

This leaflet provides basic information about public rights of way for landowners

Public rights of way across your land may be footpaths, bridleways, byways and restricted byways. These give the public certain rights and responsibilities.

On Footpaths

The public has a right to walk. They are allowed to have dogs with them not necessarily on a lead, but under close control. This also applies to bridleways and byways.

On Bridleways

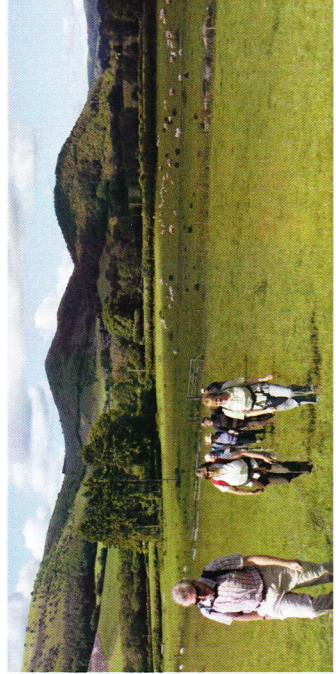
The public has a right to walk, ride or lead a horse or ride a bicycle.

On Byways

The public has the right to walk, ride or lead a horse, ride a bicycle or motorbike, drive a horse and carriage or motorised vehicle. Any vehicle using the route must have tax, insurance and MOT. The public has the same rights on a Restricted Byway as on a Byway except that they may not use motorised vehicles.

Identifying Public Rights of Way

Ordnance Survey maps ('Explorer' and 'Landranger' series) show the approximate position of public rights of way. The latest and most accurate rights of way mapping can be seen online at Herefordshire Council's Public Rights of Way webpage.



Ploughing and Cropping

You must not plough any public right of way on the headland of a field, nor any cross-field byway, restricted byway or old road.

Where it is necessary to plough a cross-field footpath or bridleway, you are required to clear the crop from their surface so as to make them reasonably convenient for use. In a few instances the width of a path is recorded but otherwise paths must be cleared to at least the minimum width set out in the table below. If Herefordshire Council has to carry out work to clear paths itself, it may clear them to the maximum widths quoted.

Path type	Min width	Max width
Field edge footpath	1.5 metres	to 1.8 metres
Field edge bridleway	3.0 metres	
Cross-field footpath	1.0 metres	to 1.8 metres
Cross-field bridleway	2.0 metres	to 3.0 metres
Any other Highway	3.0 metres	to 5.0 metres

In the case of ploughed rights of way, the minimum widths are to be made available to the public within 14 days of the first disturbance and within 24 hours of any further disturbance.



Livestock and other animals

You must not keep a dairy bull over ten months old in a field crossed by a public right of way. A beef bull over ten months old must be accompanied by cows or heifers.

You must not allow dogs to impede the free use of the right of way e.g. by threatening or aggressive behaviour. There are serious penalties for allowing a dog to injure or intimidate users of a right of way.

Gates and Stiles

You are responsible for gates and stiles on public rights of way. You must maintain them in a safe condition, ensuring that they can be used without difficulty.

Herefordshire Council may contribute towards maintaining gates and stiles – please contact us to find out how.

You must not put a gate or stile at a new location without permission from Herefordshire Council.

Planning

Planning permission, and permitted development rights, DO NOT allow you to build over or illegally divert a right of way. Herefordshire Council Planning Service can provide help and advice.

