

Lower Wye Valley Tracks & Trails Consultation

What is your connection with the Monmouthshire Wye Valley AONB?

(Tick all that apply)

Live here

Work here

Visit here frequently

Visit here occasionally

Work for an organisation with an interest or involvement in the area

Volunteer with an organisation with an interest or involvement in the area

Do you currently use the tracks and trails within the Monmouthshire Wye Valley AONB?

Yes

No

Not sure

How often do you typically use the tracks and trails within the Monmouthshire Wye Valley AONB?

Daily or almost daily

Several times a week

Several times a month

A few times a year

Once a year or less

What are the main reasons you currently use tracks and trails?

'Commuting' to work, school, college etc. on foot/cycle etc.

For leisure

For work/volunteering (restoration, maintenance etc.)

Other (please specify)

In your view what makes the Monmouthshire Wye Valley's tracks and trails so special?

There are many ancient bridleways and paths descending hillsides which have absolutely unique surface characteristics due to erosion.

And what do you think could be improved around the Monmouthshire Wye Valley's tracks and trails?

Not much - not many issues as far as I've experienced

The Tracks & Trails strategy and action plan will be developed around a number of priorities. These will be developed based on what has already been learnt from existing work and community feedback and, essentially, through this consultation process. How important do you feel each of these priorities are?

You can read more about the [scope and topic areas here](#)

	Very important	Quite important	Neutral	Not very important	Not at all important
Responding to the opportunity to support the improvement of the tracks and trails and reduce the impact of flooding and erosion					X
Creating an environment, through resources, facilities and education that enable all user groups to harmoniously enjoy the Wye Valley AONB's tracks and trails				X	

Encourage responsible behaviours among all users and discourage any undesirable behaviours X

Provide support to landowners in the area to maintain tracks and trails in a way that ensures both good access for users and protects the environment and heritage of the area X

Why do you say that?

My main concern is the “sanitisation” of ancient bridleways and paths by changing their surface characteristics, which would be a travesty and out of keeping with the purposes of the AONB to preserve natural beauty - please leave them alone!

Are there other things that you think should be prioritised?

If there are any particular perceived problems, working on each perceived problem individually in collaboration with the user groups concerned.

There are many different ways in which actions can be targeted to reduce the impact human users have on the AONB's environment. Some of the ways being considered are:

- Improving the surfaces of tracks and trails to support their use and sustainability. This might include repairing existing surfaces, considering new options for resurfacing, managing the flow of water along and across the routes or other improvements so that they can be used more safely by people and to sustain the routes for future use
- Improve the durability of the landscape, for example through new natural flood management schemes, changes to management of the surrounding land to hold back water and control flows, new or reinstated walls and hedges and tree planting, designed to mitigate the impact of use of the tracks and trails
- Managing use, for example by restricting/encouraging use to the times of year/weather conditions when the least damage is done or restricting the types of use. In this scenario it is easy to think simply of restricting access to motorised vehicles, but consideration must also be given to the impact of large events or groups of walkers or runners can have, or cyclists following the same wheel track, or horses cutting into soft ground. There may be opportunities to manage use through voluntary agreements.
- Provide information to help users understand the challenges and encourage the right behaviours. This maybe through more signage on tracks and trails including both way-finding and environment/heritage information, access to online resources, encouraging community involvement and volunteering opportunities etc.

How important do you think each of these are?

	Very important	Quite important	Neutral	Not very important	Not at all important
Improving the surfaces of tracks and trails to support their use and sustainability					X
Improve the durability of the landscape			X		
Managing use			X		
Provide information	X				

Why do you think that?

My main concern is the “sanitisation” of ancient bridleways and paths by changing their surface characteristics, which would be a travesty and out of keeping with the purposes of the AONB to preserve natural beauty - please leave them alone!

Are there other actions that you think could be taken?

If there are any particular perceived problems, working on each perceived problem individually in collaboration with the user groups concerned.

The strategy can be developed to achieve a range of outcomes. By outcomes we mean the benefits that implementing the strategy will have on the community, the landscape, the biodiversity and the heritage. How important do you think it is for each of these to be included in the strategy?

	Very important	Quite important	Neutral	Not very important	Not at all important
Protecting and conserving the native species, wildlife and plants in the area, through careful landscape management, enhancement of natural habitats, etc.			X		

Looking after the overall character of the area, by ensuring the countryside around the tracks and trails is maintained sympathetically

X

Addressing the challenge of increased risk of flooding; something that is affecting many areas of the country with climate and land use change

X

Maintaining the built heritage of the area so that it can be enjoyed by future generations

X

Providing support (funding, training) to local communities so they can improve or maintain their local tracks and trails

X

Encouraging responsible use by visitors, who support the local economy through their spend in the area (accommodation, food and drink, visiting attractions etc.)

X

Why do you think that?

My main concern is the “sanitisation” of ancient bridleways and paths by changing their surface characteristics, which would be a travesty and out of keeping with the purposes of the AONB to preserve natural beauty - please leave them alone!

Are there other outcomes you would like the strategy to be focused on?

Yes - to avoid the “sanitisation” of ancient bridleways and paths by changing their surface characteristics, which would be a travesty and out of keeping with the purposes of the AONB to preserve natural beauty - please leave them alone!

What can you do to help develop and deliver the strategy, whether that is through your personal actions,

those of organisations you work or volunteer for or any groups you are a member of that use the Monmouthshire Wye Valley tracks and trails?

Provide a link into the mountain bike community

What do you think others need to do to help develop and deliver the strategy? Again, this may be individuals' behaviours, local organisations or membership groups that use the area?

Be really clear about what the perceived issues are that are driving the strategy and what the potential solutions are - both are very open to interpretation currently and very unclear

The AONB Management Plan recognises that we all have a collective responsibility, including all who enjoy the Monmouthshire Wye Valley AONB, to conserve and enhance the environment for the future. (The AONB Management Plan can be [seen here](#))

How can all user groups best work together to ensure this?

Not sure - it's not clear currently what the perceived issues are

What compromises might be needed?

Not sure - it's not clear currently what the perceived issues are

Are there additional actions that the Wye Valley AONB Unit and partner organisations need to take to make the area accessible, while conserving and enhancing the environment for the future?

Not sure

How can the Wye Valley AONB Partnership best promote responsible behaviours among those who use the tracks and trails in the Monmouthshire area?

Be clear about what the perceived issues are (which hasn't been done as yet!) and then communicate about the perceived issues to the relevant user groups

How can the Wye Valley AONB Partnership best discourage unwanted behaviours among those who use the tracks and trails in the Monmouthshire area?

Be clear about what the perceived issues are (which hasn't been done as yet!) and then communicate about the perceived issues to the relevant user groups

It would be very helpful if you would answer the following questions in order to check we have the views of a broad range of people. These questions are optional and your views will still be considered equally if you choose not to answer some or all of them.

Which if any of the following activities do you take part in in the countryside either in Monmouthshire Wye Valley AONB and/or elsewhere in UK?

(Please tick all that apply).

	Monmouthshire Wye Valley AONB	Elsewhere in the UK
Walking for leisure & wellbeing		X
Walking dog(s)		X
Horse riding		
Horse driving (carriage)		
Cycling (road)		
Cycling (off-road)	X	X
Motorbike – trail riding		

Vehicle off-roading

Orienteering

Fishing

Bird-watching

Wildlife watching

Heritage conservation

Landscape conservation

X

Wildlife conservation

Green laning

Other (write in)

Are you?

Male

Female

Non-binary

Other

Prefer not to say

What age are you?

Under 25 yrs

25 - 34 yrs

35 - 44 yrs

45 - 54 yrs

55 - 64 yrs

65 - 74 yrs

75 yrs and over

Prefer not to say

Do you have any of the following disabilities or conditions?

(Tick all that apply)

No, I don't have any of these disabilities or conditions

Hearing

Visual
Physical
Learning (e.g autism, ADHD, dyslexia)
A mental health condition
A long term health condition (e.g diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, fatigue etc.)
Prefer not to say
Other (please specify)

Which one of the following best describes your ethnic group or background?

Asian or British Asian
Black or Black British
Mixed ethnic background
White British
White - Gypsy / Romany / Traveller
White - any other background
Prefer not to say
Other (please specify)

Your response will be anonymous unless you choose to provide your contact details. This will be used for the purposes of the Lower Wye Tracks & Trails consultation only. We will not store or use this data for any other purpose without seeking further consent. Please refer to our privacy policy for more information. You can withdraw this consent at any time.

Name:

Email:

Phone number:

Address (including postcode):