

What is a public right of way?

Public rights of way are the legal right to walk, cycle, ride a horse, take a horse and cart or a motorised vehicle of 2,3 or 4 wheels depending on the status of the path, (mostly) over **private** land. They are highways and are under the same legislation as the adopted road network, but are recorded on the Definitive Map for Public Rights of Way .

There are four legal status's

Footpath - right to walk

Bridleway - right to walk, , ride or lead a horse, use a pedal cycle

Restricted byway - right to walk, ride or lead a horse, use a pedal cycle, take a horse and cart

Byway (open to all traffic) also known as a BOAT - right to walk, , ride or lead a horse, use a pedal cycle, take a horse and cart, drive a motorised vehicle of 2, 3 or 4 wheels

Types of path

There are four types of path and you can use different paths for different activities. They are signposted from the roadside, with markers along the route. You should always keep to the marked route.



Footpaths are marked with yellow arrows

Only walkers can use footpaths



Bridleways are marked with blue arrows

Walkers, horse riders and cyclists can use bridleways



Restricted byways are marked with burgundy arrows

Walkers, horse riders, cyclists and horse and cart can use bridleways. Cars and motorcycles are not allowed



Byways are marked with red arrows

Walkers, horse riders, cyclists, car users, motorcyclists and horse and cart can all use byways

Three parties are involved and each have differing responsibilities over them

Nottinghamshire County Council as the local highways authority, has a duty to ensure the public can pass and repass safely along the route. This includes certain maintenance elements such as surface including surface vegetation, bridges over natural watercourses, directional and roadside signs and some barriers. They also have powers of enforcement in certain circumstances

The owners/occupiers of the land have the duty to ensure they do not obstruct the route e.g. electric fencing, machinery, fences, and have responsibility for structures such as stiles and gates (as they are needed for stock control and not for the path), hedges and trees alongside and marking and removing crops over arable paths. This includes householders with hedges (or trees) backing onto a right of way – these must be trimmed so as not to obstruct the way.

The public have the duty to use the path responsibly, to keep to the path and not trespass on private land (including keeping dogs on the path and not allowing them to run free) and to respect private land

There may also be private rights on land that means some people can take a motorised vehicle on a public footpath or bridleway if they have a legal right to do so, such as farm machinery or a householder if they live on a track that also has a footpath or bridleway running along it. They will have additional responsibility to not damage the surface of the path

Anti-social behaviour or illegal access should be reported to the police

Any reports of issues found on a public right of way should be directed to [Report a problem with a public right of way | Nottinghamshire County Council](#) and further information on rights of way can be found here

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