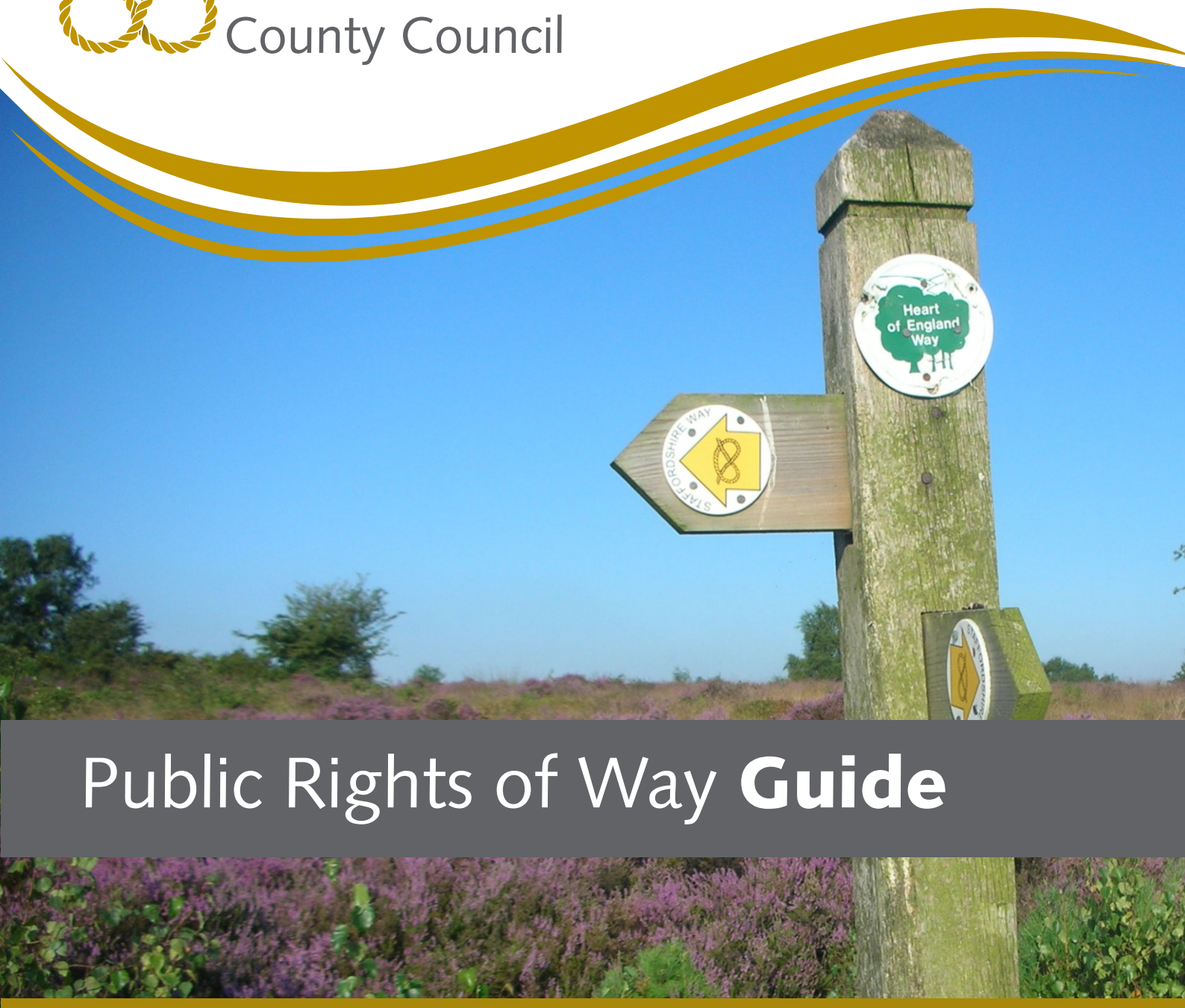
Staffordshire County Council




# Public Rights of Way **Guide**

# Public Rights of Way

## Introduction

Staffordshire has a network of over 4000 kilometres of public footpaths and bridleways, which offer the single most important means of exploring every corner of the County.

Whether you wish to explore Staffordshire by foot, cycle or on horseback, we hope that the information contained in these pages will help you and provide you with some ideas about the opportunities available to you. There are many opportunities for walking and riding in Staffordshire from long distance recreational routes such as the Staffordshire Way and the Way for the Millennium, the Heart of England Way and the Sabrina Way. There are many shorter, Country Trails and Promoted Routes, several of which are based around County Council Country Parks, Picnic Areas and Greenways. All of these are promoted by the County Council and are waymarked.

Before starting off, you may wish to check whether there are any disruptions to the path network in your chosen area by checking if there are any Temporary Closures or Proposed Diversions.

We are continually working, with Parish Councils, voluntary groups and local organisations, through the County Council's Community Paths Initiative to promote and develop such routes for your enjoyment.

Generally speaking, the responsibility for keeping public paths open for public use is shared by the County Council, as highway authority, and landowners. The County Council is responsible for the surface maintenance of the paths and for dealing with unlawful obstructions. Landowners are responsible for keeping the paths free from obstruction. The County Council also ensures that all routes are legally protected on the definitive map. The Rights of Way Guide gives you some basic information about public rights of way that you may wish to read before using the public path network. It is not intended to answer every question, but merely to act as a brief overview and guide.

If you do experience any problems whilst using a public right of way, please take time to report the fault to us so that we can resolve the problem by completing the Public Path Obstruction Report. Your form will be acknowledged within five working days and we will advise you when the problem has been resolved.

Please come and enjoy Staffordshire's Countryside.

If you need any further advice, please contact us.

# Public Rights of Way

## Introduction

This brief overview has been designed to provide you with basic information about public rights of way. It is not intended to answer every question, but merely to act as a guide. If you require more detailed information please do not hesitate to contact us.

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## User Rights and Responsibilities

The public's right over a highway is a right of passage for the purpose of passing and repassing. Path users must keep strictly to the line of the path and must not loiter.

## On Public Rights of Way, you can:

- Take a pram, pushchair or wheelchair if practical
- Take a dog (on a lead or under close control)
- Take a short, reasonable detour to get round any illegal obstruction.

## Wherever you go, do not forget the Country Code:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

## The Definitive Map and Statement

The Definitive Map and Statement is a legal document and records the line and legal status of all recorded public rights of way. Public rights of way are highways over which members of the public have the legal right of passage across someone else's land.

If a public right of way is included on a Definitive Map, it is conclusive evidence, in law, that the public have the right of passage, even though there may not be any visible evidence on the ground that a right of way exists. The Statement that accompanies the Definitive Map is a brief written description of the recorded public right of way.

The County Council is responsible for preparing and maintaining the Definitive Map and supporting Statement for its area.

Should you wish to inspect the Definitive Map and Statement for Staffordshire, copies are available for inspection at:

All District or Borough Council Offices;

Main branch libraries;

Staffordshire County Council's Offices

either County Buildings,
Martin Street,
Staffordshire,
ST16 2LH;

or **Rural County**
**No. 1 Staffordshire Place**
**Tipping Street**
**Stafford**
**ST16 2LP**

Once a Definitive Map and Statement is published, any amendments either to change the status of a route or to add or delete a path, can only be achieved by a Definitive Map Modification Order.

Any person having evidence to suggest that the Definitive Map is in error, can submit an application under Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for the map to be modified.

## The Definitive Map and Statement

There are three types of public right of way recorded on the County Council's current Definitive Map and Statement:

### Public Footpath

(denoted by – – – – )
The right of passage is on foot only. A dog is considered as an usual accompaniment, but must be under close control at all times. Such routes are waymarked with yellow arrows.

### Public Bridleway

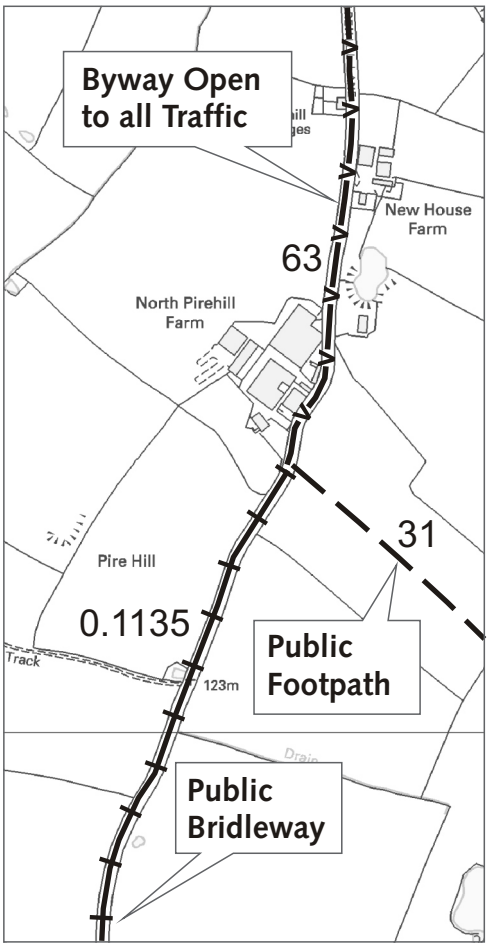
(denoted by —+—+— )
The right of passage is on foot, The right of passage is on foot, bicycle or on horseback. Such routes are waymarked with blue arrows.

### Byway Open to All Traffic

(denoted by —V—V— )
The right of passage is on foot, bicycle, on horseback or by motor vehicle. Such routes are waymarked with red arrows.

### Restricted Byway

(not currently denoted on the definitive map)
The right of passage is as on foot, bicycle, on horseback or by non-motorized vehicle.




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The Definitive Map and Statement is only conclusive as to the minimum public rights existing on a route. It may be that there are pre existing higher rights, as yet unrecorded.

In addition to the public's rights on footpaths and bridleways, certain people may have private rights, for example to drive motorised vehicles along a route.

## Permissive Paths

A permissive path, sometimes termed a concessionary path, is a route which the landowner permits the public to use, with the intention that it should not become a public right of way. Permitted paths should be seen as a supplement to the rights of way network, not as a substitute for rights of way, particularly if the definitive route is obstructed.

To ensure that the public does not acquire a right of way, it is advisable for a landowner to erect Notices to that effect. An example of such a Notice is set out below:

"This path is private property and is not a public highway. Members of the public are allowed to use the path on the strict understanding that such use will not in any way constitute or contribute to the dedication of a highway under Section 31 of the Highways Act 1980, and that the landowner reserves the right to close it either temporarily or permanently at any time."

The landowner may wish to close the path at certain times of the year and remains responsible for the maintenance of the path, including its surface.

Public access is also sometimes allowed to land that is subject to a Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Such routes are administered by the Department for Farming and Rural Affairs, for further details see Countryside Stewardship Access Sites.

## Changes to the Network

Once a highway, always a highway is an important maxim.

Once a legal Public Right of Way has been established and recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement, it can only be extinguished or altered by a formal legal Order. It can not be lost by non-use alone.

A public path may be lawfully extinguished or diverted by a Diversion and Extinguishment Order, or its status amended by a Map Modification Order.

Map Modification Orders are also made to add or delete a path from the Definitive Map and Statement.

There are also provisions under Section 25 of the Highways Act 1980 to create new public rights of way, known as Creation Agreements.

It is sometimes necessary to temporarily close a public right of way, during development works, for example. Such Temporary Closures are made on the grounds of public safety.

## Diversion and Extinguishment Orders

The County and District Councils have discretion to make statutory Orders to Extinguish or Divert paths, in the interests of the landowner or the public.

Generally, Orders are made under the Highways Act 1980, although there is provision under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to make Orders where it is necessary to extinguish or divert the path to enable development to be undertaken. The local planning authority granting the planning permission determines these Orders and, in most cases, will be the District or Borough Council.

Orders made under the Highways Act 1980 must meet certain criteria before any application may be considered.

In the case of Diversion Orders made under Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980, the new route must start and finish on the same highway as the existing route, or on a highway leading to them and must not be substantially less convenient to the public. The effect on adjoining landowners and the public's enjoyment of the route must also be considered.

In the case of Extinguishment Orders made under Section 118 of the Highways Act 1980, the only grounds for making an Order is lack of need, except for railway crossings, where safety can be considered. The fact that a path may be out of repair and unusable at the time the Order is made, is not a reason for extinguishment.

There are also new provisions under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 for special diversion or extinguishment Orders to be made for crime prevention and the purposes of school security.

Public Path Orders are subject to extensive statutory requirements for consultation, publicity and provision for representations or objections. Opposed Orders cannot be confirmed by the County Council and have to be referred to the Secretary of State for confirmation, who may call a Public Inquiry to resolve the matter. In some cases the issue may be determined by written representations.

Charges are imposed to cover the costs of administration and advertising associated with any Order. At present the administration costs are £975.00 and the advertising costs are approximately £700.00.

Should you wish to apply to divert or extinguish a public path running across your land, please contact us.

To see all such applications currently being administered by the County Council that affect Public Rights of Way in Staffordshire, see Proposed Diversions.

## Temporary Closures

The County Council also makes Road Traffic Regulation Orders to allow public rights of way to be temporarily closed for maintenance work to be carried out where there is a danger to the public. Such Orders either last for six months or in certain cases, three weeks if it necessary to close the path urgently. Whenever possible, alternative routes are provided.

Charges are also imposed to cover the costs associated with such Orders. The administration costs are currently £625.00 and an advertising cost will be incurred, depending on the nature of the closure.

To check the latest Temporary or Emergency closures affecting Public Rights of Way in Staffordshire, see Closures in effect.

## Map Modification Orders

Amendments to the Definitive Map and Statement, either to add a route or to reclassify, delete or modify an existing route, are achieved by a Map Modification Order. Modification Orders do not create new public paths. Evidence is required to show that the route already exists.

A person may submit an application and supporting evidence under Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for the Definitive Map to be modified. For more information relating to this area of work, please contact us.

## Creation Agreements

The County Council can enter into a Public Path Creation Agreement with any individual, authority or organisation. Before entering into an Agreement, the County Council has to consult any other local authority within the area and a Notice has to be published in at least one local newspaper.

## Widths of Public Rights of Way

Apart from land affected by ploughing and cultivation, there is no standard legally defined width for a right of way of any category of path, unless specified in the Statement accompanying the Definitive Map and Statement. (Note: No widths are specified in the Statement accompanying Staffordshire County Council's Definitive Map).

The width for each individual path is considered to be that which the public has been in the habit of using. In the absence of any other evidence the common sense approach would be that the footpath should be wide enough for two walkers to pass each other and a bridleway enough for two horses to pass.

Where a path runs between long established boundaries -banks, old hedges, walls etc. the presumption is that they mark the limits of the highway and that the right of way is across the full width between those boundaries.

The Rights of Way Act 1990 deals with crops and overhanging vegetation.

Maximum and minimum widths are laid down in the Rights of Way Act 1990 for headland paths over arable land and for restoration of crossfield paths following ploughing and cropping. These are without prejudice to any greater widths recorded in the Definitive Statement and DO NOT set a standard for the complete rights of way network. Under the Rights of Way Act, 1990, the landowner must ensure that headland paths are not ploughed and that a minimum width of 1.5 metres for a headland footpath and 3 metres for a headland bridlepath is maintained. The landowner may plough a cross-field path, but the line of the path must be made obvious again within 14 days. The minimum widths when reinstating cross-field paths are 1 metre for a footpath and 2 metres for a bridlepath.

## Maintenance of the Network

## The County Council's role

Staffordshire County Council, as highway authority, is responsible for the maintenance of public rights of way. (A Parish Council has the power to maintain footpaths or bridleways in its area, but this does not absolve the Highway Authority from its duty see The Parish Council's Role). (Section 41 of Highways Act, 1980.)

In simple terms, irrespective of who owns the subsoil, the surface of any publicly maintainable highway is vested in the ownership of the Highway Authority (Section 263 of the Highways Act, 1980).

The County Council, as mentioned above, is responsible for maintaining and protecting the public path network. The County Council should:

- keeping the surface of the public path network in good repair and controlling vegetation (other than crops) growing from it
- maintain bridges over natural water courses, including farm ditches
- signposting rights of way from metalled roads and providing additional signs and waymarks as necessary along the route
- protecting the public's right to use and enjoy rights of way
- securing the removal of obstructions, including ensuring that paths over cultivated land are reinstated and marked out after they have been disturbed
- ensuring that there are no intimidating notices that would deter the public from any paths
- provide a minimum 25% contribution towards any costs incurred by a landowner in maintaining stiles or gates on public rights of way.

## The Landowner's Role

The landowner or occupier of land must:

- keep rights of way clear of obstructions;
- cut back vegetation encroaching from the sides and overhanging the path, so that it does not inconvenience the public or prevent the line of the path from being apparent on the ground. (On bridleways, horseriders should be allowed 3 metres [10 feet] of headroom)
- ensure that all field-edge public paths are **never** cultivated
- ensure that cross-field footpaths and bridleways are cultivated (i.e. ploughed or disturbed) only when it is not convenient to avoid them and are properly reinstated after disturbance
- keep paths clear of crops to ensure that they do not inconvenience users
- maintain any stiles or gates on a public path in a safe condition;
- ensure that bulls are **not** kept in a field crossed by a path unless they do not exceed 10 months old or are both not of a recognised dairy breed and are accompanied by cows or heifers
- ensure that any warning notices are displayed only when a bull is present in a field never keep any animal which is known to be aggressive in a field to which the public has access
- ensure that no misleading signs are placed near rights of way that might discourage access.

## The Parish Council's role

Parish Councils have no specific duties for rights of way, however, they are given certain powers which, if exercised, can make a significant contribution to the public's ability to enjoy the public path network.

The rights and powers conferred to Parish Councils are:

- the maintenance of any footpath or bridleway within its area which is maintainable at public expense
- the erection of lighting on any footpath or bridleway. Although the number of public paths likely to require lighting is small, lighting can be important on paths leading to a village or bus stop for example
- the erection of notices, with the consent of the landowner, on or near a footpath or bridleway, warning of local dangers
- the creation of new footpaths and bridleways by agreement with the landowner over land in their own and adjoining parishes if satisfied that the creation would be beneficial to all or, any part of, the parish or community
- the signposting and waymarking of public paths on behalf of, and with the consent of the highway authority. A highway authority can give permission for other persons such as Parish Councils to erect and maintain signposts on its behalf
- the provision of seats and shelters at the side of public paths.

## Stiles, Gates and other Structures

Stiles or gates across a public path are a licensed obstruction.

In order to erect a stile or gate, a landowner will need to obtain the consent of the County Council, as highway authority. Consent can only be given by the County Council, if the stiles or gates are required to prevent the ingress and egress of animals on land which is used for, or about to be brought into use for, agriculture or forestry. (Section 147 of the Highways Act, 1980.)

The sole exception to the above is that the County Council may, on its own authority, erect stiles, gates or barriers on public footpaths or bridleways as it deems necessary to safeguard people using the highway (Section 66 of the Highways Act 1980, as amended by Section 70 of the Countyside and Rights of Way Act 2000).

It is the landowners' responsibility to maintain any stile, gate or other structure across a public path in a safe condition and to a standard of repair required to prevent unreasonable interference with the rights of the person using the right of way. The highway authority can serve notice on the landowner requiring repairs within 14 days and, if necessary, following the expiration of the notice undertake the work and seek to recover its costs. (Section 146 of the Highways Act, 1980.)

A bridleway gate should have a minimum width of 1.5 metres (5 feet). The highway authority can serve notice on the owner of a gate requiring it to be enlarged, ensure it opens freely or to remove it. (Section 145 of the Highways Act, 1980)

There is no statutory minimum width for a stile, although it must not unreasonably restrict the use of the path.

Although the maintenance of stiles and gates is the responsibility of the landowner they can recover at least 25% of the cost from the Highway Authority.

## Signposting and Waymarking

The Highway Authority has a duty to signpost all public paths where they leave a metalled road. (Section 27 (1) of the Countryside Act, 1968.)

The status of a right of way must be given but the provision of supplementary information such as destination and distance is discretionary.

Signposts need not be erected in situations where the highway authority considers it unnecessary and the Parish Council agrees. (Section 27(3) of the Countryside Act 1968)

The highway authority also has the power to erect waymarkers along routes to assist persons unfamiliar with the locality. Consultation must first take place with the landowner/occupier and way marks should not be attached to any structures owned by the landowner/occupier without their permission. The merit of waymarking is that it assists path users unfamiliar with the locality to follow paths more easily thus avoiding inadvertent trespass or damage.

Pulling down or obliterating a direction sign is an offence. (Section 131 of the Highways Act, 1980). The offender can be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court and such incidents are reported to the police.

## Obstructions and Other Nuisances

Any person who wilfully obstructs the free passage along a highway, without lawful authority, is guilty of an offence under Section 137 of Highways Act, 1980 and liable to a fine. Furthermore, under Section 64 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, a magistrates Court may, on the conviction of a person for wilful obstruction, order the person to remove the obstruction if it is in that person's power to do so. This may be in addition to, or instead of a fine.

A highway obstruction has been defined as "something which permanently or temporarily removes the whole or part of the highway from the public's use altogether".

An encroachment which reduces the width of a highway, e.g. the extension of a garden fence across a right of way or a building is an obstruction, even if the obstruction is only partial.

Any unauthorised structure on a right of way can be considered an obstruction and the highway authority can serve notice on the person responsible for the structure requiring them to remove it within a period of one month. If the notice is not complied with, the authority may remove the obstruction and seek to recover the costs incurred under Section 143 of Highways Act, 1980.

## Damage to the Surface

It is an offence to damage or disturb the surface of any public right of way and to deposit anything on it, without lawful authority or excuse, so as to render it inconvenient for the public.

The damage or disturbance can include digging a ditch or carrying out any other form of excavation; removing soil or turf (except when carrying out lawful improvements) and the ploughing of field-edge paths.

The Highway Authority has a duty to try to remedy the situation, if necessary, by Magistrates' Courts proceedings. (Sections 131 and 131A of Highways Act, 1980).

## Barbed Wire Fence Adjacent to the Highway

Maintenance of any fences abutting a public path is the responsibility of the landowner. Where there is a barbed wire fence along the side of a path which is likely to injure path users or animals on the highway, the highway authority may require its removal by serving a notice on the occupiers requiring them to abate the nuisance within a specified time (from 1-6 months). If they fail to comply with the notice a Magistrates' Court may order them to do so and empower the authority to remove the fencing itself and recover the cost from the owner. (Section 164 of Highways Act, 1980).

## Ploughing and Cultivation

The statutory right to plough or disturb by cultivation applies only to cross field footpaths and bridleways over agricultural land. Headland footpaths or bridleways must not be ploughed or disturbed by cultivation.

After ploughing or other disturbance, the surface must be made good so that it is reasonably convenient for the exercise of the right of way and the line of the path must be indicated on the ground to at least the minimum width. This must be done within 14 days of the first time the surface is disturbed for the cultivation of an agricultural crop and within 24 hours of any further disturbance during the cultivation of the same crop.

If the occupier fails to make good the surface within the time limits, or if the crop obstructs the minimum width (as detailed below) of the path during the growing period, the highway authority can serve 24 hours' notice on the occupier, of their intention to carry out the necessary work itself to reinstate the right of way, or if the occupier cannot be located, post notices on site. Alternatively, the authority can prosecute the occupier in the Magistrates' Court.

A very small number of footpaths and rights of way are subject to a common law right to plough. Unless this right is recorded in the Definitive Statement the onus is on the occupier to prove the existence of the right. Where there is a common law right the occupier is not obliged to make good the surface but must keep it clear of growing crops.

The minimum widths for the reinstatement of cross-field paths, following cultivation or removal of crops from the surface, and for headland paths are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Headland or field-edge footpath** | **1.5 metres** |
| **Cross-field footpath** | **1 metre** |
| **Headland or field-edge bridlepath** | **3 metres** |
| **Crossfield bridlepath** | **2 metres** |





## Overhanging vegetation and Fallen Trees

Maintenance of any vegetation overhanging the right of way is the responsibility of the landowner unless the vegetation is growing on land forming part of the highway, i.e. the verge. Where a hedge, tree, shrub or any vegetation overhangs a highway so as to endanger users, the highway authority has the power to require the owner or occupier to cut it back within 14 days of service of a notice. However, the owner or occupier has 21 days from the service of notice in which to appeal to the Magistrates Court against the terms of the notice. If the work is not done within the stated time-scale, the authority may do it itself and recover the cost from the owner. (Section 154 of Highways Act, 1980).

The highway authority is responsible for ensuring that fallen trees are removed from the highway either by requiring the landowner/occupier to clear the route or by removing as much of the tree as obstructs the route. Trees growing on the path are normally the Authority's responsibility. (Section 154 of Highways Act, 1980).

## Misleading Notices

It is an offence for any person to place or maintain on land on or near a public right of way, a false or misleading notice which is likely to deter the public from using that way. A Magistrates' Court can require the offender to remove the notice and impose fines. (Section 57 of National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949).

## Deposition of Material on a Highway

It is an offence to deposit, without lawful authority or excuse, anything whatsoever on a highway, in consequence of which a user of the highway is injured or endangered. It is also an offence to allow any filth, lime or other offensive material to flow onto the highway, or to place any rope or wire across a highway so as to endanger people using the highway. If the substance deposited is endangering public safety the highway authority can remove it immediately and seek to recover costs, otherwise they can prosecute the offender in the Magistrates' Court.

If substances are deposited as a result of fly-tipping and whilst unsightly are not preventing the use of the right of way it is the duty of district councils to remove them under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. (Section 161 (2) of Highways Act, 1980).

## Firearms

It is an offence to shoot across a vehicular highway. However it is not an offence to shoot across a footpath or bridleway, although it may amount to a public nuisance or be considered as wilful obstruction of the highway. It is an offence to carry or use firearms on or near a right of way in order to intimidate or deter the public from using the right of way.

## Railways and Quarries

It is an offence not to fence off a railway adjacent to a highway or a quarry which is dangerous to the public because of its location (under the Railway Clauses Consolidation Act 1845 Section 68 and Mines and Quarries Act 1954 Section 51). In other cases of dangerous excavations and structures on land adjoining a Right of Way the nuisance may be an offence under common law.

## Animals Affecting the Use of Rights of Way

## Dogs

Where a dog effectively prevents the use of a path by behaving in a threatening manner, it constitutes a nuisance at public law. It is often extremely difficult to prove that a dog is either dangerous or intimidating path users. The police are informed of all reported incidents.

## Bulls

It is an offence punishable by a fine to keep a bull in a field or enclosure crossed by a public right of way, unless the bull is under eleven months old, or is not one of the recognised dairy breeds and is accompanied by cows or heifers. Recognised dairy breeds are currently defined as Ayrshire, British Friesian, British Holstein, Dairy Shorthorn, Guernsey, Jersey and Kerry.


Friesian


Ayrshire


Jersey


Guernsey


Dairy Shorthorn


Kerry

## Horses

Horseriding on a public footpath without the owner's consent is a civil trespass against the landowner. A district council has the power to make a bye-law prohibiting horseriding on a footpath, this power is usually only used on urban footpaths.

## Dangerous Animals

It is an offence to keep any animal, including bulls which would otherwise be legal, and horses, in a field crossed by a right of way if the animal is known to be dangerous. The owner may be liable for damages and prosecution under Section 2 of the 1972 Animals Act or the Health and Safety at work Act 1974.

## Intimidation

In some instances, the right to use a public right of way may be challenged by the landowner in such a way that no physical obstruction takes place. The County Council has a statutory duty to protect the rights of the public to the use of public rights of way and this duty is wide enough for appropriate action to be taken to prevent intimidatory tactics. (Section 130 of Highways Act, 1980).

## Motor Vehicles

It is an offence for any person to drive on a public footpath or bridleway without lawful authority, i.e. the landowner's consent. Even if consent is given, it is an offence to drive recklessly, carelessly or inconsiderately on a highway.

The onus is on any person driving on a footpath or bridleway to prove lawful authority.

The police should be informed of all incidents, together with registration marks if possible. (Sections 2, 3 and 34 of Road Traffic Act, 1988).

## Community Paths Initiative

The Community Paths Initiative (CPI) was introduced in 1992. It is the County Council's principal commitment to local schemes for the development and promotion of the public path network. Its aim is to increase people's awareness and enjoyment of their local path network by involving them in the care, maintenance and promotion of their local paths.

Parish Councils and other community bodies compete annually for grants towards local path projects up to a maximum of £2000.00. The scheme is designed to encompass as wide a range of projects as possible and any project that fulfils the criteria of ' improving the condition of local paths' or 'promoting their use and enjoyment' is considered.

Since 1992, financial assistance has been awarded to more than 220 projects. Successful projects include the purchase of tools and equipment, the replacement of stiles with kissing gates to increase Access for All, the publication of circular Parish Walks leaflets and the provision of interpretation boards.

For more information, please contact Mr Paul Rochfort on (01785) 277241.

## Promotion

The huge growth in the popularity of recreational walking in recent years has produced a corresponding demand for publicised routes. Within the network of regional routes in Staffordshire, the County Council and other organisations have provided an extensive range of walks and information. These include the long distance routes such as the Staffordshire Way, Way for the Millennium, the Newcastle Way, the Weaver Way, the Limestone Way, Heart of England Way, the Gritstone Trail, the Monarch's Way and the Beacon Way, as well as a range of shorter, circular self-guided walks, many of which are based around the County Council's Country Parks, Picnic Areas and Greenways.

For further information, see our Country Trails and Promoted Routes.

The County Council also supports the local production of circular walks leaflets with Parish Councils and other community groups through its Community Paths Initiative and is involved with the Forest of Mercia partnership in implementing its Access Strategy that includes the creation of the Forest of Mercia Way.

An annual Countryside Event programme is available, which includes guided walks and other events organised by the County Council.