Guidance on Applying for a Temporary Closure on a Public Right of Way

General

Public rights of way should always be open and available for use but there are times when Suffolk County Council (SCC) will close them for short periods. Rights of way must not be closed or restricted without our consent. If you are working on or near a right of way but can carry out your work whilst allowing the public to pass safely, then you may not need to close the right of way. Please check with the Area Rights of Way team.

SCC may close a right of way if we are satisfied that:-

- Works are proposed to be carried out on or near the right of way
- There is a potential danger to the public or serious damage to the ROW
- It is necessary to allow for litter clearing or cleaning.

Period of closure

SCC can authorise the closure of a right of way or part of a right of way for up to 6 months using a legal order. If longer is needed, then an application has to be made to the Secretary of State for the Environment for an extension. This application must be made in good time before the initial closure period has expired and there will be an additional charge.

Charges

For a closure up to 6 months  £970
To extend a 6 month closure on application to the Secretary of State  £600

Do not send payment in advance – the bill will be sent to the applicant.

For orders relating to multiple paths, the administration charge and advertising costs may vary from that described above.

How to apply

To apply for a temporary closure order, you will need to complete an application form.

1. Application form for temporary closure up to 6 months  Form ROW TTRO 01-12

OR

2. If you intend to carry out work to the surface of the right of way, or likely to damage or change the surface then please complete:-

   Application form for temporary closure up to 6 months  Form ROW TTRO WK 01-12

Allow 8 weeks for your closure application to be processed.
Emergency Situations

In an emergency situation, the right of way can be closed using an emergency closure notice. This notice allows a route to be closed for:

Up to 5 days for:
- Works being carried out on or near the right of way
- Litter clearing and cleaning

Up to 21 days:
- Because there is a potential danger to the public or serious damage to the right of way

An emergency notice should only be used for unforeseen circumstances, for example, emergency safety work such as closing a collapsed bridge. It should not be used to close paths where works have been planned in advance. The charge for this is £600

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1. Please give a clear explanation of why the route needs to be closed and how long you expect to have the route closed. The closure order will cover a 6 month period but it is important to give the public accurate information about the actual duration. A closure order can be removed once it is no longer needed at any time.

2. Provide a map showing the extent of the closure and an alternative route if there is one. The alternative route must be on other rights of way or roads or on land in your control. You must ensure that an alternative route across land in your control is safe and fit for public use.

3. You must make sure that the closed route is physically closed to the public, for example using safety fencing, barriers and signs.

4. Include an order number or a reference for invoicing purposes.

5. Access must be allowed to emergency vehicles at all times

6. Access to private property must be allowed at all times.

7. Applicant must notify local residents and businesses that will be affected by the closure.

8. Notices of the closure must be posted on site. Normally this is done by the Area ROW team but the applicant must also monitor the condition of notices and inform the Area ROW team of any missing or damaged.

9. Failure of the public to obey the notice is an offence under the Road Traffic Act 1984 section 16 and absence of notices is therefore a lawful defence.

Contact

East Suffolk
East Area Rights of Way Team
Suffolk Highways
Suffolk County Council
Blyth Road Industrial Estate
Halesworth
Suffolk
IP19 5EN