

Shropshire Local Access Forum	<u>Item</u>	<u>Paper</u>
4 February 2010	<b>12</b>	<b>E</b>
10.00 am		

## **SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING GROUPS (SRCDG)**

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2009, at 7.30pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

### **1. Attendance:**

Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere, Chair. John Gibson, British Driving Society, Vice Chair. Linda Russell, South West Shrewsbury BWG, Joint Secretary. Zia Robins, Shrewsbury & District RC A&BWO, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA, Joint Secretary. Gill Eyre, BHS South Shropshire East, South Shropshire. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Sue Evans, Beckbury, Ryton & Badger BWG. Jan Baldwin & Gaynor Evans, Broseley BWA. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA. Andrew Kelly, Vyrnwy & Dist BWA. Lucy McFarlane S.C.

### **Apologies:**

Jan Mees Robinson, Telford Bridleways. Tina Baran & Catriona Shaw, Oswestry Riding Club. Rosemary Pattenden, Worthen & Dist. BWG. Mark Weston BHS.

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2009 were taken as read and adopted.

### **3. SC Representative**

It was regretted that Karen has now left. Interviewing for her replacement is to take place next week. The Group acknowledged their appreciation of Karen's work, and how sorry they are to lose her.

### **4. Matters Arising**

#### **(a) Discovering Lost Ways**

Zia reported that she had spoken to Mark Weston who was on the Stakeholders Working Group. A lot of issues are being looked at. There is a long delay in getting the minutes out, the last ones were ten pages long. They are on the [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk) website. The closing date for sending information and examples to [swg@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:swg@naturalengland.org.uk) is extended. We need to review the way forward and look at which routes and links need to be prioritised.

#### **(b) Defra Stewardship**

Zia reported that Lynn Stabler covers the north of Shropshire and down the east side to Shifnal and Gill Mehan covers the rest of south Shropshire, and showed a map of the two areas. Gaynor asked how to register a route/ best way. Natural England set the criteria. Landowners apply. Sue E. confirmed there were a number of permissive routes in her area. New routes have been added at Acton Scott, Burlington Farm, Shifnal, Wheathall Farm, Dorrington, and The Bog near Pennerley. The route details are still all headed 'Country Walks' on the website, Zia

has raised this at LAF. The next LAF agenda will include an update from Natural England on permissive access.

**(c) Ride UK and Horses Welcome**

It is understood that this scheme is still ongoing, but there are still only the five in Shropshire, and still only three, Tugford, Thresholds and Dinney are on the link from the [www.shropshireriding.co.uk](http://www.shropshireriding.co.uk) website, with Church Bank and Earnstree Hill House still omitted. The Marches horse trails website gives information on them. There is still no link from the Shropshire riding website to the BHS Horses Welcome website. Karen was going to check this. Mark Weston has assured Zia that the Ride UK website is to be updated, hopefully, by July.

**(d) List of Streets and UCRs**

The minutes of the UCR Working Group Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> March were noted. At the last LAF meeting it was agreed that a letter be sent to Highways voicing concerns, including the non-attendance at meetings of Highway representatives. The Countryside Access Team has done some excellent surveys on UCR's, with map, photos and reports. There are still more routes to be done. Highways have agreed that 1929 routes onwards are public roads, but there are still errors in mapping. There is concern that the old maps might disappear. These are the definitive maps of the highways, but errors have occurred when copying to new maps and also when routes are being digitised. The paper maps need to be preserved. There is also concern over recording and maintaining the width of highways. Verges are part of the highway and encroachment has taken place. Maintaining the verge width is important to horse riders. UCR's are an important part of our network and need funding, it is also important that UCR's are marked. A black arrow denotes a public road in other counties. No date has been set for the next UCR Working Group meeting. It is assumed that Karen's replacement will chair it. John Gibson reported that Highways were not attending the Working Group meetings, that Unitary has put things in limbo, and that Budgets have been cut. He has now stood down from LAF. The next LAF meeting is on 17<sup>th</sup> June. Andrew reported that he is having discussions with DEFRA and is chairing meetings. The list of streets and related issues are being looked at. Andrew is also attending a meeting in September dealing with width of highways. If members had queries as to status of routes they should check with Shropshire Council Highways, and do research. John reported that there were "cart roads" that were marked as white and were unclassified. The Stakeholders Working Group is looking at issues. Unclassified roads were marked in yellow on the 1929 Handover maps when highway responsibility was passed from Districts to County.

**(e) Blue Remembered Hills**

The route leaflets are now available. Zia reported that she has ridden the first two sections and there are a number of problems on them. Route one, which has some steep hill work and lots of gates, starts at a road junction and does not mention there is a car park by the river in Clun, a short distance away. Route 2 finishes at a T-junction on a busy road. Lucy reported that the route had been developed by the AONB. It was not to the same standard as the Ride Shropshire circular routes and the Jack Mytton Way. There is still one part of the route to be resolved where there is a small section of footpath between a bridleway and a road, so the official launch has still not taken place.

**(f) Cycling**

The copy of Georgina Sharp's letter, read out at our last meeting, is noted. Zia reported that Richard Knight's team are to look at the signing and way marking in Eastridge Wood.

**(g) Helicopters**

Sue reported how she had got the landing site 29 at Beckbury closed, only to discover at the meeting at RAF Shawbury on 21<sup>st</sup> May, that the RAF had another landing site next door to it.

They have agreed to look at this. Maps of the landing sites were shown at the meeting, and concern was raised as a number were noted to be close to, or have bridleways on them. They have agreed to send us the full list of landing sites.

**(h) Telford & Wrekin**

Zia has the minutes from the 25<sup>th</sup> of March Telford & Wrekin LAF meeting. Marilyn Petroni, Telford Bridleway Group, is Vice Chair. Sheila Hutchinson also represents horse riders on the Forum Their next LAF meeting is on 17<sup>th</sup> June at the Civic Offices when their ROWIP and Quiet Lanes are on the Agenda. Gaynor Evans and Jan Baldwin said they hoped to attend. The ROWIP draft is on the [www.telford.gov.uk](http://www.telford.gov.uk) website.

**(i) Stiperstones & Tugford diversion consultations**

Tugford diversion – It was agreed that this was a satisfactory route.

Stiperstones – There was concern over the proposed closure to horse riders of the bridleway to the top. Stopping the very few horse riders who use the route, would not resolve the wear problem, which is caused by it being a popular walking route. Angela and Zia had walked the route proposed by Natural England, which made an excellent addition to the network. Some sections were quite narrow. Lucy confirmed that to be accepted as a bridleway the route would need to be 3 metres wide. Zia had raised the possibility of a link via the Shropshire Way gated section to the road. It was raised as to why both routes could not be available for horse riders.

**(j) Any other matters arising not on the Agenda**

There were no other matters arising.

**5. Public Inquiries and Definitive Map Issues**

The list of Shropshire Council Formal Applications, as at February 2009, attached to the Agenda, are noted. The Review Policy document is still waiting to go to Cabinet. Lucy reported that it is intended to review in batches of parishes instead of individually, starting in North Shropshire. Wildlife and Countryside Act issues will not go to Committee, except for the outstanding FP claim in Culmington, unless the Countryside Access Manager decides they should. This will only be if they are particularly complex and it will likely to be very few. Reports would be prepared and landowners and others would be consulted. They would go to Deb Hughes for delegated decision on publishing Orders.

Shrewsbury Review – The next batch of orders would be published soon. The bridleway claims, including Greenfields, would be in the last batch.

Weston Rhyn FP50 upgrade to BW Craignant.- has gone to the Inspectorate. Awaiting Inquiry date.

Worfield – BW 33A – Bridleway claim is awaiting result of Angela's appeal.

Petton BW1 - The landowner's application to downgrade to footpath was refused by Committee. The landowner is appealing. A gate on the bridleway has been padlocked denying access. The outlet to the road at the east end has to be resolved.

Melverley RB – The lane by Vyrnwy Bank is confirmed as a Restricted Byway

Hopesey RB – The Route was confirmed. The lady objector appealed to the High Court but did not serve notice correctly so it was struck out. This is a good example of an Enclosure Award route.

Ruyton XI Towns FP diversion and BW creation Order - published. This is the west end of the Drumbles route claim put in many years ago. The centre section has already been confirmed as a bridleway. The published order for the other end is still waiting to be resolved.

Pennerley BOAT Application – The track by the Chapel is still being investigated.

## **6. Feedback from LAF and other Forums**

The minutes attached marked E, F & G are noted.

Zia gave a verbal report of the Local Access Forum meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> April. Neil Wilcox gave a report. Rights of Way now come under Leisure and Culture. He reported that 83% of rights of way are easily usable. A safer route is being negotiated for a road section of the Jack Mytton Way/Shropshire Way at Plowden. The next LAF meeting is at Craven Arms on the 17<sup>th</sup> July.

Angela raised the issue that there was a push for cycling use on railways and canal tow paths, and that horse riders need to be included. Zia has raised this at LAF. The National Audit Office has done a report on improving safety for vulnerable road users, considering safety for walkers and cyclists, but they have not included equestrians. Mark Weston has highlighted this omission.

## **7. Shropshire Council**

### **(a) www.shropshireriding.co.uk**

The site is not being updated. Zia asked for ideas/input for the site. The Cycling and walking sites get more support and updates.

### **(b) Maintenance of Rights of Way**

Gill Eyre reported that a group of riders had ridden the whole of the Jack Mytton Way and asked whom to report problems to. Richard Knight was organising the surveying and work to be done on the route and reports should go to him.

### **(c) Planning and Rights of Way Committees**

Zia reported concerns over consultation on planning when it affects a Right of Way. The e-mail she read out at the last meeting, in response to consultation on Shropshire's Core Strategy, was circulated. There are guidelines that should be followed on planning. Shrewsbury & Atcham District had been good at consulting.

### **(d) Staff**

Pippa is now on maternity leave, and has no temporary replacement. Lucy has job shared since November but there is currently no one to share with. Phil Betts is now Parish Paths Partnership Officer, so there are currently only two enforcement officers to cover all Shropshire, Kevin Jones and Terry Hughes.

## **8. Higher access rights on COMMONS Section 15 CROW**

Every Common will have to be looked at individually to check what higher rights exist. Tim Ward looks after the Register for Shropshire Council. Issues such as requests for gates, fencing etc, now go to the Planning Inspectorate for determination. We need to look at Commons in our areas and consider which are important to horse riders and what access currently takes place. Higher access was looked at by Natural England, but this was not comprehensive.

## **9. Any Other Business**

There was no other business

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

This will be held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at 7pm in the Wenlock Room at the Shirehall.