

Being in the know - the benefits of membership

Sharing knowledge and experience is at the heart of IPROW membership. So you can be sure that whatever problems you may come across you will have instant free access to the widest possible body of specialist knowledge and expertise. This includes:

- **The on-line forum.** Post a question and the chances are someone else will have come across it before and be able to help. Or browse the previous postings; there are hundreds of topics with literally thousands of responses.
- **Advice Line.** If you have a particularly knotty problem we will refer it, free of charge, for advice to some of the most experienced rights of way and access professionals in the country.
- **IPROW's specialist Wiki.** This growing on-line encyclopaedia of articles, knowledge and case notes on all aspects of rights of way work is compiled by IPROW members and with case law reports by specialist lawyers.

Other important benefits include:

- **Direct notification** of the latest changes in case law, legislation, regulations and Government advice, delivered straight to your inbox as they happen.
- **Recognition of your professional standing** among your colleagues, with elected members and at local inquiries.
- **IPROW's journal "Waymark"** full of lively articles, information and discussion.
- **Appointments Service.** The latest job vacancies, delivered to your inbox as soon as they are available.
- **A voice at the top table.** IPROW sits on important national committees and is seen by Government as a key consultee before any changes in the legislation or procedures are made.
- **Generous discounts** on IPROW's acclaimed specialist training courses.

In short being a member of IPROW means being in the know – having access to the very best professional advice and being confident you are up to date with the latest changes to case law, legislation, regulations and Government advice.

Some of the things our members tell us:

"As a 'jack of all trades' working for a small authority, I regard my IPROW membership as essential. There is always someone to turn to for advice who will know what I am on about, while the level of specialist knowledge and expertise far exceeds that available to me here in house."



"I sent the woolliest of recollections of the principles in 'a case I once heard about' and back came an accurate citation within the hour. What an excellent service; it's a great benefit of membership!"

"My membership more than paid for itself with just one phone call of expert advice."

"The advice I got from IPROW's forum has saved my authority literally thousands of pounds ... and the embarrassment of having to admit to everyone involved that we were wrong."

"Thanks to everyone's help I have now persuaded the powers that be that their advice was incorrect Three cheers for the IPROW forum! Why struggle without it?"

"By far the best training course I have ever been on."



To join IPROW online go to
<http://www.iprow.co.uk>

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If your job is dealing with public rights of way or access to land ...

..... then perhaps you need some help?

If your job is dealing with public rights of way or with public access to land, then you will know just how difficult, time consuming and contentious these subjects can be.

The legislation is often extremely complicated. Simple, routine tasks such as path maintenance or dealing with an obstruction can end up being anything but simple and far from routine. They may involve working on private land that is difficult to get to and which the farmer sees as his 'factory floor', for example, or where conservation or wildlife issues have also to be taken into account.

And while nearly everyone enjoys walking or riding away from the road network, few things, it seems, can generate as much ill-informed debate as a disputed public right of way or argument about the rights which people may have to use a particular area of land.

Back in 1986, the recognition that rights of way were a highly specialist subject area led a group of local authority officers to come together to form what is now IPROW – the Institute of Public Rights of Way and Access Management. Their aim was to overcome officer's isolation and make life easier by sharing knowledge and experience, promoting professional recognition among colleagues, and encouraging the adoption of the best working practices.

Today public demand for places to walk and ride away from roads used by cars is even greater. But so too are the problems and challenges faced by those whose job it is meet that demand, by protecting and looking after the path network and access land.

There is now more legislation and the 'rules and regulations' we must all work to are infinitely more complicated. The public also now have more direct powers, such as being able to take the authority itself to court if it fails to deal with an obstruction. More and more cases seem to end up at a local inquiry. At the same time, as we all know, the pressures under which local authorities are working - the need to be ruthlessly efficient and to ensure the best possible value for money - have never been more extreme.

With officers under so much pressure, it is no wonder that IPROW has gone from strength to strength.

Who are IPROW's members

IPROW truly represents the whole of the rights of way profession. Its members include national legal experts on rights of way and access issues, policy officers from Defra, the Welsh Assembly and Natural England (along with several of the Planning Inspectorate's rights of way Inspectors), paid officers of bodies such as the Ramblers and specialist independent consultants.

But it is those working on rights of way and access issues at the 'grass roots' that form the bulk of the membership. Around three quarters of all members work for highway authorities (as do most of the IPROW Board of Directors). They represent all grades and cover all aspects of the work, from countryside rangers, path inspectors and enforcement officers, to those developing the path network for leisure and tourism and those responsible for maintaining the definitive map or making public path orders.

As a professional body, membership is only open to those whose employment is involved in some way with public rights of way or access to land. It is not open to the general public.



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How much does it cost - and who pays?

There is a one-off joining fee of £31.80. Thereafter membership is just £68.40 a year for all members.

The benefits of membership mean that many of those who work for a highway authority have their fees paid for them, including by some authorities who regard IPROW as a 'support service'. Others pay for themselves:

"I joined IPROW even though we don't get membership paid. It's been worth every penny. When I need a voice of experience with something we've never come across before, or some other knotty problem, then it's nice to know that there's a someone just an email away."



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How to join

It is easy to join on-line. Just go to our website <http://www.iprow.co.uk> and follow the link.

There is no entrance examination or complicated tests - as long as you meet the basic requirement of being employed in rights of way or access management you will be able to join as an Associate Member (AIPROW). If you have worked in the profession for a number of years and built up your experience, you also have the option of applying for full membership (MIPROW). In this case we will ask you to demonstrate your experience, such as by submitting a recent piece of work. Other membership grades include Principal (PIPROW) and Fellow (FIPROW).

"I've been intending to join IPROW for ages ... then I found the online application on the website and it was all done in minutes! It was so fast and efficient - much easier!"