

SAFETY AND BEHAVIOUR ON SHARED ROUTES

Leicestershire Local Access Forum Review

The forum is to look further into this issue and first must identify whether there is a problem and if so the nature and extent of it.

People walk on private land

Speeding cyclists are a danger to others

Horses churn up the surface of paths

Cyclists ride where they are not allowed to

Roads are becoming too dangerous for non motorised users

Mobility scooters can be a nuisance or worse to the users of paths.



All these statements are true to an extent but do not tell the whole story. There have been a number of reports, especially about cycling, which will help our considerations.

Beyond that we must determine how much of this and associated issues fall within our remit. Whilst all roads are rights of way, traffic as such and public transport are only within our brief in as far as they interfere with walkers and riders or impact on peoples abilities to get out to enjoy the wider network of rights of way and public open spaces.

Members in initial discussions provided numerous examples of where problems have been seen, many on the road itself and that is not really within our scope. Riders two abreast and in large formations are perceived as a nuisance to other traffic. People using bikes to zip about in city centres have been seen ignore red lights and to collide with pedestrians but more often than not they are probably more of a risk to themselves than anybody else.

As with all such perceived problems the reputations of the great majority of riders and walkers are tarnished by the memorable nuisance and bad behaviour of a few.

There is wanton disobedience of rules but also a lot of ignorance as to what people are allowed to do where.

Particular areas of concern flagged up in early consideration are cycle hire centres providing bikes to complete novices without any instructions and people riding bikes on footpaths.

We must then consider what we can in effect do about it.

We feel the lack of education is a major factor but enforcement or the lack of it is also a problem

Can signage be improved or added to?

Can we suggest how people can be educated and trained so that they know what and where they can go and how to behave when they are there?

Can we design any literature to be offered to outlets and schools etc.?

Can we suggest straplines which could be added to websites to the same end?

To whom and where should we be addressing our efforts?

As a national problem or perceived problem should we be making recommendations to DeFRA via the Regional Access Forums Meetings?

Some of the following reports address issues outside our remit.

Is dangerous cycling a problem?

Comments (1517)

By Jon Kelly BBC News Magazine



[Continue reading the main story](#)

MPs could introduce a new offence of causing death by dangerous cycling. But how much of a danger do these two-wheeled travellers really pose?

There is little that divides UK public opinion more sharply than cyclists.

To their supporters, Britain's bike-riders are clean, green, commuters-with-a-conscience, who relieve congestion on the nation's roads while keeping themselves fit.

But to certain newspapers, and indeed plenty of motorists, they are "lycra louts", jumping red lights, hurtling past pedestrians on pavements and denying the Highway Code applies to them.

Now this debate - regularly articulated, with the aid of Anglo-Saxon dialect, during rush-hour traffic - has found a forum in the House of Commons, where MP Andrea Leadsom has introduced a private members' bill to create new crimes of causing death or serious injury through dangerous or reckless cycling.

She cites the case of Rhiannon Bennett, who was 17 when she was killed by a speeding cyclist in 2007. The cyclist - who, the court heard, had shouted at Rhiannon to "move because I'm not stopping" - was fined £2,200 and avoided jail.

[Continue reading the main story](#)

Pedestrian casualties 2001-09

- Killed by cycles: 18
- Seriously injured by cycles: 434

- Killed by cars: 3,495
- Seriously injured by cars: 46,245

Figures apply to Great Britain. Source: Department for Transport

The MP, herself a keen cyclist, insists she does not want to penalise Britons from getting on their bikes. Her intention is to ensure all road users take "equal responsibility" for their actions, as drivers are already subject to analogous legislation. The government has said it will consider supporting the bill.

But the discussion raises the question of how much of a danger bicycles actually pose on the nation's roads.

Cycling campaigners insist the popular perceptions of rampaging cyclists are not supported by statistical evidence. According to the Department for Transport (DfT), in 2009, the most recent year for which figures are available, no pedestrians were killed in Great Britain by cyclists, but 426 died in collisions with motor vehicles out of a total of 2,222 road fatalities.

Indeed, bike riders insist it is they who are vulnerable. Of the 13,272 collisions between cycles and cars in 2008, 52 cyclists died but no drivers were killed.

Jump media player

Conservative MP Andrea Leadsom urges MPs to back a change to the law

Alex Bailey of the Cyclists Touring Club (CTC), which lobbies on behalf of bike users, says valuable parliamentary time could and should be used more effectively to improve road safety. He says there is no need to change the law as twice in the past decade an 1861 act has been used to jail cyclists who killed pedestrians while riding on the pavement.

The notion of the marauding, aggressive cyclist causing rampage on the road, he insists, has little grounding in fact.

"It has a lot of currency in the media," he says. "But it's emotionally based, not rationally based. The problem is not about cyclists at all."

Certainly, few would argue that the boom in cycling has led to a transformation in the activity's public image.

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Great Britain cycle safety statistics

- In 2008, pedal bikes made up 1.8% of urban, non-motorway traffic but were involved in just 0.25% of pedestrian deaths and below 1% of serious pedestrian injuries
- During the same year, there were 13,272 recorded collisions between cars and bicycles, resulting in the deaths of 52 cyclists and no car drivers or passengers
- A study of collisions between cyclists and other vehicles from 2005-07 found police allocated blame to drivers in 60% of cases, to the cyclist in 30% and to both parties in the remainder

Source: Department for Transport

- Are women cyclists in more danger than men?
- Cycle helmets - a hard case to crack

Once it might have conjured up images like that of George Orwell's old maids "biking to Holy Communion through the mists of the autumn mornings".

Now, at least in built-up areas, one stereotype, rightly or wrongly, is of well-paid men in expensive leisurewear with a sense of entitlement and a refusal to conform to the same rules as everyone else.

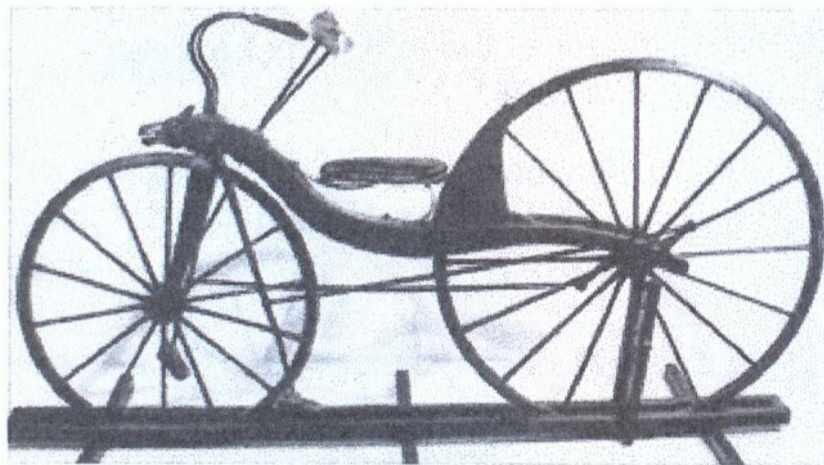
Tony Armstrong, chief executive of Living Streets, which represents pedestrians, says that while most cyclists behave safely, it should not be ignored that "a significant minority cause concern and fear among pedestrians by their reckless and irresponsible behaviour".

He acknowledges deaths and serious injuries caused by cyclists are relatively rare, but adds that the impact of more mundane anti-social behaviour is more difficult to quantify.

"Although fatalities are recorded, there is no way of measuring how many people have been intimidated or left feeling vulnerable by irresponsible cycling," he says. "We know from our supporters that this is a major concern."

[Continue reading the main story](#)

The first-ever cycle crime



- Kirkpatrick Macmillan, a blacksmith from Keir Mill, Dumfriesshire, is credited by most historians with inventing the pedal bicycle in 1839
- In 1842, a newspaper report describes "a gentleman from Dumfries-shire bestride a velocipede of ingenious design" who knocked over a little girl in Glasgow's Gorbals area and was fined five shillings
- Many believe the offender must have been Macmillan himself. He died in 1878 without ever having patented his invention
- [More about Kirkpatrick Macmillan](#)

Indeed, Professor Stephen Glaister, director of motorists' advocacy group the RAC Foundation, suggests much of the hostility on the roads stems from a lack of understanding

and suggests levelling out the legislation would reassure drivers that the rules were being applied fairly.

"In some ways, road users are tribal in their nature; loyal to their fellow drivers or cyclists, and dismissive of - or antagonistic towards - those who choose to travel by another method," he says.

"Subjecting everyone who uses the public highway to the same laws might actually forge better relationships between us all and erode the idea held by many that those who travel by an alternative mode routinely make up rules of the road to suit themselves."

But some bike-users reject the idea that anecdote and mutual suspicion should drive policy.

In particular, Guardian columnist and cycling advocate Zoe Williams says she is exasperated by the references to red light-jumping whenever bikes are discussed.

She insists the practice largely stems from fear, not arrogance, due to the high number of cyclists killed each year by heavy goods vehicles turning left at junctions, and says ministers should concentrate on tackling such deaths if they really want to make the roads safer.

She adds: "Can you imagine if every time we talked about cars people complained about drivers doing 80mph on the motorway?"

"Most cyclists are actually pretty timid. You're constantly living on your wits because you're vulnerable. Instead of drawing up laws like this we should be encouraging cycling and making it easier."

The discussion will continue at Westminster. But legislating away the antipathy between cyclists and drivers will surely be a momentous challenge for MPs.



Cycling Embassy of Great Britain

Making riding a bike as easy as riding a bike.

Cyclists ride on pavements

This page is a draft under construction. It is a widely editable wiki page and should not be assumed to be official Cycling Embassy policy.

Common claims and canards > Objections to cycling and cyclists > **Cyclists ride on pavements**

Summary of the claim

"Cyclists ride on pavements, footpaths and pedestrian zones without regard for pedestrians, inconveniencing and endangering them. It is illegal in the United Kingdom."

The claim is used to hijack or derail discussions of, or campaigns for, cycling. The implication is that cycling does not deserve public support or investment.

Example sources

This claim is inevitably raised in the comments section whenever cycling is mentioned in a tabloid newspaper. The Daily Mail news debate forum (link is external) and Evening Standard comments section (link is external) provide fine examples.

Summary of responses

1. Blaming "cyclists" for this problem is a mistake:
 1. Whatever method we choose to get around, we are all pedestrians some of the time, so problem pavement users affect all of us. It is therefore silly to characterise this as a "pedestrians versus cyclists" issue. It is a problem of people versus a selfish minority, and the Cycling Embassy finds itself on the side of the people.
 2. "Cyclists" is a diverse group. It includes teenagers and grandmothers, the Prime-Minister and playwrights (link is external). They don't all believe the same things or behave the same way any more than all bus passengers or all pedestrians do, and should not be tarred with one brush or collectively punished.
 3. One can observe bad habits amongst users of all transport modes — many of them far more dangerous than using a bicycle on a pavement. But just as the average motorist would not identify with or defend drink driving, so the average cyclist does not identify with pavement cycling.

obvious that blaming “cyclists” in general for the problem, as is so frequently done by tabloid newspaper commenters and commentators, is an irrational and lazy response, and even a harmful one when it used to dismiss the problems that cycling campaigns are trying to overcome. Additionally, we argue that tackling the problem is unlikely to be successful unless the root causes are addressed.

Why “cyclists” are not to blame

“Cyclists” is a diverse group, from kids going to school by BMX to village vicars on vintage three-speeds doing the parish rounds; affluent city commuters on Bromptons to their low-paid office cleaners on Tesco’s own-brand. There are competitive racers, thrill-seeking mountain bikers, laid-back country tourists and plain utility cyclists. It should be obvious that such a diverse group can not be dismissed as having homogeneous beliefs or behaviours.

Just as it would be wrong to tar all “motorists” with the brush of joy riding, drink-driving or mobile-phone use (or, indeed, driving and parking on pavements), ridiculous to blame “passengers” for the crimes of the fare-dodger, and bizarre to blame “pedestrians” for dangerous dog walkers, it is silly to blame cyclists and cycling for the crimes that a few commit while riding a bicycle. Other cyclists are endangered by bad cycling too (not least because we are all pedestrians some of the time), so when a commentator derails a cycling discussion or campaign over this issue it amounts to a collective punishment when we already amongst the victims.

The cause of the problem, and the true solution

The root cause of cycling on pavements is the pressure that pushes cyclists off roads — fear of cycling in close proximity to fast and busy motor traffic and big trucks.³ When cyclists are observed cycling on the pavement, it is most commonly on roads which have higher volumes and/or faster motor traffic — especially near to junctions, the most dangerous places for cyclists. This is consistent with the fact that fear of traffic is the most common barrier to cycling. While most people simply give up cycling when confronted with the hostile conditions on Britain’s roads, some resort to breaking the law by using pavements. This is especially true for those who are new to cycling, those who do not cycle frequently, and those who cycle out of necessity rather than choice, such as students.^{1 3 4}

Their actions, whilst inconsiderate and posing a moderate danger to pedestrians, are effectively illustrating the need for effective interventions which eliminate the barrier to cycling posed by fear of traffic — in particular, dedicated segregated cycle infrastructure along the busiest and fastest roads.

Shared use paths

Not all “pavement cycling” is illegal. Although by default one is not allowed to cycle on a pavement, it is easy for councils to over-rule the law on a specific pavement, turning it into a “shared-use facility” — a combined footway and cycleway. Sometimes a shared-use path is purpose built, with separate footway and cycleway lanes. More often, it is simply the same old pavement, but with a blue bicycle sign indicating its new status.

Pedestrians using these pavements might not always realise that cycling on them is legal, endorsed and even encouraged. There are many reports of cyclists having been the victims of misplaced wrath while using them, even when their status as cycleways has been quite clear.⁵

While cycling on shared paths is legal, this does not mean that pedestrians and cyclists will not be in conflict, or that vulnerable pedestrians will not find sharing the path intimidating. This is especially true of the very many poorly implemented and constructed shared paths, or inappropriately designated pavements in the UK. Shared paths are frequently too narrow, have obstructions and blind corners, and it is often unclear where the exact boundaries of the “shared use” zone are.

4. Cars and delivery vans are also routinely driven onto and parked on pavements, creating obstructions and costly damage to paving. Pedestrian campaigns like Living Streets recognise that there is a more general problem of pedestrian space being invaded, and pavement cycling is only one part of it.
2. Sociologists who have studied the behaviour and attitudes of pavement cyclists have found most to be far less dangerous and malicious than the claim portrays them:
 1. Some of those who cycle on pavements are simply not aware of the law regarding cycling on pavements. Rather than being selfish, they may simply not understand the consequences that their actions could have. In this case, education is more appropriate than punishment.
 2. Most of those who cycle on pavements *are* aware of the law and the potential consequences of their actions, but actively take steps to avoid inconveniencing and endangering others.
3. Cycling on pavements is a response to badly designed streets and hostile road conditions. Where roads are quiet and safe, or where high-quality cycling facilities have been provided, pavement cycling ceases. The problem can not be solved without addressing the root cause. The Cycling Embassy campaigns for better infrastructure and conditions for cycling and an end to pavement cycling would be a side-effect of achieving that.
4. Although by default the law prohibits cycling on pavements, councils are able to easily over-rule it in specified locations, turning the pavement into a "shared use" footway/cycleway, and many pavements now fall into this category. Pedestrians encountering a cyclist on the pavement might not have realised that they are actually using a shared path.

In more detail

The problem

Cycling on pavements is inconsiderate and may cause inconvenience or fear for pedestrians, contributing to a hostile environment which reduces the mobility of vulnerable or disabled people such as the elderly and visually impaired. Such behaviour may ultimately cause injury or death, though such extremes are very rare and the risks exaggerated.² Cycling on pavements is therefore illegal, punishable by a £30 fine (£60 in London), except where councils (or landowners if on private land) have made exceptions.

A minority of cyclists ride on pavements regardless. (And in most of the UK it certainly is a small minority, though it might feel like more as you spot and remember those on the pavement while missing and forgetting those on the road.) Sociologists at Lancaster University have sought to understand these pavement cyclists, studying their behaviour and interviewing them about their motives. They found that some are simply unaware of the law and the problems that they are causing — they *should* be aware of the law, of course, but the best solution in these cases is surely education rather than punishment. Most, though, are aware of the law and that the pavement rightfully belongs to pedestrians, but they choose to ignore the rules, for reasons discussed below (see "The cause of the problem, and the true solution"). However, contrary to the common claims of dangerous and reckless cycling, the pavement cyclists interviewed were generally aware that their behaviour could inconvenience or frighten pedestrians, and they told researchers that they try to cycle considerately, give way to pedestrians and dismount in busy areas.³

Though this evidence suggests that the problem is frequently exaggerated, we nonetheless recognise that it is a very real problem, and the Cycling Embassy makes no attempt to condone pavement cycling or to defend those who engage in it. However, we think that it should be

While the Cycling Embassy believes that on fast and busy roads cyclists need their own space separated from motor vehicles, we do not think that "shared use" is the right model for that space. Aside from the problems that such pavements create for pedestrians, they make for slow and unattractive cycle routes. The Cycling Embassy wants to ensure that where cycling facilities are required, they are implemented to appropriate high standards, and a reduction in pavement cycling should be a side-effect of our campaign.

Things to See and Do

The Countryside

Welcome to limestone country! The White Peak is a spectacular landscape of open views across hills and dales, criss-crossed by drystone walls that enclose farmland. Cycle, walk or ride along over 70 miles of Trails and cycle routes to experience nature's year round colour and discover a rich industrial heritage and railway history.

Look out for the mural at Friden brickworks on the High Peak Trail. Enjoy the Manifold Track and see a scale model of the railway in the Manifold visitor centre. Visit the historic villages of Hartington, Tissington and Cromford. Explore the old market towns of Ashbourne and Wirksworth.

Visit, Enjoy, Get Fit

Enjoy the countryside by bike. It's a great way to spend time with family or friends. Get fit whilst you relax and have fun. You'll be helping to reduce traffic congestion and pollution and it gets you closer to nature. It's win:win for everyone, and there are prizes to be won too!

If you are a new or occasional cyclist and sign up to the Cycling Challenge website through Pedal Peak District you get the chance to win a monthly prize of a bike worth £300.* Forms are available in Peak District National Park cycle hire centres and visitor centres or visit www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/cycle

Join up to get information about cycling routes and training opportunities near where you live. We'll help you set small, manageable goals to continue cycling. Every time you complete them you get entered into draws to win great prizes.

Pedal Peak District is a £2.25 million project set up to: encourage more people to cycle, particularly those who don't much or at all; promote cycling for fun, health, fitness and transport; create a new cycle route from Bakewell to Buxton; and promote better public transport links.

It is managed by the Peak District National Park Authority and is part of a pilot project being run by Cycling England, an independent body funded by the Department of Transport www.dft.gov.uk/cyclingengland

* www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/cycle for terms and conditions.

For Cyclists

Hire a bike or bring your own to explore the White Peak Trails and cycle routes. Keep to the left and ride in single file. Give way to pedestrians and horses.

Ring your bell or call out "Bike" when approaching others from behind so they know you are there.

Please consider other users at all times and do not race along the Trails. On the Trails, you are advised not to cycle down steep inclines for safety.

Call in at the cycle hire centres for local cycling advice from friendly cycle hire assistants. Sign up to the Cycling Challenge website and you could win a bike. www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/cycle

Take your time and enjoy the views!

For Horse riders

Horses and riders are welcome on the Trails. There is also a riding route around Carsington Water.

Route 54A is the only section of the network not open to horse riders due to poor visibility at road junctions.

There are several tunnels and steep inclines along the White Peak Trails and cycle routes – see map.

Please consider other users and do not gallop along the Trails. Keep to the left and ride in single file.

For horses, the Pennine Bridleway starts at Hartington Station where there are horse-box parking facilities. More information on www.nationaltrail.co.uk/penninebridleway

Relax and enjoy a gentle ride.



For Walkers

Walkers are welcome.

Keep to the left on the Trails.

The Trails are used by cyclists and horse riders so please consider other users at all times.

Keep dogs under control and clear up their mess.

The network includes country roads which do not have pavements alongside – be aware of traffic.

Enjoy your White Peak walk!



Access For All

The High Peak and Tissington Trail have level, mostly compacted stone surfaces providing easy conditions for all users with accessible car parks, picnic sites and toilets. Beware of the steep inclines in places, marked on the map.

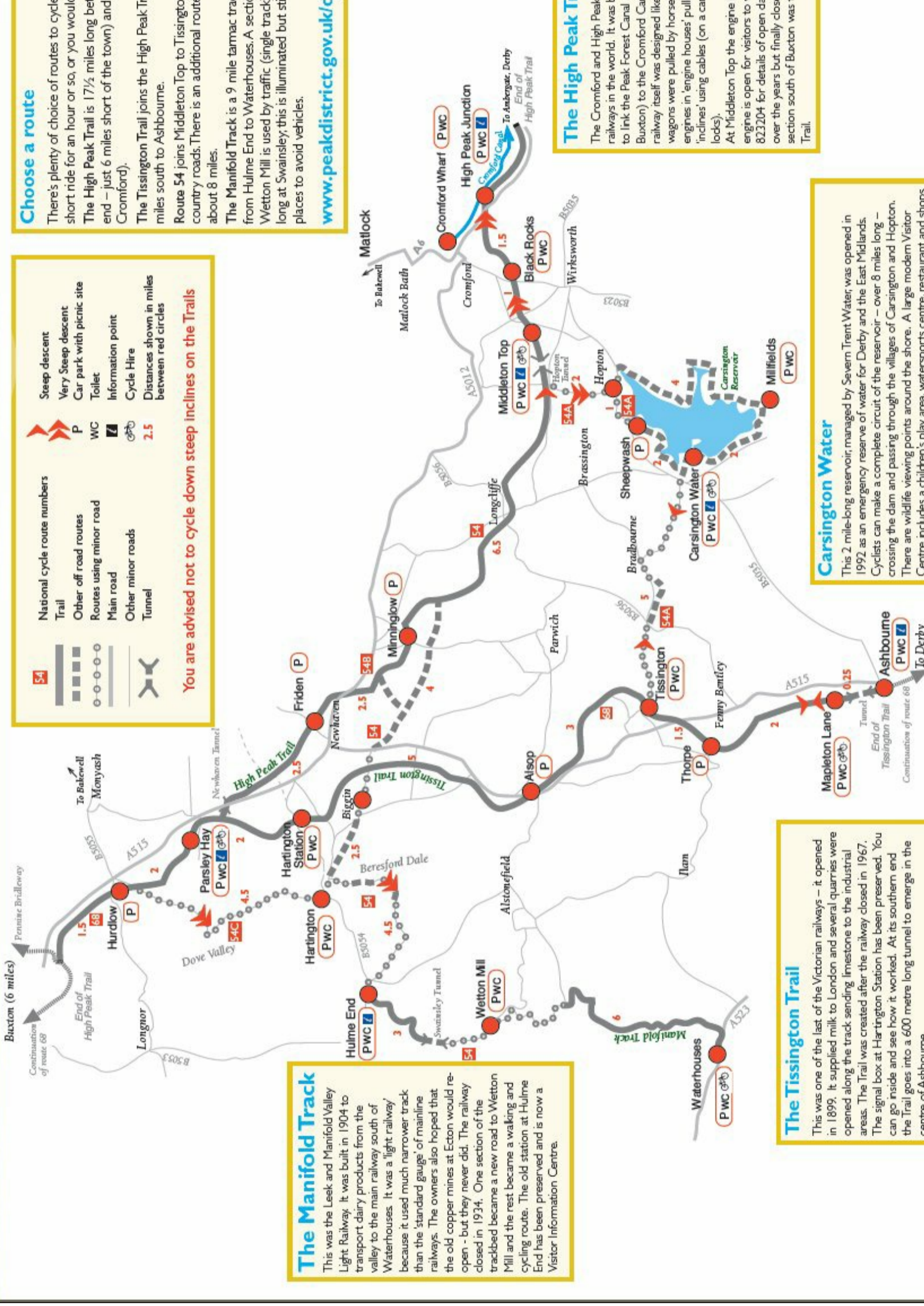
At Parsley Hay cycle hire centre there is a range of bikes suitable for all abilities including tandems, trikes, handcrank and wheelchair bikes. At Ashbourne, Carsington Water and Middleton Top you can hire a mobility scooter, phone for details.

Carsington Water has accessible facilities including visitor centre, restaurant, shops and toilets.

The Manifold Track has a good level tarmac surface but there is a section of it open to motor traffic.

For more information go to www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting

White Peak Trails and Cycle Routes



Choose a route

There's plenty of choice of routes to cycle whether you're planning a short ride for an hour or so, or you would like a longer outing: The High Peak Trail is 17½ miles long between Dowlow (at the Buxton end – just 6 miles short of the town) and High Peak Junction (close to Cromford). The Tissington Trail joins the High Peak Trail at Parsley Hay and runs 13 miles south to Ashbourne. Route 54 joins Middleton Top to Tissington via about 10 miles of country roads. There is an additional route around Carsington Water of about 8 miles. The Manifold Track is a 9 mile tarmac track along a disused railway from Hulme End to Waterhouses. A section between Swainsley and Wetton Mill is used by traffic (single track) and contains a tunnel 100m long at Swainsley; this is illuminated but still quite dark with small passing places to avoid vehicles.

www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/cycle

	National cycle route numbers		Steep descent
	Trail		Very steep descent
	Other off road routes		Car park with picnic site
	Routes using minor road		Toilet
	Main road		Information point
	Other minor roads		Cycle hire
	Tunnel		Distances shown in miles between red circles

You are advised not to cycle down steep inclines on the Trails

The Manifold Track

This was the Leek and Manifold Valley Light Railway. It was built in 1904 to transport dairy products from the valley to the main railway south of Waterhouses. It was a 'light railway' because it used much narrower track than the 'standard gauge' of mainline railways. The owners also hoped that the old copper mines at Ecton would re-open - but they never did. The railway closed in 1934. One section of the trackbed became a new road to Wetton Mill and the rest became a walking and cycling route. The old station at Hulme End has been preserved and is now a Visitor Information Centre.

The High Peak Trail

The Cromford and High Peak Railway was one of the first railways in the world. It was built between 1825 and 1830 to link the Peak Forest Canal at Whaley Bridge (north of Buxton) to the Cromford Canal – a distance of 33 miles. The railway itself was designed like a canal. On the flat sections the wagons were pulled by horses. Large steam powered beam engines in 'engine houses' pulled the wagons up the steep 'inclines' using cables (on a canal the inclines would have been locks). At Middleton Top the engine house with its massive beam engine is open for visitors to wonder at (telephone 01629 823204 for details of open days). The railway was adapted over the years but finally closed completely in 1967. The section south of Buxton was then converted to the High Peak Trail.

Carsington Water

This 2 mile-long reservoir, managed by Severn Trent Water, was opened in 1992 as an emergency reserve of water for Derby and the East Midlands. Cyclists can make a complete circuit of the reservoir – over 8 miles long – crossing the dam and passing through the villages of Carsington and Hopton. There are wildlife viewing points around the shore. A large modern Visitor Centre includes a children's play area, watersports centre, restaurant and shops.

The Tissington Trail

This was one of the last of the Victorian railways – it opened in 1899, it supplied milk to London and several quarries were opened along the track sending limestone to the industrial areas. The Trail was created after the railway closed in 1967. The signal box at Hartington Station has been preserved. You can go inside and see how it worked. At its southern end the Trail goes into a 600 metre long tunnel to emerge in the centre of Ashbourne.

TRAIL CODE OF CONDUCT



All users please keep to the left unless passing others



Please use the trail safely and be considerate to other users

The trail is not suitable for high speeds. Parents of young children on bikes need extra vigilance. Be aware other trail users may have disabilities.



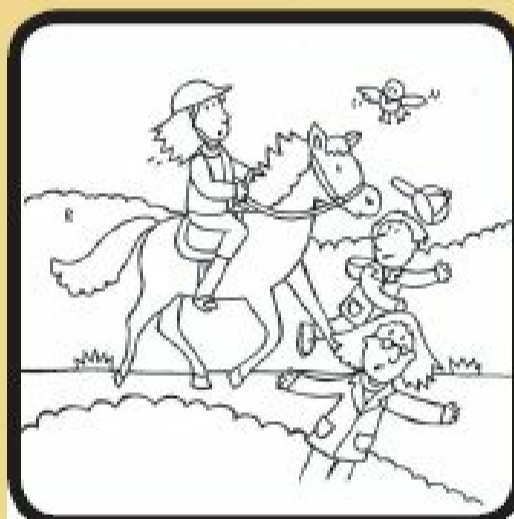
Cyclists, please keep your speed down and give way to other users

Use your bell or call out 'bike' to warn people of your approach and pass people slowly when it is safe to do so. Be aware that horses can be spooked by bikes.



If the trail is busy, please avoid being in large groups across the trail

Take extra care, and allow other users to pass and listen out for their approach.



Horse riders, please keep to a walking pace when passing other users and no more than a trot at any time to protect the trail surface



Dogs must be kept under close control at all times

Please keep dogs on short leads within the tunnels.



Please respect the privacy of adjoining properties and landowners



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www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting



Do not drop litter and please clean up after your dog

Footpaths

This public right of way is meant for pedestrians only. You are allowed to walk your dog as long as it is under your close control. When walking a dog, you must ensure that it keeps to the public footpath and does not trespass into nearby properties. Prams, pushchair or wheelchairs can also be used on a footpath.

Bridleways





These are meant for walkers, horseriders and bicyclists. Bicyclists are expected to give way to walkers and horseriders.

Byways Open To All Traffic (BOAT)

These byways are normally marked "byways" and are open to motorists, bicyclists, horseriders, motorcyclists and pedestrians. As with public tarmac road networks, motorists must ensure that they are legally authorised to use BOATs (i.e. registered, taxed, insured and MoT'd).

Restricted Byways

Restricted Byways are created under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. They are open to the traffic mentioned above in BOATs, but exclude motor vehicles and motorcycles.

	Footpath – open to walkers only, waymarked with a yellow arrow
	Bridleway – open to walkers, horse-riders and cyclists, waymarked with a blue arrow
	Restricted byway – open to walkers, cyclists, horse-riders and horse-drawn vehicles, waymarked with a plum coloured arrow.
	Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) – open to walkers, cyclists, horse-riders, horse-drawn vehicles and motor vehicles, waymarked with a red arrow.

DON'Ts

Footpaths

Footpaths on edge of a field must not be ploughed. Footpaths can be ploughed, if they cross fields. However, a minimum width of 1 metres must be made available within 14 days of ploughing. Landowners must also ensure that they restore footpaths after ploughing.

If you are walking a dog, you must make sure that it does not stray off legal lines of a public footpath as this may constitute an act of trespass. Also ensure that you clean up your dog mess, if your dog fouls up on a footpath.

Bridleways

Bridleways on the edge of a field must also not be ploughed except they cross over fields. Like footpaths, landowners must also give a minimum width of 2 metres within 14 days of commencing ploughing. Landowners must also ensure that they restore bridleways after ploughing.

Motor cars, mini motors and motorcyclists are not allowed on bridleways.

Byways Open To All Traffic (BOAT)

Under-age or banned drivers, quad bikes, mini-motos, non-road-legal scramblers & quad bikes are not allowed on BOATs.

BOATs must not be ploughed or obstructed to prevent public use.

Restricted Byways

Motorcyclists, motorists in motorcars, mini motors, quad bikes, non-road legal scramblers are not allowed on restricted by ways.

Restricted byways must also not be ploughed or obstructed to prevent public use.

Other don'ts for landowners

- You cannot grow crops on a public right of way, however grass can be grown for hay and silage.
- Dairy bulls over 10 months are not allowed to cross over a field with a right of way.
- You cannot put up stiles or gates without the permission of your local authority.
- You cannot put up misleading signs to prevent people from using a public right of way.
- You are not allowed to harass, intimidate (e.g. placing a fierce dog on public right of way) or prevent members of the public from using a public right of way.
- It is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 to put up barbed wires, electric fences or exposed barb wire that prevents or obstructs a public right of way.

Other don'ts for users of public rights of way.

- You are not allowed to disturb or harm any wildlife found on a public right of way.
- You should not drop or leave litter on a public right of way.
- You should not trespass on neighbouring lands to public rights of way. At all times keep to the legal limits!

In addition to public rights of way people may use open access land



Open access land – 865,000 hectares of mountain, moorland, heathland, down land and registered common land (mapped under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) is available to people to walk, run, explore, climb and watch wildlife, without having to stay on paths. Similar rights will be extended in stages on coastal land (identified under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009). Check the Open Access pages at www.naturalengland.org.uk for maps, information and any current restrictions in place.



A 'negative' access symbol – may be used to mark the end of area-wide access although other access rights may exist, for example public rights of way.

WHAT CAN WE AND SHOULD WE DO

Education is the one area where we should most be able to help. No amount of rules such as speed limits on shared routes etc., can really help unless they can be enforced. We can advise authorities on guidelines to be added to their publications and could assist in a printed version if the County was prepared to fund its production or other funding sources could be found.

The two primary classes of user which we feel we need to target are the novice cyclists and those people we encourage to start walking for their health and well-being. In the latter case the Countryside Code probably provides what is needed and we perhaps should just encourage this to be made more available and for walking-promoting web sites to have a strong link to it. Experienced and regular horse riders and cyclists should and probably do know where they can go and their own organisations do a good job of reinforcing this. The very nature of horse riding means that there are no true novices as they have to be taught but almost anyone can pick up a bike and have a go.

It seems therefor that to have the maximum impact we need to get to these people; the question is how?

The first step is surely to consult local partners to see who else is trying to work on these issues to prevent duplication of efforts and try to have uniform approach. The work done by the Peak District National Park is a good starting point.

If we can agree some form of guidance we would wish to try and get them into the hands of all cycle hire outlets, possibly cycle sales outlets and to bodies doing cycling proficiency tests at schools.

We will be returning to these ideas early in 2015 but in the meantime will take soundings of others users.

We must not lose track of the fact that we wish to encourage more people to use the rights of way and open access areas for recreation, exercise, and general and mental health. They must however know where they can go and when there what they can and cannot do. They must show respect for other users and the owners of land they may be crossing.

We have previously discussed the legal situation in respect of mobility scooters on footpaths and have issued guidance on the control of dogs when in pasture with cattle present.

We must continue to work to promote the creation of more routes for people to enjoy either riding or on foot, and for more informative signage as to where routes go and what class of user may use them..

We have just responded to the Department of Transport's consultation on Cycling and Walking.

The Leicestershire Local Access Forum (LLAF) is an independent statutory body, set up as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000, and exists to represent the interests of everyone concerned with access to the countryside and the public rights of way network including footpaths, bridleways and byways, cycleways and areas of open access.

It is a statutory function of the LLAF to give advice to a range of bodies, including local authorities, on access issues in respect of land use planning matters. The Secretary of State has advised that in particular, forums were to focus on the impact and options for minimising possible adverse effects of planning policies and development proposals, in respect of future public access to land. Forums are tasked with identifying and expressing support for opportunities to improve public access, associated infrastructure and the rights of way network which might be delivered through planning policies or new developments.

If you have specific questions, or wish to raise any other issue with the Forum please email: information@leicslaf.org.uk

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