

“Best Foot Forward!”

Torfaen’s Rights of Way Improvement Plan



**TORFAEN
COUNTY
BOROUGH**



**BWRDEISTREF
SIROL
TORFAEN**

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RHAGAIR

Cynllun Gwella Hawliau Tramwy “Drafft” ar gyfer Torfaen, yn ôl gofynion Deddf Cefn Gwlad a Hawliau Tramwy 2000, yw’r ddogfen hon.

Cynhyrchwyd y ddogfen gan y Tîm Mynediad i Gefn Gwlad i’w ddefnyddio nid yn unig fel cymorth i gynhyrchu cynllun rheoli ar gyfer y Tîm, ond fel dogfen ymgeisio ar gyfer y ffynonellau cyllid y rhagwelir yn ystod y deng mlynedd nesaf.

Mae’r Cyngor yn cydnabod y pwysigrwydd o hyrwyddo a rheoli’r rhwydwaith hawliau tramwy a’r mynediad ehangach i gefn gwlad er mwyn annog gweithgareddau corfforol gan ei fod yn cyfrannu at gyflawni un o bum blaenoriaeth gorfforaethol yr Awdurdod, sef gwella iechyd i bawb drwy hyrwyddo ffyrdd iachach o fyw.

Nid yn unig ydy’r Cynllun hwn wedi ei ysgrifennu gyda’r bwriad o gynnig gwell dealltwriaeth i Aelodau a thrigolion yr Awdurdod, ynghylch materion mynediad a rheoli hawliau tramwy, ond hefyd fel bod modd ei ddefnyddio i hwyluso’r cydweithio gyda phartneriaid mewnol ac awdurdodau cyfagos. O ran hyn, mae’r Cynllun yn cyfrannu at ymagwedd gydweithredol o reoli mynediad i gefn gwlad o fewn cyd-destun Parc Rhanbarthol arfaethedig y Cymoedd.

FOREWORD

This document is the “Draft” Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) for Torfaen, as required by the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. It has been produced by the Countryside Access Team to be used not only as an aid to producing a management plan for the Team, but to be used as a bidding document in anticipation of funding opportunities that are likely to be available over the next ten years.

The Council recognises the importance of promoting and managing the rights of way network and wider countryside access to encourage physical activities since this contributes to achieving one of the five corporate priorities of the Authority, namely improving the health outcomes for everyone by promoting healthier lifestyles.

Not only has the ROWIP been written with the intention of giving the Members and residents of the Authority a better understanding of access issues and rights of way management, but also so that it can be used to facilitate joint working with internal partners and neighbouring authorities. In this respect the ROWIP contributes to a collaborative approach to managing countryside access within the context of the proposed Valleys Regional Park.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000, Section 60(1), states that every local highway authority must produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (hereafter referred to as ROWIP) by 2007. This will be the first time such a strategic document on public rights of way has been produced for Torfaen County Borough Council and should therefore be considered a major step in ensuring the rights of way network meets the needs of the public today and in the future.

2. Aims

- 2.1 The ROWIP is an assessment of the extent to which local public rights of way meet present and likely future needs. It will be used to support funding applications to achieve this and it will identify resources required to bring the network and its associated documentation up to date. It will highlight the opportunities that the network provides for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the authority's area. The ROWIP will highlight major problems for those with little or no sight or with mobility problems encountered while trying to access the countryside. The strategy includes an action plan to ensure that this will be a dynamic strategic document, accessed and used throughout its ten-year lifespan.
- 2.2 In the process of drafting the ROWIP, a number of other publications have been and will continue to be consulted so that the ROWIP will support and be supported by the policies and strategies in these other documents. These documents are listed in Appendix 4

3. Objectives

- 3.1 The ROWIP, comprising of a ten year strategy & action plan will;
- Highlight the importance of managing the Public Rights of Way (PROW) network. This is in order to maintain health and wellbeing, one of the Council's corporate priorities, as well as assuring the public's general enjoyment of the countryside. Attention will be drawn to any problem areas relating to anti-social behaviour, enabling strategic partnerships to develop and work together.

- Show up any deficiencies or “gaps” in the PROW network that may not have been evident previously. The ultimate aim, where possible, will be “Access for all”.
- Identify to the Council the real needs and requirements of users of the network, highlighting areas where there is a need for better provision for individuals and groups for whom at present the network makes little sense or presents physical barriers to their enjoyment of the countryside.
- Help staff to focus and prioritise the use of existing resources and allocate them in the most effective manner and in ways that will maximise the benefits of the network.
- Will provide the Council with a clear strategy to follow over a ten-year period. It will focus on the benefits improved access will bring to the local community, namely improvements to the economy, health and well-being and a better understanding of both our natural and historical heritage.
- Identify the need to produce a new Definitive Map and Statement.
- Through its preparation, be used to raise the public's awareness of public rights of way and the availability of the network. It will look at the information on “access” that is available at present and how to improve and provide a more integrated information system.
- Increase awareness and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Access Team. It will be used to highlight areas where it will be beneficial to work in partnership with as wide a range of other groups as possible to ensure continued improvement and enjoyment of the countryside's resources
- Indicate and identify areas where there is a need for improvement, therefore the ROWIP is a document that can be used as a “tool” to secure additional funding.
- Provide Torfaen CBC and other local authorities with the base information, a strategic way forward and an action plan that will be used in taking forward the management and promotion of the proposed Valleys Regional Park in South Wales. The latter promotes the basis for better collaboration in Countryside Management across the valleys.

3.2 The Action Plan should result in all members of the public having:-

- Access to a safe and effective rights of way network that meets their needs;

- An accurately recorded network in which they will have confidence;
- An assurance that these levels will be maintained and improved.

4. ROWIP Considerations

4.1 The ROWIP requires consideration of 4 factors:-

- The Definitive Map and Statement of PROW
- The Public Rights of Way Network
- Improving Accessibility
- Resource Issues

5. The Definitive Map and Statement of PROW

5.1 The present document was published in 1967 and now needs to be assessed to see what is required to ensure it is an up-to-date and a reliable document that provides for the needs of a modern society.

- What are its shortfalls?
- What numbers of Modification Orders are required?
- What numbers of Legal Event Orders are required?
- Quantify the backlog of other legal orders.
- Is it in a form that can be easily accessed by the public?
- Are there likely to be any “Lost ways”?
- Does the map reflect what is available “on the ground”?

5.2 By quantifying the above the plan will be able to identify the resources required to produce a reliable digitised version of the Definitive Map. The ultimate aim will be to produce a new or updated Definitive Map and Statement.

6. The Rights of Way Network

6.1 The present network was surveyed in the early 1950s and registered in 1967. In conjunction with the Definitive Map, the network needs to be assessed to see if it meets with present and future needs by:-

- Identifying any gaps or anomalies in the network;
- Assessing the condition of the path network;
- Ensuring all routes are equal to the demands made upon them;
- Understanding and prioritising the range of issues raised by consultation;

- Working with landowners/managers to promote responsible land management to reduce the need for legal or enforcement actions to keep the network open;
- Working with the public to ensure the responsible use of the network.

6.2 There are no proposals to do a condition survey on every single link of the network during the drafting of the ROWIP.

7. Improving Accessibility

7.1 Looking at the wider issues of accessibility, there is not only a need to consider those with mobility issues, but there may be groups within our society that feel access to the countryside and the PROW network does not concern them, that it is for someone else or some may even feel intimidated by the prospect of access to the countryside. To attempt to overcome these issues it will be necessary to:-

- Incorporate the requirements of the less able into the ROWIP, ensuring that the network is easy to use, as appropriate;
- Assess the present day needs and demand of the users;
- Identify any real and perceived barriers to the use of PROW;
- Increase the public's awareness of the PROW network;
- Encourage greater social inclusion;
- Promote the availability of PROW, and access land and the responsible use of the network;
- Improve all forms of information provided; in leaflets, online, on-site etc.

8. Resource Issues

8.1 Prior to Local Government Reorganisation in 1996, the management of PROW and the associated legal documentation was the responsibility of the former County Council of Gwent, and before that, Monmouthshire County Council. Following re-organisation, the responsibility was transferred to Torfaen County Borough Council, and staff employed to manage this area of work.

8.2 At the present time, the Authority employs a Senior Countryside Access Officer, a Countryside Access Officer, a full time Countryside

Warden assisted by a part time Countryside Warden (200 hours per annum) and approximately 5 stalwart footpath volunteers ranging in age from late 50s to late 80s! The volunteers usually meet once a week and assist the wardens in opening up sections of the network by repairing or installing damaged or missing furniture and cutting back vegetation.

- 8.3 The budget for managing the rights of way network is £21,500 per annum. This funds all maintenance work, legal orders, some training, equipment, materials, tools and the volunteer wardens' expenses. In addition, this sum must also fund the computer soft-ware (mapping systems and the Countryside Access Management System) essential in this day and age to ensure the section provides an efficient and accurate service. Finally, the costs incurred in running the Local Access Forum and for the production of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan must also come out of this annual allocation.



Volunteers helping the Countryside Warden to install a stile and a foot-bridge

- 8.4 Torfaen has a network of approximately 990 registered public rights of way, a total length of approximately 340 kms of highway. There are also approximately 1,260 hectares of Urban Common and Open Access land that allows for public access on foot. This is just over 10% of the land mass that makes up Torfaen. In addition, approximately 1,200 hectares of Forestry Commission land has been dedicated to the public for access, predominately on foot although some routes with higher rights (bridleways) are being permitted. Finally, other areas that allow public access in Torfaen are Garn Lakes, Pontypool Park and the leisure route (part of National Cycle

Route No 46) along the old railway line from Blaenafon to Pontypool, community woods and public open spaces.

- 8.5 The Local Access Forum has been and will continue to be a key body in advising on the drafting and monitoring the progress of the ROWIP. Members are an essential point of contact and of shared experience between the officers drafting the ROWIP and the users of the PROW network.

THE DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

9. History of the map

- 9.1 As required by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Definitive Map and Statement were drafted in the former County of Monmouthshire, following a survey carried out between 1950 and 1952. All routes believed to be public were surveyed by volunteers who returned “parish submissions” to the Rights of Way Officer, indicating paths to be included on a draft map covering the whole of the former authority area.
- 9.2 Once the draft was produced, in July 1952, the public was invited to inspect the map and could then make applications to add routes that they believed to be public that had not been included on the draft map. They could also make applications to remove routes they felt had been wrongly shown on the map for example, a route shown was actually private or its status had been wrongly represented.
- 9.3 These applications were considered and then a provisional or modification map was produced in September 1965, showing the routes to be added and those to be removed. This was again made available for public viewing, but appeals this time could only come from landowners/managers about any routes that had been added or deleted at this stage, that affected their land.



Figure 1. Extract of the Definitive Map. Path numbers 12 & 13, at Llantarnam Grange, now run through the centre of Cwmbran's shopping precinct.

9.4 The relevant modifications were made and the Definitive Map and Statement became a legal document when published in November 1967. This map was “split” at local government reorganisation in 1996 and the authority still uses the sections of the 1967 map (see figure 1 above) that cover the Torfaen area. As the Definitive Map and the written Statement are legal documents they can only be altered by a legal order. The routes indicated on the Definitive Map and in the Statement are classed as “highways” or public routes that can only be extinguished or altered through a due legal process.

9.5 Officers dealing with rights of way and access have a range of statutory duties (obligations) and powers (discretions), to assist them in their work. Here are some examples:-

➤ **Duties**

- ◆ To ensure the Definitive Map and Statement are kept up to date.
- ◆ To protect the public’s right to use PROWs.
- ◆ To maintain the surface of PROWs maintainable at public expense.
- ◆ To prevent the obstruction of PROWs.
- ◆ To ensure farmers reinstate paths after ploughing and that their crops do not make the use of the PROW inconvenient.
- ◆ To signpost PROWs where they leave metalled highways.
- ◆ To draft a ROWIP.

➤ **Powers**

- ◆ To make Public Path Orders (PPOs), to divert or extinguish PROWs.
- ◆ To order offenders to remove obstructions.
- ◆ To provide rights of way or access wardens.
- ◆ To enter land in relation to PPOs.

10. The Definitive Map Today

10.1 In Torfaen at present, there are 990 registered public rights of way that can be broken down as seen in figure 3. As the 1967 map used the old communities of Blaenafon, Henllys, Llanfrechfa Lower, Llanhennock, Cwmbran and Pontypool (split into Abersychan and Panteg), this is still how they are numbered for legal purposes. The

community of Llanhennock is predominately under Newport's jurisdiction, apart from Public Footpath No 2 at Ponthir, which due to a tweak in the county boundaries, now falls within Torfaen. When a new Definitive Map and Statement is completed and ratified, it will reflect the changes to the authority by splitting the area into the following "new" communities:-

- Abersychan
- Blaenafon
- Croesyceiliog
- Cwmbran Central
- Fairwater
- Henllys
- Llantarnam
- Llanyrafon
- Pontymoile
- New Inn
- Panteg
- Pen Tranch
- Ponthir
- Pontnewydd
- Trevethin
- Upper Cwmbran

10.2 A Public Rights of Way are defined as follows:-

- footpath (FP), to be used by the public on foot only;
- bridleway (BR), which can be used by the public on foot, on horseback or on a bicycle,
- restricted byway (RB), which can be used by the public on foot, horseback, bicycle and with a NON motorised vehicle (e.g. horse and cart),
- byway open to all traffic (BOAT), can be used by the public by all the above means and with occasional motorised vehicular traffic.

10.3 One of the provisions of the CROW Act 2000 was to have a blanket re-classification of what were known as Roads Used as Public Paths or RUPP's (on the present Definitive Map they are labelled cartroad footpaths or cartroad bridleways.) Since this came into force in May 2006 these are now classified as Restricted Byways.

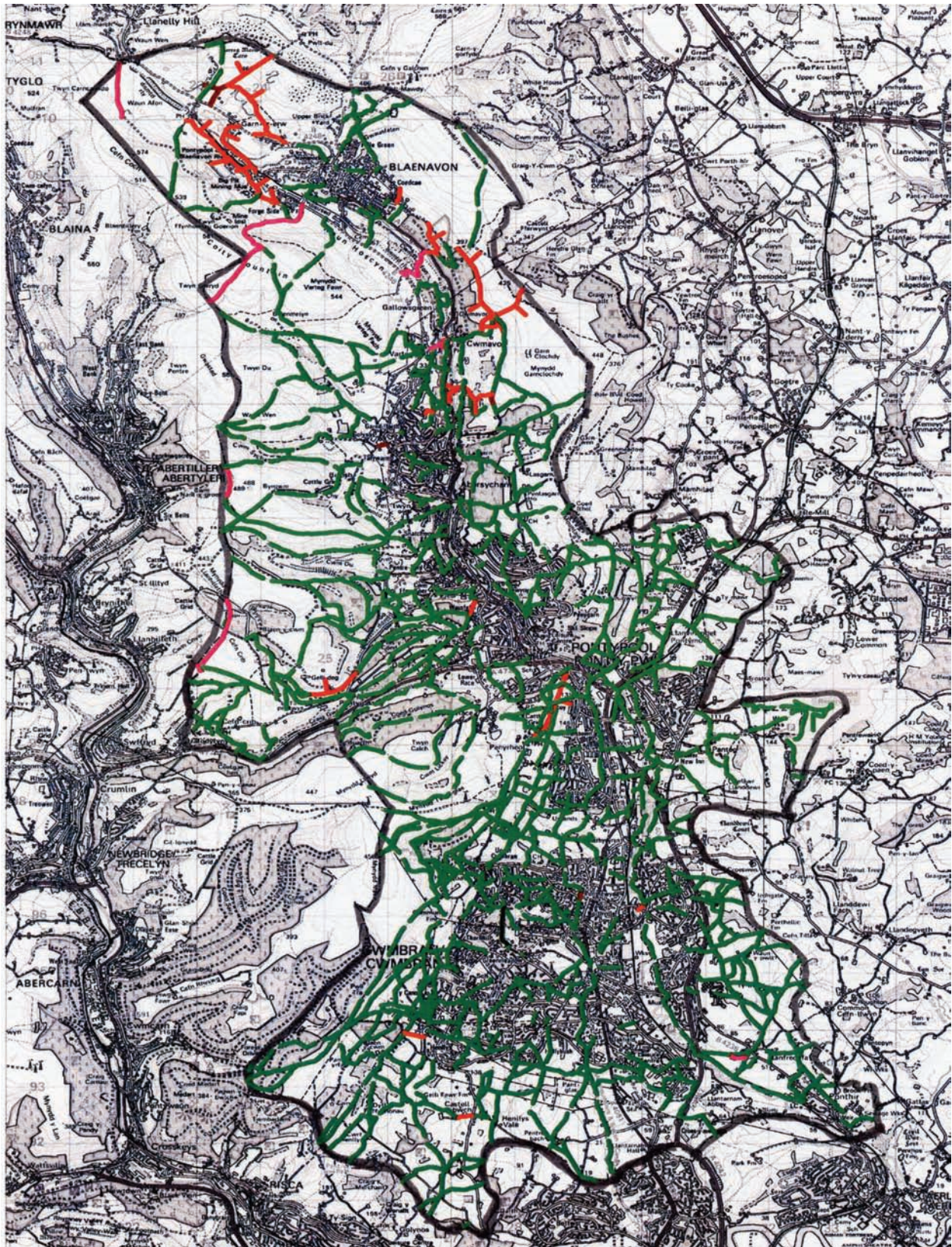


Figure 2. Map showing the PROW network in Torfaen.

Community	No. of FP's	No. of BR's	No. of Restricted Byways	No. of BOATS	Total ROW per Community
Abersychan	110	6	16	1	133
Blaenafon	35	6	10		51
Croesyceiliog	29		1		30
Cwmbran	41				41
Fairwater	97				97
Henllys	73		5		78
Llantarnam	34				34
Llanyrafon	31				31
New Inn	76				76
Panteg	39				39
Pen-Tranch	79	5	20		104
Ponthir	49	1			50
Pontnewydd	20			1	21
Pontymoile	40		8		48
Trevethin	40		4		44
Upper Cwmbran	113				113
Overall Totals	906	18	64	2	990

Figure 3. Totals of Rights of Way in Torfaen Communities

11. Legal Orders

11.1 It is the duty of the Council as Highway Authority to keep the Definitive Map and Statement under continuous review. Since 1967, there have been many changes to the PROW network. Numerous diversions and extinguishments (Public Path Orders) have been implemented on the ground, housing estates have been built over large sections of the network, new trunk roads have been constructed which have required “side roads” to be altered and new previously unregistered routes have been claimed.

12. Diversion, Extinguishment and Creation Orders

12.1 Landowners, tenants or developers can apply to divert, create or even extinguish routes that affect their property. A diverted route must not be “less commodious” than the existing line, e.g. to significantly increase the length of a path or to incorporate a slope or steps to a route that previously had run on the level. To successfully apply for a route to be extinguished, an applicant must prove that the path will not be needed. The Council may also create a path where they feel there is a need for a new route. At present the Authority

deals with on average 10 applications for PPO's a year. Each order takes approximately 12 months from application stage to confirmation, providing there are no objections.

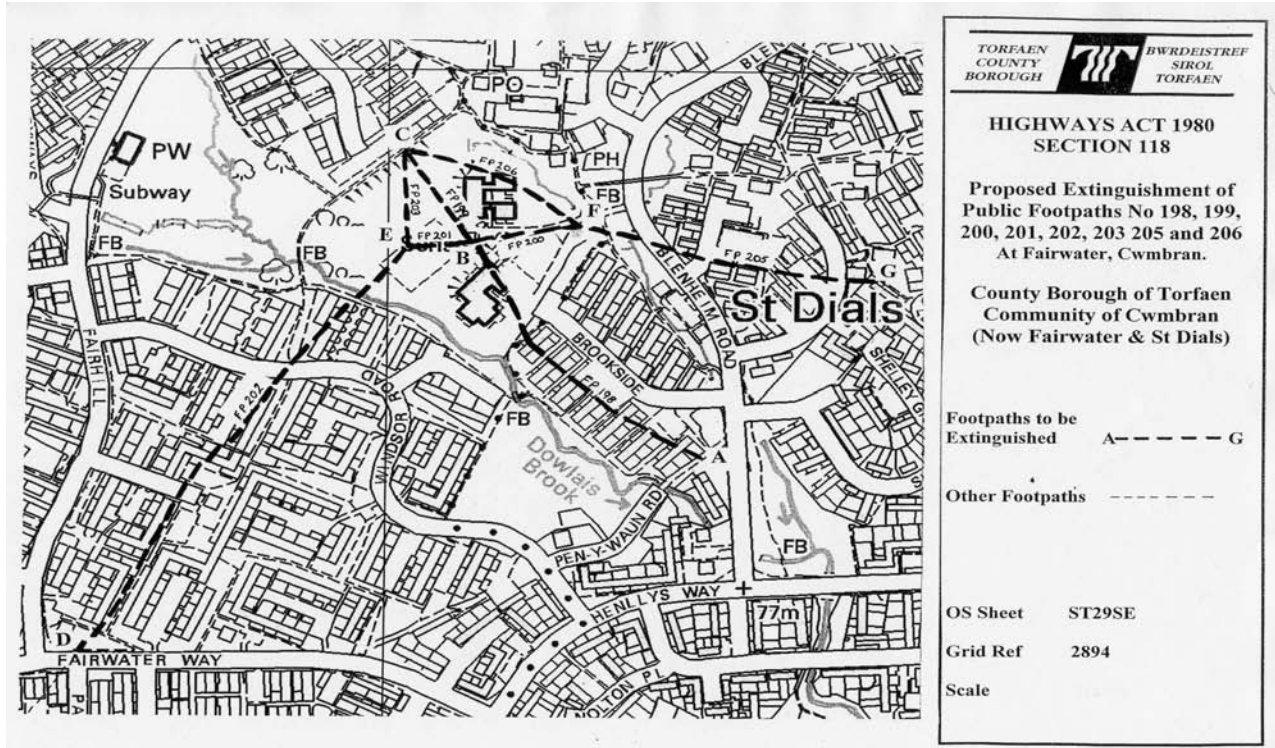


Figure 4. Example of an Order Map, in this instance it shows paths to be extinguished.

12.2 Orders which have been objected to and which the Council is unable to resolve are passed to the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) for a decision. It is then for a Planning Inspector to review all the evidence and to produce a decision, either following written representations from both parties or following a Public Inquiry.

12.3 See Appendix 3 for an Order Flow Chart which outlines the process for orders.

13. Legal Event Orders

13.1 All diversions, extinguishments and creations require two types of legal order; one physically to change the line on the ground and a second to make a legal alteration to the physical map and statement. Since 1967 however, only the former orders have been made and confirmed. The latter or “Legal Event Orders” (LEOs) were never made and this is a process that Torfaen County Borough Council must now undertake before it can update its Definitive Map and Statement. It is calculated that there are approximately 113 Legal Event Orders required to bring Torfaen’s Definitive Map and Statement up to date. They can be broken down into the following communities:-

Blaenafon	Henllys	Llanfrechfa Lower	Llanhennock	Cwmbran	Pontypool	TOT
9	4	12	1	34	43	103

14. ISSUE 1

(1.1) In addition to the 103 outstanding Legal Event Orders that will need to be made, an average of 10 additional LEOs will be required every year.

(1.2) At present the Council has no Legal staff resources specifically dedicated to PROW work and so the completion times are very reliant on when the existing legal assistants can allocate their time to produce the legal orders

15. Statement of Proposed Action 1

- Agreements need to be made on the number of LEOs per annum that could be processed by the Legal Section.
- A rolling programme of LEOs to be processed and forwarded to legal section for confirming.
- From 1 January 2008, the council will ensure that every new order to be confirmed must be accompanied by a Legal Event Order to prevent an increase in the number of outstanding orders.
- It is necessary to ensure that all records (paper and digital) are updated at confirmation.

16. Temporary Diversion or Stopping-up Orders

16.1 There are times when it is necessary, in the interest of public safety, to issue temporary orders, for example, to dismantle a dangerous footbridge, to lay a pipeline, etc. The applicants can apply to the Council for an order to divert or temporarily stop-up a path for six months; any longer than this and the applicant must gain permission from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) for an extension of time. There is also a provision for emergency stopping up of a path, should there be an imminent danger to the public. On average the Authority receives 6 applications for temporary orders a year.

17. ISSUE 2

(2.1) The absence of an officer in the Council's Legal Services dedicated specifically to rights of way work and capacity issues with the existing legal officer result in delays in producing temporary orders. This is not acceptable, especially if the orders are required in the interests of public safety or are emergency closures.

18. Statement of Proposed Action 2

- Investigate with the Legal Services the provision of an officer dedicated to, or who can give priority to, rights of way orders etc. to find a way of resolving the present delays in processing orders.
- Funding should be sought for an additional officer to do this work.
- Research the possibility of an additional Access Officer taking on some additional responsibilities for the legal processing of the orders and sourcing funding for this.

19. "Built Over" Footpaths

19.1 Since the Definitive Map was finalised in 1967, Cwmbran New Town has been built over much of the ROW network without any diversion or extinguishment orders being undertaken (see figure 5). This has resulted in many houses still having a registered route running through the curtilage of the property. As these are legal, registered routes, still shown on the Definitive Map, they must be shown on any relevant Local Land Charge Search undertaken when a property is being purchased. This may mean a vendor is unable to complete a sale of their property, a prospective purchaser could be declined a mortgage or a tenant may lose their "right to buy". Under extreme

circumstances, a member of the public could serve notice on the Council to remove the “obstructions” to the registered route.

19.2 It has been calculated that this affects over 700 properties in the Cwmbran and south Pontypool areas where properties have been built over registered public rights of way. It has been estimated that approximately 24 orders would initially be required to bring the map up to date but this does not take into account the anomalies that continue to emerge. Legal event orders would subsequently need to be processed.



Figure 5. Part of Cwmbran showing the housing estates with the registered public footpaths overlaid in green.

20. Old Orders

20.1 Following research undertaken in compiling the ROWIP, an additional anomaly for rectification has been “discovered”. Approximately 26 orders were made in the 1950’s, primarily under the New Towns Act, to extinguish or divert public footpaths in the new residential and retail areas of Torfaen. The need to remove these routes was not indicated on the provisional stage of the map and therefore they were included on the 1967 Definitive Map. Legal advice is that these routes retain their public status, despite them being no longer available on their

registered line on the ground. These paths will need new legal orders to resolve the issue.

20.2 The approximate number of affected paths has been estimated as follows:-

	“Built over”	“Old orders”
Blaenavon	0	1
Llan. Lower	0	7
Cwmbran	34	15
Pontypool	13	3

20.3 There are a total of 73 paths that will need approximately 50 orders to rectify the Definitive Map

20.4 Additional funding has been made available from the Council to implement a rolling programme to deal with built over paths in Cwmbran & Pontypool, by March 2008 and a part-time officer has been employed to give administrative and technical support to the access officers.

21. ISSUE 3

(3.1) There are over 100 known paths that need Public Path Orders (PPOs) to divert or extinguish them to update the Definitive Map, along with any new anomalies that remain to be discovered.

22. Statement of Proposed Action 3

- Source additional funding to continue to fund administrative support to resolve “old orders” and anomalies.

23. Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs)

23.1 In addition to the above orders, there are eleven outstanding applications for DMMOs (“new” paths) which need to be evaluated, determined and processed. Anyone can make an application to add a previously unregistered route that is believed to be public to the Definitive Map, or to re-grade an existing route to a higher or lower status as long as there is sufficient evidence to support their application.

23.2 It is impossible to calculate how many new applications will be made over the next 10 years. Due to the finite number of officer-hours available, other matters often take precedence or priority. Once other backlogs have been cleared, it is intended that more officer time can be allocated to the many hours of research required for the processing of DMMOs.

23.3 As with a PPO, an order which has been objected to is passed to the Welsh Assembly Government for a decision. Also, if the Council decline to make an Order, the applicant can lodge an appeal with the Welsh Assembly Government.

24. ISSUE 4

(4.1) At present it is taking more than the statutory time required to process DMMOs.

25. Statement of Proposed Action 4

- Make applicants aware that they need to provide as much evidence as possible, historical as well as that of users, to support their application. This would reduce the amount of officer time required in researching the additional information required.

26. Lost Ways

26.1 Under the CROW Act there is provision for the extinguishment of public rights on unregistered historical routes (i.e. routes that may have only historical evidence to support their status as “public” ways, for example a roman road, a drovers’ route or a pilgrims’ path). These are routes that were in existence prior to 1st January 1949 but have not been included in the Definitive Map and Statement and now require an application to register them before 2026 to ensure any public rights will not be “extinguished”. After this date, routes cannot be added to the Definitive Map or their status re-graded solely on historical evidence alone.

26.2 “Lost ways” or unrecorded routes *could* require a lot of officer time and resources in the future, should any be identified in the years preceding the cut-off date. It is impossible to estimate the number of routes or ways that may be claimed before 2026 as, at present, only

one ancient route has come to the attention of the Local Highway Authority as needing protection by registration. This is a short section of an ancient pilgrims' route that in Torfaen goes from Llantarnam Abbey to Llanderfel Chapel. It may be used as a test case to see how much archival research is required to register a "Lost Way"

27. ISSUE 5

(5.1) There is no way of estimating at present how many claims for Lost Ways may be made before 2026 or for the amount of research required in assessing and registering these routes.

(5.2) The process of registering a route purely on historical evidence is yet untested in Torfaen.

28. Statement of Proposed Action 5

- Consider using the "pilgrims' route" as an example for setting our procedures for dealing with any future claims for lost ways.

29. Other Mapping Anomalies.

29.1 During the drafting of the 1967 Map, neighbouring communities and districts failed to liaise sufficiently resulting in, for example, some footpaths in Torfaen become bridleways when they cross into neighbouring authorities or stop abruptly and are "dead-end" routes. (See figure 6)

29.2 The Torfaen area is divided into 13 A2 sized maps at a scale of 1:10,000. The nine that are affected are listed below with an indication of the anomalies found on each sheet. To rectify these will take a great amount of research before any order can be made to modify the Definitive Map. Where the anomaly is due to a change in status at the Authority boundary, there needs to be liaison with the neighbouring authority, as well as historical research to ascertain the original status of the links. The statutory requirement for all local authorities to produce a ROWIP is an ideal opportunity to rectify these anomalies. The first stage in this process has been the development of a "Loops and Links" action plan (see point 38) Furthermore the opportunity for collaborative working within the context of the Valleys Regional Park provides a platform for resolving these issues

29.3 It is likely that there are also anomalies that are yet to be discovered. Inconsistencies between the Draft Map, the Definitive Map and the Statement often are discovered when an unrelated problem or complaint is being researched. These will be difficult to quantify until the research required for the drafting of the new Definitive Map brings them to light.

Sheet No.	ROW type	Anomaly
20NW	FP	Changes to BR at Blaenau Gwent boundary
	FP	Does not link with another highway, unregistered gap.
	FP	Changes to BR at Blaenau Gwent boundary
	FP	Changes to BR at Blaenau Gwent boundary
20SW	FP	Changes to BR at Blaenau Gwent boundary
	BR	Goes down then up quarry face
	CRB	Changes to BR before reaching road
20SE	CRB	Links onto an un-registered track
	FP	Path is a dead end, does not end at a highway
	FP	Path is a dead end, does not end at a highway
	FP	Path is a dead end, does not end at a highway
21SW	CRB	Changes to a BR at Monmouthshire boundary
	FP	Path is a dead end, does not end at a highway
	BR	Changes to CRB then becomes a dead end, not connected to a highway
29SW	CRB	Changes to FP at Caerphilly boundary
	FP	Changes to BR at Caerphilly boundary
29NE	FP	Path is a dead end, does not end at a highway
29SE	CRB	Changes to a FP for 210m then changes back to CRB
	CRB	Is a dead end, does not end at a highway
	CRB	Changes to a FP
39NW	FP FP FP	All 3 paths terminate on the Old Newport Road, public status extinguished by a SRO, therefore all paths are "dead ends"
39SW	FP	Changes to BR at Newport boundary
	BR	Becomes a FP at either end

Figure 6. List of "Anomalies" per map sheet.

30. ISSUE 6

- (6.1) There are at least 8 routes that change status at authority boundaries and require rationalisation.
- (6.2) There are 16 paths that are “dead ends” or change status mid way and so require a DMMO or a PPO. One bridleway goes down a quarry face, crosses a deep pool then climbs up the opposite sheer rock face!
- (6.3) Inconsistencies between the Draft and Definitive Maps and the written Statement are still coming to light and will continue to require resolution.

31. Statement of Proposed Action 6

- Liaise with neighbouring authorities and make orders to upgrade footpaths to bridleways where possible, as part of the Valleys Regional Park action plan
- Utilise information supplied in the Loops and Links strategy
- Liaise with landowners to look to providing extensions to dead end paths, or extinguish them if they are not necessary in the future.
- Resolve inconsistencies when drafting the new Definitive Map to ensure it will be a reliable document.

32. Producing a New Definitive Map and Statement

32.1 The existing Definitive Map, dating from 1967 is woefully out of date not only for reasons already covered in previous points, but also because the base maps used in the 1967 Map date from 1949, so none of the new urban centres, trunk roads and industrial estates are accurately mapped; many major features, including Llandegfedd Reservoir, have been annotated on the map by hand. The old community boundaries do not reflect the modern shift in population or the new community boundaries and the existing map for Torfaen is only a part of the original produced for the former County of Monmouthshire.

32.2 Where the Map is a pictorial indication of the registered PROWs, the Statement is a written indication and description of each route. The path descriptions contained in the Statement accompanying the 1967 Map were patchy and often unsatisfactory. The original hand-written

comments supplied as part of the initial 1950s survey were incorporated into a bound book of typed flimsy pages which was not in a form that could be split at subsequent Local Government re-organisations. This book at present is located in the Rights of Way Section of Monmouthshire County Council and is the only legal copy of Torfaen's written Statement. In the early 1980s a computer printout of the statement was produced for each "community" and these were disseminated at the 1996 re-organisation to each unitary authority. This had been printed for ease of use and to protect the flimsy original copy, but it is not a legal document.

32.3 To update and produce the information required for a new Definitive Map and Statement, it will be necessary to undertake a 100% survey of the network. This is in addition to updating the legal records as raised in point 13.

33. ISSUE 7

(7.1) In its present state, the Definitive Map does not accurately reflect or represent the Authority and its network of public rights of way.

(7.2) The accompanying written Statement does not provide an accurate or reliable description of the routes in the network.

34. Statement of Proposed Action 7

- Produce a reliable digitised map that includes all PPOs and DMMOs that date from 1967 to the present.
- Ensure that all new confirmed orders are entered on the digitised map.
- Complete a 100% survey to ensure all routes are accurately mapped and have a reliable written description.
- A template of the contents for the path description entries must be prepared, prior to undertaking a survey, so all relevant information gathered is consistent throughout the whole Authority.
- All new orders must be accompanied by a new written Statement for the whole length of the path/s, not just for the diverted section. This would reduce the final number of paths that will need to be looked at in the 100% survey.

- Once the Map and Statement have been satisfactorily updated, a new Definitive Map and Statement will need to be produced, not only in a digital format that can be made available on the Authority's website, but also in a paper format.

35. Order Registers

35.1 Under the CROW Act 2000, new duties have been placed on Authorities to set up and keep three types of register:-

- 1) Deposited plans /statutory declarations made under S31 (6) of the Highways Act 1980.
- 2) Applications of certain types of Public Path Orders.
- 3) Claims made for orders to add routes to the Definitive Map.

35.2 The Regulations came into force on 15 January 2006 and all registers were required to be published by 1 July 2006. Torfaen County Borough Council already holds the information required regarding 1) on a paper file and most of the information required for 2) and 3) are held on existing 'Access' database tables. However, the Regulations not only stipulate what the registers must contain, but also, the format in which they are to be kept and made available for the public. The required information, additional to that which is already recorded, for all three registers is quite extensive. At present the Council does not have the software required to set up the electronic registers in the prescribed format nor is there funding for the costs involved in setting up the registers or providing a member of staff to input all the existing information or to maintain the registers.

36. ISSUE 8

(8.1) There is a new statutory duty to provide information in a digital and paper format and at present this Authority is not fulfilling this duty.

37. Statement of Proposed Action 8

- Continue with the present methods of recording the information and seek funding to change the format.
- Seek additional funding for the future cost of software and maintenance packages for the three registers.

- Seek additional funding or staff resources for entering the additional information on paper/electronic registers.

38. Identifying Gaps

- 38.1 Sometimes there is an obvious need for a route where none exists at present; this is a “gap” or a hole in the network. To identify any public demand or need for additional routes is more complicated than just looking at the maps and putting in links where there appears to be no provision, for example, bridleways. The reason that there is not a link in a certain area could be simply because no-one has ever wanted to walk, ride or cycle there. The present map has only 82 registered horse riding/cycling routes, a total of just 8% of the network. The routes are fragmented or connect only by use of busy roads. Consultations with horse riders have taken place and riders have identified routes they would like to use
- 38.2 In spring 2007, with Heads of the Valleys funding from the Welsh Assembly Government, Torfaen County Borough Council commissioned Hyder Consulting to develop an action plan to improve the registered network of public rights of way that currently exists within Torfaen. Known as the Loops and Links Action Plan, the study was to focus on four key areas:-
- Improve PROW links between urban and rural areas, to give better access to the countryside and town amenities.
 - Improve PROWs across local authority boundaries.
 - Identify ways of improving connectivity along PROW s.
 - Identify potential PROW’s that would improve the network system as a whole.
- 38.3 There are only two short sections of Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) in Torfaen, which combined with the reclassification of CRF/B’s or RUPP’s to restricted byways, means that there is no legal provision for any off-road vehicular sport enthusiasts to drive or ride in the county borough, other than on adopted roads. To prove a route has public motorised vehicular rights, evidence of such public use prior to 1930 must be provided.

39. ISSUE 9

(9.1) There is a limited number of horse riding routes making a fractured network.

(9.2) There are no legal off road routes available for motorised sports. Lack of this amenity has lead to the increase in those participating in this sport illegally.

40. Statement of Proposed Action 9

- Continue to liaise with bridleway user groups to gather any information/evidence of unregistered routes used that may need adding to the Definitive Map.
- Implement appropriate parts of the Loops and Links Action Plan.
- Continue to liaise with various bodies to reduce the antisocial and illegal aspects of off-road motor sports.
- Where feasible, liaise with any landowners expressing an interest in providing permissive off-road vehicular access.

THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK

41. Condition of the Network

41.1 Ideally a 100% survey of the PROW network should be undertaken before drafting a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. Due to the time required to undertake this task and the lack of resources to do so, it was felt that the results that would be obtained by such a survey would not justify the cost. Therefore it was decided to rely on previous surveys to give an indication of the physical condition of the PROW network in Torfaen.

41.2 The first round of surveys used is the annual Performance Indicators (PIs). These are “samples” based on a random 5% sample of PROW. Initially the selection was of 5% of the total number of “links” or paths in the Authority, but latterly this was changed to 5% of the total length of PROWs. The first PIs available for Torfaen are from 1999-2000 but due to the change in the samples used for the PIs and the intervention of Foot and Mouth regulations, it is difficult to provide a true comparison of the annual figures. Only the last four years figures

give an accurate indication of how they compare. The PIs are calculated over a “financial” year.

- 41.3 1999 – 2000 - There were two indicators for this year, and these were the number of paths that were
- a) signposted where they left a metalled road
 - b) easy to use by members of the public

Footpaths signposted where they left a metalled road	21%
Routes easy to use by members of the public	40.8%

A total of 49 links were surveyed for this 5% sample

- 41.4 From 2001, the two previous PIs were amalgamated into one i.e. the percentage of total lengths of PROW which were easy to use by the public now included the signposting element. The Foot and Mouth restrictions were in force for 9 months of this year so only a quarter of the 5% ROW lengths random selection were actually surveyed. Post 2002 the methodology of PIs has remained the same and the table below shows the results achieved.

Year	Result of 5% survey
2000-2001(Foot & Mouth restrictions)	47%
2001-2002(limited survey due to F&M)	39%
2002-2003	37%
2003-2004	49%
2004-2005	49%
2005-2006	45%

- 41.5 Countryside Council for Wales Survey – 2002 – The Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) carried out a Wales-wide survey based on the “ease of use” indicator. The survey was based on three individual one kilometre squares being selected by the surveyors and every PROW within these squares was surveyed. The results, as can be seen from the table below, differed greatly from the PI’s obtained by Torfaen’s own PI surveys. Torfaen came top in Wales with 72% on “ease of use”

Authority	'Ease of Use' Performance Indicators			CCW survey 2002 – % of links
	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	
Anglesey CC	55%	69%	*	40%
Blaenau Gwent CBC	*	66%	76%	59%
Brecon Beacons NPA	*	*	*	49%
Bridgend CBC	10%	22%	39%	41%
Caerphilly CBC	*	82%	*	54%
Cardiff CC	33%	39%	40%	40%
Carmarthenshire CC	52%	58%	48%	23%
Ceredigion CC	46%	49%	46%	29%
City & County of Swansea	26%	43%	67%	57%
Conwy CBC	52%	43%	55%	46%
Denbighshire CC	45%	52%	58%	48%
Flintshire CC	59%	62%	*	45%
Gwynedd Council	*	64%	61%	58%
Merthyr CBC	64%	64%	67%	*
Monmouthshire CC	*	79%	*	54%
Neath Port Talbot CBC	77%	87%	87%	42%
Newport CC	33%	34%	55%	60%
Pembrokeshire CC	44%	43%	*	23%
Pembrokeshire Coast NPA	*	*	*	55%
Powys CC	39%	*	*	28%
Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	61%	65%	21%	53%
Snowdonia NPA	*	*	*	52%
Torfaen CBC	*	41%	47%	72%
Vale of Glamorgan CC	59%	53%	53%	49%
Wrexham CBC	61%	63%	67%	38%
All Wales	48%	56%	55%	46%

Figure 7. Breakdown of CCW Performance Indicator figures for each Welsh Authority.

42. CONCLUSION

42.1 The use of PI's is not a satisfactory way of surveying the condition of the rights of way network as the route may be open, available and easy to use but should it be missing a finger post or way-marking, the path would "fail", being deemed unsatisfactory. Many feel that this is not a true indication of the state of the network.

42.2 The figure of 72% of paths being easy to use, as indicated in the 2002 CCW survey is also unsatisfactory and a false marker of the nature of the network. Torfaen was lucky in the random selection of the 3 kilometre squares used by the surveyors. If any or all of the 3 areas had fallen within the urban areas of Cwmbran the final figure would have been significantly lower due to the number of obstructed registered paths (See point 19).

42.3 It must also be remembered that any survey is only a snapshot in time; that a path surveyed as clear today could be obstructed by a fallen tree tomorrow, a bridge could be washed away the week after it was inspected and fingerposts often “go missing” soon after they have been installed. The only satisfactory indicator or picture of the network will be to do a 100% survey on the ground. This can be accomplished at the same time the routes are surveyed for the purpose of re-writing a Statement for the proposed new Definitive Map.



Replacing a footbridge at Pontyfelin at a cost of £65,000

42.4 One satisfactory conclusion that arises from using PIs is that it shows the performance of Torfaen’s network is consistent.

43. Maintenance of PROW Network

43.1 In Torfaen, there is one full time and one part time Rights of Way Warden with a team of volunteers to maintain the network. The table

below shows the number of complaints received from the public requesting maintenance for a given year (1996 is for a part year only, as Torfaen became a Unitary Authority in April)

YEAR	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2006
No. Received	91	103	127	201	208	198	186	177	127	112

44. Cycle/Leisure Route

44.1 The National Cycle Route (No 46) runs the whole length of the authority from Blaenavon, along the old railway line, through Pontypool and onto the canal towpath north of Cwmbran where it continues on into Newport. The canal towpath section of the cycle route is along registered public footpaths. Part of this route, between Blaenafon and Wainfelin, Pontypool, is also classed as a leisure route as it accommodates access for horse riders. At present, this part of the route is only permissive, has no legal status and is supported, crossed or is abutted by many aging and substantial structures.



Canal towpath as part of the cycle network.



Cycle track along the old mineral line.

45. Urban Footpaths

45.1 A number of our public rights of way are now absorbed into urban areas, so a higher standard of maintenance is appropriate. Consideration is to be given as to how these paths are to be managed in the future.

46. ISSUE 10

(10.1) Waymarks/fingerposts are often vandalised or stolen and therefore there is a problem in ensuring all routes are always adequately waymarked and signed.



Stile, Fingerpost and Dog-stile at Capel Newydd, Blaenavon



Gate and Stile on a restricted by-way, Blaenavon

- (10.2) Part of the cycle/leisure route is not a registered PROW, but it is a priority route for public access and requires maintenance. Resources to maintain its surface and the many aging structures found along its route are limited. Often works necessary to ensure the viability and safety of the route require specialised expertise, additional manpower or large plant/machinery.
- (10.3) Certain paths appear on a regular basis in the maintenance register as requiring the cutting back of vegetation. During the active growing season, this task ties up the majority of the wardens' time.
- (10.4) There are some routes that have and will continue to require greater expenditure than other routes. The nature of the topography of the authority means that many PROWs suffer flooding or scouring during periods of heavy rain, which is

increasing annually due to recent, more extreme weather conditions.

- (10.5) Whilst conducting the 100% survey required to update the Definitive Map and Statement; it is likely that many maintenance issues will come to light and will create a back-log of works required.
- (10.6) There is no prioritisation or weighting of paths, so maintenance of routes can be haphazard, with some paths receiving expenditure that is disproportionate to their public use.
- (10.7) The increasing number of urban paths being “tarmaced” has emphasised the need to consider a Network Inspection Regime similar to that used by the Highways and Transportation Department.

47. Statement of Proposed Action 10

- Undertake research to find and assess new products or practices that reduce damage by vandalism to rights of way furniture.
- Take legal steps to formalise the status of the cycle route to a registered “cycle track” as part of a wider cycle network.
- Source additional funding for the maintenance and improvement of both the surface and the infrastructure of the cycle/leisure route in recognition of its importance as an arterial route through the Authority.
- Organise a cyclical schedule of “problem paths” for regular vegetation clearance on an annual basis, allowing a proactive approach. Consider sourcing funding for external contractor/s to undertake cutting back the vegetation, thus freeing up the rights of way wardens.
- Prioritise the maintenance of paths by using information obtained from PIs and the proposed 100% survey. Paths appearing on circular walks, used as safe routes to school etc to be given higher priority.
- Source additional funding to improve drainage infrastructure, to compensate landowners for additional drainage structures required that may affect their land.
- Consider sourcing funding for additional (part time) warden to assist in perceived maintenance backlog resulting from 100% survey.

IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY

48. The Access Questionnaire

- 48.1 Questionnaires were sent to residents in Torfaen via the “Torfaen Talks” Newsletter in March 2005. (See Appendix 4 for copy of form) Prior to this, copies of the questionnaire were sent to all Community Councils for their comments. Of the estimated 39,500 households to whom the community paper was delivered, only 132 people returned completed forms, of which only 126 were usable for the purposes of the ROWIP. Even though this was a poor response it is felt that the replies were a valid indication of the public's use of the Authority's PROWs and public open spaces.
- 48.2 Due to restrictions on officers' time and financial resources it was decided not to conduct any town centre surveys, cold calling or community workshops. It was thought that all those who felt strongly about rights of way issues already had taken the time to return the form in “Torfaen Talks” and that any further attempts to organise events to gather information would add little additional information in relation to officer time spent in organising the events.

49. Results

- 49.1 Respondents - There was a reasonable spread over the age ranges but the highest percentage of replies was from those aged between 49 and 74 with the least number of replies coming from those over 75. Of the replies only 8% expressed a problem using PROWs because of mobility issues. The national average of “disabled” users is believed to be around 20%. No one with sensory requirements (e.g. visually impaired) had a form returned on their behalf.
- 49.2 Usage - Over 68% used PROWs at least once a week (29% every day). 31% used PROWs at least once a month with only 7% using them infrequently or never. The latter cited overgrown routes, lack of information and a fear for their safety as a problem with PROWs in Torfaen. Not surprisingly perhaps, the greatest use of PROWs was for walking (75%) with cycling coming second (29%) but only 4% used the routes with horses while only two respondents used PROWs for carriage driving or motorcycling.

- 49.3 Reasons - Most used the PROWs for pleasure and recreation (44%) or to walk the dog (17%). What was heartening was that a large percentage used the routes to improve or maintain their health (22%). It was disappointing that only 2% used the network as a safe alternative to take children to school.
- 49.4 Knowledge - A large proportion of the users (48%) appear to rely on just their local knowledge to navigate their way around the PROW network whilst a further 20% used no information at all to plan a route. They responded that they “just went out” appearing to follow their noses. Only 15% utilised a guided walk leaflet whilst 12% employed an OS map to plan a route. Finally, 2% would try the Torfaen website. The highest percentage of routes used is “local”. Though many did not express a preference, 24% preferred short circular routes, with 14% stretching themselves on longer routes.
- 49.5 Problems - The most common problem encountered whilst using PROWS appeared to be routes overgrown (21%) or not sufficiently waymarked (18%) with a lack of information available and concern for personal safety both expressed as a problem by (14%) of the respondents. 11% have encountered blocked routes; 7% felt the path furniture was in poor condition whilst 6% cited the furniture as a barrier to their use of PROWs.

The two main suggestions on improving access to the network were to provide more information on the network and to increase the number of waymarks. A further suggestion most made was to increase the cutting back of vegetation and to address the public’s lack of personal confidence/safety issues. Illegal off-road motorbikes were often cited as causing a nuisance or intimidation to users and also that there were not enough benches/ resting places in the countryside.



One of the designs of motorcycle barrier used on rights of way



Example of motorcycle damage.

49.6 Getting it right - The highest percentage of users felt that the “best” thing about the network was the good access already available to the varied countryside found within the authority boundary and also of the variety of routes available (for example canal tow path, mountainside, green lanes, riverside etc). Many appreciated the safe nature of the routes, away from traffic, their peacefulness and even the good condition of most of the network’s furniture.



Hoverfly on Sheepbit Scabious



Path in Bath Woods



Spotted Orchid



Views from Mynydd Illtyd Common



Canal at Pontymoile Basin

49.7 Open Access and Permissive Routes - Over 50% of those returning the forms have used the routes through and around the many areas of woodland within the authority. Most use the woods for walking with only a few using them for cycling or riding.

86% of the respondents have used the Leisure/National Cycle Route that runs from Garn Lakes to Newport. Surprisingly it is used mostly for walking with only 36% using it for cycling and no-one claimed to have used the route for horse-riding.

Of the other areas that can be used for public access, Pontypool Park came top with 65% using it for recreation and exercise. 63% make use of the mountains/ urban commons around the authority. Disappointingly, only 29% had knowledge of Garn Lakes.

50. Conclusions

50.1 It was encouraging that a high percentage of respondents appeared to use the network on a regular basis, though the apparent low use by horse riders seems to reflect that there is a poor network of bridleways in the Authority. There are 82 registered bridleways and restricted byways in the authority but they are often fragmented. This makes for an unsatisfactory network for horse riders and carriage drivers.



Open Access land at Cwm Du



Event at Garn Lakes, Garn yr erw

- 50.2 More effort needs to be made to improve and promote the use of safe routes to school and the work place. Even though 22% cite health as a reason for using PROWs, this figure indicates that less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the population use this valuable and free asset to improve their health and well-being.
- 50.3 Most users of the countryside appear to be relying on local knowledge but this is not satisfactory as they may not be using registered public rights of way or open access areas. It also indicates that more effort may be needed from the local authority to encourage people to broaden their horizons into more unfamiliar territory.
- 50.4 All lengths of routes appear to be used and therefore every effort should be made to open up and make available the whole PROW network. There appears to be a problem with seasonal overgrowth that is obviously not being satisfactorily resolved with the present manpower and resources available. It would require a cyclical maintenance rota to be drafted and possibly a private contractor paid to cut back known problem routes.
- 50.5 Users on the whole wish to feel more “comfortable” when using the network, something an increased number of way marks and fingerposts would resolve.

Encouraging the use of the countryside by the less able

51. ISSUE 11

- (11.1) At present, those with mobility problems often see too many barriers to their accessing the countryside, whether it is physical or perceived.
- (11.2) There is too little information available for those who would wish to access the countryside, but who lack the confidence due to insufficient information on the types of barriers or terrain they may encounter, the available facilities e.g. parking, toilets and where they are located in relation to access points.
- (11.3) There is a problem with illegal motorcycle usage of the cycleway and open access areas. The only remedy at present is to erect barriers or lockable gates. This can seriously restrict the use of these areas by the less able, those with prams, wheelchairs or on mobility scooters.



Improved surfaces of paths at Garn Lakes.



Improved disabled access and parking at Blaenavon Station for cycle route and “Whistle Stop” walk.

52. Statement of Proposed Action 11

- Continue the rolling programme of replacing “barriers” with least restrictive options e.g. a stile with a gate and identify sites for improved access and resting spots, e.g. benches, carved logs, boulders of appropriate heights.

- More totally accessible routes need to be provided which would also take into account adequate parking, public transport access and other necessary facilities.
- Produce and circulate information on these routes listing “barriers”, slopes, surfaces and the facilities that can be found around the route.
- Broaden and police more efficiently the “key-holder” (See Appendix 1) scheme for the various gates that are at present needed to prevent illegal motorcycle access.
- Continue to combat illegal motorcycling, encourage police to take a more proactive stance.

Encourage Greater Social Inclusion

53. ISSUE 12

(12.1) At present we may not be reaching the correct audience or providing a service that adequately meets the needs of, for example, single women, younger users, those with special needs, the elderly, etc.

(12.2) Need to ascertain how to encourage those who at present lack confidence to access the countryside; break down perceived barriers.

54. Statement of Proposed Action 12

- Use events to publicise health benefits, run more “taster” events.
- Provide advice/ assistance etc to community groups to help meet the needs of those who at present do not have the confidence/ knowledge to access the network. Offer walks tailored to their needs.

Increase Public Awareness and Promoting the Network

55. ISSUE 13

(13.1) There is a need to improve the publicity of the PROW network and promote the health and social benefits of using the countryside more widely.

- (13.2) There is a need to encourage not only the local use of the network but also to work on advertising the many fine walks and exciting countryside area to a wider audience.
- (13.3) Torfaen is not widely appreciated as a destination for walking to tourists, despite its varied landscape, heritage, etc.
- (13.4) A disappointing number of people appear to use the network to provide alternative or “safe routes” to work or school.
- (13.5) Few horse riders and “families” on bicycles appear to use the cycle/leisure route.
- (13.6) Use of community woods is very localised.
- (13.7) Garn Lakes is another site that is under-utilised, despite the many improvements to the area.

56. Statement of Proposed Action 13

- Distribute available leaflets to local doctors’ surgeries, health centres, clubs etc and publicise the many services available to encourage healthy walking. Highlight the numerous links between the urban areas and the countryside.
- Make more use of local events to promote the PROW network and areas of public access; increase the distribution and promotion of existing leaflets and put all walks on the Countryside Access web page.



Some walkers on a guided walk to promote the “Cistercian Way”.



A group that completed the guided walk of the full length of Torfaen!

- Liaise with tourism providers and attractions to promote all the walks available within the Authority and Torfaen as a walking destination.

- Liaise with Highways and Transportation Officers to look at ways of improving the physical attributes and the information available on safe routes to both school and work. Also, identify any new routes that can be improved and discuss ways of promoting the “safe routes” network.
- Make more of the cycles/leisure route leaflet already available and stage more family style events along the route.
- Continue with woodland management programmes, holding more and better publicised events in local woods and encourage community involvement.



“Horse logger” used to environmentally extract timber from a community wood to be used to form a sculpture.

- The Garn Lakes site needs to be more widely publicised. Continue to run Garn Lakes Day and endeavour to increase local and national publicity of the event and the site; produce an information or promotional leaflet or webpage highlighting improved access.
- Work collaboratively with other agencies and local authorities to achieve this within the context of the Valleys Regional Park

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY TABLE OF ISSUES AND STATEMENT OF ACTIONS

	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES NEEDED	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	ESTIMATED "COSTS"
1	LEGAL EVENT ORDERS					
1.1	Outstanding LEO'S.	Agree no. of LEO's to be sent annually to legal services for processing.	All backlog of LEO's to be cleared.	Additional officer time required to process LEO's	TCBC	5,000
		Ensure all new orders are accompanied by a LEO and all records updated at confirmation.	That a new "backlog" is not created and paper & digital records are reliable.	Officer time.	TCBC	£207 per annum
1.2	No dedicated legal officer available to process orders.	"Legal Services" to provide an officer dedicated to ROW work.	All backlog of LEO's to be cleared.	Additional officer time required to process LEO's.	TCBC	£2,500 (Alternative option to above)
2	TEMP ORDERS					
2.1	Unacceptable delays in processing temp. orders have health and safety implications.	"Legal Services" to provide a dedicated officer or ROW staff to take on additional responsibilities.	All temporary orders to be processed within an acceptable time period appropriate to the circumstances.	Additional officer time required in Legal Services or in Access Team.	TCBC	£2,500 (Alternative option to above)
3	BUILT OVER PATHS & OLD ORDERS					
3.1	There are many PPO's required to update the definitive Map	Initiate a rolling programme of Orders to resolve built over paths and old path mapping	To deal with approximately 100 orders	Source funding for the cost of the orders. £20k has been supplied by	TCBC	£20,000 Check number of orders

		issues.		Risk Management.		
	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES	P F S	EC
		Ensure anomalies are dealt with when they are discovered	Provide an officer dedicated for resolving mapping issues	Source additional funding to retain part time temporary officer to work on orders	TCBC	£3,225 pa
4	DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS					
4.1	Officers taking longer than prescribed time to process DMMO applications	Put onus on applicants to provide more evidence.	Orders processed more quickly, backlog reduced.		TCBC	Nil
		Produce an information pack for applicants advising them on researching necessary information	Ensure that applicants provide suitable and useable evidence	Additional officer time required to process information pack, and cost in producing pack.	TCBC CCW	£500
5	LOST WAYS					
5.1	There is an unknown quantity of "lost Ways" in the authority.	*Use the example of the "Pilgrim" route as an indication of the amount of research required to process an order purely on historical evidence.	Process 1 known Lost Way	Officer time in undertaking historical research	TCBC	£5,000
5.2	The process of registering a lost way is untested.	*Use the experience of the above action to produce a model for dealing with future applications	Produce information that can be added to a DMMO information sheet.	Officer time in producing model and cost of incorporating it in existing literature.	TCBC, CCW	£500

	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES	P F S	EC
6	OTHER MAPPING ANOMALIES					
6.1 & 6.2	Cross boundary mapping anomalies and “dead end” paths need resolution	*Implement Loops and Links Action Plan for continuity of routes including liaising with neighbouring authorities under Valleys Park initiative.	Ensure that all cross boundary paths are consistent and provide an improved network.	Officer time for liaison, producing orders and cost of processing orders	TCBC, H of V	£40,000
			Publish a strategic document	Officer time in drafting strategy	H of V	Nil (done)
6.3	Other mapping anomalies	*Liaise with landowners, user groups etc, to resolve the problems associated with dead end paths	Ensure that all paths are extended to link with highways, public open space, etc. or are extinguished if not necessary in the future	Source funding to compensate landowners and for processing orders. Additional officer time.	TCBC, H of V	£100,000
	Mapping Inconsistencies	*Resolve the issues as they appear until new Definitive Map & Statement produced	Produce a reliable map	Officer time	H of V	£15,000
7	NEW DEFINITIVE MAP & WRITTEN STATEMENT					
7.1	Existing Definitive Map does not reflect the new estates and boundaries etc.	Ensure all mapping orders are up to date and that they are incorporated into the new map.	Produce a new and more reliable Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way	Officer time Continually Upgrade “Countryside Access Mapping System”	TCBC	£2,500
		Complete a 100% survey of the Rights of Way Network	Provide accurate survey of routes on ground to incorporate into new map	Officer time in completing survey. Cost of hand held gis mapping and data storage.	TCBC	£17,500

	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES	P F S	EC
		All new orders to be accompanied by a LEO and digitised map updated accordingly.	Ensure that digitised map is accurate representation of registered routes.	Officer time to update digitised mapping. Cost of CAMS upgrades and support.	TCBC	£2,000 pa
7.2	Written statement contains insufficient or inaccurate information.	Complete a 100% survey to compile an accurate written description for each path	Produce a new and accurate written statement to accompany updated Definitive Map	Officer time for updating CAMS database and drafting new statement	TCBC	£21,500
		All new orders to be accompanied by a new written description for the FULL length of the path.	Reduce the number of paths that will need to be included in the 100% survey.	Officer time for updating CAMS database and drafting new statement	TCBC	£100
				Cost of printing paper Definitive Map and Statement.	TCBC	£3,000
8	ORDER REGISTERS					
8.1	Statutory duty now to provide new registers in digital format	Until we can fulfil statutory duty, continue to regularly update "paper" registers & "Access" tables.	To fulfil statutory duty to produce registers that meet requirements	Funding for new software and additional officer time to set up, update and maintain system.	TCBC	£5,000
9	IDENTIFYING GAPS					
9.1	There is a limited number of horse riding routes in Torfaen	*Continue to liaise with horse riders users and landowners to improve network	Provide improved bridle access	Officer time in organising groups and liaising with all parties	H of V, TCBC FC, CCW & WTB	£40,000

	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES	P F S	EC
		Source funding for providing incentives to landowners	Provide permissive horse riding access	“Compensation” for landowners	H of V, TCBC FC, CCW & WTB	£25,000
9.2	There are no “off - road” routes for motorised sport in Torfaen	*Liaise with landowners to provide permissive off-road vehicular areas or trail.	Set up a suitable site or long distance trail in Torfaen or neighbouring LA	Officer time in organising groups and liaising with all parties	Comm.First, CCW, TCBC	£40,000
		*Continue to liaise with Police, community Safety Officers, Local Communities, landowners, etc.	To reduce the amount of anti social behaviour and environmental damage caused by illegal “off-roaders”.	Officer time in liaising with all parties.	TCBC, Police, CCW	£1,000 + £17,500 pa
10	CONDITION OF NETWORK					
10.1	Vandalism and damage to ROW furniture.	Conduct research on vandal proof materials/ furniture	Reduce the ultimate cost in man-hours and materials whilst ensuring network well signed and structures are safe.	Additional cost of new materials and furniture	TCBC, H of V	£5,000 pa
		Produce a database of vandalised furniture.	Give priority to items that are vandalised most and inform the police.	Officer time in setting up and maintaining database.	TCBC	£250 pa
10.2	The cycle route is unregistered and requires high levels of maintenance	*Take legal steps to formalise the status of the cycle route, as part of Valleys Park cycle network	To have the route finally designated as a “Cycle Track”	Officer time in processing the order.	TCBC	£4,000 pa
		Source additional funding to maintain the cycle route	To maintain high standard surface and to improve the safety	Funding to maintain existing surface, improve/repair the	TCBC, H of V, Sustrans,	£10,000 pa

	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES	P F S	EC
			of the infrastructure	infrastructure and to initiate a regular inspection regime.	Active Lifestyles	
10.3	Cyclical vegetation clearance time consuming during growing season	*Identify problem paths to organise a cyclical maintenance schedule and source funding to pay for clearance.	To reduce the number of complaints re. overgrown paths	Funding required for private contractor or seasonal warden.	TCBC, H of V	£13,500 pa
10.4	Some PROW's require greater expenditure than in previous years due to increasing rainfall.	*Source additional funding to improve drainage infrastructures, surfaces and to compensate landowners for affected land.	Halt the continuing erosion of routes and ensure access on some paths not severely limited during inclement weather	Funding required to improve drainage and surfacing.	TCBC	£10,000 pa
10.5	100% survey will highlight more required improvements	*Prioritise paths for maintenance. Give weight to circular walks, safe routes to schools etc.	Ensure limited resources are spent on paths with a higher priority	Officer time in researching and prioritising each path according to its use/importance	TCBC	£30,000
		*Source funding for additional warden.	Provide an extra warden to assist in additional works	Funding for a full time or part time warden.	TCBC, BLF	Included in above fig
10.6	No prioritisation of paths resulting in disproportionate expenditure.	Prioritise or "weight" paths.	Ensure that all "High Priority" paths are maintained to a higher standard.	Officer time in assessing priority of paths.	TCBC	£3,500
10.7	More urban paths being metalled, requiring regular inspections.	Introduce a maintenance regime similar to that used for adopted highways.	Ensure all urban paths are inspected regularly.	Additional funding for new regime.	TCBC	£25,000

	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES	P F S	EC
11	IMPROVING ACCESS					
11.1	There are still “barriers” for the less able to access the countryside	*Continue with rolling programme to remove barriers and replace them with least restrictive options	Year on year improvements	Funding for extra costs for gates etc	TCBC, H of V Landfill tax-credits, Com. Councils, CCW	£6,500 pa
		*Identify site/ routes for improved access, for improved facilities etc. Provide some “100%” access routes	Provide more circular routes with 100% access.	Funding for improved surfacing, replacing steps with slopes, seating, etc.	TCBC, H of V Landfill tax-credits, Com. Councils, CCW	£10,000 pa
11.2	There is a lack of information available on accessible routes	*Provide literature in various formats on suitable routes that are in the form of access statements	Produce a web page with all relevant details and / or leaflet containing comprehensive information	Funding for production of web page and literature in various formats	TCBC, CCW	£2,000 pa
11.3	Illegal use of leisure route and Open Access areas is deterring legitimate users, restrictions used to prevent illegal use also restricts some legitimate users.	*Continue to liaise with police, Community Safety Officer and local groups	Reduce amount of anti social behaviour and educate users of offence	Officer time	TCBC, CCW, Police	Included in 9.2(a)
		*Look at changing some barriers for least restrictive options	Improve access for those who at present are restricted by existing barriers	Funding for new styles of barrier	TCBC, CCW , H of V	£1,000 pa

	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES	P F S	EC
		Further developed key holder scheme.	Increase the number of responsible key holders and thus increase number of users.	Funding for extra locks and keys. Officer time in setting up data base of key holders	TCBC CCW H of V	£1,000 pa
12	GREATER SOCIAL INCLUSION					
12.1	Not reaching a comprehensive audience.	*Use local events to reach a wider audience, to publicise network and services	Identify groups we have not reached and tailor future events to their needs.	Officer time	TCBC CCW Comm. First Active Lifestyles	£1,000 pa
12.2	Need to ascertain what “perceived” barriers are still restricting access	*Contact and work with a wider range of community groups.	Improve public confidence and knowledge of network	Officer time	TCBC CCW Comm. First Active Lifestyles	£2,000 pa
		*Continue to liaise with Police and community safety Officers	Work to reduce any antisocial behaviour that is restricting public access.	Officer time	TCBC CCW Police	Included in 9.2(b)
13	AWARENESS & PROMOTION OF NETWORK					
13.1	Not enough bias on health and social benefits of walking	*Distribute walks/events leaflets to Doctors, health centres etc	Encourage more use of countryside for health benefits.	Officer time and cost or re-printing leaflets.	TCBC Active Lifestyles	£10,000
		*Offer taster events or tailored walks to local groups, societies & clubs	Get a new “audience” out into the countryside	Officer time, cost of providing transport.	TCBC CCW Active Lifestyles	£1,000
13.2	ROW network not adequately advertised	*Improve access pages on Torfaen website. More items in local press Increase collaboration under the Valleys Park initiative.	To reach a wider local audience	Officer time, cost of press articles or adverts.	TCBC WTB, H of V, Active Lifestyles	£500 pa

	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES	P F S	EC
13.3	Tourism potential for walking in Torfaen not fully realised	*Ensure all published walks leaflets also available in a downloadable format on Torfaen Website	Encourage tourism by informing them of the activities, walks, etc available.	Officer time	TCBC WTB H of V	£2,000 pa
		*Make more of events and Valleys Park initiative to publicise walks and services.	Reach a wider national audience.	Officer time	TCBC WTB	£1,000 pa
		*Ensure there is a link from Torfaen Tourism pages to countryside walks and events pages.	Reach a wider national/ international audience	Officer time and cost of advertising.	TCBC WTB	£1,000 pa
		*Contact tourism providers and wider organisations e.g, The BBC Walking site, to add links to their web sites.	Reach a wider national/ international audience	Officer time	TCBC WTB	£1,000 pa
13.4	ROW network not sufficiently used to provide safe routes to school and work	*Liaise with Highways and Transportation Officers to look at ways of improving facilities.	To increase the number of users, reducing the amount car journeys.	Officer time and funding to improve surfaces etc.	TCBC, H of V Landfill tax-credits	£12,000 pa
		*Consider improving the Safe Routes network.	Improve the network, thus encourage more use.	Officer time		Included in above
		*Promote the routes to both schools and work places	Increase healthy exercise and reduce emissions.	Officer time and cost of promotional items	TCBC, H of V Landfill tax-credits, CCW	£1,500 pa
13.5	Cycle/Leisure route not used to its full potential	*Increase promotion of the cycle/leisure route,	Increase the number of hores riders cyclists.	Officer time and cost of reprinting leaflet.	TCBC CCW	£1,500 pa

	ISSUES	ACTIONS	TARGETS	RESOURCES	P F S	EC
		*Run more “family” based events along the length of the route	Increase the number of families using the route together, encouraging healthy exercise and also social well being.	Officer time		£1,500 pa
13.6	Community Woods under utilised	Continue woodland management programmes and run more events in woods.	Increase publics awareness of this asset, encouraging a sense of ownership and responsible use	Officer time, cost of staging events e.g. horse logger, bodgers etc	TCBC CCW FC Comm. First	£2,500 pa
13.7	Garn Lakes and other sites which are under utilised	*Continue to run Garn Lakes..... Day produce a leaflet and promote the site, its improved access and its links to other amenities.	Increase the number of users of the site, especially the less mobile. Increase the number of tourists visiting the area.	Officer time and cost of staging the event. Cost of producing promotional literature, signs etc.	TCBC WTB CCW	£20,000 pa

*Will try to work collaboratively with other authorities

APPENDIX 2

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

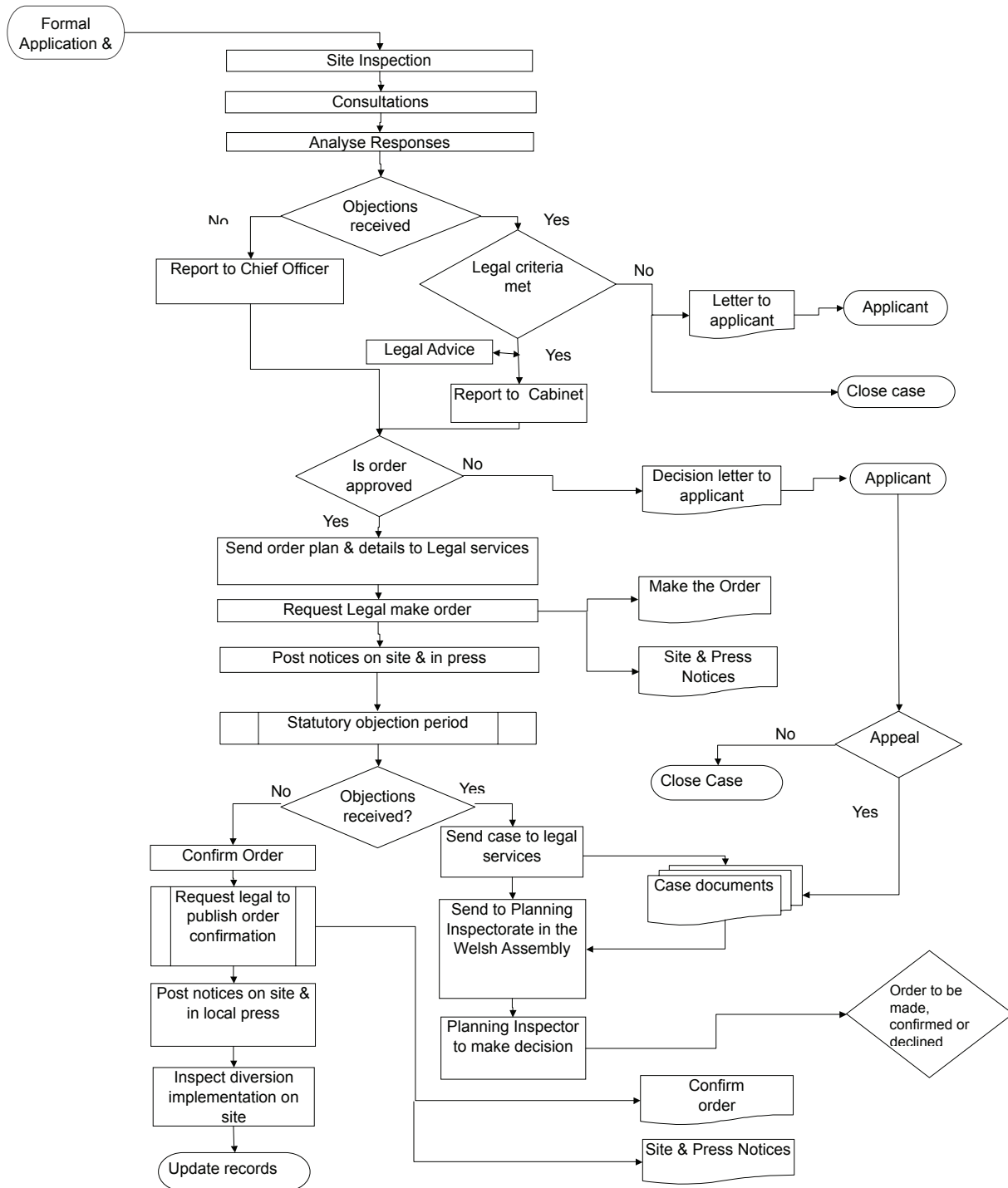
CBC	County Borough Council
CC	County Council
CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
CROW	Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act 1995
Definitive Map	Following the National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949, all surveying (local) authorities were to produce a map of all public rights of way within their area. The map for Torfaen was originally part of the map produced for the former Monmouthshire County Council and its published date is 1967.
DMMOs	Definitive Map Modification Orders. This is where, for example a path claimed through long use is added to the Definitive Map, or the status of a path shown on the Definitive Map is changed.
FC	Forestry Commission
Highway Authority	The section responsible for maintaining the Definitive Map and the PROW network. In Torfaen CBC this duty falls to the Countryside Access Officers found in the Countryside Service/ Regeneration, though in some authorities it falls under the jurisdiction of either the Highways or Planning sections.
LA	Local Authority i.e. the council
Lost Ways	Under section 56 of the CROW Act, any unrecorded historical rights of way that are not registered before 1 st January 2026, will be extinguished. In other words, any

ancient routes (e.g. drovers' "roads") that are not registered to be included on the Definitive Map by 2026 will cease to have a public status. The public will not be able to claim them based on purely historical evidence.

LEOs	When a PPO is made it alters the route on the ground, but does not change the route on the Definitive Map. To do this, a second order, a Legal Event Order (LEO), must be made. No LEOs have been made since 1967 when the Definitive Map was published
NPA	National Park Authority
O S	Ordnance Survey
PFS	Potential Funding Source, where the Authority may look to source additional funding. Active Lifestyles – Sports Council Wales funding Comm. Councils – Community Councils Comm. First - Communities First - WAG funding H of V - Heads of the Valleys, a WAG funding . Landfill Tax Credits - funding administered via "ENTRUST"
PIs	Performance Indicators
PPOs	Public Path Orders. Diversions, Extinguishments and Creations of registered public rights of way. A route cannot be altered without a legal process culminating in a confirmed order.
PROW	Public Right of Way, be it a registered public footpath (FP), bridleway (BR), restricted byway (RB) or byway open to all traffic (BOAT).
ROWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan, a statutory document all local authorities are required to produce by 2007.

SRO	Side Road Order. The type of order dealing with alterations to connecting roads or paths when major or trunk roads are constructed or altered. For example, the Croesyceiliog Bypass required paths to be diverted or partially “stopped up” for public safety or to access new crossing points.
Statement	A written description of all PROWs that accompanies the Definitive Map
Surveying Authority	The Authority responsible for surveying the paths, usually the same as the highway authority.
Sustrans	A charity which promotes sustainable transport such as walking and cycling
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government

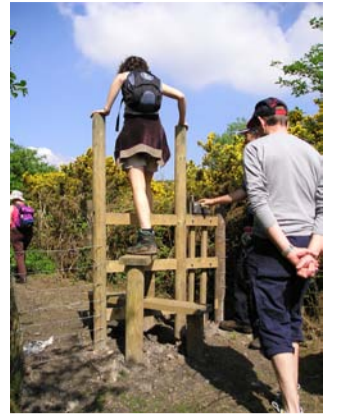
**Appendix 3.
Order Flow Chart**



Rights Of Way Improvement Plan Questionnaire



Take a few just a few minutes to complete this form and be entered in a **PRIZE DRAW** to **WIN a years free family pass to Greenmeadow Community Farm, one nights accommodation in a 15th century farmhouse or a £25 book token**, thanks to the generosity of the Community Farm and Mrs Caroline Jayne.



Torfaen is currently undertaking to draft a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The aim of the plan is to help everyone to enjoy the countryside and use the rights of way network, either to get to school, to access work or for leisure purposes. Your help in completing this questionnaire is an important part of this process as it will let us know who uses Torfaen's public footpaths (not pavements or adopted paths), bridleways and byways, how they are

used and in which areas there is a need for improvement. Fully completed forms that are returned to us by May 1st will be entered in the prize draw. Return your forms by post using the following freepost address; Countryside & Environmental Projects, Department for the Environment, Torfaen C.B.C., FREEPOST SWC 2909, Cwmbran, NP44 2ZZ. Should more than one person in the household wish to participate in the survey, please feel free to make a copy of this blank form and complete it. Thank you for your time.

1 Are you responding as (please tick only 1)

- A resident of Torfaen Private Landowner e.g. farmer
 A visitor to the area Other
 Member of an Interested group

Name of group:

2 Please put your postcode here:

3 Age group (please tick only 1)

- 15 - 29 30 - 44 45 - 59 60 - 74 75 and over

4 Do you have any disability, which affects your use of Public Rights of Way? (not roadside pavements)

- No Yes, mobility Yes, sensory

5 How often do you use Public Rights of Way? (Footpaths, bridleways, etc)

- Everyday At least once a week
 Once a fortnight Once a month
 Less often Never

6 How do you use Rights of Way (tick all that apply)

- Walking Cycling.
 Horse riding Carriage driving
 Motorcycling 4x4 off road vehicles

7 Why do you use Rights of Way (tick all that apply)

- For pleasure/recreation Walking the dog
 To get to work To get to school
 To get to pub/shops For health
 Other (please state)

8 What information do you use to plan your activity?

- Ordnance survey Map Walk leaflet
 Local Knowledge Don't Know, just go
 Other (please specify) Website (please specify)

9 Would you use the Torfaen County Borough Council's Website for information on where to go.

- Yes No

10 What sort of routes do you prefer to use?

- Short circular routes Local Routes
 Longer distance routes No preference
 Other (please specify)

11 We would like your help in prioritising where to make improvements regarding Public Rights of Way. Please tick to indicate which, if any, is a problem in your area.

- Routes are not way marked enough Routes are blocked
 Too many stiles/barriers Routes overgrown
 Stiles/gates in poor condition Lack of information
 Lack of confidence/not enough routes Personal safety

12 What do you think needs improving most in Torfaen? Please just tick one of the below.

- Routes are not way marked enough Routes are blocked
 Too many stiles/barriers Routes overgrown
 Stiles/gates in poor condition Lack of information
 Lack of confidence/Not enough routes Personal safety

13 What do you think is the best thing about Rights of Way in Torfaen?

.....

14 Are you aware of the revised Country Code?

- Yes No

15 Do you ever use any woods in the area for access?

- Yes No If yes, which woods?

And for what reason?

- Walking Horse riding Cycling

16 Do you use the old railway line/canal towpath (National Cycle Route No 46) for walking or cycling?

- Yes, walking Yes, cycling
 Yes, both Other (please specify)

17 Do you use Pontypool Park for recreation?

- Yes No If yes, in what way.

18 Do you use Garn Lakes, Blaenavon for recreation?

- Yes No If yes, in what way.

19 Do you use any areas of open mountain, moorland or common land for access purposes?

- Yes No

If yes, please state in what way and where

If you wish to be entered in the prize draw please fill in your details below.

Name: Address

..... Contact phone number

Thank you for assisting in our research.

- Please tick the box if you are happy to be contacted should we need more details on your opinions

APPENDIX 5

List of Associated Documents

Document	Publisher
Wales Policy & Information Review	CCW/WAG
Guidance to HA's on completion of ROWIP	CCW
Unitary Development Plan	TCBC
Local Transport Plan	TCBC
Countryside Strategy Document	TCBC
Managing Public Access	CCW
Motor vehicles & PROW	DEFRA
Walking Tourism Strategy	WTB
Local Biodiversity Action Plan	TCBC
Increasing Access to the Countryside for Disabled people	Fieldfare Trust
PROW Good Practice Guide	PROW Review Committee
Service & Organisational Development Plan	TCBC
Safe Routes to Schools	Sustrans
The Valleys Regional Park Vision Valleys (Vision Review)	Greening the Partnership
Loops & Links Action Plan	TCBC
Landscape Action Plan	TCBC
Environmental Education Strategy	TCBC
Public Access to the Countryside	Wales Audit Office

APPENDIX 6

List of Consultees

Auto Cycle Union
British Horse Society
CADW
Commoners Associations
 Bloreng Mountain
 Coity & Mynydd James Mountains
 Llanhilleth
 Mynydd Maen
Community/Town councils
 Blaenavon Town
 Croesyceiliog & Llanyravon Community
 Cwmbran Community
 Henllys Community
 Ponthir Community
 Pontypool Town
Disability Advice Project (Wales)
Environment Agency
Forestry Commission
Farmers Union Wales
Gwent Ornithological Society
Gwent Wildlife Trust (TWIG)
Hamden (Llandegveth Reservoir)
LARA
National Farmers Union (Cymru)
Neighbouring Authorities
 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
 Brecon Beacons National Park
 Caerphilly County Borough Council
 Monmouthshire County Council
 Newport City Council
Ramblers Association
Sustrans (Cymru)
Torfaen Local Access Forum
Torfaen Voluntary Alliance
TCBC Departments
 Exercise for Life Walking Co-ordinator
 Highways & Transportation
 Health & Well Being Development Team
 Research & Citizens Engagement
Welsh Trail Riders