

Report for the Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum

10th June 2022

Derby City Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan

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General Rights of Way Service

The service is now running at normal levels although there are still some difficulties associated with the limitations of home working. Some services are beginning to return to the office.

The Highways Maintenance service continues to carry out the rights of way maintenance and enforcement function. The maintenance service is looking to add paths to its online complaints system on the Rights of way - maintenance and enforcement web page. This is being investigated but the public can contact the service directly by phone and email.

Definitive map and path orders

As stated in previous reports, work continues to be carried out towards the production of the legal event modification orders that are required to bring the definitive map areas covering Derby up to date. The Council has received two applications for definitive map modification orders from the British Horse Society in the Sinfin Moor area of the city. The Council is currently processing public path orders.

Defra Update

In February this year, Defra announced that the 2026 cut-off date for submitting applications for unrecorded historical ways is to be abandoned. Defra announced recently that all of the proposed Deregulation Act 2015 provisions and associated statutory instruments, with the exception of those related to the 2026 cut-off date, will be implemented. The key provisions remaining include the 'right to apply' process which would allow owners, lessees or occupiers to apply formally for public path orders within a timed statutory framework. Defra has stated that it aims to put these reforms before Parliament by the end of the year

Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP 2)

The City and County RoWIP Joint Subgroup last met in November 2021. It was recognised that the actions within the Statement of Action of the Derby 2014-17 plan may need revising because of the policy, societal and environmental changes that have occurred since it was produced. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to arrange further meetings because of work pressures. A meeting to discuss proposed changes to the existing RoWIPs' actions is planned for the coming weeks.

Path Schemes Update

Derwent Valley Bridleway/Cycleway.

The proposed bridleway scheme will link Haslams Lane, Derby and Ford Lane, Little Eaton. It was reported in March that a consultation on the proposed bridleway scheme had taken place with relevant and interested stakeholders. A second consultation is due to take place on proposals to change the existing public path network in the area. The intention is to rationalise the rights of way network in the area.

Sinfin Moor Park permissive pathway

A new permissive path and an outdoor gym installation has been created in Sinfin Moor Park using Section 106 contributions, linked to nearby residential developments. These features will complement the parks existing facilities which include a café, play area and nature reserve. The construction work was undertaken by Talbot Farm Landscapes Ltd and are already encouraging more people to visit the park and keep active.

The newly installed 1.3km footpath takes users around the perimeter of Sinfin Moor Park's recreational space. The path's tarmac surface and circular route opens up the whole park for everyone to enjoy. There are various benches located around the path which allow visitors to stop for a rest, watch the football or cricket and take in the scenery whilst enjoying the fresh air.

Brand new exercise equipment and an outdoor table tennis table have also been installed near to the park Pavilion. The gym equipment is designed for use by adults and young people either as part of a structured or casual workout. The outdoor table has been installed thanks to funding from Table Tennis England as part of its Ping! project which aims to make table tennis visible, accessible, and sociable; improving opportunities for people to have a go. Park users can borrow bats and balls from the community café or from Sinfin Library during its opening hours on Mondays and Wednesdays. The work was carried out with the support of the Friends of Sinfin Moor Park Local Nature Reserve.

Discussions about creating a permissive bridleway using part of the park's path network are ongoing.

Other schemes

There are other path schemes in the works and they will be reported on when more progress has been made.

Allestree Hall and Park

It was reported in March that Allestree Park is set to become UK's largest urban rewilding greenspace. Derby City Council is working with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and the University of Derby on the rewilding project for the park. A public consultation on the rewilding project took place earlier in the year. The final proposals for the project have not yet been confirmed.

The Hall, itself, was due to be handed over to its new owners this Spring.

From the Council Newsroom (with updates from Ray Brown)

Devolved Powers

The Government used the Queen's Speech to offer all English local authorities the opportunity to benefit from a devolution deal by 2030 as part of its Levelling Up agenda. It was reported in March that the leaders of Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council had released a joint statement about options for devolution.

Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council have submitted initial proposals to negotiate a combined devolution deal.

The four councils were named as pathfinder areas by the Government in February and were invited to apply for a devolution deal. The councils are now at the front of the queue and are looking to secure the earliest possible deal to bring more decision-making power into the hands of local people.

If agreed, this could create a new East Midlands Mayoral Combined Authority, leading to more major decisions being made locally and more funding for services in the region.

Key areas for greater autonomy and funding highlighted in the submission to the Government include transport and infrastructure, business growth, inward

investment, strategic regeneration, destination management, employment, education, and skills. Council resources could also be pooled to make them go further.

The combined authority submission follows the publication of the Government's Levelling Up White Paper, in which local leaders were asked to put forward a vision for devolved powers and improved services in their area.

Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, and Nottinghamshire is home to 2.2 million residents, which would make a future East Midlands Mayoral Combined Authority the third biggest in the country.

The councils involved, including district and borough councils in these areas, would retain all the powers they already have. The deal would not create a new tier of Government but would bring a level of Government which already exists from Westminster to the East Midlands, to be shaped by local councils, and closer to the residents and businesses it affects.

All four councils will work with district and borough councils, businesses, and other stakeholders to look at the details of the plan, which needs to be approved by the Government. Discussions with the government are ongoing.

UK City of Culture

Derby's bid to become the UK's City of Culture made it to the last eight but was ultimately unsuccessful. The four finalists selected were Bradford, Durham, Southampton and Wrexham. The winner was due to be announced on 31st May.

Derby Arena Cycle Hub

Derby Arena's Cycle Hub is a one-stop-shop for all things cycling in the local area, from using the Olympic length indoor cycling track to leading outdoor rides and hosting children's birthday parties.

Derby Arena has indoor cycling opportunities for all ages and abilities. From balance bikes and first pedal classes for young children, women only track sessions, veterans' sessions, track taster opportunities for beginners, family rides in the holidays and para cycling.

The Cycle Hub offers riders everything they need to get involved with the sport, with the aim being that cycling can be accessible to all. Changing facilities and showers are available on site for all indoor track riders to access, along with a water fountain.

Derby Arena also offer regular indoor cycling classes to help you build people's fitness level.

Derby Walking Festival Returns

The successful Derby Walking Festival is back for the 3rd year running, celebrating walking and the many walking routes and opportunities available to you in Derby. The event runs from Sunday 1st May until Sunday 26th June 2022 and is organised by Derby City Council's Parks and Active Living Service as lead partner of Move More Derby.

Over 40 walks will take place throughout the city of Derby during May and June, and many are free to attend. There are walks that you can download and enjoy in your own time and walks that will be led by local walk leaders. With a wide variety of in person, self-guided, virtual and active walking, there's something for everyone.

Moorways Sports Village

Derby's new Moorways Sports Village opened to the public on Saturday 21st May with a grand opening weekend in time for the half term holidays.

The public can try out the flumes and water slides in the thrilling Water Park, splash out in the 50 metres pool, and enjoy all the centre's brand new facilities like the children's soft play areas for the very first time.

Construction partner Bowmer + Kirkland worked with Derby City Council to ensure the £42 million complex was delivered on time and on budget.

The Council has appointed Everyone Active, a leading UK leisure operator, as its partner to manage the new iconic facility and the adjacent Moorways Stadium, with its outdoor athletics track and field facilities, and football pitches. Both sites remain in the Council's ownership.

Accessibility has been designed into the building, with features including a Changing Places changing room and toilet, in-built steps and a lift into the main swimming pool, and a Poolpod lift to enable independent entry into the water. The teaching pool has a portable iSwim hoist to provide convenient access.

Derwent Meadows Nature Reserve

An important wildlife area next to a business park in Alvaston is set to become the next link in a chain of rewilding spreading across Derby.

Derby City Council has taken on the 99 year lease of Derwent Meadows Nature Reserve, off Raynesway, and has entered into a ten year partnership with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to manage the area for the benefit of wildlife and people.

The 60 acre site is owned by Goodman, who invested in local infrastructure and the creation of a dedicated wildlife area when work on Derby Commercial Park was completed in 2007.

The new partnership between Derby City Council and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is an important step in the Trust's vision for a greener, wilder city. The Trust are already working with the Council to rewild Allestree Park.

Derwent Meadows site is already a dedicated wildlife area, with a riverside path linking with the local footpath and cycle network. The idea behind it was to create and improve wildlife habitats, to improve access for people to the River Derwent and to provide improved facilities for local anglers, whilst integrating the business park into the local community.

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's plan is to improve the biodiversity by clearing overgrown areas, improving the wetlands and creating new habitats to encourage as many species as possible, including installing bat and bird boxes. It will also provide interpretation boards so that visitors gain a better understanding of the nature around them.

The Trust will also work with the local community, offering opportunities for helping improve the habitats by volunteering and working with local schools, groups and young people in the area.

Derby buzzing about new Bee Bus Stops

Derby City Council is working in partnership with Clear Channel to give its bus stops across the city given an eco-friendly makeover. The first 12 new bus stops installed so far feature a 'Living Roof', meaning they're topped with wildflower and Sedum plants: a favourite for bees and other insects whose numbers are sadly in decline.

Over the next 12 months, 90 of Derby's bus shelters will be upgraded, with new eco models, substantially improving the experience for the city's bus users.

Additionally, a large number of bus stops will be powered by their own solar panels, reducing reliance on electricity from the grid to power digital advertising, information screens and low-energy lighting. Clear Channel will also be working with partners to ensure that all material from the old shelters is recycled, upcycled, or otherwise avoids landfill.

Derby City Council is benefitting from the expert guidance of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to support their Green City ambitions and will be playing an active part in any future developments with the city's Living Roofs.

‘Smart bins’

Derby City Council’s Streetpride team is rolling out ‘Smart bin’ sensor technology, reducing litter and improving the cleanliness of our streets.

The team have been installing smart bin sensors into litter bins around the city. The sensors use predictive ‘fill-level’ technology, monitoring how fast the bin is filling and alerting when the bin needs emptying.

The technology has been trialled in 200 ‘hot spot’ litter bins so far dramatically reducing the number of overflowing bin complaints. It also means visits to empty bins when needed has decreased visits to bins by 53% by cutting out unnecessary trips.

Derby to welcome Urban Forest on the Market Place

From the end of June, the Market Place will be transformed into a woodland wonderland bringing a new, vibrant space for al-fresco dining and outdoor events over the summer. The space will be free to access for residents and made available to cultural partners to host events.

It will be just one of four Urban Forests in the UK this summer and the only one in the East Midlands.

For Derby’s Urban-forest, up to 125 trees and around 300 shrubs will be installed, covering most of the Market Place. Within the forest, a clearing will be created and picnic benches provided for city centre visitors to use for al-fresco dining. There will also be space for a stage so that the clearing can be used as a performance area.

The Urban Forest has been designed and will be installed by industry-leading Scotscape, who have created urban greening solutions across the globe, most recently at COP26 in Glasgow and the Forest for Change at Somerset House. Scotscape’s vision is to cover Towns and Cities with plants, nurture them and watch them grow so that a blanket of verdant green covers all our surfaces and watch the biodiversity follow.

After this, the trees and shrubs will be re-homed in a city park to recapture the design, as part of the ongoing Queen’s Green Canopy project. Earlier this year, Derby was given ‘Champion City’ status in recognition of the city’s commitment to the Queen’s Green Canopy project.

Derby Riverboat

Derby City Council is setting out the first steps towards unlocking the true potential and vibrancy of its river, by paving the way for the future regeneration of the city centre.

The River Derwent through Derby city centre has not been navigable for more than 100 years, but that is now changing with the introduction of commercial boat trips on the river by Derby and Sandiacre Canal Trust (DSCT) in their riverboat, Outram.

DSCT is run by volunteers and the Council has been playing a supporting role in their venture. Since its successful launch into the river from Cathedral Green, the Outram has been undergoing trials, with the aim of commencing passenger trips during this summer.

The Council Cabinet agreed to approve progressing with the Project and the funding sources in April 2022.

The proposed supporting infrastructure includes a new access platform at Phoenix Green in the city centre, permanent mooring and signage to support the operation of boat trips, and also improvements in lighting, access and safety railings which will open up the riverside area and make it more accessible for pedestrians. It is anticipated that these measures and ongoing river maintenance costs can be accommodated with existing capital and revenue budgets.

Recommendation

To note this report.