

# Byways & Bridleways Trust

## Press Release

A Simple 'Templating' System for Path Orders Would Save Thousands of Pounds.

The Byways and Bridleways Trust Calls for Urgent Action.

The incredible network of public footpaths, bridleways and byways in England and Wales is a tremendous benefit to the nation's health and heritage. Just like the NHS, Armed Forces, and Education it costs money to run, but there is no excuse for wasting taxpayers' money when saving it is easy to do.

Every week local authorities across England and Wales send out dozens of notices and orders concerning the recording and management of public footpaths, bridleways and byways. These notices and orders must comply with standard forms set out in Statutory Instruments, but every week a number of orders are badly drafted. Mostly the errors are small and have little adverse impact on the right of way to which the order relates, but the Trust estimates (from first-hand knowledge) that on average each week there are two orders so badly drafted that they attract objections from the public.

Enquiries of colleagues in local government is that the cost of remedying one defective order (whether by the making of a new order, or through the Secretary of State correcting the defective one) is £1,500. At two a week, the cost to the taxpayer of putting right careless errors is over a quarter of a million of Her Majesty's good English pounds.

There is a simple solution available: the provision of one central source (website) from where any authority intending to make an order can draw down a template and advice notes (much like Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs provides) thereby reducing considerably the risk of inadvertent error.

The Trust wrote to defra asking that this system be implemented quickly, both to reduce the needless workload on councils, the public, users' organisations and land managers, and to save this huge waste of taxpayers' money.

defra has declined to take the lead on this, insisting that it is a task for the currently moribund Rights of Way Review Committee. This is simply shuffling off the problem to someone else, and will not deliver a solution in any reasonable time, if at all.

The Trust calls upon the Secretary of State to appoint a senior civil servant to make the change happen. No more excuses.

For more, please contact our Editor - [editor@bbtrust.org.uk](mailto:editor@bbtrust.org.uk)

Dave Tilbury

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