



**MONITORING QUALITY STANDARDS ON NATIONAL TRAILS IN  
ENGLAND**

**RESULTS 2006**

## QUALITY STANDARDS ON ENGLISH NATIONAL TRAILS – 2006

Natural England wants everyone using the network of National Trails in England to enjoy their experience to the full.

Our over-arching goal is the maintenance of National Trails to a standard that is consistent and sympathetic to the landscape through which the Trails pass, which meets the needs of users and which is appropriate to their use.

Each year we ask National Trails Officers to report on how their Trails are performing against the standards. National Trail Officers are professionally-qualified individuals whose knowledge about each Trail is unsurpassed and whose opinion can be relied upon. This report gives a detailed breakdown of the results monitored during the summer months of 2006.

This year, for the first time, we have asked National Trail Officers and their management groups to set targets for the next monitoring period.

This year's results also include figures from the Cotswold Way National Trail, which is due to open officially in May 2007.

### OVERALL SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Areas of particular concern are:

#### Measure 8

Irresponsible off-road vehicle use is still causing some problems. Changes to the law (the introduction of a class of route called a "restrictive byway") and sensitive management have managed to effect things positively on some Trails, for example, The Ridgeway, but things have worsened on other Trails, for example the Peddars Way and the Thames Path. We are continuing with our exploration into the issues on the Pennine Bridleway and will seek to manage the problem on other Trails.

#### Measure 13

The closure of a number of Youth Hostels that previously served the Trails has had a detrimental affect. Natural England was unable to influence the Youth Hostels association in their decisions, which were taken on solely business grounds.

A user survey was carried out using the National Trail website during 2006. Analysis of this is underway and the results from the English Trails will be compared with the results of this quality standards monitoring. Further investigation and priority funding will be considered where the two reports do not match.

## RESULTS

These figures need to be read in conjunction with the document “Quality Standards for National Trails in England” which is also available on this site.

*In the tables below a figure in red shows where a result is not as good as when last measured, a figure in blue shows where a result is better than when last measured while a figure in black shows where a measurement has remained the same.*

*Where “unknown” is shown this is normally because it has been impossible to collect the information due to a lack of technical equipment or manpower.*

MEASURE 1: The percentage of each Trail that is legally defined		
		Target
Pennine Way	99	100
Cleveland Way	99.5	99.5
Yorkshire Wolds Way	99.5	99.5
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	99.3	100
North Downs Way	100	100
South Downs Way	95	96
Thames Path	99.4	99.4
Ridgeway	100	100
South West Coast Path	92.2	95
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	96.2	98.5
Cotswold Way	86	100
Average figure	96.9%	

Figures in the target column that are just below 100% are calculated on the fact that the “walked “ route of a National Trails can diverge from the actual “legally defined” route (as shown on definitive maps). Where this is perceived as a major problem, we encourage action to vary routes so that both converge.

MEASURE 2: The percentage of each Trail in the best position		
		Target
Pennine Way	100	100
Cleveland Way	98	100
Yorkshire Wolds Way	95	100
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	87	90
North Downs Way	92	92
South Downs Way	99	99
Thames Path	91	94
Ridgeway	96	97
South West Coast Path	92.3	95
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	95.8	98
Cotswold Way	82	84
Average figure	93.5%	

Where it is possible to vary the route of the Trail to take landscape, vista and experience into account, we encourage this approach.

MEASURE 3: The percentage of each Trail which is traffic-free and off road		
		Target
Pennine Way	93	93
Cleveland Way	90.5	90.5
Yorkshire Wolds Way	86	87
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	85	88
North Downs Way	78	80
South Downs Way	93	94
Thames Path	90	91
Ridgeway	90.2	90.2
South West Coast Path	85.3	86
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	82.9	83.5
Cotswold Way	82	84
Average figure	79.5%	

**MEASURE 4: The number of road, rail, river and sea crossings on each Trail that need improvements to make them safe**

		Target
Pennine Way	0	0
Cleveland Way	0	0
Yorkshire Wolds Way	0	0
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	2	2
North Downs Way	6	0
South Downs Way	2	1
Thames Path	9	9
Ridgeway	7	7
South West Coast Path	3	3
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	7 (More route now open)	3
Cotswold Way	16	Uncertain until negotiations are re-opened
Average figure	5	

Unsafe road crossings are largely deemed to be so because of speed of traffic, line of sight and similar issues. Work with relevant Highway Authorities is on-going to improve these sites.

**MEASURE 5: The percentage of fords, bridges and ramps on each Trail which are appropriate**

		Target
Pennine Way	100	100
Cleveland Way	100	100
Yorkshire Wolds Way	100	100
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	64	64
North Downs Way	100	100
South Downs Way	99	99
Thames Path	69	70
Ridgeway	100	100
South West Coast Path	90	90
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	100	100
Cotswold Way	90	100
Average figure	92%	

MEASURE 6: The percentage of each Trail with an acceptable width.		
		Target
Pennine Way	100	100
Cleveland Way	90	90
Yorkshire Wolds Way	99	100
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	99.9	100
North Downs Way	85	85
South Downs Way	99.5	99.6
Thames Path	86	86
Ridgeway	Unknown	Unknown
South West Coast Path	100	100
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	100	100
Cotswold Way	98	98
Average figure	95.7%	

MEASURE 7: The percentage of each Trail that has an acceptable surface.		
		Target
Pennine Way	100	100
Cleveland Way	96	96
Yorkshire Wolds Way	99	99
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	96.2	97
North Downs Way	94	95
South Downs Way	98.6	98.6
Thames Path	70	?
Ridgeway	82	?
South West Coast Path	99	100
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	98	99
Cotswold Way	95	98
Average figure	93.4%	

**MEASURE 8: The percentage of each Trail where off-road vehicle use is causing demonstrable problems.**

		Target
Pennine Way	Unknown	Unknown
Cleveland Way	1	0
Yorkshire Wolds Way	1	0
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	3.8	0
North Downs Way	5	5
South Downs Way	0	0
Thames Path	6	5
Ridgeway	44	42
South West Coast Path	<1	<1
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	19.8	0
Cotswold Way	<1	0
<b>Average figure</b>	<b>10%</b>	

**MEASURE 9: The percentage of steps and gradients on each Trail that is appropriate.**

		Target
Pennine Way	100	100
Cleveland Way	70	75
Yorkshire Wolds Way	33	40
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	92	93
North Downs Way	100	100
South Downs Way	100	100
Thames Path	32	35
Ridgeway	Unknown	Unknown
South West Coast Path	78	78
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	100	100
Cotswold Way	88	92
<b>Average figure</b>	<b>79.3%</b>	

MEASURE 10: The percentage of each Trail corridor which is of the highest quality		
		Target
Pennine Way	87	87
Cleveland Way	82	82
Yorkshire Wolds Way	8.8	12
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	79	79
North Downs Way	91	91
South Downs Way	99.5	99.5
Thames Path	Unknown	Unknown
Ridgeway	100	100
South West Coast Path	85	85
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	Unknown	Unknown
Cotswold Way	95	97
Average figure	80.8%	

MEASURE 11: The percentage of furniture on each Trail corridor that is appropriate		
		Target
Pennine Way	Unknown	Unknown
Cleveland Way	77	80
Yorkshire Wolds Way	94	95
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	Unknown	Unknown
North Downs Way	78	80
South Downs Way	95	98
Thames Path	41	45
Ridgeway	36	40
South West Coast Path	84	87
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	99.5	100
Cotswold Way	77	91
Average figure	75.7%	

**MEASURE 12: The percentage of access points on each Trail that is accessible by public transport and appropriately connected.**

		Target
Pennine Way	100	100
Cleveland Way	100	100
Yorkshire Wolds Way	83	83
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	71	71
North Downs Way	100	100
South Downs Way	100	100
Thames Path	81	81
Ridgeway	56	56
South West Coast Path	100	100
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	87	93
Cotswold Way	52	52
<b>Average figure</b>	<b>84.5%</b>	

**MEASURE 13: The number of gaps in accommodation provision on each Trail**

		Target
Pennine Way	0	0
Cleveland Way	3	3
Yorkshire Wolds Way	3	
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	1	1
North Downs Way	1 – closure of youth hostel	0
South Downs Way	1	
Thames Path	0	0
Ridgeway	1	1
South West Coast Path	YHA gaps increasing due to closures	No more gaps
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	3	2
Cotswold Way	8	
<b>Average figure</b>	<b>2</b>	

MEASURE 14: The percentage of each Trail that is litter and dog mess free		
		Target
Pennine Way	100	100
Cleveland Way	98	100
Yorkshire Wolds Way	100	100
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	95	95
North Downs Way	81	85
South Downs Way	98	98
Thames Path	95	96
Ridgeway	84	85
South West Coast Path	99	100
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	99	99
Cotswold way	100	100
Average figure	95.3%	

MEASURE 15: The percentage of officially produced Trail information that is currently accessible and branded in accordance with national guidance		
		Target
Pennine Way	100	100
Cleveland Way	100	100
Yorkshire Wolds Way	100	100
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	60	62
North Downs Way	100	100
South Downs Way	100	100
Thames Path	100	100
Ridgeway	100	100
South West Coast Path	100	100
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	100	100
Cotswold Way	100	100
Average figure	96.3%	

MEASURE 16: Number of guidebooks		
Pennine Way	8	
Cleveland Way	8	
Yorkshire Wolds Way	6	
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	Unknown	
North Downs Way	Unknown	
South Downs Way	7	
Thames Path	3	
Ridgeway	3	
South West Coast Path	Unknown	
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	Unknown	
Cotswold Way	Awaiting opening	

MEASURES 17,18 AND 19: Availability of printed information		
		Target
Pennine Way	Circular walks not available	
Cleveland Way	All available	
Yorkshire Wolds Way	All available	
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	All available	
North Downs Way	All available	
South Downs Way	All available	
Thames Path	All available	
Ridgeway	All available	
South West Coast Path	All available	
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	Public transport Guide and circ walks/rides not available	
Cotswold Way	Work still required	

**MEASURE 20: The provision of accessible, complete and up-to-date online information**

		Target
Pennine Way	yes	
Cleveland Way	Yes	
Yorkshire Wolds Way	Yes	
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	Yes	Yes
North Downs Way	Yes	Yes
South Downs Way	Yes	
Thames Path	Not complete	
Ridgeway	Not complete	
South West Coast Path	Yes	Yes
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	Yes	Yes
Cotswold Way	Yes	

**MEASURE 21: The provision of complete database of service information for each Trail**

		Target
Pennine Way	Yes	
Cleveland Way	Yes	
Yorkshire Wolds Way	Yes	
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	Yes	
North Downs Way	Yes	
South Downs Way	Yes but work needed on accommodation entries	
Thames Path	Yes	
Ridgeway	Yes	
South West Coast Path	Yes	
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	Yes	
Cotswold Way	Yes but not complete	

MEASURE 22: The percentage of signs which meet the standards on each Trail		
		Target
Pennine Way	10	50
Cleveland Way	84	85
Yorkshire Wolds Way	91	92
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	100	100
North Downs Way	83	85
South Downs Way	80	99
Thames Path	87	89
Ridgeway	71	71
South West Coast Path	64	71
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	100	100
Cotswold Way	67.5	83.5
Average figure	76.1%	

MEASURE 23: The number of key access points which have appropriate information displayed		
		Target
Hadrian's Wall Path		
Pennine Way	All	All
Cleveland Way	All	All
Yorkshire Wolds Way	5	
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	6	6
North Downs Way	50	80
South Downs Way	All	
Thames Path	43	43
Ridgeway	50	100
South West Coast Path	44	44
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	8	8
Cotswold Way	80	

MEASURE 24: The percentage of highway authorities that comply with temporary diversion procedure best practice		
		Target
Pennine Way	100	100
Cleveland Way	100	100
Yorkshire Wolds Way	100	100
Norfolk Coast Path/Peddars Way	100	100
North Downs Way	100	100
South Downs Way	100	100
Thames Path	100	100
Ridgeway	100	100
South West Coast Path	100	100
Open parts of Pennine Bridleway	100	100
Cotswold Way	100	100
Average figure	100%	