

## **SOAC Part 15 - Paths, Tracks and Rights of Way**

Rights to responsible access equally apply on and off paths, tracks and rights of way and land managers are expected to respect this, but access users must also respect the need for land management activities. There are some circumstances where it might be advisable to remain on paths if they exist even if the land alongside is within your rights to access. Examples where this may be desirable are adjacent to houses, through fields or land that is vulnerable to erosion.

The only difference between access on and off paths or tracks is where the route is a right of way under common law or a core path. Rights of way are unaffected by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, so any access rights are in addition to those you have due to the route being a right of way. At some locations these may permit you to access areas which otherwise are outwith access rights. Rights of way often, but not always, have signposts. Detailed information is available at [www.scotways.com](http://www.scotways.com). Core paths are a network of paths. These have been compiled by each access authority (local council or national park), and also may give you access to areas that would otherwise not be accessible. Very few are in the uplands as they are primarily intended to encourage access for those that are not used to grabbing a map, compass, waterproofs and heading for the hills. For details of these, contact the relevant access authority or look at their website.