



## **Policy for the Management of Vehicular Use on Byways Open to All Traffic within the South Downs National Park (Summary)**

The Society has drawn together best practice from a range of sources concerning policies for the use of motorised vehicles on Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) and unsealed Non Classified Highways. The full policy sets down the Society's strategy for managing motorised vehicular use of such routes throughout the South Downs National Park and can be found on the Society's website at [www.southdownssociety.org.uk/who-we-are/public-documents/](http://www.southdownssociety.org.uk/who-we-are/public-documents/)

The Society recognises that a balance has to be struck between enjoyment of vehicular use rights over a route and the impacts on amenity for the local community, the environment, and other types of use. Recreational driving groups have highlighted their desire to pursue and promote only lawful and responsible activity.

Local Highway Authorities (LHA) are duty bound to keep in repair highways which are publicly maintainable including most public rights of way and the great majority of the routes which are of interest to vehicle users. They strive to maintain highways in a condition in keeping with their designations but resources are limited and in practice levels of maintenance vary widely. The Society recommends that the following measures might be introduced in the management of such routes.

1. In some instances it may be necessary to introduce a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to preserve the character of the route or to ensure that the route is not damaged when at its most vulnerable and to use a permit system with gates controlled by combination locks or similar where this may be deemed appropriate
2. Liaise with user groups to encourage voluntary restraint when necessary and to "adopt" a route and maintain it on behalf of the LHA.
3. The appropriate LHA to carry out monitoring of traffic on routes by using vehicle loggers and ensure that routes are included in formal LHA inspections
4. Encourage local groups to watch-over routes and report problems to the LHA ensuring that any reported localised damage is repaired immediately to reduce higher levels of expenditure in the future.
5. Use of non-vehicular routes e.g. Restricted Byways and Bridleways, by motorised vehicles will be referred to the Police.
6. The use of organised motor trials using BOATs should be discouraged within the confines of the South Downs National Park.

### **The Society has set out the following policy statements:**

1. It recognises the rights that motor vehicle users have to access to BOATs and unsurfaced roads.
2. It does not encourage this activity but acknowledges that responsible use on some routes can be sustained.
3. It will expect the LHA to take action to limit or prevent access by motor vehicles if this use is damaging to the route or local environment, or conflicts with the reasonable interests of walkers, riders, cyclists or carriage drivers.
4. Where such action may be necessary the Society will examine each case individually and on its own merits.
5. It will work to encourage responsible behaviour by all countryside users and a better understanding of the network.
6. It is opposed to the unlawful use of motor vehicles on rights of way and unsurfaced roads, and will work with the Police and others to prevent such access.
7. The Policy will be reviewed every 5 years and where necessary amendments made based on experience and comment from its members.