

RIGHTS OF WAY HIERARCHY SYSTEM - EXPLANATORY NOTES

Step 1 – Measuring Demand

According to the rationale in our Rights of Way Improvement Plan, there are two main factors that affect the demand for a particular right of way:

- the size and location of the population in the area
- the value of the area in terms of its scenic amenity i.e. its significant physical and geographical characteristics that make it more attractive for outdoor recreation

The county was divided into 1km² land parcels and allocated a score to each land parcel based on these two factors. See attached Map.

The rights of way in each land parcel were then given a score from 1 to 5, with rights of way scoring 5 being those where demand is likely to be highest and 1 being those where demand is likely to be lowest.

Step 2 – Measuring Benefit to Users

The significance of each right of way in the wider path network, and hence its benefit to users, was then evaluated by giving a score to each right of way, where appropriate, based on the factors given below. No score was awarded to a right of way which did not meet any of these criteria.

Factors which measure a path's significance in the wider path network	
Factor	Score
Right of way is part of route of major recreational importance such as the Staffordshire Way, Heart of England Way, Gritstone Trail, the Trent Valley Way or the Limestone Way.	10*
Right of way is part of a known locally promoted route. Locally promoted routes are fully signed and waymarked routes and include routes developed by District and Parish Councils and user groups promoted on SCC's website and through the Definitive Map.	8*
Right of way is located within 25m of and links directly with a locally promoted route.	6*
Right of way runs across publicly accessible land such as country parks, land designated under Sections 15 & 16 of CROW Act or land managed by other councils or bodies.	8*
Right of way provides link to publicly accessible land such as country parks, land designated under Sections 15 & 16 of CROW Act or land managed by other councils or bodies.	6*
Right of way provides link to local services such as schools, shops or community facilities.	8*
Right of way is the subject of an application under Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to upgrade its status to bridleway or restricted byway	2*
.Right of way is important locally and well used by local community (This information to be gained via stakeholder engagement with user groups and parish councils etc. Not scored at present)	

Each right of way was then given a score based on its multi user potential i.e. its highway status with footpaths being awarded a score of 2 and bridleways a score of 3. This score was then added to the above score.

The results from steps 1 and 2 were then combined to categorise each right of way as A, B or C

Next Step

The purpose of this exercise is to provide a starting point for assessing the use and importance of a path in the wider network. Local intelligence is necessary to give a more accurate picture.