

“The Commoner”

We have had a number of emails and correspondence relating to motorised vehicles, and in particular trial bikes cutting up the byways and other parts of the common. This totally unnecessary damage is being caused by a small minority. The common, part of the North Wessex AONB, has always been open to all to enjoy proving they abide by the Bylaws.

As you may have noticed the temporary Traffic Restriction Order notices have been erected and the gates are now bolted shut on the designated areas. As many of you will know, we have been annoyed by the annotation on these placards that states “prohibit any mechanically propelled vehicle with 3 wheels or more”. This is ambiguous and misleading. Despite numerous written requests the Officers have failed to clarify where this stipulation has come from and its statutory basis. We think that all motorised vehicles should be banned from these ancient rights of way as one of the key stipulations in the Traffic Restriction Order is that they surface should not be damaged.



The picture on the left was taken last Sunday, November 12th on Sandy Lane (BUCK15/3) a route that has a current TRO in place. If this is not damage to the surface, then what is?

Unfortunately, this is far from an isolated incident as many have written to us on this subject and with the amount of rainfall, we have recently had the damage will only get worse.

We have taken the opportunity of attaching the Byways that are currently the subject of TROs and the various routes that are open to the public in Bucklebury, together with the Made Order. If you see any 4 x 4s on any of the routes covered by the TROs, please can you call 999 as this is a reportable offence. Similarly, please also report trial bikes or any motor bikes riding on footpaths.

We fully realise there is a reluctance to report “trivial” incidents to the hard-pressed emergency services but this is the only way to record these illegal infringements.

As a reminder the four types of public rights of way are as follows:

- i. Footpaths – for walking, running (one word two syllables!).
- ii. Bridleways – walking, horse riding, bicycles.
- iii. Restricted byways – all transport **without** a motor.
- iv. Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT).

We have attached a link to the West Berkshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). Please use this opportunity to have your say but we suggest that you also include a number of byways that are in need of protection i.e., BUCK56 (in its entirety), BUCK 67 (in its entirety), etc. The simplest way would be to upgrade many of our byways from BOATS to restricted byways, thus prohibiting all motor vehicles apart from those with a prescribed route of access to property. **Please be prompt as comments have to be submitted to the website before 23rd November.**

The Estate

Some damage has also occurred on the Lower Common during the logging activities by the Estate gaining access to their private plantations at Lodge Copse and Head's Copse. Alasdair Jones-Perrot, The Steward has given an undertaking that the damage will be repaired but this can only be done when the weather improves and these will of course take time to heal.

It is pleasing to see posts have been installed on the area around Scotland to restrict off-roaders and placed on the steep slope to try and reduce the damage that has occurred in this area. We understand that already there has been damage to these posts, so please be vigilant as this is a reportable offence.





Work has continued on clearing the birch and spruce from the existing areas of the heathland on the lower common and some sections are showing some real improvement.

We apologise for the image quality of the picture on the left but it was raining heavily when the picture was taken, but nethertheless this is now a very attractive area one can see the potential this callunais – heather, heathland.

I thought it might be quite interesting to show others what happens to some of the timber from the Bucklebury's Estates plantations. Quite by chance and unexpectantly, some of the Chestnut timber has been put to go use for the function on an environmental project that I have been working on in Hampshire.

Rather than been used for fuel or lumber this material has been installed in a large biofilter. The structure uses a pipe system to extract air from a composting facility. As the air passes through the filter, which is kept at about 37° with a high humidity and high retention time, the microbial growth takes out most of the bad odours before being released to the atmosphere.



And finally, on a plus side, we have been blessed with some outstanding wild mushrooms this autumn on the common and have taken the opportunity of attaching a few pictures of the very many species.



(left) Magpie Inkcap (*Coprinospicis picacea*)



(Above) Fly Agaric (*Amanita muscaria*)



(Above) Honeyfungus (*Genus Armillaria*)



(Below) Tawny Grisette (*Amanita fulva*)



(Above Left) Parasol (*Macrolepiota procera*)

(Above Right) Birch Polypore (*Fomitopsis betulina*)

And these two below have us beaten for the moment, if anyone can identify them, please let me know, but we think they are probably *Amanita Cothurnata* - if they are they are deadly poisonous! But could be *Agaricus Silvicola* and these contain cadmium!



As they say “ Never Eata – an Amanita”

Jason Allum

Bucklebury Commoners Association

Attached : Buck2023-2024 Map
 Made Order Bucklebury
 WBC Draft ROWIP 2023