

- The Definitive Map is conclusive proof of the existence and status of a right of way at the RELEVANT DATE. This is a particular day on which the Map shall be taken to prove in law that the public had the rights shown. The first legal requirement of the Definitive Statement is to specify the Relevant Date of the Map as a whole, before going on to record details of individual rights of way.
- 'Once a highway, always a highway' is a legal maxim. According to highway law, a highway goes on existing unless changed by a statutory order, and therefore highway rights that were shown to exist on a particular day continue to exist in perpetuity unless and until there is such an order to change them.
- Most of the rights of way shown on this Definitive Map will have been carried forward from previous editions unchanged. The only differences will be the additions, deletions or changes of status which have been made by 'evidential' orders or by 'legal event' orders in the period intervening between the last edition and the cut-off date for the present edition. The cut-off date is the Relevant Date stated on the title page.
- Orders modifying the Map and Statement have their own Relevant Date which is stated in each order as it is made. When the modification is included in a new edition of the whole Map, its Relevant Date becomes the Relevant Date assigned to that edition. The process of including new modifications in the whole Map so the individual orders no longer need to be consulted is known as 'consolidation'.
- Future modifications, ie those occurring after the cut-off date, will in the same way have their individual Relevant Date, which is effective until they are shown on the Map at the next consolidation.
- The Relevant Date is a benchmark date for the recording of the existence of a public right of way or any details concerning it. A path has either the Relevant Date of the Map on which it is shown, or if recorded later than the current Map, the Relevant Date in the individual order ■