



**RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FUNDING PROGRAMME (RFP)  
2016-17**

**END OF YEAR OUTPUTS REPORT.**

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## **Executive Summary**

Local highway authorities in Wales are required to produce statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs) under Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way 2000.

They are a 10 year prioritised plan for the improvement of the local rights of way network for all users – walkers, cyclists, horse-riders, off road users as well as people with sight and mobility problems.

Welsh Government has made funds available for the implementation of these ROWIPs from 2008-2017 using a funding formula to all 22 Welsh local authorities and 2 National Park Authorities. The programme entitled “Right of Way Improvement Plan Funding Programme (RFP)” has been administered by Natural Resources Wales (and formerly the Countryside Council for Wales) for the entire funding period.

The funding has been used to carry out a wide and varied number of actions to improve the rights of way network in Wales and benefit all sectors of society.

All information gathered in this report has come directly from the local authorities.

The key points of this report are:

- Practical improvements on the ground remain the most funded action;
- Projects delivered intended to benefit more than one group of users;
- Specific projects have been delivered to encourage access for all.

## 1. BACKGROUND

Local highway authorities in Wales are required to produce statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs) under Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. They are intended to cover a 10 year period and provide a prioritised plan for the improvement of the local rights of way network for all users. These users are walkers, cyclists, horse-riders, off road users as well as people with sight and mobility problems.

The Welsh Government (WG) allocated £1.7 million annually in capital monies for the implementation of ROWIPs in 2008/9, 2009/10, 2010/11. In 2011/12 and 2012/13 the allocation was £1.4 million. In 2013/14 the funding was £1 million with the same amount being allocated in 2014/15 and 2015-16. In 2016-17 £1 million was again allocated bringing the total funding to date to £11.9million.

The Countryside Council for Wales was tasked with establishing the ROWIP Funding Programme (RFP) and administering and managing the funding to local authorities. This role was taken on by Natural Resources Wales on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2013.

This paper provides information collated directly from all 24 funded authorities<sup>1</sup> (All 22 local authorities, Brecon Beacons National Park and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authorities) about the work **delivered** in 2016-2017, the ninth year of the RFP. Similarly, financial and output information in this report relates to all 24 authorities receiving funding. Where appropriate 2014/15 and 2015/16 ROWIP data has been included for comparison.

During the 9 year funding period, there have been a number of conditions which local authorities have to adhere to. In 2015-2016 these were amended by Welsh Government in order to simplify and improve them. For the purposes of reporting, it should be noted that whilst there was no longer a requirement to carry out a specific project for what had been defined as 'low use groups: groups that make disproportionately low use of the countryside' authorities have reported on projects that have taken place, and these are included as part of the reporting below. For more details about the conditions for 2016-2017 please see Appendix 1.

## 2. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Key achievements of the funding in 2016-2017 are:

### a) **Practical improvements on the ground:**

76% of the funding was used to improve existing access on the ground. This follows the trend from previous years where local authorities are mostly utilising ROWIP funding for practical works. This work has contributed to increasing the proportion of the network that is easy to use. Again, works include improving path furniture such as bridges, gates, surface improvements e.g. improving path drainage, and work to remove or cut back vegetation.

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

Projects that had a "general benefit to all users" and projects that were "multi-benefit" (benefiting more than one user type) together accounted for 47% of the total value of projects and 36% of the total number of projects funded this year. This shows that RFP delivers actions for many different activities and ranges of ability. This year "multi-benefit included Low User

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<sup>1</sup> 23 ROWIPs cover the whole of Wales. Since 2009-2010, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority who have a joint ROWIP with Pembrokeshire County Council received funding direct from CCW and the report reported on work delivered separately from the Council.

Groups” was the category noted for the largest expenditure [however expenditure assigned to this category fell by 8.6% when compared to 2015/16 figures]. The nature of these projects is to be more specifically targeted to meeting people’s needs.

The range of beneficiaries catered for by these various projects is wide: for example,

- 16% of multi-benefit projects catered for the group of users “walkers, cyclists and horse-riders [down from 34% in 2015/16]”;
- 8% of multi benefit projects catered for ‘low use’ groups including disabled users, people with mobility problems, people with pushchairs and Community First areas;
- Walkers accounted for 38 % of actions of the actions carried out.

The rest of these projects benefited a whole range of users in different combinations e.g. “People with mobility problems and equestrians”, or “disabled, mobility issues and blind”. There were many different combinations of users.

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

As mentioned above, whilst there was no requirement to deliver a specific project for ‘low use groups’ rather, the access authorities should comply with the principles of least restrictive access and also aim to comply, wherever possible, with the statutory guidance issued by Welsh Government under Section 69 of the CROW Act 2000 and with NRW’s associated guidance ‘By All Reasonable Means’. Even so, authorities reported 23 specific actions aimed at making access easier for groups that make disproportionately low use of the countryside. The funding for these specific projects totalled £128,964.00

**d) Status of routes and improved infrastructure.**

A further 787km of the rights of way network is now easier to use following improvements which the RFP and other funding sources contributed in 2016-17.

The majority of the routes improved in 2016-2017 were either footpaths or bridleways but all types of route have seen some improvement.

Information about the infrastructure that was installed and removed indicates that the least restrictive access condition is being implemented to make the network become increasingly accessible, year on year.

### **3. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW**

The Land, Nature and Forestry Division of WG, were, once again, successful in securing a further year’s funding of the RFP in 2016-2017 with a budget of £1million. NRW worked to manage the budget to ensure as much spend within the project as possible and a total spend of **£999,457** (99.95% budget spend) was achieved.

The WG funding was allocated on the basis of an agreed funding formula, which comprised a baseline amount of £25,000 for each authority with the additional funding being allocated on a formula basis. Within each authority the formula was calculated on the basis of a weighting of 65% on the length of PRoW (including rights of way in the coastal zone), 25% on usual population (updated using Census 2011 data) and 10% on the area of access land.

This report provides information about the £1million provided by WG for the RFP. In addition, local

authorities invested their own funding and accessed other sources of funding. Table 1 below shows the total amount of money spent on ROWIP actions over and above the WG funding, and compares these figures with 2015/16 expenditure.

**Table 1: Overall funding for RFP actions in 2016-2017**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Funding Amount (£) 2016/17</b>	<b>Funding Amount (£) 2015/16</b>	<b>Funding Amount (£) 2014/15</b>
<b>WG funding</b>	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
<b>LA spend</b>	89,502	97,248	150,366
<b>Other sources of funding*</b>	£31,900	52,538	173,134
<b>Total RFP (£)</b>	<b>£1,121,402</b>	<b>£1,149,786</b>	<b>£1,323,500</b>

### **LA Spend**

This refers to the amount of money that the authorities have contributed from their own funds over and above their RFP allocation for 2016-17 (but excluding staff costs).

#### **\*Other sources of funding:**

Authorities were also asked to report on other sources of funding which they were able to draw on in addition to the two main sources for ROWIP actions.

Other sources of funding amounted to £31,900 and included:

- Own Revenue budget;
- Walking of Health
- CADW
- Cwmni Nod Glas
- Caeathro Playing Fields Association

Some caution should be exercised in comparison with previous years (due to the inclusion by some authorities of their own funding under the 'Other Sources of Funding' category) LA spend on projects reported under the RFP has reduced since 2014/15 (£150,366) and in 2015-16 it has reduced again to £89,502

It is clear that 'other sources of funding' has decreased significantly since 2012/13 (then £601,437), An overall reduction in contributions from elsewhere reflects the current economic climate and overall reduction in budgets and staff in local authorities.

### **Management of Funding:**

As in previous years, the authorities had to ensure that 40% of funding was claimed by the second claim deadline (December 2016) to assist budget management and help us ensure that all the money is utilised in year. All but two authorities met this requirement [Denbighshire 39.1% & Rhondda Cynon Taff 38.6%]. However 58% of the whole RFP budget was claimed by December 2016, significantly above the 40% condition.

Table 2 below shows the funding offers for 2016-2017. All authorities managed their budgets well so that there was no need for reallocation of funding between authorities.

**Table 2: Funding offers and total amount claimed 2016-2017**

Authority	Funding Offer (£)	Funding Amendments	Total claimed (£)
Anglesey	33,585	0	33,585
Blaenau Gwent	26,786	0	26,786
Brecon Beacons	49,918	0	49,918
Bridgend	32,965	0	32,965
Caerphilly	37,480	0	37,480
Cardiff	37,103	0	37,103
Carmarthenshire	54,607	0	54,607
Ceredigion	53,521	0	53,505
Conwy	47,410	0	47,410
Denbighshire	40,022	0	40,022
Flintshire	37,699	0	37,699
Gwynedd	76,594	0	76,594
Merthyr Tydfil	23,931	0	23,931
Monmouthshire	41,304	0	41,304
Neath Port Talbot	35,056	0	35,056
Newport	29,682	0	29,682
Pembrokeshire County Council	23,864	0	23,864
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority	23,864	0	23,864
Powys	122,668	0	122,668
Rhondda Cynon Taff	39,519	0	39,519
Swansea	37,286	0	37,284
Torfaen	28,334	0	27,968
Vale of Glamorgan	31,136	0	31,136
Wrexham	35,666	0	35,508
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,000,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>£999,458</b>

#### 4. ACTIONS DELIVERED: TYPES OF WORK CARRIED OUT

##### OVERVIEW

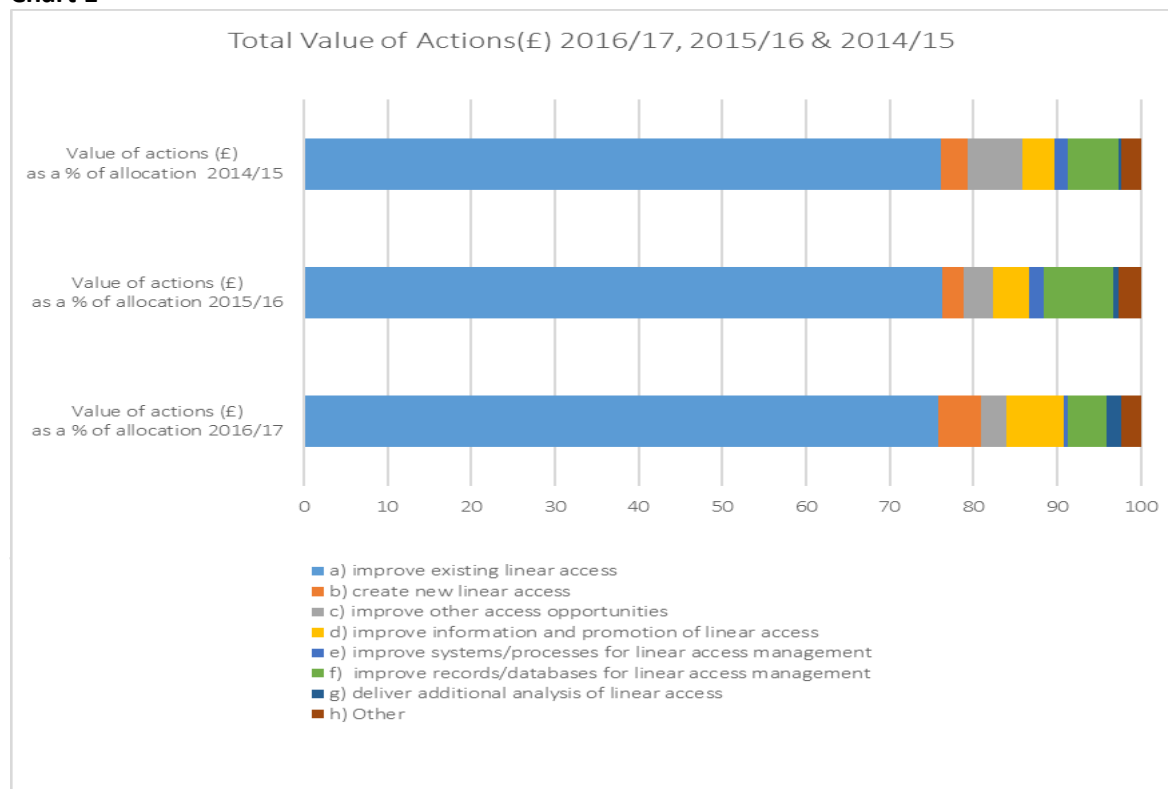
The range of work that can be undertaken to implement ROWIPs is broad. Authorities grouped their actions according to agreed 'Programme Action Types'. Analysis of the number and value of these different action groups provides information about the type of work authorities carried out.

Actions were grouped as follows:

- a) **Improve existing linear access:** physical improvements to routes e.g. improving the surface of paths, installing or repairing stiles, gates and other path furniture.
- b) **Create new linear access:** physical creation of new routes.
- c) **Improve other access opportunities:** for example, improvements to access to access land/other natural green space.
- d) **Improve information and promotion about linear access:** for example signage and way-marking, on site (e.g. interpretation panels), off site (e.g. leaflets), website, events, and marketing.
- e) **Improve systems/processes for linear access management:** for example systems for maintenance, enforcement, monitoring, reporting.
- f) **Improve records/databases for linear access management:** for example bringing the definitive map up to date, digitising the definitive map, or developing/improving electronic PROW management system.
- g) **Deliver additional analysis of linear access:** for example additional survey/analysis of access provision or additional analysis of access use.
- h) **Other action type:** where none of the above action types were applicable.

**Chart 1** and **Table 3** below show the breakdown of the value actions (£) that were delivered in 2016/17 and compares to 2015-16, and 2014-15 values. A detailed breakdown of who benefited from these actions is provided further on in the report.

**Chart 1**



Programme Action Type	Number of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value of actions (£) as a % of allocation 2016/17	Number of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value of actions (£) as a % of allocation 2015/16	Number of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value of actions (£) as a % of allocation 2014/15
a) improve existing linear access	135	756,883	75.7	127	762,183	76.24	132	760,505	76.06
b) create new linear access	12	52,321	5.2	12	26,492	2.65	11	31,975	3.20
c) improve other access opportunities	9	30,271	3.0	6	34,922	3.49	12	65,760	6.58
d) improve information and promotion of linear access	20	67,138	6.7	16	43,245	4.33	17	37,950	3.80
e) improve systems/processes for linear access management	3	5,984	0.6	4	16,920	1.69	3	16,098	1.61
f) improve records/databases for linear access management	13	46,508	4.7	8	83,151	8.32	7	60,711	6.07
g) deliver additional analysis of linear access	3	16,442	1.7	3	6,843	0.68	1	3,733	0.37
h) Other	6	23,912	2.4	9	26,008	2.60	5	23,182	2.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>£999,458</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>£999,764</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>£999,914</b>	<b>100</b>

In 2016-2017, 76% of the projects were for improving existing linear access. This follows the trend from previous years that the majority of the RFP allocation is for practical works on the ground. Where authorities select more than one Action Type, these are classed as h) 'Other' see page 13 for further details.

## OUTPUTS AND DETAIL

Considering each of these action types in turn, we can look in more detail at the characteristics of the work delivered. Tables 4 to 14 provide further breakdown of the above action types.

### Improving existing linear access and creating new linear access (actions types a and b).



£809,207.91 has been spent on improving existing linear access and the works completed are very similar to previous years such as:

- Carry out surface improvement works that include drainage works and surfacing;
- Access improvements to the footpath to include changing stiles for kissing gates and a replacement bridges;
- Creation of circular roots in the coastal zone associated with the Wales Coast Path;
- Removal of stiles and barriers impeding access for users by the removal in particular of stiles, along both promoted routes and routes of local significance;
- Self-closing gates to replace stiles, signage and way marking;
- Improving access to multi user routes allowing people with mobility issues to access routes more easily for example;
- Maintenance programme on promoted trails network in partnership with organisations.

There were 12 project that created new linear access, examples of these include:

- Creation of a new public footpath on the edge of Solva village [Pembrokeshire];
- The creation of a new footpath to provide a links as part of a new residential development in St Brides Minor [Bridgend];
- Opening up of newly diverted route in Neath Port Talbot, to include installation of two new bridges and installation of kissing gates.

Table 4 below shows the route lengths improved to meet the Wales benchmark indicator 'Easy to Use' standards<sup>2</sup>, and compares these with 2014/15 kilometres of improvements. Authorities were asked to report on the total length of route improved on the basis of links - the definition being that a PRoW link begins and ends where it meets:

- a junction with another PRoW;
- a metalled road; and
- a dead end.

This was in order to show the network length that was now 'easy to use' by the public as a result of improvements, and not just the length of route which had been physically worked on. This total length **should not** be solely attributed to works and funding under the RFP. Rather, RFP has contributed to this, together with other organisations and funding sources (primarily local authorities themselves).

**Table 4: Status and Length of Route which RFP has helped make 'Easy to Use' during 2016/17, 2015-2016 & 2014-2015 (including contributions from other sources of funding).**

	Km of network 'easy to use' 2016/17	Km of network 'easy to use' 2015/16	Km of network 'easy to use' 2014/15
Footpath	545.4	634	475
Cycle track	32.4	28	24
Bridleway	182.2	181	216
Restricted Byways	15.5	36	25
Byway Open to All Traffic	11.4	28	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>786.8 Km</b>	<b>907 Km</b>	<b>794 Km</b>

<sup>2</sup> Previously National Performance Indicator, the indicator itself is no longer collected by all authorities and the results are no longer publicly available.

Table 4 (above) shows that the footpaths are by far the most common type of route to be improved, which reflects the fact that the Welsh network is made up mainly of footpaths (79%)<sup>3</sup>. Analysis of this information shows that these improved routes are distributed across Wales.

Table 5 and 6 provide information about work on infrastructure under RFP. In line with previous years, more gates have been installed/replaced than stiles, and more stiles have been removed. This indicates that authorities are adhering to the condition to apply the least restrictive access approach; which enables as many people as possible to use the routes being improved.

Infrastructure installations are illustrated in Table 5.

**Table 5: Infrastructure installed new or replaced under RFP 2016-2017.**

New/Replacement Infrastructure	No of item 2016/17	No of item 2015/16	No of item 2014/15
Stiles	48	62	84
Gates	641	476	532
Bridges	39	59	101
Fingerposts	355	308	272
Waymark posts	199	346	294
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,282</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>1,283</b>

**Table 6: Infrastructure removed under RFP 2015-2016.**

Removed Infrastructure	No of item 2016/17	No of item 2015/16	No of item 2014/15
Stiles	168	96	97
Gates	11	16	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>128</b>

#### **Actions forming part of Regional Trail/linking to a National Trail or Wales Coast Path.**

Authorities were asked to state where action types a) and b) included work on a regional trail, or on links to a National Trail or the Wales Coast Path.

Of the £809,208 spent on linear access, the table below shows that 49% of this (£398,924) was used on routes that are in some way promoted. This highlights the importance which authorities place maintaining and enhancing their flagship routes.

**Table 7: Actions forming part of regional trail/linking to a National Trail or Wales Coast Path in 2016-2017**

Type of Trail	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Regional Trail	11	57,502	14	14	70,110	22	13	73,713	25

<sup>3</sup> CCW Policy Research Report No. 03/05 - Wales Rights of Way Condition Survey 2002

Wales Coast Path	11	63,819	16	7	27,147	8	10	70,789	24
National Trail	3	20,367	5	4	30,085	9	3	37,225	12
Other	15	257,236	64	30	198,393	61	22	116,698	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>£398,924</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>£325,735</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>£298,425</b>	<b>100</b>

Most 'other' projects were locally promoted and community trails in addition, examples of types of projects included under the 'other' category included:

- Improvements to Public Rights of Way that link the Welsh Coastal Path, Regional Trails and other Nominated Routes;
- Path forms part of the Community and Nature funded Darganfod Dyfi local promoted route.

**Action type c) improve other access opportunities.**

In addition to local rights of way, ROWIPs should contain information about other types of access in an authority area. The CCW Wales ROWIP Review<sup>4</sup> showed that 4% of all ROWIP Actions relate to access land designated under CROW and 6% to other types of access opportunities. These types of actions are noted under the RFP in category c) improve other access opportunities. Table 8 below shows what other types of access opportunities were improved in 2016-2017 to which 3% of the overall funding was allocated to improve other access, reflecting the emphasis placed on linear access in the ROWIPs themselves.

**Table 8: Types of Access improved under category c) improve other access opportunities 2016-2017**

Type of Access	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Natural Green Space	2	8,546	28	5	29,500	84	2	2,638	4
CRoW Access Land	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Other	6	21,724	72	1	5,422	16	9	63,122	96
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>£30,270</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>£34,922</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>£65,760</b>	<b>100</b>

Of the 6 'other' projects, examples included;

- Access to historical CADW site [Pembrokeshire County Council]
- Improving access to multi user routes allowing people with mobility issues to access routes more easily [Rhondda Cynon Taff]
- Development of volunteer groups including the purchasing tools and materials [Ceredigion & Caerphilly]

**Action type d) improving information and promotion about linear access.**

<sup>4</sup> CCW Policy Research Report No. 08/26. Evison, Taylor and Coleman. (2009) *Wales ROWIP Review*.

This action type ranked second (in terms of number of actions) and accounted for 6.7% of the overall monetary allocation this year. This action type has been consistently a popular use of the funding over the lifetime of the programme. The CCW Wales ROWIP Review showed that ‘promotion off site’ was the second most common intended action type after ‘management’. This is a type of action can be delivered at a relatively low cost and is also essential to encourage greater participation in outdoor recreation as promoting routes assures users that these routes are open and available. However, in 2016/17 there was a marked decline in funding utilised for offsite promotion.

The table below shows the breakdown of the types of information and promotion that were funded.

**Table 9: Action type d) improving information and promotion about linear access 2016-2017**

Type of Information	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Off Site	2	959	1	7	12,500	29	8	7,376	19
Signage & Waymarking	3	10,110	15	2	6,481	15	1	2,472	7
Events	3	3,604	5	2	7,147	17	1	3,485	9
On site	1	1,129	2	0	0	0	1	3,000	8
Website	2	5,000	7	1	5,408	13	0	0	0
Other Info and Promotion Initiatives	2	12,710	19	4	11,709	27	6	21,617	57
Marketing	4	21,439	32	0	0	0	0	0	0
Research	1	1,246	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	2	10,941	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>£67,138</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>£43,245</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>£37,950</b>	<b>100</b>

Events to design and promote the local rights of way network play an important role in trying to encourage participation in outdoor recreation. They provide a way to interact with new and existing users by talking and getting to know what users want and expect from their local rights of way network. Events also provide an ideal opportunity to promote what is currently out there to enjoy.

**Table 10: Action type e) improving systems/processes for linear access management 2016-2017**

Proper and informed management of linear access is crucial to having a well maintained rights of way network. The table below shows the types of work being delivered under RFP that relate to systems and processes for improved management.

**Table 10: Action type e) improving systems/processes for linear access management 2016-2017**

Type of Action	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Reporting	0	0	0	1	3,388	20	0	0	0
Monitoring	0	0	0	1	4,000	24	0	0	0
Maintenance	1	695	12	0	0	0	3	16,098	100
Enforcement	1	1,693	28	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	3,596	60	2	9,531	56	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>£5984</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>£16,920</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>£16,098</b>	<b>100%</b>

Actions include:

- Purchase of horse friendly barrier for a TRO Green Lane [Newport Borough Council];
- Maintenance of PRoW including waymarking [Rhondda Cynon Taff].

**Table 11: Action type f) improving records/databases for linear access management 2016-2017**

Type of Action	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Bringing the definitive map together	7	34,951	75	6	45,915	55	4	44,712	74
Developing / Improving electronic PRoW mgmt. system	1	5,482	12	0	0	0	1	1,425	2
Digitising the Definitive Map	5	6,075	13	1	13,256	16	1	10,579	17
Other	0	0	0	1	23,980	29	1	3,945	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>£46,508</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>£83,151</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>£60,661</b>	<b>100</b>

Work on the Definitive Map still featured in 2016-2017, with a consistent level of input in bringing the Definitive Map up to date during the 9 year funding period. This shows that this action type continues to underpin rights of way management and is an ongoing feature of ROWIPs.

10% of the funding allocated to improve definitive maps, records, and databases was used to maximise the use of CAMS electronic management as a digital GIS tool to maintain the definitive map.

**Table 12: Action type g) delivering additional analysis of linear access 2016-2017**

Type of analysis	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Additional survey/analysis of access provision	2	14,162	86	3	6,843	100	1	3,733	100
Other	1	2,280	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>£16,442</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>£6,843</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>£3,733</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority of funding assigned to this action was used to analyse the use of the ROW network by those that make low use of PRoW. An example of this approach included the organisation of a seminar to consider best practise [Monmouthshire Council].

**Table 13: Action type h) other 2016-2017**

	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Other	6	23,912	100	9	26,008	100	5	23,182	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>£23,912</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>£26,008</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>£23,182</b>	<b>100</b>

Actions identified as “Other” contained more than one type of action e.g. some projects had an element of action type a) improving linear access, as well as action type d) improve information and promotion of linear access. It was therefore difficult to pigeon hole that particular action within the existing criteria for action types.

Examples of these “Other” projects are:

- Processing of 10 DMMO Applications;
- Increasing Provision for walkers and cyclists as part of the realignment/reinstatement of RoW and following a request from the Community Council;
- Increasing Bridleway provision as part of the realignment/reinstatement of RoW;
- Updating digitised copy of Definitive Map taking in to account all Orders/Dedications confirmed/signed since 2004 to create new Working Copy of Definitive Map and provide base map for future updating Definitive Map;
- Works to improve the surface on part of Fp 23C Maesteg (including replacement steps) to encourage access to Llynfi Community Woodland Site;
- Undertake preparatory work for review of RoWIP (e.g. extensive route condition surveys, investigations in regard to existing provision of and future requirements for signage, structures and the accessibility of routes for hard to reach groups).

**Table 14: Actions which included a Biodiversity element 2016-2017**

There were a variety of projects that assisted public understanding, or conservation, of local biodiversity. Whilst for 2015-2016 there was no requirement for every authority to carry out a

specific project (rather a general requirement to adhere to conservation related duties) where authorities did report about such projects this has been included in analysis.

**Table 14: Actions which included a Biodiversity element 2016-2017**

Type of Biodiversity action	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Biodiversity Projects	22	110,247	100	32	165,154	100	32	£200,724	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>£110,247</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>£165,154</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>£200,724</b>	<b>100</b>

‘Biodiversity projects’ refers to actions that improve access and benefits nature conservation/biodiversity as well.

These actions have a public engagement element to them in that members of the public are learning about local biodiversity on the routes they use. This can be achieved in the form of interpretation boards at key points along a route, or at access points to a local nature reserve or leaflets about local flora and fauna given out at county fairs or in schools.

Some of these biodiversity actions are very similar to action type d) Improve information and promotion about linear access, where works delivered under this action type include interpretation panels, leaflets and events.

Some examples are: -

- Works to improve the surface on part of Fp 23C Maesteg (including replacement steps) to encourage access to Llynfi Community Woodland Site;
- Campaign development to increase user awareness and attitudes to responsible access and respecting each other and heritage and conservation sites subject to public access;
- Carrying out a programme of activities that promote and encourage use of the rights of way network and countryside in general. Activities will include further development of the interactive map, guided walks and biodiversity awareness raising activities.

## 5 WHO IS INTENDED TO BENEFIT FROM ACTIONS

Authorities were asked to show the intended beneficiary of each action.

**Table 15: below shows the main beneficiaries of the RFP – this includes all the actions funded by RFP and all the beneficiaries 2016-2017 (see also Chart 2 below)**

Beneficiaries	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Multi - benefit (including Low Use Groups)	62	414,011	41.4	70	498,733	50	68	478,116	48
Walkers	95	377,930	37.8	93	376,795	38	89	329,356	33
Disabled Users and people with Mobility Problems	17	112,277	11.2	10	79,699	8	10	69,520	7
Horse riders	3	6,454	0.6	5	22,667	2.3	2	7,465	0.7
General benefit to all users	11	54,308	5.4	5	15,890	2	8	52,786	5
Others	2	4,095	0.4	1	4,897	0.5	5	35,455	4
Walkers/ Landowners	1	1,129	0.1	1	1,084	0.1	0	0	0
Vehicular Users	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	1	2,472	0.2
Young People, Families, Walkers, disabled users, people with mobility problems	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	2	14,249	1
Other groups that make low use of countryside	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	3	10,495	1
All Users	10	29,254	2.9	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>£999,458</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>£999,765</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>£999,914</b>	<b>100</b>



In this year's programme, 5.4% of the actions were of "general benefit to all users" and 41.4% were "multi benefit" i.e. benefitted more than one group of users. Together, these projects accounted for 46.8% of the total value of funds in this year.

Here as in the Wales ROWIP Review (2009) and previous years, the largest single user group expected to benefit from actions are walkers which reflects the way in which footpaths make up the majority of the rights of way network in Wales. Also, it is not possible for other user groups to benefit specifically in the way that walkers do as improvements on bridleways and cycle routes will also benefit walkers and are therefore inherently 'multi-benefit'. Projects for walkers alone accounted for 38% of the RFP financial allocation and 47% of the overall number of actions.

One of the conditions throughout the first 7 years of the funding programme was that all local authorities had to include at least 1 action that benefited 'Low Use' groups defined as "groups that disproportionately make low use of the countryside", for example:

- disabled users;
- people with mobility problems;
- young people.

If an authority recorded an action as "Low Use" then it was an action specifically designed for the aforementioned groups of people.

On further inspection of the data, low use groups are also being represented in other actions not specifically aimed at low use groups.

Actions recorded as being "multi benefit" were actions where there was more than one group specifically intended to benefit as a result of the work, including those groups who are able to access the countryside more easily and frequently i.e. walkers and cyclists, as well as "low use" groups who are not able to access the countryside so easily.

Whereas projects that have a "general benefit to all users" tend to be focused around planning and improving management systems.

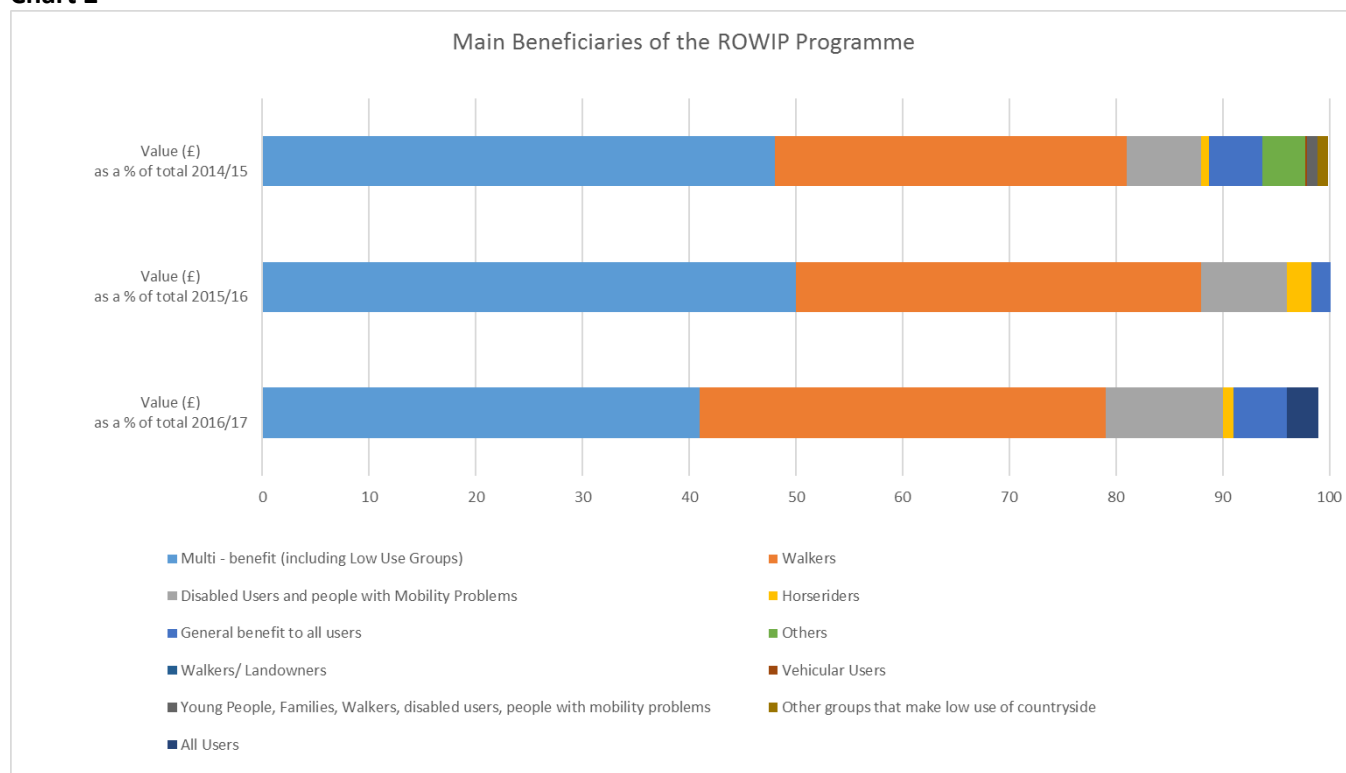
Table 15 above shows that 62 actions were "multi-benefit" i.e. benefiting more than one specific type of user. The breakdown of these actions is as follows:

- 5 actions included 'Low Use' groups and were recorded as benefitting: "Disabled Users, People with mobility problems; walkers, cyclists, people with mobility problems; and Disabled users, walkers, dog walkers, families with pushchairs";
- 57 actions were recorded as 'multi benefit' and aimed at combinations of more able bodied users such as 10 actions benefiting specifically "walkers, cyclists and horse riders".

Even though there are 10 actions specifically for "walkers, cyclists and horse riders", an analysis of all 201 actions show that walkers and cyclists are also represented in actions specifically targeted at low use groups as well as in combinations of different users. Also, any actions that benefit horse riders and cyclists will generally be multi benefit because improvements on bridleways and cycle routes will also benefit walkers.

11% of the overall financial allocation has been used for actions aimed at specifically benefitting people with mobility problems.

**Chart 2**



**6. FUNDING FOR GROUPS THAT MAKE DISPROPORTIONATELY LOW USE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE 2016 - 2017**

As stated above, there was no requirement for 2016/17 to deliver a specific project aimed at better meeting the needs of people with disabilities, ethnic minorities or other groups who make a disproportionately low use of the countryside. Where authorities have reported specific projects, these are included below.

**Table 16: Type of 'low use' group, number and value of actions**

Beneficiary	No of Actions 2016/17	Value of Actions (£) 2016/17	Value (£) as a % of total 2016/17	No of Actions 2015/16	Value of Actions (£) 2015/16	Value (£) as a % of total 2015/16	No of Actions 2014/15	Value of Actions (£) 2014/15	Value (£) as a % of total 2014/15
Multi Benefit	5	34,271	26.6	7	23,894	26	13	87,806	47
People with mobility problems	13	81,290	63	9	66,323	74	8	63,347	34
Disabled Users	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6,173	3
Disabled, mobility issues and blind	1	8,883	6.9	0	0	0	0	0	0

General benefit to all users	1	738	0.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
People with mobility problems and equestrians	1	2,500	1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Walkers	2	1,282	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Young People, Families	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	14,249	8
Other groups that make low use of the countryside	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	10,495	6
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6,090	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>£128,964</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>£90,217</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>£188,160</b>	<b>100</b>

Those who have benefited from the 5 multi-benefit actions included:

- Disabled users, people with mobility problems,
- Walkers, cyclists, people with mobility problems,
- Disabled users, walkers, dog walkers, families with pushchairs,
- Walkers, cyclists, horse riders, landowners,
- Walkers, cyclists, horse riders, less abled users.

**Table 17: Type of work and value of work delivered for 'low use' groups 2016-2017**

<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Value of Actions (£) 2016/17</b>	<b>Value of Actions (£) 2015/16</b>	<b>Value of Actions (£) 2014/15</b>
a) improve existing linear access	85,336	69,963	154,494
b) create new linear access	30,470	3,654	0
c) improve other access opportunities	4,275	16,600	32,855
g) deliver additional analysis of linear access	8,883	0	0
h) Other	0	0	811
<b>Total</b>	<b>£128,964</b>	<b>£90,217</b>	<b>£188,160</b>

Works delivered for 'low use' groups have been similar to previous years and have included:

- Surfacing and drainage on bridleway to extend easy access route in the Brecon Beacons
- Continue with improvement works to surface to enable footpath to be upgraded to

bridleway in Bridgend

- 2nd phase of a project involving design and consents for construction of route for cyclists, walkers and wheelchair users in Gwynedd
- Improving access to multi user routes allowing people with mobility issues to access routes more easily for example in Rhondda Cynon Taff

Works delivered during 2016-2017 have been wide ranging, yet again enabling many actions to be delivered against more than one action type. It is encouraging to see that local authorities are continuing to deliver works on the ground that “tick more than one box” and therefore getting the most out the Right of Way Funding Programme.

**END**

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## Appendix 1

1. NB in 2015-2016 WG amended some conditions in response to feedback from local authorities.

The specific conditions affected by this were:

- Introduced in Yr3, all authorities to deliver at least one network improvement that will also assist public understanding of, or conservation of, local biodiversity': **Removed in favour of focus on the more general duties**
- Introduced in Yr3, local authorities were allowed to use RFP funds in the Coastal Zone (CZ) when the Coastal Access Improvement Programme (CAIP) changed the focus of the programme from the CZ and Wales Coast Path to just focus on the WCP in time for the official launch of the Path in May 2012. **Requirement removed but still a high priority.**
- Authorities each deliver at least one improvement aimed at better meeting the needs of the disabled, Communities First, ethnic minority or other groups who make a disproportionately low use of the countryside. In all their 'on the ground' improvement work on rights of way, the access authorities should also aim to comply, wherever possible, with the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Government under Section 69 of the CROW Act 2000 and with Natural Resources Wales' associated guidance 'By All Reasonable Means' [and therefore adhering to the Least Restrictive Access principle to benefit as many users of the countryside as possible]. **Removed in favour of focus on the more general duties.**

**List of ROWIP Funding Programme (RFP) Conditions implemented by Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales during 2015-2016 set out in section 11 of the ROWIP offer letter:** (these were in addition to the usual NRW grant offer conditions)

**11. Additional conditions specific to this project or programme of works:**

- a) In addition to Paragraph 2 of the above conditions, the applicant must comply with any other requirements relating to protected habitats and species issued by NRW.
- b) Progress reports are to be submitted with all claims plus an end of year report in a format to be agreed. These reports will include information on progress with the achievement of agreed interim milestones and target outputs.
- c) Authorities must claim 40% of their funding allocation by December 2016.
- d) If there are clear signs of a likely under spend NRW/WG will reserve the right to reclaim the monies and utilise them elsewhere or agree to extra funding for authorities who can effectively use any potential under spend.
- e) Local Authorities will be expected to apply their own audit systems in using ROWIP programme funding and ensure that their external auditors (WAO) cover this in their annual programme of audit
- f) In all 'on the ground' improvement work on rights of way, the access authorities should comply with the principles of least restrictive access and also aim to comply, wherever possible, with the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Government

under Section 69 of the CROW Act 2000 and with NRW's associated guidance 'By All Reasonable Means'

- g) The Local Authority must make the ROWIP available on the internet. Details of the relevant web link should be forwarded to Susan Jackson once this condition is met.
- h) Authorities will submit information about the level of funding which they intend to invest in access management work (as evidenced in their planned budget documentation) for financial year 2015-16. The Director of Service will provide confirmation that the ROWIP Programme funding being allocated will be additional to their planned funding for general countryside management work and that the new funds will not displace the authority's own funding and resources for rights of way work.
- i) The ROWIP funding will be separate and additional money for priority works and will not be suitable for match funding in relation to NRW's countryside grant.
- j) NRW will not be responsible for ensuring that authorities have met this condition. For the purposes of this programme, displacement of funding shall be considered as any cut in budget allocated for 2016-17.
- k) Eligible expenditure as from the 1 April 2016 will be paid, **provided the signed acceptance is received by the Partnership & EU funding team within 1 month of the date of the offer letter**
- l) **Eligible costs**  
The resources from us are capital monies and will therefore need to be used in a way consistent with current accounting guidance on capital expenditure. Where costs can be legitimately capitalised as part of the ROWIP programme, items that may be considered for funding can include the following:
  - i) New staff employed to deliver key elements of the ROWIP programme. This might include the costs of staff employed to work on the Definitive Map, website development and other related publicity activity and to identify and remove obstructions from rights of way where these costs can be legitimately capitalised as part of the ROWIP programme
  - ii) Capital investment in improvement works (including bridge works, upgrading of footpath surfaces, new drainage works, and diversions and new sections of rights of way promoted by the local authority).;
  - iii) Capital investment in improvement works (including bridge works, upgrading of footpath surfaces, new drainage works, and diversions and new sections of rights of way promoted by the local authority).
  - iv) New way marking, furniture (stiles, etc.) and new information boards, etc. on rights of way
  - ii) Specific improvements designed to meet the needs of those with mobility problems (meeting the guidance referred to in paragraph 12 iv. below
- m) In cases of doubt as to whether a specific item is eligible for funding under these arrangements, the local authority should consult with their own Finance Department to ensure that it is a legitimate use of capital resources. [They will need to record this for audit purposes].

**n) Funding in the Coastal Zone**

Since 2010/11 ROWIP Funding Programme eligible costs include ROWIP priorities within 2 kilometres of the coast (the 'coastal zone') as long as they are not already being funded through the separate Wales Coast Path Development Programme. Following the opening of the Wales Coast Path in May 2012, improvements to routes which connect inland communities to the Path are likely to create popular circular routes, and these should be treated as a priority for ROWIP funding by coastal authorities.

- o)** For the purposes of the ROWIP Funding Programme, work to deliver the Wales Coast Path is not an eligible cost and ROWIP funding should not be used as match funding for the Wales Coast Path Development Programme.