

## SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING GROUPS (SRCDG)

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2011, at 7.30pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

### 1. Attendance:

Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere, Chair. Zia Robins, Shrewsbury & District RC A&BWO, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA, Joint Secretary. Judy Dickenson, Church Preen & District. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Jan Baldwin & Elaine Newton, Broseley BWA. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA. Sue Evans, Beckbury, Ryton & Badger BWG. Gill Eyre, BHS South Shropshire East, South Shropshire. Andrew Kelly, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Shona Lewis, Shropshire Council.

### Apologies:

John Gibson, British Driving Society, Vice Chair. Linda Russell, South West Shrewsbury BWG, Joint Secretary. Gaynor Evans, Broseley BWA. Dorothy Billings, Carriage Driving, Bridgnorth. Rosemary Patten, Worthen & Dist. BWG. Anne Roberts, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Mark Weston BHS

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011 (incorrectly headed 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011) were adopted and signed by the Chair.

### 3. Matters Arising

#### (a) Helicopters

The meeting at RAF Shawbury on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2011 was attended by John Gibson, Zia Robins, Gill Eyre and Jim Stabler. The minutes of the meeting have just been sent out by RAF Shawbury. RAF Shawbury is looking into getting some more fluorescent tabards for distribution to riders. Lyn Stabler, Natural England, did not attend, as there are to be no more new stewardship agreements. It is agreed that the next meeting will be held before our meeting in the Shirehall, in Spring/Summer 2012. RAF Shawbury to take the minutes.

#### (b) Cycling

Shona has spoken to David Cowell on the issue with way marking of new cycle routes on the Long Mynd. They are about to reproduce the maps for cycling. The new cycle routes are currently being way marked with a bridleway way marker with a number in the middle, which is confusing, as Ride UK routes, which follow the same tracks, also have numbers. It is agreed that there should be specific markers for the bike routes. There is also concern at the speed at which some mountain bikers come down routes, with lack of consideration for other users. Sue Evans said she had heard of bike routes that crossed bridleways where the bike riders may not be able to stop and could go flying over/across a horse! There is concern that bikers are not aware that they should give way to horse riders and pedestrians on a public bridleway. Incidents were raised, including one on the Jack Mytton Way, where cyclists had ridden without consideration for horse riders. Cyclists should give a verbal warning if approaching from behind.

Elaine reported a new multi user scheme being proposed for the Wrekin that included low key signing of multi-user routes. A meeting on it was not well advertised, so not many horse riders attended. The proposal is down to the last 8 for funding. She will send some information on this to Zia

Sue Evans updated on a permissive section of National Cycle Route 45 in the Wyre Forest, which is being turned into an 'all-ability' route, from which horse riders will be excluded. Sue does not know who the owner is, but it is managed by Natural England. It is a wide track on the old railway line. She asked if members knew of other 'all-ability' routes that were used by horse riders. Zia said the 'all ability' track from the Stiperstones car park was put along a public bridleway and she was not aware of any reported problems there. Disabled horse riders use routes. Shona suggested contacting Alison Kennedy. If the route is wide enough users could be separated. Mark Weston has been consulted. Sue has ridden the route since she was 7 so could possibly put in a claim. The section is in Worcestershire but it is the only link for a circular Shropshire Ride. Shropshire is contributing to the cost of work on the bridge over the Dowles Brook into Worcestershire. Andrew said Jane Ridley in Staffordshire has been involved with old railway lines and may have information that could help.

It has been confirmed to Shona that the permissive section of NCR Route 45, owned by the Willey and Apley estates, which is in the Coalport/Bridgnorth area, is open to horse riders. The current signing only shows walking and cycling. Alison Kennedy said that their policy for multi-user routes is to sign them as that. Shona has been assured that when the signage needs replacing: they will include horse riders. Members agreed this would be too long a time and that some correct signage should be put up now, perhaps a stick-on sign showing a horse rider or a horseshoe. Shona also notified the meeting that as the agreement is only permissive they are allowed to close the route between November and January. It is agreed that the signage should show the times of possible closure. This should also be on the leaflets and web pages. Shona will follow this up. (See concern over this closure in 12. Any Other Business)

#### **(c) Quiet Lanes**

Zia asked for this to be brought to LAF. At the last LAF meeting, Jan Cook stated that there are only two Quiet Lane schemes in Shropshire; that there was only a small reduction in traffic flows; and no significant reduction in traffic speed or accidents. In the current financial climate, there would need to be more justification, so no more schemes would be implemented for the time being. Zia said she was aware of more than 2 schemes in Shropshire. She felt that drivers did take note of the signs, and that it made them more aware of the possibility of meeting non-motorised users on the road. Zia will follow this up again when appropriate.

#### **(d) Chinese Lanterns**

It is noted that it is important that reports of any incidents should be sent to Sheila Hardy BHS Safety Officer, e-mail [s.hardy@bhs.org.uk](mailto:s.hardy@bhs.org.uk). Chinese Lanterns were discussed at the recent meeting at RAF Shawbury. They have been spotted on night flying but have not been a major concern in this area. It is understood that the wires can be sucked into aero engines. Group members expressed concern over the fire risk, and the risk of them getting into fodder etc., and being ingested. Horses are frightened by them when they come into their fields. A member reported that one that came down nearby sent the horses ballistic. People are fined for dropping litter in the streets; these lanterns are littering the countryside. The NFU are taking up the concerns of their members.

#### **(e) Any other matters arising not on the Agenda –**

**Definitive Map Issues. Honeypot route** – Shona spoke to Karen before she left, and is still following up on it. Elaine said that she had agreed to retract the evidence given on the Home Farm to Dean Corner route, in exchange for the Honeypot route, and Lord Forrester, who was alive then, had agreed to look at it, and that Lady Forrester has been reminded of this. The Estate was in agreement, but the tenants at the time were the problem. The situation may have changed now. Nigel Williams, who was involved with the open cast mining, was happy for the route to be used. Shona will have a look at this and come back to us as soon as possible and then report to the next meeting.

**Broseley Court 169A bridleway claim** - Elaine reported that a new footpath sign and a kissing gate has been put up by Shropshire Council at Broseley Court, on 169A. This is a bridleway claim addressed at the recent Public Inquiry. It has not been confirmed yet. Shona will raise this with Paul Daly who manages the Parish Access Project

**Other Matters to Note** - Zia reported that during BHS Access week 20-30 May, BHS Shropshire did a ride along the Long Mynd, organised by Jane Kerswell, to raise money for access. Sue Evans also did one in Mortimer Forest.

#### **4. Shropshire Council**

##### **(a) Update on Staff, Restructuring, & Budgetary situation**

Shona is currently the Access Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader. She reported that a meeting had been held that morning for the Parks and Countryside and Countryside Access Teams. They have been told of the proposed structure for their mode of service. A 90-day consultation period has started for anyone at risk within that structure to comment. An interim structure was set up on 22<sup>nd</sup> April for Shona's team. Mapping and Enforcement have been merged and her team will deal with all mapping, enforcement, and also with any planning issues. She circulated a temporary working map showing who is currently covering the different areas within Shropshire. Parishes shown white, will, for the time being, be dealt with by Shona. Terry Hughes has retired, and Kate Nore has left, leaving only Kevin to deal with all enforcement issues, so they had to restructure. Each Officer will deal with all public path Orders, mapping issues, enforcement, planning consultation, searches, Natural England Consultations, and all general enquiries and issues on the network in their allotted area. This will be more constructive as they will become familiar with all issues in their area and the landowners and users, but they will have to prioritise and look at the resources available. The combined team will now be known as Outdoor Recreation and, as well as Countryside Access, will also deal with children's play areas and all Country Parks and countryside sites. The maintenance team will have to deal with not only work on the ground, but also all the other work involved with running all the sites. They will still have access development and will try to get money in. There will be more focus on market towns initiatives. It is hoped to have everything in place by 1<sup>st</sup> October. They will only have revenue funding as all capital funding was cut. Zia confirmed that she did address Shropshire's Full Council Meeting, raising the importance of Rights of Way to Tourism and to the local economy, and did her best to retain the capital funding, but the cuts were still put through. Shona said that the work of users and volunteers will be very important.

Shona said that it is very important that routes get properly opened up when confirmed following public inquiry. Zia said there are still some confirmed routes where this has not happened.

##### **(b) Shropshire Riding website**

Jim Stabler had agreed at the meeting at RAF Shawbury to put on a section showing RAF flying events. This is now on the right hand side of the home page of the Shropshire Riding website. [www.shropshireriding.co.uk](http://www.shropshireriding.co.uk) under 'Air Activity'. Other items on the website are out of date. We do need it updating. Shona confirmed that they will make sure all is working with the new active button system, which is being trialed on the walking site, before rolling it out to the other sites. Parking places, pubs etc would all be useful information to have on the riding site. Shona said they have an internal portal for photos. Any relevant photos they could use are always helpful.

##### **(b) Countryside Access Implementation Team**

Zia updated from Richard Knight. Summer maintenance is being done. Work is ongoing on UCR routes to the west of the Long Mynd, with top dressing still to be done on Medlicott to Adstone.

Shona confirmed that they have now got the signed agreements for The Vinnals BW and the dedication of the route by the three landowners as a public bridleway will be published next

Thursday. This is an excellent result. Zia and Linda have been pushing for years to get this route resolved. It is an important link between Lyth Hill and the Long Mynd; an old green lane that has always been ridden, but which mostly held no status. Excellent work has been done by the Countryside team to achieve this; and by the Implementation team on work to improve the surface, drainage, and to clear overgrowth. The whole route is now usable. This is the last link in one of the circular routes Zia is progressing, along with her linear route from the Long Mynd north to Nescliffe.

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

The Public Inquiry into objections to the modification to the Order to upgrade FP50 to BW Craignant, was held at Quinta Hall, Weston Rhyn on 27<sup>th</sup> April and it is hoped to have the result by the end of the month.

Barrow & Broseley - The objection issues are being progressed by Lucy, including a line problem.

FP 65, Bentall Woods down to the Power Station had all been agreed with everyone. It was asked what the current position was. Shona will follow up with Lucy on progress with this.

Shona is hoping to clear the backlog, including Badger Dingle, Sutton Lane, the Frodesley Orders, Hilton, and St Martins, Old Moors Lane. Old Moors Lane was put in as a bridleway claim, but the majority of it is an accepted UCR and the rest is shown on the 1929 handover map, and should be at least a RB. Shona said that ongoing Orders will be seen through by the officer currently dealing with them.

Badger Woods - Sue asked if there had been any progress with the dedication. Shona said that it is beneficial if an officer goes to see landowners on dedications.

Shrewsbury Review - Dedications have been completed by Shropshire Council for the old canal route from St. Michaels Street to Telford Way; the old railway line in Sutton Farm; and the route from behind The Maltings to Greenfields, which is now part of a National Cycle Route. They do not have to publish these, but have to show acceptance by the public and signing indicates this.

Oaks Wood, Pontesbury - the claim is still being dealt with by Matt.

Stiperstones - The diversion is due to be confirmed. Zia was verbally assured that there would be bridleway access to the new route from the car park, which was not on the order, as otherwise riders have to go through the car park and two gates to get back to other side of the fence.

Tugford - The issues are waiting for the reports to be done and then they will be published.

Long Mynd - The Groups discussed the proposed diversion and creation of routes on the Long Mynd, Midland Gliding Club land, which Jim had asked to be put to the Groups following a meeting he and Zia had with the Gliding Club. The proposals do not involve the Jack Mytton Way, which goes up the runway, but are to address a safety issue as the launch cable goes across the bridleway, which crosses the airfield. Sheep have gone up on the wire. Those not familiar with the area do not realise the wire is there and horses can trip on it. The Gliding Club offered to dedicate an eastern perimeter BW in exchange for closing the two linking central crossing bridleways. These would be diverted to the BW crossing to the south by the tumulus. We will ask if a shorter link could be provided to the JM Way from the south BW, back north along the line where the old forestry was felled. This is well clear of the launch vehicle site. The proposed eastern perimeter route would link the bridleways around the airfield, giving more circular route options. Members expressed concern on the safety issue and agreed that the proposal should be progressed.

## **6. Shropshire LAF Working Group on Rights of Way and other Relevant Legislation.**

The Working Groups notes, attached marked **B**, are noted. Andrew asked for a copy of the spreadsheets with the LAF comments. Shona will e-mail this to him. Most of the legislation was agreed by LAF to be essential, but suggestions were put forward where changes could be made. One point put forward was that there should be a Definitive List of Streets confirming status as

well as maintenance responsibility. There is concern that other changes could be made to legislation without the public being aware.

## **7. List of Streets and UCR's**

The minutes of the Byways Liaison Group Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2011, attached marked C, and the date of the next meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> September 2011 are noted. John Gibson had been unable to attend the March meeting. The BLG meeting is separate to the LAF sub-committee on UCR's, which had not met for sometime. Andrew asked if it would help if he attended the BLG meetings. Shona explained that it was a User group similar to our Groups, but would speak to Richard and Jim. Andrew went to a meeting in London of the Local Street Gazetteer/ National Street Gazetteer, on how the list of streets should be produced. It was put forward that Andrew's presentation to that meeting should be discussed further with Philip Hammond, the Minister for Transport. Shona confirmed that we had asked for a list of streets for Shropshire with a map attached. It is agreed that we need clarity on the status of routes. Shropshire had agreed, and it was minuted, that routes shown from the 1929 handover Highway map onwards are public roads, but there have been a number of staff changes in Highways since.

Zia raised with Shona a problem that has arisen due to changes in advertising. Temporary Traffic Regulation Order Notices now only mention that pedestrians can have access through when roads are temporarily closed. They used to include access to cyclists and horse riders with the proviso that they may need to dismount. Some diversions involve roads like the A5 and long distances. Horse riders must be considered when diversions take place. Shona will follow this up. Zia asked Shona if there had been any consultation with them on the proposed power lines for wind farms. Shona was not aware of any, apart from for individual wind farms.

## **8. Local Transport Plan**

It is noted that the LFP3 information and consultation is available at [http://www.Shropshire.gov.uk/traveltransport.nsf/viewAttachments/AMOS-8GJF<4/\\$file/provisional-ltp-core-strategy-april-2011.pdf](http://www.Shropshire.gov.uk/traveltransport.nsf/viewAttachments/AMOS-8GJF<4/$file/provisional-ltp-core-strategy-april-2011.pdf). There is only one specific reference to Equestrians in the current documents, but this is only in connection with tourism, other references state 'walkers, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users', 'foot, cycle and other sustainable transport modes', and 'more sustainable modes including pedestrians and cyclists'. These should state 'and equestrians' or 'and horse riders'. There is concern that walkers and cyclists leisure use of highways is covered, but not equestrians. There was good coverage of equestrian needs in the previous LTP for which Shropshire received a BHS award. There is also concern that the Plan does not give enough consideration to rural areas. It is agreed that Zia will do a response on behalf of the Groups.

## **9. DEFRA**

### **(a) Natural England Organization**

Lyn Stabler is now responsible for all of Shropshire Access Development which includes some Stewardship schemes.

### **(b) Natural England Stewardship Access Schemes**

It is noted that two new schemes were signed up before the deadline. These are at Farley near Pontesbury, and at Battlefield, north of Shrewsbury, but there are no maps available on the website, and there was no consultation with users. The missing bridleway link at Battlefield is a 'lost way'. Rednal is still not back on the website. Many permissive bridleways are still headed 'country walks'. Defra has a big backlog to catch up on, and is also subject to funding cuts.

## **10. Public Forest Estate in England**

This was raised at the last LAF meeting. Zia asked that LAF looked at the public Forest Estates in Shropshire and what access there is in the woodland so we have information ready to report to the Independent Panel on Forestry. There is to be a sub committee meeting of LAF on this. There is no bridleway representative on the Independent Panel, despite the fact that TROT manage a lot of the horse riding access in public woodlands. The Wildlife Trust does not have any permissive access for horse riders on their woodland in Shropshire. Zia attended the meeting in Shrewsbury and spoke up on access. Sue Evans had attended the meeting in Ludlow, which Mark Weston also attended. Daniel Kawczynski M.P has not responded to Zia's letter to him. Car parking provision is extremely important. The Groups were happy for Zia to respond on their behalf.

## **11. Minutes and Feedback from LAFs and other Forums**

The Minutes of the Local Access Forum Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2011, attached marked **D** are noted. Agenda Items relevant to our group from the LAF meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May have been covered in our Agenda. It is noted that many public toilets due for closure are being taken over by local Parish Councils etc. This is excellent news. The car park with toilets and an honesty box at Shelve is a good starting point for a circular ride. The next LAF meeting is the AGM on 13<sup>th</sup> July at Craven Arms.

## **12. Any Other Business**

**Power line routes for wind farms** – The proposals could have an impact on the ANOB and on new riding routes that Zia is currently working on. The power lines could go underground. Zia handed out consultation forms and maps. The deadline for responses has been extended. It is agreed that Zia will respond on behalf of Groups.

Andrew asked if the Groups member's contact details could be provided for Groups members.

**Cycle route** – Members revisited **3(b) Cycling**. Great concern was expressed over the closing periods for the permissive route on the Coalport to Bridgnorth route. The Broseley Group had provided evidence of bridleway use for the route years ago, and the Bridgnorth Group had done their end. Members agreed that this claim should be reactivated.

**Dates of the Next Meetings** The next meeting is to be held on the **3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011**. The provisional date for the following meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012 is confirmed. Meetings to be held in the Shirehall at 7.30 pm.