

Guidance for Events on Public Rights of Way

It is generally regarded as acceptable to use Public Footpaths, Bridleways and Byways for organised sponsored walks, cross country running challenges and similar events.

Well managed events reduce the risk of disruption to communities, environmental impact and unfortunate occurrences.

Organisers should satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the route and should always consult with the owners of the land over which the public rights of way run. Check-points need to be established and arrangements made for vehicular access to certain points for emergencies, feeding stations and tidying-up operations. Organisers should also ensure all participants are clear about the route of the public right of way and properly aware of the public's rights and responsibilities when using them as set out in the [Countryside Code](#).

Requirements for Organisers:

(this list is not exhaustive and is summary of the key issues that should be considered)

- Plan early and consult widely (e.g. Parish Council, Rights of Way Department, Isle of Wight Council Events Team, the Police).
- Obtain permissions from Landowners.
- Avoid inappropriate dates and times.
- Keep to appropriate participant numbers and brief all entrants thoroughly.
- Give way, be courteous to and respect other users – participants must be prepared to stop and/or slow down and do not have priority over other members of the public.
- Particular care and attention must be taken on Public Bridleways where horses may be present and possibly “spooked” by unexpected occurrences and where cyclists may be travelling at speed.
- Avoid large number of participants setting off at the same time (e.g. staggered starting times for small groups).
- Respect the needs of landowners and the privacy of residents.
- Take heed of farming and forestry operations.
- Be aware of sensitive landscapes, wildlife habitats and archaeological sites.
- Seek landowner permission for the putting up of signs and ensure they are all removed immediately after the event.
- Pick up and take away all rubbish.
- Consider the impact of vehicles coming to the event.
- Arrange appropriate insurance and contingency cover.
- Acknowledge the co-operation you have received.

Further recommended information can be found in the code for [Outdoor UK Challenge Events](#) on the website of the Institute of Fundraising. Prompted by particular concerns about insensitively organised activities in fragile and sensitive areas it is also relevant to any large scale walking events. It aims to minimise problems by encouraging organisers to work in consultation with local councils, land managers and other relevant organisations, and to consider issues such as environmental impact and safety of participants and others. Please read and follow the code when organising an event.

Please Note:

Though walking and running are unrestricted, cycle races on Roads and Byways require prior permission from the Police.

Cycle races on bridleways and footpaths are not permitted under any circumstances (Road Traffic Act 1988, Section 31).

It is an offence to drive a motor vehicle on a Public Footpath or Public Bridleway without lawful authority (Road Traffic Act 1988, Section 34).