

Robin Grant
Via email

29th June 2022

Forestry England
620 Bristol Business Park
Coldharbour Lane
BRISTOL
BS16 1EJ

informationrights@forestryengland.uk

Information Request: Cannock Chase Wild Trails Closures - our ref: 057_22

Dear Robin Grant,

Thank you for your recent enquiry we received on 30th May 2022 in which you asked for the following information:

Dear Forestry England, Could you please provide all of the documentation you have relating to wild mountain bike trails in Cannock Chase Forest and the recent closure of a number of them, including the following, as per V4 of Forestry England's Unauthorised Trails and Desire Lines Practice Guide:

- a copy of the risk-based analysis conducted before deciding to close the trails*
- a copy of the notice you previously posted on the trails providing details of how riders could get in touch with you giving them a reasonable time to respond*
- a copy of the inspection file/site inspection*
- any records or evidence of hazards*
- a copy of the rationale for the decision to close the trails*
- any reports of accidents or near-misses relating to the trails*
- any complaints that have been received from the public, neighbours, or others*

We have considered your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) as the information you are seeking is considered "environmental information" as defined in Regulation 2 of the EIR. You can read more about the EIR [here](#).

Please find our response to your request below:

The only trails that have been 'closed' currently are ones which have been found within an operational harvesting site. Because they are within a live harvesting



site, sections of woodland are temporarily closed off for health and safety reasons whilst we conduct our forestry operations. Wild trails are “managed” when we see that they are being used as a trail, so the term “closed” is used advisedly. In compliance with [Regulation 12\(4\)\(a\)](#) there is no risk-based analysis document to disclose because it is not held.

Our harvesting operations are ongoing throughout the year and ordinarily we do not consult with members of the public before starting a live site as they form part of our ongoing annual work programme. Our Cannock Chase Forest Plan which details this work is publicly available on the FE website [here](#).

There is no inspection file for the wild trails we have found as part of our site walkovers as they are not official FE built trails and their existence to us was unknown prior to working in this area. This guidance is detailed in our desire lines guidance which has been disclosed to you in previous requests on this issue.

If Members of the public entered our live harvesting site, there would be at risk to themselves as well as putting our operators/staff at risk. These area closures form part of our management of health and safety on a live harvesting site. There are no records of any incidents relating to persons on site, therefore Regulation 12(4)(a) applies to disclosure.

The rationale behind our actions is answered above.

Again, the trails that have been closed off were only found as part of our site walkover prior to commencing work. There were no incidents reported, therefore Regulation 12(4)(a) applies to disclosure.

There have been no complaints in relation to either the forestry operations or the area closure. Regulation 12(4)(a) applies to disclosure.

We have tried to deal with your request as fully as possible. If you have any questions, then we would be happy to try and answer these for you. However, should you wish to request an internal review of our response please contact:

Forestry Commission
Chief Executive Officer
620 Bristol Business Park
Coldharbour Lane
Bristol
BS16 1EJ

Email: commissioners@forestrycommission.gov.uk



We aim to resolve any concerns with you directly in the first instance. However, should the matter fail to be resolved to your satisfaction, you may make an additional appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Further information on the role of the ICO and guidance on FOI/EIR can be found on the ICO's website: www.ico.org.uk or by calling the ICO helpline: 0303 123 1113

Yours sincerely,

Knowledge & Information Management (KIM) Team
Forestry England

