



Dartmoor ponies and cows given reflective neckbands to prevent car collisions

More than 200 animals on Dartmoor are being given reflective neckbands to make them more visible to vehicles and help prevent road traffic collisions.

The bands will be issued to farmers of 80 Dartmoor Ponies and 150 cattle following a successful funding bid to the Vision Zero South West Road Safety partnership.

The idea came from Dartmoor Forest Parish Council who say collisions and animal deaths have been a major concern for several years.

They successfully bid for £6,306 from the Vision Zero South West 'Call For Ideas' scheme which will pay for neckbands for animals specifically along the B3212 road from Peek Hill to Princetown.

The scheme is being officially launched at a special event on Friday, June 24 at 10am outside the Princetown Visitors Centre, where you will be able to meet some of the farmers and see pictures of livestock modelling the new neckbands.

Cllr Mark Williams of Dartmoor Forest Parish Council said: "The B3212 is the busiest of the two the main roads across Dartmoor and is the arterial route from Plymouth onto the moor and to Princetown and HM Prison Dartmoor.

"The 3.5 mile stretch between Peek Hill and Princetown is unfenced, with a speed limit of 40mph and runs across Walkhampton Common where around 150 cattle and 80 ponies roam freely.

"Collisions involving vehicles hitting animals are unfortunately frequent. There were 117 collisions involving animals on Dartmoor in 2021 recorded by the Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society. Most result in the death of the animal and heavy damage to the vehicle involved. Some also result in injury to drivers and passengers.

Karla McKechnie, Dartmoor Livestock Protection Officer, said "these unfenced roads become death traps unless motorists are animal aware and drive with 'moor' care. I am sickened and saddened by the high number of collisions I attend involving dead and dying animals. If you witness an animal being hit, please call me urgently on 07873 587561."

Cllr Williams explained that "Over the past few months the Parish Council has engaged with a range of stakeholders, including local farmers with livestock grazing the moor alongside the road, and representatives from Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society, Dartmoor National Park Authority, Devon County Council Highways, Dartmoor Commoner's Council, Devon and Cornwall Police, Dartmoor Speedwatch and Burrator Parish Council."

Andrew Watson, Head of Recreation and Access at Dartmoor National Park said "The National Park sees thousands of visitors each year, attracted by the vast open areas of moorland with unfenced roads and grazing livestock. The Authority is delighted to be part of this partnership, working to reduce the number of animal deaths and injuries across Dartmoor, and improve road safety for all visitors and residents".

As well as the neckbands, the funding from Vision Zero South West has also been used to install a new Vehicle Activated Speed sign below Leedon Tor, on the road from Princetown, to alert drivers to excess speed. This is in addition to the one, funded by the Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society, already located by the double car parks on the road from Peek Hill.

Improved signage at both Peek Hill and Princetown will be put in place to remind drivers to expect livestock to be on, or near the road, and to reduce speed/ give way to animals.

Cllr Mark Williams added: "These neck bands have proved successful in their use in the New Forest. We hope that these measures will raise driver awareness of the need for caution and reduced speed when travelling on this stretch of road, and that traffic collisions and incidents involving livestock will be reduced as a result.

"If this initiative proves successful the aim is to roll out similar measures on other key routes across the moor, should additional funding become available."

Vision Zero South West Partnership Manager Natalie Warr said: "We launched the 'Call For Ideas' small grants fund to support creative and innovative schemes just like this one.

"Working together is vital when addressing road safety issues, and no one knows their local roads quite like the communities who live there.

"Quite often you can big impact with a relatively small amount of money and that's exactly what I hope we have done in this case.

"Our vision is to halve all fatal and serious road collisions in Devon and Cornwall by 2030 and we can only do that by working collaboratively and innovatively with residents. I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone involved in this bid, I think it's going to make a big difference."

ENDS

Invitation to the launch

Media are invited to come along to the launch, which will take place on Friday 24th June at 1000, outside Princetown Visitors Centre, PL20 6QF

Who to contact:

Dartmoor Forest Parish Council Lead Contact: Cllr Mark Williams 01822 mj_williams1@btinternet.com

Dartmoor Forest Parish Council Clerk:

Jackie Bennetts 01822 859104 clerk@dartmoorforestparishcouncil.gov.uk

Vision Zero South West - VZSW Communications & Engagement Officer:

Joel.COOPER@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

Stakeholders:

Farmers: Graham Colton and Verity Nicholls verity.nicholls44@btinternet.com

Justine Colton justine.colton@sky.com

Dartmoor Livestock Protection Officer:

Karla McKechnie 07873 587561 karla.mckechnie@yahoo.co.uk

Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society: Marion Saunders marion@hillbridgefarm.co.uk

Dartmoor National Park Authority: Andrew Watson awatson@dartmoor.gov.uk

Andrea Roberts (Ranger) aroberts@dartmoor.gov.uk

Devon County Council Highways: James Anstee james.anstee@devon.gov.uk

Dartmoor Commoner's Council: Sara Sloman office@dartmoorcommoners.org.uk

Devon and Cornwall Police:

Kerry Whitting kerry.whitting@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

Jenny Mashford jenny.mashford@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

Dartmoor Speed Watch: Cllr Gregg Manning (Chair DFPC) greggmanning@live.com

Burrator Parish Council: Richard Glanville richard@glanville.uk.com

What is Vision Zero South West?

Vision Zero is a shared commitment between a number of organisations across Devon and Cornwall. The one thing they all share is a commitment to cut the number of deaths and serious injuries in the region to zero.

Vision Zero is led by a partnership board which includes a wide range of experts from all around the South West including senior police and fire officers, leading clinicians, councillors and the police and crime commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Vision Zero's partners include:

- Cornwall Council
- Devon County Council
- Plymouth City Council
- Torbay Council
- Exeter City Council
- Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service
- Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service
- Devon and Cornwall Police
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
- National Highways
- NHS University Hospitals Plymouth Trust
- Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust
- South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
- Cornwall Air Ambulance
- Devon Air Ambulance
- Driving for Better Business
- Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS)

For more information visit www.visionzerosouthwest.co.uk. You can also follow Vision Zero on Facebook at www.facebook.com/visionzerosw, on Twitter at twitter.com/visionzerosw or on Instagram at instagram.com/visionzerosouthwest

For more information about this press release, or about Vision Zero South West, please contact Joel Cooper on joel.cooper@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk