

RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE – 24TH MAY 2004

SUBJECT: THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK – INVESTIGATIONS CURRENTLY IN HAND

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Committee of progress to date on potential changes to the rights of way network.

2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

2.1 There is a duty to maintain the Definitive Map and Statement.

3. THE REPORT

3.1 Current applications made for Modification Orders (Claims) which are currently under Investigation are as follows;

Claimed Right of Way No. 87 Pennar Lane, Newbridge (Document No. 1)

An application has been made to add a bridleway, this has now been amended to By Way Open to all Traffic (BOAT) to the Definitive Map as shown on the map. Report prepared and will shortly be circulated for comments before being submitted to future Rights of Way Committee for determination.

Claimed Right of Way No. 121 Markham (Document No. 2)

An application has been received to add paths to the Definitive Map as shown on attached map.

Correspondence has been entered into with the landowner to pursue an amicable resolution.

Claimed Right of Way No. 126 Manor Road/Oakland Terrace, Newbridge (Document No. 3)

An application has been made to add a footpath to the Definitive Map as shown on attached map.

Correspondence was entered into with the two landowners to achieve an amicable resolution. Unfortunately, this was not possible. Report is being prepared for circulation to all interested parties prior to being submitted to Rights of Way Committee for determination.

Claimed Right of Way No.173 Penpedairheol (Document No. 4)

An application has been received to add paths to the Definitive Map as shown on attached map.

Correspondence has been entered into with the landowner to pursue an amicable resolution.

Claimed Right Of Way No. 178 Tonypistyll, Pentwynmawr. (Document No. 5)

An application has been made to add a path to the Definitive Map from points A-G on Doc No. See Item ?? on Agenda.

Claimed Right of Way No. 183 Ruperra Woods (Document No. 6)

An application has been received to add bridlepaths to the Definitive Map as shown on attached map.

Correspondence has been entered into with the landowner to pursue an amicable resolution.

Claimed Right of Way No. 185 Trinant (Document No. 7)

An application has been received to add a path to the Definitive Map as shown on attached map.

Report nearing completion for circulation to interested parties prior to being submitted to Rights of Way Committee for determination.

4.2 Reclassifications

An application has been received to reclassify a footpath to By Way Open to All Traffic at Rhuslas Pond near Fochriw.

A report has been prepared and was due to be circulated to interested parties for comments. However, due to the appeal on the Blakewell Case and the court's decision to allow a right of way from illegal use of a footpath, direction is awaited from the Welsh Assembly Government through briefing notes before completing the report.

4.3 Provision of 40 Mile Long Distance Bridleroute

The provision of a 40 Mile Long Distance Bridleroute has been included in the Authority's Local Transport Plan. (Policy TC2).

Questionnaires have been circulated to as many horse riders within the Borough as possible. 130+ No. have been returned. Requests have been made for horse riders to indicate on maps the routes they currently ride and any suggestions for new routes.

Within the questionnaire riders could indicate the problems they encounter with official bridleroutes. Several of the issues they have raised are as follows:-

Difficulty in opening gates and locked gates.

Overgrowth, overgrown hedges, trees down and low branches.

Surfaces:- rutted by motorbikes/four wheel drive, stoney, waterlogged and muddy routes.

Barriers erected to prevent motorcycle use sometimes difficult to negotiate.

Motorbikes, quad bikes on paths terrifying horses.

Waymarking.

Dumped cars, litter, metal.

Dog walkers and cyclists.

Riders complain that there are not enough bridlepaths in certain areas and the difficulty in using busy roads and lanes. Requests have been made for warning signs to alert motorists of horses. Unfortunately there is a strict criteria for the erection of these signs and they can only be erected where horses cross roads. The cost of providing signs are around £400 per location. Discussions have been taken place regarding several locations in the Oakdale/Croespenmaen areas and these are being investigated.

In the Welsh Assembly Road Strategy for Wales, Chapter 6 (6.41) mention is made of the Quiet Lanes Initiative which is currently being piloted in a number of English rural areas. Quiet Lanes are areas which are actively promoted as routes where cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders have priority over motor vehicle users. These routes can be traffic calmed, signed and subject to lower speed limits.

Discussions have been held with the horse riders in the area to explain the purpose of the questionnaire and assisting with any problems they have encountered with official bridle routes. Several horse riders have assisted in checking out routes within the forestries to provide information for the Forestry Commission. Discussions have also been held with the British Horse Society and S.A.F.E.

Investigations are currently being undertaken into the possibility of providing two additional routes on the Oakdale Business Park to allow off-road riding and safer routes to avoid busy main roads.

Meetings have been held with the Forestry Commission who are keen to open routes within forestries in the area for bridle routes.

A meeting is due to take place with horse riders within the Oakdale/Croespenmaen/Trinant/Manmoel/Argoed/Blackwood/Cefn Fforest areas to discuss the Countryside Sections plans for the area together with a discussion on any possible new bridle routes.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 To note the report.

Author: Mrs. June Piper, CROW Support Officer.
Consultees: Chairman and Vice Chairman, Rights of Way Committee.