

A self-help guide to reporting faults on bridleways

Do you sometimes ride down a bridleway and see a problem, such as a tree fallen across the route or a signpost missing, and think to yourself “I hope someone reports that”. Well, it’s no good just leaving it to other people, you need to report it yourself. Here is an easy guide to online reporting of problems on Rights of Way. It looks like a lot of instructions but just follow it step by step.

Essex County Council is the authority responsible for maintaining Public Rights of Way.

- Go to <http://www.essexhighways.org/transport-and-roads.aspx> and scroll down the page till you see a heading “What would you like to do next?”.
- Underneath this heading, click on the pictogram “Tell us about something”.
- A map comes up – click on approximately the right area. Precision is not required at this stage.
- A page with 14 pictograms comes up. Scroll down to the bottom left hand and click on the Public Rights of Way pictogram.
- Now you see eight pictograms of types of problems – click on the appropriate one.
- Even more pictograms! Again, click on the relevant one.
- A map comes up, where the idea is to click the map to place a marker at the site of the issue you want to report. As it says, you can either enter a post code (without spaces), or a town or road name. An alternative is to zoom in on the map to find the spot. The zoom tools (+ and -) are on the top left corner of the map.
- You have to zoom in a long way before the map allows you to click and place a marker. If you see the message in a box which says “zoom in further to see house numbers and reported issues”, then you haven’t gone far enough.
- When you no longer see that box, then you can click on the place where the fault is. Bridleways are coloured green with little lines across them, and byways are brown with arrows on them. Restricted byways are blue with opposing arrows. There is a key at the bottom of the map.
- If the fault has already been reported, there is a little purple diamond at the location. If you click on the diamond, you can see the detail of the issue that has been reported.
- Assuming your issue has not already been reported, when you click on the location on the map, a message comes up “There are currently no issues being investigated at this location, please select the option below”. Click on the green button which says “Report an issue here”.
- The map sometimes seems to jump about a bit so you might need to have another go to get exactly the right place.
- An information box comes up with the PRow number and a description. If the marker is in the correct position, click the green box “Confirm location”.
- You’re nearly there! You now enter the details of the problem. In the first box, give precise information about where the problem is (if you can give an Ordnance Survey grid reference, that is very helpful).
- In the second box, say what the problem is e.g. a tree across the bridleway or whatever the issue is.
- You can add up to five photos but they might not be accepted if they are too many MB.
- If you want to keep a record of what you have reported, cut and paste the text into your own word file.
- When you are happy with what you have entered, press green button “Submit”.
- You will get a reference number for your report; keep a note of this as it will enable you to follow the problem up in the future.

With thanks to Katherine Evans of The Ramblers, who wrote the instructions on which this article is based.