

Rights of Way Improvement Plan

2019-2029



Cyngor Sir Gâr
Carmarthenshire
County Council



Executive Board Member Foreword

The County of Carmarthenshire has an extensive and largely rural network of Public Rights of Way (PROW). We recognise that this network of paths and ways alongside the County's coastline, open access land, country parks, woodland parks, picnic sites and nature reserves provide opportunities for recreation and tourism which in turn helps the health of the population and supports local businesses and the local economy.

In addition, more urban PROWs provide sustainable travel opportunities to schools, places of work and local amenities and facilities.

We must however also recognise the challenges of managing such a large and expansive network during this ongoing period of limited funding and reduced budgets.

The first Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) for Carmarthenshire provided a clear strategic direction for PROW management in the County. In the 10 years since its publication the plan has helped to ensure the best use of resources to make more of the PROW network available and to enhance priority paths and areas of public access. This has involved successful partnership working with volunteers, Town and Community Councils as well as other local Authorities and organisations.

This revised ROWIP is founded on research and consultation with a variety of stakeholders and the public. It takes into account the successes and shortcomings of the first plan through its 10-year term and provides strategic direction to the Countryside Access team, enabling them continue to build on the many positive outcomes.

This plan is ambitious as we strive to achieve significant improvements to our public access network over the next 10 years. We thank all those who have contributed to the preparation of this new ROWIP, the delivery of which will allow more people to enjoy access to our open countryside, coast and the various local attractions and businesses in Carmarthenshire.



County Councillor Hazel Evans
Executive Board Member for
Environment



Councillor Peter Hughes-Griffiths
Executive Board Member for Culture,
Sport & Tourism.

Chairman of Local Access Forum Foreword

As the Chairman of the Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum, I welcome the opportunity to write this introduction on behalf of the Forum Members. This plan will set the agenda and goals for access to the Countryside, Parks, Towns and Villages in the County for the next 10 years and forms an important document through which the performance of the Local Authority can be measured.

Access for the public is extremely important with significant benefits for health, wellbeing and the economy all being linked to people using the Rights of Way network and other public spaces within Carmarthenshire. The Local Authority needs to ensure that this access is maintained and improved throughout the life of this plan and is encouraged to continue to provide opportunities for walkers, horse riders, cyclists and other leisure users throughout the County.

This plan will be regularly examined by the Forum to ensure that the Authority's objectives are being achieved and targets met.

Every member of the public has the right to attend our Forum sessions to observe the discussions and ask relevant questions on the recommendations that it submits to your County Council. If you want to find out more about the Forum please look on the Council's website where you will find copies of Minutes from meetings along with each year's annual report that is produced.

Please use your right to ensure the County Council listens to what you want with regards to access by getting in contact with them & the Forum.

Mark Hadley
Chairman
Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum



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APPENDICES ARE AVAILABLE TO VIEW ONLINE ON THE COUNCIL WEBSITE
WWW.CARMARTHENSHIRE.GOV.WALES

ALTERNATIVELY, A HARD COPY CAN BE REQUESTED VIA EMAIL
PROW@CARMARTHENSHIRE.GOV.UK BY TELEPHONE 01554 742216 OR BY
SENDING A REQUEST BY POST TO:

COUNTRYSIDE UNIT,
MYNYDD MAWR WOODLAND PARK,
HEOL HIRWAUN OLAU,
TUMBLE, LLANELLI.
SA14 6HU

1. Background and Introduction

In 2007 Carmarthenshire County Council published its first Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). The ROWIP was decennial document, developed in accordance with with section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act (2000) which detailed Carmarthenshire's plan for the strategic management, development and improvement of the County's Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network up until 2017.

Through the term of the 2007-2017 ROWIP a great deal was achieved in improving and enhancing the PRoW network in Carmarthenshire. The actions and policies published in the previous plan led to the Authority being awarded ROWIP funding annually. A total of £726,449 ROWIP funding was received between 2008 and 2017 which allowed a significant number of the published actions and policies to be either partially or entirely implemented.

During the term of the last ROWIP we worked in 56 communities and during this period over 300 routes were improved or reopened, hundreds of new pieces of access furniture were installed and dozens of footbridges ranging from 3m up to 33m in length were constructed on the network. ROWIP funded works also included surface and drainage improvements across the network and various promotional activities.

Under section 60(3) of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, all Local Authorities in Wales are expected to undergo a statutory review of their present 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan' (ROWIP) within 10 years of publishing their original Plan.

Guidance published in 2016 directs that any emerging Improvement Plans must consider the following;

- The extent to which local Rights of Way (RoW) meet the present and future needs of the public;
- The opportunities provided by local Rights of Way for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the authority's area; and
- The accessibility of local Rights of Way to blind or partially sighted people and others with mobility problems.

The Improvement Plan must contain an action statement outlining how, as an Authority, Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) can better manage the local Rights of Way network and undertake improvements.

The Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum (LAF) is a statutory body established under section 94 of the CRoW Act 2000. Its role is to advise the Council on all countryside recreation matters. The LAF has had an advisory role during the production of this plan and will continue to have an input into the implementation of any actions arising from it.

Welsh Government guidance published in July 2016 outlines the ROWIP review process, as shown in Diagram 1 below.

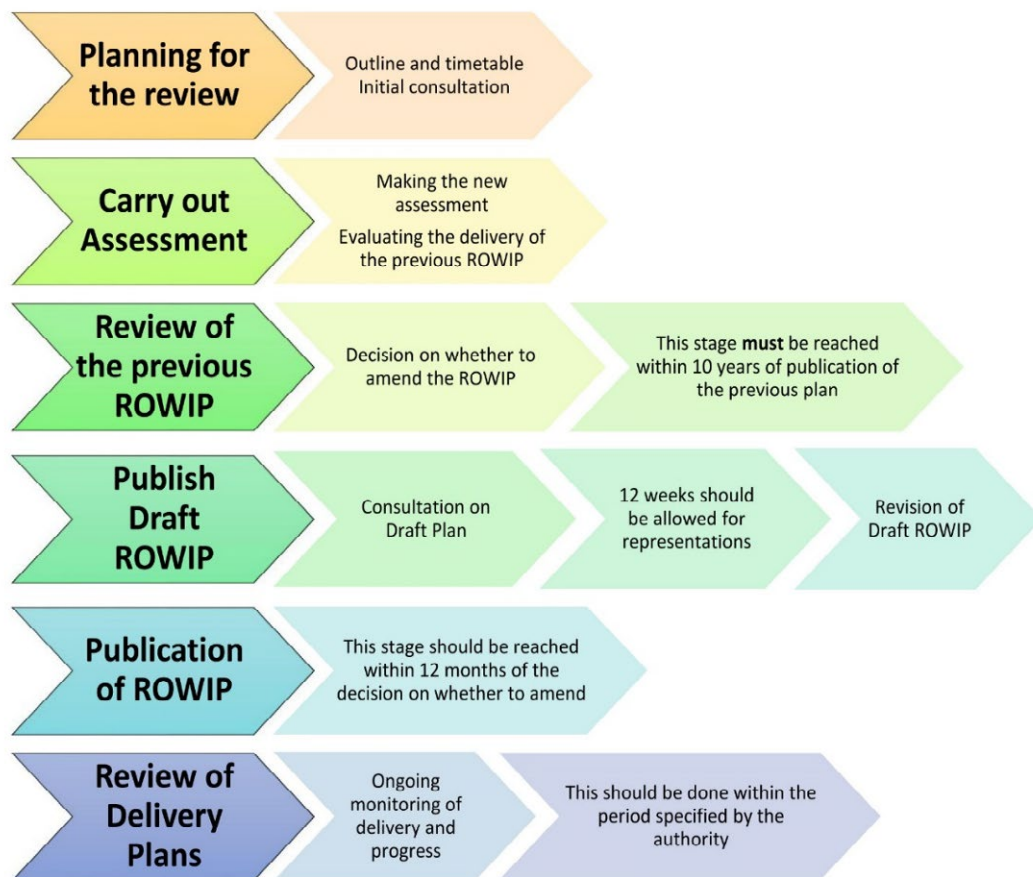


Diagram 1: Summary of the ROWIP process and timetable

Some of the actions and policies detailed in this plan are aspirational. These have the potential to bring significant benefits to local communities and improvements to the network, however, their delivery is subject to securing appropriate grant funding.

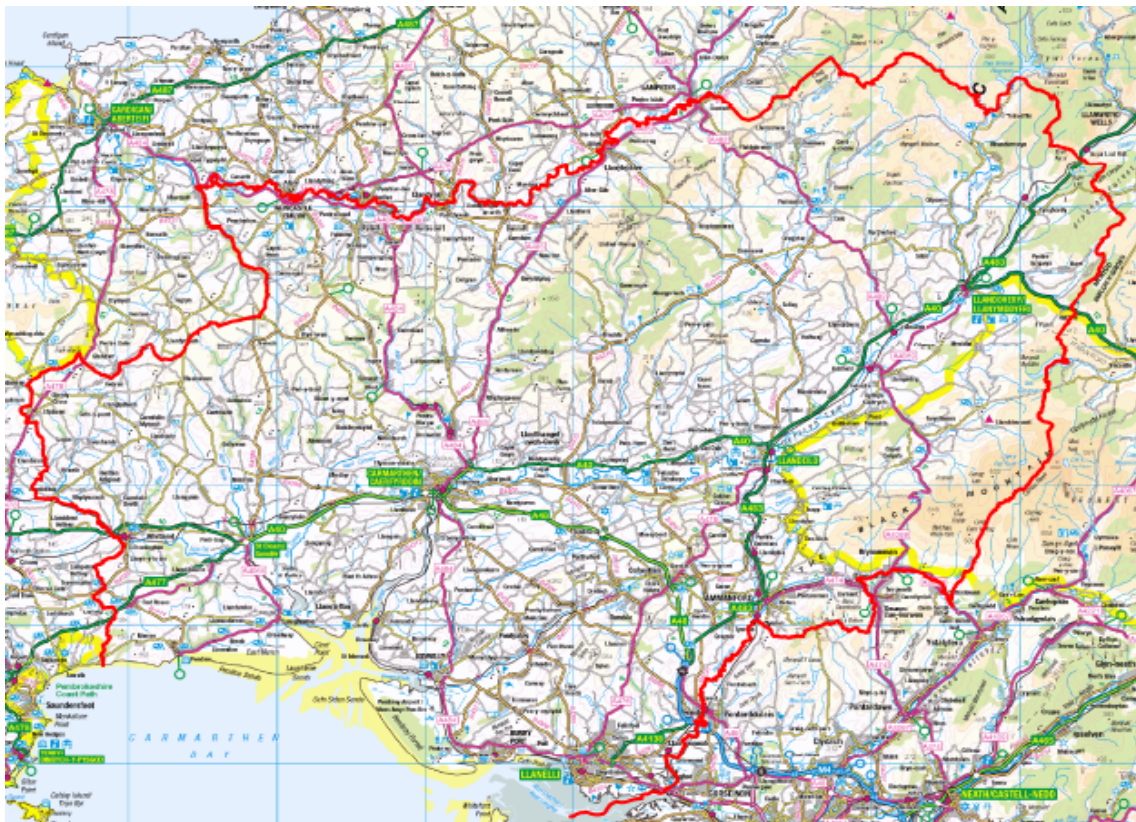
Section 11 of this plan presents, in detail, the aims, policies and action plan that will steer public rights of way and access management for the next 10 years. These have been developed following the assessment stage of the ROWIP process and their delivery will be reviewed on a two-yearly basis to monitor their progress.

The draft version of this plan has been subject to the statutory 12-week public consultation as detailed above (see appendix 1 for the list of consultees).

Each consultation response received has been fully considered and, where appropriate, revisions have been made to the ROWIP to reflect those responses.

Preparation of the ROWIP falls within the scope of Article 2(a) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. An SEA need only be undertaken if the implementation of a plan is likely to lead to significant environmental effects. The ROWIP was screened against the flowchart contained in 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Having completed this screening exercise it is the Authority's judgement that the aims, policies and actions contained within the ROWIP are not likely to lead to any significant environmental effects, we therefore consider that an SAE is not required.

The Carmarthenshire ROWIP covers all of the County with the exception of the section (largely the Black Mountains) which forms part of the Brecon Beacons National Park. There is currently an agency agreement between Carmarthenshire County Council and the Brecon Beacons National Park who manage and maintain the PRoW network that falls within the National Park boundary. Within that area the relevant ROWIP will be that prepared by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.



*Carmarthenshire County Boundary
(including Brecon Beacons National Park Boundary)*

2. Geography & Demographics of Carmarthenshire

Carmarthenshire is a diverse County with the agricultural economy and landscape of large rural areas contrasted with the urban and industrial south-eastern area. However, as a primarily rural County, the population density is low at 75.7 persons per sq. kilometre, compared with 140 persons per sq. kilometre for Wales as a whole. This scarcity of population is more apparent in rural Carmarthenshire than it is in the south and east where 65% of the County's population reside on 35% of the land.

The main urban centres of the County include Llanelli, Carmarthen and Ammanford. Carmarthen (due to its central geographic location) typically serves the needs of the County's rural hinterland. A number of rural villages and settlements are self-sufficient in terms of facilities and services, however, other smaller settlements lack services and facilities. The needs of residents in these latter areas are typically met by neighbouring settlements.

Carmarthenshire is justly renowned for its magnificent coast, quiet estuaries, steep wooded valleys and rugged uplands. Throughout much of the rest of the county there is a patchwork of woodlands and fields, bounded by the hedge banks that are frequently of historic importance. The network of PROW run all through the landscape made up by these habitats. This natural beauty of the county is a major factor on which the local tourism and recreation industries depend. Biodiversity is therefore fundamental to the physical, economic and spiritual well-being of all who live and work in Carmarthenshire.

The richness of Carmarthenshire's natural and cultural environment is highlighted by the number of sites designated to protect and enhance their important nature conservation value, at a national and local level: 7 Special Areas of Conservation, 3 Special Protection Areas, 1 Ramsar site, 82 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (with a further 12 within the Brecon Beacons National Park), 5 National Nature Reserves, 5 Local Nature Reserves and 7 registered landscapes. The County also boasts sites designated at the international level to protect and enhance important nature conservation value, as well as striking landscapes and distinctive historic towns and villages.

The importance of the County's built heritage is borne out by the 27 conservation areas, 470 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (ranging from Prehistoric to post-Medieval/Modern features of cultural historic interest) and a large number of listed buildings.

Agriculture in Carmarthenshire dominates the rural landscape with the agricultural industry and, in particular, dairy and sheep farming establishing the County as one of

the most important agricultural areas in Wales. Some 203,700 ha of land within Carmarthenshire is classified as agricultural land with the majority classified as grade 3a and 4 with a small tranche of grade 2 land in the south-east of the County.

At the LDP base date (2006) the population for the County was estimated to stand at 178,043 with 78,213 households (2006 WG-based projection). The Welsh Government also published a set of 2008-based population and household projections; however, the most recent data in the 2011 Census identified the population of Carmarthenshire at 183,777 with 78,829 households.

As displayed in Table 2.1 the population of Carmarthenshire as a whole, is older than the national average.

Table 2.1 Population of Carmarthenshire (2011 Census)

AGE	CARMARTHENSHERE	WALES
Age 0 to 4	5.6%	5.8%
Age 5 to 9	5.3%	5.3%
Age 10 to 14	5.8%	5.8%
Age 15 to 17	3.8%	3.7%
Age 18 to 24	8.2%	9.7%
Age 25 to 29	5.2%	6.1%
Age 30 to 44	17.3%	18.6%
Age 45 to 59	20.9%	19.9%
Age 60 to 64	7.3%	6.7%
Age 65 to 74	11.1%	9.8%
Age 75 to 84	6.9%	6.1%
Age 85 and over	2.8%	2.4%
Mean Age	42.3	40.6
Median Age	44	41

3. The Public Rights of Way Network

All Public Rights of Way in Carmarthenshire – footpaths, bridleways and byways are recorded on the Definitive Map and Definitive Statement which is held in the Countryside Access office. A full explanation of the Definitive Map and Statement as the conclusive legal record of public rights of way in the County and how the County Council manages and amends the record is provided in appendix 2. Digital mapping software which provides a digital version of the Definitive Map is used by the Authority for day to day management of public rights of way. This digital information is also available to the public online however to view the legal record members of the public are invited to view the hard copy of the Definitive Map at the Countryside Access office.

The Public Rights of Way (PROW) network provides a valuable recreational resource for use by residents and visitors to Carmarthenshire alike. They provide unrivalled access to the countryside and offer sustainable methods of travel by enabling safe use of alternative modes of transport to motor vehicles.

Table 3.1 below provides details of the respective numbers and length of recorded routes in Carmarthenshire, being the third largest local authority network in Wales.

Table 3.1 Network Routes & Length (March 2018)

Route Type	Number of Routes	Length (km)
Footpath	2951	2198.0
Bridleway	136	164.8
Byway Open to All Traffic	88	77.9
Restricted Byway	1	1.6
Totals	3176	2442.4

Our statutory responsibilities in respect of the PROW network include:

- Signposting and waymarking of footpaths, bridleways and byways;
- Keeping up to date the Definitive Map and Statement which is the legal record of Public Rights of Way;
- Maintaining the surface of a Public Right of Way to a standard appropriate for the purpose for which it is used;
- Maintaining bridges over natural river courses;
- Keeping the Public Rights of Way open and available by ensuring that other partners fulfil their responsibilities.

Countryside access opportunities offered by the PRow network contribute towards health and well-being initiatives and improving quality of life for residents. As they are free to access and enjoy, they can also promote social inclusion.

According to the Wales Outdoor Recreation Study (WORS) 2016-2017, a wide range of activities are enjoyed by people visiting the countryside.

The study showed that walking was the main activity undertaken by nearly three quarters of all adults in Wales during the last 12 months. Social recreation activities were also very popular, with nearly a third of people enjoying picnicking.

Table 3.2 Reasons Why People Visit the Countryside (2016-17 WORS Study)

Activity	Percentage of adults taking part 2016/17
Walking	71.4%
Picnicking	31.3%
Taking children to play area outdoors	31.1%
Informal games (e.g. frisbee or golf)	19.8%
None of these	19.5%
Running	16.9%
Wildlife watching	16.2%
Road cycling	13.0%
Swimming outdoors	12.6%
Off-road cycling or mountain biking	9.1%
Fishing	6.5%
Other watersports	4.8%
Rock climbing or caving	3.6%
Field sports (shooting / hunting)	3.5%
Horse riding	3.0%
Off-road driving or motorcycling	2.9%
Other outdoor activities	2.9%
Motorised watersports	1.5%
Don't know	0.2%

The network also plays a part in the economic development of Carmarthenshire through either direct or indirect spend in the County. Spending on tourism services, equipment, hospitality, travel, parking and any number of other support services all contribute to the local economy.

A Natural Resources Wales (NRW) report published in 2013 demonstrates the economic value of well managed and promoted countryside access provision. Their report concluded that the Wales Coast Path, which circumnavigates the coastline of Wales, generated approximately £16 million of added value to the Welsh economy (The Economic Impact of Wales Coast Path Visitor Spending on Wales 2013).



Telpyn Point

4. Other Public Access Opportunities

In addition to the PRoW network there are other valuable opportunities to access the countryside such as:

Open Access Land designated under the CRoW Act, consisting of open country such as mountains and moorland and 'registered common land'. There are approximately 7600 hectares (ha.) of Open Access Land where the public have the right to roam on foot. This includes areas of 'dedicated open access land' where landowners allow free open access. An example is the Welsh Government who allow free open access to their woodland estate and in addition, also offers permissive access opportunities for mountain biking, horse riding and carriage driving.

Unclassified Road Network amounting to approximately 170 Unclassified Roads (often referred to as "Green Lanes") with vehicular rights, totalling some 150 kilometres of largely unsurfaced routes, which play a significant role in the provision of recreational routes, for all users.

Cycleways developed in response to the rapidly growing cycling market in Wales. Carmarthenshire has made significant developments in improving the opportunities for cyclists with the ambition to become the 'cycling hub of Wales'. The creation of numerous cycleways in the County which include the National Cycle Network and Safe Routes in the Community have also created opportunities for other users such as walkers, less able and disabled users and occasionally horse riders.

Under the Active Travel Act (Wales) 2013 Carmarthenshire continues to identify and improve routes for cyclists and walkers to make active travel the most attractive option for shorter journeys and to connect key sites and communities. Appendix 3 shows the number of Active Travel routes in Carmarthenshire which follow parts of the Public Rights of Way network.

- Category A – Cycle lane forming part of the carriageway, commonly 1.5m strip adjacent to nearside kerb.
- Category B – Cycle track – a highway route for cyclists not contiguous with the public footway or carriageway. Shared cycle/pedestrian paths, either segregated by a white line or un-segregated.
- Category C – Cycle trails, leisure routes through open spaces, not necessarily the responsibility of highway authority but may be maintained by an authority.
- On Road - signed route but using normal carriageway, no segregation.

Carmarthenshire County Council Sites largely owned and managed by the Authority providing valuable recreational access, often to user groups with poorer provision in the wider countryside for example people with physical disabilities and horse riders.

Coastal Access to the foreshore where public access rights exists. Beaches like Pembrey, Marros and Pendine are accessible for walking and very popular with horse riders. The nationally recognised Wales Coast Path (WCP), a linear route around the coast of Wales established between 2007 and 2012 which provides unrivalled access to the coastline of Carmarthenshire on foot, through a range of habitats and coastal landscapes. Constant improvements are being made to the WCP with help from Welsh Government funding to ensure it is as widely accessible as possible.

Permissive Access delivered in a number of ways, such as through Glastir Agri-Environmental Funded Schemes, privately by individual landowners or over National Trust properties, primarily for walkers.

“Lost Ways” are routes which carry public rights over them which were in existence before 1949 but are not currently recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement for Carmarthenshire.



Llanllwni Mountain

5. MAINTENANCE

In managing the network of Public Rights of Way in Carmarthenshire the Council has to maintain surfaces of routes and bridges, signposts where they leave a metalled road and ensure that the routes are free from natural & man-made obstructions. The Council must also ensure that landowners carry out their responsibilities, which includes the maintenance of Rights of Way furniture such as stiles and gates, and the removal of vegetation encroaching from the sides or above the Rights of Way.

Historically the maintenance of the Rights of Way network on the ground has been greatly under-funded and under resourced. Maintenance is a vital element for Rights of Way - neglect of essential small-scale strimming and clearance results over time in major works of tree/shrub clearance from routes and far greater issues from the perspective of both owners and users.

Since the first ROWIP 2007-2017 many aspects of the PROW maintenance have changed. Of the original thirty-four active Town and Community Councils only six now carry out the same duties. The primary means of maintenance was, and still is, carried out by the Ranger Service. Nine fulltime rangers were employed to carry out these works but due to ever increasing budgetary constraints (£149,132 overall reduction in controllable maintenance budget between 2007/08 and 2017/18) the number of rangers has now been reduced to four.

As a consequence of this we now use approved contractors, on a part time basis, to do the majority of the work of vegetation clearance. This leaves the rangers free to concentrate on coordinating work with landowners and dealing with the more demanding and complex issues.

To better meet the needs of the residents and visitors to Carmarthenshire, and to meet the County Councils statutory duties, an increase of resources would be required. We aim to work closer with Town and Community Councils to encourage greater involvement from them to maintain their local PROW and help to identify a list of key priority routes within their communities.

Appendix 4 lists the participating Town & Community Councils together with details of the number of Rights of Way maintained within their areas.

It is important that environmental sustainability is considered when we plan maintenance or enhancement works. The timing and manner of maintenance will be carefully considered with regard to any relevant protected species legislation so as not to have adverse impacts on protected species or habitats. Opportunities for action to enhance habitats and species will also be sought.

6. IMPROVEMENTS

In recent years improvements on the network have been carried out using the limited PROW budget enhanced by the annual ROWIP grant (now ceased), Wales Coast Path funding and additional funding contributions from organisations such as the British Horse Society and Carmarthenshire Riders.

Since the implementation of the first ROWIP and with assistance from the funding sources mentioned above that has at least doubled the effective budget for Public Rights of Way improvements, much has been achieved.

- 1355 Public Rights of Way and other routes with public access have been worked on, this amounts to 1272kms of public access and can be broken down into:
 1. 1,099 kms footpaths,
 2. 98km bridleways,
 3. 46kms of Byways
 4. 29kms unclassified roads

- Improvement work has been completed on:
 1. The Wales Coastal Path,
 2. Tywi, Teifi and St Illtyd Trails
 3. The Heart of Wales Trail.
 4. The Cothi Trail

- The Rights of Way software package CAMS continues to be developed and improved and more information input / extracted to give meaningful reports such as those provided to the Local Access Forum at the quarterly meetings.

- 22 County Walks have been established and promoted via Tourist Information Centres and other outlets.

- Positive reaction has been received from local councils, public bodies, other organisations, land owner groups and the general public.

However, there is much more to do, and the Authority will continue to seek partnership funding to enable further improvements and better promotion of walks and trails in the County.

As these improvements are completed, over time, the Maintenance team will be able to give more attention to maintenance issues. The proper maintenance of County Walks and other promoted routes must be a priority issue. The need for sustainable maintenance will increase in importance over the Plan period and is a critical factor for the ROWIP to address, subject to the availability of sufficient funding.

7. RESOURCES

In the last decade, despite reduced funding and maintenance staff resources (as outlined in section 6) the proportion of the network that is open increased from 2012 to 2017, with only a slight reduction in the year to March 2018 as evidenced by table 9.1.

Irrespective of resources our responsibilities remain the same, albeit the remit has increased with the addition of facilities such as the Heart of Wales Trail and the Cothi Trail as two examples. Measures are in place to deal with most of these issues, but the number of reports and list of requests for maintenance continues to grow due to improved contact with user groups, Community Councils and the public.

The Wales Coast Path receives Welsh Government funding through NRW which means this important national trail is adequately resourced at present.

A continuation of the annual capital budget for maintenance of £50,000 is critical. This is used as match funding for grants and to purchase materials, hiring of plant and for the use of seasonal contractors for less complex project works and general maintenance purposes. This allows significant improvements to the network to develop easier access for people of all abilities. Given the present circumstances it will be increasingly important to encourage and support Town and Community Councils to take responsibility for some of the key paths in their areas. We anticipate a mixed response to this as historically Town and Community Councils have shown a diverse range of attitudes towards getting involved with the ROW network within their boundaries.

An increased use of contract staff in 2017- 18 to cover a vegetation clearance schedule of work has enabled the Rangers to concentrate on liaison with landowners, carry out our statutory requirements and to manage and support contract staff. Promoted routes have been reduced in number in order to focus efforts and limited resources on the best walks and rides in the County to maintain them to a high standard. Plans are in place to improve the quality of information on the County Council's *Discover Carmarthenshire* website to encourage walking, cycling and horse riding for residents and to support local economies through tourism.

We intend to work with volunteers to help survey the network and to carry out simple lightly supervised tasks.

In conjunction with the Countryside Access team, greater use is now made of the CAMS digital mapping system to log, prioritise and record all works carried out or planned and is available for use by more staff than previously. Upgrading and improving the system along with ongoing staff training is essential to ensure that the Authority gets the most out of CAMS.

The Countryside Access team, responsible for managing the Definitive Map, enforcing the Public Rights of Way network and processing legal Orders, has maintained staff numbers since the implementation of the first ROWIP with the

exception of periods of reduced staff numbers where vacant posts have not been filled.

As outlined in appendix 2, a significant backlog of legal Orders exists within the Countryside Access team which dates back to a period when the service was operated by very low staff numbers. The resource needed and time required to clear the backlog is difficult to quantify due to the unpredictable timescale of the Order making process combined with other the other statutory duties met by the team.

The increased remit and higher reporting numbers outlined earlier in this section also impact the available resource within the Countryside Access team but with current staff numbers progress is being made in processing some of the older legal Orders as well as newer Order applications, enforcement matters and continuous review of the Definitive Map and Statement.

Despite the significant resource challenge, improvements were achieved year on year up until 2017 as shown in the Performance Indicator results table below.

The annual Performance Indicator (PI) (5% sample) has long been the primary method of obtaining data to record the current condition of the network. From 2015 there was no longer a statutory requirement to carry out our annual performance indicator surveys however two years following the removal of the requirement Carmarthenshire recognised the significant value of the PI results and elected to resume PI style surveys of the network from 2017 as an information gathering exercise. We intend to continue this on an annual basis subject to sufficient resources to complete the process.

Table 9.1: Performance Indicator (PI) (5% Sample) Survey Results

Measures	% Pass						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Open, Accessible and Signed (CMT/001 PI)	37.9	34.6	41.4	-	-	47.6	45.9
Open and Accessible	52.2	50.8	53.2	-	-	59.3	52.2
Open	52.2	51.1	53.9	-	-	59.3	52.3

8. INITIAL CONSULTATION

In March 2017 initial consultation letters were sent to a variety of stakeholders to outline the steps that CCC would be taking to review the Carmarthenshire ROWIP.

Local Authorities:

Ceredigion County Borough Council, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Pembrokeshire County Council, Powys County Council and Swansea City Council.

A summary of Statutory Stakeholders:

National Authorities, Brecon Beacons National Park, Tourism Businesses, Local Access Forums, Natural Resource Wales.

The purpose of this was to advise stakeholders of CCC's intention to review the ROWIP and the timetable for doing so.



The Carmarthen Fans

9. THE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

The Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum (LAF) played an important role in developing and shaping this Plan, particularly in respect of the aims and policies.

4 main consultation meetings were held with the LAF in respect of the new ROWIP.

1. An introduction to the process and to the Capita consultant appointed to undertake the review,
2. A workshop with the subcommittee to review the actions and policies in the previous ROWIP
3. A discussion group to comment on first draft
4. A feedback session to go through responses received following 12-week consultation

In accordance with WG Guidance, CCC has engaged the LAF in the following way;

WG ROWIP Guidance	LAF Involvement
Assisting with dialogue through contacts with national, regional and local organisations.	The LAF assisted by providing local contacts to which consultation material was circulated.
Informing the data gathering exercise including the extent to which local Rights of Way meet the present and likely future needs of the public.	LAF ROWIP subcommittee members were engaged in a review of the actions and policies of the previous ROWIP and proposed new actions and policies for the revised ROWIP
Advising on how the network could be improved for the public and where there are particular land management concerns.	The LAF ROWIP subcommittee proposed areas for improvement and this information was used to develop appropriate actions on the Action Plan.
Advising on the related issue of access to open countryside especially where new linear routes may be desirable.	The LAF have identified issues on open access land during regular LAF meetings, this information was taken into consideration during development of new ROWIP
Providing advice on prioritising implementation.	The LAF provided assistance in defining the High, Medium and Low actions within the Action Plan.
Commenting on published draft plans.	The LAF were given opportunities to provide comment and feedback on the emerging Plan.
Assisting in the resolution of conflicts between different representations when plans are issued for consultation.	Not necessary.

10. ROWIP ASSESSMENTS

Following the decision to produce a new ROWIP a number of assessments were carried out to inform and support the new document.

a. Assessing the Delivery of the Previous ROWIP

Section 6 outlines the achievements delivered during the term of the 2007-2017 ROWIP with the support of the associated ROWIP funding awarded by Natural Resources Wales.

A comprehensive review of each of the Actions and Policies contained within the 2007-2017 ROWIP was undertaken to evaluate the success of its delivery. This was first completed as an in-house exercise before being extended to the LAF ROWIP subcommittee where the actions were briefly reviewed then considered for suitability in the new ROWIP. This evaluation is presented in appendix 7.

The evaluation process highlighted those actions and policies that were realistic, within the resources and time available. This helped to inform the actions and policies going into the new ROWIP.

b. Assessment of Current and Likely Future Public Needs

In accordance with WG Guidance a 12-week consultation period was undertaken to assess user needs. The results of this exercise are presented in appendix 5. Due to the low participation rate in the consultation exercises the robustness of the data gathered was poor and therefore of limited value. The policies and actions developed for this ROWIP were therefore not based heavily on this data but rather on other available published data, Local Access Forum input and staff knowledge and expertise.

The Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey (WORS) attempts to measure participation levels and behaviours in outdoor recreation by adults living in Wales, including the associated health and economic benefits. It also covers public attitudes towards biodiversity, along with actions that people take to protect the environment.

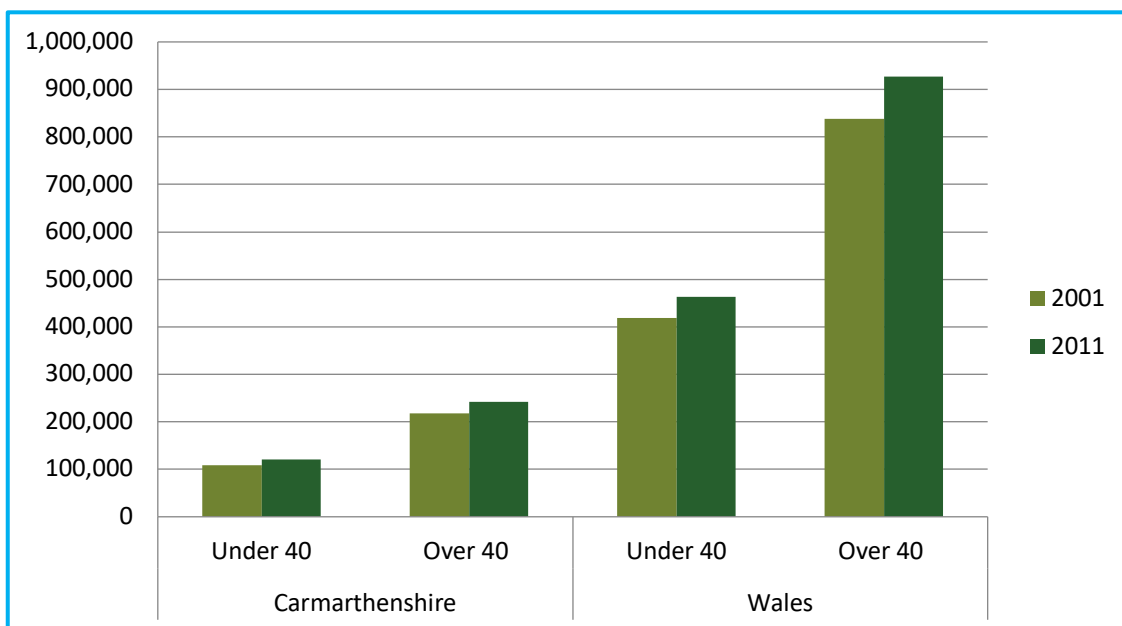
It is the largest survey of public engagement with the environment by people living in Wales, with around 6000 people interviewed throughout the year over each full 12-month period. It includes adults of all ages and backgrounds who live in both rural and urban areas.

To date the survey has been undertaken in 2008, 2011 and 2014 and comparison year on year has been used to identify any statistically significant trends in recreational behaviour or demand over that time.

Analysis of the WORS allowed a unique insight in the activity levels, behaviour and attitudes of people in Wales, and this information has been used to help shape and fine tune this Improvement Plan, as demonstrated in appendix 6.

Within the context of this Improvement Plan the WORS survey frames some of the key challenges faced by CCC in terms of attracting more people to countryside. It is known that the County has an aging population, as demonstrated by graph 9.1

Graph 9.1: 2011 Population Age



According to 2011 Census, the population in Carmarthenshire is ageing. Between 2001 and 2011 the number of people aged between 0 – 39 declined by approximately 3,500, while over the same period of time the number of people aged between 40 and 80 increased by over 9,000.

Within these ages groups there was a decline of 13% for those aged between 30 – 34, and a decline of 14% for those aged between 35 and 39 between 2001 and 2011. In the 60 – 64 age bracket there was an increase of 36%, while the number of people in the 65 – 69 age bracket increased by 27% over the same period.

It is important that the emerging ROWIP contains plans and policies designed to cater for this trend. In addition, when developing an Action Plan it is important to understand the barriers that prevent people from accessing the Countryside on a more regular basis.

Barriers

According to the WORS survey for those reporting no visits in the last year, the single most common reason (28%) was a perceived lack of free time, whilst 24% cited physical disability, 19% other health reasons and 19% old age. In contrast, only 2% said there was nowhere suitable for them to go, and 1.7% said they didn't know where to go.

However, there were some significant gender and age-related differences. For older people (over 65), the main barriers were old age (41%) and physical disability (34%). For younger adults (16-44) the main barrier was lack of time (57%). Equally, women were more likely to cite physical disability and old age as their main barrier, whilst for men it was lack of time. For respondents who reported not having made a visit to the outdoors in the last four weeks, the most common reason (46%) was bad weather. The WORS survey also reports that most visits were relatively short; 50% lasted an hour or less. A substantial majority (77%) were two hours or less.

Whilst the ROWIP can do little to influence issues relating to lack of time or weather, actions can be developed so that facilities to improve access for the elderly and those with reduced mobility are implemented. In addition, facilities and attractions that encourage people to stay longer need to be developed and introduced across the rights of way network.



Timber Footbridge, Cilycwm

An assessment of future needs must take account of the physical needs of different user groups' accross the Public Rights of Way network.

Walkers

All walkers need a network which is easy to use with adequate and clear signing and waymarking where needed. This is especially true in the case of tourists who are often not familiar with the area and rely on the Ordnance Survey Mapping which shows all routes as if they were clear on the ground. They are dissuaded from walking and this reflects on both County and Town & Community Councils. There has been substantial concern over the number of routes that are obstructed by overgrown vegetation, poor furniture, fences and other problems. Detailed discussions within the Local Access Forum have noted that stiles were often not suitable for the elderly or less-able and many preferred gates or kissing gates as they were easier to negotiate.

The value of the Rights of Way network to the everyday needs of the local community has been emphasised both for leisure and other purposes. The important role that a fully open network can make to the tourist industry and its related employment in the County has also been significant. The council receives both compliments and complaints from visitors to the County, the latter generally where expectations on the ground do not match up to anticipated information from Ordnance Survey (OS) maps etc.

According to the WORS 2016/17 survey walking is the most popular countryside activity. Consequently, it is important that the needs of walkers are catered for within this emerging Improvement Plan.

Horse Riders

Horse riders have the right to use bridleways, restricted byways and BOATs, giving them access to 6.7% of the County's PRow network. However, this access is not evenly distributed across the County. Equestrian off -road access is particularly lacking, but a network of byways, minor road and bridleways exist in Brechfa Forest amounting to circular rides of more than 20 miles.

The equestrian network is fragmented and links on busy roads or rural roads that are local short cuts make them increasingly dangerous for equestrians to use because of the speed and volume of motorised traffic on them. It is hoped that being recognised as vulnerable road users in the Wales Road Safety Delivery Plan will improve the safety of these links in time as increased traffic volume and development around bridleways identifies a likely increased need for equestrian provision in the future.

Horse riders require local rides but will box to areas further afield or to avoid busy roads. They are probably the most vulnerable users when sharing routes with vehicles due to the unpredictable nature of their mounts. Riders seek historic routes with natural unsealed surfaces that provide spectacular views or links between

communities and countryside access, with minimal gates that are horse friendly and easy to negotiate.

Equestrians improve their own personal health, as well as bringing added economic benefit to Wales by the increased spend as a result of such recreation.

Horse ownership provides and supports work for many in rural areas where local employment is much needed - such as farriers, vets, petrol stations, timber yards, feed merchants, farmers and the livery yards where many of these horses are kept.

The National Equine Database (2012) recorded 34,748 passported horses' resident in Wales, 22,000 of these in Carmarthenshire.

Based on the British Equestrian Trade Association's finding that horse owners spend £3,600 annually on their horses this represents an annual investment by horse owners into the economy of £485 million and to Carmarthenshire of £79 million.

Equestrian tourists have to house and feed their horses as well as themselves which doubles spend per night of any other visitor to the county. With a significant number of active riding and pony clubs in the county and venues for equestrian sport, Carmarthenshire attracts equestrian visitors from neighbouring counties and further afield, but more could be done to encourage them to stay longer, to access beaches, forestry and open country.

Carriage Drivers

Carriage drivers have legal access to byways and restricted byways. In Carmarthenshire byways are unsuitable for carriages due to the uneven surfaces and the general state of repair so they are not generally used. They also have access to some NRW forestry which includes Crychan Forest which attracts no fees but similar access to Brechfa Forest is chargeable, with no access at Pembrey Forest despite a successful annual event held in Pembrey Park, bringing carriages from some distance away. It is council policy not to allow equestrians to the park unless attending an organised event. Engagement with local groups is required to identify suitable routes for improvement and access to Council owned land.

Carriage driving can give access to the countryside for users who are unable to use it by other means or who are disabled. They are minority users of the PRow network and it is rare for new access to cater for them. Carriage drivers predominantly use off road areas and minor roads shared with other users.

Cycling

Cycling has long been a popular and low-cost method of transport in Carmarthenshire and this has been accentuated by improvements to routes forming the National Cycle Network, notably in its off-road sections. Overall, 29 million trips

were made during 2011 on the National Cycle Network in Wales, with 85% of users saying that they felt fitter as a result.

At Pwll Pavillion on the Millennium Coastal Path, there have been over 137,000 users in 2017, with 74% cycling and 26% walking. At Pembrey, Canal Waun Sidan, attracted over 48,000 people in 2017, 54% of them cyclists and 46% pedestrians.

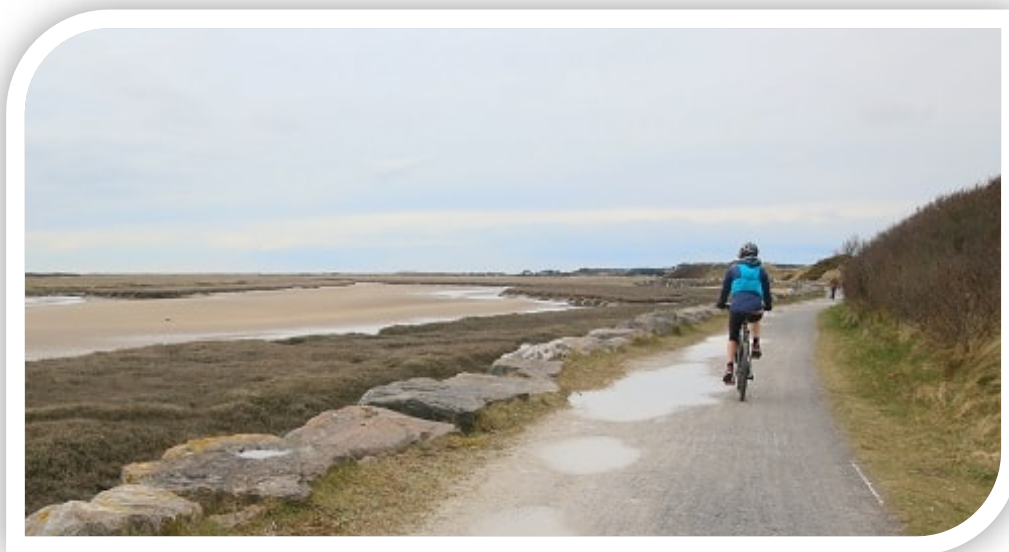
Cyclists are entitled to use the same public Rights of Way that are available to horse riders. The Countryside Act 1968 extended rights on bridleways to include cyclists but again within the County the limited available network of Public Rights of Way and problems on some byways have limited opportunities.

Cycling usage is likely to increase outside of the road network and the byways/green lanes could be a useful resource in terms of assisting in meaningful and safe alternatives to busy roads.

Where such a resource offers a key strategic or community link and there are no quiet and safe alternative roads then any such improvements to the byways and green roads should take into account a robust and attractive surface which can be used by all types of cycle alongside the other users. Where quiet and secure highways offer easy access, then surfacing shared byways would be less of an issue and these byways should only be considered passable by mountain bike. It would therefore be beneficial to consider a hierarchy of byways and green lanes to meet the varied needs of users.

Active Travel

There are 10 Active Travel towns across Carmarthenshire. In total 128 Active Travel routes fall on to the Rights of Way Network. Appendix 3 illustrates those Active Travel routes that are on the Rights of Way Network.



The Millenium Coast Park

Motorised Users

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), in its consultation paper on mechanically-propelled vehicles and Public Rights of Way, quote a figure from a user group representative of about 15,000 recreational off-road vehicle drivers active in England and Wales. In consultations for the preparation of this ROWIP a number of responses were received from motorised vehicle users and other interested parties within the County. These responses included ensuring that the ROWIP should recognise the rights of these users / riders /drivers to drive / ride along and use routes that are legally available to them. This reflects the economic importance within the tourism industry that these activities can achieve and that such activities should be encouraged within the Plan.

All motorised users of the PROW network must be fully road legal with driving licenses, road fund licenses and valid MOT's for their vehicles. It is also necessary for CCC to continue to encourage provision of suitable off-road custom-built facilities, properly insured and safe for riders / drivers to use within the County. These facilities should be made available to both non road legal and road legal users.

In the County the main resource available to off-road recreational motorists are unsurfaced County roads and byways. There have been 5 Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) made by the County Council and 3 others are under consideration. TRO's can be used to manage routes where safety concerns arise but will only be used as a last resort when other options have been exhausted.

Canoeists and other Paddlesports

NRW has affirmed that recreational access to water in Wales is within the remit for Local Access Forum and the ROWIP and therefore in contrast to Carmarthenshire's first ROWIP, access to waterways for canoeists and other paddlesports should be recognised and considered in future access management.

Paddlesport is generally recognised as being a positive activity for physical and mental health and general well-being. It also contributes to the economy and has low environmental impact.

According to Canoe Wales information on access to waterways is one of the main limiting factors to greater paddlesport participation, limited often due to lack of clarity over legal rights on waterways.

This is a complex issue which the Welsh Government propose to resolve through future legislative reform.

c. Current and Emerging Legislation, Plans and Policies

The ROWIP must take account of the numerous other policy areas and legislative provisions with complementary themes and objectives. Policies and Legislation around Transport, Health, Wellbeing and Conservation, to name only a few, should be taken account of and the revised ROWIP should ultimately work alongside them.

The Policies and Actions contained in the revised ROWIP both compliment and contribute towards the aims and objectives of a number of pieces of both Welsh and UK legislation.

Current and emerging legislation, plans and policies that have been taken account of in the development of the new ROWIP are detailed in appendix 8.



Byway Open to All Traffic, Llanybydder

d. Evaluation of Completeness – Record of Limitations

Welsh Government guidance for the ROWIP review requests that an evaluation is undertaken which assesses the record of limitations and authorised structures on the network and the completeness of that record. This assessment should include the processes in place for their authorisation and is relevant in the Councils existing and ongoing policy of least restrictive access.

In this context a limitation generally refers to a stile or gate on the network which effectively limits the rights of the public. Limitations should be recorded, 'if it is not recorded, the limitation does not exist' (Ridall & Trevelyan 2007) and on that basis should be considered an unauthorised obstruction.

The purpose of the evaluation is to address 3 key functions;

- To inform the public of the local arrangements for the regulation of limitations;
- To provide a picture of current practice across Wales; and
- To provide an opportunity for authorities to consider their procedures and, if necessary, address any issues identified.

The Definitive Statement of Public Rights of Way for Carmarthenshire provides partial information in respect of limitations on the County's Public Rights of Way network.

The current Definitive Statement for Carmarthenshire prepared under the provisions of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) includes limitations recorded by the Parish Councils and submitted to the Local Authority as part of the original parish survey. The quality of information and level of detail submitted by the Parish Councils during the surveys varied enormously and not all of the limitations and authorised structures recorded were included in the final Definitive Statement. This means that there is some disparity between the recorded limitations held on the Definitive Statement and the situation on the ground, but the information recorded provided a good basis for our record of limitations.

Additional information in respect of limitations has been added to the Definitive Statement largely through the Public Path Order and Modification Order processes which have been ongoing since the first publication of Carmarthenshire's first consolidated Definitive Map and Statement. This is an ongoing process which increases the number of accurately recorded limitations contained in Carmarthenshire's Statement on a continuous basis, but the document is still far from a complete record.

Carmarthenshire's more complete record of limitations is the data held on the CAMS digital mapping system. Information in respect of structures on the network is regularly inputted and updated and the CAMS system is used as a day to day management tool. Information provided to the public in respect of limitations is often taken from CAMS and, where survey data is sufficiently detailed, can provide a complete picture of the limitations present on the network.

Authorisation of structures/limitations outside of the legal order process is carried out under section 147 of the Highways Act 1980. Landowners and/or managers must make an application to the local Authority to gain permission to erect a new limitation on the network.

The authorisation of structures through this process are not reflected in the Definitive Statement but are held as a permanent record on the individual path file and recorded on the CAMS system.



Llangathen Church

e. Assessment Summary

Taking into account the findings of the assessments that were completed for the purposes of informing the new Carmarthenshire ROWIP, the aims, policies and table of actions contained in section 11 have been developed.

Assessing the delivery of the previous ROWIP gave us our initial findings in terms of what can be achieved during the term of a ten-year plan. The review highlighted many valuable indicators to consider when determining the actions and policies for the new ROWIP such as what is realistic in terms of scope, how the availability of funding can affect delivery and how actions should be written in such a way that they may be quantified. The 2007 table of actions and policies was also reviewed with the LAF as a separate exercise which gave a good indication of what had been of value to PROW users and therefore should rollover into the new plan and what new actions and policies should be added to meet likely future needs.

Current and likely future needs were partly assessed by a public consultation exercise. Unfortunately, it delivered little in the way of robust data due to low participation in the varied exercises. This conveyed a very narrow perspective on what is valued in terms of public access opportunities and what might be needed in the future. The data could be considered supportive of the actions contained in the new ROWIP, but it did little to provide a basis for developing those actions. Data obtained from published sources and professional organisations such as WORS and Canoe Wales gleaned more robust and comprehensive data on current public use of the network and their likely future needs, which has been used to develop the table of actions and agree our aims and policies going forward.

An assessment of Legislation and Policy has revealed the significant level of crossover and commonality between the ROWIP aims and policies and the various Acts, plans and policies currently published or in draft. Common themes such as well-being, sustainable travel, health and conservation appear alongside collaborative working and shared resources. This assessment illustrates the importance of the aims, policies and actions published in the new ROWIP aligning with the requirements of other departments, the Authority as a whole and outside organisations as well as being compliant with the provisions of relevant legislation. The agreed ROWIP policies as well as the numerous partnerships identified in the table of actions should ensure that this is the case.

The evaluation of completeness of Carmarthenshire's record of limitations has identified a notable weakness in the formal recording of limitations and lawful structures on the network. Given the recognised understanding that in the event a structure is not recorded it should not exist on the network, Local Authorities seemingly need to work towards comprehensive record of limitations and structures to effectively assert and protect the public in their enjoyment of the public rights of way network. There is both a policy and an action contained in section 11 that will help improve the process of recording limitations and enforce in cases of unlawful structures.

As already stated earlier in the plan, some of the actions and policies detailed in this plan are aspirational. They have the potential to deliver improvements to public access in Carmarthenshire subject to securing appropriate funding throughout the 10-year term.

11. AIMS, POLICIES & ACTION PLAN

Some of the Action Plan and Policies listed in this section are aspirational. They outline the activities and initiatives identified as valuable to Public Rights of Way and Access and that will be introduced and implemented if the relevant funding can be secured.

In reviewing the Rights of Way network there has been an opportunity to bring together actions and policies specifically concerned with the PRow network, with associated, wider access opportunities. These are included below.

Analysis of the work to date has drawn out a series of themes and aims which form the basis for the ROWIP.

A) AIMS

- Aim 1:** Ensure that the Rights of Way network is easy to use and enjoyable.
- A. Rights of Way Improvement
 - B. Rights of Way Maintenance
 - C. Rights of Way Enforcement
 - D. Access for All
- Aim 2:** Provide a reliable, accurate, up to date and widely available digital Definitive Map & Statement.
- A. Maintain progress in updating the Definitive Map
 - B. Produce a digital Definitive Map
 - C. Pursue Lost Ways claims
- Aim 3:** Ensure the opportunities for countryside access are easy to use and enjoyable.
- A. Country Parks
 - B. Open Country/Open Access Land
 - C. Picnic Areas & Nature Reserves
 - D. Active Travel Routes
 - E. Coast and Forestry
- Aim 4:** Continue to work in partnership with all relevant, interested parties to achieve improved facilities for Countryside Access.
- A. Promote Partnerships
 - B. Volunteers
- Aim 5:** Promotion – maintain and improve the range and quality of public information on access and PRow, as well as make it more widely available in appropriate formats.
- A. General
 - B. Publicity Material

B) POLICIES

POLICY 1	Waymarking along a route will be integral to any Rights of Way improvement scheme, together with priority waymarking on routes identified as difficult to follow by users.
POLICY 2:	<p>Develop prioritised improvement programmes by adopting the appropriate scoring system. Scoring systems will guarantee consistency in prioritisation and should take into account the following criteria as a minimum requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Statutory Duties b. Health and Safety concerns c. Consideration of Promoted Routes d. Under provisioned user groups e. Funding Deadlines f. Local Member & Community Council Support g. LAF Support h. High levels of public support i. Consideration of wider County Council objectives
POLICY 3:	There will be a presumption to leave Rights of Way surfaces in their permeable / natural state other than those selected as priority routes for people with limited mobility or where ground conditions make it essential for reasonable access.
POLICY 4:	<p>The Council will work with landowners and land managers to improve access for all by adopting a “least restrictive option” for all amendments to the network and a pro-active approach on improvement to selected routes. This will comprise the order of a gap, gate, then stile, subject to the essential needs for stock management and the liabilities of the landowner for the structures.</p> <p>Managing access will aim to accommodate the management needs of landowners as far as possible whilst maximising accessibility for all, including mobility/visually impaired.</p>

POLICY 5:	<p>Where applications are made for new furniture, there will be a presumption that structures will be kept to a minimum. Permitted structures will comply with Policy 4 above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures which are authorised will provide the least restrictive option for users unless there are over-whelming stock management reasons for a less accessible option to be permitted. • On footpaths there will be a presumption in favour of the use of gates. • On bridleways there will be a presumption in favour of bridle gates fitted with bridle latches.
POLICY 6:	<p>Produce an Equestrian Strategy designed to promote and develop an accessible network for equestrian use.</p>
POLICY 7:	<p>Develop prioritised annual maintenance programmes by adopting the appropriate scoring system. Scoring systems will guarantee consistency in prioritisation and should take into account the following criteria as a minimum requirement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Statutory Duties b. Health and Safety concerns c. Consideration of Promoted Routes d. Under provisioned user groups e. Funding Deadlines f. Local Member & Community Council Support g. LAF Support h. High levels of public support i. Consideration of wider County Council objectives
POLICY 8:	<p>Routes which carry both public and private rights of access - CCC will undertake maintenance of Public Rights of Way according to the demand and needs of the public in accordance with the prioritised matrix.</p> <p>Private rights and/or easements which may exist in conjunction with a Public Right of Way will not be a maintenance consideration.</p>
POLICY 9:	<p>CCC will consider applications from third parties to change the surface of a Right of Way subject to a compatible approach, future maintenance commitments and a review of its impact on other users.</p>

POLICY 10:	CCC will work constructively with Landowners to resolve Public Rights of Way disputes / issues before resulting to legal recourse.
POLICY 11:	Keep CAMS up to date with all enforcement matters reported/surveyed (e.g. obstruction [natural/manmade], missing signs/misleading signs, dangerous livestock/landowners etc.) to be dealt with in line with the Enforcement Protocol.
POLICY 12:	Prosecution will be considered on repeat offences, where the authority is prevented from taking direct action on a Right of Way or where a landowner/occupier fails to apply for a diversion to remedy a particular obstruction.
POLICY 13:	Recover from applicants for temporary closures the full cost of advertising and any other associated costs to the Council.
POLICY 14:	Diversion orders will only be considered by the Council where it is shown to be the most cost effective and practical means of resolving historic / long standing problems on a Public Right of Way. Diverted routes are to be clearly way marked prior to Order coming into force and the cost of Orders to be covered by the landowner if they are the inherent cause.
POLICY 15:	Retain, review and enhance (wherever possible and in agreement with landowners) suitable opportunities, as identified by user groups, for country-side access for those with limited mobility and other impairments.
POLICY 16:	Use approved scoring matrix to define Public Path Order priorities which give consideration to such criteria as H&S, reduced maintenance burden, threat from development, benefit to network, political support and wider Council strategies/policies.

POLICY 17:	Use approved scoring matrix to define Definitive Map Modification Order priorities which give consideration to such criteria as age of application, quality/validity of application, political support, and threat from development and value to network.
POLICY 18:	Applicants will be required to pay for the costs of diversions/extinguishments together with the cost of works required to open the new route.
POLICY 19:	Applications for Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) Orders should be received, considered and ideally a resolution to make the Order reached before construction commences. TCPA Diversions will only be permitted where it can be proven that a PRow must be diverted to enable the development to be carried out and where an acceptable and comparable alternative route will be provided as far as is possible.
POLICY 20:	Unauthorized construction activity that obstructs a Right of Way will be considered as an obstruction and dealt with under the enforcement policy/protocol.
POLICY 21:	Use of permissive routes will be limited and only progressed where there are substantial short-term benefits involving minimal expenditure.
POLICY 22:	Work closely with other divisions within both the Highways and Transportation service and the Leisure service and use joined up working and collaborative planning to better enforce, fund, improve and promote the PRow network.
POLICY 23:	Continue to promote and encourage responsible use of the countryside and respect for those that live and work in the countryside.
POLICY 24:	Actively encourage participation in countryside access from all sections of society using all widely accessible forms of promotion to maximise reach.

C. ACTION PLAN

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (incl. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 1: ENSURE THAT THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK IS EASY TO USE AND ENJOYABLE					
A. RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT					
ACTION 1A: To increase the proportion of PROW that are open, easy to use and well signed by reopening and improving a minimum of 100km p.a (4.6% of network)	High	£150k	No ROWIP funding lost	2022	CCC
ACTION 1B: To increase the proportion of PROW that are open, easy to use and well signed by reopening and improving a minimum of 200km p. a	Low	£300k	No	2029	CCC
ACTION 2: Seek to maintain 2017 Countryside Access budget allocation plus inflation over the 10-year period of this Strategy.	High	£50K	Yes	2029	CCC

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
<p>ACTION 3: Ensure that the Wales Coastal Path is maintained to highest possible standard in conjunction with Powys and Ceredigion utilising the Coast Path Officer jointly appointed for the role and utilising WG funding for the purpose. Look to improve appropriate sections to provide access for all.</p>	High	£50k	Yes	2022	CCC WG NRW Powys CC Ceredigion CC
<p>ACTION 4a: Bridleways, Byways & Green Roads (U/C roads) – work with Byway User Group, BHS and other user groups to improve selected highways, byways, bridleways and other suitable access land for equestrian users.</p>	High	£32k	No - £16k awarded for works to Byways and UCR's. No specific Bridleway funding.	2022	CCC BHS User Groups
<p>ACTION 4b: Explore opportunities to develop regional Equestrian Trails and additional equestrian routes within Carmarthenshire as more money is made available.</p>	Med	£15k	No	2025	CCC BHS User Groups
<p>ACTION 5: Rights of Way that could be used to gain recreational access to waterways for canoes and similar waterborne craft should maintained to allow for this purpose.</p>					

AIM 1: ENSURE THAT THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK IS EASY TO USE AND ENJOYABLE

B. RIGHTS OF WAY MAINTENANCE

<p>ACTION 6: Improve performance on signposting to increase use of rights of way "Easy to Use"</p>	High	£12.5k	Yes	2022	CCC User Groups
<p>ACTION 7: Annual Community Maintenance will be prioritised by the Countryside Access team. Town/Community Councils will be approached by the Countryside Access unit requesting that they to exercise their powers of PRoW maintenance within their council area.</p>	High	>£50k	No Community Council assistance will increase achievability of this action.	2021	CCC Town & Community Councils Local Access Forum User Groups
<p>ACTION 8: Seek additional maintenance funding to enable a long term, sustainable, high quality access network, in conjunction with neighbouring Welsh authorities.</p>	High	£50k	N/A	2022	CCC, WG PCC, BBNP SCC, NPT, CCC

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
<p>ACTION 9: To ensure that all existing promoted Strategic Trails and County Walks are open, available, well maintained, signed and waymarked. Subject all walks and trails to annual review taking account of quality, suitability, popularity and resources available.</p>	High	£10k - £50k	Yes	2022	CCC User Groups
<p>ACTION 10: In conjunction with the Carmarthenshire Byways User Group and other relevant user groups, work to ensure that all Byways & U/C Highways where vehicular rights have been permanently restricted continue to be maintained and are kept open and available for remaining lawful users within resources available.</p>	Med	£10k - £50k	Yes – where possible	2025	CCC BHS
<p>ACTION 11: Continue to work towards a target of 100% open and easy to use network of bridleways in the County.</p>	High	£10k	Yes	2023	CCC BHS User Groups

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
ACTION 12: Clearance and improvement of suitable, selected byways/"green roads" in consultation with user groups subject to ongoing funding.	Med	£16k	Yes	2021	CCC User Groups
AIM 1: ENSURE THAT THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK IS EASY TO USE AND ENJOYABLE					
C. RIGHTS OF WAY ENFORCEMENT					
ACTION 13: Define an Enforcement Protocol for policies/procedures to assert and protect the rights of the public where discussion, negotiation, goodwill and cooperation have failed by 2020.	High	£18k	Yes	2021	CCC
ACTION 14: Use approved scoring matrix to define enforcement priorities such as Health & Safety considerations, to ensure issues are dealt with fairly and in a timely manner in accordance with agreed criteria.	Med	£4k	Yes	2021	CCC

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 1: ENSURE THAT THE RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK IS EASY TO USE AND ENJOYABLE					
D. ACCESS FOR ALL					
ACTION 15: Adopt the policy of Least Restrictive Access and follow the principles of "By All Reasonable Means" using appropriate advice and guidance to improve the accessibility of all countryside access schemes.	High	£20k	Yes	2029	CCC Partners
ACTION 16: Engage with established relevant advisory groups such as the Carmarthenshire Disability Coalition on opportunities to upgrade the network for people with disabilities and less able users. Also, take active steps to identify and appoint a LAF member to represent the interests and needs of disabled, elderly and less abled users.	Med	£2k	Yes	2024	CCC Local Access Forum
ACTION 17: Develop an Equestrian Policy in line with Policy 6 to promote and develop an accessible network for equestrian use	High	£6k	Yes	2022	CCC, BHS Equestrian User Groups & Businesses

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 2: PROVIDE A RELIABLE, ACCURATE, UP TO DATE AND WIDELY AVAILABLE DEFINITIVE MAP & STATEMENT A. MAINTAIN PROGRESS IN UPDATING THE DEFINITIVE MAP					
ACTION 18A: Improve 2007-2017 performance by processing total 40 orders p.a. to Order making stage (to include both Public Path Orders [diversions, creations, extinguishments] & Modification Orders [claims, route anomalies, deletions])	High	£30k	Yes	2023	CCC
ACTION 18B: Improve annual Order making performance to 45-50 Orders pa with those Orders being predominantly outstanding DMMO's.	Med	> £50k	No	2021	CCC
ACTION 19: Carry out a review of the appropriate costs to be charged for Orders. Initial review to be completed Nov 2017 with charges to be reviewed every year thereon.	Med	£2k	Yes	2029	CCC

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 2: PROVIDE A RELIABLE, ACCURATE, UP TO DATE AND WIDELY AVAILABLE DEFINITIVE MAP & STATEMENT					
B. PRODUCE A DIGITAL DEFINITIVE MAP					
Action 20: Continue to work towards 100% audit of digital map of PRoW (CAMS) through ongoing continuous review of digital PRoW layer.	Med	£15k	Yes	2024	CCC
AIM 2: PROVIDE A RELIABLE, ACCURATE, UP TO DATE AND WIDELY AVAILABLE DEFINITIVE MAP & STATEMENT					
C. LOST WAYS					
Action 21: Consider evidence received for Modification Orders to add unregistered historic Rights of Way to the Definitive Map and Statement as a matter of priority.	High	£10k	Yes	2026	CCC
AIM 3: ENSURE THAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OTHER COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS ARE EASY TO USE AND ENJOYABLE					
A. COUNTRYSIDE PARKS					
Action 22: CCC will continue to promote the Council's Country Parks as facilities for the public to access	High	£2k	Yes	2029	CCC NRW

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 3: ENSURE THAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OTHER COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS ARE EASY TO USE AND ENJOYABLE					
B. OPEN COUNTRY					
Action 23: To ensure all maintained or improved points of public access to blocks of access land are signed appropriately with the national access symbols.	Low	£1k	Yes	2029	CCC, NRW Local Access Forum User Groups
AIM 3: ENSURE THAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OTHER COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS ARE EASY TO USE AND ENJOYABLE					
C. PICNIC AREAS & NATURE RESERVES					
Action 24: Maintain existing picnic sites and nature reserves remaining under the care of the local authority / countryside access care team and ensure that robust maintenance arrangements are put in place to ensure all sites remain in good order.	Med	£15k	Yes	2024	CCC Partners

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 3: ENSURE THAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OTHER COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS ARE EASY TO USE AND ENJOYABLE					
D. ACTIVE TRAVEL					
ACTION 25: Assist the Transport Strategy & Infrastructure team in developing and maintaining cycleways in accordance with Carmarthenshire Cycle Strategy and the Active Travel Act.	Med	£100k	Yes	2021/2024	CCC, WG Sustrans User Groups Landowners
ACTION 26: Provide regular advice the Transport Strategy and Infrastructure team in schemes being developed under Active Travel and/or the Walking and Cycling Strategy.	Med	£1.5k	Yes	2024	CCC WG Sustrans User Groups

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 3: ENSURE THAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OTHER COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS ARE EASY TO USE AND ENJOYABLE E. COAST AND FORESTRY					
ACTION 27: Work with partner organisations and relevant stakeholders to maximise access to coast and forestry for as many user groups as possible, making efforts to improve access to all those underrepresented in other areas of the access network.	High	£2k	Yes	2024	CCC, NRW Private Forestry Managers The Crown Estate Private
ACTION 28: Incorporate in publicity which areas of open access forestry and coastline are available to which user groups.	Med	£1k	Yes	2022	CCC NRW

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 4: WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ALL RELEVANT INTERESTED PARTIES TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED FACILITIES FOR COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS					
A. PROMOTE PARTNERSHIPS					
ACTION 29: Continue to carry out surveys of the access network on a community by community basis in conjunction with local councils and volunteer groups.	Med	£30k	Yes	2024	CCC Town & Community Councils Local Ramblers Community Service
ACTION 30: Continue to promote partnerships with community councils, landowners/occupiers and other public and private organisations, to maximise resources available for improved countryside access.	High	£5k	Yes	2022	CCC, LAF T & C Councils NRW National Trust
ACTION 31: Secure s.106 funding for improvements to Rights of Way and for the development of wider access opportunities for all, to meet the needs generated by new development.	High	£2k	Yes	2024	CCC Developers

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
<p>ACTION 32: Continue to work in conjunction with agri-environment schemes to achieve long term improvements and carry out enforcement on the access network.</p>	Med	£10k	Yes	2024	CCC NRW WG
<p>ACTION 33: Continue to work jointly to promote a more sustainable use of the PRoW network through links with public transport providers e.g. development of train and/or bus walks.</p>	Med	£4k	Yes	2026	CCC Transport Providers
<p>ACTION 34: Continue to liaise with BHS and other horse-riding groups to improve equine provision, maintaining a working knowledge of the NRW-BHS Concordat and working jointly with off road driving organisations such as the TRF and Tread Lightly to identify off road driving opportunities in the County.</p>	High	£4k	Yes	2021	CCC BHS TRF Green Lane Association Treadlightly

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 4: WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED FACILITIES FOR COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS					
B. VOLUNTEERS					
ACTION 35: Maximise use of local organised voluntary groups and volunteers for the preparation for and provision of improvement and maintenance programmes on the PRoW network.	High	Up to £50k	Yes	2021	CCC, NRW User Groups Ramblers Keep Wales Tidy Pride in Your Patch
AIM 5 – PROMOTION – MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE RANGE AND QUALITY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION, WIDELY AVAILABLE IN APPROPRIATE FORMATS					
A. GENERAL					
ACTION 36: Work with relevant departments and agencies to improve opportunities for countryside access for people living in areas of deprivation.	Medium	£5k	Yes	2024	CCC Partners

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
AIM 5 – PROMOTION – MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE RANGE AND QUALITY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION, WIDELY AVAILABLE IN APPROPRIATE FORMATS					
B. PUBLICITY MATERIAL					
ACTION 37: Provide up to date promotional material for promoted Rights of Way.	High	£3k	Yes	2021	CCC
ACTION 38: Alongside NRW guidebooks and online promotion of the WCP, ensure the information on the CCC website for the Carmarthenshire section of the WCP is up to date and accurate.	High	£2k	Yes	2021	CCC NRW
ACTION 39: Ensure that all promotional material relating to current County Walks are kept up to date by ongoing review.	High	£5k	Yes	2021	CCC

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per annum	Within available resources (inc. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
<p>ACTION 40: Consider creating new County Walks or reintroducing previously promoted walks where a need is identified by local people or user groups and when sufficient resource to create, improve, maintain and promote additional routes is available. In doing so consider the availability of public transport connections.</p>	Low	£20k	No	2029	CCC
<p>ACTION 41: Further improve the County Council website by providing information on countryside access opportunities and for all users, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Improved general information for public and landowners. b. Application packs for DMMO's (claims) and PPO's (diversions, extinguishments etc.) c. Online complaints forms d. Online register of DMMO & PPO applications and s31(6) deposits. e. Operational status of PRoW network <p>Also, work to improve information relating to the Carmarthenshire LAF by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adding more general information b. Publication of meeting minutes c. Providing updates of meetings and venues 	Med	£8k	No	2025	CCC Local Access Forum

Actions	Priority H/ M/ L	Estimated Cost per Annum	Within available resources (incl. grants)	Target / Date	Lead Body / Partners
<p>ACTION 42: Supply regular information regarding improved horse riding, equestrian and tourism opportunities in the County to local BHS representative, Carmarthenshire Riders and other similar groups to be included in their promotional materials. Encourage wide circulation of promotional materials.</p>	High	£2k	Yes	2022	CCC
<p>ACTION 43: Provide information regarding opportunities for those with limited mobility and other impairments to groups such as the Carmarthenshire Disability Coalition to be included in their promotional materials. Encourage wide circulation of promotional materials.</p>	High	£2k	Yes	2022	CCC Partners
<p>ACTION 44: Promote the social, health and economic benefits of walking, riding, and cycling through events activity programmes within country parks, the CCC walking and cycling strategy and forthcoming CCC equestrian strategy.</p>	High	£4k	Yes	2025	CCC