

**RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE – 24TH MAY 2004**

**SUBJECT: WORKS IN HAND OR RECENTLY UNDERTAKEN**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the works recently undertaken or programmed to be carried out in regard to the rights of way network

**2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 To provide a network of routes for journeys on foot and horseback leisure.

**3. THE REPORT**

- 3.1 Works undertaken by Caerphilly County Borough Council since 26th January 2004 is as follows:

- i erection of 21 No. 4 bar stiles and 6 No. 5 bar stiles;
- ii erection of 2 No. kissing gates;
- iii provided 4 No sleeper bridges across water courses;
- iv erected 2 No. hunting gates;
- v cleared 33 No. paths blocked by debris and foliage,
- vi bridge repairs 5 No..
- vii erection of field gates 17 No.
- viii erection of finger posts 22 No. (N.B. 28 finger posts stolen over Easter period)
- xi erection of 48 No. waymarker signs
- xii erection of 3 No. barriers
- xiii erection of 40 metres of post and rail fencing

- 3.2 In addition to the foregoing, the Rights of Way Warden has continued to undertake surveys of footpaths and bridleways following complaints received from Councillors and members of the public in the Mynyddislwyn, Bedwas and Machen, Gelligaer, Caerphilly, Risca and Blackwood areas.

- 3.3 These surveys form the basis of works likely to be undertaken by user groups in the coming year. Additional surveys have been undertaken and works being prepared due to the injection of £20,000 additional funds for the current financial year. Details follow in this report

- 3.4 The Gelligaer Ramblers are continuing the survey work associated with the Performance Indicators. A similar exercise is being carried out by the Islwyn group although progress appears to be slow.

- 3.5 The priority of work is unchanged since the previous meeting which is as follows:-

- i Hazards to the public;
- ii Hazards to property and livestock;
- iii Regular maintenance programme;
- iv Complaints from the public not covered by (i), (ii) or (iii).

- 3.6 A list of the telephone and other complaints received by rights of way staff since 26<sup>th</sup> January 2004, and also the remedial works undertaken to resolve the issues is on deposit in the Members` Room. At present there is a backlog of works of approximately five weeks.
- 3.7 Members will recall my previous report which identified and injection of an additional £20,000 of the financial year 2003-04 to be used to combat the backlog of works.
- 3.8 One particular maintenance issue was footpath No.6 in the Community of Abercarn. This route links Pentreloid and Aberbeeg. Due to water flowing down the path the surface had been severely eroded creating a hazardous surface for the public.
- 3.9 The Authority sought quotations for the repair of the right of way from experienced contractors with the final contract being awarded to Gateway Construction at a cost of £17,325.00. This being reported to the Technical Scrutiny Committee on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2004.
- 3.10 Due to the almost immediate misuse of the path, staggered barriers were ordered and installed at the top and mid points on the path.
- 3.11 The remainder of the additional monies has been spent of the day to day maintenance issues.
- 3.12 In the forthcoming financial year the rights of way team have identified the following improvement/maintenance works.
- 3.13 Project Work for 2004/05

CRB 1 and 2 Abercarn Drainage and surfacing works. Estimated cost £1,000, length of path 900 metres

FP354 Abercarn. Stiles, clearance, waymarking and fingerposts. Estimated cost £2,000, length of path 500 metres

CRB 97 and 101 Bedwas and Machen. Complete reconstruction of path due to water erosion. This will involve gabion baskets and full surface construction. Estimated cost £8,000 opening 400 metres of path. This route does give access to a much larger network

FP21 Gelligaer. Tarmacing of surface, drainage works and fencing. Estimated cost £7,000 opening 300 metres of path and access to the larger network

Although these foregoing works have been programmed, the works will be dependant upon any unforeseen emergencies that may arise.

Following a budget review and in response to Members` wishes the Authority has recently created and advertised a vacancy for a Trainee Rights of Way Technician. The Authority is seeking a trainee warden to assist with being responsible for the day to day running of the public path network, including maintenance of all registered paths. In addition the appointed person will assist in the updating the definitive map and statement which will include investigating challenges to the definitive map and statement, and the processing of diversion and extinguishments applications. It is anticipated that the appointed person duties will be split be split between office and field duties on a seasonal basis.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Cost of works to be paid for from the Rights of Way budgets

## **5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Works arranged by rights of way warden

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Members are asked to note the report

## **7. REASONS**

7.1 To advise Members

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Consultees: Chairman and Vice Chairman, Rights of Way Committee.