



BRIDLEWAY GUIDELINES

FIND YOUR BRIDLEWAYS ... on OS maps. The *Explorer* series gives up-to-date info

YOU CAN RIDE ON... Bridleways (BWs), Byways (Restricted or Open to All Traffic), and Other Routes with Public Access (ORPAs). You can legally drive a carriage on Byways and ORPAs.

YOU CAN ALSO RIDE ... where there's Permissive Access e.g. some country parks; on Countryside Stewardship/Higher Level Schemes that allow riding, and on *hard tracks* in Forestry Commission woods shown on OS maps as Open Access Land. *But -follow marked routes and obey any rules.*

LOOK FOR A SIGNPOST ... where BWs and byways leave the road, which may be down a side street

FOLLOW THE WAYMARKS ... BLUE arrows for BWs, RED or PURPLE-BROWN on byways. Once on the route look ahead to next yellow-topped post and try not to deviate from line of route.

MUD ... riders should go slowly if they *MUST* use bridleways etc in wet weather. Don't cut up the track for other riders. Respect grass and KEEP OFF growing crops.

DEEP, BOGGY MUD ... should be reported. The cause is usually bad drainage

RUTS ... dangerous, persistent ruts should also be reported.

VEGETATION ... from either the side or the ground that hinders passage should be reported. You can clear it provided you use tools you would normally carry with you on some walk/ride e.g. secateurs.

HEADROOM ... 11ft (3.5m) is needed to ride upright under trees, tunnels etc.

GATES ... should be useable from horseback. On BWs must have a min. 5ft (1.5m) *clear* between gateposts and when gate fully open; on byways 10ft. Weights NOT acceptable. SHUT any gate you open

TURNING CIRCLE ... 10ft (3m) is needed for a horse to turn to shut a gate -on *both* sides of gate!

ELECTRIC FENCES ... must carry yellow/black warnings; should not run ACROSS routes; should be insulated within at least 3m of catch *and* of leading edge of gate if it opens towards electric fencing

FENCED TRACKS ... should be a minimum of 5m wide to allow for passing and for maintenance. Wire should be taut and clearly visible. Barbed wire is illegal if dangerous.

BWs ON ARABLE LAND... must be a minimum of 2m wide across fields and 3m for an unfenced field-edge bridleway. **On grass** no limit to width, but you **MUST** stick to the line.

PLOUGHING ... a cross-field BW must be reinstated within 14 days of ploughing and 24 hours of any other cultivation. Field-edge BWs must **NEVER** be ploughed, nor **any** byway or ORPA.

BIRD SCARERS ... bangs -only one group per 10 minutes; should not be near any road or right of way

BULLS ... from non-dairy breeds can be kept *with cows* in fields crossed by rights of way.

CATTLE GRIDS ... should have fence between grid and passing gate, with gate catch away from grid.

HORSES ... aggressive horses, stallions and UNUSUAL animals; e.g. llamas, ostriches etc, should be fenced-off for safety with an obviously stout or double fence - see Fenced Tracks and Electric Fences above. But expect to encounter horses loose in fields that BWs or byways cross.

HOLES ... there should be enough space to avoid rabbit/badger holes. Report if dangerous.

LEVEL CROSSINGS ... On roads, behave like a car. On gated crossings (BWs, byways etc) use trackside telephone if there is one; follow signalman's instructions especially about phoning once across. **FOLLOW ANY INSTRUCTIONS AND CROSS WITH CARE AT ALL TIMES.**