

RIGHTS OF WAY CABINET COMMITTEE – 2ND AUGUST 2007

SUBJECT: INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER GROUPS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the involvement of user groups who are assisting the Authority with the improvement of the rights of way network

2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

Community involvement; best value; Rights of Way Improvement Plan, maintenance plan.

3. SUMMARY

- 3.1 The rights of way network has benefited from partnership meetings with a variety of interest and community groups. It is the intention that these relationships are continued and developed to maximise the benefits that can be achieved for rights of way.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 An important part of the maintenance of the rights of way is undertaken with the assistance of community councils, user groups and individuals.
- 4.2 The new work party, which is part of Safe Access for Equestrians (SAFE), has continued to clear bridleways of heavy overgrowth, installed gates and generally improved the network. This is a welcome addition in that it is the only equestrian based group we have working on paths.
- 4.3 The Rights of Way Warden has continued to undertake works with user groups by utilising the services of contractors to demonstrate and instruct new user group members in safe working practices.
- 4.4 The Ramblers Association together with the British Horse Society are continuing to assist the Authority where possible. They and their respective members continue to report areas of concern as a result of their walking and riding activities. This information is to be fed into the RoWIP maintenance schedules.
- 4.5 The Darren Valley Ramblers have recently identified a number of paths in their area that require attention. With the assistance of the rights of way warden through training days involving the safe use of machinery, the group is proceeding with the clearance of paths, installation of gates, stiles, signposts and waymarking.

- 4.6 All the works undertaken by these groups of volunteers are an important contribution to the access to the rights of way network and the Authority will continue to pursue the development of these links in the future in accordance with the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- 4.7 Through contact with Groundwork Caerphilly, the Authority is currently working with “On the Ground Team” who are a group of adults of various ages undertaking voluntary work to gain work experience and skills in the countryside environment.
- 4.8 This group is currently working in the Crosskeys and Pontywaun area, works identified include stiles, gates and signposting.
- 4.9 The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) has recently completed the clearance of paths in the Rudry and Rhydygwern areas.
- 4.10 Newport Outdoor Group has carried out a number of surveys in the Cwmcarn area and has arranged a work weekend to complete the works identified.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To inform Members

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