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Peak District  
Green Lanes Alliance

## Saving our green lanes from off-road vehicles

### Newsletter July 2019

#### DCC decide on TRO for Jacob's Ladder

PDGLA and Friends of the Peak District were delighted when Derbyshire County Council approved the making of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to permanently ban recreational motor vehicle use on Jacob's Ladder near the village of Stoney Middleton.

It is a steep and narrow lane with poor sight lines making it incompatible with use by motor vehicles alongside walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users and horse riders. For more than 20 years the local community have been plagued by fast moving off-road cars and motorbikes that have intimidated residents and made them fearful of using the lane.



Unsurprisingly then local people turned out in force to pack the small room meeting room at County Hall in Matlock, where Cllr Simon Spencer (Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Infrastructure) would give his decision on 19<sup>th</sup> June. But first there was a challenge to Derbyshire County Council in the form of a solicitor's letter from the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF). This claimed misrepresentation of the TRF's objection in the report that would be used to make the decision and asked for the entire 18 page objection to be read out at the meeting. Cllr Spencer rejected this request as all submissions had been given due consideration during preparation of the report.



*Jacob's Ladder in April 2018. Note the lack of verges for horse riders to get out of the way of vehicles and the blind corner.*

The letter also claimed that the TRO process had been chaotic as the council had had to repeat the consultation. Cllr Spencer recognised that there had been a technical hitch in the first public consultation but the second consultation had been undertaken in the proper manner and met all legal requirements. He therefore rejected the TRF challenge.

A representative of the Association of Peak Trail Riders spoke on behalf of the TRF against the TRO, claiming only a minority of local residents were for it. To counter that a local resident and representatives of Peak Horsepower and of Friends of the Peak District all spoke passionately in favour of the TRO.

Cllr Spencer listened and concluded that he was reassured that officers had been through everything in detail and that the report was balanced and reasonable. Use by vehicles is harming the Peak District

National Park - to the detriment of the natural beauty and tranquillity, the wildlife and the cultural heritage of the area, and the public's enjoyment of all it has to offer. He therefore supported his officers' recommendation to proceed with a TRO. He did however provide one positive for the off-roaders. Even with a TRO on the lane the Council would consider requests to use the route for motorcycle rallies properly and lawfully organised, and with prior authorisation from Derbyshire County Council.

There was general jubilation by all the local community when Cllr Spencer gave his decision. All that the National Park stands for had won through and the lane will be

restored to the village to allow residents and visitors to enjoy the peace and wildlife and take some exercise safely.

Derbyshire County Council has announced it will publish the order on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. Fingers crossed that there is no legal challenge to it from the TRF.

### **A resident's view of the effect of recreational vehicles on Jacob's Ladder**



*Jacob's Ladder in March 2018*

I have been a resident of Stoney Middleton for some 40 years. When I first lived here Jacob's Ladder was a pleasant and quiet lane to walk and enjoy the peaceful environment and countryside. The lane is now destroyed and has very deep ruts with exposed tree roots and many walls are falling down. It is heartbreaking to see the destruction that recreational vehicles, 4x4's, trail and quad bikes have done to the lane. Walkers and horse riders do not use the lane and cyclists struggle to avoid the deep ruts.

Some residents of the village do not visit the cemetery any more as the path is difficult to walk on and there is a fear of meeting a vehicle. The lane is narrow and there are no passing places or borders to get out of the way of any oncoming vehicles. Sometimes when there is a burial, the churchwardens have to ask the council

to repair the lane so that people can get to the cemetery. The repairs wash away afterwards.

The lane leads on from the area known as The Nook. This is a cul-de-sac and a quiet residential area near the church. Often church services are disturbed by the noise of off-roaders. The houses on The Nook are old and there are no pavements. Residents report 4x4's and bikes revving up at night outside their houses and congregating in The Nook for a night ride.