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Peak District
Green Lanes Alliance

Saving our green lanes from off-road vehicles

September 2017 Newsletter

PDNPA to go for public consultation on full TRO on Wetton

The route known as Wetton is one of the few genuinely “green lanes” in the Peak District National Park. It runs from the Manor House (SK 105567) to the Manifold Trail (at SK 098557) through a typical White Peak valley. The area seems remote and untouched by humans (although in reality all landscapes in the UK reflect human occupation and land management practices). It is far from busy roads. Tranquillity and beauty are the two words that would describe the valley.

PDNPA Members voted unanimously to go out to public consultation on a full Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) on the route at the September meeting of the Audit, Resources and Performance Committee. The debate was interesting but worrying. One member wanted repairs through joint working by vehicle and non-vehicle users before a TRO was considered. However it would be easier to get the engagement of non-vehicle users if they felt the route would subsequently be protected by a TRO. Others felt there were more damaged routes which were a more obvious priority. This is true, but pre-emptive TROs can prevent routes degrading. Those members unequivocally supporting a TRO stressed the natural beauty of the route, the tranquillity, the need for pre-emptive action and the statutory duty to conserve the natural beauty.



Photograph 1: The first signs of damage by recreational motor vehicle users in January 2013.

PDGLA Members have been monitoring the route since 2011. In November 2011 there were few signs of recreational vehicle use on the route. (Photograph 2) In January 2013 (14 months later) damage was obvious in part of the middle section. (Photograph 1). It's the middle section of the route that is most vulnerable to damage. Photographs 3 and 4 are taken in the same area as photograph 2 and show the damage over time during the winter months.



Photograph 2: November 2011 before there were many signs of recreational motor vehicles using the route.



Photograph 3: The same area in February 2014



Photograph 4: The same area in February 2017

PDNPA has carried out limited vehicle logging that shows that use is relatively light. However, the off roading activity described by a local speaker at the Audit, Resources and Performance Committee meeting suggested that use might be heavier at times than the limited vehicle logging showed. And PDNPA vehicle logging shows that use is increasing.

PDGLA has seen the effect of recreational motor vehicle use on Minninglow Lane, Ballidon and Moscar Cross Road, Sheffield (both of which remain green lanes over long sections.) On these lanes, the surface can become so rutted in the winter that they are unusable for many. Moscar Cross Road is fine in the Summer and early Autumn because Sheffield City Council flattens the ruts every year. On Minninglow Lane, the ruts are hidden by the long grass in the summer. We do not want to see the Wetton route get to the same condition.

DEFRA accepts that pre-emptive TRO's may be necessary in National Parks where there is evidence to support them. We believe that routes such as Minninglow Lane and Moscar Cross Road provides the evidence and that it is important for PDNPA to protect a tranquil and beautiful route before it is badly damaged by recreational vehicles.

You can see our response as a statutory consultee at <https://democracy.peakdistrict.gov.uk/documents/s19695/SAS%20-%20ARP%20Sept%202017%20-%20Wetton%20-%20App4.pdf> It starts at page 10. The papers presented to the meeting can be seen at <https://democracy.peakdistrict.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&Mid=1573&Ver=4> under agenda item 6.

We will let you know when the public consultation begins.

Update on the Hollinsclough Rakes

Staffordshire County Council (SCC) has closed the two Hollinsclough Rakes to all users by a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO). Unfortunately there were no notices at the start and ends of the routes about the TTRO and no barriers which might have alerted potential users to the closure. So use continued. Councillor Gill Heath announced at the PDNPA May Audit, Resources and Performance Committee meeting that SCC was going to put large stone barriers in place to stop use. These were finally put in place at the end of September and a local resident reports that they have deterred at least one motor cyclist.