

Shropshire Local Access Forum	<u>Item</u>	<u>Paper</u>
4 February 2010	7	B
10.00 am		

Unsurfaced County Highways/White roads – LAF update report

Members are aware that a first stage survey of unsurfaced unclassified roads took place in 2008-2009. Approximately 90km of routes were surveyed. Following on from the survey the Countryside Access team has been in discussion with Highways Managers over the future recreational management of some of these routes.

It has been agreed that out of the first survey in the future, approximately 67km of routes will be managed for recreational use within the Countryside Access team. Generally these routes offer significant recreational potential and make good links with the Rights of way network.

For clarification of management responsibilities and also for public information, the routes to be managed by the Countryside Access Team will be recorded as green lanes (GL's) on the Highways GIS dataset.

The maintenance requirements to restore access to these routes have been identified and a forward programme of work to carry out maintenance has been drawn up. The work is likely to take 4-5 years to complete. The routes will be maintained to the same standard as Byways open to all traffic in accordance with the policy within the Countryside Access Strategy 2008-2018. Reference to this work will also be incorporated into the Highways Management Plan and the safety Inspection Manual.

A budget of £35,000 has been identified within the Highways financial plan to support maintenance and future second phase survey work. This budget will be ongoing. In addition it has been agreed that materials in the form of road planings, when available, will be able to be provided to support any works required.

The remaining 23km surveyed were either insignificant in extent or a surfaced route for which the Highways managers will retain management of and where required alter the status of on the GIS dataset. For example some routes may be recorded as green lanes, but are in fact found to be surfaced following on from the survey.

A further 200 routes have been identified for a second phase survey. These routes include and are prioritised for survey as follows:

1. Other existing unclassified routes thought to be green lanes
2. Unrecorded routes identified on the 1932 Handover maps
3. Other white roads whose status needs clarification.

Subject to funding these routes will also be built into a programme for survey over the next 3 years. With regard to routes in section 1 and 2 the same management process outlined above will be followed and agreements over future recreational management obtained.

The survey of routes in section 3 will aid the investigation into these routes status. Where these are confirmed as being public rights of way the same process above will be applied. Any routes having no legal status but acknowledged as public highways will have their status confirmed by Highways.

Highways Records Working Group (HRWG) Update

The Group met for the first time in June 2009 to discuss issues relating to the List of Streets, highway extent records and the Definitive Map. The Group is currently made up of RoW and Highway Officers and Defra. The group last met in December.

The aim of the HRWG is fivefold;

1. To exist as a forum for discussion and the sharing of experience and ideas, in particular for those responsible for the List of Streets and for the Definitive Map and Statement .
2. To develop a written guide to help authorities in the process of researching the status and extent of a highway.
3. To identify issues around the current system (statute, regulation and guidance) for recording highways
4. To make constructive suggestions as to how the current system could be improved.
5. To engage central government in ways of improving the current system.

An issues list has been drawn up – attached and so far a draft questionnaire has been circulated to all Highway Authorities for information and the results are currently being analysed.