



Walkers are Welcome in

**TADCASTER**

**Walking on Footpaths and Bridleways can be muddy, wet and provide difficult walking over uneven ground. You may need to climb stiles and pass through narrow gates.**

**You may also meet animals such as cows and sometimes bulls. The following information copied from the North Yorkshire County Council website provides helpful advice.**

**Enjoy the countryside but also be sure to follow the Countryside Code and minimize damage and disturbance to crops, livestock and wildlife.**



### **The Countryside Code**

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

## **Rights of way - information and advice**

North Yorkshire CC are responsible for managing the longest public rights of way network in England at over 10,000km. This page highlights some common issues.

### **Dogs**

Dogs are allowed on public rights of way, but must be kept under close control. On open access land there may be restrictions at certain times of year to

protect wildlife. Intimidating dogs should be reported to us or the police. Problems with dog fouling should be reported to your district or borough council.

### **Cattle**

It is normal to meet livestock when out in the countryside using the public rights of way network. However, you should never meet an adult bull being kept alone in a field with a right of way in it and although keeping of beef bulls when cows are present is acceptable you should never come across a dairy bull. Where you experience a problem please email [paths@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:paths@northyorks.gov.uk).

Cattle attacks are relatively rare. Follow these simple principles to reduce the risk:

- Always walk round cows with calves. Walking between them can be seen as a threat.
- If they approach, walk slowly and if you have a dog ensure it is at heel.
- If you feel threatened, let go of your dog. It can run faster than cattle and escape.
- If in doubt, do not enter the field.

### **Crops, vegetation and surfacing**

Farmers are entitled to plough public rights of way if it is not reasonably convenient to avoid them. This only applies to cross-field footpaths and bridleways.

The landowner is responsible for ensuring that a hedge does not overhang and obstruct a public right of way. If a right of way is obstructed by a fallen tree or large branch, responsibility for its removal lies with the tree owner. We are responsible for ensuring that vegetation on the surface of a right of way is kept under control and does not make the route difficult to use. Overgrowth of plants and shrubs alongside the path is the responsibility of the landowner.

We, as the highway authority, are responsible for the surface of all public rights of way - the landowner's interest only extends to the sub soil. If you need to dig up the surface to lay pipes or drains, for example, you should contact the public rights of way team first.

### **Gates, stiles, signs and bridges**

It is the landowner's duty to ensure that stiles and gates are in good repair. Anyone wanting to install additional gates or styles on footpaths or bridleways must apply to us in writing. A padlocked gate on a public right of way constitutes an obstruction; we

have the right to remove it without consultation if the issue cannot be resolved.

When replacing old furniture or installing new, we provide the most user-friendly option. By law, we have to reduce barriers for the less able, so a gap is most desirable, but due to stock control this is not always practical. Gates are the next best solution, followed by kissing gates and stiles.

Responsibility for bridges and culverts is shared between us and the landowner, and we are responsible for most footbridges. The rail authority is responsible for most footbridges over railway lines, while British Waterways is responsible for all bridges over the canal network.

All public rights of way should be signposted where they leave a road. We have an on-going programme of replacing missing and broken signposts. If you notice any, email [paths@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:paths@northyorks.gov.uk).

## Other obstructions

Intimidating behaviour designed to stop the use of a public right of way may be an offence and may amount to obstruction of the path. Such issues should be reported to us at [paths@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:paths@northyorks.gov.uk). If the behaviour is a public nuisance, the police should also be told.

Owners and occupiers of land crossed by public rights of way can be liable for injuries caused by negligence. For example, if a stile were to collapse under a walker, or if someone was injured by an electric fence placed across a path, the injured party may pursue a claim. We are responsible for the right of way surface. In certain circumstances, we will be liable if the injury is due to a negligent act.

There should never be exposed barbed wire or electric fences across a public right of way without a means of crossing. Where a barbed wire or electric fence is alongside a right of way, it may be a danger. There should be electric fence warning signs at regular intervals.

## Maintenance

Among our responsibilities are protecting the rights of way, making sure they are free from obstructions and that the furniture is easy to use and in good condition. Outside the national parks, maintenance of rights of way is taken care of by seven area rangers and a team of countryside volunteers. Together, they look after 4,645km of footpaths, 37km of cycle track, 1,389km of bridleways, 9km of restricted byways and 7km of byways open to all traffic.

## Legislation

Rights of way law is drawn from a patchwork of different pieces of legislation, key among them the Highways Act 1980, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Details of these and other relevant laws can be found at [the government legislation website](#).

## Local access forum

The local access forum advises us and other public bodies on how to make the countryside more accessible, influencing planning and policy. It has 18 members, with new members recruited every three years.

## Responsibilities

Landowners and the public each have responsibilities for rights of way. Download a copy of our leaflet [Duties and responsibilities of landowners and farmers \[2Mb\]](#) here. The public can do their part by following the Countryside Code, closing gates, protecting plants and animals and taking litter home.

## Your rights

On all public rights of way you can take a pushchair or wheelchair if the path is suitable, although many may be uneven and may have gates or stiles. You are also allowed to picnic, but always take your litter home. You are not allowed to ride a horse or a bicycle on a footpath - this is a trespass against the landowner - and it is an offence to drive a vehicle on a footpath, bridleway or restricted byway.

## View public rights of way on a map

Follow the link below to the NYCC on-line map showing public rights of way in the whole of the county, including the North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales national parks. If you have any queries or issues with paths in the national parks please contact the rights of way teams in the relevant national park authority.

[http://maps.northyorks.gov.uk/connect/?mapcfg=Out\\_and\\_About](http://maps.northyorks.gov.uk/connect/?mapcfg=Out_and_About)

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