

Rt Hon John Healey MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Secretary of State
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

9 April 2021

Dear Priti

Off Road Motorcycle and Quad Bike Licensing Scheme

You have received a letter from the leaders of the four councils in South Yorkshire, our South Yorkshire Mayor and our Police and Crime Commissioner, requesting a new approach to the anti-social behaviour and crime linked to off-road motorbikes and quads.

This has been a problem in our area – and elsewhere – for many years but has worsened during the pandemic.

In the constituency I am fighting to protect a much-loved green space at Silverwood Nature Reserve, where drivers of off-road vehicles are causing damage, anti-social behaviour and threatening wildlife. In another area, Manvers, I've been working for months to try to stop quads and off-road bikes tearing up footpaths, the Trans Pennine Trail and the golf course. Similar problems elsewhere in the constituency have been reported to me as well.

This is impacting council resources and police time, not to mention causing intimidation and disturbance to members of the public.

South Yorkshire Police and our Police and Crime Commissioner have responded by creating a dedicated off-road motorbike team, but they are frustrated by the limits of current legislation which means that if the owner of a seized vehicle pays a recovery fee they simply get their vehicle back.

Stricter conditions around ownership and use should now be brought, giving police adequate powers to seize vehicles being used illegally. A new system of licensing would determine that the vehicle is owned for a legitimate purpose – for work or sport, for example – and specify where the vehicle could be used. Police could seize unlicensed vehicles or those being driven illegally and dispose of them.

I would like a meeting to discuss this idea and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Healey".

John Healey MP
Wentworth & Dearne