

THE CARE OF TRACKS

Advice for owners from Woodlands.co.uk

A shared track is not at all the same thing as a public road or street, and has to be treated with intelligent care by all its users.

- At the earliest opportunity, get to know the other users of the track, and together plan a strategy for caring for the tracks. Ensure that you each have copies of this advice sheet.
- Your own driving will affect the surface of the track.
Avoid, if at all possible, driving when it is wet or snowy. When there are potholes, don't drive through them if you can help it. Users of this sort of track often bring from home some clean rubble or stone, etc in a bag to drop into the potholes. It's amazing how just a few bags over time can help.
Try to avoid driving in the "tram lines", but instead help to compress the whole width of the track.
And never drive fast- apart from being dangerous, it causes the loose gravel to disperse off the track .
- Good drainage is crucial for good tracks.
Wherever possible keep any ditches alongside the tracks clear, as much of a track's integrity comes from good drainage.
Keep culverts clear. This can be done , for example, by pushing a long stick through to make sure it's not blocked. Dig leaves, silt etc. out of a culvert 'sump'.
Try to divert any new stream lines/rivulets that are running onto the track.
- Extraction of timber is very hard on tracks. It should be done in dry weather, and always on a vehicle/trailer with either wide, load dispersing tyres, or tracks.
If you do damage a track you are legally required to repair it. If the track belongs to Woodlands.co.uk you can get advice from them.
If your own timber is being extracted by a contractor, you will probably want to have the reinstatement of the tracks built into the agreement.
- If you own a wood alongside a track, aim to cut the vegetation back, especially anything overhanging. Getting light and air onto the track will help keep it dry.
- If there is a fallen tree over the track, don't attempt to drive over it. Either deal with it by clearing it, including anything in the ditches, if you can, or contact the owner of the wood that had the tree in it.
- If you encounter horses on the tracks, politely ask them to leave (unless it is a bridleway or TROT route) as horse riding on tracks will cause severe damage over time.