

And *who* got off their backsides ...

... and did something positive?

From *The Guardian*, Thursday March 6 2008:

“The battle for Deadman’s Hill

“The Yorkshire Dales are in the front line in an increasingly bitter war between off-roaders who drive along its green lanes and environmentalists who want them banned.

“It’s a terrible mess,” says Michael Bartholomew, chairman of the Yorkshire Dales Green Lane Alliance (YDGLA). “It’s high in the fells, so the motorbike and 4x4 noise reverberates for miles. And a few years ago, the off-roaders made a great song and dance about repairs they had voluntarily made to the route, but it hasn’t lasted. Now it’s as degraded as ever.”

From the BBC News website, Thursday 6 March 2008:

“Beacons footpath repairs top £3m

“Footpath repairs in the Brecon Beacons have been



priced at more than £3m, but national park officials say there is no money to fund the work.

“The park is looking at ways of raising the money to restore parts of more than 1,240 miles (2,000km) of rights of way. However, work has started on one £50,000 project to repair Bwlch Giedd Path on the Black Mountain. Some 200 tonnes of stone has been airlifted onto the mountain and work is set to be completed in three weeks.

“Park access officer Richard Ball said the latest project was difficult because work was being carried out at an altitude of some 700 metres (2,300ft). He said the popular network of paths fell into disrepair through usage and harsh weather conditions.”

Can you see the contradiction here? Green road drivers get off their backsides and do comprehensive repairs to a road badly eroded by decades of neglect. After several years, including some of the most extreme weather events for generations, these repairs were simply washed away. Mr Bartholomew uses this as yet another weapon to damn all recreational drivers to Hell and beyond.

Meanwhile, walkers and the weather have caused £3 million-worth of damage to one national park alone. Any talk of banning the culprits? Far from it – the cries go up for the hard-pressed taxpayer to make good all their damage ... and with helicopters too! And that is just the Brecon Beacons.

Have you seen the havoc – the quagmires and erosion – inflicted by ramblers in Northumberland and the Lake District, to name but two more? Plainly there’s a different set of ethics applied to and for the trampers in their big boots and bobble hats.

A team of motor recreation volunteers fixing neglected roads in the Lake District National Park. Of course this work will not last forever. The weather and passage of time will see to that. Unsealed roads need regular attention on the ‘stitch in time ...’ principle.

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