



# THE RIDGEWAY National Trail

## Summary of Surface Improvement Proposals

1. We will assemble a Monitoring Group to push forward progress of the proposals below and to monitor this progress against a defined timetable.
2. We will thoroughly survey vehicle usage, looking at agricultural, access and recreational use. The data will be assessed against records of physical damage at selected points to provide objective measures of damage related to use.
3. Areas of previous major repair work will be re-assessed both on the ground and using photographic records to provide a qualitative measure of efficacy against time.
4. We will look for and, where appropriate, implement novel management techniques.
5. Segregation of users may be the best option on some stretches. We will identify such stretches and implement segregation where appropriate.
6. We will work with farmers to identify and develop alternative agricultural access options.
7. A simple decision making protocol will be drawn up to guide the specification of future surface repairs.
8. We will regularly monitor areas of major works and introduce a follow-up patching programme.
9. As a priority we will draw up costed proposals for the repair of all areas currently below the quality standard.
10. We will work immediately to secure finance for the repair of sub-standard sections based on a three year programme. Implementation of the programme will begin in Spring 2003<sup>1</sup>.
11. We will review the policy of non-maintenance of road crossings at the next meeting of the Management Group.
12. In addition to funds for repair, we will be working to secure adequate finance to implement a rigorous on-going maintenance programme.
13. We will ensure that all signing to and from The Ridgeway is accurate.
14. The Code of Respect will be reviewed and simplified.
15. We will liaise with the Police regarding Access Specialists, to be trained in the relevant law and able to advise colleagues, and general policing of the National Trail.

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<sup>1</sup> NB – Repair work is already underway at Fox Hill, Swindon B.C.

16. We will implement the following experimental measures to compare the effects of statutory restraint, voluntary restraint and no restraint in reducing surface damage:

Measure	Timings	Location	Test
Experimental TRO during winter months with rotovating and rolling of natural surface during Spring	Oct 03 – April 04  Oct 04 – April 05	Smeathe's Ridge, Wiltshire	Has previously been rotovated and rolled but without restraint to allow to firm up. Will the surface works last through the rest of the year with winter restraint?
Voluntary restraint during winter months with rotovating and rolling of natural surface during Spring	Oct 03 – April 04  Oct 04 – April 05	Aldbourn Road north to Swindon BC border, Wiltshire.	Will the surface improvement last through the year with voluntary winter restraint?
Experimental TRO during winter months with rotovating and rolling of natural surface during Spring	Oct 03 – April 04  Oct 04 – April 05	Fox Hill to Ridgeway Farm, Bishopstone, Swindon Borough	Repair currently underway. Voluntary restraint through to end April 03.  To test longevity of repairs with statutory winter restraint.
Voluntary restraint during winter months with rotovating and rolling of natural surface during Spring	Oct 03 – April 04  Oct 04 – April 05	Blowingstone Hill to Sparsholt Firs	To look at effectiveness of Voluntary restraint where private access is also required. Also effect on and of cross tracks
Experimental TRO during winter months with rotovating and rolling of natural surface during Spring	Oct 03 – April 04  Oct 04 – April 05	Byway at Starveall to concrete road above Compton	To assess relative damage by agricultural and recreational vehicles. Test for improvements by TRO.
Voluntary Restraint during winter months with rotovating and rolling of natural surface during Spring	Oct 03 – April 04  Oct 04 – April 05	Watlington Hill Road to Lewknor Hill Road, Oxon	Will the surface improvement last through the year with voluntary winter restraint?



Our ref  
Your ref  
Date 19 May 2003

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## RIDGEWAY NATIONAL TRAIL

I am sure colleagues will have let you know about the outcome of the meeting with Alun Michael on the 8 April 2003. I promised at that meeting that the Agency would take a lead in pulling together a plan for the Ridgeway National Trail as a whole, which would be practical to implement, readily understandable by users, and above all cost effective in making the Ridgeway a high quality experience for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

In order to ensure a better quality experience for these users we are requesting that each highway authority along the length of the National Trail assesses the following methods and applies them as appropriate to their stretch of National Trail;

- Traffic Regulation Orders (permanent and or seasonal)
- Repair of National Trail to the standards as set out in Surface Standards Document (April 2001)
- Seek policing of Ridgeway National Trail to deter illegal use
- Seek alternative routes for agricultural vehicles
- Segregation of users where appropriate

By 16 June, please could you let me know what you are prepared to do on your stretch of the trail, and your proposed timetable for implementation. We can present Alun Michael (Minister of Environment Rural Affairs & Urban Quality) and the interested MPs of the overall course of action that is being taken. We encourage you to liaise closely with neighbouring authorities across the route, through the Ridgeway Management Group, to ensure consistency across the length of the National Trail.


As part of the process of implementation, if you think it helpful, we will set up a working group to oversee and advise on the way forward. The working group will be made up of a member



From the Chief Executive, Richard Wakeford

from each local highway authority across the Ridgeway, representatives from the Ridgeway National Trail Management Group and the Ridgeway Forum, the Ridgeway National Trail Officer, Defra, LARA and Friends of the Ridgeway.

I do hope that you will be able to send a map, which collates details and provides a timetable for all of the actions for your section of the trail to Hazel Fleming, Dacre House, 19 Dacre Street, London, SW1H 0DH by **16 June 2003**. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Hazel Fleming or Geraldine Moon on 020 7340 2900.



Richard Wakeford  
Chief Executive

- cc. Ridgeway Management Group  
Cllr Margaret Dewar - Buckinghamshire County Council Cabinet Member, Community Services  
Cllr Fleur De Rhe-Philipe - Wiltshire County Council Cabinet Member, Environment  
Cllr Ian Dobie - Swindon Cabinet Member, Transport & Environment  
Cllr Neil Fawcett - Oxfordshire County Council, Executive Member for Learning and Culture  
Cllr Royce Longton - West Berkshire Council, Portfolio Holder Environment & Sustainability