

MERSEYSIDE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM PRESENTATION PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY IN HALTON

- Halton has approx 76km of Public Rights of Way 73.5km of footpaths and 2.5km of bridleway.
- The responsibility for which lies within the Environment and Development Directorate headed by Dick Tregoe.
- This Directorate consists of 4 Departments –
 - The Planning Department
 - Environmental Health Department (excluding waste Management)
 - Consumer ProtectionAnd The Highways and Transportation Department
- The Highways and Transportation Department is made up of 2 further Divisions The Highways Division and the Transportation Division.
- The Transport Policy and Planning Section falls within the Transportation Division and this is where the majority of the responsibility for Public Rights of Way falls.
- You will notice that in the structure Rights of Way maintenance is the responsibility of the Highways Division Network Section. However, in reality this, function is carried out by the Transport Policy and Planning Section. When the structure was re-organised the duties were never removed from myself.
- Although each member of the section has their own functions within the team some of which are listed in the chart we all work as a together and draw on each others expertise.
- My main responsibilities include –
 - Rights of way maintenance and improvements
 - Updating the Definitive Maps and Statements that cover the area of Halton – this I consider as a priority if we are to be able to assess the current condition of the network and identify missing links.
 - Processing stopping up/diversion orders.
 - Dealing with all rights of way queries
 - Providing advice when rights of way are affected by Development
 - Providing advice on highway enforcement issues
 - Promotion of the Rights of Way network, cycleway and greenway networks.

- Ensuring the development and implementation of the Greenways Network – I co-ordinate the Greenways Working Group and try to ensure we have schemes ready to take advantage of any funding that comes available.
 - The recording and development of the cycleway network – I am fortunate that one of our technicians is a keen cyclist and between us we provide this function. He provides the practical advice and I deal with the legal issues and paper work, funding etc.
- I am also fortunate in
 - That I have Groundwork Mersey Valley who assist me with the management and the development of the network.
 - that the LTP is prepared by this section and that Steve Carson who was formerly at Knowsley has a good understanding of rights of way issues.
 - The fact that the development control function is also undertaken here means that I am made aware of developments, which may have an impact on rights of way at an early stage and can sometimes influence how they are accommodated.

Some current Issues

1. **The Definitive Map** - I am currently reviewing the definitive map and statements and am in the process of preparing a Definitive Map Modification Order. I consider this function to be a high priority as the maps and statements have not been updated since 1953. I have so far located 45 orders, which affect 36 paths but this is an ongoing project with a fair way to go yet.
2. I have produced Halton's 1st Milestone Statement which finally got approval on the 8th January 2004 and will be printed shortly.
3. Through the Greenways Working Group we identified easy win priority routes that could be implemented if funding became available. This paid off as we were able to take advantage of funding that became available as a result of the new Widnes Water Front which is an economic development zone. During 2003/04 we constructed 7km of footway cycleway and provided 5 tucan crossings to the tune of approx £800,000. This has made a significant impact on the development of the network. This work has also allowed us to open up 5.5km of the Runcorn cycleway which had been neglected somewhat over the years.

4. I am also working with St Helens Area Bridleway Development group to provide a cross boundary link along the old mineral line at Mill Lane up to St Helens and then hopefully on into Lancashire. Funding has been obtained from ICEP which has enabled the Group to undertake a study which is currently underway into the feasibility of developing off-road bridleway routes at Colliers Moss, Wheatacre Farm, Sutton Manor, Maypole Farm and Clockface Country Park in St Helens, Sunny Bank in Halton and Pex Hill. The intention is to link between these sites as far as possible with off-road routes. Although this is being driven by the bridleway group it is the intention that the route will be a multi user Greenway route for all.