

MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE CYCLE FORUM

Wednesday 14 September 2011 Shirehall, Shrewsbury

1. Present

Miles Kenny (chair)	John Shenton	Peter Walden
Alison Kennedy	Keith Mason	Philip Saltmarsh
Andy Wood	Kim Williams	Ray Hughes
Angela Shenton	Mac Hoskin	Reg Potter
Bill Dorrell	Martin Beardwell	Sally Wood
Derek Owen	Mary Diggory	Sean McCarthy
Emma Bullard	Michael Willmot	Simon Jones
Gavin Ashford	Mike Arthur	(Councillor)
Geoff Shinner	Nyk Pickering	Simon Jones (Wem)
Helen Crighton-Poli	Peta Sams	Tim Rutherford
Helen Waugh	Peter Lloyd	
Jenny Willmot	Peter Mathison	

2. Apologies

Beth Holgate	John Short	Peter Holgate
David Currant	Julie Potter	Philip Pool
Henry Harbord	Mike Clarke	Richard Harman
Jenny Leese	Paul Wagner	Terry Egglestone
John Leese	Peter Bird	
John Petty	Peter Crofts	

3. Previous minutes and matters arising

Mountain biking on the Long Mynd: Tim King has spoken to Peter Carty about the map. The leaflet was printed in July and is online:

[http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/cycling.nsf/viewAttachments/LHUUH-8MZJ5E/\\$file/long-mynd-mtb-map-2011.pdf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/cycling.nsf/viewAttachments/LHUUH-8MZJ5E/$file/long-mynd-mtb-map-2011.pdf)

BMX in Shropshire

4. Clubs, coaching and development of BMX tracks in Shrewsbury Sean McCarthy, Active Lifestyles Manager, Shropshire Council

Sean explained that over the past 12-18 months his team has obtained funding to refurbish some of Shrewsbury's BMX tracks and provide volunteers with training.

- £5000 was granted by the Monkmoor and Underdale Local Joint Committee (LJC) for the track at Upton Lane, and £9000 by the Central Shropshire Partnership (no longer in existence) for other tracks.
- Upton Lane and Shorncliffe Drive have been resurfaced
- Bayston Hill is very well-used and working with Councillor Ted Clarke the track has been improved
- Meole Brace: a tarmac bowl has been added. Working with Community Action Team (Lucy Roberts) and Meole Estate Community Association

A BMX club started in Shrewsbury in May 2011 and is affiliated to Mid Shropshire Wheelers. Richard Stephens (the only qualified BMX coach in Shrewsbury) runs sessions every Saturday (except the last Saturday in the month) from 11am-12pm at Upton Lane. New members are welcome. This track is suitable for

beginners. (Note - coaching sessions at Bayston Hill, which is suitable for more advanced riders, ran over the summer but have currently stopped).

Maintenance: all the tracks are on Shrewsbury Town Council land (except Shorncliffe Drive and Bayston Hill) SC and STC are working together on maintenance issues and Richard Stephens sends STC a maintenance report each week. Signs have been installed with “do’s and don’ts” and contact telephone numbers for any questions or problems.

Monkmoor skate park is being taken down. A consultation on skating and BMX facilities will run from 31 October until 4 December. To comment go to <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/sports.nsf/open/CD39CDBA00A49B4C802579300044E14F>

There are also plans for an improved website with information about BMX tracks throughout Shropshire and the level of ability they cater for.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Is there funding for developments outside Shrewsbury, such as Ludlow? Applications could be made to LJsCs in other areas. The Shrewsbury tracks do attract people from across the county.
- Should the club name be changed? Sean is open to suggestions; the name BMX Shrews was chosen as the funding was there initially.
- There is lots of demand in Oswestry; young people are riding BMX bikes in the new park due to lack of facilities. Some travel to Bayston Hill to use the track there.
- What age group does BMX Shrews cater for? Currently ages range from 6-17, but no-one is turned away. Levels of cycling ability vary widely (not necessarily related to age). There are 52 boys in the club and one girl.
- One member commented that attendance at the club had been very good for his son’s general fitness level and self-esteem.
- There is a new “pump track “ at Kinnerley (similar to the one at Upton Lane). Sean did not know of this; it may have been put in by the parish council.

Sean: the next step will be to provide/promote facilities across the county and to work with the Community Action Teams.

5. BMX racing and development of competition facilities **Derek Owen, Parks & Open Spaces Officer, Telford and Wrekin Council**

Derek gave a presentation. Please contact Alison if you would like a paper or electronic copy of the slides. Key points were:

- Wrekin Riders BMX club operates Shropshire-wide and draws members from a wide age range
- New competition tracks in the area: Wolverhampton (regional standard); Telford (Dawley) proposed for 2013 (national standard). A bid has been put in for National Lottery and Sport England funding – there is none from British Cycling. The cost will be £300k plus fencing. It will be in the grounds of the Phoenix School and for school use during the school day. There will be a charge to use it during public sessions with a discount for WR members.
- BMX world championships take place in Birmingham in May 2012
- Wrekin Riders have 4 coaches plus 2 in training

- There is a difference between BMX racing (speed and skill round a track) and freestyle. Freestyle riders tend to use skate parks.
- Current BMX tracks in Shropshire/Telford are “play” tracks: not suitable for serious racing. An 8-lane track is needed for regional competitions
- WR are working with groups in other towns to develop facilities: Church Stretton, Craven Arms, Broseley, Much Wenlock, Ellesmere.

Cllr Simon Jones asked if Wrekin Riders can advise on the design of play tracks. Yes – but WR have not been involved with the work in Shrewsbury

6. Wem Biketrack project

Andy Wood and Simon Jones updated the group on their efforts to get an open access pump track in Wem. They have had agreement in principle from the Town Council and widespread support; however there is no agreement on a location. Andy and Simon are very keen to progress this and have even had an offer of free labour to build the track, from a local contractor.

Forum members were asked for suggestions for the best way to proceed.

- Insurance is less if the facility is not described as a “BMX” track
- Shawbury Parish council have put in a track and were very supportive
- Helen Waugh of BMX Shrews offered to make a video of a club session to show that the activity is suitable for young children
- Derek is willing to visit Wem Town Council and/or invite them to visit a track in Telford
- Derek recommended that the ROSPA post-installation inspection is included as part of the build. Guidelines suggest that a track should be 30m from the nearest residential property.
- Probation Service may be able to help with maintenance

Action: Shropshire Cycle Forum to send letter of support for Wem Biketrack project to Wem Town Council. Update: ROSPA is visiting Wem in November to inspect the possible sites. More information on <http://www.wembiketrack.co.uk/>

7. Updates – Telford and Wrekin

Gavin Ashford updated the group on the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). Telford and Wrekin Council has been awarded £3.5m for 7 schemes; mainly addressing congestion outside schools and the journey to work; plus leisure and tourism. There will also be cycle training, including adult training.

There will be work on two cycle routes:

- The Silkin Way (tied in with “Parks for People” redevelopment). This will be “refreshed”/improved – surfacing, signage etc. (Town Park to Ironbridge)
- The Telford-Newport–Stafford route, partly on disused railway. Telford and Wrekin Council will work with Staffordshire Council and TBUG on route design

Other projects:

- Safer routes to school (casualty –led)
- Area travel plans – businesses on large industrial areas
- Grants for businesses e.g. for cycle parking or cycle loan
- Wheels to work – bicycle loans

8. Updates – Shropshire

- LSTF. Shropshire has been awarded £5m. Cycle Shrewsbury will continue and cycling and walking promotion will start in Oswestry and Ludlow. There will be a new one-stop travel website; for now the Cycle Shrewsbury website will have information about Ludlow and Oswestry cycling developments. Contacts for each town are:
 - Oswestry Julie Potter 01743 253001 (works Tues-Thurs)
 - Ludlow Ray Hughes 01743 253063
 - Shrewsbury Emma Bullard 01743 255435
- Love Your Bike month: October will be Love Your Bike month in all 3 towns. New walking and cycling maps will be produced for Ludlow and Oswestry; and the cycle journey planner will be live for those areas. For information go to <http://www.cycleshrewsbury.co.uk/>
- Cycle Shrewsbury and Connect2: contra flow schemes are progressing slowly, Radbrook Toucan crossing is almost completed and work starts this week for the Connect2 project at Raven Meadows/ Smithfield Road.
- National Cycle Network routes. There was a comment about the poor surface on R45 at Linley. Progress is being made on a number of missing links:
 - Route 45, Bridgnorth footpath diversion and new gate
 - Route 44, Bromfield risk assessment/ liaison with Highways Agency
 - Route 44, Pontesbury interim signing through the village
- Cycle parking – at popular town centre sites in Shrewsbury and Ludlow there are problems with space being taken from ‘legitimate’ cycles by advertising bikes or motorbikes. Shropshire Council has started with polite requests to remove these and will also add notices to cycle stands if appropriate

9. Any other business

- Cyclo-cross events at Shrewsbury Sports Village: Sundays 18 September, 4 December, 15 January. For more information go to <http://midshropshirewheelers.com/>
- Helen Waugh: BMX Shrews would be happy to help with Love Your Bike month
- Martin Beardwell: Poor maintenance on the A5 cycle track between Montford Bridge and Felton Butler. This is the Highways Agency responsibility; they subcontract to Amey and it is very difficult to get the work done. **Action:** Alison to follow up with HA/ Amey
- Martin Beardwell: Will there be a route to Shrewsbury Station through the new Gay Meadow development? Alison – we have requested that this is kept
- Keith Mason: Drivers are running the red lights on the crossing at Old Potts Way; especially going towards town.
- Miles Kenny: please can we have a dropped kerb on the cycle track opposite Brassey Way (to allow cyclists to cross to businesses there)
- A recently published report discusses the benefits of cycling to the economy - in terms of bike sales as well as health and congestion:
http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/zuvvi/media/bc_files/corporate/The_British_Cycling_Economy_18Aug.pdf

10. Next meetings

Tuesday 6th December – Shirehall

Topics to include LEJOG and other long-distance ride experiences