

STATEMENT

04.08.20

Long Drove, Glastonbury/Wells

A message from the Leader of Mendip District Council, Cllr Ros Wyke.

I would like to offer some clarification concerning recent travel arrangements at Long Drove, which runs between Glastonbury and Wells.

In June, the Government announced a scheme to fund temporary, emergency walking and cycling routes to relieve the pressure on public transport after lockdown. It was called the 'Active Travel Fund' and was principally designed for urban environments.

Somerset's Councils were allocated £120,000 to share between them, and were each asked to submit proposals for temporary routes.

Long Drove, although on the edge of the criteria for pedestrianisation, was identified as having potential as a temporary route, and the lane was closed to traffic to allow safe cycling.

Pressure from Government to deliver these schemes at speed, meant no consultation with local parish councils took place. People subsequently objected to the new arrangements, and County Highways withdrew the signage.

I would like to take the opportunity to clarify the following;

- The emergency measures featured in the first round of the Government's Active Travel initiative were designed for pop-up pedestrianisation schemes, and were not compatible with Mendip's sustainable travel plans. (Future Active Travel funding streams may be more appropriate however.)

- Although an interesting route which takes cyclists off a busy 'A' Road, Long Drove was never viewed by Mendip as a long-term option because of the necessity for farm traffic and access vehicles to use the lane.
- The Council is committed to developing a network of sustainable, safe, walking and cycle paths across our area.
- We want to work *with* communities and parish councils to help us identify routes that meet the needs of local people for recreation and commuting – ones that people can sign-up to and everyone can enjoy.

I do hope this correspondence explains our position, and offers some reassurance to residents.

With best wishes,

CLlr Ros Wyke