

Green Lanes Annual Report 2017/18



February 2018

Green lanes are untarmaced tracks, valued by many recreational users as walking, cycling and horse-riding routes and their nearby communities as well. Some green lanes have motorised vehicle rights.

This is our first green lanes annual report and is for everyone who uses and looks after green lanes. It reports on the work we have done in partnership with others over this last year.

1) Monitoring

The Peak District National Park Authority uses electronic logging devices to monitor vehicle use, these have also been used in the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District to obtain data. These loggers – which are buried on site for a period of at least 4 weeks – provide two signals, one for sound and one for the size of engine passing. This means differentiating between agricultural vehicles and larger four by four vehicles is difficult. Where such data is required, officers use their experience to look for locations not used or rarely used agriculturally to ensure data is as accurate as possible in the recording of recreational use.

Data is shared with the police to record illegal use on routes with restrictions to enable them to make intelligence-led decisions on their operations.

During 2017 we have monitored 22 sites. This includes all TRO routes, as well as monitoring at Beeley Hill Top, Hurstclough Lane, Minninglow Lane, Swan Rake, Tagsclough Hill, Three Shire Heads and Wetton. Illegal use has been monitored at Abney, Black Harry Lane, Blackberry Lane Foolow, Brushfield (including logging of the scheduled ancient monument), Monksdale Lane, routes in Pretty Wood Eyam, and a footpath at Sheen.

2) Education & Enforcement

During 2017/18, police have acted upon reports of illegal activity at routes in Derbyshire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire.

An advisory day was held in October 2017 with the support of the local Green Lane Association, West Yorkshire Police and the Area Ranger. This gave the opportunity to meet and talk to 4x4 drivers and motorcycle riders to ensure that they are aware of where they can legally drive/ride and the consequences of driving/riding illegally.

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3) Signage

The illegal use notices erected at Sough Lane, near Taddington have resulted in an improvement to the adjoining land.



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Vandalised signs have been replaced at the Redmires end of the Long Causeway route and at Washgate, near Hollinsclough. Where signs are temporarily obscured or missing, the traffic regulation order is still in force.

4) Reporting

Action plans on priority routes, illegal use and communications for 2017/18 to protect the special qualities of the National Park were approved by Members of the Authority in May 2017. The plans can be viewed at www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/vehicles and are due to be updated at the March Audit, Resource and Performance Committee.

A summary report on the Traffic Regulation Orders made by the National Park Authority was provided in May and has recently been updated. As well as giving details about the special nature of these routes, it also updates the level of logged vehicle use and includes a section on accessibility.

The routes identified as priority routes within the National Park, namely those requiring improved management, are covered by route reports and are kept updated with the latest vehicle logging data, changes in legal status and environmental information. The reports can be viewed at www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/priorityroutes.

5) Legal Status



www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/vehicles

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The Brushfield-Upperdale route, once recorded as an unclassified road and now legally determined and signed as a Public Bridleway, passes some of the finest scenery within the Peak District National Park. The views of Monsal Dale and distant Great Shacklow Wood are striking. It lies adjacent to a scheduled monument which over the years has been subject to vehicle damage. The route was, before determination of legal status, very popular with recreational vehicle users but the legal status of the route is respected and has been since the route was formally determined as bridleway and the order to do so came into effect. Recently the police have taken action against two recreational motorists on the route but use by vehicles has fallen by around 90%, with the route still used for agricultural access. National Park ranger and access staff have worked with the local community to clearly sign the route and are now looking at potential repairs.

As part of their ongoing partnership work with Derbyshire County Council to enhance access, repair works are scheduled to be carried out on the upper track high above Monsal Dale. Delivering 60 tons of materials to such a remote site is challenging, and almost impossible without the help of the farming community. However, the works will address ponding on the worst sections and deter any damage to adjacent farmland, natural habitats and walls by those who try to avoid the deep puddles on this part of the route. This work is being carried out by the Authority's in-house team who have many years of expertise at works such as these.

6) Voluntary Restraint

A red rectangular sign with white text and illustrations. At the top, the words "VOLUNTARY RESTRAINT" are written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below this, there are two white line-art illustrations: a Land Rover-style vehicle on the left and a motorcyclist on the right. Below the illustrations, the text "Recreational motorists are asked NOT TO PROCEED BEYOND THIS POINT" is written in green, with "NOT TO PROCEED" in a larger font. A red horizontal bar contains the text "VALID FROM 1 NOVEMBER 2017 - 1 MAY 2018" in white. Below the bar, the text "Failure to comply could result in full time closure" is written in red, followed by "The future of recreational motoring is in your hands" in black. At the bottom, there are two boxes: one for "Reason:" and one for "Road reference:". The "Reason:" box contains the text "For the protection of the highway due to waterlogged track and deep rutting". The "Road reference:" box contains the text "Minninglow/Galloway Lane" and "Contact derbyshire.rep@glass-uk.org". At the very bottom, there are three logos: "GLASS GREEN LANE ASSOCIATION", "PDVUG", and "treadlightly!".

www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/vehicles

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The Peak District National Park Authority applauds efforts by user groups to take voluntary action to address access issues. We've worked with groups like the British Mountaineering Club and mountain bikers for several years and in recent years have also been working with the Peak and Derbyshire Vehicle User Group and its associated member groups.

For the past 3 winters, PDVUG has been urging recreational vehicle users to refrain from using Minninglow and Gallowlow Lane – the latter an enclosed largely unsurfaced old lane that passes near Minninglow itself – and which gets very wet in winter. Standing water can make access difficult and ruts caused by vehicles can make the lane very difficult for other users to access. The local farmer does not use the lane for agricultural purposes and so any reduction in vehicles during these wet periods is welcomed.

This winter we've seen approximately 40% less 4x4 vehicles than we'd expect and we'll continue to monitor use. PDVUG has published and erected visible signage, one of which is shown here. We help maintain these signs and monitor the levels of use. One frustration this year has been when we'd arranged with the landowner to level out all the ruts on the lane to give an idea of how this would combine with restraint. Unfortunately Derbyshire County Council – whose duty it is to maintain the lane – had notice served on them at the very time that the we were proposing works and are understandably reticent about what works should be carried out there with a legal noticed pending. The lane therefore unfortunately remains rutted.

In the meantime PDVUG continues to urge recreational motor vehicle users to stay off the lane during wet periods to ensure the surface does not deteriorate and deter other users.

7) Traffic Regulation Orders



www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/vehicles

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During 2017, the Authority made two traffic regulation orders; at Derby Lane, near Monyash and at Washgate, near Hollinsclough following consultation. Details of the orders made and the reasoning for these can be viewed at www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/tros.

A further public consultation has commenced at Wetton Hills, near the Manifold Trail. Details of the proposal can be viewed and commented on until 6 April 2018 at www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/consultations

8) TRO Exemptions

At Derby Lane an exemption to the traffic regulation order allows for caving access on application. Since the making of the order there have been 11 applications for exemptions.

8) Volunteers

The Peak Park Conservation Volunteers' stone pitching work continued at Washgate in 2017. A new drain was put in by Potteries and High Peak TRF at Three Shires Head.

