



Land managers rights and responsibilities

What new rights and responsibilities do landowners have?

The CROW Act balances a freedom for people to enjoy the countryside with the continuing freedom of owners and occupiers to manage their land as they choose. The Land Managers' Guidance Pack was produced to help explain the arrangements to land managers who are affected by the introduction of the new access rights and is available on our the Open Access website. For general enquiries, or to order a free copy of the pack, email the [Open Access Contact Centre](#) or call 0845 100 3298.

Are farmers paid compensation for access to their land?

No. Government has decided that access will become a statutory right and that no compensation will be payable. Restrictions and limitations on the new rights have been included to ensure that landowners will not suffer significant losses or costs as a result.

What is the Access Management Grant Scheme?

The Access Management Grant Scheme (AMGS) is administered by Natural England on behalf of Government to help access authorities introduce the new access rights on the ground and to reduce the burden of the access rights on land managers. It currently prioritises land which is high in nature conservation value or where there is likely to be high demand for access.

Will farmers be given any money to help them manage access?

A land manager can under certain circumstances apply for funding under the Access Management Grant Scheme. Those circumstances are:

- If the access authority concerned has decided not to enter the scheme
- If the land manager is responsible for managing substantial areas of new access land that meets the schemes priorities
- If it is economical to offer a grant. This will include consideration to the extent of the grant application and the administration costs
- The local context – will the inclusion of the area in question be particularly valuable in terms of the local access opportunity.

Is there any information about the signs to use on access land?

The Countryside Agency produced guidance on the use of signs on access land for access authorities and for land managers. The guidance for land managers forms part of the Land Managers' Guidance Pack. If you want a copy of the access authority guidance, which is longer and more detailed, please email [Natural England Publications](#) or call 0870 120 6466 and quote the following: 'Signs on access land in England – guidance for access authorities, CA 181'.

Can I get supplies of the new access symbol and the negative access symbol?

Natural England does not provide supplies of the symbol directly to land managers. Access authorities can apply for funding through the Access Management Grant Scheme to



purchase symbols. Landowners and managers who feel there is a need for symbols on their land should contact their local access authority. This is the National Park Authority for land in national parks, and the local highways authority in all other areas.

Am I legally responsible for the safety of people using my land?

On land subject to CROW access rights, the occupier of the land (normally the landowner or farm tenant) faces a lower duty of care to people using the right of access than is currently owed to trespassers. Occupiers still need to take reasonable care so that people using the right of access, and trespassers, do not suffer injury because of a known hazard on the land. However, whenever the CROW access rights are in force, occupiers will not face any liability in respect of accidents that result from natural features of the land, such as rocks, trees, rivers, streams, trees, ditches or ponds. Providing they do not set out to create a deliberate risk, and are not reckless, then occupiers will not face any liability in respect of an injury suffered by someone passing over a wall fence or gate, without using any gate or stile that may exist properly.

If someone using the right of access is injured by one of your animals then you may be liable if you (or someone who was looking after the animal for you) were aware of any abnormal characteristics in the animal that made it likely to cause an injury unless it was restrained. You won't normally be liable if someone is trespassing or they voluntarily accepted the risk.

More advice on liability issues can be found in the Land Managers' Guidance Pack. This is available on the [Open Access](#) website or you can request a copy from the Open Access Contact Centre on 0845 100 3298.

Are people trespassing if they cause damage?

Yes. Anyone ignoring the general restrictions in Schedule 2 to the Act (refer to "What activities are not included in the new rights?") becomes a trespasser and may be asked to leave the land. Anyone trespassing on access land by virtue of contravening these restrictions, or local restrictions under Chapter 11 of the Act, may not enter it again (or enter other land in the same ownership) within 72 hours of leaving it.

What happens if a large group of people decide to use my land for access?

There is no limit on the number of individuals who can be on access land at one time, but there has been no evidence so far of sudden or excessive visitor pressure as a result of the new access rights.

Participation in organised games and sports, or in activities organised or undertaken for a commercial purpose, is not permitted by the new rights, but maybe permitted by the landowner.