

Recreational Activities at National Trust Properties

Guiding Principles and Good Practice



THE NATIONAL TRUST

First published in 1995 as Part C of
Open Countryside: Report of the Access Review Working Party

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Contents

Introduction	4
Bait digging	5
Camping	7
Canoeing	9
Caravanning (including Motor caravans)	12
Caving and Potholing	15
Challenge events	18
Climbing	21
Cycling	26
Dog walking	30
Equestrian access	33
Field studies	37
Fishing	40
Golf	44
Hang-gliding and Paragliding	47
Kite flying	50
Model flying	52
Motor boating	54
Motor vehicles	57
Orienteering	60
Paintball games	63
Sailing	65
Shooting	67
Sub-aqua diving	70
Walking	75

Introduction

Open Countryside, the report of the Access Review Working Party, has provided a framework and direction for the management of access since 1995. It has been well received both internally and by those representing recreational interests. Parts A and B of *Open Countryside* remain a useful source of reference. Copies are still available and can be obtained from the Estates Department.

The Principles for Access remain and will continue to govern the National Trust's management of access in the countryside.

Principle 1 – The duty and primary purpose of the National Trust in the countryside is to promote permanent preservation for the benefit of the nation. It will regard access as a fundamental way of providing this benefit and as a principal purpose.

Principle 2 – The National Trust Acts establish its responsibilities for conservation. If serious conflict arises, conservation will take precedence over access.

Principle 3 – The National Trust will ensure that the countryside retains characteristics which afford the widest range of experiences and will enable people to enjoy access to its properties.

Now, five years later, *Recreational Activities at National Trust Properties – Guiding Principles and Good Practice* supersedes Part C of *Open Countryside*. Those previously consulted have been contacted again and welcomed the proposal to update and add to the original Part C. In addition four new activities have been included: sub-aqua diving, camping, caravanning and challenge events. Examples of good practice undertaken at properties are indicated in italics. Please let us know of others for the next revision.

This new document has been prepared in PDF format, which has been produced with the intranet in mind. With an acrobat decoder it can be viewed on a Mac or PC. It will therefore be easier to update in future and individual properties will be able to print off sections as necessary.

Comments, ideas for change or suggestions for new activities are welcome and should be sent to:

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Camping

There are three main types of provision for campers on National Trust property: on recognised camp sites managed by the Trust, on recognised sites managed by camping clubs and on smaller sites managed by tenants and others. Camping away from recognised sites requires permission.

The Trust compiles an annual list of recognised camping and caravan sites on its properties which gives an indication of facilities, opening times, charges and restrictions. Some of these sites are restricted to use by scout and/or guide groups only.

Guiding principles

- 1** The National Trust welcomes, promotes and publicises camping on recognised sites managed by itself and others.
- 2** There is a presumption against camping on non-recognised sites without permission. This presumption is waived in certain circumstances and areas, eg in the Lake District in upland areas above 450 metres out of sight of the public highway, to allow the wilderness experience to be enjoyed.
- 3** ‘Wild camping’, where tolerated, should only involve one night stop-overs, a maximum of two campers and leave no trace of its presence.
- 4** Organised groups, eg Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, should consult with local National Trust contacts in advance of a visit to determine if there are special arrangements for groups of this type.

Good practice

- The design and management of recognised sites should reflect the National Trust’s environmental principles, particularly in relation to refuse, sanitation and water management.
- There should be no lighting of fires or barbecues except where such sites are provided.
- Assessments should be made of site capacity, bearing in mind the characteristics of the site and its surrounding area.
- The National Trust will continue to produce an annual site guide which might include more information about ‘responsible’ camping.
- Farm tenants should be encouraged to consider the provision of sites in appropriate circumstances. Such sites should reflect the National Trust’s environmental standards.
- Dogs should be kept under close control, ideally on a lead, on recognised camping sites and may occasionally be prohibited. They should be exercised away from pitch areas and those used for communal activities, and faeces should be picked up and disposed of responsibly.

Canoeing

Use of National Trust waters by canoeists is not great. Overall in the UK canoeists are not well provided for. The activity has few damaging impacts and, provided potential impacts are controlled by permit, licence or agreement, it could take place on more rivers.

Guiding principles

- 1** The National Trust welcomes canoeists on suitable waters and should seek to identify new opportunities for canoeing.
- 2** The National Trust should limit canoeing on areas it wishes to retain as ‘remote’ to foster a sense of wilderness and to allow such areas to become wildlife refuges and conservation areas.
- 3** Where fishing rights are in hand there should not be an automatic presumption in favour of fishing as opposed to canoeing.

Good practice

- Promote the British Canoeing Union’s (BCU’s) ‘Earning a Welcome’ and the Angling and Canoeing Statement of Intent produced by the Sports Council.
- Liaise with the local access officers of the BCU/Welsh Canoeing Association (WCA)/Canoeing Association of Northern Ireland (CANI) or clubs to promote controlled canoeing where possible, particularly if new waters are being made available.
Lake District, North West
- Encourage affiliation to a canoeing club or membership of the BCU/WCA/CANI.
- Encourage liaison and/or agreements between anglers and canoeists.
River Tyne, Northumbria: agreement to balance the needs of anglers and canoeists during busy periods between October and February
- The modification of natural channels specifically for canoeing should not be permitted.
- New vehicular access to the water’s edge to facilitate canoe launching should be resisted unless it also serves other purposes.
- Designate launching and landing places.
- Avoid areas used for swimming and diving.
- Avoid fish spawning areas (salmon and trout October – March); at spawning times (check local situation).
- Avoid important breeding bird and wintering wildfowl areas.

Welsh Canoeing Association (WCA)

Canol Tryweryn, Frongoch, Bala, Gwynedd LL23 7NU

Tel: 01678 521199

Fax: 01678 521158

Local canoeing clubs**Environment Agency – currently working on a policy for canoe access agreements**

References

British Canoe Union – ‘Canoe Focus’ magazine.

Regional club newsletters.

British Canoe Union (1991). *Access and Environmental Policies*. British Canoe Union, Nottingham.

British Canoe Union (1991). *Guidelines for River Clean-ups*. British Canoe Union, Nottingham.

Sports Council (undated). *Angling and Canoeing Statement of Intent*. Statement published by Canoe Access and Development Committee convened by the National Anglers’ Council. The Sports Council, London.

British Canoe Union (undated). *Earning a Welcome*. BCU, Nottingham.

Caravanning (including Motor caravans)

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There are three main types of provision for caravanners on National Trust property: on recognised sites managed by the Trust, on recognised sites managed by the major caravanning organisations and on smaller sites managed by farm tenants and others. The Trust compiles an annual list of recognised camping and caravan sites on its properties which gives an indication of facilities, opening times, charges and restrictions.

Guiding principles

- 1 The National Trust welcomes caravanners on recognised sites managed by itself and others.
- 2 The overnight use of National Trust car parks is prohibited.

Good practice

- Site managers and users should act responsibly with regard to waste water and sanitation disposal. Full account should be taken of the need to safeguard water supplies and prevent the pollution of rivers and streams.
- Refuse should be taken home or disposed of in accordance with on-site arrangements.
- Units should be well spaced to ensure emergency vehicles have good access to each unit on site.
- Open fires and barbecues should not be lit without the permission of the site manager.
- The speed of vehicles should be restricted to 5mph on site.
- Organisers of events should spread the arrival and departure of vehicles to minimise disruption to local people and other road users.
- Steps should be taken to ensure that access to the proposed site is suitable for the number and likely size of units expected to use the site.
- Dogs should be kept under close control, ideally on leads, on sites and may be prohibited. They should be exercised away from other units and parts of the site used for communal activities and faeces should be picked up and disposed of responsibly.
- The Trust recognises that some car parks, particularly those with height barriers, restrict access for motor caravans. Wherever possible and appropriate when planning and managing parking areas, consideration should be given to the requirements of caravans and motor caravans, which can average 8.5 metres long, 2.3 metres wide and 3.2 metres high.

Caving and Potholing

Natural caves are a particularly fragile environment and have been seriously damaged in recent decades, from both recreation and other land uses. Physical damage to formations is very serious and usually irreversible. There is a correlation between the amount of access to a cave and levels of damage. It is important that caves on National Trust land are regularly monitored taking all land uses and interests into account.

Guiding principles

- 1** The National Trust welcomes caving and potholing at selected sites, subject to area, regional or national strategies as appropriate.
- 2** Cave conservation on National Trust land should be regularly monitored and reviewed.

Good practice

- Promote the National Caving Association (NCA) Cave Conservation Policy.
- Prepare a strategy for each main caving area with the appropriate regional caving association, NCA, local clubs and other landowners.
South Peak, East Midlands
- Establish close liaison with local clubs and cave conservation officers for regional associations.
South Peak, East Midlands; Gower, Wales; North Somerset, Wessex
- Liaise with guidebook committees and/or editors.
- Encourage clubs to participate in cave conservation plans.
- Grille or gate cave and mine entrances (allowing bat access).
- Zone more resilient sites for group and training centre use.
- Tape routes and tape off delicate formations.
- Stipulate leadership qualification (ie NCA Cave Instructors Certificate) as condition of access.
- Digging and use of explosives should be for authorised research and rescue purposes only.
- Prohibit use of carbide lamps.
- Use internal locked gates to prevent access to susceptible parts of cave systems.
- Limit access by novices (eg a maximum of 2 in a group of 7) as they generally cause more damage than experienced cavers.

Monitoring suggestions: Collect regular data on cave disturbance, particularly in cave entrances. Volunteers and cave conservation officers can be usefully involved.

Trends

Significant increases in the last 10 years, especially in outdoor activity centres, school groups and commercial organisations. 20–25,000 people go caving every year. 12,000 members of National Caving Association.

Possible impacts

Disturbance of cave soils.

Damage to cave formations. Caving had caused damage to 50–85% of nationally important caves by 1972 (Wilmot, 1972).

Litter (including spent carbide).

Disturbance of bats.

Removal of artefacts, bones etc.

Vandalism of grilles and doors.

Improved knowledge of cave systems and underground river courses.

Contacts and liaison

National Caving Association

3 The Acorns, Oakhill, Bath BA3 5BT

Tel: 01749 840795

E-mail: nca@nca.org.uk

Contact: Conservation Officer

The Association is a national federation of five regional caving councils and six specialist organisations. One of its major responsibilities is conservation, through the auspices of its Conservation Officer and Conservation and Access Committee.

Regional caving associations – access and conservation officers

National Association of Mining History Organisations

Legislation, codes and agreements

Whether or not a formal access agreement is in place, all cavers are required to observe the law in so far as it touches upon aspects of caving activity, such as digging, the use of explosives or acts likely to pollute water. In addition it is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) to wilfully disturb bats or badgers, both of which may inhabit some caves. Destroying birds, nests or eggs, or damaging limestone pavements can also lead to criminal proceedings.

It is the law protecting bats which is probably most likely to be infringed by cavers. It is illegal knowingly to disturb, injure or kill bats. It is also illegal to seal the access to any cave or disused mine known to house bats. Gates or mine shaft covers fitted to the entrance of such sites must contain gaps large enough to allow the passage of bats.

Cavers and mine explorers visiting known bat sites are urged by the NCA to observe its Cave Conservation Policy and respect any restrictions imposed to minimise disturbance, particularly during the winter hibernation period.

References

National Caving Association – ‘SpeloScene’ and newsletter.

Mellors, P.T. (1988 but updating). *Legal Aspects of Access Underground*. National Caving Association, London.

National Caving Association (1995). *Cave Conservation Policy*. National Caving Association, London.

National Caving Association. *Cave Conservation Handbook*. National Caving Association, London. A4 format, 178 pages, available ring or soft bound.

- Avoid using areas which are vulnerable at particular times of year, eg hay meadows, ground-nesting bird sites, fields used for lambing.
- Avoid sensitive ruins and ancient earthworks, particularly for gathering/parking areas.
- Check that the relevant authorities have been consulted to establish, agree and act upon likely impacts.
- Try to avoid planning events at times of the year when sites/surrounding areas are particularly busy, eg public holidays, days when other events are taking place.
- Respect the needs of farming and forestry when giving permission for an event and ensure there is adequate liaison with interested parties.
- Give careful thought to whether or not dogs are to be permitted.
- A risk assessment should be undertaken to determine health and safety implications before agreeing to an event of any size. Contact the Health & Safety Adviser, Heywood House.
- Inspect the event organiser's insurance cover in advance of an event, which should be at least £2 million, and preferably £5 million.
- The Country Code should be observed by all organisers and participants.
- All organisers of charity events should be asked to comply with the code of practice prepared by the Institute of Charity Fund Managers (ICFM).
- Acceptable routes or 'out of bounds' areas may need to be marked by tapes.
- Detailed emergency procedures should be prepared and agreed in advance.
- Ensure clear up procedures are agreed and understood.

Trends

Not known, but thought to be increasing.

Possible impacts

Conflict with other visitors and local communities/businesses, particularly if inadequate information is given in advance.

Spectators and event facilities can cause congestion at busy sites.

Disturbance to sensitive habitats, landscapes and heritage sites where control is inadequate.

Pressure on local services and facilities.

Many beneficial impacts, eg the potential to raise knowledge and awareness of countryside issues and the National Trust, contact with young, active people and urban communities.

Contacts and liaison

The national governing bodies of sport and recreation have much experience of event organisation and can advise if there are guidelines for their specific activity. Many of the National Park Authorities (Dartmoor, North York Moors, Peak District, Snowdonia) have produced guidelines for events.

Legislation, codes and agreements

Highways authorities will need to be consulted if the event is to use rights of way. Organisers of charity events should be asked to comply with the code of practice prepared by the Institute of Charity Fund Managers (ICFM).

References

Countryside Commission, English Sports Council, Environment Agency (1998). *Sporting and Challenge Events in the Countryside – Guidelines for organisers*. Countryside Commission, English Sports Council, Environment Agency, London.

The Sports Council for Wales, Countryside Council for Wales (1998). *Sporting and Challenge Events in the Countryside – Guidelines for organisers*. The Sports Council for Wales, Countryside Council for Wales, Cardiff.

- Although there is no scientific reason to observe close seasons for coarse fisheries, it is recommended that the National Trust does observe them. This practice allows a disturbance free period for vegetation, fish, birds and other wildlife. The minimum period for bank fishing is 15 March–15 June; in most cases it should be longer than this.
- Provisions should be made in letting arrangements for the purchase of day tickets.
- Where there is no public access to National Trust fisheries, reasons should be clearly stated.
- Ensure litter is cleared. Anglers should be responsible for removing litter at their own swim regardless of who discarded it. Consider an angling ban on persistent offenders.
- Provide education and information on good fishing practice and the natural form, function and wildlife of the water body.
- There should be a strong presumption against the use of live bait.
- Specialist advice should be sought if the use of bait is suspected of causing water quality problems.

Monitoring suggestions: As far as practicable ensure fishermen maintain written records of all fishing effort, fish taken and their weights. Obtain Environment Agency data on fish, invertebrates and water chemistry to increase knowledge of freshwater ecology, trends, etc.

Trends

Participation is understood to be stable. A national angling survey undertaken by the National Rivers Authority (NRA) in 1994 estimated that there were 3.3 million freshwater and sea anglers aged 12 years and over in the UK.

Possible impacts

Fishing can be a positive pressure for good water quality, fish stocks and fish health.

Fishing provides some income on most properties.

Small-scale habitat enhancement for fishing can lead to wider environmental benefits.

Fishery management to facilitate angling may have detrimental impacts on the broader ecology of a water body, eg damage and disturbance to water channels, bankside vegetation, water pollution from overstocking or disturbance of waterbirds.

Conflict with other recreational activities, eg canoeing and walking, cycling or riding along river banks.

Legislation, codes and agreements

In common law, fish in private waters or in non-tidal rivers or streams can be taken only by, or with the consent of, the owner/holder of fishing rights. The Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 contains detailed rules about such matters as close seasons and the taking of immature fish. Certain methods of fishing are also proscribed.

The 1975 Act requires a fishing licence to be obtained for all freshwater fish on any inland water. Licences are issued by the Environment Agency which also fixes licence duties for particular areas. A licence does not alone confer a right to fish. The angler must also have the permission of the landowner or person holding the fishing rights.

Fishing legislation is subject to a national review.

References

Lewis, V. (1999). *The Management of Freshwater Fisheries*. Report to the National Trust, Cirencester.

Environment Agency. *Freshwater Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation: A Good Practice Guide*.

Medway, Lord. (1980). *Report of the Panel of Enquiry into Shooting and Angling (1976–1979)*. Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Horsham, Sussex.

National Rivers Authority (1995). *National Angling Survey 1994 (Fisheries Technical Report 5)*. HMSO, London.

Salmon and Trout Association. *The Game Angling Code*.

Specialist Anglers Conservation Group. *Code of Conduct for Specialist Coarse Anglers*. Col. T Marks, The Stables, High Street, South Cerney, Gloucestershire, GL7 5UP.

Sports Council (1991). *Angling – An Independent Review of the Sport of Angling*. Commissioned by the Sports Council and the National Anglers’ Council. The Sports Council, London.

Sports Council (undated). *Angling and Canoeing Statement of Intent*. Statement published by Canoe Access and Development Committee convened by the National Anglers’ Council. The Sports Council, London.

Wild Trout Society. *Guidelines for the Management of Wild Trout Waters*.

Hang-gliding and Paragliding

Use of National Trust properties for hang-gliding and paragliding is not great due to the specific requirements of the activity, such as topography and terrain. Current levels of use are generally acceptable, largely as a result of working closely with national and local clubs. A national precedent agreement for gliding on Trust sites has been prepared in conjunction with the British Hang-Gliding and Paragliding Association (BHPA).

Guiding principles

- 1** The National Trust welcomes controlled hang-gliding and paragliding on its land, recognising that these activities seldom cause significant disturbance provided particular care is taken with regard to livestock and birds.
- 2** There are management benefits associated with licence arrangements and so the National Trust should ensure their continued implementation.

Good practice

- Liaise closely with local clubs and BHPA representatives locally and nationally.
- Provide site information to inform users and other visitors of the various controls.
Ivinghoe Beacon, Thames & Chilterns
- Liaise with local clubs as much as possible and consider the formation of local access groups where participation in airports is considerable.
Mam Tor, East Midlands
- As part of a flying licence specify numbers on site, in the air and attending events, define parking, landing and take-off points and provide for seasonal restrictions where necessary.
- Ensure there is close liaison with local clubs in respect of risk assessment, each party should carry out its own assessment.
Devil's Dyke, Southern
- Hang-gliding and paragliding may not be considered appropriate on areas the Trust wishes to retain as 'remote'.

Monitoring suggestions: Monitor levels of use at different times of the year. Review licences annually to examine the effects of the activity, particularly on the interests of farm tenants, neighbours and other users.

Trends

Membership of the British Hang-Gliding and Paragliding Association is around 12,000 and is static. There are some 200 clubs.

Possible impacts

Danger to other visitors.

Disturbance to livestock and wildlife, especially birds on sea cliffs.

Spectators can cause congestion at busy sites.

Creation of new paths to launching and landing points.

Visual intrusion.

Contacts and liaison

British Hang-Gliding and Paragliding Association

The Old School Room, Loughborough Road, Leicester LE4 5PJ

Tel: 0116 261 1322

Contact: Sites Director

Legislation, codes and agreements

The overall body in charge of airspace rules is the Civil Aviation Authority. Article 51 of the Air Navigation Order (1985) states that:

‘A person shall not recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft to endanger any person or property.’

Copies of the NT/BHPA Precedent Agreement can be obtained from the Estates Department at Cirencester or the Legal Department at Queen Anne’s Gate, both of which will deal with queries.

In 1997 charges associated with licences ranged from £95 to £350 per annum.

If a BHPA-registered school is operating on Trust property, then this should not necessarily be a reason for increasing the annual fee over and above that levied against a BHPA-registered club. The ethos of BHPA-registered schools is to provide new members, trained to a very high standard, who will join local clubs and the BHPA. The potential income for instructors is modest and commercial rates might ultimately damage the sport.

References

British Hang-Gliding and Paragliding Association – ‘SkyWings’, monthly national magazine, and ‘Club Bulletin’, monthly news-sheet.

Elson, M.J. (1992). *Planning and Provision for Airsports. Facilities Factfile 3. Countryside and Water Recreation*, Sports Council, London.

Possible impacts

Danger and disturbance to other visitors.

Disturbance to livestock and wildlife, particularly birds.

Parking congestion at some sites.

Creation of new paths to launching and landing points.

Visual intrusion.

Contacts and liaison

British Model Flying Association

Chacksfield House, 31 St Andrews Road, Leicester LE2 8RE

Tel: 0116 244 0028

Contact: General Secretary

Legislation, codes and agreements

The overall body in charge of airspace rules is the Civil Aviation Authority. Article 51 of the Air Navigation Order (1985) states that:

'A person shall not recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft to endanger any person or property.'

This law covers all model flying, whatever the size or weight of the aircraft. The codes of conduct contained in the BMFA Members' Handbook have been developed in response to Article 51. Wherever model flying takes place these codes must be used. Models that are over 7kg are subject to further regulations.

Under sections 58 and 59 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974, local authorities or magistrates' courts may restrict or prohibit flying if the noise caused by the activity amounts to a statutory nuisance.

Copies of two NT/BMFA Precedent Agreements, for affiliated and non-affiliated clubs, are available from the Estates Department, Cirencester. Queries should be directed to the Estates Department at Cirencester or the Legal Department at Queen Anne's Gate.

References

British Model Flying Association (1995, amended 1997). *Members' Handbook*. British Model Flying Association, Leicester.

Elson, M.J. (1992). *Planning and Provision for Airports. Facilities Factfile 3. Countryside and Water Recreation*, Sports Council, London.

Trends

Thought to be stable.

Possible impacts

Intrusion from noise, speed and wash.

Danger to bathers and non-powered craft.

Disturbance of birds.

Fuel pollution (hydrocarbons and lead).

Erosion from boat wash.

Increased turbidity of water.

Water pollution from waste disposal (dirty water etc).

Contacts and liaison

Royal Yachting Association (RYA)

RYA House, Romsey Road, Eastleigh, Hants SO50 9YA

Tel: 023 8062 7400

Fax: 023 8062 9924

E-mail: admin@rya.org.uk

Web site: www.rya.org.uk

Contact: Legal and Government Affairs Manager

British Waterski Federation

390 City Road, London EC1V 2QA

Tel: 020 7833 2855

Contact: Development Officer

References

British Marine Industries Federation & UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development (1998). *Navigate with Nature – Are You On Course?*. BMIF & UK CEED, Cambridge.

British Marine Industries Federation and Others (1999). *Managing Personal Watercraft – a guide for local and harbour authorities*. BMIF and others.

Royal Yachting Association (1998). *Tidelines – Environmental Guidance for Boat Users*. Royal Yachting Association, Eastleigh, Hampshire.

Sports Council (1992). *Planning and Provision for Motor Sports*. The Sports Council, London.

Sports Council (1993). *Water Skiing and the Environment*. The Sports Council, London.

Motor vehicles

Scope for increasing the opportunities for off-road motor vehicles is limited overall because of potential conflicts with other recreational activities and the National Trust's conservation purposes. However, there should be a more positive and welcoming approach where use is both legitimate and responsible.

Guiding principles

- 1** The National Trust should recognise the legitimate rights of access for motor vehicles.
- 2** The National Trust should not resist well-founded claims for vehicular Rights of Way.
- 3** Recreational, informal use of vehicles in open country off vehicular Rights of Way should be strongly resisted.
- 4** Where problems associated with this activity are caused or anticipated, voluntary solutions should be sought through liaison with the motoring organisations' Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) and the local highway authority. Only if these efforts fail should the implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders be sought.

Good practice

- Close liaison should be established with local users wherever possible to encourage responsible use of National Trust property. LARA members will comply with reasonable requests to avoid particular routes and have offered assistance to maintain routes and erect signposts.
Lake District, North West: Traffic Management Study
- When conflicts of interest arise or when byway applications are made, there should be extensive liaison with LARA representatives and local highway authorities to develop a positive approach to the management of off-road vehicular access.
Cherhill Down, Wessex: Conflict Resolution
- LARA's Code of Conduct and Access Guide should be promoted wherever possible.
White Horse Hill, Thames & Chilterns

Monitoring suggestions: Levels of use should be monitored to determine the source of any problems associated with off-road vehicles.

Trends

The sales of off-road vehicles and the range of models have been increasing over the past ten years, the percentage of these vehicles used for recreation on byways is unclear.

Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF) membership is currently static at approximately 1,500 members, but estimate active trail riders number nearer 4,500. All Wheel Drive Club membership is 4,500, but the estimated total of participants exceeds 20,000.

Possible impacts

Erosion of route surfaces, particularly in bad weather.

Damage to walls and gates.

Interference with other users and their safety, particularly when using rights of way unlawfully or irresponsibly.

Noise pollution.

Significant impacts on nature conservation are reported (Royal Society for Nature Conservation, 1987), but have not been noted on National Trust land to date.

Contacts and liaison

LARA (the motoring organisations' Land Access and Recreation Association)

PO Box 20, Market Drayton TF9 1WR

Tel: 01630 657627

Fax: 01630 658928

Contact: Motor Recreation Development Officer

LARA is the forum for promoting the responsible use of our environment for motorsports and recreation. It coordinates opinion and members' views on issues affecting their interests and serves as a contact point for liaison with outside agencies.

Full members: Amateur Motor Cycle Association, Auto Cycle Union, Association of Rover Clubs, All Wheel Drive Club, British Motorcyclists Federation, British Off-Road Driving Association.

Associate members: British Schoolboy Motorcyle Association, Civil Service Motoring Association, Motor Cycle Industry Association, National Autograss Sport Association, RAC Motor Sports Association, Trail Riders Fellowship.

Byways and Bridleways Trust

St Mary's Business Centre, Oystershell Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 5QS

Tel: 0191 233 0770

Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers
 PO Box 78, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 4UP
 Tel: 07000 782318

Legislation, codes and agreements

Any use of the highway by motors is covered by a wide range of rules and regulations. No distinction is made in law between those public roads which are tarred and those which are not. Motoring away from public roads is also covered by a different set of complex rules and motorsport has its own codes of conduct.

References

Motoring organisations' Land Access and Recreation Association – 'LARA News'.

Trail Riders Fellowship – 'Trail', monthly bulletin.

Byways and Bridleways Trust – 'Byway and Bridleway' magazine, ten times a year.

Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers – 'Waymark' magazine.

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (1997). *Making the Best of Byways – a practical guide on managing the use of vehicles on public rights of way*. DETR, Countryside Division, Bristol.

Motoring organisations' Land Access and Recreation Association (1993). *Access Guide for Motorised Recreation and Motorsport in the Countryside*. Motor organisations' LARA, Cannock, Staffordshire.

Motoring organisations' Land Access and Recreation Association (1993). *Planning for Motorsport and Recreation in an Increasingly Sensitive Environment*. Motor organisations' LARA, Cannock, Staffordshire.

Motoring organisations' Land Access and Recreation Association (undated). *The Drivers' Countryside Code of Conduct*. Motor organisations' LARA, Cannock, Staffordshire.

Royal Society for Nature Conservation (1987). *Damage to Wildlife Sites by Off-Road Vehicles*. Royal Society for Nature Conservation, Lincoln.

Trail Riders Fellowship (1994). *Caring for green lanes*. Trail Riders Fellowship, Motspur Park, Surrey.

Trail Riders Fellowship (1994). *Handbook*. Trail Riders Fellowship, Motspur Park, Surrey.

Other detailed publications on many motoring activities are available, contact LARA with details of your area of interest for further information.

Orienteering

Orienteering is considered an appropriate activity on National Trust land. Orienteers are generally responsible and their activity is well managed and there are few problems as a consequence.

Guiding principles

- 1** The National Trust welcomes orienteering on its land, recognising its educational merit and value as an activity for a great range of ages and abilities.
- 2** The National Trust should continue to manage orienteering by permits and licences and make a charge to cover costs and/or contribute to the maintenance of facilities.

Good practice

- Liaise closely with local clubs and the British Orienteering Federation (BOF).
- Refer to Environmental Good Practice in Orienteering produced by BOF.
- Numbers of participants and the type and frequency of events should be determined by local assessment.
- Zones should be established to protect 'remote' areas, in order to retain the peace and quiet highly valued by many visitors.
- Ensure licences and permits detail acceptable practices, eg no paint marks on trees, rocks etc., no nails to be hammered into trees, re-routing in wet weather, markers, posts and litter to be removed afterwards.
- Forewarn local residents if a large influx of cars is expected.
- If there is a breakdown in communication locally inform BOF.

Monitoring suggestions: Record levels of use and if there are concerns record impacts or implement more detailed monitoring.

Trends

Increasing. BOF membership 12,000 in 1990; forecast to increase by 5% pa. National Curriculum encourages orienteering. Approximately 8,000 orienteer at least twice a month. Occasional orienteers take total to 100,000+ in UK.

Possible impacts

Good maps are provided which are useful for many purposes.

Port Stewart Strand, Northern Ireland; Formby, Mercia

Localised damage to vegetation can occur if course sites include fragile areas.

Temporary disturbance to breeding birds, but no long-term or permanent damage at current levels of use. The sporadic nature of orienteering gives ample recovery periods for both fauna and flora.

Disturbance of the enjoyment of others, particularly during large events, as a result of pressures on local transport networks and services.

Contacts and liaison

British Orienteering Federation (BOF)

Riversdale, Dale Road North, Darley Dale, Matlock DE4 2HX

Tel: 01629 734042

Fax: 01629 733769

E-mail: bof@bof.cix.co.uk

Welsh Orienteering Association

Coedlan, Cefn Drum, Pontardulais, Swansea, West Glamorgan SA4 1NJ

Legislation, codes and agreements

Licences and permits are currently drawn up on a site by site basis.

References

BOF – quarterly newsletter.

‘Compass Sport’ magazine.

Welsh Orienteering Association – ‘Y Ddraig’ magazine.

British Orienteering Federation (undated). *Orienteers and Your Land: Information for Landowners*. British Orienteering Federation, Matlock, Derbyshire.

British Orienteering Federation (1997). *Orienteering Rules and Guidelines*. British Orienteering Federation, Matlock, Derbyshire.

British Orienteering Federation (1994). *Handbook for Major Event Organisers*. British Orienteering Federation, Matlock, Derbyshire.

British Orienteering Federation (1992). *Environmental Good Practice in Orienteering.* **British Orienteering Federation, Matlock, Derbyshire.**

Douglas, E.A. (1989). *An Assessment of the Impact of the November Classic Badge Event 1988 on the New Forest.* **British Orienteering Federation, Matlock, Derbyshire.**

Ecosurveys Ltd (1991). *The Effect of the May 1991 Orienteering Event on the Breeding Bird Community of Brandon Park.* **British Orienteering Federation, Matlock, Derbyshire.**

Paintball games

Paintball games, which take place in woods, are currently banned on National Trust land (Coast and Countryside Subject Paper, 1990), because of anticipated conflicts with other recreational use. The activity can also cause damage to woodland.

National Trust staff may occasionally wish to accommodate this activity. Providing the site is of low conservation value and otherwise appropriate, there is no reason to impose a blanket ban. However, the small number of Trust woods which match this definition will significantly limit the opportunities for paintball games on Trust land.

Guiding principles

- 1 Paintball games are only acceptable in woods of low conservation value, on an occasional basis, subject to strict controls.

Good practice

- Ensure the wood is large enough to allow good dispersal of players, at least 30 hectares (75 acres).
- Management controls include: limits on numbers participating, seasonal restrictions, zoning (including the marking of 'no go' areas), restrictions on the erection of structures, digging and cutting back of vegetation.

Monitoring suggestions: General surveillance, eg on condition of site before and after, including after an adequate recovery period, would be useful to add to existing information on the effects of the sport.

Trends

Approximately 1 million participants in the UK.

Possible impacts

Conflict with other recreational activities.

Trampling damage to woodland ground flora (eradication in severe cases).

Soil disturbance and compaction from trenching, trampling etc.

Countryside Alliance

The Old Town Hall, 367 Kennington Road, London SE11 4PT

Tel: 020 7582 5432

Fax: 020 7793 8484

The Game Conservancy

Burgate Manor, Fordingbridge, Hants SP6 1EF

Tel: 01425 652381

The Game Conservancy is a research-based organisation which aims to ensure the future of game in its natural habitat by promoting a wider understanding of game and applying its research results by developing practical management techniques.

References

British Field Sports Society – ‘Country Sports’ newsletter three times a year.

British Association for Shooting and Conservation – ‘Shooting and Conservation’ quarterly magazine.

Game Conservancy – ‘Game Conservancy Review’ annually.

Game Conservancy – ‘Game Conservancy newsletter’ twice a year.

National Trust (1992). *The Use of Firearms on National Trust Property*. Estate Management Manual. The National Trust, Cirencester.

- Ensure noise from compressed air cylinders does not disturb birds, seals or visitors.
- Provide specialist literature on the interest of sites, protected wreck sites, where to go, the reasons for controls and National Trust practice.
- Establish zoning, incorporating sanctuary areas and permit-only areas.
- Ensure, as far as practicable, that divers do not approach cetaceans (dolphins, porpoises).
- Operate a booking system that incorporates restrictions, eg stipulate check in/check out, limit the number of divers, including the number of divers in a group (eg max. 20), limit the number of novice divers in sensitive sites, and ensure there is a satisfactory ratio of trained divers to novices, for both safety and conservation reasons (ideally 1 novice:1 dive leader), limit the number of boats and/or cars.
- Ensure divers have identifiable marks.

Monitoring suggestions: Collect data on levels of use. Establish underwater monitoring programmes in selected sites in collaboration with BSAC and with professional advice.

Farne Islands, Northumbria: levels of diving are being monitored on a regular basis as part of BSAC research

Trends

An estimated 80–90,000 people dive in the UK. BSAC membership increasing dramatically: 1960 – 5,000; 1970 – 13,721; 1980 – 27,075; 1990 – 36,434; 1995 – 55,000. 20% of membership is overseas. Records show that in 1992 70,000 divers undertook 1.5 million dives around the coast of the UK.

Possible impacts

Monitoring and recording of the underwater and marine environments, leading to better understanding and increased knowledge.

Promotion of the importance of the underwater environment; increased awareness of related issues.

Assistance with wardening, litter collection, etc.

Disturbance of underwater fauna, shore birds and seals.

Physical damage to fragile and delicate organisms, from anchoring, knocking with fins and unwieldy equipment. Novices known to cause much more damage than experienced divers.

Collecting and removal of specimens – shown to deplete local populations and reduce average size of individuals locally. Impact most severe from commercial collecting, but collecting for research purposes has also caused damage.

Physical damage to archaeological sites.

Associated parking and launching requirements.

Conflict with other user groups, eg fishermen, power and non-power boat users etc.

Contacts and liaison

The Receiver of Wrecks (RoW) (finds in the UK)

The Coastguard Agency, Spring Place, 105 Commercial Road, Southampton SO15 1EG

Tel: 023 8032 9474

Commission on Historical Monuments in England (RCHME) (finds in England)

National Monuments Record Centre, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ

Tel: 01973 414600

RCAHMW (finds in Wales)

Government Building, Plas Crug, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 1NJ

Tel: 01970 621200

DoE (Northern Ireland) (finds in N Ireland)

Environment and Heritage Service, 5–33 Hill Street, Belfast BT1 2LA

Tel: 028 9023 5000

The British Sub-Aqua Club (BSAC)

Telford's Quay, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral, Cheshire L65 4FY

Tel: 0151 350 6200

Fax: 0151 350 6215

Web site: www.bsac.com

Contact: Technical Support Manager

The BSAC was founded in 1953 and in 1958 was recognised by the Sports Council as the UK governing body for the sport. The BSAC is the largest diving club in the world and an authority on recreational diving and diver training. It has 1,250 branches and affiliated clubs in the UK and over 200 BSAC schools. Each year it trains some 20,000 people to dive. A Branch and Contact List is produced regularly.

The Cave Diving Group (CDG)

169, Nutgrove Road, Nutgrove, St Helens, Lancs WA9 5JH

Contact: Secretary

Nautical Archaeology Society

Membership: 206 Moorview Way, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 2TN

Training and Projects: 19 College Road, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LJ

Tel./Fax: 023 9281 8419

Marine Conservation Society (MCS)

9, Gloucester Road, Ross on Wye, Herefordshire HR9 5BU

Tel: 0198 956 6017

The MCS is a national voluntary organisation concerned with all aspects of conservation of marine life and habitats, principally in UK waters. It provides expertise in habitat conservation, interpretation, monitoring and recording techniques and wardening, as well as a very wide range of marine issues.

British Society of Underwater Photographers

60 St Helen's Gardens, London W10 6LH

Contact: Secretary

Legislation, codes and agreements

The National Trust supports the BSAC Code of Conduct.

All finds should be reported to the Receiver of Wrecks (RoW) in the first instance, and the RCHME, RCAHMW and BSAC if advised otherwise by the RoW. Newly discovered wreck sites or finds should be marked using marker buoys and their positions fixed through either GPS or land bearings.

Note: It is an offence not to report finds to the RoW under the Merchant Shipping Act (1894).

Under archaeological legislation there are potentially tens of thousands of wrecks off the UK coast, many of which are known and have been recorded but are not protected by law. The Protection of Wrecks Act (1973) provides protection for 47 wreck sites around the UK, and restricts access to licensed divers. Licences are issued by the Advisory Committee on Historic Wreck Sites for the DCMS (soon to be delegated to English Heritage), CADW, Historic Scotland and EHS NI.

In UK law, ownership of material lost at sea resides in the original owners or their successors, unless it can be shown that abandonment occurred. Finds are held by the RoW for one year, after which if no one owner can be found the find is often passed to the finder in lieu of salvage award. Important archaeological finds are often offered to museums for conservation.

Inland sites, eg rivers and quarries, are treated as normal archaeological sites and some are protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Ownership of finds is the same as for land.

References

British Sub-Aqua Club – 'Diver', monthly magazine.

British Sub-Aqua Club (1998). *Safe Diving Practices*. BSAC National Diving Committee, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire.

British Sub-Aqua Club (1998). *BSAC Environmental Policy*.

Walking

Walking is the core activity on National Trust land. The Trust is a major provider of land for walking and is highly regarded for this.

Guiding principles

- 1** Walking has always been, and will continue to be, the main type of access provided by the National Trust.
- 2** The National Trust will continue to make assessments of new walking opportunities, in particular the provision of more places to stop, as well as places to go, and more routes for visitors with reduced mobility (young families, elderly, disabled visitors etc.).
- 3** The National Trust allows and welcomes freedom to roam over its unenclosed land and woods. This does not necessarily apply to dogs.

Good practice

- Liaise with local walkers and ramblers groups to discuss their needs and those of the National Trust.
- Promote the Country Code.
- Assess and predict levels of use before undertaking new promotional initiatives; ensure damage is unlikely to occur and that staffing and maintenance resources are adequate.
- Provide information which gives guidance on where to go, what to see, how to get there and what walking conditions to expect, which helps to create an awareness and understanding of the countryside.
- Seek to influence the content of non-National Trust promotional literature (guidebooks etc.) and identify opportunities for joint publication.
Cornwall; North York Moors National Park
- Assess critically the need for erosion repair, especially in the uplands. Consider priorities in the context of competing needs (eg information provision, monitoring and new types of access elsewhere) which may have more overall benefit.
Upland Repair Handbook and work in the North West, Snowdonia and Brecon Beacons
- Assess paths for long-term sustainability and where practicable seek to re-route those that are badly sited, prohibitively expensive to maintain or damaging features of interest.
Lake District, North West

- As far as possible ensure that complaints from the public about path surfaces do not compromise important natural or management processes (eg allow wet and boggy paths, dung on paths, etc.).
Hill Top, North West; Lizard village, Cornwall
- Replace stiles with kissing or self-closing gates wherever possible.
See 'BT/Fieldfare Countryside for All' and 'National Trust Visitors with Disabilities'
- Many walkers seek peace and quiet and a sense of wilderness: the National Trust recognises this and should provide for it.
- Seek opportunities to extend access on tenanted farmland, particularly where there are new tenants, as part of a whole farm assessment. Make good use of agri-environment schemes for this purpose.
Sherborne, Severn; Chyngton, Kent & East Sussex
- Consider opportunities for additional routes, creating links with footpaths beyond National Trust boundaries and dedicating them wherever possible.
Dudmaston, Mercia; Standen, Southern
- Encourage and make it easier for visitors to walk to National Trust properties from their homes or public transport links.
Erddig, Wales; Formby, Mercia; Hardcastle Crag, Yorkshire
See 'Green Transport News'

Monitoring suggestions: Monitor erosion repair to assess its long-term effectiveness and benefits and investigate contribution of land use, eg grazing. Monitor levels of use at selected sites/times.

Trends

Increasing. Membership of Ramblers' Association (RA): 1970 – 20,000; 1980 – 30,000; 1990 – 85,000; 1997 – 120,000. 20 million in the UK walk regularly. c.50 million walk in the countryside at least once a year.

Possible impacts

Erosion and costly path repair works, with insufficient assistance from highway authorities.

Damage to habitats and natural features from footpath construction.

Seasonal disturbance of fauna, especially moorland birds.

Damage to fragile vegetation.

Damage to walls, fences, stiles, etc., and litter.

Conflict between walkers, cyclists and riders (danger, walkers frightened, path surfaces made more difficult for walkers).

Safety requirements, the cost of their implementation and damage to valuable features.

Traffic and car parking congestion associated with walking, and the cost of car park maintenance. Also some income from car parking.

Contacts and liaison

Ramblers' Association (RA)

1–5 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2XX

Tel: 020 7339 8500

Fax: 020 7339 8501

E-mail: ramblers@london.ramblers.org.uk

Contact: Assistant Director (Access)

Ty'r Cerddwyr, High Street, Gresford, Wrexham, Clwyd LL12 8PT

Tel: 01978 855148

Fax: 01978 854445

E-mail: cerddwyr@compuserve.com

The Association promotes rambling, protects Rights of Way, campaigns for access to open country and defends the beauty of the countryside. There are over 50 area and 400 local groups throughout Britain. The association uses volunteers for path clearance, waymarking and organisation.

Institute of Public Rights of Way Officers

PO Box 78, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 4UP

Tel: 07000 782318

Legislation, codes and agreements

Walkers have a legal right of way on footpaths, bridleways, byways and roads used as public paths. On a bridleway cyclists must give way to walkers. They also have 'de facto' access to many areas of land where they have not specifically been invited and to which no formal rights of access apply, eg extensive, remote and unenclosed moorland areas.

References

Ramblers' Association – 'Rambling Today', quarterly magazine and year book.

Ramblers' Association – 'Footpath Worker', quarterly bulletin of reports and decision letters on public path orders, court cases and related matters.

Barlow, J. & Thomas, M. (1998). *Mending Our Ways – the quality approach to managing upland paths*. British Upland Footpath Trust, Manchester.

Ramblers' Association (1993). *Harmony in the Hills*. Consultation document. The Ramblers' Association, London.

Sidaway, R. (1990). *Birds and Walkers. A review of existing research on access to the countryside and disturbance to birds*. A report prepared for the Ramblers' Association, London.

Ratcliffe, D. (1992). *Rambling and Nature Conservation*. *Rambling Today*. Spring issue.