

Tuesday 25 September 2012, Shirehall, Shrewsbury

**1. Present**

Cllr Miles Kenny (Chair)  
Alison Kennedy  
Angela Shenton  
Bill Dorrell

Geoff Shinner  
Joanne Morison  
John Shenton  
Keith Mason

Kim Williams  
Martin Beardwell  
Peter Mathison  
Reg Potter

**2. Apologies**

Alex Grant  
Beth & Peter Holgate  
Eliz-Anne Williams  
Gavin Ashford  
Jill Henderson  
John & Jenny Leese

John Morris  
John Short  
Mary Diggory  
Mike Arthur  
Mike Clarke  
Paul Wagner

Peta Sams  
Peter Walden  
Philip Pool  
Philip Saltmarsh  
Rob Fris

**3. Previous minutes and matters arising**

***Times Campaign & Department for Transport – Cycle Safety Fund***

Shropshire Council was asked for an expression of interest and ideas for possible projects by end of August 2012. After reviewing pedal cycle accident reports (5 year records), requests for improvements and schemes in the programme, the following 5 sites were put forward:

- Heathgates island, Shrewsbury
- Abbey Foregate (section near Abbey), Shrewsbury – Martin gave his support for this.
- Column roundabout, Shrewsbury
- Reabrook roundabout, Shrewsbury
- Whitchurch Road, Morrison’s junction, Shrewsbury

Note – there were 12 sites in Shropshire with 3 or more pedal cycle accidents between 2007 and 2011. 11 sites are in Shrewsbury, 1 in Oswestry. Also suggested by Forum members were all the islands on Shrewsbury’s link road, including Meole Brace Island. (Further changes are planned here as part of the southern urban extension). **Action: Shropshire Council has to complete an application form for funding by end of November 2012.** *For more information* <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/cyclesafety/article3456974.ece>

Many of the sites identified through the Times campaign were on trunk roads. Alison sent these to Highways Agency who have responded with information on possible improvements for some of the A5 islands. (*Edgebold, Emstrey and Whittington*)

***Smithfield Road refuge, Shrewsbury***

After two Scrutiny Committees, Shropshire councillors have voted to remove the refuge (installed 2 years ago). Forum members stated that they were ‘appalled’ and ‘disgusted’ by this decision. It is likely to be removed mid-October, over 2 nights (*night working times are usually 7pm to 6am*).

***NCN Route 81*** Alison has followed up request for sign to be replaced at Church Road, Uffington.

**Asda Cycle Parking** The old cycle rack is back!

**Cycling in schools – recent successes in Shropshire with the Sustrans Bike It project**

**4. Oswestry, getting started – Jo Morison, Sustrans Bike It Officer**

Jo Morison started her 3-year post in April 2012. She is based in Castle View, Oswestry but works closely with Transport team in Shirehall, and is part of the Sustrans West Midlands team. Her work in Oswestry encompasses 8 primary schools, 1 secondary school and 1 College.

Progress so far has included making contact with schools; booking meetings with head teachers. By July, she had 4 schools with Bike It champions and was starting to book activities. The reaction from schools has been mainly positive, although some schools have concerns about infrastructure and traffic around their school. Other schools are keen to widen the project to include other modes of active travel – walking and scooting.

Key activities this term will include:

- Hands-up surveys
- Opportunities to communicate with parents
- Age specific cycle skills sessions - giving pupils more confidence to ride bikes
- Cycle to school days and free bike checks
- Themed assemblies
- Be bright, be seen poster competition
- Two-Zero-Hero competition <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/freerangekids/get-involved/be-a-two-zero-hero-competition>
- Big Street Survey <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/freerangekids/get-involved/the-big-street-survey>

Questions following Jo's presentation included:

- Are there plans to improve infrastructure in Oswestry? Alison mentioned that colleagues are undertaking a traffic review at the moment
- Can parent parking be restricted – possibly moved away from school gates? Many schools support informal Park and Stride schemes e.g. Gateacre Park for Woodside Primary. Other schools have 20mph advisory speeds.
- Is affordability of cycles an issue? Yes, this does seem to be an issue. Possible sources of cheap bikes include Shropshire Furniture Scheme and Police auctions
- Is there a Bike It officer in Telford? Not at present, but Sustrans happy to provide more information for schools who wish to request Bike It.

## **5. Shrewsbury, three years on – Kim Williams, Sustrans Bike It Officer**

Kim provided an informative and entertaining presentation entitled 'Bike It Shrewsbury: The Evolution' (Cycle Forum members failed to get the hidden references to evolutionary books...). Kim has been working with Shrewsbury schools since September 2009. 17 of the 18 primary and junior schools have had at least 1 year of involvement with Bike It, and 13 primary and junior schools are currently active Bike It schools. Shrewsbury 6<sup>th</sup> Form College and Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology are also involved.

The origin of the data used for Kim's presentation was from hands-up surveys in the schools (junior pupils only – Years 3,4,5,6). 3 years of data from 6 schools shows that:

- The percentage of children cycling 3 or more times a week has doubled since 2009
- This higher level of frequent cycling has been sustained for 3 years
- The percentage of children who have never experienced cycling to school has decreased (Shrewsbury is the first Bike It project in the country to report on the data...)

Closer analysis of the data showed that in the first year of Bike It (2009 to 2010) there was a big increase in levels of regular cycling (1 or more times a week). This levelled off during 2011 and 2012. However, levels of regular cycling in 2012 are still higher than 2009 and at 25% are close to the national average of 27% at Sustrans project schools.

Factors influencing the levels of cycling were considered:

- Car use - the percentage of children being regularly driven to school has shown a steady decline over the data period (52% in 2009 to 43% in 2012).
- Scooters! – significant increases since data collection started in 2011
- Changes in schools – staff changes and new infrastructure can have a big impact on levels

In summary:

- Levels of cycling seem to increase most dramatically in the first year of engagement
- The popularity of scooters is getting children to travel more actively for the school journey
- The percentage of pupils being driven to schools is gradually decreasing
- There's lots more work to be done! Including 15 bespoke Bike It projects, wider engagement (families as well as pupils) and older pupils (Y6-Y7 transition and College-University transition).

Questions following Kim's presentation included:

- Why are scooters so popular? There is a perception that it is safe on the footway. Scootability training is very popular, particularly with infants.

## Cycling updates

### 6. Cyclists' Touring Club Birthday Rides, Ellesmere 2012 – Peter Mathison

Peter explained that the CTC (Cyclists Touring Club) was founded on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1878. 40 years ago the then CTC President started the annual birthday rides (held in a different venue in August each year). The key thing is that there are a number of rides of differing lengths available from a central site (with facilities for camping, caravans and indoor accommodation).

This year's birthday rides were based at Ellesmere College and attracted 500 CTC members (about 250 indoors, 160 camping and the others staying offsite or living nearby). Peter showed photos of some of the highlights:

- Local scenery including; Gates of Chirk Castle; Chirk aqueduct; Pontcysyllte aqueduct
- Mass ride through Ellesmere town to the church, marshalled and supported by Ellesmere Chamber of Commerce
- Cutting of celebratory birthday cake and presentations to CTC members
- Attendance of members of all ages, and representatives of CTC Council including Chair, Professor David Cox

Local CTC members put together a range of rides, from 13 miles to 77 miles, plus a gazetteer of places to visit in the area. The route instructions (25 different routes in total) and gazetteer are now available from Shropshire Council in pdf format – please contact Alison for full details.

### 7. Shropshire – events and latest infrastructure projects

#### **Oswestry**

- Oswestry BikeFest took place this year (rather than Shrewsbury BikeFest) on a Sunday in July at Oswestry Leisure Centre. It included all the best bits of BikeFest: Dr Bike, Bike It, stabilisers off, cycle skills, Quest 88, BMX coaching. The format worked successfully and, if resources allow, it is hoped to plan another event for 2013, as well as Shrewsbury BikeFest.
- Feasibility design work for the railway path is progressing (focussed on urban sections). Topographical surveys and ecological surveys have now been undertaken.

#### **Ludlow**

- Food Chain cycle ride in July was a very successful partnership between Shropshire Council, Ludlow 21 and local food producers – weather was favourable
- Sheet Road zebra crossings were opened with help of local community at the end of August

#### **Shrewsbury**

- London Road zebra crossing is now completed
- Northern Gateway works started this week
- St Julian's Friars and Wyle Cop – public exhibition on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> October. Questions were asked about enforcement of parking on St Julian's Crescent ([not adopted yet](#)) and pedestrian priority from Greyfriars footbridge ([latest proposals at the junction of St Julian's Crescent and St Julian's Friars are that the raised table will be a shared surface, without give-way lines](#)).

### **Events and training**

- FREE Cycle maintenance courses are continuing and take-up is high
- FREE Ride leader training courses – more are planned including Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November, Shrewsbury. Please contact Alison for more details and booking forms
- Summer events have included; family Bike It activities at Sundorne Sports Village; Shrewsbury Street Theatre Festival; Women on Wheels (Shrewsbury and Oswestry); Go-Ride Games
- Love Your Bike Month is back for October 2012

### **8. National Cycle Network Routes**

- Route 45 – Bridgnorth to Coalport: Alison and Richard inspected the route in August. Geoff has visited recently and reports that potholes have been filled in for most of southern section
- Route 45 – Chelmarsh: reports of mud have led to alternative route details being posted on site. Alison will meet with Sustrans to discuss future of this section
- Route 55 – Silkin Way: south end near Coalport has been resurfaced over the summer

### **9. Any other business**

- [www.travelshropshire.co.uk](http://www.travelshropshire.co.uk) is now live
- Ellerdine Heath Garden Centre recommended for stops whilst touring
- Gay Meadow path has received a financial boost for feasibility work from Network Rail
- Ellesmere Birthday Rides show that bicycle business is good for towns. Suggests councillors and officers meet with local Chambers of Trade and shopping reps to discuss how cycling can benefit local business
- Advertising bike in Shrewsbury seems to have gone
- Work starts January 2013 on the Newport to Wolverley (old railway line) walking and cycling route to Stafford
- Scaffolding on Waitrose is making access difficult for cycle parking on Pride Hill, Shrewsbury.  
**Action: Alison to find out length of time. It's booked until 22<sup>nd</sup> October.**
- Next year's CTC Birthday Rides are planned near Stone in Staffordshire. Please contact Peter Mathison c/o Alison if you want to offer to help or suggest contacts in the area.
- New cycle leaflets will shortly be available for Much Wenlock (circular cycle rides) and Oswestry (family cycle rides).

### **10. Content, dates and venues for meetings in 2012**

Wednesday 5th December, Shirehall, Shrewsbury