

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 06 APRIL 2022

QUESTION from Peter Dobbs, Local Resident of Ashbourne, regarding the action plan for Ashbourne's Air Quality Management Area -

Does this council believe that a suitably quantified and scientifically rigorous Action Plan for Ashbourne's Air Quality Management Area can be produced by November this year (18 months after the AQMA was declared), given the constraints of the Marsden Report?

RESPONSE -

Following the declaration of an AQMA in Ashbourne the District Council is required to produce an Action Plan for submission to Defra on how it intends to address the exceedance of the NO2 air quality objective in Ashbourne. As the responsible authority for highways, Derbyshire County Council is legally required to work alongside Derbyshire Dales District Council to implement an action plan. This report was put forward to the relevant cabinet department at Derbyshire County Council and made public in February. This will form the basis of the submission. It should be noted that this must be agreed with Defra prior to being adopted. Working in this way we certainly hope that a suitable action can be produced and agreed in the necessary timescale.

STATEMENT from Janet Treacher, Local Resident of Bamford, regarding the Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation Results and Proposed New Orders:

With regard to the proposals to be discussed this week, may I urge you to follow the example of High Peak who introduced a 'wildfires' PSPO in 2021 and ban open fires and especially disposable BBQ's.

The damage caused to Bamford Edge in May 2020, with the loss of vegetation and wildlife in the nesting season was heart-breaking and meant that emergency services had to be diverted to deal with what is an easily avoidable problem.

STATEMENT from Dave Treacher, Local Resident of Bamford, regarding the Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation Results and Proposed New Orders:

With regard to the proposals to be discussed this week, may I urge you to follow the example of High Peak who introduced a 'wildfires' PSPO in 2021 and ban open fires and especially disposable BBQ's.

I don't live in the Dales but I do live close enough to witness the damage caused by the careless use of these polluting, disposable products.

STATEMENT from Ann Hodgson, Keith Hodgson, Mary Hodgson Frost and Marcus Hodgson Frost, Local Residents of Bakewell, regarding the Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation Results and Proposed New Orders:

We consider allowing barbeques in The Peak District to be totally inappropriate and antisocial.

It will result in a scarred landscape and a severe fire hazard on a supposedly protected environment. Peat and heather moors are very special and very fragile.

Having tried it out at places like Carsington, they have now banned barbeques which were antisocial for other users of the area.

This applies importantly also to Bakewell park, where the use of the park and play area would be totally destroyed. Picnics are one thing. Barbeques are wholly unacceptable.

STATEMENT from Nicky Loveday, Local Resident of Great Longstone, regarding the Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation Results and Proposed New Orders:

The devastation caused to our countryside, land and wildlife and consequential loss to landowners and businesses from the irresponsible use of BBQs and Open Fires in the Dales could be mitigated by a PSPO making them illegal.

Whilst it will further reduce any risk of wildfires on our moorland, it would also reduce the damage to land and property, reduce the amount of harmful litter to locals, visitors, livestock and wildlife, reduce the damage to our climate and allow the Dales to be seen in all their beauty.

The use of disposable BBQs and Open Fires in our tourist hotpots such as Monsal Dale is simply out of control and landowners need the support of the District Council to reinforce their attempts to prevent them being used on their land.

The patchwork of areas within the Dales where BBQs and Open Fires are banned is unhelpful and confusing to both locals and visitors and the public would be better informed and educated by a total ban in the public spaces throughout the Derbyshire Dales.

Whilst I fail to understand why the District Council has not acted to date, I would ask the Committee to reconsider its objections to such a beneficial and positive step to protect our Dales and surrounding areas.

STATEMENT from Suzanne Howard, Local Resident of Hathersage, regarding the Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation Results and Proposed New Orders:

I'm writing to urge you to issue a PSPO for the Derbyshire Dales area, to help protect our precious wild spaces from the destruction caused by barbecues and open fires.

As a resident of Hathersage, I spend every summer watching plumes of smoke rising from Stanage Edge or Padley Gorge, and my heart sinks with every siren from yet another fire engine heading out. We are so blessed to be surrounded by such beauty, from the high heather moorlands to the deep wooded valleys, with curlews and ring ouzels calling above. We owe it to our wildlife and landscape to do everything within our power to protect it as far as we possibly can.

Of course I understand that a PSPO is not a magic cure, but it would give much needed weight to the arguments of residents and authorities if we could explain to people heading out with bags of charcoal that, actually, barbecues and fires are banned on the moors here, and that they could face prosecution if they don't turn around and go elsewhere.

The place for barbecues is in a back garden or a public park. If you don't have a back garden or a park, and still want to eat al fresco in the Peak District countryside, take a picnic that doesn't require you to set fire to anything. It's not difficult. Someone's desire to eat a charred burger is simply not sufficient justification to risk the destruction of acres of moorland or woodland, the death of countless birds and mammals, and the public money spent on fighting fires.

Please, this is YOUR chance to help the community that you're here to serve, and to make a real difference to the protection of the countryside that you're surrounded by.

STATEMENT from Phil Sproson, Local Resident, regarding the Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation Results and Proposed New Orders:

I'm writing to urge you to issue a PSPO for the Derbyshire Dales area, to help protect our precious landscapes from the destruction caused by barbecues and open fires. Each year, and as a resident, the correlation between good weather, weekends and moorland fires is getting stronger and stronger year on year. Tools to help stop this annual avoidable destruction will all help, and help the environment and wildlife of the National Park and Derbyshire.

STATEMENT from Christopher Thirtle, Local Resident of Great Longstone, regarding the Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation Results and Proposed New Orders:

I understand that on Wednesday 6 April the Community and Environment Committee will consider proposals for new and revised PSPO's but as yet they don't propose to take the opportunity to make unauthorised BBQs and Open Fires illegal in the

Derbyshire Dales. Failure to do this would be a travesty and, I believe, be contrary to the mood of local communities and landowners who are fed up with the devastation caused to our countryside, grazed land, and wildlife by the irresponsible use of BBQs and Open Fires.

The issue goes far beyond wildfires on moorland. BBQs and Open Fires damage the land and destroy the visual amenity of some of our most iconic vistas in the Derbyshire Dales. In addition, the litter that is so often associated with such BBQs and Open Fires, such as foil trays, food waste, bottles, cans and broken glass, poses a significant risk to wildlife and grazing farmed animals. Every summer there are burnt squares of grass and bare patches of scorched earth left by BBQ's and Open Fires in some of the most picturesque places in the Derbyshire Dales and there would be many, many more were it not for the intervention of local land managers and agents in places such as Monsal Dale. The damage caused is not only unsightly but demonstrates the real risk that a fire could easily spread into the surrounding Ash woodlands which now have an ever-increasing fuel load of dead wood due to the prevalence of Ash Dieback. One carelessly discarded tray of hot charcoal and a serious woodland fire threatening homes and livelihoods is not a fanciful idea but a real possibility.

Local supermarkets and shops have elected to ban the sale of disposable BBQs and this suggests that the commercial sector is more alive to these very real concerns of their local communities than public bodies such as our own District Council. This cannot be right! The Peak District National Park Authority has adopted a position, agreed with landowners, that BBQs and Open Fires are banned within the National Park unless the landowner has given their express permission. What is now needed is the legal framework to support the landowners and reinforce their ability to get this message across.

A clear, united, coherent, and unequivocal message that unauthorised BBQ's and Open Fires are illegal within Derbyshire Dales makes sense and empowers those of us on the ground trying to manage the behaviour of visitors to the area. I fail to understand why the District Council has not acted to date on this issue and ask the Committee to reconsider its objections to such a beneficial and positive step to protect a beautiful and special part of the National Park. Please act now. Please make all unauthorised BBQs and Open Fires illegal in the Derbyshire Dales and support the wishes of your local communities.

STATEMENT from Alison Sizer and Tim Sizer, Local Residents of Bakewell, regarding the Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation Results and Proposed New Orders:

We would be grateful if you would consider our comments regarding barbecues at the meeting considering new and revised PSPOs in Matlock this evening.

Barbecues and open fires should be made illegal on our moorlands and public open spaces.

1. We should NOT be encouraging single use culture at a time when a commitment to stopping climate change is essential.
2. Single use barbecues are thrown away (sometimes!), resulting in massive use of card and paper labelling and shrink wrap plastic. Cooking grills ultimately ending up in land-fill as they can't be recycled or composted.
3. There are peat moorlands in the Derbyshire Dales and it is irresponsible to allow the use of barbecues in these areas. Wildfires put a strain on emergency services and have a devastating impact on the environment, flora and fauna. We should be endeavouring to protect and preserve the peat moorlands not put them at risk of burning.
4. Single use barbecues contain charcoal which is unsustainably sourced, decimating forests at a time when we should be reducing the use of fossil fuels and nurturing our forests.
5. People inevitably leave single use barbecues behind, as they are too hot to dispose of. This litter is left behind them, scorching the ground and leaving a danger to wildlife and dogs. This has been the case In Bakewell Rutland Recreation Ground and Scott's Garden.

PLEASE DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO GREEN AND CLIMATE ISSUES BY BANNING THE USE OF SINGLE USE BARBECUES.

STATEMENT from Andrew Critchlow, Derbyshire NFU County Adviser, regarding the Public Spaces Protection Orders – Consultation Results and Proposed New Orders:

As a representative of most farmers in the Derbyshire Dales area I'm disappointed the proposed PSPO does not cover all land with access in the Peak National Park area. As is the case with a similar High Peak Borough Council PSPO that was introduced last year. My understanding is this wording has been used with success elsewhere in the country.

From personal experience of managing moorland in the High Peak area and speaking with fellow land managers, it is very useful to be able to say when we come across people with fires or BBQs etc that it is against the law. It takes the pressure off us and stops us looking like whinging farmers. 9 out of 10 we approach accept the point. It also allows signs to be put in vulnerable places, that have a bit of power behind them rather than just requesting.

I'm very surprised that in paragraph 8.2.4 of the officers report it states: *In other areas of Derbyshire Dales where wildfires are not a major issue, PDNPA feel that existing legislation can be used effectively to control unauthorised or dangerous wildfires, rather than the use of a PSPO in these other areas.* I'm not sure why it is believed wildfires are *not a major issue*. With moorland fires it is not the frequency it is the severity and size that is the issue. DDDC area includes Stanage Edge, The Eastern Moors & Chatsworth moorland. People involved in managing those areas are repeatedly asking people to put BBQ's and even open fires out. Most of these incidences don't get reported to the police or Fire Brigade.

Millions of pounds have been spent on restoring the Peak District moorlands and some is within the DDDC area, we mustn't see that undone by avoidable wildfires.

After correspondence with various Councillors and Vikki Hatfield, Neighbourhoods Manager, I have come to the conclusion, the lack of official evidence does seem to be the stumbling block to widening the proposed PSPO to cover all land with access as is the case in the HPBC area. Regrettably I have decided it would be counterproductive to oppose the proposed order and futile at this stage to propose it is widened to include all access land within the PDNPA area and at the same time within the DDDC boundary, without sufficient evidence in a verifiable format.

I would ask the effectiveness of the PSPO is kept under review and the dialogue is kept open between the NFU/ land managers and DDDC whilst further work is done particularly by ourselves to collect what I think is compelling evidence for the PSPO to be broadened and if necessary the PSPO can be reviewed within the three cycle.