

## RIGHTS OF WAY CABINET COMMITTEE – 2ND AUGUST 2007

**SUBJECT: WORKS IN HAND**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

### 2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 2.1 Rights of Way Improvement Plan Maintenance Plan

### 3. SUMMARY

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

### 4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Works undertaken by Caerphilly County Borough Council since 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005 are as follows:

- i erection of 28 No. 4 bar stiles and 6 No. 5 bar stiles;
- ii erection of 2 No. new kissing gates;
- iii repair of 4 No. kissing gates
- iv provided 4 No sleeper bridges across water courses;
- v repair 10 No. hunting gates and erection of 4 No. filed gates
- vi cleared 8kms of paths blocked by debris and foliage,
- vii erection of 80 metres of post and rail fencing and 170 metres of Rylock fencing.
- viii repair of 300 metres of public path surfacing
- ix erection of finger posts 28 No. on Footpaths and 23 No. on Bridleway
- x erection of 30 No. waymarker signs
- xi erection of 3 No. disabled (Woodstock) kissing gate
- xii laying of 700 metres of land drainage
- xiii construction of 120 No. steps on various public paths

- 4.2 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 County Borough as a whole.

- 4.3 Each financial year a list is compiled of paths where the works identified are beyond the usual maintenance expected. Previously these schemes have not exceeded £20,000.00 but during the last year 4 No. paths have been identified as needing work above that which is usually expected as routine maintenance.

- 4.4 One of the schemes identified in the financial year 2006-07 was footpath No.2 Rhymney. The works involved the clearance of the path, removal of trees, waymarking the path, constructing sections of the path and associated drainage works. These works were completed by the middle of April 2007 at a cost of £7000.00.
- 4.5 List of paths and works required including priority of each route.

#### Footpath No.15 Gelligaer

This path connects Penallta Road, Brynheolog and Pottery Lane, Cefn Hengoed. The path is primarily used by the public going to work and forms a useful link for the environmentally friendly journey. Recently during the heavy rain, the mid section of the path at the bottom of a concrete flight of steps has been washed away during the winter storms. This has left the path in a hazardous condition. The repair of the path will involve, the raising of the surface of the path, the construction of the stream edge probably from block stone, the excavation of the original watercourse to re-align the flow away from the path, and the provision of handrails alongside the concrete steps. In consideration of the work it is considered above that usually expected of routine maintenance and therefore the only way repairing this route will be to specifically identify the path for a special scheme. The estimated cost of this scheme is £13,000.00

#### Footpath No.10c Bedwas and Machen

This path commences on Tydfil Road, Bedwas and passes to the rear of the properties fronting Tydfil Road and Garth View. The path is bounded initially on both sides by a high retaining wall to the east and north, and a timber fence, it is approximately 3 metres wide. Continuing along the path the route narrows to approximately 2 metres and remains bounded by property fences and an old British Rail boundary fence. The path passes over the former railway line (the former bridge being removed) and terminates on Bryn Gwyn Street, Bedwas. Only a narrow strip of worn path is evident between the physical boundaries. The path continually becomes overgrown and is used as a short cut by pensioners between the two highways. The repair of the path will require the removal of the overgrowth, levelling of the surface and the construction of the route with tarmacadam. The estimated cost of this scheme is £7,000.00

#### Footpath No.393 Abercarn

This path commences on Commercial Road, Cwmcarn and ascends a flight of steps to terminate on the maintainable rear lane. A number of residents have identified these steps as hazardous and inspection indicates that they are in need of repair together with the centrally located handrails. The repair of this path will require the reconstruction of the steps, replacement of parts of the handrails. The estimated cost of this scheme is £12,500.00

#### Bridleway No.141 Gelligaer

This path commences on the Deri to Fochriw road almost opposite the entrance to the Darren Valley Country Park. The path follows a 1.4 – 2.0 metre wide path up the hillside to its termination on bridleway 140 Gelligaer. The route has suffered over a period of time and requires upgrading with gates, 2 No. corrals drainage and surface improvements to accommodate the use from the Country Park. The estimated cost of this scheme is £7,000.00

#### Bridleway No.117 Risca

This path commences on the unclassified county highway from Pontymister to Draethen. The path immediately climbs following a worn path approximately 0.6 metres in width to its termination on the county boundary. This path has suffered extensively from water erosion creating in places channels 0.6 metre in depth.

The proposals to alleviate the present poor condition of the path will involve the levelling of the surface, provision of a hardcore path to a width of 1.8 metres and the re-direction of the water at a number of locations to a nearby stream. Estimated Cost of this scheme is £8,000.00.

- 4.6 The Deri Ramblers have continued maintenance works and have cleared 1kms of paths.
- 4.7 In the Islwyn area volunteers have continued to clear paths and have completed 6kms in the last year.
- 4.8 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).
- 4.9 A list of the telephone and other complaints received by rights of way staff since 29<sup>th</sup> March 2006 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 four weeks.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Cost of works to be paid for from the 2007/08 Rights of Way budgets, but Capital funding will be sought to enable delivery of the RoWIP.

## **6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Works arranged by rights of way warden

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Members are asked to note the report and support the repair and improvement of footpath No.15 Gelligaer and footpath 393 Abercarn

## **8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 To advise Members of the current condition of the rights of way network and improve the network for public enjoyment

Author: Adrian Sander, Senior Assistant Engineer (Rights of Way).