KENT COUNTY COUNCIL’S
RIGHTS OF WAY Improvement Plan

Consultation Draft
Easier to read version
kent.gov.uk/maidstonegateway
1. Hello

We (Kent County Council) would like to tell you about our plan to make the Rights of Way in Kent better.

The plan is called the ‘Rights of Way Improvement Plan’.

The plan will tell you what we would like to do and how we will do it.

We would like you to tell us what you think about the plan.

You can do this by filling in the form online at:

kent.gov.uk/rightsofwayimprovementplan

You can do this until 12th September 2018.

This is an easy read copy of the plan.
2. What is a ‘Public Right of Way’

A Public Right of Way is a path where people are allowed to do the following:

- walk, run, use mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs
- walk, horse riding, cycle, use mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs
- walk, horse riding, cycle, drive a horse and cart, use mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs
- walk, horse riding, cycle, drive a horse and cart, drive a vehicle with an engine

Public Rights of Way connect to places and services and can be used to:

- go to work
- go to school or college
- go shopping
- go to towns or villages
- go to the countryside
- go to the seaside

All the Rights of Way join together and are called the ‘Public Rights of Way Network’.
3. What is the Rights of Way Improvement Plan?

It is the law that we write this plan and look at it again every 10 years.

We have already written one plan 10 years ago and it is now time to write a new one.

The plan is about the following things:

• Making the Public Rights of Way network better so that more people want to use it.

• Making the Public Rights of Way network better so that more people can use it.

• Helping more people to use the paths to become happier and healthy.

• Letting people know where and how they can use the Public Rights of Way network.
4. How did we write the Plan?

Looking at the following things helped us to write the new plan:

• We looked at what we did in the first plan.

• We looked at other plans and policies that had already been written, that linked to the plan.

Policies are a set of rules written by an organisation which it will follow when delivering services.

• We asked people what they wanted.

• We looked at what we have now.

• We used maps and other information to help us plan for the future use of the network.

We used all this information together to write the new plan.
5. What did we find out?

Good things about the Public Rights of Way Network

**Health**

People can use the Public Rights of Way network to get more physically active.

People who are more physically active are more healthy. They have a lower chance of developing:

- heart disease
- diabetes
- cancer
- mental health problems

Studies have shown that people who are active outside in the countryside felt better:

- had more energy
- felt less depressed
- felt less confused

Being active helps manage mental health issues, especially in the natural environment.
When people walk or cycle to places instead of getting into their cars, there are:

- fewer cars on the road
- lower road traffic air pollution levels
Kent’s Economy

More people are going to live in Kent in the future.

Making sure that places people live in the future have lots of opportunities to walk, cycle and ride a horse, will:

• give people a choice to not use their car to get to places they want to go.

• make Kent a nice place to live.

• attract new jobs and businesses to the area.
People come to visit Kent for the good walking, cycling and horse riding routes.

Kent is a popular place to visit for holidays and day trips.

Kent has some very popular paths that people like to use, these include:

• North Downs Way
• England Coast Path
• Greensand Way
• Saxon Shore Way
• Weald Way
• Stour Valley Walk

When people visit Kent’s Public Rights of Way they may spend money which helps Kent’s economy.
6. What is stopping people using Public Rights of Way?

People did not like to use the Public Rights of Way network because:

- the paths were too overgrown with weeds.
- they don’t know where to go.
- paths don’t take them where they wanted to go.
- cyclists and horse riders are worried about dangerous busy roads.
7. What Works?

People would use the Public Rights of network if:

- paths are well looked after.
- paths were away from busy roads and cars.
- paths linked to school, places of work and other services.
- paths followed a circular route.
• paths were better connected to new housing and new roads.

• barriers were taken away.

• path surfaces were smoother and not muddy.

• paths were clearly signed and easy to follow.

• Information could tell you where and how to use the paths.
8. Over the next 10 years -
What we will do and how we will do it?

From all the information we looked at we got 6 different ideas.

These ideas will help us make the best use of the paths and will let people know about them.

The six ideas are:

1) Active lifestyles

We want to help people become more active every day, by changing the Rights of Way Network.

These changes will help people to walk and cycle to get to places and not use their car.

We also want people to have fun and relax on the network and use it to:

walk the dog
go for a walk
go for a run
2) Evolution of the network

More people will be living in Kent over the next 10 years and more houses will be needed.

We will work with the people that plan how and where the new houses are built.

We need to make changes to the network so it can be used by more people.

We will make sure the people that live in the new houses can walk, cycle and ride a horse and not have to always use their cars.
3) Knowing what’s out there

We want to let more people know about the Public Rights of Way network by:

• providing better information.

• making sure the information gets to all types of people.

• clearly signing the Public Rights of Way, especially from busy areas like Country parks.
4) **Well-maintained network**

A lot of people wanted Public Rights of Way to be better looked after.

We want to improve what we already do to cut weeds on the paths, so people can use them easily.

We want to make the path surfaces better so more people with different abilities can use them.
5) **Rights with responsibilities**

Some paths cross over private land, like a farmer's field.

Farmers must help us to keep the paths clear for people to use.

We will work with farmers and other landowners to make sure this happens.

We also want people to know what they can and can't do on a Public Right of Way.

We will let people know the rules so we make the network safer for everyone using it.
6) **Efficient delivery**

We want to provide good customer service and build on what we already do.

We will use new technology and new information from our customers to do this.
9. How do I tell you what I think of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan?

You can tell us what you think of the plan and our six ideas by filling in the form online at:

kent.gov.uk/rightsofwayimprovementplan
All documents can be made available in alternative formats upon request. Call 03000 421553. This number is monitored during office hours and there is an answering machine at other times.