

Public Rights of Way and Countryside Access

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess

Oxfordshire County Council's role:

The county council has a statutory duty to record, maintain and protect the public right of way network (public rights of way are footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways). We manage these rights of way in partnership with farmers, land managers, user groups and local councils. There are many other ways of accessing green spaces and the countryside including using access land, permissive paths, nature reserves, country parks and other routes and areas. The county council often does not manage these but does recognise their importance in providing a joined up network and does work with site owners and managers where possible.

How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?

We can provide limited advice to Neighbourhood Development Planning groups wishing to improve the accessibility of public rights of way in their areas, increase the connectivity of their local network, or to increase awareness and engagement in the use or management of the network.

Public rights of way information produced by Oxfordshire County Council:

- The county council manages the Definitive Map and Statement (DM&S) of Public Rights of Way, which is the legal record of public rights of way. To view the map and statements online, please go to the webpage: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/defininitivemaponline.
- The county council's main landing web page for access is www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess and this contains full information about most aspects of public rights of way, including the opportunity to report issues and find out how access can be changed and improved.
- As the highway authority, the county council has a statutory duty to prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan, which sets out our ambitions for the management and improvement of public rights of way for walkers, cyclists, equestrian users and people with mobility problems. Oxfordshire County Council calls its new plan the Rights of Way Management Plan and the current draft version is at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/rowip along with the original plan from 2006.

Oxfordshire County Council contact:

If you require advice or ideas on how to improve and develop public rights of way as part of an emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan, please email:

countryside@oxfordshire.gov.uk