

Hope Valley Forum
27th February 2008

Questions and Answers

Q: Andrew Chadwick, Abney Parish Meeting: How many off-roaders have legal number plates? At Great Hucklow school, children walk at the point where bikes come off the tops, frightening them. PC Ayre has visited. What is being done? Bikers show no respect.

A: Sgt Mullis – respect earned from actions taken, try best within resources available.

A: PC Lowe – co-ordination is through operation Blackbrook. Will engage with Mr Chadwick directly. Issue can be resolved through information and communication, engaging with parish councils and PDNPA. It is important to influence the majority and parish councils are reporting some level of success.

Q: Mr Lomas, walker: In 2002, his wife, while walking, broke her leg very badly, stepping on a rut. On enquiring to DCC, he was given conflicting responses from 2 different departments, one saying that the route was a BOAT, the other saying it was ‘unclassified’. Landowner put in a modification order and, after a hearing, it was shown to be a bridleway. PDNPA is waiting to put notices up from DCC to state status of the track. Central Government gave no time limit, so many councils think they can take for ever. It is taking far too long, with too many different opinions.

A: DCC – the issue is complicated. Signage is an issue – will talk about on one to one level afterwards.

(From Miller’s Dale on Meadow Lane – passing through Monksdale Farm.)

A: DCC – apparent confusion between departments is not unusual and may be a result of the mapping system where a route is described as ‘non-classified’ but there is still a duty to maintain it. The definitive map may say something else. Takes time, 200 claims currently being dealt with. With limited resources all claims are dealt with methodically. Under new policy, the sequence of claims to be dealt with will be stated clearly. Information about this is on the website.

Q: Part of this track is still not designated and still very bad.

Q: What is the timetable for designation?

A: DCC – it can take several months to research what rights exist on a route, for example there is a need to examine many historical documents. There are 200-300 outstanding claims, each requiring around 4 months’ work before going to committee. Priority is given according to urgency and public pressure.

Q: Mr Eyre – Brough. In 1994, he wrote to PDNPA asking for restriction on lane – last June, it was made a priority and test case for a Traffic Regulation Order.

A: Mike Rhodes, PDNPA – Brough Lane is on the list of 23 priority routes – all views will be considered as well as the need to improve their management.

Q: Hathersage Parish Council – footpath in Hathersage south of Derwent has a designation. There have been numerous meetings, at which action was promised by Easter. This is a slow process but this footpath is part of a ‘national way’ – this can cause problems when they are already in a bad state or repair.

A: DCC – order will be confirmed shortly – this takes the path away from the river’s edge.

Q: Cllr Bevan – at the last 3 forums she has asked the same question. A suggestion was made some time ago that there should be a map. Police say they can’t deal with problems unless they have a map showing the proper status. How for have DCC got in getting this map together?

A: DCC – has agreed to produce this map in a short time. It is too difficult to produce a map that shows ‘rights’ as the network is vast. But they can provide maps that show the current status. The information is available imminently.

A: Police – can’t make false promises. There are a vast number of routes, so the way forward is by information and communication with enforcement is last resort. The majority must influence the minority. Other forces with an aggressive approach do not address the long term problem. Success will take time but we are moving slowly in the right direction. Quality of life issues may be low down on the Police priority list but they are all referred to the right groups to be able to tackle the problem.

Q: Cllr Bevan – if DCC can’t get a map together, how can the elderly walk safely on a path? No one can move forward without the map.

Q: Jill Burt – Hope: Concerned about the Brinks. There was a notice saying ‘no vehicles’, but this was torn down, metal ones get sawn through. Who will enforce this? Whose job is this? Who has the power? Can I take an action myself?

A: Police – they will work with PDNPA wardens – they will look at matters when they are reported. Will give card afterwards for direct contact.

Q: Shaun Merrick – rambler as well: He is against illegal motorcycling but feels vilified tonight. It is only a small minority that causes problems. Not everyone should be criticised. Correct signage is important. Should be enough trails for all to share. Many riders are normal human beings, with a family life and a hobby that they enjoy.

Q: Brian Gill – Brinks: Has been a problem for 10 years. Should be on priority, as the track is impossible to walk. Believes authorities will never get co-operation from irresponsible people.

A: PDNPA - Bridleways are not legally used by MVs, so issue is one of enforcement.

A: Police – CPS won't take prosecution where is any doubt about legal status. Legal status defined on rolling programme, so every map put of date quickly.

Q: Bill Gordon – Outseats PC: Displacement is big issue, in particular it goes to the night time, when is no one in around to enforce.

Q: Anon – on Pilsley High Street last Sunday, there were 40 people riding about; the week before 90, plus 4x4; the week before that there were 70 plus. If an innocent party were injured, how would anyone get them out? Can a warden be available to monitor the situation at weekends?

A: PDNPA – wardens are stretched but there are electronic counters on site so the numbers are counted and the authority is aware of the level of use.

A: Richard Pett – electronic counters were first used in the Lake District. They use a magnetic coil and acoustic system and are buried in ground for month. This gives a very accurate count as to how many are going past.

Q: Shatton – what are the implications of the test case here?

A: PDNPA – on Brough lane, the issue is access, parking and use of the moor for hang-gliding. It is a planning committee enforcement issue. A TRO stop was considered but the Authority decided it must be considered as part of the 23 priority routes.

A: PDNPA - Dewper lane is tarmacked so PDNPA has no authority there.

A: PDNPA - Planning Committee recommended TRO but full Authority decided action must be taken in context of the whole network.