

Shropshire Local Access Forum	<u>Item</u>	<u>Paper</u>
13 May 2011	<b>15</b>	<b>D</b>
10.00 a.m.		

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

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2010, 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. Elaine Newton & Jan Baldwin, Broseley BWA. Elaine Thomas & Jan Mees-Robinson, Telford Bridleways. Dorothy Billings, Carriage Driving, Bridgnorth. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Sue Evans, Beckbury, Ryton & Badger BWG. Rosemary Pattenden, Worthen & Dist. BWG. Caroline Le Butt, Much Wenlock. Kevin Jones, Shropshire Council Enforcement Officer.

### **Apologies:**

Judy Dickenson, Church Preen & District. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA. Anne Roberts, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Gaynor Evans, Broseley BWA. Mark Weston, BHS. Helen Foster, Long Mynd & Dist. BWA, who notified us that Carol Williams is now their Chairman.

Zia reported that she had received an email from Jim Stabler, Countryside Access Development Officer who has previously represented SC at our meetings, stating "Please note that I have now taken over responsibility for the Walkers Forum and the interface to your group has passed to Kevin Jones and Shona Lewis". There was concern over Shropshire Council's support of our Groups, and whilst members were delighted that Kevin was able to attend the meeting, members felt it important that the Countryside Access Development Officer should be involved in our meetings. There was also concern as Kevin's workload is already high due to staff having left.

Members pointed out that the recent questionnaire to Right of Way Users, intended to show need and usage, was very biased towards walking. It had only been sent to walking groups. Only the three members of our Groups who represent Parish Paths Groups had received one copy each.

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2010 were adopted.

**Items 3(d) 3 (g) 5 and 7 taken first. Kevin then left at 8.07pm.**

### **3. Matters Arising**

#### **(d) Countryside Access Team Staff updates**

It is noted that Shona has now returned from maternity leave. This is excellent news. It is also noted that Pippa will be on maternity leave from the end of October. Kevin reported that he is the only Enforcement Officer able to do site visits. Other staff members have left, and, due to cuts, are not currently being replaced. Terry Hughes is currently desk bound and is due to retire next April. This will limit the number of enforcement issues the County will be able to deal with. We understand that the Council are looking for 25% funding cuts.

### **(g) List of Streets and UCRs**

The Minutes of the Byways Liaison Group Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> March, marked C, are noted. Kevin reported that work is starting on UCRs with the next stage, signing and opening them up. Zia asked if the colour and type of signing has been resolved. She thought that Black had been agreed at LAF, and was concerned at the mention of Red in the Byways Minutes as this could be confusing as Red is the national colour for BOATs. Kevin agreed. Black has been used in Shropshire to denote a 'County Road' there is a black waymark on Cwms Lane UCR, Church Stretton. It is believed that black is also used in other Counties. Highways gave a commitment to LAF that all 1929 handover map routes onward are roads. Unless legally closed, these should all be shown on current highway maps. If members know of any extra evidence, such as Highway reports or Quarter Sessions records to show that these routes are County Roads, they should send details to Shona Lewis. Old Moors Lane 1929 H. Map UCR is still in discussion with Highways.

## **5. Countryside Access Implementation Team**

To note that work is due to start soon on maintenance and repairs on the 10 South Shropshire Hills Ride Shropshire routes. Any problems on routes should be reported as soon as possible to the Access Maintenance Officer Pete Atkinson. E.mail – [Ped.Atkinson@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Ped.Atkinson@shropshire.gov.uk) . Kevin stated that this would be done as a winter task. The Shropshire Council Outdoor Recreation Service Annual Report 2009-2010 – Making a Difference – was presented at the last LAF meeting. Members asked if it was available on the Internet, Kevin to enquire. The Team are attempting to keep clear the routes that have previously been big clearance jobs. They have done a fantastic amount of work with their limited resources and staff numbers. Parish Partnership Groups are going to be even more important in future and, with the prospect of cuts, we will all need to do our bit to help keep routes clear.

Members send congratulations and a big vote of thanks to Richard and his Team.

## **7. Task & Finish Group**

Kevin reported that the prioritisation system for dealing with reports on maintenance and enforcement on Rights of Way set up in 1997 has been reviewed. He went through how the new priority system (attached to Agenda marked E) would work. Reports from Parish Councils, P3 Groups or Parish Wardens and problems reported on Shropshire Council promoted routes will get higher priority. Members stated that they had received good response to problems they had raised. Kevin stated that P3 Groups are a great help to the system, and that volunteers are very important to the Council. Problems reported on Rights of Way are put onto a database. If there is a health and safety risk they need to know, and that gets a higher priority. Members raised some issues. Kevin said that obstructions should be reported to Terry Hughes on 01743 255054, and ROW furniture problems to Ped Atkinson.

**Kevin left following this Agenda item. Group's members thanked him for attending.**

## **3. Matters Arising (Agenda Items 3 (d) & 3 (g) taken at the start of the meeting)**

### **(a) Natural England Stewardship**

The Groups noted that the 4mile field edge permissive bridleway at Uckington & Wheathill Farms, Atcham, with parking, is now open. The scheme is rideable, but, due to supply difficulties, the landowner is still awaiting frames for the map boards and enough way marks to mark out the scheme. It was hoped to have these in place soon.

The Acton Scott scheme was not accessible on the route shown on the Defra website when Zia went to ride it recently. A corrected map board showing the proper access and route, is now on the website.

### **(b) Discovering Lost Ways**

The summary from the Stakeholder Working Group attached to the Minutes, marked A, is noted. Angela reported on Zia's presentation to LAF, where Zia highlighted to LAF members items

from the summary, emphasized that the proposals had to be implemented in full, and stated that appropriate funding was needed to deal with the deficiencies of the definitive map process. LAF members asked the Access Development Officer to enquire with Natural England as to the current status of the project. Officers agreed that the project could ultimately save money for the Council. Angela is concerned that if landowners are allowed to put gates on Byways, they could do this as a deterrent to use. Zia said that Mark Weston understands that there will be a meeting in October between Richard Benyon of Natural England and Ray Anderson, the Chair of the Stakeholders Working Group, to discuss the stepping forward report.

**(c) Helicopters**

It is noted that minutes of the Helicopter Liaison Committee meeting held prior to our last meeting have been circulated to attendees. The importance of continued consultation on landing sites, with Shropshire Council for Rights of Way, and Natural England for Stewardship routes, was emphasized. It is important that we continue liaison with RAF Shawbury as personnel change all the time. It is understood that RAF Shawbury will be operational for the next 25 years.

**(d) Countryside Access Team Staff updates - Item taken at start of meeting**

**(e) Telford & Wrekin LAF**

The Minutes of the 28<sup>th</sup> April 2010 meeting are noted. Members confirmed that they still wish to receive these.

**(f) Gates**

It is noted that the BHS has produced a new 24 page advisory document on “Gates” and 2 page “Bridle Gate Installation Checklist” available to read or download from the BHS website [www.bhs.org.uk](http://www.bhs.org.uk), under Rights of Way Legal & Technical Information, and that a new leaflet on cattle grids is due out soon.

**(g) List of Streets and UCRs - Item taken at start of meeting.**

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

There were no other matters arising.

**4. Cycling**

The minutes of the Shropshire Cycle Forum dated 16<sup>th</sup> June 2010 marked **D**, and the date of a further meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2010 are noted. Allison Kennedy attended the 15<sup>th</sup> July LAF meeting and talked on promotion of parking, developing and maintaining cycling routes, cycle training, and the development of routes in Shrewsbury and East Oswestry areas. The Minsterley to Pontesbury route was raised and a member suggested a route cross-country would be better. Alison did confirm to Mark Weston that equestrians would be able to use the route. Zia stated that bridleway routes used for the cycle network should be marked correctly and that surfaces should be suitable for horse riders. Group’s members are concerned that horse riders are not being catered for on routes. Gill Eyre reported that this has happened in Oxford. Zia reported that mountain bike routes in the Long Mynd area are being numbered in the centre of Bridleway waymarks. This is confusing as Ride Shropshire routes in the area have different numbers. It is agreed that bike routes should have separate waymarks. This should be raised with Peter Carty.

**5. Countryside Access Implementation Team - Item taken at start of meeting**

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

It is noted that the Current Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 Modification Orders, Town & Country Planning Act Orders and other Orders are now available on Shropshire Council’s website, [www.shropshire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk) go to Leisure & Culture – FP’s & ROW.

Shona has reported that they have had cuts on publishing, and that the priority is to get money in, so they will be focusing on Public Path Orders, extinguishments, diversions etc. where the landowner pays. They should be able to do Dedications, as these are relatively straightforward. Other issues will still be dealt with, but will be restricted due to staffing constraints. They now have to deal with all the Town & Country Planning for Shropshire.

### **Public Inquiries**

It is important that all deadlines for papers to be submitted for Public inquiries are noted and met.

**BW1 Petton** The appeal on the downgrade of BW1 to FP has been dismissed. The anomaly has to be resolved and this obstructed BW opened up. The property on the first section of the BW, where the route was diverted out of a garden into a field, now has an access drive and trees planted on the new route, and it is for sale. The sales brochure states that the bridleway has never been used during their ownership. Not surprising as the ongoing route has been obstructed!

**Claverley/Worfield** BW claim to Hilton. Following the appeal by Angela on the Council's refusal to publish the order, the Council are now directed to publish the order.

**Weston Rhyn** The Inspector's Modification to the FP50 upgrade to BW at Craignant has been objected to, and is to go to a 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Inquiry on 27/28<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

**Barrow & Broseley** Part of the Order had to be re-advertised causing a 6-week delay. There were no objections, so this is now back with the Planning Inspectorate waiting for decisions.

### **Recently Published Orders**

**Llanyblodwell** – Objections have been received to one BW line and a BW addition. This will be part confirmed when objectors confirm intention as to whether or not to sustain objections.

**Pennerley BOAT addition Worthen with Shelve** – BOAT addition confirmed.

### **Orders still to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate.**

**Sutton Mill Lane FP addition**

**Badger FP upgrade to BW**

**Culmington FP Addition**

### **Under investigation**

**Shrewsbury Review** – 16 Orders are to be published or dealt with by dedication, including 2 bridleways, the western end of FP108 and the old Severn Valley railway line at Sutton Farm.

**Greenfields BW claim** The BW dedication by Shrewsbury Town Council is now complete.

**FP65 Barrow upgrade to Bridleway** – negotiations are still ongoing

**Purslow Woods** – East of Clun – Actively being investigated – recent meeting with P.C.

### **Public Path Orders**

**Bitterley BW94** – The Diversion and Creation Orders are confirmed.

**Abdon/Heath/Tugford Jack Mytton Way Diversion** – this is soon to be published.

**Stiperstones BW routes** – still under negotiation.

7. **Task and Finish Group** – Item taken at start of meeting

8. **Budgetary Pressures**

Zia's statement to LAF on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010 marked **F** is noted. Following Zia's statement to LAF, Deb Hughes, the Countryside Access Manager, circulated a key messages document from the Council Leader Keith Barrow, detailing the funding cuts that the Council would have to make over the next few years. Deb stated that the Council was currently looking at the implications of the required cuts and more should be known in October. The Council acknowledged the

importance of rights of way through the funding given to support the Parish Access Project over the next 5 years. Group's members are concerned at the prospect of cutbacks and change of focus. Shropshire Council has a statutory duty to maintain Rights of Way.

## **9. Minutes and feedback from LAFs and other Forums**

The minutes of the Local Access Forum held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010 marked **F**, and the date of the next LAF meeting to be held in the Shirehall at 10am on the 21<sup>st</sup> October, are noted.

Zia did a verbal update on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010 LAF meeting, as the Minutes are not yet approved. Jane Ing is now Chairman, and Mark Weston is Vice Chair.

**Promoted Routes** - Zia reported that Leader Funding has now been granted for the Shropshire Way, with £50,000 for a ring of circular walks in the Oswestry Area, and £30,000 for the Much Wenlock area, but that no funding had been obtained for the bridleway link from the Jack Mytton Way to the north via Zia's proposed Humphrey Kynaston Way to Nesscliffe and on to Grinshill, and then back to the Jack Mytton Way via the proposed Bishop Bennet Way. There are no Shropshire Council promoted BW routes north of Pontesbury, which is the northern most extent of the South Shropshire Hills Ride Shropshire routes. Zia asked that horse riders be included where possible on the new Shropshire Way routes.

**Local Transport Plan** - Zia asked that it could be ensured that horse rider's considerations are included within the local Transport Plan Integration.

**Hedge Cutting and Stewardship** – Zia stated that there was confusion about landowner's responsibilities in relation to hedge cutting on rights of way. She requested that Natural England should take action on the matter.

**Bird Scarers** – Zia expressed concern about bird scarers sited alongside roads and rights of way. These were particularly dangerous to horse riders.

It was agreed that there be a future LAF agenda item on the subject of quiet lanes with advisory 20 miles per hour speed limit, with Hugh Dannatt from the Council invited to attend.

## **10. Any Other Business**

**Chinese Lanterns** – Members are very concerned at recent reports of these being found in Shropshire in grazing fields, a number being picked up in fields near Adcote, north of Shrewsbury. Wire from them could get into hay and other feed and there are reports of serious injuries from livestock ingesting parts from them, there is also the fire risk. It is agreed that the Groups' concerns over these should be taken forward.

**Natural England Consultation** – The BHS request for horse riders to respond to Natural England's Discussion Document 'An Invitation to shape the Nature of England' was read out. There is no mention of Public Rights of Way in the document. Members expressed concern and noted the e-mail address, and the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2010 deadline for responses. It is agreed that Zia will do a response on behalf of the Groups.

**Drawing the Line** – The BHS 'Drawing the Line' Auction on the 13<sup>th</sup> October, to raise money for the campaign against indiscriminate breeding, is noted.

**Rights of Way User Forms** - Members are concerned that these consultation forms are very biased towards walkers.

**Parking** - Angela raised the problem of parking to ride in areas that do not have Ride UK.

**11. Dates of Next Meetings** - The confirmed date of the **AGM of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011** is noted. The date of the following meeting of **6<sup>th</sup> June 2011** is confirmed. The meetings to be held in the Shirehall at 7.30 pm.