



Ian Budd
Director of Education
Cyfarwyddwr Addysg

Stuart Mackintosh
Head of Leisure and Recreation
Pennaeth Hamdden

BY E-MAIL

peter.foulkes249@btinternet.com

Atebwch os gwelwch yn dda /Please reply to:
The Gwalia, Ithon Road,
Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6AA

Os yn galw gofynnwch am / If calling please ask for:

Enw / Name: Mark StAfford-Tolley

Ffôn / Tel : 01597 827677

Ffacs / Fax :

Llythyru electronig/Email: mark.stafford-tolley@powys.gov.uk

Eich cyf / Your Ref :

Ein cyf / Our Ref : LR/MST

Dyddiad / Date: 25th March 2019

Dear Mr Foulkes,

MONK'S TROD BYWAY (LC296)

Thank you for your letter received on 19th March expressing your Trustees' concerns over the use of the Monks Trod public byway by motorcycles.

I can confirm that the length of byway (LC296) with unrestricted access to motorcycle traffic extends from the public road at Pont-ar-Elan westwards to just before Carn Ricet, a distance of approximately 3 km. The decision to re-open this section was taken in autumn last year following earlier surface maintenance works to facilitate drainage and repair historical damage from motorised vehicles. All works were undertaken with the consent of Natural Resources Wales and under an archaeological watching brief. The surface along this section is acceptable for motorcycle use at the current time, although its condition is being kept under review. A site visit on 18th March revealed no significant deterioration of the surface along this part of the byway.

The remainder of the byway between Carn Ricet and Rhyd Hengae at the Ceredigion border remains closed to motorcycle traffic under a temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). However, the present Order allows motorcycle access to be permitted along the closed section on up to three specified dates. As you have noted, the granting of access on each occasion is subject to weather and ground conditions and motorcycle use will be monitored by Council Officers. The access restriction will be reviewed again once the TRO expires in April but the BOAT remains permanently closed to four-wheeled public motorised vehicular use.

I have noted the Trustees' opinion that the byway should not be used for motorcycle traffic in the long term. Countryside Services recognises the Society's concerns regarding the historical significance and landscape value of the Elenydd area, as well as its significant biodiversity value. I see that both Cllr Aled Davies, Portfolio Holder for Countryside Services and Richard Tyler Chairman of the Powys LAF have already responded to you. Managing public access is a complex issue, and the Council has to provide a balance between conflicting legal duties and

differences in public opinion regarding competing recreational needs.

At the current time, we are still conducting a legally required assessment to determine if, and in what manner, maintenance works can proceed. We will continue to work closely with our stakeholders to resolve access concerns as and when they develop, taking into account other relevant opinions where appropriate.

I can assure the Trustees that in delivering our legal duties as the Highway Authority, the Council is also taking seriously its legal duty to conserve biodiversity. Expert ecological and hydrological advice has been sought to ensure all designated sites are safeguarded from adverse impacts arising from any works. By law, works can only take place once NRW and the Council are satisfied that the SAC, SPA and SSSI will not be affected negatively as a result. The current proposed maintenance works will provide a sustainable surface, clearly defining the line of the byway, which has become unclear in several places. Waterlogged locations will also be repaired and resolution of both issues should reduce the level of damage to the protected habitat adjoining the BOAT.

The Council also remains mindful of the route's importance within the historical landscape, although no part of the byway itself lies within, or immediately adjacent to, any scheduled archaeological features. The archaeological watching brief commissioned for last year's maintenance works identified a section of potential interest along the western half of the byway. Work in this area was avoided as a result. Subsequently, a professional archaeological walkover survey and desktop study of the entire BOAT has been completed and submitted to the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) for comment and approval. This will be used to inform any future works and safeguard sensitive areas.

Please do not hesitate to contact me again if the Society has further questions or comments regarding public access on the Monk's Trod.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Stafford-Tolley', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Stafford-Tolley
Senior Countryside Access Officer