

Pembrokeshire County Council  
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

# Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire 2018-2028

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Director of Community Services  
Pembrokeshire County Council

Chief Executive (National Park Officer)  
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority



## **Executive Summary**

### **Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire 2018-2028**

Public Rights of Way play an important role in Pembrokeshire, enabling access and connectivity within and between both rural and urban areas. (PRoW) are highways maintainable at public expense. Under the Highways Act 1980 Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) as Highway Authority has a statutory duty to maintain public rights of way which account for a large network of over 2,600 km distributed across the county. Within the National Park the management of most of the PRoW network is delegated to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA). Under the delegation agreement PCNPA acts as Agent for PCC and assumes maintenance responsibility for the rural element of the PRoW network in the National Park of approximately 770km.

The most common classification of public rights of way are public footpaths and bridleways. Public rights of way vary greatly in their character and use and range from promoted routes such as the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail and the Landsker Trail to “parish paths” that provide numerous walking opportunities within local communities to urban paths providing non-recreational access within the towns . The minimum standard of maintenance of each type of PRoW will depend on the public right of access dictated by its classification. Therefore footpaths should be maintained to a standard appropriate for pedestrian use, bridleways for equestrian traffic and byways for occasional vehicular use.

Pembrokeshire County Council and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority have jointly prepared a second Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP2). Local authorities have a statutory obligation to prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP), which is the prime means by which local authorities identify, prioritise and plan for improvements to their local rights of way network. The RoWIP therefore aims to improve the network of public paths to meet the current and future needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and disabled people.

The RoWIP has been prepared in accordance with Welsh Government’s (WG) Guidance for Local Authorities on Rights of Way Improvement Plans issued in July 2016, which has included stakeholder consultation and a review of relevant research. The Plan is composed of two main elements; the Assessment and a Statement of Action for the management and strategic improvement of public rights of way.

The review of the implementation of the initial RoWIP (2008-18) demonstrated that the Plan has successfully guided a wide range of public rights of way improvements, which have contributed to the health and well-being of resident communities and the wider population as well as helping to support the local economy. It is evident that the proportion of the maintained public rights of way network has increased greatly over the ten years of the Plan.

The main priorities of the successor RoWIP will be to ensure that the current network of public rights of way continues to be well maintained with strategic improvements being implemented where funding is available. As a reasonable provision of public paths now exists in the county, there is scope for more work to raise the awareness of the countryside access opportunities afforded by public rights of way. Therefore in order to

increase participation levels, the promotion of public rights of way has also been prioritised.

Implementation of the Plan will be largely dependent on the availability of resources, both in terms of staff and budgets and greater partnership working together with the availability of external funding sources will be crucial to the achievement of the Plan's objectives.

### Summary

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire 2007 to 2017 has been reviewed and the decision has been taken to amend the plan as required by section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). The first Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) was published in July 2008 and its 10 year term ends in July 2018 and for purposes of clarity will be referred to as RoWIP. The updated plan will be referred to as RoWIP2. The new title for the document will be 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire, 2018 to 2028'.

Pembrokeshire County Council and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority have agreed to prepare jointly the second Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire (RoWIP) to take effect from 2018. This plan identifies, prioritises and plans for improvements to the rights of way network in Pembrokeshire. It also addresses the need to improve access opportunities for groups with disabilities.

Part 1 of the plan is an assessment of local rights of way. It sets out the main characteristics of the network in Pembrokeshire; explains the purpose of the RoWIP2; outlines the background work which has been undertaken; summarises the initial consultation and examines a number of key topics, including:

- The extent to which the network currently meets existing user needs and is likely to meet future user needs;
- The ability of the network to serve the requirements of those with disabilities; and
- The role of rights of way in providing opportunities for public access and countryside recreation

Part 2 of the plan is a statement of action and delivery plan. This section discusses the challenges in managing, maintaining and improving the network, and outlines the objectives that have been created from the assessments made in Part 1.

In a change to the previous RoWIP, the monitoring of the plan will be part of the new delivery plan. This will take the form of an annual report on the previous delivery plan achievements, a review of PRow policy and a SMART work plan for the year ahead.

### Website information

This plan can be viewed and downloaded from the websites of each authority:

[www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk](http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk)  
[www.pcnpa.org.uk](http://www.pcnpa.org.uk)

The Definitive Map can also be viewed [here](#).

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## **Part 1      Assessment of Local Rights of Way**

### **1.1      Introduction**

- 1.1.1    The public rights of way (PRoW) network in Pembrokeshire provides opportunities for the public to enjoy the countryside on foot, on cycle, on horseback and by wheelchair. A small proportion of the routes are also available to users of motor vehicles and to carriage drivers.
- 1.1.2    The network of routes also makes an important contribution to the tourism industry and the quality of life of residents, bringing significant economic and social benefits. Furthermore, it provides an incentive for people to take exercise, which can improve their health and well-being.
- 1.1.3    Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) in its role as Local Highway Authority has responsibility for rights of way in the County. In the National Park area, some of these responsibilities, in particular for maintenance, are delegated to the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA). The PCNPA also has concurrent powers on some matters (such as diversions and creations) and is the managing authority for the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail on behalf of Natural Resources Wales (NRW).
- 1.1.4    PCC and the PCNPA each make important contributions to maintaining and improving rights of way in the County. It has therefore been agreed to jointly prepare the second Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire (RoWIP2), in accordance with the provisions of section 61 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CRoW Act) and the Guidance for Local Authorities on Rights of Way Improvement Plans published by Welsh Government (WG) in July 2016.

## 1.2 Characteristics of the rights of way network in Pembrokeshire

The network is currently 2612.7 km (1623.1 miles) long. The components of the network are:

Types of route	Pembrokeshire (all routes)	PRoW in the National Park	PRoW in Pembrokeshire County Council
Footpaths	2080.5 km 79.6% of the network	831.5 km	1249 km
Bridleways	506.7 km 19.4% of the network	187 km	319.7 km
Restricted Byways (formerly known as Roads Used As Public Paths)	4.1 km 0.2% of the network	2.6 km	1.5 km
Byways Open To All Traffic (BOATs)	21.4 km 0.8% of the network	9.8 km	11.6 km

1.2.1 A short description of the ‘rights of passage’ relating to each is set out in the glossary to this plan (Page 35).

### Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail

1.2.2 Public rights of way account for 260km (86% of the total length) of the Coast Path. The Coast Path is one of 15 designated National Trails in the UK. It is a major attraction, providing long distance walking opportunities along the coastline of Pembrokeshire. It links dozens of communities along the coast and provides access to over 80 coves and beaches. It is well integrated with the linking network of public rights of way to provide a wide range of circuit walks.

1.2.3 There is also a network of off-road shared use paths (SUPs) for cyclists, pedestrians and disabled people in the County that has developed exponentially during the course of the first RoWIP. These paths fall into a category of their own and are not covered by any of the categories listed in the glossary. Some sections of this network of shared use paths form part of the National Cycle Network. The increase in the length of SUPs has been significant over the last 10 years and has been further reinforced by new WG legislation; namely the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. These paths improve the safety and connectivity of the PRoW network because users are able to exit paths onto the SUP rather than directly onto the highway or verge.

1.2.4 In addition to PRoW and shared use paths for cyclists and pedestrians, there are also many permissive paths in Pembrokeshire. These can take two forms. The first arises where a landowner agrees to allow the public to pass along a defined route, which is not a PRoW. The second is where a landowner allows higher rights to be exercised along a PRoW than those legally attributed to the route. Some permissive paths have been created recently through the Glastir scheme.

- 1.2.5 There is a clear value to many permissive paths, as they provide additional links and circuits. In the National Park (NP) there are 117 km of permissive paths which represents 10% of the network of PRow. However, in the absence of a legally binding agreement, permission can be withdrawn at any time. For this reason, the Authorities believe that in general it is desirable to integrate such routes within the PRow network and in the long-term seek dedication of such permissive paths as PRow.
- 1.2.6 Some public rights of way are not recorded. These may be historic routes that have never been registered – often referred to as ‘lost ways’. Others are more recent, having been created by usage. Where identified, these can be added to the Definitive Map and Statement using Modification Order procedures.
- 1.2.7 The Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) introduced a new right of access on foot to certain areas of open country (primarily areas defined as mountain / moor / heath / down) and to Common Land registered under the appropriate Act. These areas are collectively termed ‘Access Land’. The maps showing such land is maintained by NRW and the information is now also published by the Ordnance Survey.
- 1.2.8 In Pembrokeshire, Access Land covers about 4.3% of the county. Access Land in the part of the County outside the National Park covers 15% with the remaining 85% being in the National Park area. The rights of way network already provides access to many of these areas. When integrated with the PRow network, access land provides valuable additional opportunities for countryside walking.
- 1.2.9 Other access opportunities in countryside areas are provided by organisations that open their land to the public, such as the National Trust, and on managed sites such as Scolton Country Park. The many beaches of the county are also used for outdoor recreation, for instance walking and horse-riding. Indeed, some sections of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail run across beaches.
- 1.2.10 Minor roads and unclassified roads (UCR) in rural areas provide useful, at times essential, links between different parts of the PRow network. They are often (although not invariably) lightly trafficked and with a degree of caution can be used safely by walkers, cyclists and equestrians. The network of such roads in Pembrokeshire is extensive.

### 1.3 What is the purpose of this plan?

1.3.1 The RoWIP2 identifies and plans for improvements to the local rights of way network, for the benefit of both current and possible future users of the network. It also addresses the need to improve access opportunities for disabled users. The legislation makes specific mention of those who are blind, those with impaired sight and those who have mobility difficulties. The Authorities recognise a need to extend this consideration to those with other disabilities and to those with young children, together with the families, friends and carers of these people. The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 have also been taken into consideration, as have more general aspirations to develop an inclusive network reflecting the principle of equality.

1.3.2 The RoWIP2 can help to deliver improvements to the rights of way network. This can, in turn provide a number of cross cutting benefits such as:

- Improvement of health, well-being and quality of life – proactive management and promotion of PRow and access land can have a positive impact on the health and well-being of local communities. Regular walking can help to combat heart disease and obesity in particular as well as benefiting mental health. Providing an accessible, enjoyable way to keep fit and active which is free at the point of use is therefore essential;
- Economic benefits – PRow are a major economic driver of the tourism sector in rural Wales, and the Coast Path is a major attraction in itself. Leisure walking in the countryside on PRow is by far the dominant visitor activity, whether it is incidental to a visit or the main purpose. PRow provide vital infrastructure to gain access to and enjoy Pembrokeshire's coast, countryside, high quality landscapes and heritage;
- Sustainable transport – PRow originated as part of the rural communications network. They continue to provide opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding which provides alternatives to motorised travel and because they are generally carbon-neutral provide highly sustainable modes of transport;
- Biodiversity – By virtue of their location, there are often benefits to biodiversity. PRow can contribute to ecological connectivity, as rights of way are green corridors within the landscape. They can create and protect habitat and provide linear routes for species.

### 1.4 What has been done so far?

The Authorities published and consulted on a 'RoWIP Timetable' and 'Terms of Reference' at the outset of plan preparation. These documents were accompanied by a cover letter explaining the process and asking stakeholders what improvements they would like to see prioritised in future. The feedback from the initial consultation documents together with a review of the previous RoWIP has informed what is proposed in the second plan. The Local Access Forum has been consulted at each stage of the process.

## 1.5 Who have we consulted?

1.5.1 In line with their statutory duty, the Authorities consulted the following before preparing their draft RoWIP:

- Each highway authority whose area adjoins the RoWIP area;
- Each Town and Community Council, whose area is within the RoWIP area;
- The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (who are also partners with the County Council in preparing the plan);
- The Pembrokeshire Local Access Forum (LAF);
- Natural Resources Wales (NRW);
- Such persons as the Welsh Assembly may by regulations prescribe in relation to the local highway authority's area; and
- Such other persons as the local highway authority may consider appropriate.

1.5.2 Authorities amending RoWIPs are also advised to:

- Consult organisations in the RoWIP2 area identified as consultees for Rights of Way Orders; and
- Involve Local Access Forums in the preparation or review of RoWIPs, in particular the Assessments.

1.5.3 The consultation process on the RoWIP2 had two key stages. The first was the initial consultation and the second was the consultation on the draft plan. Consultation on each of these documents has been more extensive than the statutory minimum requirement.

1.5.4 A database is used as a basis for contacting and informing those with an interest in the RoWIP2 and continues to evolve. It currently contains 167 entries.

1.5.5 The Pembrokeshire LAF is a statutory body advising on the improvement of access to the countryside for recreation and enjoyment. It has established a RoWIP Committee, which meets periodically to debate issues relating to the emerging plan and provides advice to the Authorities as well as being debated at quarterly full meetings.

## 1.6 Who currently uses the network and are the users likely to change in the future?

1.6.1 The right of passage varies according to the type of right of way. So whilst footpaths are only available to walkers, the other types of route (those with 'higher rights') are available to additional user groups, such as horse riders and cyclists.

1.6.2 Walking is the dominant recreational activity on the network at present, partly because there are a lot more opportunities for this activity in terms of length of available route and partly because more people choose it in comparison to other types of activity. However, there are significant numbers of horse-riders and cyclists making use of routes with 'higher rights' (or dedicated routes available to cyclists in the latter case), with potential for significantly increased use in future years.

1.6.3 Other types of user are less commonly encountered on the network. This is in part because there are fewer of them in the area and in part because there are fewer routes available to cater for their needs. Examples include wheelchair users, carriage drivers and off road motor vehicle users.

## 1.7 Who are the network stakeholders?

1.7.1 Firstly, there are the network users including residents and visitors to the County, some of whom have set up groups to promote their particular interests in relation to the network. Examples include the two Rambler groups in the County, the Pembrokeshire Bridleways and Byways Association and the increase in the number of walking groups in the County.

1.7.2 As well as the network users, there are many other people and organisations with an interest in the rights of way network. These include landowners, farmers and agricultural tenants, as well as organisations with land crossed by rights of way, for instance the National Trust, the local wildlife trusts, NRW, the National Park Authority and the County Council.

1.7.3 The involvement of individuals, user groups, organisations and partnerships in the planning and management of an improved network is vital. The Authorities will continue to develop partnership working with stakeholders.

1.7.4 Two areas meriting special attention are given as examples where a close relationship with stakeholders is particularly important:

- Where a right of way crosses land used for agricultural purposes. In this instance, particular care is needed to minimise any conflict with agricultural operations.
- Where a route crosses land that has a particular value for wildlife species and habitats. There are many areas in Pembrokeshire that are important in this respect and where partnership working with conservation organisations is essential.

1.8 To what extent is the network meeting the needs of existing users of the network? Is it likely to meet the future needs of users?

- 1.8.1 The RoWIP2 Assessments provide some useful information on the extent to which the current network meets the needs of existing users. The general conclusion seems to be that there is an improving network in Pembrokeshire, which is in most instances meeting the needs of users. However, there are several areas where there is clearly scope for further improvement and the provision for individual user groups is better in some cases than in others. For instance, there seem to be fewer opportunities for horse riders in comparison to walkers. Another key finding is that some residents do not make use of the network at all, often because they do not participate in any of the activities that the network facilitates because of lack of time, awareness, inclination or problems with transport.
- 1.8.2 The concerns raised by users are discussed in more detail later in this document. Examples include blocked and overgrown routes, a desire to see barriers (such as stiles) reduced, occurrence of litter and dog fouling, rutted and muddy paths, inadequate signage, a need for more information both online and in paper format, a scarcity of inland routes, a need for more routes catering for higher rights (such as horse riders and carriage drivers) and a need for more routes suitable for those with disabilities.
- 1.8.3 Looking to the future, the Authorities aspire to create a more inclusive network and this will require special attention to be given to broadening of opportunities for those with disabilities and carers. Very often, improvements to meet the needs of these users are beneficial to all network users.
- 1.8.4 Since the first RoWIP, the consolidated Definitive Map and Statement has been updated and was published in 2012. The review was in part funded by the RoWIP grant. This will allow the Ordnance Survey to be provided with up to date information to record on their maps, provide an improved basis for searches and help the public to find PRow.

1.9 What assessments have been undertaken?

Assessments have been undertaken on the following topics:

- 1.9.1 Legislation
- 1.9.2 Plans/Strategies
- 1.9.3 Physical condition of network (PCNP Full survey)
- 1.9.4 Legal State of the Network
- 1.9.5 Review of previous RoWIP
- 1.9.6 Relevant Research (including PCNP user survey)
- 1.9.7 LAF Consultation
- 1.9.8 Meeting with PCC Access Officer and Secretary to the Pembrokeshire Access Group
- 1.9.9 Initial Consultation feedback and comments
- 1.9.10 Integrated Impact Assessment
- 1.9.11 Strategic Environmental Assessment

## 1.9.1 Legislation

Since 2007 there have been a number of legislative changes that will need to be taken account of in the statement of action. Principally these are:

- 1.9.1.1 Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013
- 1.9.1.2 Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- 1.9.1.3 Equality Act 2010
- 1.9.1.4 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 1.9.1.1 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 has the potential to have the greatest impact on the PRow network as it requires each county in Wales to produce active travel maps containing footpath and cycle networks in towns with populations above 2,000 people. This covers ten settlements in Pembrokeshire (including those in the NP). Although it is within the administrative area of Pembrokeshire, St Dogmaels is included within the Active Travel settlement of Cardigan.

The Act aims to improve footpath and cycle links in and out of the settlements as well as between parts of the towns for travel purposes to reduce the use of motorised transport. Currently guidance requires routes to be improved within settlements only. Although this appears to have little impact on the PRow network, there will be many indirect benefits such as PRowS which currently end at a highway verge that could benefit from a new footpath or cycleway and improve safety. Also, there are PRowS which have been absorbed by urban areas which could be upgraded to become available to cyclists or wheelchair accessible.

- 1.9.1.2 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 replaced the duties that were previously imposed by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 commonly referred to as the NERC Act. Its overarching aim is to improve the quality of the environment in Wales and position the country as a low carbon, green economy ready to adapt to the impacts of climate change. In the context of the PRow network, this means that any improvement or diversion to a path must take into account its impact on biodiversity and sustainability. This includes the materials used in path furniture such as benches and way markers to the stopping up of existing paths and the creation of new ones.

The Act also placed a duty on NRW to produce area statements that would allow Wales' resources to be managed in a proactive, sustainable and joined up approach. Three pilot studies were produced, with further work to extend this to the rest of Wales due to start in late 2017. At this time RoWIP2 is unable to take account of area statements, but it may be possible to incorporate them in future RoWIP reviews.

- 1.9.1.3 The Equality Act 2010 and the secondary legislation Wales Regulations 2011, seeks to protect people from discrimination. In terms of the PRow network, this means improving the paths for users who are currently unable to access the paths. This includes visual impairments and restricted movement, and whilst the

PRoW network originally was not accessible to these user groups, more paths need to be adapted so that PRoWs can be enjoyed by all.

- 1.9.1.4 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a legal obligation on public bodies to consider people's future in Wales when making decisions affecting the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act established public service boards (PSB) to publish a well-being assessment and going forward, actively seek to improve the four elements of the act.

A PSB was created in Pembrokeshire which published the assessment for the County in April 2017. The PRoW network was included in the report in the context of the physical and mental well-being benefits of using the network for exercise and enjoying nature.

## 1.9.2 Plans/Strategies

The scope of the assessment into relevant plans and strategies covers the following key documents:

- 1.9.2.1 The Well-being Assessment for Pembrokeshire
- 1.9.2.2 Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9 November 2016)
- 1.9.2.3 The Local Development Plans (LDP) in each authority
- 1.9.2.4 Initiatives to Promote Walking for Health & Wellbeing
- 1.9.2.5 Area Statements
- 1.9.2.6 Greenways

- 1.9.2.1 The well-being assessment for Pembrokeshire has included the PRoW network due to its potential health benefits. From this initial assessment, there may be opportunities to collaborate with the PSB to bid for funding to promote the network.

- 1.9.2.2 Planning Policy Wales (Edition 9 November 2016) states that 'Local Authorities should seek to protect and enhance the rights of way network as a recreational and environmental resource'. This policy safeguards the network and when diversions are required, the public rights of way officer will always seek the best possible outcome. Local Development Plans should seek to add detail to Planning Policy Wales rather than duplicate.

- 1.9.2.3 In PCC the LDP covers PRoW under the definition of 'public realm'. The policy relating to this is GN.2 criterion 6 which relates to sustainable design and in this context the integration of sustainable design with the existing public realm. PCC will begin reviewing the LDP in 2018.

In PCNPA the current LDP incorporates PRoW in terms of the visual impact that development could have on the network in policy 15. This LDP is due to be replaced by LDP2 in 2019, but the policy itself is due to be rolled forward as part of the revised plan based on the preferred strategy (May 2017).

In addition to this, Section 106 agreements can enable improvements to PRoW where the opportunity arises in relation to applications.

1.9.2.4 Initiatives to Promote Walking for Health & Wellbeing. Building on the success of the Steps2Health initiative, Let's Walk Pembrokeshire and Walkability now encourage walking and the use of public rights of way as a social and healthy activity for all. This will help to address the sedentary lifestyles of some residents and improve their general health and wellbeing.

1.9.2.5 NRW has a duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to prepare and publish statements ("Area Statements") for the areas of Wales that it considers appropriate for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of the national natural resources policy. Area Statements provide an integrated and coherent evidence base for NRW and others to take appropriate action in a way that promotes the sustainable management of natural resources at the local level; enabling the joined-up, collective action, and innovative new solutions needed for the sustainable management of natural resources. They will enable NRW to plan activities within an area, to rationalise activities and to work with other stakeholders and interested parties. NRW are currently preparing an Area Statement for the south west region. Once published NRW may provide further information regarding the Area Statement priorities and how they relate to the ROWIP and its Delivery Plans.

1.9.2.6 Pembrokeshire Greenways is a well established partnership of organisations which works to encourage local residents and visitors of all abilities to access the coast and countryside by sustainable modes of transport through walking, cycling, bus and train travel. Greenways partners include the following organisations: Natural Resources Wales, National Trust, Pembrokeshire Access Group, the National Park Authority, Pembrokeshire County Council and PLANED.

### 1.9.3 Physical condition of network (PCNP Full survey)

Rights of Way Network in the National Park 2017.

	Total Network	Accessible Network	% Accessible
Footpath	831.5 km	687.3 km	82.6%
Bridleway	187 km	174.6 km	93.4%
Byway open to all traffic	9.8 km	9.8 km	100%
Restricted Byway	2.6 km	2.6 km	100%
Total	1030.9 km	874.3 km	84.8%

N.B. Public rights of way network only (includes public rights of way along Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail).

#### 1.9.4 Legal State of the Network

- 1.9.4.1 The Definitive Map and Statement is a legal document and provides conclusive proof of the existence, status and route of a public right of way. It is consequently fundamental to the management of public rights of way. The Definitive Map and Statement was first published in 1960. Although a review was commenced in the late 1960s, it was abandoned.
- 1.9.4.2 A second review of the Definitive Map commenced in 2009, and completed in 2010. The consolidated Definitive map and Statement was published in 2012 with an indicative date of 2010. This was also made available online, giving people instant access to the mapped network for the first time.
- 1.9.4.3 Since publication, some changes have taken place to the network, for instance through public path orders, modification orders, re-classification orders and land use changes. These changes are stored on a working copy on each of the respective Authority's internal databases.
- 1.9.4.4 The rights of way network in Pembrokeshire continues to evolve. For instance, PCC are aware of approximately forty potential definitive map modification order (DMMO) cases where anomalies exist. There are a further 8 formal applications made for DMMOs. In addition, when the definitive map was consolidated, the definitive statements were not, which means that the majority of statements require DMMOs. PCC recognise the processing of DMMOs is slow due to the lack of resources. Additional resources would be needed to effectively deal with the backlog of DMMOs.
- 1.9.4.5 Furthermore, changes to the network also arise through Public Path Orders, which comprise Diversion Orders, Creation Agreements and Extinguishment Orders. These are sometimes submitted by the public but also arise as a consequence of the Authorities' path opening programmes.
- 1.9.4.6 Over the course of the RoWIP 2008-2018 PCNPA made 9 Public Path Creation Agreements and made 18 Public Path Diversion Orders. The authority currently have over 30 applications logged for Diversion Orders and many more route anomalies that require to be formalised by a Diversion Order.
- 1.9.4.7 The Council has promoted the diversions of up to one hundred public paths throughout the last ten years (up to 2015). This has improved the network greatly by making routes safer and more enjoyable for use by the public.
- 1.9.4.8 Efficiency savings within the service require a more restrictive approach to diversions. Diversions are a non-statutory duty, therefore only when there is a clear and substantial public interest which cannot be met through other less costly means will the authority pursue such diversions.
- 1.9.4.9 The need to secure efficiency savings within the Planning Service as a whole, including to bolster the Planning Enforcement Service has implications for reduced staffing in the Rights of Way Legal Team and, as a consequence, for reduced capacity to undertake discretionary work on diversions.

- 1.9.4.10 Due to the change in process a statement of priorities has been prepared and sets out how the authority deals with requests for diversions.
- 1.9.4.11 The network of rights of way is known to have anomalies where unauthorised diversions have been carried out. Unauthorised diversions have been carried out by landowners/occupiers, the Council, community enterprises and others to secure perceived improvements, for example to promote an alternative route to the definitive one in order to secure an open and accessible route, without recourse to protracted due process. The number of anomalies is unknown however it is thought to be well in to the hundreds.
- 1.9.4.12 In addition to the routes shown on the Definitive Map and Statement, there are thought to be a significant number of rights of way in England and Wales that are unrecorded, the so-called 'lost ways'. Some of these are in Pembrokeshire. The cut-off date for claims relating to such routes is 2026. An increase of 9% in network length is anticipated throughout England and Wales. If applied pro-rata to the Pembrokeshire network, this would add 212 kilometres (132 miles) of routes. The Welsh Government has yet to issue guidance with regard to this legislation. The Welsh Government consultation, Sustainable Management of Natural Resources 2017, proposed to repeal the requirement to investigate all lost ways by 2026. There was overwhelming support for this proposal with 4,149 respondents agreeing to it being repealed and only 10 respondents opposing it. In anticipation that this legislation is unlikely to be enacted in Wales there is a need to plan for the continuous review of the Definitive Map.

## 1.9.5 Review of previous RoWIP

1.9.5.1 The objectives from the previous RoWIP can be found at Appendix B. To be able to write a new plan, the original RoWIP objectives need to be reviewed to find out what had been achieved and how successful the plan had been. The review of the implementation of the RoWIP was an extremely useful exercise and has helped greatly to inform the assessment by determining where improvements need to be made.

1.9.5.2 Below is a summary of the number of objectives which have been achieved, are ongoing in terms of management, achieved in part or not achieved/progressed.

Status	Number of objectives	As a percentage
Achieved	46	67%
On-going management	4	6%
Achieved in part	12	18%
Not achieved	6	9%
Total	68	100%

1.9.5.3 The aim of Objective A was to maintain the network and a number of the actions were met in this regard. The nature of the objective means that this will always be an on-going task within the RoWIP, and many of the actions remain relevant for the next plan period.

1.9.5.4 Objective B aimed to provide a more continuous network, which in some respects was achieved by active travel creating roadside paths that indirectly have linked up paths that previously ended on the highway verge. Many of the objectives to upgrade the paths to allow different types of network user to utilise them through either re-designation or giving paths higher rights were also achieved. Equally, permissive paths were created to join missing links in the PRoW network. The rights of way network is now integrated into the planning process so that paths affected by a planning application are picked up at the early stages and the planning and rights of way officers can now work together for the best outcome for the PRoW.

1.9.5.5 The aim of Objective C was to provide a safer network of PRoW that crosses roads, which was again achieved in part through active travel implementation. New road schemes also now include cycling and walking in the design stage and the impact on the PRoW network. The A40 Trunk road improvement at Robeston Wathen included two underpasses to link bridleways and footpaths at locations that were previously difficult/un-safe to cross at. Problems remain on the existing network, but this is constrained by funding for such schemes.

1.9.5.6 Objective D concerned the Definitive Map, which was revised in 2010 and published in 2012. The other action points were surrounding PPO and DMMO claims, which had previously been processed in a timely manner, but reduced resources and man-power has meant that PCC is only able to process a limited number usually in connection with planning applications.

- 1.9.5.7 Objective E was focused on involving the community in the maintenance of the network. The achievements in this regard have been limited because of reduced resources which would be needed to establish involvement in such schemes. Having said this, St Dogmaels Footpaths Association and Newport Paths Group are notable in their longstanding commitment to public rights of way maintenance and the PCNPA volunteers have assisted in PRoW upkeep, and existing associations and individuals have carried out sample surveys annually on behalf of PCC.
- 1.9.5.8 Finally, Objective F aimed to promote the network of paths to a wider audience. Many of the actions in this section required communications and marketing departments in the respective authorities to promote the existing network. The PCNPA promote 200 website walks, these provide a map and description on a side of A4 which can be downloaded or printed. There has also been substantial input into providing more on the ground information such as distance and destination information on way markers as well as interpretive panels.

#### 1.9.6 Relevant Research

Contained in the 'Guidance for Local Authorities on Rights of Way Improvement Plans (July 2016)' it states that "Due to the availability of new data sources it is not anticipated that authorities will need to commission their own public surveys". However in anticipation of the need to prepare RoWIP2, research was undertaken by PCNPA over 2015/16. As a result the relevant surveys used are:

- 1.9.6.1 Well-being Assessment for Pembrokeshire (April 2017).
- 1.9.6.2 Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Country Path User Survey 2015-2016 Report (January 2017).
- 1.9.6.3 Recreational Audit for Disabled Access in Pembrokeshire Survey Report (May 2016).
- 1.9.6.4 Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey 2016: Final Report (July 2015).
- 1.9.6.5 Wales Coast Path NRW 2017.

#### 1.9.6.1 Well-being Assessment for Pembrokeshire

The report acknowledges the benefits of the PRoW network and references the length of the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network across the entire county and the benefits of walking in the countryside. The assessment included a local well-being survey which also included comments from members of the public. Respondents asked for the network to be maintained, expanded where possible and encourage volunteering to assist with these suggestions.

#### 1.9.6.2 Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Country Path User Survey 2015-2016 Report

The Country Path User Survey was undertaken by the National Park Authority in order to inform the preparation RoWIP2. The survey was conducted over 12 months (July 2015 – August 2016) and a robust sample of 2,959 respondents has provided a wealth of reliable information and guidance.

The survey revealed high levels of satisfaction with the condition of public rights of way, indicating that current maintenance standards meet the expectations of the public in terms of path surfaces, signage and access furniture.

The large proportion of staying visitors walking the path network confirms the importance of the National Park as a tourist destination, and in particular the attraction of its accessible coast and countryside. The fact that over 50% of visitors walk on every day of their stay reflects the results of the Pembrokeshire Visitor Survey 2011/12, which confirms leisure walking as the most popular visitor activity. Given the importance of walking to the tourist economy of Pembrokeshire, there is a need to maintain this level of service to ensure a sound future for the tourism industry.

The frequent use by residents is also notable, demonstrating that the path network is well used, and makes an important contribution to the health, well-being and quality of life of residents of Pembrokeshire. The proportion of visitors and residents participating in the survey mirrors previous research, and while residents may only complete a questionnaire form once, their frequency of walking accounts for a significant usage of country paths.

It is evident that one of the main ways that people plan a countryside walk is by following signage on the path network and the provision of more destination and distance signage in particular was singled out as a measure that would encourage more walking.

The survey also provided valuable information for guidance in the provision of walks information and the promotion of walking opportunities. The popularity of Ordnance Survey maps and printed leaflet guides in helping people to plan a walk is noted and there was also a clear demand for more printed guides and leaflets to encourage greater participation. The average distance and duration of a walk was longer than expected and this needs to be taken into consideration when providing walks information as current provision tends to concentrate on shorter, circuit walks. The increased marketing of countryside walking opportunities was identified as a key feature to encourage more participation. It should be noted that the lack of awareness of access opportunities is also one of the main barriers to non-participation. The age of respondents demonstrates leisure walking to be more popular with middle and retirement age groups with the potential to market walking to younger age groups. The survey revealed that country walking is very much a seasonal activity with available daylight, weather and ground conditions being more conducive to participation in the summer months, however, there may also be potential to promote the activity more in winter months and shoulder seasons.

### 1.9.6.3 Recreational Audit for Disabled Access in Pembrokeshire Survey Report

The aim was to identify and work towards removing barriers for disabled people from visiting outdoor recreational sites and experiencing recreational activity. It therefore has relevance to the management of public rights of way.

The main barriers identified for disabled people were as follows:

- Difficulties with public transport; a lack of regular, public transport services, particularly to rural areas, during hours of desired participation, i.e. weekends, evenings, out of the holiday season, etc.
- Perception problems; it was shown that some providers, group leaders, parent/carer had negative attitudes towards the ability of disabled individuals to participate in certain activities. To a lesser extent, disabled individuals perceive a lack of self-ability to partake in some of the activities seen as more active or risky.
- Lack of awareness of opportunities. A general lack of knowledge of the activities, locations, and providers that are currently available and accessible offering opportunities by both participants and providers.
- Dependence on support from others; some individuals need support from others to go along with and during participation of activities and this reduces the frequency of participation.

Actions which would encourage participation in outdoor recreation were identified by disabled individuals as follows:

- A central resource to be able to find information on activities and providers that can accommodate varying abilities.
- Organised 'taster activity sessions'; specifically promoted brief 'intro' or 'taster' events for disabled individuals could allow less confident participants to 'give it a go' to determine if it is suitable for them.
- A better understanding of the needs and opportunities for disabled individuals by the adventure activity sector through providing training opportunities. This would enable all members of staff from booking to delivery to be confident in their actions and ensure the highest quality experience for all involved.

### 1.9.6.4 Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey 2016: Final Report

The survey was conducted over 2014 with a sample of 5,995 respondents. The report makes comparisons with the data of two previous surveys dating from 2008 and 2011. Walking remains by far the most popular activity with 83% respondents participating in this activity but road cycling and running both showed an increase. Off-road cycling/mountain biking accounted for 17% of respondents and horse riding 6% with these levels of participation changing slightly since 2008.

Overall participation remains high with 93% having participated in some form of outdoor recreation within the prior 12 months but frequent participation in outdoor recreation had declined. There was also a decrease in short duration visits to the countryside and doorstep visits. Parks were the most popular destination demonstrating the importance of urban green space. The main motivations cited were health and exercise (23%) and dog walking (22%).

The main barrier to non-participation was physical disability and poor health and the main barrier to rare or infrequent participation was the lack of time and bad weather.

A new question on expenditure showed that expenditure only occurred on 42% of visits and was on average £30.51 per person. Health benefits were assessed on the basis of frequency, duration and intensity and calculated that 57% of the sample derived some health benefits from their activities and 28% were getting clear benefits from outdoor recreation.

The survey demonstrated that there is a continuing demand by adults resident in Wales who would like to visit the outdoors for recreation more often (60%), an equal proportion to those recorded in 2011 and 2008. In addition to being the most frequently undertaken activity amongst those who visit the outdoors, walking was also the activity that the highest proportion of respondents would like to do more often. In terms of destinations, 30% of respondents indicated that they would like to visit beaches more often than they currently do, making this the most popular type of destination.

#### 1.9.6.5 Wales Coast Path NRW 2017

There were a total of 1,483 interviews in Wales over 2015 with 151 interviews at 5 survey stations in Pembrokeshire. The results for Pembrokeshire can be summarised as follows, with comparison to the Wales average in brackets:

- Age of respondents: 45-64 yrs 51%; over 45 yrs 72% (Wales: 74% over 45 yrs).
- Origin: 52% from Wales, 45% from England (Wales 59% & England 38%)
- Awareness of the Wales Coast Path was highest in Pembrokeshire - 61% (Wales 46%)
- Pembrokeshire had the largest proportion of staying visitors 64% (Wales 39%).
- Reasons for using Coast Path: leisure trip from home 37%; leisure trip/longer break 62%. (Wales 60% - 38%).
- Distance travelled along WCP in Pembrokeshire was 3.2 miles including retracing their steps.
- Spend by group/party (average party size was 2 adults): In Pembrokeshire the average was £27.34 on entire day trip, this was by far the highest by region; mean spend on accommodation per night was £78.82.
- Approach to perceived risk and personal safety while walking the WCP - 49% respondents took no precautions and perceived there to be no risk when walking the Coast Path.

The survey reinforces the economic significance of the Coast Path and public rights of way to the tourist industry of Pembrokeshire.

### 1.9.7 LAF Consultation

The Pembrokeshire Local Access Forum has been closely involved at every stage with the review of the RoWIP and the preparation of RoWIP2. It convened a meeting of its RoWIP committee on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2017 to review the RoWIP at its full meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017 it identified key priorities for RoWIP2. The main priorities are summarised as follows:

- A need to establish a baseline of data with regard to the condition of the county network both in order to monitor performance and to advise the public with regard to the accessibility and condition of the network.
- Although the maintenance of public rights of way is a statutory duty, a commitment to the ongoing maintenance of public rights of way should be a fundamental priority for the Plan.
- Plan objectives must be achievable and although there was concern about the uncertainty of future funding, the objectives need to be aspirational in order to secure any available funding streams including those linked to health and well-being. Concern was expressed with regard to the ending of the RoWIP funding programme in 2018 which had provided a degree of certainty for the implementation of RoWIP proposals over many years.
- There was potential to promote more long distance multi-user routes in the county. The Preseli Ridge and Pembrokeshire Trail could be improved and a number of new routes established. The availability of such promoted routes would attract staying visitors. The local authorities should seek to work closely with Dŵr Cymru to optimise the potential cycle routes from the hub at Llys-y- fran.
- Bridleways should be given priority for improvement in view of the multi-user opportunities they afford. The creation and promotion of circuit walks around settlements should also be a priority.
- Improvements to provide access for disabled people and wheelchair users should also be prioritised. It was important to maintain and promote existing provision and seek to develop new routes where possible which would enable access by mobility scooters so that costly surface improvements would not be required.
- The Plan must not duplicate the duties introduced by Active Travel legislation for cycling and walking improvements. Active Travel improvements are confined to the larger urban areas of the county so there was scope to plan for shared use paths (SUP) in the wider countryside that would make roads safer for vulnerable road users.
- “Lost Ways” (unrecorded rights of way) could still potentially deliver a number of access opportunities. Should the duty be commenced in Wales, the RoWIP2 should have an action that would enable the County Council to access funding for the research into Lost Ways.

- Objectives promoting responsible conduct in the countryside, the control of dogs and promotion of the Countryside Code should all be included in a new ROWIP.
- The voluntary sector has a potentially important role in the management of public rights of way. There needs to be more structured support to enable individual volunteers and groups to monitor the condition of public rights of way and undertake maintenance, whether minor in nature or as more substantial projects with work parties.

#### 1.9.8 Meeting with PCC Access Officer and Secretary to Pembrokeshire Access Group

At present, whilst the opportunities for disabled people to use the network are improving, it is still limited. There are a number of ways in which this might be addressed, for instance by:

- Making more routes available for disabled people (and as elements of this, particular types of disability), by improving surfaces, widths and gradients and providing taped commentary for circuits – wherever feasible taking account of best practice, such as the ‘Fieldfare’ standards, to ensure a high standard;
- Providing more information about routes available for disabled people and grading the routes, so that users can select those that are feasible for them to use in advance;
- Providing more circuits, as many of the existing routes that are suitable for disabled groups involve a return journey along the same route as the outward one. Where the return is along the same path, ensure that a turning circle is available;
- Wherever possible, providing complementary facilities on routes suitable for disabled users such as seating and bus routes, as well as specific facilities such as toilets and parking provision;
- Reflecting the increasing use of not just wheelchairs but also four wheel scooters and trampers by those with mobility difficulties. This often requires a higher quality surface, but this could be a compacted surface that horse riders can also use;
- Reducing the number of stiles on the network and replacing them with gates or gaps wherever possible; and
- Taking measures to highlight areas of danger for blind / partially sighted users.

Whilst the number of paths available is limited, more needs to be done to publicise the work to disabled users such as:

- Website based information on multi-user routes in PCC. At present PCNPA maintains and promotes a range of wheelchair accessible route on its website which is due to be reviewed, but this approach needs to be reflected by PCC so that information provision is consistent across Pembrokeshire.
- Updating the Pembrokeshire Access Group (PAG) 'Scooting around document'. This could help to create a collection of paths in PCC that are suitable for those with accessibility problems.
- A joined up approach to promotion between PAG and the Authorities. Website links could help to achieve this.
- The availability of motorised wheelchairs for hire from different organisations needs to be promoted in a more unified approach.

#### 1.9.9 Initial Consultation stakeholder feedback and comments

The initial consultation contacted a total of 83 statutory stakeholders (as prescribed by Welsh Government guidelines) and a further 61 additional stakeholders that the Authorities deemed appropriate to be contacted. These included stewards of common land, charities and trusts, user groups, private businesses.

The initial consultation email contained:

- the terms of reference which set out any changes in legislation and process since the previous RoWIP;
- the timetable for reviewing and amending the RoWIP along with an explanation letter to explain each stage of the timetable; and
- a request for stakeholders to comment on their views on the current state of public paths; how and what they use the network for; their priorities in terms of sustaining and where possible improving those aspects; and what barriers they felt prevented people from using the network .

A link to the existing RoWIP page on PCC website was also provided for reference, which some stakeholders then also reviewed.

There were 13 written responses to the consultation from a range of groups, organisations and individuals. The main concerns and priorities of the respondents were:

- the network is well-maintained and this needs to be continued;
- more paths need to be re-opened, particularly inland routes away from the coast path;
- continue to remove stiles in favour of gates;
- permissive paths are welcomed as they complement the PRow network;
- path furniture such as way markers need to be maintained and more interpretation panels are needed;
- stakeholders would like to start a dialogue with network managers regarding future PRow work in their area, and also where section 106 agreements/planning applications are concerned;

- promote the countryside code more to prevent improper use;
- give higher rights to footpaths that would create bridleway circuits;
- more information on easy access paths needed, especially in PCC area;
- more guided walks and web-walks needed;
- new solutions are needed for on-road sections of routes that link the PRoW network as these are not as safe with increased traffic and speed;
- needs such as car parking for horse riders and tourist information centres need to be retained.

#### 1.9.10 Public Consultation on the Draft RoWIP

The public consultation on the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan took place between the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2018. A total of 18 individuals and organisations responded to the consultation and generally the comments received mirrored those from the initial consultation. The draft RoWIP was updated to reflect these comments where appropriate.

#### 1.9.11 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

An integrated impact assessment was undertaken for RoWIP2 to assess the impact of the plan on equality, health and well-being, sustainable development and the Welsh language.

#### 1.9.12 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

A SEA screening report was undertaken for RoWIP2 to determine whether or not a full SEA report was required. The previous RoWIP concluded that an SEA was not required, and as no significant changes have been made to the legislation governing RoWIP and the RoWIP does not direct specific projects, the screening report has concluded that an SEA report is not required for RoWIP2.

## Part 2 Statement of Action

- 2.1 What are the key challenges for the Authorities in managing and improving the network?
- 2.1.1. The Assessments in Part 1 demonstrate that there is demand for well-defined country paths that are signposted, maintained, easy to use and well related to user needs and aspirations. They also indicate demand for more information on and the promotion of the access opportunities available in Pembrokeshire.
- 2.1.2. The Authorities have identified a number of challenges in managing and improving the network. These are set out below and have been taken into consideration in setting the RoWIP2 objectives.
- 2.1.3. Maintenance – local authorities are responsible for maintaining an expanding network of paths in an appropriate condition. As the network becomes better used there will be a need to conduct regular condition surveys and implement work programmes to ensure that PRow are maintained to a reasonably safe and enjoyable standard. This includes adding value to existing paths. This task will be addressed mainly through objective A.
- 2.1.4. Improvements –in the previous plan this focused mainly on the restoration of previously impassable paths. The need to improve the standard of the existing available network will take priority in this plan and is largely outlined in objective B. This is due to the vast increase in the percentage of ‘open’ paths now standing above 80%, which will naturally lead to a switch in focus to making paths accessible to more users. The application of the ‘least restrictive option’ approach (see glossary) is fundamental in achieving this aim, and in doing so will lead to encouraging greater participation.
- 2.1.5. Safer network – There is a need to integrate the highway network with PRow in order to provide safer walking and cycling opportunities. Objective C provides for closer working with the highways and construction section of PCC which includes the communities designated as Active Travel hubs.
- 2.1.6. Administration – both Authorities have powers to progress legal events which bring about route diversions and path creations. They can also bring into effect temporary closures. There are currently a large number of diversion proposals outstanding and these are supplemented annually with new proposals. This is important work, facilitating improvements and providing certainty for landowners and path users alike with regard to route, status and liabilities. The Authorities usually recover the costs of processing public path diversion orders from applicants. In addition, Pembrokeshire County Council is responsible for the continuous review of the Definitive Map and Statement, and modification orders are required to be made as evidence comes to light regarding unrecorded rights of way. The economic climate has changed considerably since the original RoWIP, leaving significantly reduced resources available to process modifications, diversions and creations. However objective D identifies the need to continue this work.

- 2.1.7. Legal action – a greater proportion of the network is becoming available as maintenance and improvement work continues. However, a diminishing number of paths remain unavailable to the public, either because they are deliberately obstructed or because there is a lack of cooperation on the part of some landowners to enable improvement to take place. The Authorities are prepared to consider legal action and ultimately enforcement in order to make certain key routes accessible. Taking effective legal action to assert and protect the access rights of the public may slow progress with the other legal work. The Authorities can recover costs arising from enforcement action that requires the removal of obstructions. Again, this is included in objective D.
- 2.1.8. Engagement – there is scope to achieve greater community and volunteer involvement in the improvement and management of PRow. It is clear that the authorities require more staff resources in order to realise the potential of the voluntary sector, and objective E provides solutions to this end.
- 2.1.9. Promotion – promoting an awareness of the access opportunities afforded by the PRow network and access land using electronic (web-site), paper and site based formats is essential to encourage greater use of the network. The Authorities will continue to be proactive in providing information, to encourage greater use of the network by residents and visitors. The need to promote responsible conduct when visiting the countryside remains as important as ever. Objective F seeks to respond to these challenges.

## RoWIP objectives

### 2.2 Objectives for the RoWIP2 action plan

The review and assessments have provided a context for six RoWIP2 objectives that will guide the long-term management and development of the rights of way network:

- Objective A – to maintain an accessible network of public paths;
- Objective B – to provide a more continuous network that meets the requirements of all users;
- Objective C – to work with the highways and construction section of the County Council to develop a safer network of paths with regard to the road network;
- Objective D – to improve legal procedures for recording, protecting and changing PRow;
- Objective E – to achieve greater community, user group and volunteer involvement in the improvement and management of public paths; and
- Objective F – to increase the awareness and use of countryside access opportunities afforded by public paths and access land through promotion and information provision.

2.2.1. These six objectives represent aspirational aims for the PRow network and are dependent on funding from existing budgets and bidding for external funding such as the Green Infrastructure Fund.

## 2.3 Actions for each objective:

### 2.3.1. Objective A – to maintain an accessible network of public paths

A1	To maintain the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail and the accessible network of PRow in Pembrokeshire at current levels and where possible increase the length of the network. The accessible network is defined as being signposted from the highway and easy to use in accord with the rights of passage of its particular classification.
A2	Review the prioritised approach guidance adopted in the 2008 RoWIP with regards to the maintenance programme.
A3	Undertake a regular inspection regime of PRow and a systematic maintenance programme for the maintained network.
A4	Where possible, sustainable materials for PRow and access land furniture and signs will be used where appropriate. This will be decided using the ‘best value’ principle.
A5	Work with land managers to reduce unnecessary barriers and improve surfaces. Apply the least restrictive access approach of gap / gate / stile as recommended by NRW guidance “By All Reasonable Means 2017”.
A6	Work closely with agri-environment scheme providers and entrants to promote awareness of land managers’ PRow responsibilities and assist where possible with access improvements. PCC and PCNPA to establish an annual liaison meeting with agri-environmental providers.
A7	Wherever possible improve joint working with public and private bodies and major land owners such as the National Trust, Ministry of Defence, Dŵr Cymru, NRW, and Wildlife Trusts for efficient maintenance practices. Where possible also seek funding contributions from such organisations for access improvements.
A8	PCC and PCNPA to investigate and adopt joint working practices that will achieve efficiencies in the management of PRow.
A9	Integrate CROW Act Access Land and the network of public rights of way to provide additional walking opportunities.

2.3.2. **Objective B** – to provide a more continuous network that meets the requirements of all users

B1	Work with the Active Travel Team in PCC to identify urban to countryside links that could be improved or created to connect the urban centres with the PRow network and access land. Continue to identify and improve links to the countryside for other settlements that fall below the population threshold for Active Travel.
B2	Prioritise the improvement of the existing network of bridleways and routes available for cycling and where possible upgrade to multi-user routes accessible to wheelchair users. Surface improvements should be carefully considered, with particular regard to the British Horse Society guidance and in consultation with affected owners/occupiers.
B3	In agreement with land owners create new bridleways, routes available for cycling and wheelchair users, and create permissive rights where designation as a bridleway is not possible. Priority should be given to missing links that could create circular or longer linear routes.
B4	Investigate feasibility and sustainability of introducing new off-road cycling, mountain biking opportunities and facilities for off-road driving of motor vehicles, to address current under-provision.
B5	Incorporate strategically significant existing permissive paths into PRow network wherever this is possible. Where the dedication of a PRow is not possible create new permissive routes of all PRow classifications, with priority to routes which would resolve a missing link in the network.
B6	In consultation with stakeholders such as the Pembrokeshire Access Group identify opportunities to upgrade paths and facilities to create more easy access trails suitable for people of all abilities.
B7	Work closely with the planning authorities for the best outcome when a planning application affects a PRow (in particular bridleways) or Access Land.
B8	Review the Pembrokeshire Trail (North-South multi-user route) to identify potential route improvements with regard to on-road sections. Investigate the feasibility of creating more long-distance walking and multi-user trails across the county.
B9	In consultation with stakeholders and user groups identify opportunities where select improvements to public footpaths and bridleways could improve ease of access for a much wider range of users.

2.3.3. **Objective C** – work with the highways and construction section of the County Council to develop a safer network of paths with regard to the road network

C1	Work with the highways and construction section of PCC to improve the safety of well-used PRowWs that intersect a busy road, or improve busy roads that connect a disjointed PRowW network. This could include crossings, under/over-passes, traffic calming and new off-road PRowW links to join paths together or painted sections of the highway to connect paths together where footpath provision is not possible.
C2	Work with the Active Travel section of PCC to identify PRowWs that could fulfil the Active Travel Act commitment to connecting settlements and providing Active Travel opportunities in communities.

2.3.4. **Objective D** – to improve legal procedures for recording, protecting and changing PRowW

D1	PCC and PCNPA to formally adopt the joint enforcement protocols in order to deter unlawful use of PRowW and aid management of an accessible network.
D2	Review and adopt a revised procedure for prioritising DMMO claims and Public Path Orders for both PCC and PCNPA.
D3	Implement Welsh Government policy for how to investigate ‘lost ways’ by 2026 once guidance has been published. However, if this is not enacted in Wales, consult stakeholders and user groups to identify priority cases and seek additional resources to investigate such cases.

2.3.5. **Objective E** – to achieve greater community, user group and volunteer involvement in the improvement and management of public paths.

E1	Establish an “Adopt a Path” scheme, to enable individuals, village wardens, town and community councils, and community paths groups to monitor the condition of public rights of way with an option to undertake minor unsupervised maintenance work. Initially establish a pilot scheme to assess potential uptake of volunteers and resources required to support a county wide scheme. As part of the scheme, provide information on the extent to which individual members of the public can undertake unsupervised maintenance work on public rights of way.
E2	Increase the resource of the National Park Authority Ranger service to work across the county in the management of public rights of way with communities, user groups and client groups.
E3	Identify a range of suitable projects for the maintenance and improvement of public rights of way that can be undertaken by volunteers from user groups and client groups under the supervision of National Park Authority Rangers and County Council officers.

E4	Encourage town & community councils to make funding contributions to the maintenance and improvements of public rights of way. This could be achieved through raising their own precept, seeking external funding such as the Enhancing Pembrokeshire fund and the local authorities matching their contributions.
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2.3.6. **Objective F** – to increase the awareness and use of countryside access opportunities afforded by public paths and access land through promotion and information provision.

<b>F1</b>	<b>Information provision</b>
a)	Create and continually update a website based map of the network of public rights of way, permissive paths and access land in Pembrokeshire, indicating the condition of public rights of way in terms of their accessibility for their appropriate classification.
b)	In consultation with stakeholders and user groups, produce a range of digital walks leaflet guides with route descriptions and photographs aimed at promoting the local path networks close to settlements and centres of tourist accommodation. This will include information for cycling and horse riding routes.
c)	Revise and update the Walks for All publication to promote a range of access opportunities county-wide suitable for people with limited walking ability and wheelchair users.
d)	Provide distance and destination signage and sketch maps on selected routes.
e)	Provide signage with URLs and QR codes to download digital walks information.
f)	Provide information on walking opportunities to GP surgeries and other healthcare facilities with the aim of promoting take up amongst those most likely to benefit from improved health and well-being as a consequence of walking.
<b>F2</b>	<b>Promotion &amp; Engagement</b>
a)	Expand both the work of the Let's Walk Pembrokeshire partnership and the Walkability initiative with additional resources to promote walking as a key activity to improve health and wellbeing for all and to encourage people to incorporate regular walking in their everyday lives as well as for recreation.
b)	Through a combination of volunteers and officers offer communities a series of guided walks to familiarise residents with their local network of public paths.
c)	Actively promote countryside access opportunities through a range of media including local newspapers and publications, local radio and social media.
d)	Promote countryside access opportunities as part of the work of the local authorities and continue to promote Pembrokeshire as a tourist destination,

	emphasising the recreational opportunities afforded by the public rights of way network.
<b>F3</b>	<b>Improve public understanding of the need for responsible conduct when visiting the countryside.</b>
a)	At every opportunity promote the Countryside Code and the appropriate and responsible use of public rights of way and access land.
b)	Promote the National Park Authority's Dogs Code of Conduct county wide.
c)	Provide signage to promote the responsible control of dogs on public rights of way and the need to dispose of dogs' mess responsibly. Refer problems areas to the Dog Warden service for enforcement patrols.

## 2.4 RoWIP Delivery Plan

- 2.4.1 In addition to the statement of action, WG statutory guidance requires an annual delivery plan to avoid the statement of action becoming outdated and be more flexible and responsive over the course of the 10 year plan period.
- 2.4.2 The delivery plan will be the principal method by which the plan will be monitored and evaluated.
- 2.4.3 The delivery plan will consist of three parts. The first will be an evaluation on the delivery of the RoWIP to date, which includes the previous action plan(s). The second will be a review of the policies and current management of PRoW by the authorities. The third will be a SMART work plan to delivery actions within each objective. The acronym SMART stands for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**greed, **R**ealistic, **T**ime based.
- 2.4.4 The evaluation will consider the extent to which:
- the previous delivery plan has been delivered;
  - the benefit to the public as a result of works/projects being progressed/completed;
  - the extent to which the objectives in the statement of action have been delivered across all subsequent years of the RoWIP2.
- 2.4.5. The review of PRoW policy will include:
- maintenance, improvement and enforcement of PRoW;
  - managing the Definitive Map and Statement;
  - the authorisation and recording of limitations;
  - the procedure for changes to the network such as diversions, extinguishments and creating new PRoW.

In addition to the review of policies contained in the delivery plan, there will also be a stand-alone document made available online stating the current PRoW policy.

2.4.6. The SMART work plan will include:

- specific details of the output (e.g. the chosen path for improvement);
- how a given action point will be measured, monitored and reported for its achievements;
- the resources required and their availability;
- who will deliver the project and any key partners;
- the statement of action objective(s) that it delivers;
- the timetable.

The SMART plans will use existing practices utilised in annual work programmes and should be incorporated into the SMART plan. These plans should also state any project which contributes to legislation; specifically; Active Travel, Well-Being Plans and Area Statements.

2.4.7 The projects in RoWIP2 are likely to be dependent on new funding programs, rather than grant funded like the original RoWIP. The delivery plan will therefore be produced to assist with bidding to fund the RoWIP2 objectives.

2.4.8 The first delivery plan will be published on the web at the same time that RoWIP2 becomes the relevant plan which is likely to be April 2019. The first delivery plan will contain details of projects undertaken between 01/04/19 and 31/03/20. The first plan will not contain an evaluation of progress as the assessments made in RoWIP2 will inform this initial plan.

2.4.9 Each delivery plan thereafter will follow the financial year which is also likely to be the bidding financial year. In the event that the bidding process starts at a different time of year, the delivery plan will be published in line with this. Delivery Plan renewals can be publicised on the local authority websites and social media.

2.4.10 The delivery plan process will keep the public informed of current projects, and allow the delivery of RoWIP2 to adapt across the 10-year lifespan of the plan.

2.4.11 When RoWIP2 is reviewed at the end of the plan period, the delivery plans can then be used as a source of information and reference to evaluate the performance of the plan.

## Glossary

Area Statement	These are areas across Wales that require implementation of Natural Resources Policy. The aim of these policies is to maintain and enhance the resilience of ecosystems to meet present and future needs.
BOAT	Byway Open to All Traffic. A public right of way open to all types of user, including horse drawn carriages and motor vehicles. They are, however, used mainly for the same purposes as footpaths and bridleways.
Bridleway	A public right of way over which there is a right to pass on foot, bicycle and riding or leading a horse.
CRoW Act	Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000
DMMO	Definitive Map Modification Order
Footpath	A public right of way over which there is a right to pass on foot only. This does not include pavements and footways which run adjacent to the highway.
Higher Rights	Rights of passage that exceed those confined to the legal designation of a public right of way, commonly used to describe the introduction of cycling and/or horse riding on footpaths.
LAF	Pembrokeshire Local Access Forum
Least restrictive option	The option that facilitates access for the widest range of users.
LDP	Local Development Plan (The County Council and the National Park have separate LDPs).
NP	National Park
NRW	Natural Resources Wales
Permissive Path	This is not a registered public right of way but a route where a landowner permits public access over their land on an informal or formal basis. Permission can be seasonal, withdrawn or temporarily suspended at the discretion of the landowner. Permissive paths can provide additional routes and deliver higher rights, for example where a landowner permits higher rights of horse riding on a public footpath.
PCC	Pembrokeshire County Council
PCNPA	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
Restricted Byway	A public right of way which has bridleway rights of passage together with non-motorised vehicular rights of passage (horse drawn carriages). They were formerly classified as Roads Used as Public Paths (RUPPs).
Routes available to cyclists	Other routes not designated as public rights of way that which are managed for use by cyclists.
RoWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire 2008 to 2018
RoWIP2	Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Pembrokeshire 2018 to 2028
Section 106 Agreements	These agreements are sometimes created when planning permission is granted. This usually happens when there is a

	detrimental impact on public amenity which needs to be offset. In terms of a PRow, agreements could be made when significant capital is required in order to divert a footpath for a new development.
SUP	Shared Use Path. This term is used in the Transportation Department at PCC, and refers to a dedicated route shared by cyclists and pedestrians often alongside roads. In recent years these paths have extended into the countryside and have provided a safer means of access compared to a highway verge.
WG	Welsh Government

## Appendix A - RoWIP Assessments and Background Documents

RoWIP2 Assessment A	The impact of legislation on PRow
RoWIP2 Assessment B	A review of relevant plans and strategies
RoWIP2 Assessment C	An assessment of the physical condition of the network
RoWIP2 Assessment D	An assessment of the legal state of the network
RoWIP2 Assessment E	Review of previous RoWIP
RoWIP2 Assessment F	Review of existing research that has been undertaken
RoWIP2 Assessment G	Consultations undertaken with the LAF throughout the review and consultation process
RoWIP2 Assessment H	Meeting with PCC Access Officer and PAG secretary
RoWIP2 Assessment I	Feedback from stakeholders regarding the original RoWIP at the initial consultation stage
RoWIP2 Assessment J	Integrated Impact Assessment
RoWIP2 Assessment K	Strategic Environmental Assessment
RoWIP Background Document I	Well-being Assessment for Pembrokeshire (April 2017)
RoWIP Background Document II	Well-being Plan for Pembrokeshire (May 2018)
RoWIP Background Document III	Planning Policy Wales Edition 9 (November 2016)
RoWIP Background Document IV	Local Development Plan Planning Pembrokeshire's Future (February 2013).
RoWIP Background Document V	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (September 2010)
RoWIP Background Document VI	Review of the previous RoWIP
RoWIP Background Document VII	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Country Path User Survey 2015-2016 Report (January 2017)
RoWIP Background Document VIII	Recreational Audit for Disabled Access in Pembrokeshire Survey Report (May 2016)
RoWIP Background Document IX	Wales Outdoor Recreation Survey 2016: Final Report (July 2015)
RoWIP Background Document X	Wales Coast Path NRW 2017
RoWIP Background Document XI	LAF Sub-Committee and Full-Committee meeting minutes
RoWIP Background Document XII	Meeting with PCC Access Officer/PAG Secretary

RoWIP Background Document XI	Full responses from the Initial Consultation
RoWIP Background Document XII	Full responses from the Formal Consultation
RoWIP Background Document XIII	Draft RoWIP Consultation Report

### Appendix B – RoWIP1 Objectives

Objective A – to maintain an accessible network of public paths

Objective B – to provide a more continuous network that meets the requirements of all users

Objective C – to develop a safer network of paths

Objective D – to provide an up-to-date and digitised map

Objective E – to increase community involvement in improvement and management of public paths

Objective F – to improve promotion, understanding and use of the network of public paths