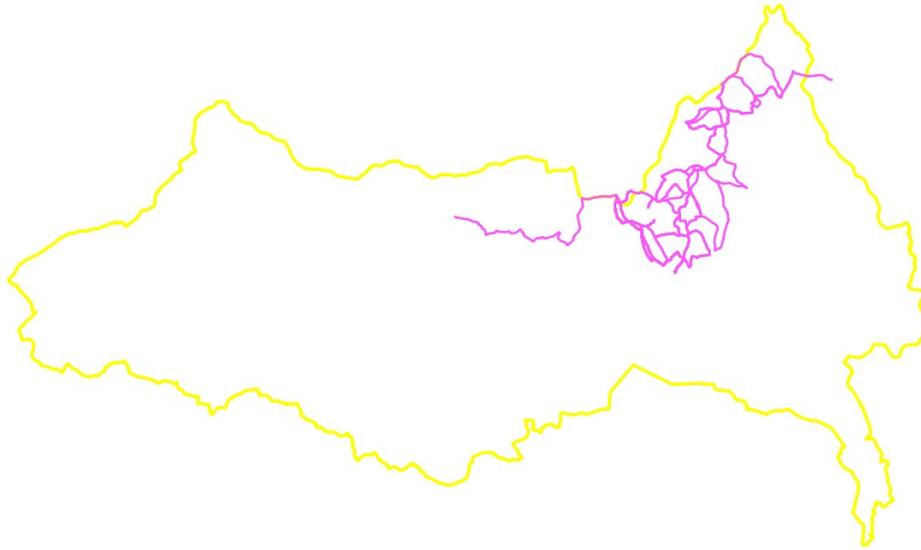
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Figure PR2 – Walking routes promoted by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority



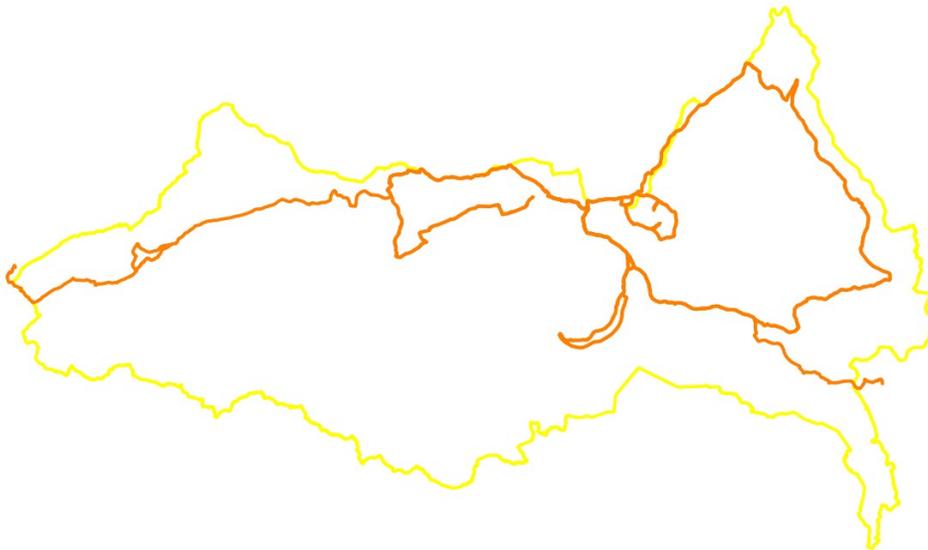
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Figure PR3 – Horse riding routes promoted by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority



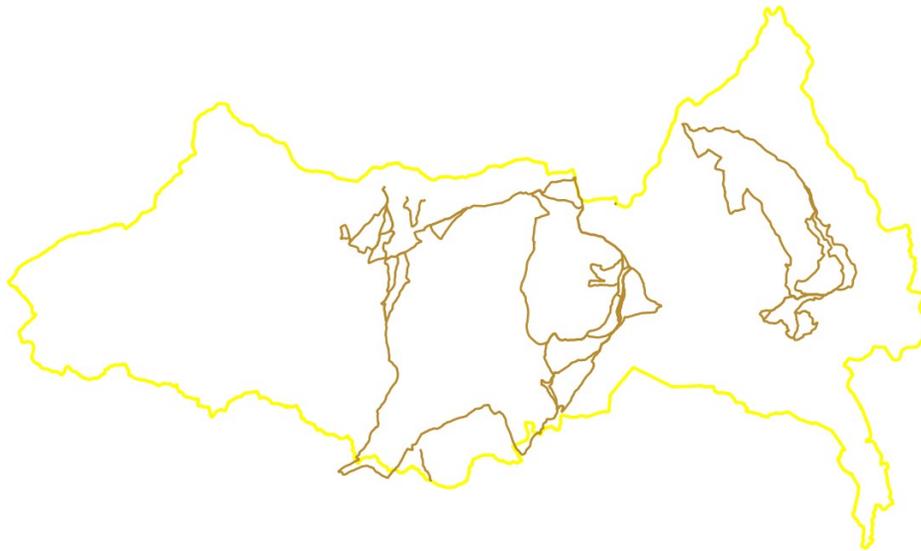
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Figure PR4 – Cycling routes promoted by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority



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Figure PR5 – Mountain bike routes promoted by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority



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Appendix 8

Flagship promoted routes and areas

Fforest Fawr Geopark

Fforest Fawr UNESCO Global Geopark is set within the Brecon Beacons National Park. It comprises the western half of the National Park, stretching from Llandovery in the north to the edge of Merthyr Tydfil in the south, from Llandeilo in the west to Brecon in the east (Figure PR6).

Figure PR6 - Map of Fforest Fawr Geopark



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Fforest Fawr Geopark was formed as a partnership between the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, the British Geological Survey and Cardiff University together with a host of other organisations with local, regional or national interests.

The Geopark was accepted into the European Geopark Network in October 2005 and subsequently became a member of the UNESCO-assisted Global Geoparks Network in October 2006. Fforest Fawr UNESCO Global Geopark aims to promote the wider understanding of the area's heritage – not just geological, but other aspects of its natural history and the wider cultural heritage – and to encourage the development of sustainable tourism based upon that heritage for the benefit of both residents and visitors to the area.

Fforest Fawr is a swathe of upland country which was included within the National Park when it was designated in 1957. These uplands lie at the heart of the Geopark although it extends beyond them to include much surrounding countryside. The Geopark's 763km² (300 square miles) include mountain and moorland, woods and meadows, towns and villages, lakes and rivers.

The Geopark has its own website www.fforestfawrgeopark.org.uk which is managed by the National Park Authority. The website contains information regarding activities that can be undertaken within the Geopark as well as places to visit. It has various Geotrails (where leaflets are available on www.beacons-nap.gov.uk for a fee) and downloadable audio trails and podcasts. The site is closely linked to www.breconbeacons.org and many pages are shared.

Waterfall Country

At the head of the Nedd valley and lying between the triangle formed by the settlements of Hirwaun, Pontneddfechan and Ystradfellte this is a highly distinctive environment of wooded gorges, caves, swallow holes and waterfalls.

The area contains two sites of special scientific interest and a special area of conservation which contain oak and ash trees and well as over 200 species of mosses, liverworts and ferns. It also contains several scheduled ancient monuments.

There are several waterfalls on the Nedd and its tributaries the most famous being Sgwd-yr-Eira located on the Hepste river where a natural path leads behind a curtain of water.

The area attracts around 160,000 visitors a year who undertake a variety of outdoor activities. The area is promoted at:

<http://www.breconbeacons.org/waterfall-country>

Blaenavon World Heritage Site

Also straddling the boundary of the National Park is the Blaenavon World Heritage Site. It was granted this status in 2000 in recognition of its contribution towards the industrial revolution that is told through the area's heritage assets.

A website www.visitblaenavon.co.uk is available for the site which contains details of several graded walks which are available to download. Some of the 'energetic' routes are located within the National Park and are reliant on the local rights of way network.

The Taff Trail

The Taff Trail was launched in 1988 and is one of the National Park's oldest promoted routes. A walking and cycling route, it was initiated and co-ordinated by the Merthyr and Cynon Groundwork trust, with the co-operation of the local councils through whose areas the trail passed.

Within the Brecon Beacons National Park it passes along a mixture of public roads, public rights of way, Welsh Water estate and canal towpath. The main cycling and walking route

extends from Merthyr Tydfil to Brecon via Ponsticill, Talybont-on-Usk, Pencelli and Llanfrynach. The satellite walking route extends north from Merthyr Tydfil to Brecon following parallel to the A470.

It is promoted by the National Park Authority as well as others through various websites. The following are the main sources of information:

<http://www.breconbeacons.org/long-distance-cycle-routes>

<http://www.mytafftrail.co.uk/index.php>

<http://www.tafftrail.org.uk/>

https://www.ldwa.org.uk/ldp/members/show_path.php?path_name=Taff+Trail

Whilst the National Park Authority has maintained sections of the Taff Trail since Groundwork was dissolved, largely as those sections are public rights of way, there is no overall management responsibility or structure for the length of the Taff Trail within the National Park.

Offa's Dyke Path National Trail

Opened in 1971, this 177 mile (285km) long route follows the English/Welsh border and part of the route follows the National Park's eastern boundary where it crosses the Black Mountains between Hay-on-Wye in Powys and Pandy in Monmouthshire. The Path follows public rights of way where it is located within the National Park. The Path is managed in partnership between Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, local authorities and the National Park Authority and co-ordinated by the National Trail Officer. It attracts additional funding because of its statutory designation.

The main sources of information regarding the route are contained in:

<https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/offas-dyke-path>

<http://offasdyke.org.uk/>

It is also promoted by the National Park Authority at:

http://www.breconbeacons.org/explore/things_to_do/walking/irresistible_offa

Following a two-year, £1 million 'Walking with Offa' collaboration between the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and number of tourism partners in both England and Wales to promote opportunities for walkers along the full length of the National Trail the following was set up:

<https://www.facebook.com/WalkingWithOffa>

The Beacons Way

First established in 2005, this 152km (95 mile) walk offers some of the best views the National Park has to offer. The whole route takes 8 days to walk. The route was revised in 2016.

The route is available as a booklet and a gpx file. The main sources of information online are contained in:

<http://www.breconbeaconsrksociety.org/national-park/the-beacons-way/>
<http://www.breconbeacons.org/beacons-way>

The Three Rivers Ride

The Three Rivers Ride is part of the National Bridleroute Network, a series of cross country rides researched and developed by The British Horse Society. The route starts at Tidbach in Worcestershire, enters Herefordshire at Wolferlow and crosses the rivers Lugg and Wye to enter Wales some 100km (60 miles) later at Hay Bluff on the edge of the Brecon Beacons National Park.

The Three Rivers Ride in the National Park traverses lowland and upland bridleways and travels along the western flank of the Black Mountains before skirting Llangors lake and crossing the river Usk to finish at the National Park Visitor Centre in Libanus, near Brecon. The route in the National Park is 56km (35 miles) long.

The section through the National Park is available as a booklet and as a pdf at:

http://www.breconbeacons.org/all_downloads/three-rivers-ride-leaflet.pdf

The whole route is available at:

<http://www.bhsaccess.org.uk/ridemaps/Ridingmap.php?file=westmidlands/Public/Threeriversride>

Appendix 9

Policy concerning the recovery of costs for public path and rail crossing orders

The Policy is derived from Circular 3/93 (Department of the Environment), 6/93 (Welsh Office) which in turn are derived from the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Recovery of Costs for Public Path Orders) Regulations 1993.

The relevant provisions enable authorities to recover their advertising and administrative costs in respect of making orders under sections 26 and 118 to 119A of the Highways Act 1980 and sections 257 and 261 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The case for enabling authorities to charge for public path and rail crossing orders is based on the premise that in applying for an order, the applicant hopes to gain some benefit from the extinguishment or diversion of the path or way. However, whilst applicants should normally expect to bear the cost of making an order, authorities have a discretion not to charge, or to charge part of the cost. Authorities may choose to take account of factors such as financial hardship, potential benefit to rights of way users etc. and waive part or all of the charge where it is considered appropriate. The Local Government (Recovery of Costs for Public Path Orders) Regulations 1993 set a ceiling on the charge authorities could recover for administrative costs incurred in the making of an order. This ceiling was removed by the Local Authorities (Charges for Overseas Assistance and Public Path Orders) Regulations 1996 as explained in Circular 47/96 (Welsh Office).

In light of these regulations the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority policy on the recovery of costs for Public Path and Rail Crossing orders is set out as follows:-

1.0 Standard charges

- a) a standard charge of £1000 (exclusive of VAT) shall be applied to each unopposed order;
- b) that the cost of publishing the following notices in the local press be charged to the applicant:
 - i) the making of the order;
 - ii) the confirmation of the order;
 - iii) the certification of the order where appropriate;
- c) the applicant will bear all the costs associated with the accommodation of the new route

2.0 Waiving of charges

The National Park Authority will consider waiving part or all of the charges:

- (a) where there is some public benefit to be derived from the order;

- (b) where the order allows definitive map anomalies to be corrected;
- (c) where the order diverts a path away from land that has a naturally difficult surface condition which renders the path difficult or unusable for a substantial period of time during the year;
- (d) where the order diverts a path from a location where it is being or likely to be affected by erosion or other natural process;
- (e) where the order is being made to divert or extinguish the path for reasons of public safety;
- (f) where the order diverts a path that has been over-planted by forest or woodland and where clearing the definitive line is not considered to be feasible or where an alternative route is considered to be substantially more commodious;
- (g) in some cases of financial hardship;
- (h) any other special circumstances

Each case will be judged individually on its own merits and a recommendation made to the National Park Authority's Planning, Access and Rights of Way Committee. The costs associated with the construction of the new route will be considered in a like manner.

3.0 Refunds

The National Park Authority will refund any charges where:

- (a) it fails to confirm an unopposed order;
- (b) it fails to submit an opposed order to the Welsh Ministers without the agreement of the applicant;
- (c) the order is not confirmed by the National Park Authority or by the Welsh Ministers as it was invalidly made

4.0 Policy changes

The National Park Authority will review the policy where necessary and make amendments to include any increase in its costs.

Appendix 10

Proposed policies and practices

Collected below are the policies and practices proposed in Sections 2 and 3.

Part 2

- i) where a structure is no longer required as a stock control or safety measure the National Park Authority will negotiate its removal
- ii) the National Park Authority will work with farmers and land managers to promote and implement the least restrictive option and will seek to keep structures to a minimum
- iii) unless there are exceptional circumstances it will be presumed that only gates will be authorised under section 147 of the Highways Act 1980
- iv) the National Park Authority will cease to replace defective or sub-standard stiles on public footpaths with new stiles but will provide and install pedestrian gates free of charge. Where a landowner requires a stile the National Park Authority will provide one free of charge in lieu of its responsibility under section 146 of the Highways Act 1980 but will not undertake installation
- v) where a gate is not feasible (as a replacement for a stile) a dog stile shall be installed (adjacent to the stile) where a demand is proven and where the landowner has given consent
- vi) waymarkers will be erected on every new piece of furniture on the rights of way network save for signposts (at roadsides), bridges and boardwalks
- vii) where a right of way is a cul-de-sac and does not provide any useful access, access to access land or a place or feature of interest e.g. a viewing point or a historic monument or any other onward opportunities for the public the National Park Authority will not provide signposts or waymarking on that right of way

Part 3

- i) the National Park Authority will support in principle and encourage applications for public path orders that connect or otherwise rectify cul-de-sacs that exist on the rights of way network

- ii) the National Park Authority will support in principle and encourage applications for public path orders that improve connectivity within the rights of way network
- iii) the National Park Authority will support in principle and encourage applications for public path orders that rectify anomalies that exist on the rights of way network
- iv) the National Park Authority will support in principle and encourage applications that rectify status changes that exist on the rights of way network
- v) the National Park Authority will continue to exercise an informal policy of not erecting signposts or waymarkers on the hill unless exceptional circumstances apply
- vi) the National Park Authority will process applications for definitive map modification orders in a chronological order but priority will be given to:
 - a. applications where adding or upgrading a right of way would add significantly to the network
 - b. applications with strong supporting evidence
 - c. where a possible error has meant that the public cannot use the right of way
- vii) the National Park Authority will process applications for public path orders in a chronological order but priority will be given to:
 - a. diversions which protect flora and fauna
 - b. farmyard diversions
 - c. diversions from private gardens
- viii) the National Park Authority will amend its policy concerning the recovery of costs for public path and rail crossing orders as follows:
 - a. “1.0 a)” to be replaced with “a standard charge of £1200 (exclusive of VAT) shall be applied to each unopposed order”
 - b. add “2.0 (i) where the order connects or otherwise rectified a cul-de-sac”
 - c. add “2.0 (j) where the order improves connectivity within the rights of way network”

- d. add “2.0 (k) where the order rectifies status changes on the right of way network”

- ix) the National Park Authority will focus on providing promotion for local circular walks suitable for targeted audiences e.g. dog walkers, families with children, people with mobility problems

- x) the National Park Authority will continue to manage the rights of way network using its prioritisation system

- xi) the National Park Authority will cease to erect stiles adjacent to field gates unless it can be shown that the stile is the legal limitation on the right of way

- xii) a. where a stile next to a gate has reached the end of its usable life the National Park Authority will decommission it. Where it can be shown that the stile is the legal limitation on the right of way it will be subject to the policy stated in 2.144 (iv)

b. the National Park Authority will install pedestrian or equestrian gates next to field gates where it is expedient to do so on the grounds of land management or safety

- xiii) the National Park Authority will adopt the guiding principles of the Path Industry Skills Group

Appendix I I

Upland path management “Guiding Principles”

- Path work will be carried out within a coherent management framework, including a commitment to long-term maintenance. It will integrate with other management objectives
- An understanding of the underpinning philosophy and practice of path improvement is required of managing and funding agencies
- Path work will be generated by area survey and prioritisation
- Priority will be given to curtailing and restoring environmental damage, while also enhancing visitor experience
- Environmental sensitivities will be given stringent regard, particularly in sites of outstanding landscape and/or natural heritage quality
- Management of the path will be informed by suitable consultation with interested parties
- The purpose of the path and its expected use will be defined and the path built to fit this purpose
- Path work will be of the highest standard of design and implementation, preferably using locally sourced materials in harmony with the site
- Good environmental practice will be paramount. No material won in works will be wasted. Techniques used will protect existing vegetation and cultural remains and the site will be left in as natural a state as is practicable
- Those involved in the design, implementation and supervision of path work should be demonstrably professionally, and technically, competent
- All work will be carried out in accordance with legal obligations and the requirements of current Health and Safety legislation.