

Dorset Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) Consultation Survey

Completed paper surveys can be returned to County Hall reception or posted to **'Russell Goff - Greenspace Manager, Countryside Team, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ'** by the closing date on **Monday, 12 October 2026**.

Overview

This is the formal 3-month consultation for the draft Dorset's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2026 to 2036. The ROWIP sets out how Dorset Council will develop a modern, accessible and better-connected network of public rights of way that supports everyday walking, cycling and access to natural green and blue spaces.

Dorset Council, as the Local Highway Authority, has a statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan. This plan fulfils that duty while setting a broader and more ambitious vision for how Dorset's public rights of way (PROW) network will contribute to the county's communities, economy and environment over the next decade.

Read the full Draft Dorset's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2026 to 2036 (<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/dorset-s-rights-of-way-improvement-plan-rowip-2026-to-2036-draft#foreword>)

All information you provide will be treated confidentially and in line with Dorset Council's privacy policy (<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/dorset-council-privacy-notice>)

Why your views matter

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will help guide future priorities and investment in Dorset's rights of way network. Your feedback will help us understand what is working well, what needs improvement, and where our efforts should be focused over the coming years.

Section 1: About you

Q1. I am responding as:

Please tick one option

***Please go to page 2 for more options**

☐	Member of the public
☐	On behalf of an organisation - please specify below
☐	Business
☒	Town or Parish Council - please specify below
☐	Elected Member

	Other – please specify below
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If “Other”, please specify: _____

If you are a town/parish council or an organisation, please specify here:

Toller Porcorum Parish Council

Q2. How often, if at all, do you use public rights of way in Dorset?

Please tick one option

✓	Daily
	A few times a week
	A few times a month
	Rarely
	Never

Section 2: Vision

***You can read the summary vision statement on page 15**

For more information read the full Vision of Dorset's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2026-2036 (<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/dorset-s-rights-of-way-improvement-plan-rowip-2026-to-2036-draft#vision-for-rowip2>)

Q3. The vision of the plan is to create a modern, accessible and well-connected rights of way network that supports health, communities, the economy and the environment.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the vision?

Please tick one option

✓	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
	Don't know

Q4. Do you have any other comments about the vision?

Please tell us in the box below

Fully support this as long as vision implemented in a timely manner.

Section 3: Policies

Below are the proposed policies for Dorset's Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

In the next section, you can share your views on each policy. You can comment on the policies that matter to you or where you have concerns.

All questions are optional. You do not need to respond to every policy and can choose to provide feedback only on those that are most important to you.

Note: Throughout this survey, any reference to **PROW** refers to **Public Rights of Way**.

Policy 1 – Maintaining and improving the existing Public Rights of Way Network

****You can read the Policy 1 summary on pages 15 and 16***

The council will prioritise maintaining and improving the existing rights of way network, focusing on the routes that are most important for local communities and everyday use.

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

☒	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree
☐	Don't know

Q6. Do you have any other comments about this proposed policy?

Please tell us in the box below

Listen to communities and then communicate

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Policy 2 – Raise awareness of Public Rights of Way

***You can read the Policy 2 summary from pages 16 and 17**

The council will improve how people find, understand and use rights of way by enhancing signage, local information, and digital tools such as online mapping.

Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

✓	Strongly agree
	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
	Don't know

Q8. Do you have any other comments about this proposed policy?

Please tell us in the box below

Improve signage and allow easy access to route maps

Policy 3 – Making our network more accessible

***You can read the Policy 3 summary on page 17**

The council will improve accessibility across the network by reducing physical barriers and providing better information, so more people can use and enjoy rights of way.

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

****Please go to page 5 for more options***

	Strongly agree
✓	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree

☐	Strongly disagree
☐	Don't know

Q10. Do you have any other comments this proposed policy?

Please tell us in the box below

Route maps (if available) should highlight accessibility for people with reduced ability

Policy 4 – Empowering Communities to help improve their Public Rights of Way Network

***You can read the Policy 4 summary on page 18**

The council will work more closely with local communities, volunteers and organisations to maintain, improve and promote rights of way.

Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

☒	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree
☐	Don't know

Q12. Do you have any other comments about this proposed policy?

Please tell us in the box below

Listen to the requirements of local communities and act on those requirements. Feedback in a timely manner to stakeholders on how actions are proceedings or not. Active engagement with local groups would help.

Implement proposals in a timely manner.

Policy 5 – Building the Dorset Economy through our Public Rights of Way Network

***You can read the Policy 5 summary from pages 18 and 19**

The council will use the rights of way network to support the local economy by improving access to destinations and promoting Dorset for walking, cycling and outdoor recreation.

Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

☒	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree
☐	Don't know

Q14. Do you have any other comments about this proposed policy?

Please tell us in the box below

Policy 6 – Ensuring the Countryside Code and access legislation is followed, and Landowners are respected

***You can read the Policy 6 summary from pages 19 and 20**

The council will promote responsible use of the network, including following the Countryside Code, while working with landowners to manage access and reduce conflict.

Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

****Please go to page 7 for more options***

☒	Strongly agree
☐	Agree

	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
	Don't know

Q16. Do you have any other comments about this proposed policy?

Please tell us in the box below

More robust discussion with some land owners who obstruct rights of way

Policy 7 – Using our new housing development and the Local Plan to enhance Public Rights of Way

****You can read the Policy 7 summary from pages 20 and 21***

The council will use new housing and development opportunities to protect, improve and connect the rights of way network.

Q17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

	Strongly agree
✓	Agree
	Neither agree nor disagree
	Disagree
	Strongly disagree
	Don't know

Q18. Do you have any other comments about this proposed policy? (Open text)

Any new developments should enhance rights of way access

Policy 8 – Maximise the PROW network's contribution to health and wellbeing

***You can read the Policy 8 summary from pages 21 and 22**

The council will support health and wellbeing by encouraging more people to use rights of way for physical activity and access to nature.

Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

☒	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree
☐	Don't know

Q20. Do you have any other comments about this proposed policy?

Please tell us in the box below

The Council should engage and support local well being and walking groups.

Policy 9 – Maximise our PROW for Sustainable transport linking communities and active travel

***You can read the Policy 9 summary from pages 22 and 23**

The council will improve connections between communities so rights of way can be used more for everyday journeys such as walking, cycling and accessing local services.

Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

****Please go to page 9 for more options***

☒	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree

	Don't know
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Q22. Do you have any other comments this proposed policy?

Please tell us in the box below

Access between villages and towns in Dorset can be hazardous with few or no pavements. Safe trailways connecting areas with little or no traffic is very important especially with very restricted/no public transport

Policy 10 – To uphold the council's legal duties to provide an up-to-date definitive map and statement which is accessible to the public

***You can read the Policy 10 summary on page 23**

The council will maintain and improve access to the Definitive Map and legal records so people can easily understand and use the rights of way network.

Q23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposed policy?

Please tick one option

☒	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree
☐	Don't know

Q24. Do you have any other comments about this proposed policy?

Please tell us in the box below

Definitive map is difficult to access and often not up to date.
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Section 4: Priorities

Q25. Which of the following are most important to you? (Rank up to 3)

Please choose your three most important priorities.

Rank them by writing:

- **1 = Most important**
- **2 = Second most important**
- **3 = Third most important**

Only three options should be numbered. Leave all other boxes blank.

1	Maintaining and improving the existing Public Rights of Way network
	Raise awareness of Public Rights of Way
2	Making our network more accessible
3	Empowering Communities to help improve their Public Rights of Way Network
	Building the Dorset Economy through our Public Rights of Way Network
	Ensuring the Countryside Code and access legislation is followed, and Landowners are respected
	Using new housing development and the Local Plan to enhance Public Rights of Way
	Maximise the PROW network's contribution to health and wellbeing
	Maximise our PROW Sustainable transport linking communities and active travel
	To uphold the council's legal duties to provide an up-to-date definitive map and statement which is accessible to the public

Section 5: Your experience of the network

Q26a. How easy or difficult is it to use rights of way in Dorset?

Please tick one option

	Very easy
✓	Easy
	Neither easy nor difficult
	Difficult
	Very difficult
	Don't know

Q26b. If you answered "Difficult" or "Very difficult" above, which area(s) of Dorset were you thinking about?

Please tick all that apply

***Please go to page 11 to tick your options**

	North Dorset
	Weymouth and Portland
	Dorchester area
	Purbeck
	East Dorset
	West Dorset
	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area Across Dorset generally
	Other (please specify)

If other, please specify here: _____

Q27. How easy or difficult is it to find information about routes?

Please tick one option

	Very easy
	Easy
	Neither easy nor difficult
✓	Difficult
	Very difficult
	Don't know

Q28. What is your level of confidence when navigating public paths and routes?

Please tick one option

✓	Very confident
	Fairly confident
	Neither confident nor unconfident
	Not very confident
	Not at all confident
	Don't know

Q29. How easy or difficult is it to report a problem to on a path Dorset Council?

Please tick one option

	Very easy
✓	Easy
	Neither easy nor difficult
	Difficult
	Very difficult
	I am not aware of how to report a problem
	Don't know

Section 6: Final comments

Q30. What barriers, if any, do you experience when using rights of way in Dorset?

Please tick all that apply

☒	Poor path condition
☒	Poor signage or information
☒	Accessibility barriers for disabled users (for example: stiles, rough or uneven surfaces, steep slopes)
☐	Blocked or restricted access to paths (for example: locked gates, closed paths, overgrown routes)
☐	Safety concerns
☐	Lack of local routes
☐	I do not face any barriers
☐	Other (please specify)

If other, please specify here: _____

Q31. Do you have any comments Dorset Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)?

Please tell us in the box below

Fully support the improvement plan but very disappointed in the delays in implementation and lack of communications with stakeholders. Where huge support for further connectivity between villages and private funding is available, no progress seems to have been made. Is the Council just talking but not implementing??

Section 7: Demographics

This section is optional. We use it to collect diversity information. This helps to ensure any changes do not unfairly impact specific sectors of the community. It also helps to make sure our consultation response comes from a representative sample of residents.

Q32. Please select your age group.

Please tick one option

***Please go to page 13 for more options**

☐	Under 18
☐	18 to 24
☐	25 to 39
☐	40 to 49
☐	50 to 59

	60 to 64
✓	65+
	Prefer not to say

Q33. What is your sex?

Please tick one option

	Female
✓	Male
	Prefer not to say

Q34. Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

Please tick one option

✓	Yes
	No
	Prefer not to say

Q35. The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted or is likely to last 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS for example) are considered to be disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010?

Please tick one option

	Yes – <i>go to Q36</i>
✓	No – <i>go to Q37</i>
	Prefer not to say

Q36. If at the previous question you stated you consider yourself to have a disability. Please state the type of disability which applies to you.

Please tick all that apply

****Please go to page 14 for more options***

	Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
	Autistic Spectrum Conditions
	Blind
	Dyscalculia
	Dyslexia

☐	Dyspraxia
☐	Deaf
☐	Hearing loss
☐	Long term health condition
☐	Mental health issues
☐	Physical impairment
☐	Sign Language User
☐	Visually impaired
☐	Medical conditions
☐	Mobility issues
☐	Learning disability
☐	Specific learning differences
☐	Wheelchair user
☐	Prefer not to say

If you prefer to use another term, please write in: _____

Q37. What is your ethnic group?

Please tick one option

☒	White: British
☐	White: Irish
☐	White: Gypsy
☐	White: Irish Traveller
☐	White: Other
☐	Mixed: White and Black Caribbean
☐	Mixed: White and Black African
☐	Mixed: White and Asian
☐	Mixed: Other
☐	Asian or Asian British: Indian
☐	Asian or Asian British: Pakistan
☐	Asian or Asian British: Chinese
☐	Asian or Asian British: Other
☐	Black or Black British:
☐	Arab
☐	Other ethnic group
☐	Prefer not to say

If other, please specify here: _____

****Thank you for your time. End of survey. ****

Summary of policies available in the Appendix below.