



RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FUNDING PROGRAMME (RFP)
2013-14

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 2008-2014 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.

Key points of this report are:

- Practical improvements on the ground remain the most funded action
- Improved Information and Promotion of Linear Access
- Projects delivered intended to benefit more than one group.
- Disabled Users and people who make low use of the countryside have also benefitted

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 – 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 & £1.4 million in 2011/12 2012/13 , 2013/14 £1 million.

The Countryside Council for Wales was tasked with establishing the ROWIP Funding Programme (RFP) and administering and managing the funding to local authorities. On April 1st 2013 Natural Resources Wales took over the functions previously carried out by the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales & Forestry Commission Wales.

This paper provides information collated directly from all 24 funded authorities¹ (All 22 local authorities, Brecon Beacons National Park and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authorities) about the work **delivered** in 2013-2014, the sixth year of the RFP. Similarly, financial and output information in this report relates to all 24 authorities receiving funding.

During the 6 year funding period, there have been a number of conditions of which for the most part, all local authorities have adhered to. For more details, please see **Appendix 1**.

2. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Key achievements of the funding in 2013-2014 are:

1. Practical improvements on the ground:

70% of the funding was used to improve existing access on the ground, following the trend from previous years that local authorities are mostly utilising ROWIP funding for practical works on the ground. 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, installing benches at key view points and surface improvements e.g. improving path drainage.

2. Improvements that benefit more than one group - including walkers, cyclists and horse riders:

The trend to improve rights of way for more than one user type continues. Projects that had a “general benefit to all users” and projects that were “multi-benefit” (benefiting more than one user type) together accounted for 59% of the total value of projects and 46% 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 including Low Use Groups’ was the category noted for the most actions (increasing to 38% of the funding value compared with 17% in 2012/13).. 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. 25% of multi-benefit projects catered for the group of users “walkers, cyclists and horse riders” .10% of multi benefit projects catered for ‘low

¹ 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 therefore reported on work delivered separately from the Council.

use' groups including disabled users, people with mobility problems, people with pushchairs and Community First areas. Walkers accounted for 24% of the value of actions of who would benefit from the actions carried out. The rest of these projects benefited a whole range of users in different combinations e.g. "walkers, People with limited mobility", or "Walkers, Cyclists, Horseriders, Carriage Drivers, Vehicle Users.". There were many different combinations of users.

3. Improvements specifically to make outdoor access easier for people who find it difficult, such as people with disabilities:

In continuing to adhere to the Welsh Government's condition of funding, each of the 24 funded authorities carried out at least one project aimed at better meeting the needs of people with disabilities, Communities First² areas, ethnic minorities or other groups who make a disproportionately low use of the countryside. There were 34 actions aimed at these 'low use' groups totalling £207,711.

4. Status of routes and improved infrastructure.

A further 968km of the rights of way network is now easy to use following improvements which the RFP and other funding sources has contributed to in 2013-14.

The majority of the routes improved in 2013/14 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 principle is being implemented to make the network become increasingly accessible, year on year.

3. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The WG Sport, Outdoor Recreation and Landscapes Division were successful in securing a further year's funding of the RFP in 2013/14 with a budget of £1million. NRW worked to manage the budget to ensure as much spend within the project as possible (reallocating some £28,500 during January 2013) and a total spend of £993,915 (99.4% 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.

² The Communities First programme is a long-term strategy for improving the living conditions and prospects for people in the most disadvantaged communities in Wales.

Table 1: Overall funding for RFP actions in 2013-2014

Organisation	Funding Amount (£)
Welsh Government (WG) funding	1,000,000
Local Authority (LA) spend	426,207
Other sources of funding*	116,886
Total RFP (£)	1,543,093

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 2013-14 (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 £116,886 and included:

- Aggregate Levy Fund
- Coed Lleol (Actif Woods Wales)
- Shropshire County Council
- Safe Routes
- Tidy Towns
- Carmarthenshire Riders Group
- North Wales Cycling Centre of Excellence Project

N.B. This is usually based on the information as provided by local authorities at the end of the year in their annual reports. However, on analysis of the 2013/14 information it was clear that some authorities had named budgets within their own authorities under this category. Further investigation is needed in order to determine if this was an issue in previous years. Where this was evident, the amounts were reallocated to 'LA spend' so that as far as possible, 'Other Sources of funding' represent *external* funding sources.

Whilst some caution should be exercised in comparison with previous years (due to the above issue) it is clear that 'other sources of funding' has decreased significantly from the previous year (from £601,437 in 2012/13) whilst LA spend has increased (from £198,969 in 2012/13). We understand that the reduction in 'other sources of funding' was due to a number of external funding agreements coming to an end in 2012/13, which may also explain the increase in LA spend where this funding was no longer required to match fund elsewhere.

Table 2: Funding offers and total amount claimed 2013-2014

Authority	Funding Offer (£)	Funding Amendments and Returns	Total claimed (£)
Anglesey	32,733		32,733
Blaenau Gwent	26,513		26,513
Brecon Beacons	48,022	4,400	52,422
Bridgend	31,979	2,000	33,979
Caerphilly	36,345		36,344
Cardiff	35,000	-16,500	18,500
Carmarthenshire	52,436		52,435
Ceredigion	51,476		51,476
Conwy	45,647		45,647
Denbighshire	38,906	7,239	46,144
Flintshire	36,723		36,723
Gwynedd	72,980		72,980
Merthyr Tydfil	23,772		23,772
Monmouthshire	39,885	-6,066	33,819
Neath Port Talbot	34,161		34,161
Newport	29,002		29,002
Pembrokeshire County Council	22,922		22,922
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority	22,922	4,123	27,045
Powys	115,824		115,824
Rhondda Cynon Taff	38,674		38,658
Swansea	36,019	7,239	43,256
Torfaen	27,992		27,992
Vale of Glamorgan	30,391	2,000	32,391
Wrexham	34,676	1,500	36,177
Total	965,000	5,935	970,915
ROWIP Evaluation Report	35,000	12,000	23,000
Overall Total	1,000,000	-6,065	993,915

Table 2 above shows the funding offers and any reallocations that were made during 2013/14.

Funding Offer:

WG requested that NRW use part of the RFP budget to commission an Evaluation of ROWIP Implementation and the ROWIP Funding Programme. At the start of the funding year, £35,000 was allocated to cover the evaluation and the remaining £965,000 was offered to authorities. The Evaluation was completed by Resources for Change Ltd, with Asken Ltd, (Appendix 2 Executive Summary) the cost of this work was £23,000.

Funding Amendments and Returns:

As in previous years, the authorities had to ensure that 40% of funding was claimed by the second claim deadline (December 2013) to assist budget management and help us ensure that all the money is utilised in year. All authorities met this requirement and 58% of the whole RFP budget was claimed by December 2013, significantly above the 40% condition.

In January 2014, WG confirmed that the remaining £12,000 from the Evaluation budget could be reallocated to authorities, at this time NRW was informed by Cardiff County Council that they would be unable to use £16,500 of their Funding amount due to licensing issues, this left a total RFP programme monies of £28,500 to be reallocated.

A bidding process window was opened on the 21st January for any of the authorities within the ROWIP FP that had capacity to request additional funding. The funding could be used on existing or new ROWIP priorities provided that the funding could be used by 20th February 2013. The whole of the £28,500 was redistributed to 7 Local Authorities.

There was £6,065 under spend during this financial year (0.6% of the budget). The majority of the under spend can be attributed to Monmouthshire County Council informing us at the final claim stage that they would be unable to process a late invoice in time for the claim, at this point it was too late for us to reallocate the funding elsewhere.

All other claims were submitted on time with the appropriate documentation.

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.

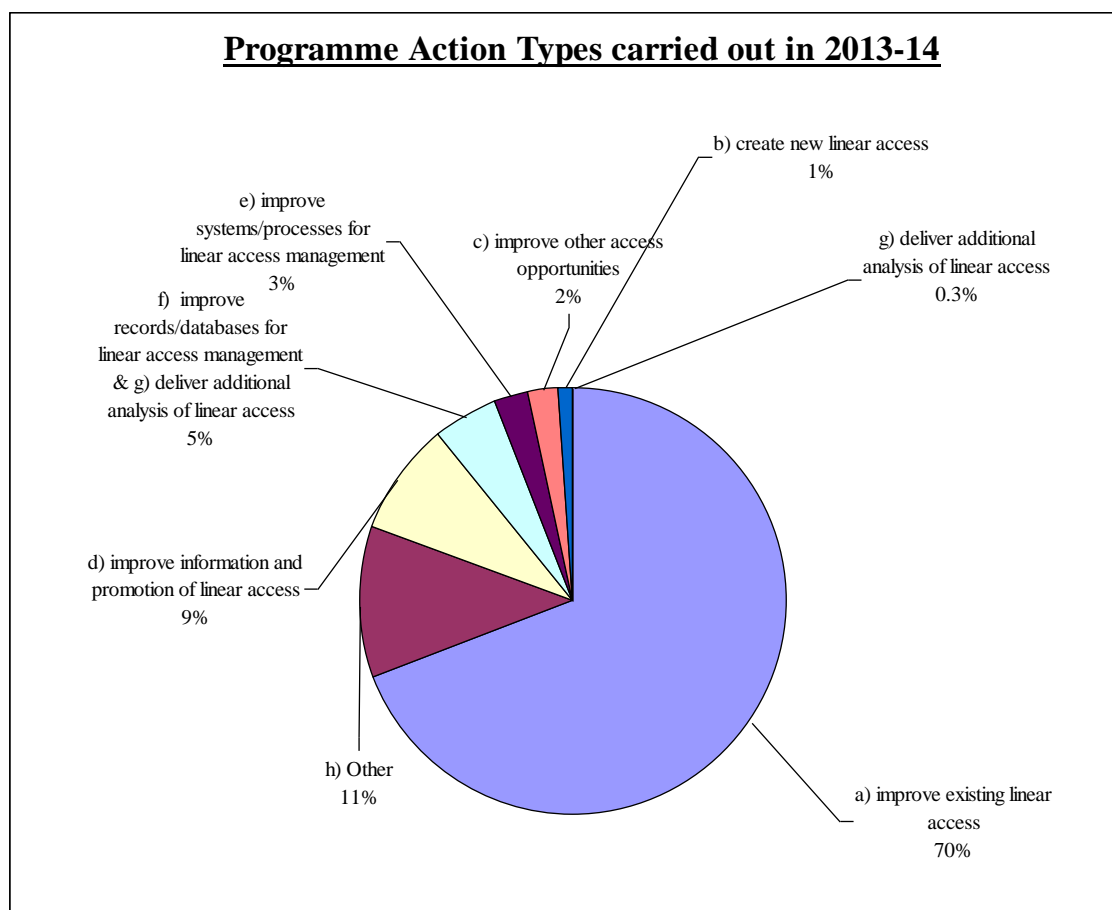
Actions were grouped as follows:

- 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.

Table 3 and **Chart 1** below show the breakdown of number of actions that were delivered in 2013-14 (in value order). A detailed breakdown of who benefited from these actions is provided further on in the report.

Programme Action Type	Number of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value of actions as a % of allocation
a) improve existing linear access	128	672,507	70%
h) Other	16	109,434	11%
d) improve information and promotion of linear access	16	83,459	9%
f) improve records/databases for linear access management & g) deliver additional analysis of linear access	6	47,547	5%
e) improve systems/processes for linear access management	6	24,927	3%
c) improve other access opportunities	10	22,560	2%
b) create new linear access	1	9,922	1%
g) deliver additional analysis of linear access	1	561	0%
Total	184	970,917	100%

Chart 1



In 2013-2014, 70% 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. 'Other' projects came in as the second highest types of project. Projects included in the list are projects that can be identified by more than one element. Examples of these projects are :

- 'Employment of assistant to assist in ROWIP grant works generally, consultation with user groups and landowners, survey of "green lanes", co-ordination of volunteer groups and promotion of improved paths. – h) d), e), f)'
- 'Sirhowy Valley and Usk Valley Walk. Work to include installation of new signage along the two routes and to extend both links to the WCP - h) a) improve existing linear access. b) create new linear access, c) improve other access opportunities'
- 'Look to redevelop the Newton to Candleston Walk leaflet to incorporate a section of the WCP and so that the walk becomes circular. Make improvements to the surface of and structures on Footpath 22 Cornelly to provide a link between Nottage and the WCP and to develop a leaflet providing a small circular walk - h) a) improve existing linear access, d) improve information and promotion about linear access'
- Where projects (2 No.) were not categorised by the local authorities, these were added to category h).

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).

£682,429 has been spent on improving existing linear access and the works completed are very similar to previous years such as:

- Boardwalks – of varying lengths over muddy or previously inaccessible areas.
- Benches – to increase accessibility of routes by allowing users of the paths to sit and relax along the way and give everyone an opportunity to stop and admire the view as part of their visit.
- Steps – to stabilise slopes that were previously difficult to negotiate and to allow the users continued access.
- Surfacing works – to improve the surface so users can use the routes easily e.g. school routes for children to walk to school.
- Removing barriers such as stiles.
- Linking routes together in urban areas
- Major vegetation clearance to improve access and increase biodiversity
- Erect a new barrier to slow down cyclists and prevent illegal activity thus protecting young school children
- Install bridges

There was just 1 project that created new linear access – this was the creation of a footpath over a golf course in Pembrokeshire

Table 4 below shows the route lengths improved to meet the Wales National Performance Indicator 'Easy to Use' standards. 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 2013/14 (including contributions from other sources of funding).

Status	Km of network 'easy to use'
Footpath	524
Cycle track	56
Bridleway	157
Restricted Byways	33
Byway Open to All Traffic	18
Total	788

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

We note that there has been a 60% reduction since 2012/13 in the total figure which RFP contributed to being Easy to Use, the reason for this is unclear. However, in addition to the figures included in the table, one authority (Denbighshire) undertook improvements to utilise minor roads as part of improvements for users with 182.150km being developed, since minor roads are not subject to the easy to use indicator they have not been included above. If this figure were added the total would rise to 970.15km taking it above the lowest annual total, 894km in 2009/10 when funding allocation was £1.7 million.

These improvements continue to demonstrate the wider benefit to make routes more accessible overall.

Table 5: Infrastructure installed new or replaced under RFP 2013/14.

New/Replacement Infrastructure	No of item
Stiles	55
Gates	421
Bridges	61
Fingerposts	266
Waymark posts	232

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

Table 6: Infrastructure removed under RFP 2013/14.

Removed Infrastructure	No of item
Stiles	114
Gates	11

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 is encouraging as it demonstrates that authorities are following good practice and the guidelines issued by Natural Resources Wales and WG emphasising the importance of adopting a 'least restrictive access' approach. This approach enables as many people as possible to use the routes being improved.

Other infrastructure installed includes:

- Installation of a horse stile
- Culvert -Installation of small footbridge and replacement of stile(s) with kissing Gate(s)
- Chicane Barrier - Erect a new barrier to slow down cyclists and prevent illegal activity thus protecting young school children.
- Benches

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 £672,507 spent on linear access, the table below shows that 42% of this (£284,188) was used on routes that are in some way promoted and 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 2013/14

Type of Trail	No of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of total
Regional Trail	11	90,245	33%
Wales Coast Path	16	53,847	19%
National Trail	4	29,307	7%
Other	22	110,711	41%
Total	53	284,188	100%

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

- Links to the National Cycle Network
- Specifically named trails

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 Review⁴ showed that 4% of all ROWIP Actions relate to access land designated under CROW and 6% to other

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

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 2013/14. 2.3% of the funding programme was used 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 2013/14

Type of Access	No of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of total
Natural Green Space	2	6,358	28%
CROW Access Land	2	5,930	26%
Other	6	10,272	46%
Total	10	22,560	100%

Of the 6 'other' projects, 4 authorities provided no further description of the work, 1 included work to routes across open green space, and 1 included improving signage of routes.

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

This action type ranked equal second most popular to fund (in terms of number of actions) and accounted for 9% 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

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 2013/14

Type of information	No of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of total
Off Site	3	7,099	9%
Signage & Waymarking	5	20,772	25%
Website	2	16,243	19%
Events	2	16,585	20%
On site	1	1,330	2%
Other	3	21,429	26%
Total	16	83,458	100%

Signage and waymarking remain a fundamental aspect of improving awareness of the rights of way network. These methods raise awareness about location of routes on the ground and provide users with confidence of their right to use routes. Signage and waymarking also provides an important basis on which leaflets, websites with maps and events to publicise routes can build on.

Offsite types of information e.g. leaflets are still a popular way of getting information out into the public domain. They are relatively inexpensive to produce and are transportable to different places e.g. country fairs, tourist information centres, handed

out at open days and other promotional events. It is also easy to transfer the paper copy into a digital version for the internet which can be updated to reflect any changes. This means that local authorities can promote routes to a technology savvy audience as well as those who prefer something tangible in their hand. Examples of leaflets produced in 2013/14 include Promotion of off road cycle routes in Torfaen, promotion of the Taff Trail in Merthyr Tydfil and biodiversity in Moss Valley Country Park, Wrexham.

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, for example,

Table 10: Action type e) improving systems/processes for linear access management 2013/14

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

Type of Action	No of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of total
Reporting	1	1,088	4%
Maintenance	3	17,671	71%
Monitoring	1	739	3%
Other	1	5,429	22%
Total	6	24,927	100%

Maintenance projects included:

- Undertake a 60% condition survey of the network
- PROW Warden conducting inspections of promoted routes and undertaking improvements to public rights of way such as signage, waymarking and negotiating the reduction of barriers and opening of impassable paths. Warden will also undertake at least one improvement to conserve local biodiversity.

Reporting projects include:

- Reports resulting from specialised electromagnetic counters installed to provide accurate information about motorised use in Denbighshire.

Table 11: Action type f) improving records/databases for linear access management 2013/14

Type of Action	No of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of total
Bringing the definitive map together	4	41,083	86%
Developing/Improving electronic PROW mgmt system	1	5,000	11%
Reclassification of RUPP's various locations throughout the county	1	1,464	3%
Total	6	47,547	100%

Work on the Definitive Map has still featured in 2013-2014, there has been a consistent level of input in bringing the Definitive Map up to date during the 5 year funding period which shows that this action type continues to underpin rights of way management and is an ongoing feature of ROWIPs.

There were 2 fixed term appointments working on Definitive Map work which were fully funded by the RFP. Identifying the cost of employing the staff is not possible as the local authorities were asked to detail costs on a project basis rather than by staff in post.

Table 12: Action type g) delivering additional analysis of linear access 2012/14

Type of analysis	No of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of total
Additional survey/analysis of access provision	1	561	100%
Total	1	561	100%

These actions were:

- Further develop volunteer network in surveying and basic maintenance this may involve training (Caerphilly)

Table 13: Action type h) Other 2013/14

	No of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of total
Other	16	109,434	100%
Total	16	109,434	100%

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 some of these “Other” actions are:

- To install an Otter Holt alongside walkway at River Side Park (Newport Biodiversity Project)
- Look to redevelop the Newton to Candleston Walk leaflet to incorporate a section of the WCP and so that the walk becomes circular. Make improvements to the surface of and structures on Fp 22 Cornelly to provide a link between Nottage and the WCP and to develop a leaflet providing a small circular walk. (Bridgend)
- Preparation of new Definitive Map, analysis and reporting of CAMS data. (Vale of Glamorgan)

Table 14: Actions which included a biodiversity element 2013/14

There were a variety of projects that also assisted public understanding, or conservation, of local biodiversity.

Type of Biodiversity action	No of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of total
Biodiversity Projects	43	320,040	100%
Total	43	320,040	100%

'Biodiversity projects' refers to actions that improve access and benefits nature conservation/biodiversity as well. These actions can be in various guises such as:

- To take three routes (one coastal) and use these to develop a toolkit that will enable local community groups to interpret, improve and develop promoted routes and publications, highlighting health issues/wildlife/landscape/heritage features with targeted distribution as outlined in walking product (Monmouthshire)
- Improve biodiversity along the trail and rights of way network by working with volunteer groups who have signed up to the adopt a path scheme (Merthyr Tydfil)
- Creation of permissive route through woodland to access improved areas of ecological sites and archaeological sites and provide interpretation panels (Torfaen)
- Biodiversity leaflet (Wrexham)
- Ecological Survey and interpretation (Vale of Glamorgan)

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 country 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.

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 2013/14

Beneficiaries	Number of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of total
Multi - benefit(including Low Use Groups)	67	373,350	38%
Walkers	68	236,777	24%
General benefit to all users	19	203,056	21%
People with Mobility Problems	12	79,845	8%
Others	9	42,646	4%
Other groups that make low use of countryside	4	16,144	2%
Horseriders	2	9,359	1.0%
Cyclists	2	5,450	0.6%
Disabled Users	1	4,291	0%
Total	184	970,918	100%

In this year's programme, 21% of the actions were of "general benefit all users" and 38% were "multi benefit" i.e. benefitted more than one group of users. Together, these projects accounted for 59% 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 likely 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 accounted for 24% of the RFP financial allocation and 37% of the overall number of actions.

One of the conditions throughout the 6 year funding period was that all local authorities had to include at least 1 action that benefitted '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 67 actions were "multi-benefit" i.e. benefiting more than one specific type of user. The breakdown of these actions is as follows:

- 15 actions included 'Low Use' groups and were recorded as benefiting: "walkers, disabled users and parents with pushchairs / buggies", "walkers, cyclists, disabled users, people with mobility problems, other groups that make low use of the countryside, Community First".
- 52 actions were recorded as 'multi benefit' and aimed at combinations of more able bodied users such as:
 - 19 actions benefiting specifically "walkers, cyclists and horse riders"
 - 5 actions benefiting specifically "walkers, cyclists, horse riders and landowners"
 - 4 actions benefitting specifically "walkers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers, vehicular Users, landowners"
 - 4 action benefitting specifically "walkers, horse riders, cyclists and carriage drivers"

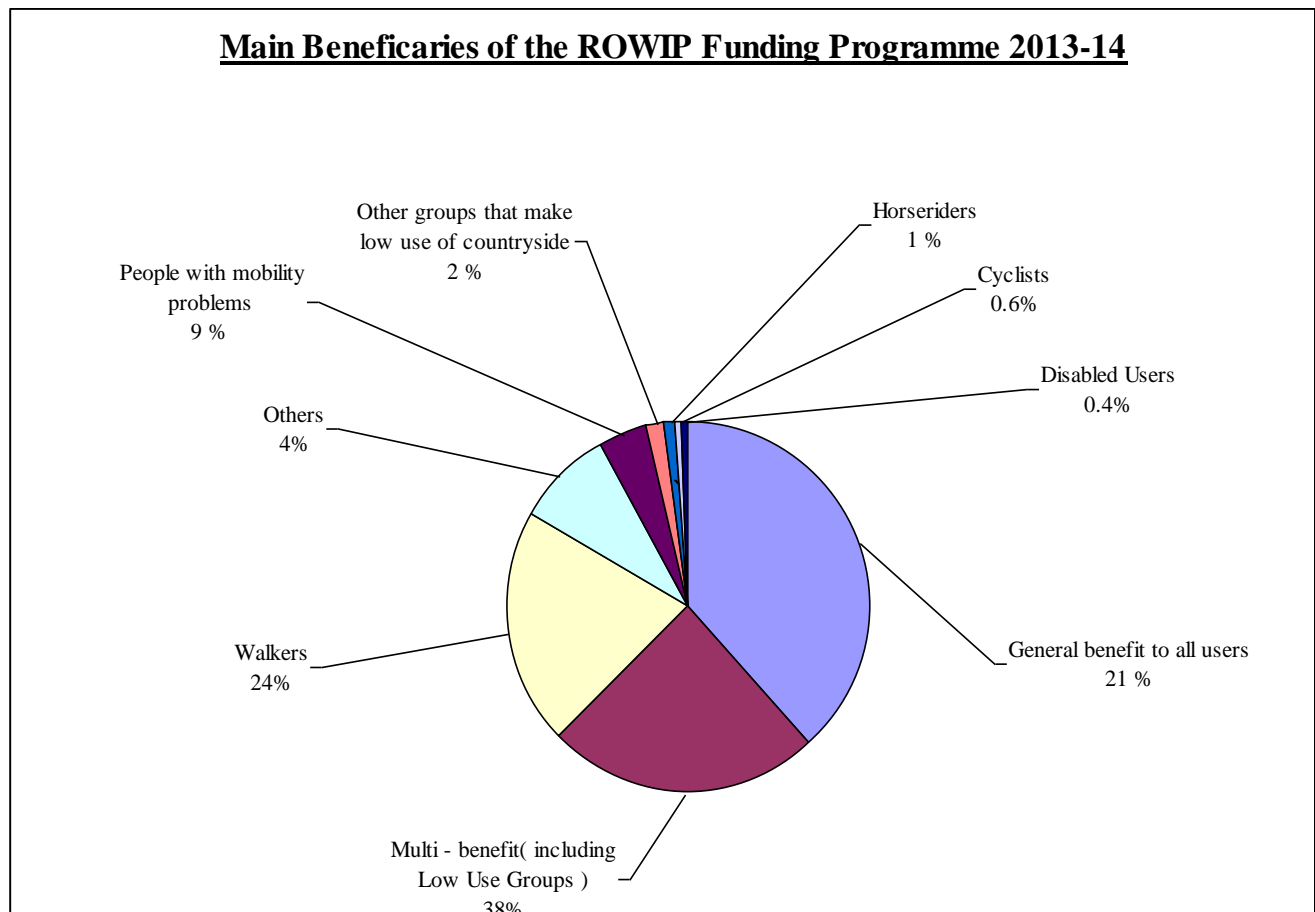
The same premise applies to horse riders and cyclists. Even though there are just 19 actions specifically for "walkers, cyclists and horse riders", an analysis of all 184 actions show that they are also represented in actions specifically targeted at low use groups as well as in combinations of different 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.

It is very encouraging to see 8% of the overall financial allocation has been used for actions aimed at specifically benefitting people with mobility problems. Examples of work are:

- Program to fund the replacement of stiles with gates or gaps where sites or facilities exist to remove existing restrictive furniture where access difficulties for some users is being experienced (Denbighshire)
- Identify and undertake specific projects to extend provision for all by installing 5 recreational picnic bench area's with pushchair and wheelchair access.(Merthyr Tydfil)
- Purchase of Medium Mobility Kissing Gates in order to replace stiles along sections of the Maelor Way route from Hanmer to Bronington (Wrexham)
- New handrails (Torfaen)

Chart 2



6 FUNDING FOR GROUPS THAT MAKE DISPROPORTIONATELY LOW USE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE 2013/14

As part of the WG requirements for the RFP, it was stated that authorities would need to deliver at least one improvement aimed at better meeting the needs of people with disabilities, Communities First areas, ethnic minorities or other groups who make a disproportionately low use of the countryside.

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

Beneficiary	Number of Actions	Value of Actions (£)	Value as a % of beneficiaries
Multi - Benefit	15	90,974	45%
People with mobility problems	12	79,845	39%
Disabled Users	1	4,291	2%
People with Sight Problems	1	11,957	6%
Other groups that make low use of countryside	4	16,144	8%
Other *	1	500	0%
TOTAL	34	203,711	100%

Those who have benefited from the 15 multi-benefit actions included:

- Young People, Walkers, Disabled Users, People with mobility problems, young families, cyclists
- Walkers, horse riders, vehicle users, cyclists. Edward St pedestrian link, improving access for all. Maesgwyn - communities first area.
- Low use users as well as some users with mobility limitations

The "other" in this category was horseriders.

The breakdown in Table 17 below shows the value of different 'Action Types' i.e. the type of work carried out. The majority of works for 'low use' groups relate to improving existing linear access.

Table 17: Type of work and value of work delivered for 'low use' groups 2013/14

Action Type	Value of Actions (£)
a) improve existing linear access	145,704
b) create new linear access	9,922
c) improve other access opportunities	8,778
d) improve information and promotion about linear access	22,856
h) Other	16,451
Total	203,711

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

- re-surfacing of routes to enable access for wheelchair users
- installation of easy access furniture and benches for people with mobility problems
- boardwalk access
- purchase of a mobility scooter for guided walks
- creation of a path for people with disabilities

There was 1 action categorised by the authority as "Other" totalling just over £16,451 and this was:

- Improvement to Riverside Walk Newcastle Emlyn, it included action types a), b) c) and d) and was intended to benefit walkers, disabled users, people with mobility problems, young people, low users of the countryside

2013-2014 has yet again seen many actions deliver against more than one action type. It is encouraging to see that local authorities are delivering works on the ground that "tick more than one box" and therefore getting the most out the RFP.

END

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Appendix 1
List of ROWIP Funding Programme (RFP) Conditions implemented by Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales during 2008-2013.

(these were in addition to the usual CCW/NRW grant offer conditions)

1. The local authorities will provide written confirmation in advance that the ROWIP monies being allocated will be additional to their proposed funding for general countryside management work – ie that these funds will not simply displace their own funding (in line with para. 5 of Schedule 5);
2. The ROWIP funding will be separate and additional money for priority works and will not be suitable for match funding in relation to Natural Resources Wales' countryside grant.
3. Authorities agree to comply with the detailed funding conditions set down by Natural Resources Wales in relation to this funding framework, including provision of relevant information via progress reports and to draw down the monies in line with Natural Resources Wales' timetable (needed for mutual audit purposes)
4. 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 National Assembly under Section 69 of the CROW Act 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].
5. A finalised ROWIP to be in place by 15 September 2008 within every access authority aiming to draw funding down under this framework.
6. The authority must make the ROWIP available on the internet by September 2009. Details of the relevant web link should be forwarded to the ROWIP Funding Officer once this condition is met. Natural Resources Wales reserve the right to withdraw the offer of funding in the event that an authority fails to meet this condition.
7. Authorities must claim 40% of their funding allocation by December [of that year].
8. Introduced in Yr3, all authorities to deliver at least one network improvement that will also assist public understanding of, or conservation of, local biodiversity'.
9. 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.
10. RFP funding is to be separate and additional money for priority works and will not be suitable for match funding in relation to Natural Resources Wales' countryside grant. However, RFP and Natural Resources Wales grant can be used to fund a wider funded project provided that the CCW and RFP elements do not exceed 50% of the costs

Appendix 2

Evaluation of ROWIP Implementation & ROWIP Funding Programme