

ROWIPs AND LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS

Why integrate with Local Transport Plans (LTPs)?

- Strong links with LTPs can raise the profile of and long-term support for rights of way in the minds of senior managers and councillors, by showing they are a mainstream part of an integrated transport network for everyday life, to reduce 'diversion, danger and delay'.
- The process of integration can help ensure that traffic planners and highway engineers recognise the needs and opportunities for rights of way.
- Whilst not the answer for every situation, LTPs can bring in significant amounts of funding for work on rights of way and other types of public access.
- Integration can: reduce the number of plans produced; prevent duplication of effort; increase resources for research, network assessments and community consultation etc; prevent ROWIP officers from working in isolation.
- ROWIPs will be progressively integrated into LTPs from 2005 - 2010 and will be assessed alongside all other elements of the plan.

Some guiding principles:

- It may not be easy. Before real progress can be made, time will be needed to develop mutual understanding with LTP staff who traditionally may have little understanding about the operation or opportunities for rights of way.
- Take care to ensure that embracing ROW issues is seen a 'good thing' that will help LTP staff and add value to their plan. Focus on areas of agreement, and accept that others may not immediately embrace all aspects of your agenda.
- LTP staff and other partners do not need to know the problems or legislative detail of rights of way; they do want to know what practical solutions and opportunities the network and ROW staff can offer.
- For real integration to occur, there needs to be clear shared aims and links between the LTP and ROWIP, which should in turn reflect wider strategic objectives of the council and central Government as a whole.
- There can be a lot of common ground between rights of way staff and traffic planners. However, different backgrounds mean time needs to be taken to learn to work with the different terminologies, approaches and cultures. Job shadowing, secondments or shared site-visits can all help.



Department for Transport requirements for integration:

- Full integration of ROWIPs into LTPs by 2010 is an incremental process; more guidance will be produced. Initially, Highway Authorities (HAs) need to submit a short ROWIP progress report with their provisional LTP in July 2005, that:
 - ✓ identifies the stage the authority has reached in preparing their ROWIP.
 - ✓ includes a high level statement of policy and objectives for improving ROW.
 - ✓ identifies any ROW improvements that link to the delivery of objectives and shared priorities for transport, such as: road safety, accessibility, congestion, air quality and other quality of life issues.
- HAs are encouraged to incorporate prioritised rights of way improvements that help meet LTP objectives into their provisional LTP, by identifying the funding source and reporting on delivery in Annual Progress Reports.
- Where ROWIP's are not sufficiently advanced to enable priorities to be incorporated into the provisional LTP, HAs should include them in the final LTP or in subsequent Annual Progress Reports. Authorities may then re-prioritise their LTP programmes to deliver identified schemes on rights of way.
- Not all planned improvements to the ROW network will be relevant to transport priorities; a full ROWIP will thus still need to be completed by November 2007.

Summary LTP timetable to April 2006

<i>December 2004</i>	Guidance on LTPs and Accessibility Planning published along with 5-year guideline budgets based on first round LTP provision.
<i>July 2005</i>	HAs submit new provisional LTPs with - at least - ROWIP progress reports.
<i>Autumn 2005</i>	DfT assess provisional LTPs. HAs start to consider other changes to LTP, and further develop accessibility strategies.
<i>Late 2005</i>	DfT publishes Plan Quality scores, revised planning guidelines for 2007/08, and thus adjusts final budget allocations to HAs for 2006/07.
<i>Early 2006</i>	HAs revise provisional targets and/or implementation programme, taking account of DfT revised planning guidelines and the Plan Quality assessment.
<i>April 2006</i>	HAs submit final LTP, including accessibility strategy & start to implement it.

For more assistance try:

1. Local Transport Plans - process and initiatives information: www.dft.gov.uk
2. PROW Good Practice Guide advice in sections in 5.2.1.3.1 : www.prowgpg.org.uk
3. Cheshire ROWIP exemplar reports 'Links to sustainable transport - project 1' (good reference list) and 'project 2' - available at: www.prowgpg.org.uk
4. Greenways - guidance and reports relevant to LTP aims: www.greenways.gov.uk
5. Countryside Agency publications and research notes that support the role of ROW in an integrated transport network - available at: www.countryside.gov.uk