
Voluntary Restraint in the Peak District National Park

Purpose

Voluntary restraint is one of the options available to prevent and reduce impacts of recreational motor vehicles on routes. Defra guidance (2005) states that 'voluntary restraint can be a useful tool for management of byways where reductions in mechanically propelled vehicle traffic is desirable, but not where the prohibition of mechanically propelled vehicles is agreed to be necessary.'

Although voluntary restraint lacks the legal enforceability of a legal regulation of use, having the support and participation of the vehicle users themselves means that there is an element of self-policing. Voluntary restraint also has the advantage of being quick and flexible to implement, in order to tackle problems such as damage or disturbance on a route at particular times.

Voluntary restraint is not suitable in every circumstance and is without prejudice to any other action that may be taken on a route. In addition, any restraint on use on an unclassified road should not be taken as confirmation that rights exist.

Process

1) Initiating

There are 2 ways for voluntary restraint to come about:

- Initiated by the National Park Authority - The NPA may identify proposed voluntary restraint on priority routes to deal with objectives and issues identified in action plans. In this case, the NPA will discuss the type of restraint and a time period with the Vehicle User Group and notify the Highway Authority and Parish Council of proposals.
- Offered by Vehicle User Groups – Vehicle users may offer voluntary restraint on routes. This is usually done by an agreement between the vehicle user groups and the Highway Authority with the NPA being notified.

2) Implementing

Vehicle user groups will produce signage based on the national format promoted by LARA which will be displayed on the route and hosted on websites. On the priority routes, the NPA will erect and maintain signage.

3) Monitoring

On priority routes, the NPA will undertake regular monitoring which will include data logging and photographs. Monitoring will also be required outside the period of restraint in order to determine whether the issues have reoccurred as a result of renewed or compressed use.

All voluntary restraint measures adopted are subject to review during and following the identified period of restraint.