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Peak District  
Green Lanes Alliance

## Saving our green lanes from off-road vehicles June 2020 Newsletter

### PDNPA Green Lanes Action Plan 2020/2021 a big disappointment

Because of Covid-19, the meeting of the Programmes and Resources Committee on 15 May 2020 was held by video conference. You can view the meeting by following the links on <https://democracy.peakdistrict.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=451&Mid=2392&Ver=4>

The papers presented to the Members can be reached from the same web page.

The Action Plan and subsequent debate was disappointing. They both gave the impression that PDNPA believes there are no longer problems with 4 x4 and motor cycle use on any of its green lanes and wants to move onto other things such as Peak District Proud (celebrating 70 years of the National Park). So no Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are planned for 2020/2021. This despite evidence that TROs are still needed. For example, on Pindale near Castleton there are problems for residents and non vehicle users. Off-piste driving continues to damage the Scheduled Monument and SSSI beside the route. Since the meeting we have been told of problems on Clough Lane, Birchover with damage to the surface (which was repaired not so long ago by Derbyshire County Council) and local people feeling unable to use the route.



Damage to Clough Lane 2020



Off-piste driving scarring the hillside of the historic lead mines beside the track in Pindale. March 2019

Unfortunately, Members did not query the rationale of the Action Plan or why no TROs were proposed. Sue Smith (Officer) reported that the four areas of work were Miles Without Stiles, Stay on Track, history and Peak District Proud. Cllr Andrew McCloy, PDNPA Chair, asked what the outcomes would be of this activity as the report to Members did not give any indication of them. Sue Smith (RoW Officer) could not give him any definite answers to that question.



*Signs on beside the track at Pindale asking drivers to keep to the track in December 2012. These had no effect on the amount of damage seen and did not deter vehicle users from driving on the scheduled monument.*

was no reason for delaying Stay on Track further. PDNPA have now also decided that signs are not enough. Previous experience with signs on routes such as Pindale and Brushfield should have warned them earlier of how ineffective signs can be.

Miles Without Stiles, again part of last years programme, is intended to identify and publicise routes which are easy access and therefore suitable for the disabled. The only progress made on this during the last 12 months appears to be a meeting involving the Local Access Forum to discuss the suitability of including Long Causeway in the scheme.

Officers reported that there had been Voluntary Restraint on Minninglow Lane after the Derbyshire County Council Temporary Traffic Regulation Order for repairs was lifted. The Voluntary Restraint was an initiative of GLASS and PDVUG (both vehicle user groups) and only applied to 4 x4s and not motor cycles as the TRF refused to take part. On most routes in the Peak District motor cyclists are the main vehicle users. Signs were put up but we can find no public information online about this voluntary restraint put out by PDVUG or GLASS. There was information about it in the GLASS newsletter which, however, is only available to GLASS members, who form a minority of green lane vehicle users. Our experience in the past is that most vehicle users do not stop and read signs. So signs without publicity are not going to be very effective.

Stay on Track, which is intended to protect the verges of green lanes from destruction by vehicle use, was part of last year's programme. Nothing appeared to be done on it last year. It is now described as a "developing campaign". Last year GLASS (a motor vehicle users group) had offered money for signs. PDNPA decided they could not accept this money during the Wetton Hills TRO process. However the TRO came into effect in October 2019 so there

Officers reported this Voluntary Restraint was a success based on vehicle logging data. No data was given to Members in the Action Plan to substantiate this. Logging data will now only be available on request. We asked for logging data for Minninglow Lane immediately after the meeting. So far (four weeks later) we have not received any, so can't tell you how effective the reduction of vehicle numbers was.

Cllr Andrew McCloy wanted to know if Voluntary Restraint was working? And is it open ended?

He was told that it reduced vehicle use and was working because it "engages vehicle users". The latter is an unusual criteria for success and is not in any government guidelines. We are not convinced that seasonal voluntary restraint is a permanent solution for Minninglow Lane.

The intention to regularly update Route Summaries which was an action in last year's Action Plan has been dropped. As for Minninglow, vehicle logging results on other routes will only be available on request. We have asked for it on all "green lane" routes where logging has been carried out since January 2018.

The problems on the Hollinsclough Rakes are continuing. They are currently closed to all users by a Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO). SCC intend to repair them and will not be renewing the TTRO. Users are removing signs and ignoring the TTRO by squeezing past the boulders. It is not clear what will happen when the TTRO is lifted.

Bamford Clough is still closed by a Derbyshire County Council TTRO. Repairs will be very expensive and complex as they involve relocating a power line.

PDGLA will continue to press PDNPA for action on routes where we believe there are problems. Although the Peak District is open to visitors again, we are very conscious of problems in "hot spots". So our committee will, for the time being, be less active in monitoring routes. We will rely more during this period on reports from our members on any developing problems. So please let us know of any problems you are aware of.

### **Use of green lanes by recreational motorists during the Covid-19 epidemic**

In our March newsletter, we commented on the difference between the Green Lane Association (GLASS) and the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF), two national organisations which represent motorised users of green lanes, in their response to the advice on travel just before lockdown.

Now that the rules on travel have been relaxed in England by the UK government, GLASS has revised its headline message for England from "avoid using green roads" to "lane local". In more detailed advice, it includes consideration of whether the local authority welcomes recreational users yet and the message "Avoid busy routes, those with many gates, and those that pass through farms or other residential areas". The TRF now advises that "riding responsibly in groups of up to six from different households whilst maintaining social distancing guidelines would not contravene the English requirements."

Since the government rules were relaxed in England, motorcyclists and 4x4 drivers have been using green lanes in the Peak District which are busy or otherwise not adhering to the advice given by GLASS and the TRF. For example, a group of eight motorcyclists was seen on Ramsden Road in the Kirklees part of the Peak District at the beginning of June; they caused damage to the newly repaired surface (<https://pathwatch.blog/2020/06/09/ramsden-road-whats-not-been-done-2/> )

### **Illegal use of Jacob's Ladder, Stoney Middleton**

Jacob's Ladder is subject to a Derbyshire County Council TRO banning recreational motor vehicle users. Residents of Stoney Middleton have reported that illegal use of Jacob's Ladder has increased recently. A group of 6 large 4x4 vehicles drove on Jacobs Ladder after midnight recently and motorcycles are using the route regularly. If you see recreational motor vehicles on any route subject to a TRO, or on a footpath, bridleway or restricted byway please ring the Police on the non emergency 101 number as soon as it is safe to do so. (Note: farm vehicles are allowed to continue to use these routes.)