



P4C News

Spring 2014

The Paths for Communities e-newsletter

Success for P4C!

It's a real privilege to be introducing our fifth Paths for Communities (P4C) newsletter!

We offered support to 43 projects and only 6 have work left to be done or claims to be processed. This edition is full of good news stories. After investing so much time and effort to develop P4C, it's wonderful to be able to see real benefits being delivered on the ground and to share some of those good news stories with you.

Over the next few months we'll be working hard to finalise the last few projects and to pull together and capture the story that is Paths for Communities. We want to share with partners and the wider world exactly what P4C has achieved, and to capture lessons learned that can be incorporated into any future activity.

So enjoy this taster of P4C delivery, and we look forward to sharing more with you later in the year.

Martin Shaw, P4C Project Manager

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Project News

A Blessing for Beck Linear Park Bridleway

A partnership of North Lincolnshire Council and local volunteer group Friends of the Beck have worked hard to provide a new multi-user right of way along the side of Bottesford Beck on the southern edge of Scunthorpe.

The official opening of the 4.5km bridleway and footpath was held on the 28th February 2014. On the day over fifty people turned up to celebrate demonstrating the enthusiasm of the local community for the project.

After a brief blessing by the vicar the ribbon was cut by local MP the Right Honourable Nic Dakin and the Mayor of Bottesford. In a short speech Nic emphasised the hard work and dedication of the Friends of the Beck volunteers especially singling out Margaret Armiger who was the main inspiration behind the successful P4C bid. The project is an excellent example of a local community group working closely with the local authority to improve access for local people and enhance the environment along the course of Bottesford Beck.

The ceremony was followed by a buffet lunch in the nearby Beckwood Public House.



Chevet Branch Line Traffic Free Connections



The official Grand Opening of the Chevet Branch Line Bridleway took place on Saturday the 8th March 2014. Performing the honour of cutting the ribbon was local MP Jon Trickett. Also in attendance was Wakefield City Council Sport and Culture cabinet member David Dagger. Over seventy people turned out for the day including forty five members of the Wakefield Cycle Forum. The Forum had been instrumental in putting the successful P4C application together and managed

the project to completion. Attendees also included a rider and helper from the nearby Wakefield Riding For The Disabled Stables who will be using the new bridleway as a safe alternative from the busy local roads.

The three phase project was awarded £85,100 and match funded to the total of £11,493 including 274 hours of volunteer time.

The 5.2km of disused railway line, surfaced and brought into use, has created a link in the traffic free network of ROW from Newmillerdam Country Park to the Tran Pennine Trail and to the general network of routes connecting Anglers Country Park, Nostell Estate and Nostell Priory, all valued and greatly used greenspaces for the people of Wakefield and surrounding area.

Jon Trickett MP, a keen cyclist himself remarked, "I can now cycle from the most westerly point in my constituency to my home and hardly have to go on a road."

Wakefield City MP Mary Creagh sent a message to the organisers of the Opening Event saying;

"As a keen cyclist I want to offer my congratulations to the Wakefield District Cycle Forum which has worked so hard to deliver this fantastic new bridleway. As Labour's Shadow Transport secretary I want more people to choose cycling, so it's wonderful to see trailblazing schemes like this being built."

Preston Montford Circular Route providing quality access

The creation of 800m of new bridleway close to Preston Montford field studies centre ensures a safe passage through Montford Bridge. It provides a circular route avoiding the busy A5. This links to the wider countryside and in particular the 52 mile route known as the Humphrey Kynaston Way. The project was delivered by a close working partnership between Natural England, Shropshire County Council, volunteers and the local access forum .

The route was launched on Sunday 18th May. The large crowd enjoyed tea and cake before the route was officially opened by Robert Bland the High Sheriff of Shropshire in a ribbon cutting ceremony accompanied by a walk on the bridleway by horse riders, cyclists and walkers. In attendance was Mark Western from the British Horse Society, who stressed the importance of quality bridleways and how the newly

created section will provide a safe route to a wider network for users.

In his speech Robert Bland recognised the enormous amount of hard work and dedication provided by local authority staff and volunteers, in particular Zia Robbins a member of the local access forum and British Horse Society. She was awarded a certificate and bouquet for her strenuous efforts in providing evidence to support the application.



Oak Tree Marks the Oakmere Way



The Oakmere Way was formally opened by local MP, the Rt. Hon Stephen O'Brien in a ribbon cutting ceremony accompanied by the planting of a memorial oak tree.

The completion of the new 3km link in the local bridleway network is hoped to encourage more tourism and visitor exploration of the area around Delamere Forest as well as providing a great new asset for local walkers and riders.

In his speech Mr O'Brien recognised the enormous amount of hard work and dedication demanded from volunteers and members of the local community in putting a project like Oakmere Way together and shepherding it through to a successful conclusion. One individual singled out for praise was Tony Overland of The Mid Cheshire Bridleway Association who nurtured the project through from start to finish and whose tireless efforts were vital to the project's success.

The project was accomplished in two phases by a close working partnership between the private company Lafarge Tarmac and Mid Cheshire Bridleway Association. Other partners involved in the development of the project included two Parish Councils, the Forestry Commission and Cheshire Wildlife Trust. The new route forms a very pleasant walk or ride from Stoneyford Lane in the east to Delamere Forest in the west.



Peakirk gets its path!

This footpath - the long-term ambition of local volunteer group, the Northern Footpath Forum (NFF) – links the village of Peakirk near Peterborough and Deeping St James with a safe, non-vehicular route for walkers. A strong and varied partnership which included: Peterborough City Council Highways Department, the Local Access Forum, Local Nature Partnership, Internal Drainage Board and local councils, joined forces with generous landowners Milton Estates, the Environment



Agency and a small private landowner to add over a 1km of footpath to the Public Right of Way network. The new route links, via the northern Maxey Cut embankment and two footbridges, onto an existing public footpath and enables people to complete a safe, circular walk.

The project nearly didn't happen as work on an adjacent railway bridge threatened to eat into the short time NFF had to deliver their project. But Network Rail stepped in to add their support and the group were back on track to deliver on time.

This project simply would not have happened without the unstinting hard work of a committed team of volunteers. Topping the chart with the greatest number of volunteer hours was the main project contact, Sally's husband, Nick!

Fresh with the success of this project, Sally said "We're now working on getting a bridge across the River Welland to link our two counties!"



MP Stuart Jackson with SallyAnn Jackson and Local Nature Partnership chair, Richard Astle

Access hub for Forest of Marston Vale's Millennium Country Park



Large interpretation board in café
[Maps downloadable here](#)

Visitors to Marston Vale's Millennium Country Park Forest Centre Café were constantly asking staff for information about access routes in the area. So, through P4C, the Friends of Marston Vale and Marston Vale Trust put together a package of access information for riders and walkers. They developed circular routes from the café with downloadable leaflets showing the natural and man-made heritage to look out for. These were supported by large interpretation

boards and listening posts to share the oral history of the land formerly part of the brick-making industry.

In addition, the Marston Vale Trust generously dedicated over 2.8km of existing routes as public bridleways. This secures permanent public rights to enjoy the park and enables people to access linking routes, both



New surfacing and horse stile



Listening post over-looking lake at Forest Centre café

permanent and permissive to villages beyond. Main contact, Darren Woodward from Marston Vale Trust, continues to work with the Trust's dedicated and skilled volunteers carrying out user surveys. Their results will be published in May 2015 by URS, the organisation commissioned by Defra to undertake evaluation of the Paths for Communities scheme.

Press Releases

Helston Packet 12/03

Planting trees a worthwhile task

A group of volunteers, comprising Helston Beavers, Duke of Edinburgh students and supervising adults planted hawthorn, blackthorn and hazel along a new footpath linking the Bulwark Estate and Lower Nansloe farm at Penrose. The land is owned by the National Trust, whose Laura Bailey said the tree planting would make Helston a greener, more environmentally-friendly place. "People will be able to watch the trees grow, over the years, and see the wildlife they attract to the footpath." [...]

The idea for a trail was initiated by a Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change (CN4C) project called Access to Nature involving The National Trust and Bulwark Residents Association. After deciding the route and starting to clear the trail, money to complete it came from the Paths for Communities fund. The Paths for Communities Project is funded by Natural England and was created to enhance the public rights of way network and to deliver benefits to rural areas.

(Also in This is the West Country)

Able Magazine 28/03

Ellerburn Trail launches in Dalby Forest

The Forestry Commission and the Cyclists' Touring Club will open a new trail on Sunday April 13, which is accessible to all for active recreation, in the heart of Dalby Forest on the southern slopes of the North York Moors. The Ellerburn Trail is a multi-user pathway for disabled cyclists, walkers, and wheelchair users as well as being a safe and accessible route for children learning to ride a bike and parents with pushchairs. The trail runs along Ellerburn Beck in Dalby Forest and aims to cater for seven per cent of Dalby Forest's annual visitors with mobility issues and their families (around 31,500 of the 450,000 visitors). One new circular route has been constructed; which is compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and the existing Ellerburn route has been enhanced catering for the more adventurous visitor with mobility issues, but still providing easy access. The Forestry Commission has worked with a number of partner organisations, including Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC), the Federation for Disability Sport and a range of local community groups to develop the trail. The trail has been funded by a contribution of £74,950 from Natural England's Paths for Communities Fund and £25,000 from Yorventure (through funds generated by Yorwaste Ltd) and £25,000 from the Forestry Commission. [...]
(and in the Northern Echo)

West Briton (Helston/The Lizard) 27/02

Holiday means footpath work for volunteers

Volunteers from all over the UK have spent a week helping build stiles and steps and clearing a new footpath at Penrose Woods near Helston. The work has been done as part of the Paths for Communities project, run by the National Trust. [...] The Paths For Communities project is funded by Natural England and includes work to create a new easy-access link from Porthleven to the coast path, improve surfacing Helston Drive and create a new boardwalk at Carminowe. [...] Anne-Marie Knight, Natural England's senior adviser, said: "This scheme provides the perfect opportunity for people to get actively involved in the delivery of access improvements. A bunch of people with some tools and a plan can make such a difference to the accessibility of a place." The work on the project began last October last year and is due for completion in mid-March.

Countryside Code



It is important that all visitors to the countryside understand how to enjoy it responsibly, and for land managers providing access across their land to understand their responsibilities. The Countryside Code applies to all England and Wales and is designed to help everyone to respect, protect and enjoy the countryside. Ensure that you are familiar with the Code. Leaflets and further advice and [guidance is available on our website.](#)

Gloucestershire Gazette (Dursley) 27/02

Diamond Jubilee leads to circular pathway

A muddy route around a Chipping Sodbury recreation ground has been transformed into a permanent pathway, thanks to the legacy of the Diamond Jubilee. [...] The project was predominantly funded by an £18,000 grant from Natural England, but also received financial backing from the Diamond Jubilee Committee [and others, listed].

(and in Thornbury Gazette and Yate & Sodbury Gazette)

Wakefield Express (City edition) 07/03

New cycle track will provide the 'missing link'

Cyclist finally pedal along the 'missing link' between Pugneys and Anglers Country Parks when a new 5km track opens tomorrow. Wakefield Council and Wakefield District Cycle Forum are set to cut the ribbon on the Chevet Branch Line cycleway, which will create an off-road link between the two destinations. [...] A grant from Natural England's Paths for Communities has been used to renovate the path, adding to a wealth of other cycle-friendly routes in the Wakefield District. The council and the cycle forum will cut the ribbon at 11.30 a.m. [...]

(and in Horbury, Normanton and Ossett editions)

Connecting North Lichfield Case Story

A case story has recently been received about the improvements to a route P4C funded in North Lichfield. The project proceeded in much the way it was expected however it has been interesting that a decrease in anti-social behaviour on the site has been noted. There has been a significant increase in usage of the site, this is thought to be a direct result of the route being improved.

These are some of the comments users have made:-

"I feel much safer coming here now."

"It is much nicer than it was."

"It's good that more people are coming here and using it."

Paths for Communities - Your Experience

Save form

We would like to understand and learn from your experience with the P4C scheme. We would also like to share these experiences with others and maybe inspire them to make improvements to the network of public rights of way in their local area.

This document is a prompt - there are no right or wrong ways to present your story. Quotes will really make your story come to life, use them wherever you can.

We have developed this template to enable you to work in a logical fashion from the original idea after hearing about the funding until completion of the route and the launch event. If you're in need of some help and need some assistance talk to your local grant officer.

Project details

Project name	Connecting North Lichfield	
Lead contact	Jane Rodd	
Grant was awarded in [date]	April 2013	
Total project cost [£]	£11,270.00	
Grant awarded [£]	£6,770.00	
Match funding [£]	£4,500	
Volunteer hours committed	1,664	
Length of PROW created	footpath	1,190
	bridleway	0
Major capital works [eg bridge]	None	
Other works undertaken [eg gates, signposting, surface improvements]	Path surface improvements, installation of new steps and repair of existing steps, creation of new woodland footpath, bank clearance and stabilisation, installation of benches, way markers, bird and bat boxes, tree planting	
Business letter of support [how many and from whom]	Letters of support from Forest of Mercia, Friends of Erasmus Darwin, Local Access Forum, Staffordshire County Council PROW	

Developing the idea...

The story starts from when you heard about the funding, then developing your idea. This covers the time before you completed the paperwork. Start with your first conversations with Natural England.

The project aimed to further build on and develop a project to reinvigorate Local Nature Reserve, Christianfields, on the northern edge of Lichfield in Staffordshire which had created a positive step change in the site infrastructure, access and safety, as well as enhancing amenities such as a pond by creating a pond dipping area and information for schools and a sculpture trail.

The Connecting North Lichfield project identified a potential site that met the criteria of the Paths 4 Communities remit, being a permissive route connecting the nature reserve and other PROWs, and being part of the 10 mile Erasmus Darwin walk, a 10 mile circular walk around the outskirts of Lichfield. Developing the route would also further enhance access to the nature reserve and a local school and sports groups located along the route.

An initial site visit with the County Council's PROW Officer was held to assess the potential of designating the route a PROW followed by another site visit with a representative from Lichfield City Council who owned the land the proposed route would pass through.

Site visits with the Forest of Mercia team further developed ideas and discussions about opportunities for the site which included engaging new and existing groups of volunteers, running funded courses to create and install infrastructure and the scope of the work required.

Support was also gained through site visits from the Local Access Forum and Friends of Erasmus Darwin group.

The initial expression of interest to Natural England was then quite easy to complete and generated a quick response from Natural England and a site visit to assess the potential of the site. This was all very positive and enabled the project to progress to the application stage which was tweaked as aspects of the site led to changes in what was being applied for, for example, a membrane to cover tree roots on parts of the path was initially identified as preferable but was subsequently found to be unsuitable due to the camber on the path and the cost of installing it.

What was that like? Did you understand the information available? What did you do to get the project to application stage?

Words to prompt you...

Why
Aims
Where
Ideas...
Site suitability
Wider picture
Local needs
Partnership
What
Bridleway
Footpath
Cycling
Safety
Business support
Choice of site
Landscape
Access for all
Community
need...
Heathy lifestyle
Outdoor education
Youth group
Scouts

Quotes will make your story come alive, use them whenever you can

What did you achieve...?

Use this section to record what happened once the route was complete. Did it complete on time? Use quotes from users of the new route to record what they think about the launch event. Use quotes from users of the new route to record what they think

The ground works were completed on time and in budget. The launch event is in the process of being organised.

There has been a significant increase in usage of the site.

Feedback received from users includes:

"I feel much safer coming here now."

"It is much nicer than it was."

"It's good that more people are coming here and using it."

Words to prompt you

Promotive

Facebook

Achievement

Definitive

What next...?

Well what now? Think about the lessons learnt and sustainability of the partnership. Tell us if there are any new opportunities as a result of completing this route.

Lessons learned:

This type of project can take longer to plan than expected
Consideration needs to be given to the longer term management of the route and the impact of any anti-social behaviour

The partnership continues to work together on shared interests and projects.

No new opportunities have arisen since completing the project as it was the final activity in a larger scale activity involving Lichfield District Council who are taking any additional development opportunities forwards with further work to connect the site.

Words to prompt you

Visitor satisfaction

Lessons

Increased visitor numbers

Do it again

More routes

Have you got anything else to give us or tell us...

The project has been highly beneficial for the volunteers working on it enabling them to develop new skills and to create infrastructure that will be part of the site for years to come. There has been a reduction in anti-social behaviour due to installation of gates and other security, but this is still an issue for the site.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



The European Agricultural
Fund for Rural Development
Europe investing in rural areas



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