

VALE OF GLAMORGAN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM: 4th JUNE 2026

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

RIGHTS OF WAY IN THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN

Public Rights of Way give a right of access for members of the public over land in private ownership, providing them access to countryside they can enjoy.

Responsibility for paths in the countryside is divided between landowners and the Council, but responsible use of the countryside by the public is equally important. Information for users can be found in the Countryside Codes. There are approximately 586km of Public Rights of Way in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Council's role, as the Highway Authority for the area, includes maintaining path surfaces, maintaining bridges, mapping paths, administering changes and taking enforcement action to resolve obstructions. Further information on the Council's responsibilities can be found within guidance on the Welsh Government's website. Landowners responsibilities include maintaining gates and stiles (liaising with the Council when doing so), cutting back overhanging vegetation, reinstating paths through ploughed land or crops and ensuring certain animals (e.g. particular breeds of bull) are not stocked in fields to which the public has access.

The Council also works with various groups representing the interests of both users and landowners, such as the Ramblers Association, British Horse Society and Valeways.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

The Vale of Glamorgan's Rights of Way Improvement Plan sets out the Council's vision, objectives and strategy for improving the County's rights of way network. The ROWIP is a framework to guide the Council's work to maintain and improve the rights of way network and to prioritise the work that is done and provides the basis for annual work-planning.

The 2024-2034 plan was finalised after a public consultation and has been produced with the support and guidance of Natural Resources Wales and the Welsh Government.

The 2024 ROWIP builds on the work contained within the Vale of Glamorgan's first Rights of Way Improvement Plan, published in 2007. The 2024 updates the previous plan by incorporating key pieces of legislation, guidance and strategy released since publication of the first plan and by evaluating the past, present and future influences on countryside access in the Vale.

Link to the 2024 ROWIP is found below:

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Living/Public%20Rights%20of%20Way/ROWIP-2024-2034-EN.pdf>

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the overview of Rights of Way be noted.