

ADVICE ON
Permissive Routes

The
British
Horse
Society



Permissive facilities are welcomed as supplements to rights of way. Some areas have so few bridleways or byways that these serve as the only off-road routes available to riders or carriage-drivers.

In any area, they provide additional routes for enjoyment, and riders and carriage drivers are grateful for them. Routes linking with rights of way to form circuits are especially welcome.

Permissive routes in managed areas such as country parks are also welcome.

The surfaces of tracks should be suitable for riding and carriage driving as appropriate.

Existing rights of way (of any category) not currently shown on definitive maps should be added to the map at the status proven by long user or documentary evidence.

These paths should not be termed 'permissive' simply because they are not recorded on the map.

BHS Access and Bridleways Officers are recommended to investigate quite carefully whether routes offered as 'permissive' routes (whether paid for or not) could be subject to claims for adding them to the definitive map. Accepting a permissive path over an unrecorded right can jeopardise the application.

While welcome as a supplement to rights of way locally, the problem for users is that they have no status or protection in law and the access can be closed at any time. Therefore, there should never be any exchange of public rights of way for permissive facilities, however poor the existing public path(s) may be.



If this advice leaflet is a printed copy, please check for the latest version on www.bhs.org.uk/access-and-bridleways

For more information on The British Horse Society's rights of way work contact:

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