

Cattle Grids

Extracts from Nibblers online discussion group

We recently installed cattle grids at RSPB The Lodge.

They are solid, galvanised steel, box construction, set in a concrete frame. The steel is bolted to the concrete below, with separator sheets made of old conveyor belt material. They still make noise, but nowhere near as much as without separators. Maybe we need separators around the sides as well as beneath. Devon County Council Highways have tried shims (rubber/elasticized?) on the securing bolts, but I'm told they wear out too quickly.

Graham Wilton-Jones
Warden
The Lodge Nature Reserve
Sandy, Beds

We have some old grids which are starting to wear (some of concrete around the grid's retaining bolt has worn). They now rattle quite noisily as the grids move when a vehicle passes over them. The grids need some maintenance required to the grids to keep them in good condition. So worn grids are noisier. Plan for maintenance before you install them.

David Hodd
Countryside Manager
Purbeck Estate

I don't claim to be an expert in anything but I do know that some cattle grid designs are definitely noisier than others.

A few personal observations:

The gap between rails can be critical - too far apart and vehicles hit each rail in turn and really make them hum!

Average vehicle speeds also make a difference - faster roads make grids noisier.

Grids that are set flush with the road surface are quieter than those that sit below the road surface.

The New Forest has lots of cattle grids - perhaps the Forestry Commission in Lyndhurst or Hants CC will have some useful information.

Regards

Steve

Lynnie

The grids we have on roads around Goss Moor NNR in Cornwall are mounted on rubber 'cushions'. This makes them a bit quieter tho' not a lot. Two of our grids are close to houses & the residents have become accustomed to the noise. We initially 'sold' them the idea of the grids as contributing to traffic calming. Fixed rails are better than loose ones - your County Highways Dept. will have specs. We had to have grids that could take a 20 ton lorry - they were £20K a piece inc. labour & accomodation works! Don't know about hole depth affecting noise levels. don't forget your hedgehog ramps!

Martin

I've been investigating this for a proposed grazing scheme at Holt Heath. In addition to Martin's points, it's worth bearing in mind that the shape of the bars affects noise levels - round-topped bars produce more tyre rumble than flat-topped bars. Also, regular maintenance is important to ensure that all bolts are kept tight to avoid rattles developing.

As you're in the area, it would be worth speaking to the Conservators of Ashdown Forest. In the late nineties, Mike Constantine was responsible for reintroducing grazing on an area of heathland there and the scheme included grids on roads.

Keep me posted if you happen on any good ideas.

Ian
