



Core Paths Networks: A Vision for the Future

Since 2005 Local Authorities and National Park Authorities (Access Authorities) have been busy preparing Core Paths Plans (CPP). Under the [Land Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#) every Access Authority has a duty to prepare a CPP. Some plans have been completed whilst others are still going through the planning process. If you would like to know more about the process of making a plan have a look at

[Core Paths Plans: A Guide to Good Practice](#)

or to find out more about the plan for your area contact your

[Access Officer](#)

or the relevant Access Authority website.

What are Core Paths?

A Core Paths Plan sets out a framework or network of the most useful and important paths both for recreation and everyday journeys; for local people and visitors. These core paths networks should provide opportunities for walking, cycling, horse riding and other non-motorised activities, including access to coastal and inland waters, by people of all ages and abilities. Each plan has been put together in close consultation with local people and land managers to try to make sure that the paths meet community needs whilst minimising any impact on farming and other land management practices.



It's useful to think of core paths as a skeleton (perhaps a strange shaped one!) that supports and ties together a much more extensive network of paths called the wider paths network.

Core Paths Plans vary from area to area in terms of extent and types of paths that are included – local interpretation of legislation. Access Authorities do not have a duty to improve, promote or maintain core paths, only to make a plan, however it is likely that all core paths will be signposted and marked on Ordnance Survey maps so that people can be confident in using them. Read a list of all the adopted Core Path Plans [here](#) .

There's a big job to do!

Core paths and the wider path networks are going to need lots of work (surface improvements, gates, signposts) to make them usable (and enjoyable!) by a wide range of people - in other words to be 'fit for purpose'. In some places people have been getting together to form Community Path Groups to get work done on their local paths - many have done fantastic work. Public funding is likely to be tight over the next few years, so local action will be really important in developing and looking after a great network of paths around your community. If you are interested in finding out more visit [Local People: Local Paths](#) .