

Mrs Sarah Haydon
Chief Officer
Biddulph Town Council
Town Hall
Biddulph
Staffordshire
ST8 6AG

19th November 2017

Dear Sarah,

At the committee meeting of BDGHS last week we discussed the Staffordshire County Councils intent to make permanent the temporary diversion of footpath number 29. We unanimously object to permanent closure on the grounds that this would prevent access and hinder conservation/ restoration of two historically important structures, namely the tunnel and adjacent decorative arch.

Recent research by our group, not available a decade ago when the temporary diversion was put in place, has established beyond doubt the historical efficacy of both structures as an important part of James Bateman's legacy.

Whilst the site is outside the increasingly popular National Trust Grange Gardens the interest in Batemans work is now global. Other similar structures on private property and in Biddulph Clough have been conserved and are frequently visited by historians and tourists.

We suggest that the tunnel and arch are listed as a matter of urgency. We are looking into this and will work with Biddulph Town Council and other agencies to achieve this.

It is therefore imperative that permanent diversion does not go ahead and that an informed reassessment is instigated as a priority. We look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

Kind regards,

Roland Machin MBE.

Chair Biddulph and District Genealogical and Historical Society