

18. GREEN LANES IN THE PEAK DISTRICT (A7622/SAS)

Purpose of the report

1. This report relates to the approach agreed by Members to encourage wider engagement and understanding of green lanes and their special qualities.
2. The report also provides an update on progress in 2020/21 relating to the implementation of the Authority's strategy for the management of recreational motorised vehicles on unsealed highways and off-road (the Strategy) and action plans for green lanes, illegal use and communications for 2021/22.
3. **Key issues include:**
 - Integration of green lanes into the access and rights of way network
 - Involvement in interpretation, protection and enhancement
 - Responsible use

Recommendation

4. **(i) That the report is noted.**

How does this contribute to policies and legal obligations?

5. The work contributes to:
 - (i) Corporate Strategy 2019-24
Outcome: A National Park loved and supported by diverse audiences
Strategic interventions: Implement plans to increase public connection with the National park through the development of quality engagement opportunities that encourage responsible behaviours and by growing sustainable tourism products
 - (ii) National Park Management Plan 2018-23
The relevant areas of impact are:
 - A National Park for everyone – relevant action is to overcome physical barriers to access
 - Encouraging enjoyment with understanding - relevant actions are: to balance opportunities for enjoyment with conserving a fragile environment; to ensure shared responsibility.
 - (iii) Strategy for the Management of Recreational Motorised Vehicles in their Use of Unsealed Highways and Off-road, and Procedure for Making Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), 2012.
 - (iv) Sections 5(1) and 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (NPACA) 1949

Background Information

6. In February 2012, the Authority adopted its revised strategy for the management of recreational motorised vehicles in their use of unsealed highways and off-road (Minute 6/12). The Strategy sets out that actions for implementing this strategy will be defined and progress measured. Action plans and progress reports have been reported to the Programmes and Resources Committee (formerly the Audit and Performance Committee) and the Peak District Local Access Forum (PDLAF) and published annually at www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/vehicles.
7. In May 2020, Programmes and Resources Committee noted the report and that year's actions and resolved that the requirement and scope of a follow-up report to that committee would be considered in the context of a broader recreational review (Minute 13/20).

8. In March 2021, the Green Lanes Annual Report 2020/21 (Appendix 1) and the 2021/22 action plans for green lanes, illegal use and communications (Appendices 2-4) were reported to the Peak District Local Access Forum (the Forum), as the statutory adviser on public access, and its input sought to deliver actions. At the meeting, the Forum considered representations from speakers on a number of routes.
9. In April 2021, the Forum's Green Lanes Sub-group met to discuss in detail issues referred by the Forum for reporting to the June 2021 Forum meeting. These included:
 - the issues on the routes raised by speakers
 - actions relating to an area-based approach at Bradwell Moor
 - the development of Keep on Track
 - messages and values relating to anti-social behaviour.
10. Green lane branding and work on history, environment, and accessibility will raise the recognition of these multi-user routes and their special qualities. In turn, this contributes to the development of an inclusive and integrated network, the encouragement of enjoyment with understanding, the provision of access for all, and for the enhancement of routes and their environments through fostering respect and a shared responsibility.
11. The Forum is a key part of the engagement work to develop input and involvement from the various interest groups represented by its members. The Forum has been engaged with the issue of recreational motorised vehicle use for 15 years. It advises not just its appointing authorities but other relevant parties and seeks to provide a consensus-based approach.
12. Illegal use has been and continues to be the predominant and overriding issue. Area-based initiatives as proposed at Bradwell Moor, and undertaken previously at Longstone Edge through the Black Harry Trails, provides a means of working in partnership to protect the National Park's special qualities.
13. Authority Members have been kept informed of this work by way of updates to the respective Chairs and Vice Chairs and notice of the publication of the annual reports and plans. There is also the scope for update at a future Members forum. The action plans and annual report are attached to this report for information (Appendices 1-4).

Summary

14. Wider engagement and integration through instilling inclusiveness, understanding and respect in line with a broader recreation approach is required to protect the special qualities of the National Park. The actions plans identify areas of work to meet these objectives to focus the officer resource and the involvement of partners and for targeting funding for the protection and enhancement of green lanes across the National Park.

Proposals

15. The report be noted.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

16. **Financial**
Funding relates to officer input to allow progress on the matters identified in the action plans and which are drafted in terms of realistic parameters, subject to supplementary costs and additional funding, including from external sources, dependant on the scope, scale or mechanism of delivery.

17. **Risk Management**
This report outlines the management proposals for the coming year in order to manage the risk to the Authority. The likelihood of reputational and financial damage to the Authority are considered to be medium (public reputation and possible legal challenge) and the impact of possible damage to the Authority is also medium. The overall risk as described in the risk scoring methodology is therefore assessed as Medium – ie ‘requires management effort to mitigate the risk’. Management actions are set out in the annual action plans which have been drafted within realistic parameters in terms of deliverability and the Strategy and Procedure which is grounded in respect of the Authority’s legal powers and abilities.
18. **Sustainability**
This report addresses sustainability issues in the context of both the National Park Management Plan and the Authority’s statutory purposes, duty and legal powers.
19. **Equality**
The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 have been met in the consideration of actions and the Authority will continue to have regard to its duties under the Act.
20. **Climate Change**
The work on green lanes provides a mechanism for the Authority to engage with visitors to the National Park regarding issues associated with climate change and for engagement with actions to protect its assets. The Authority does not promote recreational motorised use or unsustainable transport decisions nor do the action plans directly contribute to carbon net zero targets.
21. **Background papers:**
None.
22. **Appendices**
 1. Green Lanes Annual Report – 2020/21
 2. Green Lanes Action Plan 2021/22
 3. Illegal Use Action Plan 2021/22
 4. Green Lanes Communication Action Plan 2021/22

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

23. Sue Smith, Rights of Way Officer, 13 May 2021