

MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE CYCLE FORUM

Wednesday 10th March 2010, Shirehall, Shrewsbury

1. Present

Miles Kenny (chair)	John Petty	Nick Holden
Alison Kennedy	Keith Mason	Paul Wagner
Angela Shenton	Ken Tyrell	Peter Lloyd
Bernard Goodman	Kenneth Bird	Peter Mathison
Brett Kibble	Mac Hoskin	Philip Saltmarsh
Chris Pennington	Market Drayton	Reg Potter
Dan Sims	cyclists x2	Richard Harman
Gary Rogers	Martin Beardwell	Terry Egglestone
Geoff Shinner, Sustrans	Mary Diggory Mike Clarke	

2. Apologies

Adrian Penney	Jim Leach	Peter Crofts
Andy Seabourne	John Short	Peter Holgate
Beth Holgate	John Smyth	Peter Walden
Chris Dartnell	Kay Dartnell	Phil Pool
Dave Rolfe	Liz Colebrook	Ruth Stafford
Emma Bullard	Peta Sams	

3. Previous minutes and matters arising

Correction to December minutes – add that marking of cycle symbols on Abbey Foregate was requested at the December meeting.

Earlier feedback on matters arising (within 6 weeks of a Forum) was also requested (**Action: all**)

- Shrewsbury – cobbles under railway bridge – various options are being discussed with SC conservation officer. Some degreasing has already taken place. It was suggested that Network Rail could also help **Action: Alison to follow up with Network Rail**
- Shrewsbury – Dorset Pools Route 81 – a review of planning permissions has shown that there are no restrictions on the vehicle access. **Action: Alison to continue to follow-up.** Colleagues in Countryside have indicated that as long as the vehicles are using the access with the landowner's permission, then there is little that can be done, unless they are driving inappropriately in which case the Police should be involved.
- Shrewsbury – Richard contacted Shropshire Parking Service - motorbikes now using Claremont Street rather than cycle parking on Shoplatch
- Shrewsbury – diversion signs when riverside path is flooded (between weir and Greyfriars) **Action: Mike to produce proposals**
- Promotion of Shropshire Cycle Forum – fliers were distributed to advertise the Forum meetings during 2010 – for more copies please contact Alison. Mary suggested that more publicity is provided in local libraries. **Action: Alison to look at promotions, possibly linked with Bike Week in June**

4. Terms of reference

The draft terms of reference had previously been circulated. The following changes were suggested (**action – Alison to change – see below**):

Para 1 – purpose – elaborate on this. Suggested change is ‘The purpose of the Shropshire Cycle Forum is to promote the use of the bicycle in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. The Forum will act as a consultative body concerning plans of the two councils on relevant issues including traffic matters that impact upon cyclists and future development of cycling facilities.

Para 7 – that the chair should represent the current administration in either Shropshire or Telford and Wrekin Council

Para 8 - change to ‘administration of the Forum is the **joint** responsibility of ~~either~~ Shropshire Council ~~or~~ **and** Telford and Wrekin Council’

5. Maintenance

Gary Rogers (Senior Highways Manager) and Dan Sims (Engineering Assistant) outlined the responsibilities for maintenance at Shropshire Council. Although they are both based in Central Division at Longden Road, Shrewsbury, there is also a Northern Division and Southern Division. Since Shropshire Council became a unitary authority, it has amalgamated street cleaning and other borough council functions into the ‘Environmental Maintenance’ department. At the Central Division, there are 6 technicians, 2 engineering assistants and 2 Highways Managers (Urban and Rural). The Highways Maintenance team works closely with Traffic and Transport Planning (cycling) teams.

Inspections – the technicians undertake regular inspections, the frequency depending on the category of road e.g. principal roads are inspected monthly (8 times a year in a vehicle, 4 times a year on foot). Off-road cycle tracks are inspected twice a year. Any work identified from inspections is prioritised as ‘emergency’ (to be undertaken within 24hours), ‘category 1’ (5 days), ‘category 2’ (20 working days) or ‘future works’. Works are undertaken by the council’s term contractors, Enterprise.

Maintenance budgets – there is nothing specific for cycle route maintenance but there is an overall budget of ~£1.3m per annum for the Shrewsbury urban area (to include everything from gulley cleaning to road marking and surfacing). ~£300,000 is spent on footways/ cycle tracks.

The Highways Maintenance section publishes leaflets including ‘Farming and the Public Highway’ (**also available online at <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/hwmaint.nsf/open/F9DA378C568B9F5680256F7002F6FAA>**). Reporting defects – the main contact number is the Shropshire Council Customer Services Centre 0345 678 9000.

Questions

- What plans are there for the worst of the rural roads following the bad winter weather? A new ‘roadmaster’ machine is now in operation, which mixes bitumen and chippings to spray onto potholes for longer lasting repairs. Permanent patching repairs are also carried out. Technicians

have also increased the number of inspections and Enterprise is working hard to catch up with the backlog.

- Are there plans to sweep up gravel? Winter salt shortages meant that a mix of grit (25%) and salt was used. Most roads and cycle tracks will be swept every 6-8 weeks, although some routes (Shrewsbury town centre) are swept daily. Sweepings go to a waste transfer station in Telford.
- Are there any maintenance priorities for the National Cycle Network? Defects should be reported through the Customer Service Centre, although Alison can be contacted regarding signing issues in Shropshire
- What about hedge cuttings left on the road? When these are reported, staff will follow this up with landowners. No recent prosecutions.
- If there are problems near a highways maintenance office, can people drop in to report these? Yes.
- What about Telford and Wrekin? [Highways Maintenance can be contacted on 01952 384000 \(or out of hours on 0845 1 55 99 55\)](#)

Specific issues in Shrewsbury:

- Are there plans to improve the surface on London Road? Yes, in association with a scheme to provide a new cycle track between Shirehall and Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology
- Glass on Shelton Road – who should be contacted? Customer Services
- NCN Route 81 near Dorset Pools is very wet – who deals with this? Highways Maintenance is only responsible for surfaced routes so Countryside team usually deal with other sections. However, hardcore can be provide if necessary. [Since the Forum, Dan has checked this and there did not appear to be a problem, but will look again when the weather is wet](#)
- Monkmoor Road/ Abbey Foregate – cycle symbols are very faded. What about more red surfacing? Too much red surfacing will raise the costs for future maintenance. Abbey Foregate – a trench across the road causes problems for cyclists. [Since the Forum, Dan has identified the trench and will arrange for it to be topped up. Lining has also been looked at. Grit in the area by the bus bay should have been swept too](#)
- Water on road between Exfords Green and Stapleton. [The technician is looking into this and a gang is currently covering rural area so as soon as the matter is identified it can be added to the list or works](#)
- Water on road between Uffington and Upton Magna (at Downton) – this was reported last week and a technician will inspect. [The area technician has now dug out the gullies, this appears to have worked and the road seems dry](#)

List of contacts regarding maintenance issues:

Shropshire Council

0345 678 9000

customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk

<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/hwmaint.nsf/open/4702BC1BE0AC1F27802574EC003E4177>

Telford and Wrekin Council

01952 384000 (out of hours 0845 155 9955)

contact@telford.gov.uk

<http://www.telford.gov.uk/Transport+streets+and+parking/Roads+highways+and+pavements/>

Highways Agency

08457 50 40 30 (or Amey 0845 365 6455)

ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk

<http://www.highways.gov.uk/>

6. Managing mountain biking in sensitive areas

Alison had been contacted by Lynne Dean, Countryside Ranger at Nesscliffe Country Park. Lynne asked the Cycle Forum to advise on issues regarding mountain bikers not using bridleways and going down banks onto a badger sett. This occurs at Nesscliffe and other sites such as Snailbeach which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The following suggestions were made:

- make contact/ meet up with local organised mountain biking groups (e.g. Wild Wednesday Wheelers) and highlight the main
- provide signs with reasons why cyclists are not permitted there (i.e. rather than just no cycling, add details why, such as ground nesting birds)
- designate areas where they can cycle, rather than areas where they can't
- provide natural diversions or obstacles such as logs and brambles, to block entry points to sensitive areas. This has been used in the Reabrook, Shrewsbury, to protect otters

7. Telford and Wrekin updates

- Rough Park Way – recently resurfaced (hardcore) and is a useful link between NCN R45 and NCN R55

8. Shropshire updates

- Cycle parking programme still progressing and new suggestions welcomed
- Ludlow advanced stop lines (Station Drive, Corve Street near Tesco) are due to be installed this month

9. Cycle Shrewsbury updates

Welsh Bridge – following the gas explosion early in January and extensive damage to the signals, the Connect2 work was brought forward and started on site mid February. Works are currently one week ahead of schedule so hope to be substantially complete (and fully open to traffic) before Easter
Action: Alison to send copy of scheme proposals to Chris. Sent with minutes.

Some changes have been made to the design following consultation in November and December including proposals for a new pedestrian refuge on Smithfield Rd near Roushill. It was noted that refuges should be designed to minimise squeezing of on-road cyclists.

Keith requested that the Frankwell pedestrian crossings be retained. These will be reviewed once both junctions are running. Martin asked for dropped kerbs so that cyclists could use the refuge to turn right into Frankwell Quay. Mary asked for cycle parking outside Dave Mellor's on Frankwell (planned).

Crossing improvements –

- Roman Road/ Longden Road island improvements have been completed with the exception of coloured surfacing
- Monkmoor Road/ Tankerville Street upgrade to Toucan crossing is underway at present time
- Old Potts Way Toucan crossing works start April
- Radbrook Road Toucan crossing plans are now available
- Mytton Oak Road Toucan crossing plans also available
- Heathgates island improvements also in the pipeline

Feedback from station day – over 160 people were surveyed at Shrewsbury Railway Station on 2nd March to find out their views on cycle parking, cycle routes and the potential for cycle hire, sales and repairs at the station. [A full report on the results of this survey will be provided at the next Connect2/ Cycle Shrewsbury project group meeting and will then be available online.](#)

Feedback from Women on Wheels rides – first Sunday ride was very successful and weather was great. It was noted from the photo how little high viz/ bright yellow there was and the 'normal' clothes worn by the women. More rides are planned – see website or Alison for details

RSH cycle day planned for 16th March to promote the new cycle parking. Ken noted that the ward block cycle stands were full when he visited.

10. 2010 cycling events

18th March – Ludlow Cycling Support Group and Sustrans (7pm at Ludlow Conference Centre, Lower Galdeford)

27th March – Ludlow – Islabikes family cycle day at Ludlow Food Centre

28th March – Severn Hospice Daffodil Ride (NCN Route 45 north section works are being progressed and Richard hopes to have the full route open for the summer)

June – bike month in Telford and Wrekin - see website for details

12th June – Shrewsbury BikeFest – volunteers/ stallholders welcomed

16th June – Tour de Ludlow

19th to 27th June – national Bike Week

5th September – Ironbridge - Big Bike Ride, 50km and 100km routes

11. Any other business

ReaVen – a feasibility study into the disused railway line from Hanwood to Minsterley has been completed. Nick Holden highlighted the main points:

- Demand in Phase 1 could be approx 15,000 cyclists and 17,000 walkers. This could rise further if Phase 1 and 2 were combined
- Economic impact could be generation of £185,000 (Phase 1 only)
- Social impacts – it could benefit 8,000 residents of Rea Valley and up to 100,000 residents in Shrewsbury wider area
- Consultation involved 1,829 surveys (19% response) 88% of respondents were fully supportive and 61% saw main barriers to cycling as busy roads and lack of traffic-free routes

Brett – asked about costs of Rea VEN – not done yet but next stage will be to identify engineering issues

For more information, see http://www.reaven.org.uk/leisure_path.html

John P showed off his low cost cycling gear (goggles and heated gloves)

Mike noted that part of NCN R31 is closed for bridge maintenance from 15th to 19th March), but there will be access for walkers and cyclists

Keith asked for a new link path at bottom of Bage Way/ Abbey Foregate ramp

Peter asked about progress on Crowmeole Lane – current proposals are for some minor changes to junction priorities

Terry noted that a local councillor is now asking for lighting in the Quarry and he also supports this

12. Next meetings

16th June – Carding Mill Valley – anyone interested in cycling to the meeting from Shrewsbury or leading a ride from other towns, please contact Alison.

7th September – Shirehall

7th December - Shirehall