

Orchards in Pump Lane Rainham closed to the public as police try to track down off-road bikers

 KENT TRAVEL NEWS

SIGN ME UP FOR NEWS ALERTS 

By Rachel Dixon rdixon@thekmgroun.co.uk

[Read all comments](#) | 5

Published: 06:00, 16 August 2019 | **Updated:** 09:42, 17 August 2019



A popular dog walking route is now shut to the public as off-road bikers have been racing through an orchard.

The farmland in question is off Pump Lane, in **Rainham**, and is owned by fruit farmers AC Goatham & Son.

It has been **earmarked for development of 1,250 homes**, which **many people who live in Rainham and Twydall have rallied against**.



No access sign put up in to the Orchard off Pump Lane, Rainham (15181355)

They believed the privately-owned field had been cordoned off because the proposals were moving forward.

However, the cordon is to stop motorcyclists going off road and tearing up the field.

AC Goatham & Son sent a letter to Rainham North ward councillors Martin Potter and Kirstine Carr, and Mark Prenter and Hazel Browne for Twydall.

The farm was contacted on May 31, initially by phone and then by email, by a community safety officer at Medway Council.



Gaps in the hedgerows have been blocked up round the orchard off Pump Lane, Rainham (15181357)

She said: "Together with Kent Police, I have been trying to deal with numerous reports of anti-social behaviour, caused by a number of off-road bikers, who are accessing your land and racing around the orchards.

"This is occurring on a regular basis, mostly at weekends, and residents in the neighbourhood are extremely distressed."

AC Goatham & Son responded immediately and three directors met with local PCSOs at Pump Farm on Monday, June 10.

The farm agreed to put up gates and signs at the orchard entrances and within the orchards to block gaps which have been made in internal hedging.

It is hoped this will help the police stop the riders.

A bridleway is still free for the public to walk on and is maintained by Medway Council.



Cllr Martin Potter and Kirstine Carr are hosting a meeting this weekend (9773154)

This weekend, ward councillors Kirstine Carr and Martin Potter will be running a public consultation about the Pump Lane housing development proposals.

The session will outline the plans, give residents a chance to ask questions and explain how to respond to the planning application.

It takes place on Saturday, 17th August, from 10am to midday, at Riverside Country Park Visitor Centre, off Lower Rainham Road.

It is believed the proposals will go to Medway Council Planning Committee in October for consideration.

James Brown, head of regulatory services at Medway Council, said: "We are working closely with Kent Police to help reduce anti-social behaviour in the area of Pump Lane, Rainham, following reports of people riding off-road motorbikes and causing a nuisance and danger for the local community.

"We have also spoken with the landowners of the orchards in this area after reports that the riders had trespassed onto the private land. We offered advice to the landowners and understand they have taken a number of measures to help prevent this type of anti-social behaviour.

"We will continue to provide support to the landowners, as well as work closely with the police, if the minority of people continue to carry out this unacceptable type of behaviour."

<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/medway/news/popular-walking-route-shut-due-to-off-road-bikers-210541/>