

2. BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS OF ENJOYING THE COUNTRYSIDE

The Countryside Commission's *Policies for enjoying the countryside* (CCP 234), launched in 1987, first set the target that:

All rights of way should be legally defined, properly maintained and well publicised by the end of the century.



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The strong and wide-ranging support that this target has received means that it can be truly regarded as 'the national target for rights of way'. Among the many different bodies and organisations that have endorsed that national target and who are actively working to ensure that it is achieved, are:

- the Government; which has incorporated the national target into the White Paper on the Environment, *This common inheritance*;
- the key national farming and landowning organisations, the National Farmer's Union and Country Landowner's Association;
- all of the main countryside path user organisations, including the Ramblers Association, Open Spaces Society, the British Horse Society and Trail Riders Fellowship.

The main responsibility for protecting and maintaining public rights of way, however, falls on local highway authorities. It is they who have the greatest role to play – and who have also made the greatest contribution. In many areas the national target for rights of way is fast becoming a practical reality.

The Milestones approach outlined in this document is designed to build on that success. Locally and nationally, it will allow local authorities to set out (and take the credit) for what has been achieved already. But it is also a forward-looking and practical approach that will allow authorities to define clearly what remains to be done and plan effectively to make the best use of scarce staff and financial resources.

Applying the Milestones approach will help every authority to ensure that it is on course and can achieve the national target for rights of way as quickly and as efficiently as possible.



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Two rights of way that meet the national target.