

SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING GROUPS (SRCDG)

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 3rd October 2011, at 7.30pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

1. Attendance:

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. Judy Dickenson, Church Preen & District. Jan Baldwin, Gaynor Evans & Margaret Dutton, Broseley BWA. Sue Evans, Beckbury, Ryton & Badger BWG. Gill Eyre, BHS South Shropshire East, South Shropshire. Shona Butter, Shropshire Council.

Apologies:

Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere, Chair. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA. Elaine Newton, Broseley BWA. Andrew Kelly, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Dorothy Billings, Carriage Driving, Bridgnorth. Rosemary Pattenden, Worthen & Dist. BWG. Anne Roberts, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Mark Weston BHS

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2011, were incorrectly headed 11th February 2011, this was corrected, and signed by the Vice Chair.

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 6th June (paper A) were approved, and signed by the Vice Chair.

3. Matters Arising

(a) Cycling

The copy of the e-mail from Zia to David Cowell, National Trust, re Cycle routes and way marking in the Long Mynd area (paper B) is noted. A copy of the new Long Mynd MTB Map/leaflet was circulated showing routes, with many marked as short downhill “fast” tracks. When bicycles were allowed to use bridleways in 1968 the parliamentary debate included discussion on cyclists having to dismount, but settled on them giving way to walkers and horse riders. Racing is prohibited on a bridleway. Members were very concerned that the publication of these routes as “fast” tracks, endorsed speed, which could cause big problems for other users. The Shropshire Way is shown, but The Jack Mytton Way Bridleway down Carding Mill Valley is not marked on the MTB map. It is shown as Route 10 “fast flowing technical track” It is not known who at Shropshire Council approved the Long Mynd MTB Map. The Shropshire Cycle Forum minutes (paper C) are noted. They state that following the Forum, Shropshire Council and the National Trust were able to fund the printing of 10,000 maps. They are also online at [http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/cycling.nsf/viewAttachments/AMOS-8K5MJ3/\\$file/long-mynd-mtb-map-2011.pdf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/cycling.nsf/viewAttachments/AMOS-8K5MJ3/$file/long-mynd-mtb-map-2011.pdf). The Group expressed great concern over the “fast” tracks, the way marking, and who was responsible. Shona was not aware of any consultation on this. The leaflet tells cyclists to “keep your speed under control and give way to walkers and horses”, but the small print may not be read, and cyclists may not know that giving way to walkers and horse riders is a legal requirement on a public bridleway.

Agreed - Zia to raise with the BHS and to write to David Cowell, National Trust, expressing the Group’s concern.

NCR Route 45 Coalport/Bridgnorth Area

Shona reported that they had received letters from Mark Weston and Broseley BW Assoc. objecting to the 3-month closure period. Richard Harman of the cycle group was going to visit the estate to discuss the closure period again, but has not yet responded back on this; Shona will follow up. User evidence relates to linking routes. New forms need to be filled in for this route. Sue E thought that the golf course owned a section of the railway line where horse riders have to use the road. Shona will check ownership. The closure period, and that there is only a 10 year permissive agreement, came as a shock to horse riders.

Shropshire Cycle Forum The 7th July 2011 minutes (paper C) as well as reporting on Route 45 Bridgnorth to Coalport, also refer, in Item 9, to NCR Route 44 Pontesbury to Minsterley, Route 32, and Oswestry projects, including a feasibility study of the disused railway line. Shona to follow up the multi-user aspect of these. Jim Stabler has reported to LAF proposed new multi-user links in the Meres and Moses project Item 10. There are some ‘lost ways’ that link in there.

(b) Wrekin multi user route

The failure of the Veolia CR8 challenge funding bid for “The Wrekin Trundle” is noted. It is also noted that the upgrading of routes to BW status and new access will be pursued.

The Telford & Wrekin Local Access Forum minutes of 21st June 2011 (paper D) are noted.

(c) Chinese Lanterns

Zia has done an informal survey of a large number of Shropshire wedding venues and hotels pointing out the possible consequences of sending up these devices. The majority either ban or discourage use of Chinese Lanterns. One venue had an incident with horses going through barbed wire fencing which had resulted in a claim. Venues stated that it was difficult to control what happened in their car parks. One Hotel reported that they only allowed professional people to release them. Zia did point out to them that who released them made no difference to where they landed up! One venue suggested contacting Shropshire Tourism. It is believed that the numbers found have decreased recently, but that may be due to the time of year. It is understood that lanterns were on sale at the Shrewsbury Flower Show, and that some were lit and sent off on the Saturday.

(d) Government Consultation on Legislation

The Cabinet Office “Red Tape Challenge” debate www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk, which has a section covering Countryside and Recreation regulations, is noted. Shona confirmed that most were old, superseded or out of date.

(e) Local Transport Plan

Zia’s response to the LTP 2011 Consultation (paper E) is noted. Jan Cook has confirmed receipt of this. The Group congratulated Zia on an excellent response, which made very good points.

(f) National Grid Power Lines

The Group thanked Zia for responding online, on the Group’s behalf, to the consultation, and noted that information on the project is available at www.nationalgrid.com/midwalesconnection. Zia has had her response acknowledged, and has been sent a newsletter. Due to 6,500 responses having been received, a decision has been postponed to the winter.

(g) Any other matters arising not on the Agenda –

Defra Stewardship Routes - The person to contact for the time being is Chris Hogarth of Natural England. It was reported that it takes ages for corrections or changes to be made on the website. Pansons Farm routes at Hanwood took years to be put on the site, but the routes were removed from the website on the day they expired! The Rednal Farm renewed routes have taken ages to be put back on the website, and to date the map still shows the old expiry date of Sept 2010. Sue E reported a route near Sutton Maddox has changed hands on the landowner’s death but it is hoped it will be continued. Zia reported that a number of other schemes are due to expire

in the next couple of years including, on 30th September 2012, Patton House Farm and Lushcott Farm, both near Much Wenlock, and Hatton Grange Estate near Shifnal, on 31st May 2013, Wheathall Farm near Dorrington, and on 30th Sept. 2013, Tong Park Farm and Burlington Farm both near Shifnal, Lower Elcott Farm 'A' near Cleobury Mortimer, Little Wytheford Farm near Shawbury, and Lower Netley Farm near Shrewsbury. Another 7 schemes are due to end in 2014.

4. Shropshire Council

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

Shona reported that the Rights of Way Mapping and Enforcement Team, which she is managing, is now finalised, and will consist only of herself, Mat Stephens, Kevin Jones, Lucy McFarlane, and Jean Jones. She passed round a revised coloured map of the areas that each one will be covering for all issues including planning, enforcement, and map orders and inquiries. Any staff dealing with an issue pre change will generally see that issue through. The Outdoor Recreation Service will be losing more staff but not in the ROW department. The maintenance team will still be at Pontesbury. With less staff taking on more responsibilities, her team will have to prioritise. They receive hundreds of complaints. They will all be logged, but unless it is dangerous, it may be sometime before they are able to deal with them. It is important that we focus on important issues.

(b) Shropshire Riding website

Zia has followed up on this. Out-of-date information on the Riding News page has been removed. There is still out of date information on the Natural England permissive access routes. It is hoped, instead of listing them, to have a link to the Natural England site. Zia has asked for a link to the BHS Horses Welcome website. For Horse B&B, there is currently only a link to Shropshire Tourism's page which only lists a few of the BHS approved establishments in Shropshire. Zia has also asked for links to Shropshire Council's map that shows Rights of Way, the Highways Gazetteer and Highways Maintenance responsibility. There is currently nothing under the "Unboxing Facilities" heading. A list of parking places and also a list of pubs would be helpful, but a number of pubs have recently closed, including the Acton Arms at Morville. It needs someone to input information.

(c) Countryside Access Implementation Team

Zia has received an update from Richard Knight. Work is in progress to improve the gates through Hanwood. Access to Catherton Common at Lubberland will be improved with drainage and relocation of an access gate, at the request of the Farlow and Area P3 Group, to tie in with some permissive access agreed with Shropshire Wildlife Trust. Paul Butter will shortly be looking at works required at Shadymoor near Dorrington. Routine maintenance has been carried out on the network over the summer, and surface work on UCR's on the west of the Long Mynd has been completed. Members passed on their thanks to Richard's team.

5. Public Inquiries and Definitive Map Issues

There is now limited staff to deal with Definitive Map Issues. Jean Jones does all the legal orders, searches etc. Priority is currently given to legal orders.

Craignant - Final confirmation has been received of the upgrade of FP50 to BW

Honeypot Route – This is still to be resolved. This has been raised with Lady Forrester, but there were issues with the tenant. Elaine confirmed that they agreed to withdraw other evidence if they got this route. A decision needs to be made on the route.

Broseley Court FP169A BW claim - This is a footpath at the moment, but the bridleway order is due to be confirmed soon. As it was the subject of a legal order, the contractors should have left

this route when the Parish Access Project work was done. It will be rectified when final confirmation takes place. Richard Knight's team opens up routes following confirmation of orders. Order routes get priority.

Oaks Wood BW claim – Mat was dealing with this, but Shona has now taken it over. The lock on the middle gate has been removed.

Old Moors Lane, St Martins – This BW Order on a UCR is still with Mat. They need to put pressure on Highways for a decision, and then write to the Planning Inspectorate.

Badger Wood – The dedication agreement was sent last year, and reminders have been sent. An Officer will follow up on this.

Badger – There are still some other outstanding issues:- FP95 Worfield upgrade to BW, FP3pt.Badger upgrade to BW, and BW addition.

Culmington – The order to add a Footpath is due to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate. The BHS objected, stating it should be a Bridleway.

Llanyblodwel – This has been part confirmed, with a few outstanding issues to send off.

Frodesley – These Orders have now passed to Shona. It is hoped to deal with this soon.

Drumbles, Baschurch – This Order is still waiting for the last third of the BW claim to be resolved. This is the eastern section that was ridden most recently.

FP 65 Bentall Woods - This is still being progressed. If no agreement has been reached after decisions on Barrow & Broseley have been received, the Order will be published.

BOAT Diversion at Bucknell - This was dealt with at the Magistrates Court.

Badger Dingle – The deadline for getting things to Lucy is November.

The importance of good user evidence, and people to attend to speak to their evidence was stressed. It is agreed that Hearings are much better than Inquiries. Creation Agreements can be done as a priority.

Stiperstones Diversion – The access from the car park needs to be resolved with Simon Cooter.

Long Mynd Gliding field proposed deletion and additions.

Agreed - Linda to ask Helen Foster what the reasons are for the Long Mynd BW Group's objections to the proposals.

Sue E asked if there was any update on Route 45 (Natural England) in the Wyre Forest.

6. List of Streets and UCR's

There has not been another Byways Liaison Group meeting for John to attend. None are currently planned. There is concern over routes not properly recorded. Salt Lane, Golding, Pitchford is not given any status on current highway maps, but is clearly shown on old OS maps coloured as a public road. The ramblers have raised concern as the route has recently had a private notice put on it. People recall driving down it and many people have ridden it.

It is very important that we have a definitive map of public highways.

Agreed that Zia will follow up on this, and take it to the Local Access Forum.

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders – Zia discovered that access information for horse riders, walkers and cyclists has been left off recent TTRO notices to save money, but was told by Ron Buzzacott of Highways that the information was available from Shropshire Council and on the Council's website. On checking, Zia found this was not the case, there was no information on the website and no one could tell her what access was available to horse riders on published Orders. When the Orders are logged at Highways they have to state the access available through during the works, so do have the information. **Agreed** that Zia will follow this up.

7. Public Forest Estate in England

Zia's response to the Independent Panel on Forestry 'Call for Views' is noted, together with her survey of formal and informal access available in Forestry Commission woodland in Shropshire. Zia's survey was also sent as part of the response from LAF. Due to admin changes, the LAF response was late being sent, but the secretariat to the Panel confirmed to Zia that it has been accepted. The Panel have received over 40,000 responses and will be giving a progress report in November.

8. Draft National Planning Policy Framework Consultation

Zia has done a feedback on this for the LAF response and now needs any input from the Group before the 17th October deadline. It is a very woolly document. Ancient trees are mentioned but there is no mention of ROW, or the need to address ROW before works are carried out. There is concern that planning decisions under Sustainability could impact on horse riding routes and the countryside. Many riding routes are lost or compromised due to planning decisions. It is believed that a lot of the feed-in documents for Shropshire were approved last year, which many people may not have been aware of, so there is now no chance to influence these.

Agreed that Zia will respond on behalf of the Group

9. Minutes and Feedback from LAFs and other Forums

The Minutes of the Local Access Forum Meeting held on 13th May 2011 are noted. Zia updated from the LAF meeting held on 9th June 2011. The LAF Agenda, papers, and the UCR presentation are all available on the Shropshire Council website under Local Access Forum.

Most of the subjects relevant to the Group have already been covered in our Agenda. The England Access forum has now been disbanded. Jim Stabler is currently the LAF Area Co-ordinator, but there are changes due. Natural England is subject to major restructuring and this, together with The Community Infrastructure Levy, will be on the Agenda for the next meeting on 20th October at 10am at the Shirehall, together with, hopefully, the National Grid Power Line proposals.

David Wise, the LAF Secretary, has taken early retirement, and Linda Jeavons has recently been appointed to support the LAF meetings.

10. Any other Business

Proposed Wind Turbines by Jack Mytton Way near Bridgnorth. Gill Eyre confirmed that local riders are covering this.

Dates of the Next Meetings The next meeting, which is the **AGM**, is to be held on Monday the **6th February 2012**. The provisional date for the following meeting of Monday 4th June 2012 had been confirmed but, due to Queens Jubilee celebrations on that date, it has subsequently been changed to June 11th 2012. Meetings to be held in the Shirehall at 7.00 p.m. for 7.30 pm.