



**23 April 2017**

**For immediate use**

### **Offroading by 4x4s and motor bikes is causing dangers nationwide for horseriders**

A national survey of riding clubs, bridleway groups and riding establishments has found that 'offroading' by 4x4s and motor bikes is creating dangers for horseriders nationwide.

Peak Horsepower, a bridleway group affiliated to the British Horse Society, carried out the survey to find out whether the problems being caused for riders by recreational 4x4s and motor bikes in the Peak District are being replicated across the country. The survey found that riders in all English counties are being affected by offroading and that the worst problems appear to be in Berkshire, Devon, Kent, Lancashire, North Yorkshire, Somerset and Surrey.

The survey was sent to 1057 equestrian organisations in England. There were 271 responses from 202 organisations.

Three quarters of respondents said that their offroad riding routes are being used by 4x4s and motor bikes. Ninety per cent of these respondents said that 'offroading' by these vehicles is creating problems on one or more of their riding routes. Over a third of them said it is causing problems on many or most of their riding routes.

Respondents who reported problems with 4x4s and motor bikes were asked what kinds of problems they are facing.

- Seventy-nine percent of those reporting problems said that 4x4s and motor bikes have damaged the surface of their riding routes
- 72 per cent said that the noise of offroad vehicles is frightening horses
- 54 per cent said that vehicle speed is a problem
- 54 per cent said their riding routes are too narrow to pass motor vehicles easily or safely on a horse
- 51 per cent said there was nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles
- 35 percent said that blind bends are a problem.

Over sixty percent of respondents reporting 4x4s and motor bikes using their horse riding routes said that these vehicles do not stick to routes where offroading is currently legal. They said that in their local area 'offroading' is also taking place on bridleways and restricted byways, which is illegal.

Charlotte Gilbert, the Chair of Peak Horsepower says: 'Riding on ordinary roads is increasingly dangerous for horses and riders. Few local areas have a really good bridleway network and most riders depend for safe off-road riding on other kinds of tracks with no tarmac. These tracks are the 5,000 kilometres of unclassified county roads and the 4,000 kilometres of 'byways open to all traffic'. Riders are now having to share these tracks with 4x4s and motor bikes. The result is that horse riding routes all over the country have become dangerous for horses and riders. Surfaces are getting so damaged that horses can't use them. Other tracks are too narrow to be shared safely by horses and motor vehicles, or they have

dangerous blind bends. The law as it stands is failing to protect riders and riding routes. It needs to be changed'.

**Further information or to contact equestrian organisations in your area who took part in the survey, please contact Peak Horsepower on [peakhorsepowersecretary@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:peakhorsepowersecretary@hotmail.co.uk) or [phpsurvey@btinternet.com](mailto:phpsurvey@btinternet.com)**

## **Notes to editors**

### **1 What kind of off-road routes can used by 4x4s and motor bikes?**

The law currently permits motor vehicles to use two types of unsealed (ie no tarmac) tracks: Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs); and routes categorised as 'unsealed, unclassified county roads' (UUCRs). Modern motor vehicles have a legal right to use BOATs because historically these tracks were public rights of way for horse-drawn carts. There is no established legal right for motor vehicles to UUCRs but they cannot be prevented from driving on them because the legal rights of way on all UUCRs remain unknown, and where the rights of way on a track are unknown no-one can be prevented from using it. 4x4s and motor bikes can use both BOATs and UUCRs regardless of the nature of the surface and regardless of whether or not the track is suitable to be shared between motor vehicles and horses. There are 4,400 kilometres of Byways open to all Traffic in England and 5,200 kilometres of UUCR. Driving a motor vehicle on a bridleway, restricted byway or footpath is a criminal offence.

### **2 What survey respondents said**

All respondents were asked if, in addition to answering the survey questions, there were any comments they wanted to make on the use of offroad riding routes by 4x4s and motor bikes. One hundred and forty six respondents (54%) made comments. Their comments are set out by county at note 6 below.

### **3 Number of organisations responding in each English County**

Beds: 3; Berks: 12; Bucks: 3; Cambs: 5; Cheshire: 5; Cornwall: 7; Cumbria: 4; Derbs: 7; Devon: 11; Dorset: 2; Durham: 3; East Riding: 1; East Sussex: 3; Essex: 3; Glos: 5; Hants: 9; Hereford: 1; Herts:2; Kent:18; Lancs: 12; Leics: 5; Lincs: 4; Northants: 2; Norfolk: 1; Northumberland: 3; North Yorks: 11; Notts: 2; Oxon: 2; Shrops: 4; Somerset: 13; South Yorks: 2; Staffs: 3; Suffolk: 2; Surrey: 17; Tyne and Wear: 1; Warwks: 5; West Sussex: 3; Wilts:8; West Yorks: 7; Worcs:3. Three responses were received from Wales, although Wales was not targeted in the survey.

### **4 Methodology**

The survey was carried out in the autumn of 2016 using the Survey Monkey online survey tool. A link to the survey was sent by email to 1057 target recipients. Recipients were in following categories: bridleway groups (105); riding clubs (245); riding schools approved by the British Horse Society (286); other riding schools and equestrian centres (200); trekking centres (38); Endurance GB groups (19); TREC groups (10); hunts (128); equine colleges (26). The target recipients were identified from the British Horse Society website and from internet searches for each English county. Riding schools were asked to say whether they did or did not offer hacking out.

### **5 Response rates**

The survey produced a 26% response rate. The highest response rates by organisation type were for TREC groups (70% responded), Endurance GB groups (58 %) and bridleway groups (50%). Twenty four percent of riding clubs and 24% of trekking centres responded. There were 52 responses from riding schools ( 11% ). All but three of the responses from riding schools were from riding schools which offer

hacking out. There was a low response rate from hunts (7% from a target group of 128) and equine colleges (8% from a target group of 26).

## **6 Respondents' comments by county**

### **BEDFORDSHIRE**

#### **Riding Club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

' Bedfordshire County Council is trying to control the use of byways/tracks by recreational vehicles by banning them from using them in bad weather, and locking gates onto Byways/tracks but vehicles still manage to find ways round these barriers. A lot of these byways/tracks are so rutted that it makes riding extremely difficult along them. But where the council has managed to keep the vehicles off, and with their continued maintenance, these rights of way are slowly returning to how they were twenty odd years ago.'

#### **Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out**

##### **problems cited**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles

### **BERKSHIRE**

#### **Hunt**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicle  
vehicle speed

Comment: 'The ruts they groove into the tracks make it fetlock breakingly difficult to get safely along the route without slipping, stumbling, tripping! Many of the vehicles realise they are not supposed to be on the byways & bridleways which increases their speed to get away without being caught!'

#### **TREC group**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed

Comments: 'I have stopped riding out at the weekends because trail bikes whizz around our byways at speed on blind bends at the weekend. It is too dangerous - better to be on the roads with a 30mph limit. Notices have been put up to try to make them aware. I have been told that about 50% of the council PRow budget goes on repairing byways after damage by vehicles. This is unacceptable. The legal definition of byways is not for RMVs. The law needs to be changed to exclude RMVs as it was for RUPPs / restricted byways'

#### **Riding Club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: 'Vehicles make huge ruts and holes in the whole of the Ridgeway tracks. Making slippery surfaces, deep water filled holes to get through, mud and winter ice build up making all the routes impassable over several months. Why they need to use the picturesque route at all is incomprehensible'.

#### **Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out**

##### **problems cited:**

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
Comment: 'We are fortunate to have on site riding'

**Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out  
problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicle  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
Comment: 'Churns and ruts the ground which makes it dangerous for horse riders'

**Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out  
problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
Comment: 'These routes should be purely for equines'

**Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out  
problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
Comment: 'Most of the drivers won't work with the riders and therefore create a dangerous situation as they drive straight towards you at a speed with frighten horses and riders'.

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
Comment: 'It's mostly off road motorbikes. Nowhere to go if you pass them. Scares horses'

**Hunt**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comment: 'Many of the local bridleways and byways are now completely impassable on horseback or bicycle, and often treacherous on foot too, as a result of damage done by off road vehicles. I think it is important to divide off roaders down further though - there seem to be at least two types of off road drivers. 1. Those who need to drive along a byway to access somewhere. They will usually assess whether the surface is likely to be damaged further by vehicle use. 2. Those who deliberately seek out muddy tracks in order to get stuck and then get out again. The second group are the ones who are causing problems, while the first group can be a useful ally in trying to keep rights of way open and functional. I think it is important to keep green lanes and byways open to as many users as possible, but am at a bit of a loss as to how to ensure some users don't spoil it for others when 'mud-plugging' is considered to be a viable pastime'.

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
vehicle speed  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
blind bends  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles  
Verbal abuse and / lack of understanding of likelihood of incidents or accidents related to horse and vehicle encounters.

Comment: 'There are very limited off road routes in our area and these are shared by many riders, cyclists, walkers, runners and motorised vehicles. In addition to legitimate vehicles there are also unlicensed scrambling motorbikes which terrify the horses'.

## **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

### **Bridleway Group no motor vehicle use**

Comment: ' At present we have no off road recreational motor vehicles using any of our routes in our riding area. A few years ago in South Bucks there was pressure to upgrade some Bridleways to BOATS but this was rejected by the Inspectorate. BUT we are not complacent'

### **Riding Club problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

### **Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

## **CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

### **Bridleway Group problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

### **Bridleway Group problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

Comments: 'Deep narrow ruts onto previous level grass surfaces which turn them from easily traversable routes in all paces on foot, horse or cycle into routes which can only be walked (on foot or horse) or push your bike along'. 'We have a fair number of seasonal closure notices on routes, with gates/barriers, to protect them against rutting during wet weather. Use by vehicle during dry ground conditions does not cause problems and drivers we meet are always courteous. It's just the use during wet ground conditions which causes damage.'

### **Bridleway Group problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
blind bends  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
Comment: 'My friend and I were nearly killed by two middle aged men on motor bikes tanking along a bridleway trying to find a green track which is open for part of the year.'

## **CHESHIRE**

### **Endurance GB group**

Comment: 'We have very few bridleways in Cheshire so riders are mostly on country lanes or even busy roads'

### **Bridleway Group problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses

vehicle speed  
surface damage by motor vehicles

**Bridleway Group**  
**no motor vehicle use**

'There are only two byways which can be used by motorised traffic in our area and I've only seen cars or delivery vehicles. I have ridden in the Wiltshire/Berkshire area where there used to be serious damage and ruts so deep horses stumbled into them. The landowners where we holiday with our horses blocked byways leading up to the Ridgeway with stones plus ditches to field boundaries to prevent diversions. No problem for riders but maybe a problem for carriage drivers, though I have never seen any there. Whenever I've met trail bikers they have been most courteous; the only dirt bike riders I've met that have been less than friendly were on the Biddulph Valley way some years ago'

**Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out**  
**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed vehicle noise frightens horses

**Bridleway group**

No problems from motor vehicles

**CLEVELAND**

**Riding Club**  
**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**CORNWALL**

**Riding Club**

No motor vehicle use

'It has not been a problem so far for us but we are a moorland area club and we have not got a lot of bridleways in our area.'

**Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out**

No motor vehicle use

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**  
**problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**Bridleway group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: 'Whilst this is not a daily problem in my area. Vehicle use of bridleways is much more common than a few years ago (5 plus years). Motorbike riders are often young and lack experience and are often ignorant about the problems of motorbikes and horses. These young bikers can be no more than children and the bikes do not have any identification (number plates) and of course helmets make it impossible to identify the rider.'

**Equestrian centre with hacking out  
problems cited:**

blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
' A farmer has also tarmacked over the soft ground we used to use for cantering'

**Equestrian centre with hacking out  
'No motor vehicle use'**

**Equestrian centre with no hacking out  
motor vehicle use not a problem**

Comment: 'Dog walkers a bigger problem than motor vehicles'

**CUMBRIA**

**Bridleway group**

**problems cited:**  
surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

'Where legal vehicle routes have not been maintained some routes are now difficult to use for riders. Often vehicles are blamed but no maintenance on UCRs especially water issues also cause surface damage. I know of one incident where horses were spooked on a bridleway by illegal motorcycles and riders sustained injuries. As a society we very rarely get complaints about recreational vehicles. In fact we haven't had one for a long time. Illegal off roading is an issue, not specific to horseriders but out on the open fells where scarring is quite visible.'

**Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out  
problems cited**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

' Ignorance and attitude of motorised off road users towards horses ..adrenaline fuelled rudeness and arrogance bordering on dangerous they act like they have absolute right of way and for not even start to think of the economic value of horses/horse riding in the community'

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**

No motor vehicle use

**Trekking centre**

**problems cited:**  
surface damage by motor vehicles  
blind bends  
vehicle speed

**DERBYSHIRE**

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**  
surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

'The disturbance to surfaces and erosion that ensues after motor vehicles have overused a route causes the route to be impassable on horseback and even on foot'.

**Equestrian centre with hacking out  
problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**Endurance GB group  
problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
surface damage by motor vehicles

**Equestrian centre with hacking out  
No motor vehicle use**

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

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'Loss of use: Because many riders don't feel safe meeting off-road vehicles on narrow tracks, many riders therefore don't use tracks any more that they have used for decades. At a time when road traffic is busier and faster than it has ever been and when horse riders really need quiet, safe routes to ride on, we have instead effectively lost the use of many routes due to the increased popularity of off-roading'.

'Horse riders need quiet, safe routes to ride on more than ever before, with today's ever faster and busier roads. The BOAT legislation has been a disaster for horse riders as it has opened up unsurfaced routes to use by motorised vehicles - apparently occasional use of a route by a horse and cart in the distant past means that modern powerful motorised vehicles can use it frequently today! The only remedy is the application of traffic restriction orders (TROs). The Peak District National Park Authority does appreciate the safety, surface damage and other issues for horse riders and walkers on routes shared with off-roaders and has been prepared where necessary to apply TROs to protect non-motorised users. We are delighted with some such local success stories. However, the TRO consultation process is very time-consuming, staff intensive at a time of budget cuts and extremely slow and there are still so many routes in our area that need protecting'.

**Bridleway Group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**DEVON**

**Equestrian centre with hacking out  
No motor vehicle use**

'Very dangerous'

**Riding Club**

**motor vehicle use not a problem**

'I have come across many recreational motor vehicles on riding routes and they are always so courteous, they always turn off their engines, pull over to the'

**Equestrian centre with hacking out problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
' Motor vehicles are trying to go through green lanes that cannot withstand such wide wheelbases and they are tearing down the sides of the hedges. They then get stuck and horse riders can't get past. Paths are getting waterlogged and clogged up with tyre damage.'

**Equestrian centre with hacking out problems cited:**

surface damage  
vehicle speed

**Trekking centre**

No motor vehicle use

**Trekking centre problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
UTV vehicles racing around to feed Pheasants on Bridleways and byways, bridleways are crossing private land that rents to the shoot for pheasants

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horse  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

' In my immediate area they are not a problem. Bicycles are a nightmare in that they will not let a rider know when they are coming up behind on a lane or main road which horses find very scary. I have ridden on the Quantocks with recreational motor vehicles and it spoils one's enjoyment of a good canter if someone might be round the next corner. I don't like them on bridleways at all.'

' To be fair my experience is majority of Trial bikes is that the riders are courteous and once they see you stop and switch their engines off, The problem is more around the noise and they often approach fast before they see you, so potential for an accident is high. If you are on a narrow bridleway there is nowhere to pass, Plus in the winter or wet conditions they churn the surface up. Off road 4x4 tend to get stuck and cause massive damage , as they try to negotiate routes that are just not suitable, and there is now way to pass even if they are not stuck'.

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' This issue tends to happen at certain times, i.e. weekend mornings, so if you plan when and where to hack, it is possible to avoid them. They are very noisy so you can hear when they are about, but not always sure exactly where they are or which direction they are heading in. Have to say, when I meet them on the road, they are very courteous and understanding. The big worry is if you meet them on a track or bridleway, head to head - even wearing high vis, they might not see us as the tracks here are narrow and twisty.'

' We have unclassified routes in our area and they are used by a very well run motorcycle club for teenagers. They are very respectful and seem to be well aware of the potential fear they may cause a horse. They have always given me the right of way and time to get out of their way before restarting their engines I just wish more traffic on the highways were as respectful. The surface of the track has been made up probably to accommodate traffic to the nearby houses and after the winter storm damage is better for all users. This particular route is not used by 4x4's who have actually eroded tracks nearby.'

'My direct experience has been limited to encountering motor cross bikes on a byway. I don't know if they were permitted to be there. The bike riders were extremely helpful and turned off their bikes as I rode past and allowed me to get well beyond them before restarting them. I feel there can be room for both motor vehicles and horses on byways as long as riders and drivers are courteous to one another'.

#### **Riding club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

#### **Riding Club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' It is quite rare to meet a vehicle in our area off road but it does happen occasionally'  
'I do not believe any motor vehicles should be off road on the same routes as horses'

" I will confess to admitting that my sons went through a phase of driving on the byways and lanes during the night with their friends in cars as a thrill seeking thing, they seemed to like getting stuck or lost. They weren't interested in doing during the day. I'm not sure what effect they had on the lanes where they had been driving, but they would not have met riders in the early hours of the morning (hopefully!)"

' Most of the problem is the local hunts. Much of our riding in on Exmoor and I don't know whether off road vehicles are illegal or not'

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## **DORSET**

#### **Riding Club**

##### **problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles

Comments: ' We are constantly under attack from the off-road bikers who keep trying to get routes open for them. The damage they do to tracks, churning them up and the fear they cause through noise and speed are very discouraging for riders'

#### **Riding club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

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## **DURHAM**

#### **Riding Club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: 'Severe mud ruts and delves makes it almost impossible to ride'  
' In our area styles are often in place however this does not seem to stop people accessing these routes and causing mayhem. I'm very surprised more accidents haven't been caused'.

' Motorbikes especially have devastating effect on the surfaces the horses and dog walkers find them intimidating especially on bridleways. Hamsterley Forest has designated areas for each recreation but it is harder to control on bridleways and hill areas where they can gain access more readily. Mountain bikes and cyclists are an issue when riding as the rider and horse are not aware of them until they are close and horses spook even our quietest horses are alarmed by their sudden presence.'

**Riding club**

**problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
vehicle speed  
surface damage by motor vehicles

**EAST SUSSEX**

**Riding Club**

respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

Comments: ' My comment would be that off road riding indicated safe space for non motorised vehicles such as bike riders, dog walkers and of course horse riding. My local experience is that putting aside bikes which do have cycle lanes and other specialist tracks, dog walkers are well accommodated as there are many, many footpaths in East Sussex, but very limited that horse riders have access to. Our lanes are incredibly busy with traffic now even the tiny ones. In my view the BHS should be campaigning for 15- 20 miles per hour to be the law for these tiny single track roads as apparently drivers do not have the sense to see what a disaster is waiting round every corner.'

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

Comments: ' Most motor vehicle users are very considerate and accommodating to horse riders. The main issues are being able to pass safely and damage to tracks. Although for the past couple of years they have been closed off over the winter months which has improved things.'

**Riding Club**

No motor vehicle use

Comment: 'We have had no reports of any recreational use of bridleways in this area. Not that perhaps they do but it is not reported. Personally no evidence on the routes I ride.'

**ESSEX**

**Bridleway Group**

no motor vehicle use

Comments: 'Have occasionally seen evidence of off road tracks but never actually met any yet. Where would we go to enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the countryside?'

**Endurance GB group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

Comments: 'The problem mainly occurs in the Forestry Commission land, and is confined to specific tracks. There are many other tracks which are available to horse riders. In other areas that I am aware of, motorised vehicles are not allowed to use the byways between Oct 31st and Apr 1st, which helps to alleviate the problem. In addition, each of the counties has a group dedicated to opening up/ campaigning for bridleways, so we are, perhaps in a better position than in other areas. That said, there are very few bridleways in some areas of each of

these counties. As a walker I have been very disappointed by what I have seen in other areas of the country. My view is that routes should only be used at certain times of year if they are the only routes available to other users - i.e., walkers, cyclists (if appropriate) and horse riders'.

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
Comment: ' We don't have that much of a problem around our area YET!!'

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**HAMPSHIRE**

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**

No motor vehicle use

Comment: ' I would consider it a major Health and Safety issue to have off road vehicles in close proximity to horse riders. There is now way the two could safely mix especially if the vehicles are at any speed above a walking pace. Drivers would be unable to slow if they suddenly came upon riders and the horse is very likely to spook on the approach of such a vehicle or at a loud engine noise. The ground conditions which are likely to be left after use by off road vehicles especially during wet weather are also likely to be unsuitable for horse riders. I would say these two sports are very much are oil and water'

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**

Respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
abuse by riders of bikes/motor bikes

**TREC group**

**problems cited:**

blind bends  
vehicle speed

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

One of the two respondents said there were no problems in her immediate area but added: ' I work for Hampshire County Council as a rights of way ranger. The main complaint we get about motor vehicles other than illegal driving is of damage to surface'.

**Riding club**  
**problems cited:**  
surface damage

**Hunt**  
**problems cited:**  
surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comment: ' This makes riding on these routes really scary especially at weekends'.

**Riding Club**  
**problems cited:**  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles

Comment: ' There are several byways , restricted byways and bridleways in the area which are used by walkers , cyclists and off road vehicles/ motorbikes as well as many riders. There are a few bridleways which are mainly in good surface condition through most of the year as the vehicles are not using them and due to the free draining chalky soil but these often have very overgrown hedges and overhanging branches and brambles. The byways in contrast tend to have more surface damage to the point where often it is only possible to navigate them at a careful walk. They are however passable for more months of the year as the vehicles using them do tend to help keep them clearer. I do find that in this area the four wheel drive clubs etc are very considerate to riders and I have never had a problem with them although hearing motorbikes approaching can be un -nerving. I always wear a fluorescent tabard as I find they spot me quicker and are able to pull up before they are too close. The biggest problem is that the motorbikes tend to use the centre of the tracks and create another deep rut on the strip between the vehicle tracks making it difficult for horses to find any level area and as the surfaces never get any maintenance in the form of rolling or harrowing this only gets worse over time. I now only rarely use a local byway which is a long ( approx 1 mile ) grassy track and used to be a lovely long canter but is now barely usable at walk due to the deep , narrow ruts and the fact that if you meet a vehicle or motorbikes it is almost impossible to pass safely. In general I think if we are all considerate of each other it should be possible for everyone to enjoy our off road routes, I just wish there were more of them and that they linked up better , rather than either leading onto a busy road or even coming to a dead end as two local bridleways / byways do.'

## HEREFORDSHIRE

**Riding club**  
surface damage by motor vehicles

## HERTFORDSHIRE

**Bridleway group**  
No motor vehicle use

**Riding club**  
**problems cited:**  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**Bridleway group**  
No problems reported

**KENT**  
**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

Comment: 'The ruts left are so deep, if horse slipped and fell in, could easily damage a leg'.

**Bridleway group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

vehicle speed vehicle noise frightens horses

Comment: 'It's important that this issue is addressed'

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

vehicle speed

vehicle noise frightens horses

**Riding Club**

no motor vehicle use

**Riding Club**

no motor vehicle use

Comment: 'We have very limited off road riding in this area and what we have needs to be accessed by busy narrow country lanes so hacking out is hazardous at the best of times'.

**Individual respondent**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses

blind bends

surface damage by motor vehicles

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

blind bends

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

vehicle speed

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Comment: 'Many of the routes particularly the BOATS in the area are now impassable for horses - the 4 x 4s make two large wheel ruts, then the off-road motorbikes make another wheel rut in the middle and the track then becomes dangerous for horses as they are unable to stay upright. Numerous complaints made to local county council - Kent County Council - to repair or restrict but argument of insufficient funds made'.

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

vehicle noise frightens horses

vehicle speed

blind bends

**Comments:**

'We have a problem with speeding motor bikes on our bridle ways. Their speed is often so great that we have had many near misses. Many no longer ride on these routes as they are scared on the bikes'. 'They ruin the forest undergrowth, pose a danger to horses and riders, dog walkers etc. they also create noise pollution in our woods'. 'There are specific sites and venues for off road vehicles to use so there is no need for them to use the bridleways or off road routes'. 'It is mainly the ruination of the surface that annoys me. Deep ruts make it impossible to go faster than a careful walk in MANY places'. 'They make it very dangerous for off road riding as if the roads are not Bad enough. They are very rude, and race up behind you. The track surface is destroyed into

ruts, which make narrow tracks uncomfortable riding'. 'The motor vehicles tend to use the byways more in the winter which causes deep ruts. I tend to try and avoid these routes in the winter because of the vehicles and also they shoot near the byway on a Saturday throughout the winter months.

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
vehicle speed  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
blind bends  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles

Comment: 'Where off-road vehicles are legal, it is possible for everyone to use those tracks safely provided everyone has respect for each other and is sympathetic to the potential problems'.

**Riding club**

Respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

Comment: 'We have no off road riding routes in our area that are suitable for 4x4s, we have a skeletal amount of bridleways some of which are unusable as they end on extremely busy roads that are unable to be ridden'.

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**

No motor vehicle use

Comment: 'The only time this issue affected us was when a customer and I were riding along a lane next to an orchard which was bordered on the far side by a windbreak. Due to our position we could see not only a local youth hurtling down the side of the orchard alongside the windbreak, making a fair old racket with his souped up motorbike, but also his mother, riding her horse towards the same corner at a ninety degree angle. She couldn't see him due to the windbreak, and couldn't hear him due to the windy weather. They met at the corner. Her horse spooked. She stayed on. The shouting started. As we rode off down the hill we could still hear this irate mother castigating the daylight out of her son! Heh! He never did it again'.

**Riding Club**

no motor vehicle use

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

Surface damage  
Vehicle noise

Comment: 'Winter closure of affected byways would help preserve the accessibility for all. Our biggest issues is muddy corners where the 4x4's drive back and forth continually, making it impassable for all other users'.

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**

**problems cited:**

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed

**Bridleway group**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
vehicle speed  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
blind bends  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles

**LANCASHIRE/GREATER MANCHESTER**

**Bridleway group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

They know it is illegal but it doesn't stop them trying it on!

'On the whole it tends to be motorbikes and not vehicles. They are very polite, usually stop and turn off their engines but we do make a point of telling them it is illegal for them to be on bridleways, they nod sagely but I don't know whether it stops them doing it again. It is not a great problem in the Burnley area and tends to be sorted out fairly quickly. We do have a problem with vehicles driving at speed over Common Land which is in the process of being sorted out.'

**Bridleway group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

'We don't have any problems with motorised vehicles on bridleways, restricted byways or BOATS but on open moorland where they trash the ground. They will have passed the Police notice on the way on to the land that states that they are acting illegally if they continue, but they go anyway. Occasionally the police have a day out and confiscate bikes etc, but it doesn't stop them.'

**Bridleway group**

no motor vehicle use

'We have hardly any off road routes so no problems'

**Riding club**

**problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

blind bends

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

vehicle speed

vehicle noise frightens horses

vehicle speed

surface damage by motor vehicles

Verbal abuse from motor bikers

Comments: ' Irresponsible jobs driving them'; ' Bridleways are the only place we can go to get off the road. We already share them with cyclists which brings its own problems and walkers with dogs but the jobs on the off road motor bikes and quads are simply dangerous.'

**Trekking centre**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

vehicle noise frightens horses

**Bridleway group**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses

vehicle speed

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

blind bends

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

surface damage by motor vehicles

verbal abuse from the off-roaders

Comments: ' There are signs forbidding use of the routes by vehicles ie off-roaders but they are knocked down/removed. Some of the older generation are considerate and shut off engines. Even when instances are reported to the police, the police can't get up soon enough to deal with the offenders. Gates have been used to keep vehicles off the land but they have been knocked down too. Many of the offenders are under the impression they are allowed to use the land as there is nothing to stop them and signs are knocked down. When offenders are approached they often give verbal abuse and a rider was nearly forced off the end of a drop. The offenders can get aggressive towards horse riders.'

**Bridleway Group**

Comment: ' BOATS's only represent 1% of ROW so there is no problem and we concentrate on reopening lost bridleways and pressing for new bridleways, which is far more productive than wasting time on denying access to BOAT's' (See also SEBA Cheshire - seems to be same respondent)

**Bridleway group**

**problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

#### **Bridleway Group**

motor vehicle use not a problem

Comment: ' Fortunately only one of our routes is affected (by mini motor cycles mainly ) but it is an unsurfaced road open to all vehicles so we can't do much about it. They do tend to slow or stop when they see a horse so it isn't too much of a problem for us but we are aware it is a significant issue in many areas.'

#### **Bridleway group**

##### **problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

#### **TREC Group**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' Many times have seen people racing round local riding routes at high speed, round some extremely tight corners. Never quite know how to report this, and don't know the eventual outcome of a report being made.' '

#### **TREC Group**

motor vehicle use not a problem

Comments: 'Regards the surfaces on Bridleways mountain bikes seem to do more damage by coursing deep ruts & they are silent as the wiz up behind you!'

### **LEICESTERSHIRE**

#### **Hunt**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comment: ' The vehicles spoil the tracks and bridleways not only for horses but also for walkers. They pay nothing for their sport and churn up the tracks. This also frightens any sort of wildlife and spoils their habitats'

#### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

##### **problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: 'Most drivers legal or not tend to be very courteous when they see us either riding away from us or turning their engines off. The problem is when they are not aware we are nearby and they create a lot of noise that tends to upset the horses more than anything'.

#### **Bridleway Group**

##### **problems cited:**

vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
blind bends  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles

Comments: ' When you meet these vehicles whilst on horseback it is terrifying. The speed and noise upsets the steadiest of horses. You never know where they will appear and you do not have time to take avoiding action. Most are unsympathetic towards us'.

' I know some of the Lincolnshire routes get trashed by over-vigorous off-road users. Maybe the solution is a degree of segregation, as found in the Milton Keynes networks. Footpaths, equestrian routes and cycle routes intertwine but the users don't get in each other's way'.

#### **Endurance GB group**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comment: ' The ruts are so deep it is so dangerous for horses and if there was an accident it would be extremely difficult for access for emergency vehicles'.

### **LINCOLNSHIRE**

#### **Bridleway Group**

##### **problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
surface damage by motor vehicles

Comment: ' This problem used to be a lot worse in this area but has been clamped down on it seems by the authorities with just an occasional offroad motorbike or quad bike being seen now'.

#### **Trekking Centre**

no motor vehicle use

Comment: ' We don't have a problem with recreational motor vehicles, we just have no good hacking in general without going on to a busy main road. We live in the sticks yet there are about 3 bridle ways THAT IS ALL!!!! its diabolical we need more off road hacking to enjoy our sport as riding on the roads is far to dangerous nowadays especially as people are just in a rush everywhere'.

#### **TREC group**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

Comment: " hen the motor vehicles damaged the surface of a path that they should not have been using (according to law), the council closed the path completely to allow the rare plants to regrow. This was a problem for the local riders who could not use the safe off-road riding that the path allowed'.

#### **TREC group**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

Comment: ' Most vehicles are fine it is just the odd one or two that go too fast to stop on blind bends and narrow lanes'.

### **NORFOLK**

#### **Endurance GB Group**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

Comments: ' The problem mainly occurs in the Forestry Commission land, and is confined to specific tracks. There are many other tracks which are available to horse riders. In other areas that I am aware of, motorised vehicles are not allowed to use the byways between Oct 31st and Apr 1st, which helps to alleviate the problem. In addition, each of the counties has a group dedicated to opening up/ campaigning for bridleways, so we are, perhaps in a better position than in other areas. That said, there are very few bridleways in some areas of each of these counties'. ' As a walker I have been very disappointed by what I have seen in other areas of the country. My view is that routes should only be used at certain times of year if they are the only routes available to other users - i.e., walkers, cyclists (if appropriate) and horse riders'.

## **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

### **TREC Group**

motor vehicle use not a problem

Comment: ' Generally, recreational vehicles using these routes pass slower and are more courteous than local vehicle users. Vehicles on routes are a double edged sword. On one hand, the use, particularly in the growing seasons, keeps undergrowth clear and allows the ground to be visible. In one instance an entire route was opened up by recreational users. On the other, where the ground cannot take the use it gets damaged although use by horses would probably damage it anyway. Generally I am in favour of recreational vehicles using routes with use of temporary TROs for wet periods where the ground cannot cope'.

## **NORTHUMBERLAND**

### **Riding Club**

respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

### **Riding Club**

#### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

blind bends

vehicle speed

vehicle noise frightens horses

### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

Comment: ' There are very few off road routes/ bridleways in our area at all!'

## **NORTH YORKSHIRE**

### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

no motor vehicle use

### **Riding Club**

respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

### **Endurance GB group**

no motor vehicle use

### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

#### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

### **Bridleway Group**

#### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' On some routes 4x4 and motor bike use especially after or during wet weather causes long deep ruts which make the route dangerous or totally impassable for horses. In summer clay soil dries out hard it could

cause serious injury to horses. There is 1 route we have near here which has been so bad for over 10 years it's barely suitable for people to walk on foot'.

' Horse riders have limited routes to use which are free from motor vehicles. Bridleways, (where there are any!) in most parishes are fragmented and the UURs/Byways are/used to be important links in our riding network.'

I am also a BHS Access Officer for the Hambleton area of North Yorkshire and am very conscious of the differing views and policies of the BHS and many of its riding members! My personal view is that on the vulnerable routes i.e. unsuitable surface/soil substructure and those affected by water run off and/or overhung by trees (which make the track less likely to dry out) the Highways Authorities should use permanent TROs (not temporary ones). North Yorkshire is mostly rural, and has vastly varying and beautiful landscapes so attracts 4x4 off roaders from all over Europe who come for 'off roading' holidays! There are several agencies/companies set up to help these people plan their holidays. I have personally witnessed up to 6 vehicles attempting to negotiate a particularly steep and rocky track. They sometimes winch from trees and gateposts and leave damage and destruction in their wake'.

#### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

##### **problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
vehicle noise frightens horses

#### **Riding club**

respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

#### **Riding club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
'anti social farmers'

#### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

##### **problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

#### **Riding club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

#### **TREC Group Yorkshire**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
off road bikers with no helmets, riding far too fast on the local bridleways and the noise is unbelievable

'Drivers have no manners, and quite a few deliberately set off towards the horses and pedestrians to spook them. Some are curious and switch off but most are not

' I understand like us people need somewhere to undertake their hobby. However, I believe vehicles and horses should either be provided with plenty of room or kept segregated'.

' There is enough problems with maintenance on routes without them. Many routes are hard enough to navigate due to mud without motorbikes the council don't course landowners to keep the surface safe now, most would be totally impossible all winter if motor vehicles use them so it's not feasible until maintained is sorted out'

## **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

#### **Equine college**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**Endurance GB group**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
vehicle speed  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
blind bends  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles

**OXFORDSHIRE**

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**

No motor vehicle use

**Hunt**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' Not such a problem now that Parliament banned motor vehicles from the Ridgeway in the winter but some still destroy the track in wet weather.'. ' Bicycles coming up 'silently' from behind horses don't give any warning of their approach and often pass too close to the horses which they don't understand is potentially dangerous for them and for us. Motor bikes are pretty good round here and often stop and turn off their engines'.

**SHROPSHIRE**

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
Comment: ' Not a huge problem. Occasional motorcycles on disused railway line'.

**Bridleway Group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comment: ' Mixed feelings. We would rather they were not there. However, they do keep the routes open, even if they are churned up'.

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
blind bends  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

**SOMERSET**

**Equestrian centre with hacking out**

**problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
vehicle speed  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
blind bends  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles  
' motor parts left behind, gates and barriers damaged, jumps created on paths for scramble bikes making track dangerous to use. litter from picnics, fires and drinking.'

Comments: ' they will always create a way in. They disregard signage, paths, walls gates and plants no matter how rare or protected are damaged, wildlife disturbed. Fuel pollution and litter is widespread. Total disregard for others'.

**Riding Club  
problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: 'They are often inconsiderate too!'

**Riding Club  
problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

' This happened some years ago - a long drove, near top of the Mendip Hills, after an open planning enquiry - the route was opened to all motor vehicles - we used to be able to join this drove in several places by crossing neighbours fields (with permission). When the drove opened to all vehicles, neighbours locked all gates leading onto it. I took this up with the BHS and a bridleways officer came to see me but he came to the conclusion it would cost too much money to get the decision reversed or to get farmers to allow bridleways across their fields. So we lost our access to the Drove which we frequently used. The Drove is now very rutted and where as we used to be able to canter over most of its length, people who use it can only walk. We lost all routes which enabled us to do hour and 2 hour hacks and pub rides. We never use the Drove now. All in the past I know '.

**Endurance GB group  
problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' Although I live in Somerset the problem route I use is in Wiltshire. I live very near Somerset/Dorset/Wiltshire junction so ride in all three counties'.

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**Riding Club  
problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

**Bridleway Group  
problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses  
vehicle speed  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

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**Equestrian centre with hacking out  
problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' Our off road routes are very limited and we do not hack every day. One of our tracks has been used by motor bikes in the past, but it was a phase and we don't seem troubled by this at present'.

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**Bridleway group****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

Comments: ' There is only one member of the bridleways group - myself but I know of at least one route which is badly eroded and virtually unrideable because of the damage caused. There may well be other routes in my area'.

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**Bridleway Group**

respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

**Hunt**

motor vehicle use not a problem

**Riding Club****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

blind bends

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' The tracks are so cut up that the horses are twisting fetlocks from falling in the ruts. There is nowhere safe for them to place their feet. Equally there is so much water in the ruts we cannot ride in there either. We have lost half of our hacking due to the damage caused by vehicles'. ' There is simply no regard for any other types of user on these off road tracks. They are 'having a blast' so what does anyone else matter. These issues occur year round as the track is so ruined in winter it is completely unrideable even in the summer'.

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**EGB group****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

vehicle speed

vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: 'Main culprits are local hunts'

**Bridleway Group****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

vehicle noise frightens horses

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE****Bridleway Group****problems cited:**

blind bends

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

vehicle speed

vehicle noise frightens horses

Comment: ' Mostly fast trials bikes ridden by idiots. we do have some sensible users that you have some sympathy for but majority are ridden too fast (too near 'townies') for appreciation of equestrian problems with their behaviour'.

**Bridleway group****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

Comment: ' The responsible off-roaders in our area (eg TRF members) are not a problem as they know where they can legally ride and share this information with others at their meetings. However, there are a small minority of off-roaders, both motorcycle riders and 4x4 drivers, who do cause horse riders some problems by using routes illegally. Recently we have become aware that 4x4 drivers have started coming to North Yorkshire from Europe via Hull as they are no longer able to off-road in their own countries'.

## **TREC Group**

### **problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
vehicle speed  
attitude of drivers shows no respect for horses

## **STAFFORDSHIRE**

### **Hunt**

#### **problems cited:**

Moorlands Hunt vehicle noise frightens horses  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

### **Bridleway group**

no motor vehicle use

## **SUFFOLK**

### **Riding club**

#### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
vehicle noise frightens horses

### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

#### **problems cited**

vehicle speed

### **Riding Club**

#### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' In the main it is the few who spoil it for the majority as is the case with most things. There are very considerate off-roaders but there are those who have no appreciation of the countryside through which they profess to enjoy driving, nor of those who use the countryside either on foot, bike or horse'.

## **SURREY**

### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

### **Riding Club - listed above under Kent**

### **Bridleway group**

#### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

Comments: ' Trashing routes that were originally lovely to ride on'.

### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

No motor vehicle use

**Riding club****problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

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Comments: ' In one area with a byway there were a LOT of mini motorbike users who were very insensitive to how nervous the sound of their bikes made horses. However, in another area there are fewer bikes but they are generally a lot more considerate. Nonetheless, narrow, winding tracks make it difficult for either party to be seen in advance and they often go too fast'.

**Equestrian centre with hacking out****problems cited:**

vehicle noise frightens horses

**Bridleway Group****problems cited;**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' There is a substantial difference between various groups with trail bike enthusiasts the worse as they can exceed 30mph. The same can be said of some mountain bikers especially on or off heathland in Surrey where speeds of over 40mph are recorded on various platforms like STRAVA around Leith Hill Surrey'.

**Riding Club****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
blind bends  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

Comments: ' The number one reason for using off-road riding routes is to avoid motor vehicles. Horses and motor vehicles do not mix happily or safely together and accidents are inevitable; just the fear of incidents and accidents is enough to spoil what should be a pleasant and relaxing hack'.

**Equestrian centre with hacking out****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**Equestrian college**

respondent doesn't know if any motor vehicle use

**Equestrian centre with hacking out****problem cited:**

blind bends  
vehicle speed

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**Bridleway Group****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

Comments:' This [offroading] can happen at night too which has prompted landowners to put in (unlawful) gates to restrict their use. This also makes it a restrictive route for horse riders'. ' On the Surrey Hill AONB the

police have been very good about confiscating off-road motorbikes that deviate from BOATS and/or have no licence or insurance. Again, landowners have been forced to put obstructions on the paths'.

#### **TREC Group**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' Off road users are mainly very considerate and stop and turn off their engines when they see you. However, my horse is frightened by the engine noise of the motor bikes even in the distance. I have discussed this very amicably with the bike riders and they say they don't really know why they are so loud - "they're just made that way". Potentially making the engines quieter could solve one problem as well as making them less intrusive in the countryside'.

#### **Bridleway Group**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

#### **Riding club**

Respondent does not know if any motor vehicle use

#### **Bridleway Group**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

### **TYNE AND WEAR**

#### **Riding Club**

##### **problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

### **WARWICKSHIRE**

#### **Riding Club**

##### **problems cited:**

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed

#### **Riding Club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
vehicle speed  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
blind bends  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

#### **Equestrian centre with hacking out**

motor vehicle use not a problem

#### **Riding Club**

##### **problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
blind bends

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**Private horse owner**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' We have two adjacent routes both have become impassable in places due to motor bikes on one route and four wheel drives on another. The motor cycles tend to use the same track instead of using the whole width of the road. This track then fills with water and becomes deeper and deeper, it is then impassable or you risk serious injury to both horse and walkers, the four wheel vehicle enjoy getting stuck and churning up the whole route by using winches etc. This route as a series of deep ruts up to 18 inches deep thus making the whole route impassable. The Warwickshire County council state they have no budget to repair so basically the route just gets worse. We can no longer use these routes which id both frustrating and unfair. These routes were not designed for motor vehicles'.

**WEST SUSSEX**

**Bridleway Group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

**Endurance GB group**

**problems cited**

surface damage by motor vehicle  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' Drivers are unaware of the presence of riders until they are within very close proximity, and often have little consideration for horses. Damage to clay surfaces by vehicles is extensive and can make parts of routes unusable in the winter. Offroading is not quiet enjoyment of the countryside and is not an appropriate use of BOATs'

**Endurance Group**

**problems cited**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

Comment: ' We live in heavy clay area and off road vehicles ruin the tracks which the west Sussex have spent a fortune putting in good repair. Surrey has stopped them near Cranleigh and I wish the one across the border could be stopped too'.

**WEST YORKSHIRE**

**Riding school with no hacking out**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

**Riding Club**

**problems cited:**

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses

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**Bridleway Group****problems cited:**

vehicle speed  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
blind bends  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
surface damage by motor vehicles

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Comment: ' The area that is being affected is around Ramsden & Yateholme Reservoirs in Holmfirth'.

**Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
aggressive use of vehicle and occupants attitude being one of trying to frighten the horses

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Comment: ' Off road vehicles are not allowed on bridleways but they ignore that fact. They also often park at bridleway horse stiles so horses can't use them so then can't use the bridleway'.

**Riding club****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

**WILTSHIRE****Riding club****problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
vehicle speed  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses  
blind bends

Comments:' No other route to bridleways other than using one of these routes. Despite 'technically' having good access to bridleways/byways have now taken to boxing up and driving to somewhere safer as too dangerous to use paths on my doorstep! Having moved especially to be able to keep my horses at home this is a huge disappointment as 'traffic' has increased significantly since the move despite the byway having a 'voluntary closure to motor vehicles' implemented since before our move'

' Many of the local byways are used by motor vehicles despite having a voluntary closure to motor vehicles implemented. Byways are churned up and impassable in the winter months and in some cases even in the summer it is very wet and muddy as a result of motor vehicles. Such a shame in our lovely Wiltshire countryside and makes it dangerous to ride on, not only as the byways are churned and there is a risk of meeting such vehicles in narrow lanes but also as parts 'drop off' such vehicles and you never know what is at the bottom of the 'wallows' they create'.

'Motor bikes are the most common around here, in my experience the bikers are generally respectful of horse riders providing they see the horses in time. The main problem I find is the that combined with the four wheeled vehicles, there are three parallel ruts with nowhere for a horse riders to get a safe surface to ride over'.

' It's not that often I come across motor vehicles but we have quite a lot of motorbikes. It's alarming as we can hear them before they see us although they usually slow down or stop their engines if the horse starts to play up. We have to share all the roads so consideration should be made by everyone'.

**A Rights of Way group (non equestrian)**

motor vehicle use not a problem

Comments: ' In Wiltshire we have more miles of BOAT than any other county. User groups get on well, with problems only being reported by riders who encounter intolerant motorists on paved roads. Motorcyclists are singled out as being the most courteous and respectful to us (horse riders) though there is always a fear of meeting a criminal motorcyclist while out hacking. Our rights of way are generally in a good condition though a lack of local authority funds has contributed to neglect. This is the greatest problem facing horse riders in Wiltshire'.

**Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

Comments: ' Bikes coming very fast downhill behind or in front of us. Most quad bike, motor bike and off road vehicles are good and we always make sure we thank them and whenever possible talk to them. The cyclists are the worst, very often they seem to be racing or have ear phones in. All the farmers are extremely good. Some of the off road drivers seem to take pleasure in getting stuck, make a mess and use their winches to get out often damaging the rare juniper and yews that grow on the hill'.

**Private horse owner problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle noise frightens horses

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Comments: ' The offroaders (4x4s) do not seem to concern themselves with other users of these tracks/byways. I have tried contacting greenlaners clubs locally and nationally asking what their policy is towards riders and walkers and have never received an answer. I feel that there are quite a number of areas and tracks they can use without encroaching upon bridleways or byways suited to horses. Would it not be possible to restrict these ways to very dry weather conditions only? Some of the more beautiful quiet and remote ones are being used ruined on winter weekends for any other users.. The motorbikes I have encountered ,on the other hand have been more considerate'.

**Bridleway Group problems cited:**

' A few routes on Salisbury Plain attract 4x4 drivers who want to 'play' in puddles which has damaged the surface of a couple of byways, however a trial period of voluntary restraint was promoted by local branches of TRF and GLAS which worked quite well.'

Comments: ' As with all groups of people, there are always some who are rude or unhelpful - sadly we get those on horseback as well as on bikes and in 4x4s. In Wiltshire we have a huge number of rights of way and everyone seems to get on well, particularly the younger generations - I've found working on ROW issues it seems to be the older generations who dislike other users and who cause friction between the groups. We're lucky here that on many occasions horse riders and vehicle users have worked together to maintain rights of way and we use the rights of way alongside each other peacefully. Life is much easier when you all get on!! Vilifying vehicle users won't get us anywhere - I come from an area with very little bridleways as locals don't want horses on their land. Having been treated almost like a criminal for using a ROW on my horse, I wouldn't want to make someone else feel the same way when they are legally using a ROW'.

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**WORCESTERSHIRE**

**Bridleway Group problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles  
route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse  
blind bends  
nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles  
vehicle speed

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Comment: ' There are very few byways in Worcestershire. There was a problem a few years ago in one area but the path was reclassified to exclude vehicular traffic. I think the trail bikes have some DMMOs in the system but I doubt if they will succeed'.

**Riding school/equestrian centre with hacking out**

motor vehicle use not a problem

Comment: ' I ride on Salisbury Plain so do not experience any problems with recreational motor vehicles because there is a huge area for all to enjoy without upsetting each other. I think I am in a minority and feel very lucky'.

**Endurance group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

route too narrow to pass motor vehicle easily or safely on a horse

blind bends

nowhere to get out of the way of motor vehicles

vehicle speed

vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' Drivers are unaware of the presence of riders until they are within very close proximity, and often have little consideration for horses. Damage to clay surfaces by vehicles is extensive and can make parts of routes unusable in the winter. Offroading is not quiet enjoyment of the countryside and is not an appropriate use of BOATs'.

**Endurance group**

**problems cited:**

surface damage by motor vehicles

vehicle noise frightens horses

Comments: ' We live in heavy clay area and off road vehicles ruin the tracks which the west Sussex have spent a fortune putting in good repair. Surrey has stopped them near Cranleigh and I wish the one across the border could be stopped too'.