



Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme (RFP) 2015/16

Summary Report

This report about the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme (RFP) 2015/16, has two main purposes. It summarises the key outputs and key learning points from the programme and details some of the types of work and exemplar projects undertaken during the eighth year of the RFP.

The summary accompanies the *Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme End of Year Outputs Report 2015/16*, and the *Rights of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme Case Studies 2015-2016 Report*.

Background

Since 2008, Welsh Government has provided a major boost to the improvement of Rights of Way across Wales through the RFP. NRW administers this funding on behalf of WG.

In 2015/16 the programme was allocated £1million bring the total allocation since 2008/09 to £10.9million

Key achievements of the funding in 2015/16



a) Practical improvements on the ground

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£762,183 was spent across Wales to improve existing access. This practical work contributed to increasing the proportion of the network that's easy to use. Actions included improving path furniture such as bridges and gates; installing benches at key view points; and surface improvements, for example improving path drainage.

Photo: Ty Llwyd Quarry, Lake Vyrnwy, Powys County Council

Actions to improve linear access included:



Surface improvement work to upgrade footpath to bridleway;

Photo: NRW Library Photo



Access improvements to footpaths including a new sleeper bridge and changing stiles for kissing gates;

Photo: Peacehaven, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council



Removal of stiles and barriers that impeded access for users along both promoted routes and routes of local significance;

Photo: Beafort, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council



Installation of signage and way marking, and self-closing gates to replace stiles;

Photo: City of Cardiff Council



Green Dog Walker - providing information to dog walkers using public access;

Photo: NRW Library Photo



Improving access to multi user routes allowing people with mobility issues to access routes more easily.

Photo: NRW Library Photo



b) Improvements that benefit more than one group

b) Improvements that benefit more than one user group - including walkers, cyclists and horse-riders:

The trend to improve rights of way for more than one user type continued. Projects that had a “general benefit to all users” and projects that were “multi-benefit” (together accounted for **£514,623** of the total value of projects.

Photo: Pontnewydd, Cwmbran, Torfaen County Borough Council



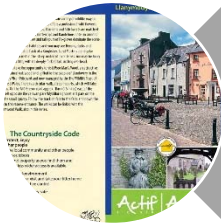
The largest single user group likely to benefit from multi benefit actions are walkers;

Photo : Bridgend CB Council 'Love2Walk' tweet



All Local Authorities had to include at least 1 action that benefited ‘Low Use’ groups defined as “groups that disproportionately make low use of the countryside”;

Photo: NRW Library Photo



Low use groups were also represented in other actions not specifically aimed at low use groups.

Photo: Discover Carmarthenshire Promotional Walks Leaflet



c) Improvements to make outdoor access easier for people who find it difficult

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Whilst there was no requirement to deliver a specific project for ‘low use groups’ the access authorities complied with the principles of least restrictive access. 16 specific projects were aimed at making access easier for groups that make disproportionately low use of the countryside, the funding for these specific projects totalled **£90,217**.

Photo: Loggerheads Country Park, Denbighshire County Council.

Work undertaken to promote better access for those who make a disproportionately low use of the countryside included:



Across Wales more gates than styles were installed promoting least restrictive access for as many people as possible.

Photo: Longfellow Road, Monmouthshire County Council



Design and consenting work for a multi user route (walkers, wheelchair, and cyclists) at Ty Moelwyn, Porthmadog

Photo: NRW Library Photo



Providing visual signage and confidence markers, benches and seats and site route information boards.

Photo: Abercych Permissive Paths, Pembrokeshire County Council



Car park provision with sealed surface route, passing places, benches and seats providing scenic route above the haven waterway.

Photo: Pembroke Ferry Circular Path, Pembrokeshire County Council



d) Status of routes and improved infrastructure

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907km of the rights of way network is now easier to use following improvements which the RFP and other funding sources contributed to in 2015-16

The majority of the routes improved in 2015-2016 were either footpaths or bridleways but all types of routes saw some improvement.

Photo: The official opening of Govilon Bridge, Bridgend County Borough Council

Length of Route the RFP helped make 'Easy to Use' during 2015-2016 (including contributions from other sources of funding):



634km of Footpath

Photo: Longfellow Road, Monmouthshire County Council



28km of Cycle Track

Photo: NRW Library Photo



181km of Bridleway

Photo: NRW Library Photo



36km of Restricted Byways

Photo: NRW Library Photo



28km of Byway Open to All Traffic

Photo: Treadlightly Leaflet, Denbighshire Council

Exemplar Project: Information and Promotion

Bridgend Borough Council

Bridgend Borough Council were once again involved in the 2015 Love 2 Walk Festival which was organised in partnership with the Bridgend Local Access Forum.

The Rights of Way team also provided direct funding from the RoWIP Funding Programme to promote the Festival. As a result the event returned to its 9-day format. This resulted in more than 25 walks being held and more than 280 people taking part in the event.

Love 2 Walk Festival 2015

Opportunities for FREE School Activity Sessions

This year's Love 2 Walk Festival is offering private group sessions for the first time. In partnership with Bridgend Libraries and BCBC Beach and Water Safety Team the special sessions are based around the Nature Keepers statues and poems, Beach and Water Safety and the Gruffalo Story.

If you are interested in booking for your class or for more information please email love2walk@bridgend.gov.uk

SCHOOL STORY WALK – TREMANS KEEPER
TUES 23rd JUNE
 Start Time 10.00am
 End 12.00 noon
 Distance Under 3 miles
 Grade Easy

Bringing outdoor experiences with creative writing and photography in partnership with Bridgend Libraries a chance to find out more about the Keepers Tales and create one of your own.

One of the fourteen interactive wooden sculptures created at beauty spots throughout the county borough.

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

SCHOOL STORY WALK – KEEPER OF THE OGMORE
THURS 25th JUNE
 Start Time 10.00am
 End 12.00 noon
 Distance Under 3 miles
 Grade Easy

Blending outdoor experiences with creative writing and photography, in a chance to find out more about the Keepers Tales and create one of your own.

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

SCHOOLS SAFER SEAS LAUNCH
WED 24th JUNE
 Start Time 11.00am
 Start Point Porthcawl Lifeboat Station
 End 12.00 noon
 Distance Under 3 miles
 Grade Easy

The Coast is never far away and this outdoor programme is designed to remind us all of that, in a fun and interactive way.

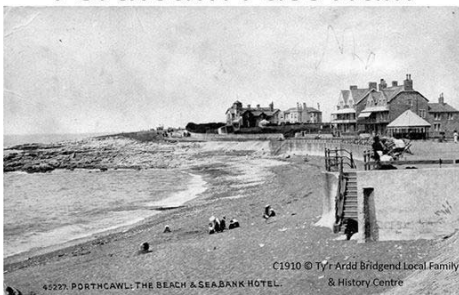
BOOKING ESSENTIAL

GRUFFALO STORY WALK
FRI 26th JUNE
 Start Time 10.15am
 Start Point Meet in Bridgend Library
 End 12.00 noon
 Distance Under 3 miles
 Grade Easy

Oh Help oh so it's Gruffalo. Incorporated in our regular walk programmes the Story Walks are popular with our young and share knowledge a story and craft activity with Bridgend Libraries then a themed outdoor activity to finish. We would love to see you there.

www.love2walk.co.uk

Porthcawl Past Walk



New for this year's Love 2 Walk

Join the volunteers from Porthcawl Museum on a guided tour of Porthcawl and discover its rich Historical Past.

Saturday 2nd November

11.00am

Starting at: The Old Police Station, Porthcawl Museum, John Street, Porthcawl CF36 3DT

**All children under 16 MUST be accompanied by an adult.
 ☎: 01656 815078 ✉: love2walk@bridgend.gov.uk 🌐: www.love2walk.co.uk



8 BLACKMILL NORDIC WALKERS MON 22nd JUNE

Start Time 11.00am Distance 3 miles
Start Point Blackmill Sheep Sales
End 12.00 noon Grade Easy

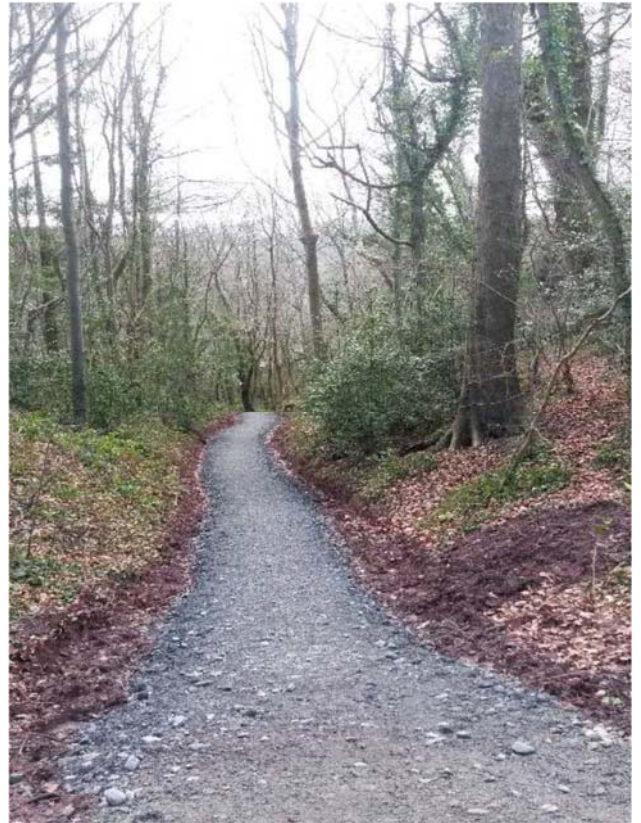
Nordic walking is based on using specially designed walking poles in a way that harnesses the power of the upper body in order to propel you forward as you walk. Now it's a recognised way to turn a walk into whole body exercise that can be done by anybody anywhere. Poles provided.

Exemplar Project: Access for all

Powys County Council - Priory Groves, Footpath Extension

Powys County Councils Countryside & Outdoor Recreation Service were able to extend the all-inclusive access footpaths in the Priory Groves, Brecon, and complete a circular walk.

This circular walk linked up to already established footpaths that are situated on land adjacent to the woodland, which allows access to Brecon Cathedral and the Pendre & Beechgrove housing estates directly into the Priory Groves woodland.



Before – The river side pathway prior to this year's work was badly eroded and narrow in places with steep drops from the raised footpath down to the river.



After – The pathway is now 1200mm wide and the path has been moved away from the drops, the pathway which was originally undulating has now been levelled to allow easier access to this area within Priory Groves