



## **Newsletter January 2022**

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### **At last - national consultation on off-roading on green lanes**

A government consultation on the recommendations of the Glover review of national parks includes questions about whether and how 4x4 and motor bikes should be allowed to continue to drive on green lanes (unsealed tracks in the countryside). This is a really important consultation for horse riders everywhere. It is an opportunity to persuade the government that they need to protect green lanes from the motor vehicle use and damage that has made so many riding routes impassable or dangerous for equestrians. The government response to the Glover report is at [Landscapes review \(National Parks and AONBs\): government response - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs). The consultation questionnaire is at [Government response to the Landscapes Review - Defra - Citizen Space](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs). The questions about off-roading on green lanes start at Question 13 under 'Managing Visitor Pressure'

**Please take part in the consultation and please tell your riding friends about it.**

### **AGM – now on 5 April**

We had to cancel the AGM and social scheduled for 2 November when our Chair was hit by Covid. We have rescheduled for Tuesday 5 April. We will send you all an email with details nearer the time.

## **Youlgreave Pleasure ride**

There was a good turnout for the PHP pleasure ride from Alport in October. This was the first PHP ride in two years. The 2019 ride was cancelled because of dreadful weather and the 2020 ride because of Covid. It was just great to be able to run a ride again. Thank you riders for taking part and even more thanks to the team that organised and stewarded the ride.

## **Chapel Gate good in parts – for now**

Chapel Gate links Edale with Rushup Edge. It is a great route but has suffered from repeated wash out and drainage problems ever since the original surface was destroyed by 4x4s and motor bikes (now banned).

One of our members recently posted on Facebook this pic of the top part of the track. She reports that the latest repairs are kind even for unshod horses and that drainage has again been



improved. But a posting from mountain bikers (see next page) shows how the latest repairs are already washing out the Edale side where the route is steep.





*Washing out already*

## Other repairs



*Back lane*

Among the routes DCC plans to repair this year are Cave Dale and Pindale (Castleton area), Jacob's Ladder (Stoney Middleton) – again, Back Lane (Darley Dale) and Putwell Hill (part of the Brushfield bridleway). Where a route they are repairing is, like Chapel Gate, steep and subject to wheel erosion and washout, we understood that DCC would consider putting a stone strip down the centre of the track to prevent new erosion.

We strongly advised stone pitching but it seems from what DCC has recently done on Back Lane that they are using just compacted stone, which we have warned is not sustainable and will quickly wash out on steep tracks used by wheeled vehicles.

Meanwhile the National Trust has started repair work on the Edale Rd to Hayfield bridleway. The Dark Peak BW group first asked for this badly damaged route to be repaired in 2019. The top section at Edale Cross is to be stone pitched. This will be of help to Edale Mountain Rescue and sustainable in the long term, despite heavy use by mountain bikes.

## **Hollinsclough Rakes – still no decision**

Staffs County Council has still not decided what to do about Swan and Limer Rakes at Hollinsclough. Both Rakes have been closed to all users since 2017 because off-roader damage had made them unsafe. Five years on, and nearly 10 years after the Peak Park said that resolving the issues on the Rakes was a top priority, repairs are finally underway, but Staffs has yet to decide whether to bring in a Traffic Regulation Order banning 4x4s and motor bikes. If they don't bring in a ban, it is pretty obvious that the repairs will be destroyed and the routes again dangerous for horses. Reporting on its recent public consultation on the future use of the Rakes, Staffs says its aim is to make the routes safe and that it is proposing to 'bring the Rakes up to the minimum standard of a bridleway or cycleway, with a smooth surface suitable for use by all non-motorised users'. It also said that it has found no established motor vehicle rights on either of the Rakes. The report is at <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Highways/roadworks/moorlands/1-updated-D3262F-Swan-and-Limers-Rakes-Consultation-Report-Rev1.pdf>

PHP is sceptical about the suitability of the drainage and repair work done by Staffs so far as there are already signs of new washout. We think that stone pitching is the only sustainable solution because of the steepness of both rakes. This was the solution adopted for Washgate just over the border in Derbyshire and is what we and the BHS have been asking for.

## **Flexipave for Shallcross Incline**

DCC says it will be using a porous, bound top surface when it repairs the Shallcross Incline near Whaley Bridge (featured in the last issue of the newsletter) using Flexipave, Nuflex and Trailflex are all being considered. The repairs to the route, an important gateway to the Goyt Valley for riders, will be done this year. PHP wishes the project every success as it will be a benchmark for future use of Flexipave in the Peak District on riding routes where surface wash out and steep gradients are an issue.

## **Bamford Clough unsafe for riders**

We reported in our last newsletter that DCC was planning to tarmac Bamford Clough, the route that links Bamford with the riding routes above Hathersage. It is exceptionally steep (1:3). The tarmacking went ahead, despite we and the BHS telling DCC in no uncertain terms that tarmac on this route would be dangerous for equestrians. Following our complaints and warnings, the Clough has remained closed to all users while DCC carries out a safety survey. Meanwhile they have put up signs telling riders (and cyclists) to dismount (see the photograph below). The sign indicates that DCC has already accepted that the



route is dangerous for some users. It also shows that DCC does not understand that a led horse can fall just as easily as a ridden one, or that dismounting is not an option for carriage



*Riders dismount sign on Bamford Clough*

drivers. The clough is a Byway Open to All Traffic. This is defined in law as a right of way which is 'mainly used by persons on foot or horseback'. At present it is too dangerous to be used by 'persons on horseback' in either direction. We have argued all along that stone pitching is the only way to make this route safe and sustainable for equestrians. Now that tarmac has been used, DCC needs as a minimum to put a sustainable stone strip down the middle. We will keep you posted.

### **New Botany Lane BW finally cleared**

When new BWs are claimed and agreed, there is often still more to do. Members of the SPEED bridleway group at Charlesworth claimed Botany Lane, Charlesworth, as a public BW back in 2013. The claim, to upgrade two routes from FP to BW, was successful and the track became a public BW in 2019. Before it could be easily used it needed clearing but because part of the new route has a peculiar and unusual rights of way history no-one, including officers at DCC, could work out whether the Council or the adjacent landowner is responsible for maintaining it. Local riders have now taken matters into their own hands and have cleared the route.



*The newly cleared BW*

Encouraged by the success of the Botany Lane application, SPEED now has three more BW claims in the pipeline.

### **No funding for Monsal Trail train scheme**

We reported in the last issue on a proposal which would re-open the Monsal Trail to trains. We are now pleased to report that the Department for Transport (DfT) has made it clear that it will not be supporting the scheme. An application for funding to explore reinstating the Peaks and Dales Railway was one of 199 bids to the £500m Restoring Your Railway Fund launched by the DfT in February last year. Thirty-six applications were successful. The scheme involving the Monsal Trail was not among them.

### **New Bridleways**

The BHS has reported that volunteer rights of way (ROW) researchers have between them now made 2000 applications for new BWs. The 2,000th application was for a route near Bowes in County Durham. Here in the Peak District, BW research is going on all the time and since the last issue of the newsletter the following new Orders have been made or confirmed.

Cromford: BW upgrade of FP 41 (Bow Wood) - Order made\*

Eaton & Alsop and Newton Grange: Dam lane BW and FP upgrades – Orders made

Matlock: Restricted Byway, Hearthstone Lane (Matlock RB 59) and Littlemoor Lane near Riber – Order confirmed

New Mills: New BW 180 – Order confirmed

Shirland & Higham: BW Ogston Lane – Order made



Wirksworth: RB along Old Lane – Order confirmed

Wirksworth: BW along Summer Lane - Order confirmed

Wirksworth: RB St Helen's Lane to Breamfield Lane – Order made

\*Where Orders are made but not yet confirmed there can be objections, in which case a public inquiry is likely

Many thanks to the PHP members who are doing this amazing work in advance of the 2026 cut off. Unless the government extends the deadline, after 2026 no new rights of way can be claimed based on historic use.

## **Moscar Cross completely trashed - again**

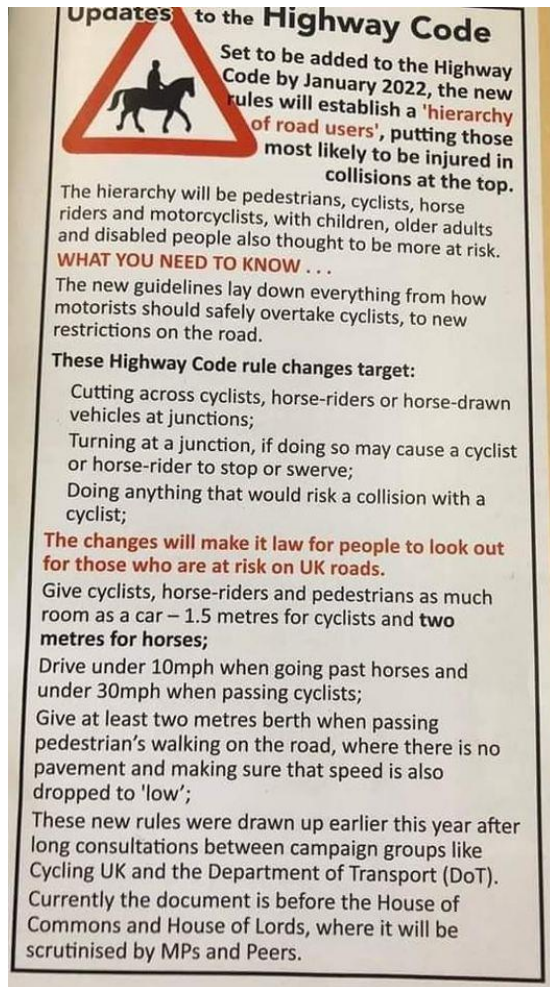
Moscar Cross Road is a byway open to all traffic in the Sheffield part of the National Park. Sheffield City Council has for years said that the way it manages 4x4 and motor bike use (asking off-roaders not to use it when it is wet and flattening the ruts in the summer) maintains access for walkers, riders and carriage drivers.



*Sheffield CC says that riders and walkers can use Moscar by squeezing along the edge*

The reality is that the route is inaccessible to equestrians between November and June. Pressure is growing on Sheffield to use a Traffic Regulation Order to keep off-roaders off of it.

## Road safety



### Equestrians and bad driving

Equestrians and their horses are being subjected to alarming levels of stress and risk according to a new study that was funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) and commissioned by The British Horse Society (BHS). This is believed to be the biggest ever equestrian safety survey involving over 7,000 participants. The full report is at [The Horse Incident Reporting Awareness Study 2021.pdf](#)

### Meanwhile ....

Changes to the Highway Code (see opposite) are bringing in a new hierarchy of road users that makes it clear that equestrians are especially at risk on the roads. The Highway Code changes are summarised below by the voluntary organisation Horses and Road Safety Awareness

## Access and Nature Recovery

'Heritage and Access' are among the priorities which will attract funding under the Local Nature Recovery scheme (the successor to the Countryside Stewardship). There is no definition yet of what 'heritage and 'access' will mean. We hope it is more than access to go see ancient monuments. Watch this space.....

### Join the Committee? Help with pleasure rides?

We are always on the lookout for new committee members and people to help with organising our pleasure rides. If this is you, we'd love to hear from you

You can contact us at

[peakhorsepowersecretary@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:peakhorsepowersecretary@hotmail.co.uk)