

# WI 'bridling' at footpath dispute

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A dispute between a branch of the Women's Institute and a group of equestrian enthusiasts in Leyland will continue for at least another two months.

The row over the plans to allow the use of a footpath in Moss Side as a bridleway has been running since last October.

However, residents' interest in the matter has forced councillors to extend the deadline for public consultation and a decision is now unlikely before the middle of July.

Enid Lister, a member of Moss Side WI, who are opposed to opening up the footpath through Nixon Woods to horses and cyclists, said there was a lot of support for their plight at Thursday's West Leyland area committee.

She said: "All the responses have gone in from the consultation, but there were a lot of residents at the meeting and the chairman extended the time limit for letters to be sent in.

"Now that residents have got involved, there were a lot of vocal comments, it wasn't rowdy, but they all had their say and generally it was against using the path as a bridleway."

The WI has stood back a little – we've got it moving and done leaflet drops and now it is up to the residents as it affects them most.

If you walk through Nixon woods at the moment it is beautiful and tranquil. It would be a shame to disturb that peace and we don't want to spoil a natural and quiet place to walk.

The WI who said they did a lot of work on the Millennium project footpath, are at loggerheads with the Ulnes Walton Bridleways Association, who say the safety of their 150 members and horses is paramount. Chairman Dr Sue Taylor-Green has said that the route would finally give them a safe off road passage throughout Moss Side and end a history of accidents on the surrounding fast country roads.

She said the WI have made several leaflet drops and the information does not present a true picture of what is planned – the whole thing has been blown out of proportion.

Chairman of the West Leyland area committee, Councillor Alan Ogilvie confirmed that the original end of April deadline had been pushed back due to requests from the public.

He said: "We're now hoping that the report will come before the next committee which is provisionally July 10."

This will allow us to make a final decision. One of the issues is the funding for any changes, which the Bridleway association have said they will pay for. If they were to be approved, the council officers are still formulating the plans.

The meeting was well attended, about 30 or 40 members of the public specifically for that issue. It is an important one, and there is a passion from both sides.