

PDGLA
PO Box 7976
Great Longstone,
Bakewell,
Derbyshire, DE45 9AY
Web: www.pdgla.org.uk
Email: pdgla@hotmail.co.uk



Peak District
Green Lanes Alliance

March 2016 Newsletter

PDNPA Announces Public Consultation on Washgate – Please take part



*View of Staffordshire Hills from
Washgate August 2015*

The good news is that PDNPA has launched the public consultation on a permanent Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for Washgate which will ban all mechanically propelled vehicles.

As usual, PDNPA propose exemptions allowing use by invalid carriages, agricultural vehicles, the emergency services and with the prior written permission by PDNPA.

Washgate is a picturesque route straddling the Derbyshire/Staffordshire border at a packhorse bridge over the River Dove. It is shown as an ORPA (other route with public access) on OS Maps. The route starts at Booth Farm and goes to Tenterhill (SK058680 to SK047672).

PDNPA proposed to consult on a TRO for Washgate in their 2015/2016 Action Plan. They completed the first stage of the drawn-out consultation process in 2015. That involved approaching the statutory consultees and after receiving their responses, preparing a report for the Audit, Resources and Performance Committee. The Committee agreed to proceed to the public consultation stage in September. (See our September 2015 newsletter for more information about this first stage.)

They have now started the public consultation, which allow the general public to give their views on the proposed TRO. When all the responses have been considered and analysed, a further report will be prepared for the Audit, Resources and Performance Committee who will finally decide whether or not to make the TRO.

All the PDNPA documents giving more information about the reasons for the proposal can be found either by following the link in the final paragraph of this

article on page 3 or by going directly to <http://consult.peakdistrict.gov.uk/details.cfm?TROID=8>



Photo: Heather on the verges which would be damaged if 4x4s used the lane; erosion of the path by vehicles (forming steps); a narrow lane unsuitable for vehicles; this narrowness currently leads to potential conflicts between motor bikes and other users. August 2015

The purpose of the TRO (which is expressed in legalistic terms by PDNPA) is:

1. preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs
2. conserving or enhancing the natural beauty of the area, or of affording better opportunities for the public to enjoy the amenities of the area, or recreation or the study of nature in the area



The narrow packhorse bridge which is unsuitable for 4x4s and quad bikes. Most motor bikes cross by the river creating unsightly erosion to the banks. January 2015



Setts (laid by volunteers) to replace original setts destroyed by off-roaders. At times volunteers repair damage caused by trail bikes before starting new work. August 2015

The background papers highlight

- the natural beauty of the route with extensive views and the beautiful River Dove crossing;
- the ecological features – particularly the plants on the route verges and in the River Dove valley;
- the historical features such as the repaired stone setts on the Derbyshire side, the packhorse bridge, and walls and barns which are such a part of the Peak District landscape;
- the damage caused to the route by recreational motor vehicle use; and
- the tranquillity of the area.

PDGLA believes these are all valid reasons to support the TRO.

You can respond by either using the on-line response form or by writing to Rights of Way. If you decide to write, please ensure you include as part of your representation:-

1. your full name and address;
2. whether you are representing your personal views or the views of an organisation;
3. Whether your comments are in favour of the proposal, objecting to the proposal or are general comments. If your comments object to the proposal, please set out the grounds on which your objection is made.



Looking down towards the River Dove from the Staffordshire side. August 2015

Please take the time to respond to this important public consultation.

Make your representations at www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/consultations or by post to Rights of Way, Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell DE45 1AE by **5pm 22nd April 2016.**

Please spread the word about this consultation and ask everyone who cares about the Peak District to take part.

PDNPA agrees to go to public consultation for a TRO on Derby Lane

PDNPA also proposed to consult on a TRO for Derby Lane, Monyash, Derbyshire in their 2015/2016 Action Plan. (See last month's newsletter for further information about this route.) They have now completed the first stage of the consultation process with the Audit, Resources and Performance Committee considering a report, prepared after the consultation with the statutory consultees, at their March meeting. The Members voted unanimously to proceed with the public consultation on a permanent TRO banning all recreational motor vehicles from Derby Lane.

Derby Lane crosses typical White Peak farmland. It is very visible from the nearby Arbor Low ancient monument. Part of the route is unusual for the Peak District in that it is across open fields and completely unsurfaced. That makes it very vulnerable to damage caused by recreational motor vehicle use. This vulnerable section is currently only being used by motor bikes as the farmer has placed large boulders at the entrance to this section to prevent 4x4 access.



THEN - March 2015



NOW - The same area in March 2016



THEN - March 2015. Tracks converging on a field gate. The tracks on the left are Derby Lane.



NOW- The same area in March 2016. the width of the track associated with Derby Lane was about 20 metres.

One very positive outcome of the discussion by PDNPA Members was their appreciation of the value of pre-emptive TROs to protect routes before major problems arise. And Derby Lane falls into this category. Our pictures above show the change in two areas of the lane with only 12 months use by motor bikes only (not recreational 4x4s.)



Trail bikes on the grassy, vulnerable section. Note the ruts in the foreground where such bikes have passed through the gate. March 2016

The status of the route is under consideration at present. DCC has decided that it should be a BOAT (byway open to all traffic) which means that the boulders would have to be removed to allow all recreational motor vehicles to use all of the route. There is an objection to that decision lodged with the Planning Inspectorate which will be dealt with, hopefully, this Summer. Members were concerned that if there was a gap between the Planning Inspectorate confirming BOAT status and the start of the TRO, that

damage might occur to the grassy section across the fields. The determination of the status of the route and the TRO process are two separate processes, both of which take time. The Officers said they would proceed as quickly as possible to the public consultation. However if the Planning Inspectorate confirmed DCC's decision, such a gap would be inevitable.

We will let you know when the public consultation starts on this route.

Update on the Voluntary Restraint on the Wetton route

We told you about the Voluntary Restraint on Wetton in our January 2016 newsletter. Wetton is a grassy Staffordshire route from the Back of Ecton area SK105566 to the Manifold Valley SK098561 near Wetton Mill. The route is on National Trust land, crosses a SSSI (site of special scientific interest) and is within the Natural Zone. [Natural Zone is a term used by PDNPA to identify the parts of the National Park which need a higher level of protection when planning matters are considered. See <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/publications/local-plan-2001/appendix4> for more information about this term.]



THEN - November 2011. Compare with the "Now" picture.



NOW - March 2016. A picture of the same area.

In November 2011 it was a beautiful grassy route through a very attractive, limestone dry valley with minimal evidence of recreational motor vehicle use. The middle section of this route is very vulnerable to damage in the winter. Our January 2016 Newsletter showed photographs of damage in January 2013, February 2015 and March 2015 when there was no voluntary restraint on the route.

Voluntary Restraint is action proposed by the responsible recreational motor vehicle users where they advise all off-roaders to avoid using the route during very wet times. They place signs at the start and end of the route.

Whilst voluntary restraint is better than nothing, it does not prevent all damage during the winter months when some routes are most vulnerable. Such damage makes the route more difficult for other users. Our photographs on the following page shows the damage to two parts of the route that has occurred within the three months that the voluntary restraint has been in operation.



December 2015 before the voluntary restraint started. The ground conditions were wetter than in March 2016



March 2016: The same area 3 months into voluntary restraint. The ruts are deeper and more extensive.



December 2015: Some grass and a few bare rocks exposed on the developing steps



March 2016: The grass is nearly gone and more bare rocks are exposed. The steps are more noticeable.

Voluntary agreements suffer from the defect that many vehicle users are not members of recognised organisations; even members of these organisations may not abide by them; and the organisations themselves have no effective sanction over their members. There are no sanctions against users who deliberately ignore voluntary restraint. DEFRA recognises this in “Making the Best of Byways” December 2005 page 26 “Discussions with authorities when drafting this guide indicate that voluntary restraint is widely seen as ineffective in managing mechanically propelled vehicle use of byways.” However DEFRA goes on to conclude “Voluntary restraint can be a useful tool for management of byways where reductions in mechanically propelled vehicle traffic is desirable but not where the prohibition of mechanically propelled vehicles is agreed to be necessary.” We do not believe a simple reduction in use of vehicle traffic is the solution to the problem of the deteriorating condition of the Wetton route.

Looking at the November 2011 picture shows what a difference a pre-emptive TRO (as proposed for Derby Lane) could have made to this route.

National Parks are Important

The Peak District was the first National Park created in England. PDGLA believes National Parks are important and need protecting and not only for matters related to off-roading. This may be particularly important when the Chancellor is proposing further cuts in the next Budget. So we're including information about a survey organised by the Campaign for National Parks. Here is what they say about their survey:-

Campaign for National Parks is the only national charity campaigning to protect and promote the National Parks of England and Wales. This year is our 80th anniversary, so to celebrate this we're starting a 'Big Conversation about National Parks' and encouraging as many people as possible to help shape our Parks for the future by completing our survey: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cnp80yrs

We're doing this because we want to know what people think about National Parks at the moment and what they'd like to see for the future. We think that if National Parks are to remain special and valued for decades to come, they need to be both relevant and treasured by current and future generations.

It would be much appreciated if you were able to complete our survey and share it with your colleagues and supporters, getting as many people involved as possible. Our chief executive has written a very interesting blog looking at why we think National Parks could be better: [We need to talk about...National Parks](#)

Please also share on social media - we're using the hashtag #cnp80 (our twitter is [@campaign4parks](#) and Facebook is [/campaignfornationalparks](#)). The survey is also available in Welsh www.surveymonkey.com/r/cnp80cymraeg

Please do publicise as much as possible and take part yourself.