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Peak District
Green Lanes Alliance

January 2015 newsletter

Bradley Lane, Pilsley – A bridleway at last



Photograph: January 2015

Residents of Pilsley have been campaigning for 20 years to have either a TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) on Bradley Lane or the route made a bridleway rather than a BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic). PDGLA and Peak Horsepower have fought two Public Inquiries about the status of the route. In both cases the Inspector decided the route was a bridleway. However the TRF (Trail Riders Fellowship) were unhappy and appealed to the High Court after the second inquiry.

Fortunately DEFRA decided to fight the case. (We weren't involved in the appeal process.) The good news is that the High Court has decided that the Inspector conducted the inquiries fairly with respect to considering all the evidence and confirmed the Inspector's decision of bridleway. The full decision can be read at <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2015/85.html>



Photograph: Signs of trail bike use in January 2015

A big thank you to all who took part including the Bradley Lane Action Group, local residents who were prepared to give evidence and Peak Horsepower members who took notes at the meeting as well as those who represented PDGLA and Peak Horsepower at the inquiry.

In spite of the signs at both ends of the route, some recreational motor vehicle users are still using the route. We hope that now the High Court has published its decision and there is no ambiguity on the status of the route, they will stop using Bradley Lane.

Off-piste activity

Off-piste activity by recreational motor vehicle users is a continuing problem in the Peak District.

PDNPA intermittently publishes a newsletter called “Staying on the Right Track” which is written to provide information for recreational motor vehicle users. It is part of the information and education objective in the PDNPA plan for managing off-roading in the National Park. The December 2014 edition highlighted illegal and off-piste activity with pictures of damage on Rushup Edge (near Edale), Houndkirk Road (near Sheffield) and in the Kirklees area.

http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/519806/News1412-Greenlanes.pdf

The Green Lane Association (who support off-roading) have found an entry on the West Yorkshire Police Facebook site about the action the Police are taking in the Kirklees area. <https://www.facebook.com/GreenLaneAssociation>. (This is the entry dated 19 January). The section 59 mentioned in the article refers to Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002.

Section 59 is quite complex, so rather than paraphrasing it wrongly or badly, here is a link to Gwent Police's procedure for dealing with cases under this section. There is a very helpful flow chart on page 3.

<http://corporate.gwent.police.uk/fileadmin/documents/foi/procedures/317-2bissue3policereformsection59procedure.pdf>



Photographs: PDNPA's Notice and the damage to the historic lead mines. December 2014

Members walked up Brushfield on Christmas Day. 4x4s are still “playing” on the old lead mines which are a scheduled monument. This is both illegal and creating

an eye sore. PDNPA has recently put up notices but judging by the fresh tyre marks, these are having little effect on some recreational motor vehicle users.



A walk along Sough Lane, Taddington recently revealed tyre marks caused by trail bikes driving across grassland to “cut off a corner.” The official track in that area is in good condition and there is no need for any vehicle to deviate from it.

Photograph: The dark line parallel to the wall and the diagonal line are both due to tracks created by trail bikes cutting the corner.

Problems with recreational motor vehicles deliberately driving on verges can be seen on many routes. Examples were recently seen on Washgate, Hollinsclough, Staffordshire; and Moneystones, Hartington, Derbyshire. In both these examples the route surface was not a problem. This activity is due to vehicle drivers wanting to test their vehicle on grass.



Trail bike track on the verge of Washgate. January 2015



4x4 track on the verge of Moneystones. January 2015

Off-piste activity can make cultivation of land harder for farmers, encourage others to deviate from the track and create an eye sore.

Please report any signs of off-piste activity to the Rights of Way Officers at PDNPA and the local authority.

Illegal activity on Morton's Field between Eyam and Stoney Middleton



After a recent public inquiry, Morton's Field between Eyam and Stoney Middleton was made a footpath. One of our members walked the route in January 2015 and found signs of continued use of the route by 4x4s and trail bikes. He also noted that the sign on the New Road end of the route had been removed. If you see illegal use of a footpath, bridleway or restricted byway by recreational motor vehicle users please tell the Police on the non emergency 101 number and let the relevant Rights of Way Officer know.

We are pleased to see that the Police targeted this route on a recent Operation Blackbrook day held jointly with PDNPA.

<http://www.derbyshire.police.uk/My-Local-Police/BDivision/BSouthSection/Hathersage/News/2015/27-Jan-Actiononnuisance4x4vehiclesandbikersaspartofOperationBlackbrookinEyamandStange.aspx>

SOPs Petition



We wrote about the problems of off-roading in the Llangollen area in our October 2014 newsletter.

The Save our Paths Group in Llangollen, are asking people to sign this online petition seeking action from North Wales police, Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB, and Natural Resources Wales to stop the problems caused by off-roader use of green lanes and adjacent countryside:

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-our-paths/>

Death of Bob Kelly

We are sorry to report the death of Bob Kelly in late December 2014. Bob was instrumental in setting up PDGLA four years ago. His involvement stemmed from the work he had done for many years on behalf of the Ramblers. We benefited hugely from his knowledge and wise advice. Since he moved from Edale (to live closer to his family) he had continued to help PDGLA, notably by helping with our work on the Deregulation Bill currently going through parliament. We have been very grateful for the work Bob had done on our behalf. His knowledge of rights of way law and national/local government procedures was extensive and invaluable. His expertise and help will be much missed not just by everyone on the PDGLA committee but by rights of way colleagues and campaigners nationally. We have already contacted Bob's family to say how sorry we are to learn of his death.

Off-roading in Leicestershire

As part of our national campaign to highlight the problems caused by off-roading, we're continuing to explore the situation elsewhere in the country. The pictures below show three routes in Leicestershire. The routes visited are in areas with heavy soil which does not stand up well to vehicle traffic in wet conditions.



This photograph shows an ORPA (Other Route with Public Access) running down westward from the hill fort of Burrough Hill. It is unenclosed on one side and vehicles stray out from the correct line at the side of the fence. This has resulted in a large swathe of agricultural land being lost to cultivation.



A second unsurfaced ORPA ascends Burrough Hill from the north. Trail bikes have caused deep ruts making ascent impossible for horses and very difficult for walkers. We saw three trail bikes all of whom stalled their engines in the thick mud at the bottom of the ruts.

Kick-starting the bikes and resuming progress could only be done with excessive revving of engines which caused an unpleasant racket and threw up great plumes of mud. Trail riders often contrast their pastime "Pottering quietly along secluded lanes enjoying the countryside" with the activities of "mud wallowing 4x4 users". We see little difference in behaviour and motivation.



This final picture is of Mary Lane near Croxton Kerrial, which is a Restricted Byway at this point. So it is illegal for motorised vehicles to use this part of the route. We found further progress impossible at this point and had to turn back.