

**September 2025:**

***A note about footpaths and bridleways :***

What an amazingly complex area this is! Walberswick Common Lands Charity has footpaths and bridleways across all of its land, bringing people and nature close together. Footpaths are for walkers whilst bridleways and byways are for pedal cycles, horses and “beasts of burden”. Suffolk County Council is responsible for the Definitive Map and Statement, which is the conclusive legal record of the existence, status and location of all recorded public rights of way in Suffolk at the relevant date of the map.

This definitive map shows public rights of way at a scale of 1:10,000cm (approximately 6 inches to one mile).

In England and Wales, we are lucky to have over 140,000 miles of footpaths, bridleways and byways which make up our public rights of way network.

Lobbying by the Ramblers led to the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, which created, together with national parks, the definitive map.

Suffolk contains one of England’s most extensive networks - it exceeds 3,500 miles compared with 4,000 miles of road. Landowners have to keep public rights of way free from obstructions and maintain stiles, gates etc. They are responsible for vegetation overgrown from the sides of a footpath/bridleway such as a hedge or tree; the highway authority is responsible for vegetation that has grown up naturally through the path’s surface.

The County has a *Green Access Strategy Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020 - 2030* which explains how improvements will provide a better experience.

