

Shropshire Local Access Forum

Date: Wednesday, 12 October 2016

Shropshire Local Access Forum

Date: Thursday, 20 October 2016
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

You are requested to attend the above meeting.
The Agenda is attached

Tim Ward
Secretary to the Forum

Members of The Forum

Name	Fields of Interest
Trevor Allison	Walking/Tourism
Stephen Bell	Walking/Conservation Wildlife/Disabled Acces
Gareph Boxley	Motorised Vehicular Use/Conservation Wildlife/Disabled Access
Peter Carr	Walking/Canals
Alex Carson-Taylor	Rural Business/Land Owning/Farming/Conservation/Wildlife
Will Chambers	Cycling
Lee Chapman	Shropshire Council
Chris Chillingworth	Walking/Voluntary Activities/Community
Janet Mees-Robinson	Carriage Driving/Disabled Access/Tourism
Stewart Pickering	Motorised Vehicular Use/Countryside Volunteer/Walking
Roger Plowden	Landowner/Conservation Wildlife/Farming
Zia Robins	Horse Riding
Jim Stabler	Tourism, Walking and Disabled Access
Stuart West	Shropshire Council
Mark Weston	Horseriding/Carriage Driving/Voluntary Activities

Your Committee Officer is:

Tim Ward Committee Officer
Tel: 01743 257713
Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Welcome and Introductions

2 Apologies for Absence

3 Minutes and any matters arising (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on 21 April 2016.

4 Public Question Time

To receive any questions or petitions of which notice has been received from members of the public

5 Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

6 Outdoor Partnerships Annual Report 2015/16, Enterprise Plan and Shropshire Council Update

Clare Fildes, Outdoor Partnerships Enterprise Manager, will give a presentation outlining the key achievements and challenges for the team and the latest update from Shropshire Council.

7 Proposal to change the LAF to the Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Board (Pages 7 - 12)

Clare Fildes will present a proposal to update the LAF (paper on the proposal attached).

8 Ploughing and Cropping update

Shona Butter, Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader, will update on the result of the latest ploughing and cropping campaign

9 Shropshire Way Main Route

Peter Carr, as a member of the Shropshire Way Association, will give an update on the development of the Shropshire Way Main Route

10 Items for Information/Update, Feedback from other Forums and Future meetings (Pages 13 - 36)

10.1 Items for Information/Update

Shooting over Footpaths
AONB Partnership proposal to become a Conservation Board

10.2 The following minutes/papers are provided as updates for members:

- (i) Central Walking Forum
- (ii) North Walking Forum
- (iii) South Walking Forum
- (iv) Shropshire Riding and Carriage Driving Forum 8 February 2016
- (v) Shropshire Riding and Carriage Driving Forum 6 June 2016

10.3 Future Meetings

- (a) Members are asked to suggest agenda items for the next meeting.
- (b) Members are reminded that the next meeting will be held at 10.00am on Thursday, 19 January 2017

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Shropshire Local Access Forum

<u>Committee and Date</u>

Shropshire Local Access Forum

20 October 2016

**MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 21
APRIL 2016
10.00 AM - 12.20 PM**

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward
Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Roger Plowden, (Chairman)
Trevor Allison, Stephen Bell, Peter Carr, Alex Carson-Taylor, Chris Chillingworth,
Janet Mees-Robinson, Stewart Pickering, Roger Plowden, Zia Robins, Jim Stabler,
Stuart West and Mark Weston

13 Welcome, New Member Introductions and Membership Recruitment Update

- 13.1 The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and introduced Councillor Stuart West, the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture, and Jim Stabler who were attending their first meeting of the Local Access Forum.
- 13.2 The Chairman advised Members that Linda Jeavons would be retiring from the Council and that this would be her last meeting as Committee Officer for the Local Access Forum. He thanked her for all the work she had done for the Forum. Mrs Robins proposed a formal vote of thanks which was endorsed by all those present.
- 13.3 The Mapping & Enforcement Team Leader advised the meeting that further work had been done on the recruitment of members and that she was actively pursuing a number of organisations and interested groups. The Outdoor Partnerships Manager reminded members that Committee Members were appointed based on their interests rather than representing a specific organisation.
- 13.4 In response to a query the Mapping & Enforcement Team Leader confirmed that Natural England were still represented on the Forum but that due to capacity issues they were not always able to attend meetings.
- 13.5 Members suggested approaching outdoor activities groups and volunteer groups. The Mapping & Enforcement Team Leader agreed to follow this up.

14 Apologies for Absence

- 14.1 Apologies for absence were received from Gareph Boxley and Councillor Lee Chapman.

15 Minutes and any matters arising

15.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2015 had been circulated

15.2 Mrs Robins pointed out that there was a duplication in paragraph four of minute 5 and that it should be amended to read: -

With reference to Minute No. 39, final paragraph, a member reiterated her concerns with regard to the high number of errors on the OS ITN mapping layer currently available on the Shropshire Council local view Outdoor Recreation map layer; as many minor public roads are shown as private any errors on the maps could lead to Sat-nav errors. Shropshire Council had still not digitised the older highway maps and it was important that a copy of all maps were made and held secure.

15.3 RESOLVED:

That subject to the above amendment that the minutes of the meeting of the Shropshire Local Access Forum held on 15 October 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record

15.4 Mrs Robins asked whether there was any progress with the Integrated transport Network Mapping Layer. The Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader advised that there was no further progress to report.

16 Public Question Time

16.1 There were no questions from members of the public

17 Declarations of Interest

17.1 There were no declarations of interest

18 Rail Crossings - Presentation by Network Rail

18.1 The meeting received a presentation from Nick Carson and Andrew Bound from Network Rail, in which they gave a background to the work that Network Rail was doing with regard to rail crossings.

18.2 In response to a query members were assured that there was no "grand plan" to close all crossings and that each case was taken on its merits.

18.3 Members made the following points: -

- Concern was raised over provision of self-closing gates and the positioning of gates for equestrians use. A Member advised that the BHS have a very good advisory leaflet on provision at level crossings
- Could anything be installed which gives users an indication of when the next train is coming

18.4 The Outdoor Partnership Manager asked what the scale of the problem was in Shropshire. Members were informed that there were no major concerns in Shropshire

18.5 The Chair thanked Mr Carson and Mr Bound for attending the meeting and answering questions

19 Local Access Forum National Conferences

19.1 Mr Weston and Mrs Mees Robinson gave feedback on the National Conferences they had attended in Bristol and Leeds. They commented that there was a generally positive atmosphere at the conference. They informed Members that the conference had received presentations on disabled ramblers and multi user access, and an update on deregulation. Concern was expressed that some multi user projects excluded horse riders. With reference to disabled access Deb Hughes reminded members that Countryside Access agreed policy is gap – gate - stile

20 Southern Shropshire LEADER Programme

20.1 The Shropshire Hills LEADER Co-Ordinator reminded Members that the LEADER programme was part of the RDP and was managed by DEFRA, with £2 million funding over 4 years. He informed Members that the 6 national priorities were: -

- Priority 1 – support to increase farm productivity
- Priority 2 - support for micro and small businesses (non-agricultural) and farm diversification
- Priority 3 – support for rural tourism
- Priority 4 – provision of rural services
- Priority 5 - support for cultural and heritage activity
- Priority 6 – support for increasing forestry productivity

20.2 The LEADER Co-Ordination explained the types of projects that were applying for funding and took Members through the application and approvals process.

20.3 The LEADER Co-Ordinator referred Members to the LEADER pages on the Council Website and asked that if they had any further queries that they contact him.

21 Parish Paths Partnership Update

21.1 The Shropshire Outdoors Development Officer advised the meeting that she had taken over the day to day running of the Parish Path Partnership (P3) groups. She informed Members that in the past 12 months the number of P3 groups had increased by 6 and the groups had contributed £74,445 worth of work to the network.

21.2 The Outdoors Development Officer informed Members that she was currently updating the P3 manual and was working to create a better network for groups, using social media. It was reported Shropshire Great Outdoors website is very successful with a great deal of visit.

21.3 Members congratulated the P3 groups for all the work that they did. The Outdoor Partnerships Manager commented that the P3 groups played a key role on the maintenance of the network whilst helping to reduce costs. A member commented that it was important that Parish Councils support for the ROW network

22 Bridges/Large Structures on the Network

22.1 The meeting received a presentation from the Rights of Way Team Leader (Copy attached to signed minutes), which set out the management of structures on the rights of way network

22.2 The Outdoor Partnerships Manager stated that a key priority was the need to provide a good network within the current financial constraints and that work was ongoing to resolve this by using a more commercial approach.

22.3 A discussion took place around commercial funding of maintenance and suggestions included the potential for the sponsorship of bridges.

22.4 The Chair thanked the Rights of Way Team Leader for his presentation.

23 Landowner Leaflet

23.1 The Mapping and Enforcement Team Leader advised the meeting that the Landowner Leaflet had been widely circulated and that good feedback had been received.

23.2 A Member commented that there was no mention of shooting on rights of way and asked that an advice note be circulated alongside the Landowner Leaflet.

23.3 A Member congratulated Officers on the production of the leaflet

24 Outdoor Partnerships Update

24.1 The Outdoor Partnerships Manager advised the meeting that a restructure of the Outdoor Partnerships team would be taking place and that she would be leaving the Council on 30 June 2016. She informed Members that as part of the process the AONB Partnership had looked at other ways of management and were looking to become independent of the Council.

24.2 The Outdoor Partnerships Manager advised Members that responsibility for 97 urban green spaces had been passed to town and parish councils and that the management of parks and countryside sites was being assessed to maximise income earning possibilities in an effort to create a neutral budget. A discussion followed on ways of doing this and suggestions included sponsorship and updating facilities such as cafes and visitor centres to increase income earned. It was also suggested that more use could be made of volunteers.

24.3 A Member asked about the funding for the Walking for Health programme. The Outdoor Partnerships Manager advised that funding came from the public health budget and that it had been secured for the next financial year but that future

funding of the scheme was uncertain. A Member stressed the importance of countryside access to the economy of Shropshire

24.4 The Chair thanked the Outdoor Partnerships Manager for her presentation and for all the work she had done during her time with the Council. This was echoed by all Members.

25 Feedback from other Forums and items for noting

25.1 Items for Noting

A member asked for an update on cropping on rights of way. The Mapping and Enforcement Team leader advised that inspections continued to be carried out by volunteers.

25.2 Minutes/Papers

The following minutes/papers, which were circulated with the agenda for information, were noted.

- (a) Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Meeting – 25 June 2015
- (b) Shropshire Riding and Carriage Driving Forum – 5 October 2015
- (c) Shropshire Hills Forum – 9 October 2015
- (d) North Walking Forum – 19 October 2015
- (e) Central Walking Forum – 27 November 2015
- (f) North Walking Forum – 25 January 2016
- (g) Shropshire Hills Forum – 5 February 2016
- (h) Central Walking Forum – 26 February 2016

25.3 Future meetings

Members were advised that it was proposed that the next meeting take the form of an away day. There was some discussion about the date of the next meeting and it was agreed that Members would be canvassed for suitable dates and would be advised of the agreed date as soon as possible.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

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Shropshire Local Access Forum Review 2016

7th October 2016

This paper sets out the justification for a new structure to ensure a more resilient approach to the management and promotion of Outdoor Recreation in Shropshire. This structure will deliver the functions of a Local Access Forum and assist in the wider development of the Outdoor Partnerships Service for Shropshire Council to secure the future of publically accessible outdoor space and an improved Rights of Way network.

Background

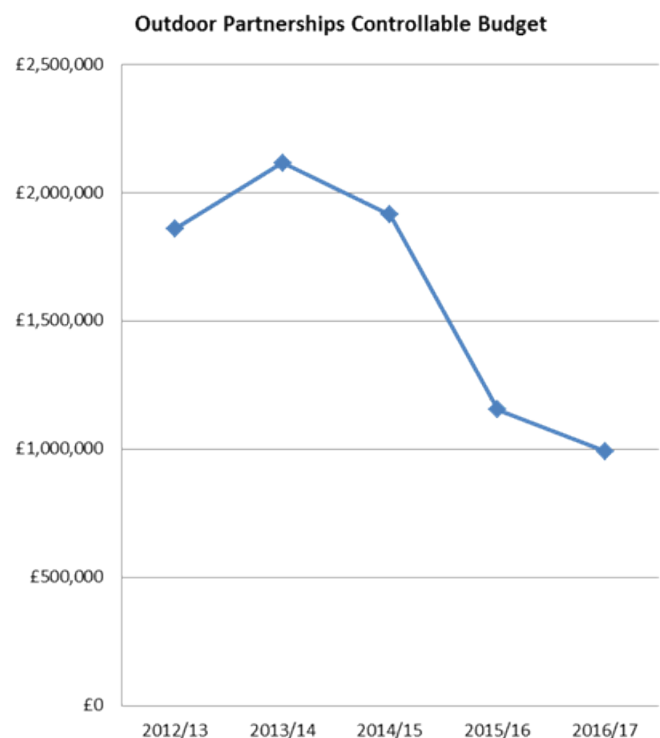
The proposed changes to the LAF have been prompted by the considerable political change across the country, and beyond, in the past twelve months. Political pressures include:

- The UK decision to leave the European Union
- Government austerity measures and the aspiration for Local Authorities to be funded through local Council Tax and Business Rates by 2020
- A move towards localism and the aspiration for devolved authorities
- Focus on economic growth and development, potentially at the detriment of the environment
- Impact of austerity on the NHS, Public Health and Adult and Children Services

As a result there is considerable politically uncertainty and unprecedented financial cuts which need to be addressed by a more sustainable and resilient approach to Service delivery.

The Outdoor Partnerships Service has had its share of the budget cuts and the Country Parks and Countryside Heritage Sites were amongst the services threatened with closure in the Financial Strategy published by Shropshire Council in January 2016.

We are not alone, Natural England are facing 50% cuts in management budgets for the National Nature Reserves, the Forestry Commission has undergone significant restructures and Shropshire Wildlife Trust is concerned about the impact of changes to the Countryside Stewardship schemes following Brexit.



The impact on the quality of outdoor recreation facilities available to residents and visitors in Shropshire as a result of these cuts could be considerable unless action is taken now to diversify income streams, influence policy development and further engage communities.

Influencing Policy

There is a significant opportunity to influence policy over the next twelve months. A number of local policies are being revised including:

- Shropshire Council Corporate Plan and Economic Vision
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Sustainability Transformation Plans

We also need to be working on the development of a new Countryside Access Strategy to be published in 2018.

In the wider context we need to ensure we are influencing across many other policy areas including:

- Public Health
- Adult and Children Services
- Economy- including tourism
- Climate Change
- Planning and development
- Countryside Stewardship
- Public parks

The Shropshire Local Access Forum (LAF) does not currently have the membership to influence at this level or the skills to deliver a more commercially driven, financially diversified service. It has been agreed at previous meetings that the LAF is not well understood outside the Service and the name itself could be discouraging relevant potential members. The aim is for the new structure to inspire and enthuse people who have the authority and expertise to wider our influence beyond the usual networks.

Local Access Forums

Key points from legislation:

- 10-22 members- max of 2 Council members if up to 16 LAF members or max 3 if 17-22 members
- Appointing Authority may appoint members at any time
- Members should represent users, owners and occupiers and any other relevant interests
- Membership should include a good mix of different interests
- Membership vacancies must be advertised in the local paper and on line
- Members should be appointed for a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 3 years but can be re-appointed
- Membership may be terminated if members have not attended for a year or have not disclosed a relevant interest

- There should be at least two meetings a year
- A Chair and Vice Chair must be appointed

The legislation associated with LAFs can be found here:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/268/part/2/made>

Proposal

It is proposed that the Shropshire Local Access Forum becomes the Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Board, with a number of sub-groups delivering specific priority actions agreed by the Board.

Aims

The aims of the new Board would be to make outdoor recreation in Shropshire:

- More financially independent and resilient
- More strategically importance across a range of sectors
- More action driven

Priorities

The priorities for the Strategy Board over the next two years reflect the current financial challenges and should include:

- Delivery of the Enterprise Plan- Business Planning, fundraising and income generation, including the development of a charitable organisation and promoting of the contracting team
- Development of the Countryside Access Strategy 2018-2028
- Promotion and marketing
- Increasing awareness of the benefits of outdoor recreation for health, the local economy and the environment
- Influencing and advising other departments, organisations and local and national policy
- Community engagement and volunteering

The Strategy Board would take on the role of the Local Access Forum as well as other duties and this would be reflected in a new Constitution.

Structure

The suggestion is to have a focused non-executive Board that consists of representatives from key organisations and networks who have the authority to make decisions and influence policy, along with the skills, experience and expertise to advise on the strategic direction of Outdoor Recreation in Shropshire.

A range of sub-groups would then be formed that deliver specific priorities identified by the Board. These sub-groups may be on-going or may exist for as long as they were needed and then be disbanded or morph to take on new activities. The advantage of the sub-groups is they will be

focused specifically on delivering key activities and will ensure partners and volunteers are contributing as effectively as possible, without spending time on issues they don't feel are so relevant.

Existing sub-groups such as the Walking Forums should be reviewed to see how they help deliver the agreed priorities, others groups will need to be formed from scratch, for example,

- Shropshire's Great Outdoors Foundation development
- Countryside Access Strategy development

The number and type of sub-groups needs further discussion.

Membership

Membership of the Board should include a key representative from each of the following, although it is hoped individuals may be representing more than one interest:

User groups:

- The Ramblers
- British Horse Society
- Cycling Forum (not currently running)
- Energize- County Sports Partnership

Owners and occupiers:

- CLA
- NFU
- National Trust
- Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Other relevant interests:

- Local Nature Partnership
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership
- Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country LPS

Council Members:

- Portfolio Holder

Individuals with specific expertise:

- Fundraising and income generation
- Outdoor Recreation development and strategy

Other people will be needed in sub-groups to deliver specific activity relevant to their skills and experience.

Timescales

It is envisaged the new structure would be active from January 2017, with a new Chair elected at the first meeting.

Recommendation

This paper is presented to the LAF for consideration and comment.

Contact details

Clare Fildes, Outdoor Partnerships Enterprise Manager

- Telephone: 01743 255067
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Agenda Item 10

Central Shropshire Walking Forum

Notes of Meeting

2pm, Friday 19th August 2016

The Wilfred Owen Room, Shirehall, Shrewsbury

Attendees:

John Newnham (Chair)	Shrewsbury Ramblers	john.newnham@btinternet.com
Audrey Menhinick	Shrewsbury Ramblers	audreymenhinick@yahoo.co.uk
Bill Hodges	Shrewsbury Ramblers	vibill@phonecoop.coop
Trevor Allison	Shrewsbury ramblers	eta-06@tiscali.co.uk
Bob Coalbran	Wellington Walkers are Welcome	bywrekin.bob@btinternet.com
Mick Dunn	Outdoor Partnerships	mick.dunn@shropshire.gov.uk
David Hardwick	Outdoor Partnerships	david.hardwick@shropshire.gov.uk

Apologies:

Helen Beresford
Clare Fildes
Dick Bailey

1. Welcome and Introductions (JN)

John opened the meeting at 2pm

2. Feedback/Action from Previous Meeting

There was no actions from the previous meeting.

3. Lost Ways Project (JN)

7 people have attended the Discovering Lost Ways training. The training was very worthwhile but it is not going to be an easy task. A lot of research and time will be required. JN will lead with taking the project forward.

4. Volunteering

a. P3 (HB) – Volunteer hours currently stand at 2477 for the year so far which is £16,650 in equivalent contractor costs. New groups are being started in Tilstock and Hinstock. Shropshire Way main route consultation has been launched. Everyone is encouraged to fill it in. the deadline is Sunday 16th Sep 2016. This year's Volunteer Celebration takes place on Monday 26th September at Nesscliffe. If you would like to attend could you please let Helen Beresford know on Helen.beresford@shropshire.gov.uk

c. Walking for Health - (MD) 18 new Volunteer Walk leaders were trained in July. The next Volunteer Walk leaders course will take place on Fr 07th Oct 2016. We have also trained 6 people as sighted guides to assist blind or sight impaired walkers. Another course will take place in Oct. The Ramblers "Walk About" festival will take place between the 3rd & 11th Sep 2016. <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/walkabout.aspx>

5. Ploughing and Cropping (MD) – In March over 120 letters were sent out to landowners where P&C issues had been identified in the past.

The breakdown of letters by area were:

Oswestry/N Shropshire	= 61%
South Shropshire & Bridgnorth (N&E)	= 20%
Shrews & Atcham & Bridgnorth (S)	= 18%

Results from first letters, following land owner feedback and/or inspections:

Routes not cropped in 2016	= 18%
Routes Cleared and reinstated	= 21%
Routes partially or inadequately reinstated	= 11%
Routes not Reinstated	= 45%

In May further letters sent to those who had failed in their obligations and were followed up by inspections in June/July. Legal notice has been served on 6 landowners. Immediate remedial action was taken by 5 landowners. The campaign is ongoing and it is anticipated that further legal notices will need to be served.

6. **Shropshire Way Circular Route (AM)** – The Shropshire Way Association is now a constituted body. They are looking to raise £2000 through donations for way marking the new route and also looking a potential funding from HF Holidays and Meres and Mosses LPC. A public consultation is now open (closes 18th Sep) <http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/shropshire-way/> looking at the 4 possible routes.

7. **Other Updates**

- a. Urban Green spaces have now been taken over by Environmental Maintenance – some handover going on. Town and Parish Councils are being approached to see if they would like to take on their Green Spaces.
- b. Shropshire Outdoor Contracting and Consulting – web pages/promotional literature are being produced.
- c. Ongoing development of the Big Lottery bid for Healthy Shropshire Outdoors. Piloting work with schools, workplaces and probation service.
- d. Severn Way development – bid to EU being considered. Expression of interest is due in September. Another meeting is to be arranged soon.
- e. Shropshire Great Outdoors membership scheme due to be launched in September.
- f. Public Health report is attached.

8. **Group Updates**

- a. **(BC)** Wellington Walkers are Welcome & Walkabout Wrekin – Very busy promoting the Wellington Walking festival <http://www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk/Festival.html> 12th - 18th Sep including a display in the Princes Royal Hospital promoting the festival and Walk About Wrekin. Path maintenance work continues concentrating on clearing overgrowth at the moment. Project being developed to improve the paths in Lime Kiln wood. A working group is being set up by the LAF.
- b. **(JN)** Shrewsbury Ramblers – WaW status for Shrewsbury is progressing slowly and being led by Shrewsbury Tourism. Mike Connor filling in Draft Application, **(BC)** has offered advise based on experience of wellington WaW application. Shrewsbury RA are putting up a display in the library advertising the festival of walks 3-11 Sep <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/walkabout.aspx> . Shrewsbury Ramblers will be having two weeks away next year in May and October which will be organised by a subcommittee.

9. **AOB**

MD – Much Wenlock Walking weekend taking place 9th – 12 Sep <http://www.muchwenlockwalkers.org.uk>
DH – Severn Wonders of the Shropshire hills walk takes place in Minsterley on Sun 4th Sep.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

Fri 18th November 2016. 2pm – 4pm. Shirehall Shrewsbury

NOTES FROM NORTH SHROPSHIRE WALK FORUM

MONDAY 25th JULY 2016

Present: Trevor Allison(Ramblers), Peter Carr (Ramblers), Mark Cuthbert-Brown(Kinnerley P3), Tony Eccleston (Wem Walkers), Liz Evans(W4H), Jane Ing (Myddle P3), Ian McKenzie (Kinnerley P3), Ann Moore (Whitchurch Walkers), Neil Moore (Whitchurch Walkers), Harvey Morgan (ROW maintenance), Barrie Stephens (W4H Oswestry), Kevin Sutherland (Hinstock P3).

Apologies

Shirley Pemberton, Clare Fildes.

From the last meeting

No issues raised.

Ploughing and cropping

Cropping Campaign

Trevor reported that 90 sections have been looked in north Shropshire, and almost half are now walkable, although this does not mean in good condition. Main problem is maize and oil seed rape.

90 identified landowners received 1st letters to remind them of their responsibilities.

40 identified landowners required 2nd letters with slightly stronger wording

The number of people receiving 3rd letters giving notification of action is still to be determined.

Paths that have been unavailable in the past are now walkable.

Whilst carrying out this exercise, new problems have been found and will be targeted next year.

This has felt to be a partial success overall and he hopes next year will be better.

There was a brief discussion about a new type of electric fence being used to keep rabbits out, but no conclusion to this.

Neil said he had noticed isolated cases of improvements in local footpaths.

Peter said if people report footpath issues this year, they will be highlighted in next year's campaign.

He added that if volunteers are trained to report issues properly with precise locations and pictures etc, officers will only need to go out to inspect regarding the 3rd letter.

Promotion of volunteering

Volunteer Day

This year's volunteer day is on Monday 26th September at Nescliffe village hall.

If anyone has ideas for activities please let Liz or Helen Beresford know.

Mark is going to contact the army camp to see if they will do a guided walk for us, or even provide an activity.

Liz is going to contact Brisbourne geese farm to see if they will allow us access to Nesscliffe from the village hall.

Walking for Health

The next volunteer walk leader's course is on Friday 7th October in Shirehall. Please contact Liz if you would like to come.

The walks in north Shropshire continue to do well with the exception of Oswestry.

P3

Peter was pleased to report that he re-visited a kissing gate he had recently installed, and found a man who was very happy as he had not been able to access the field for years as he could not negotiate the stile.

Walkers are Welcome

Peter reported Oswald's Trail has 700 downloads per month.

Liz to contact the town clerk to arrange a meeting to try to find support for walking in Oswestry.

Neil said the walking festival will be 12th to 14 May next year. A new venue is required as the Cock and Greyhound do not wish to host it again. He also mentioned they have more members now as a result of the festival.

Everyone agreed it would be good to get more businesses on board, but not sure how to do this.

Peter said there is a national walking festival in September, details here:

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/walkabout>

Oswestry Ramblers will incorporate their usual walks into this.

Development and promotion of routes and economic value of walking

Shropshire Way update

This now has a constitution and steering committee, including a Chair, Treasurer etc. and is formally in existence. There are 4 possible routes which are going out to consultation.

A budget of £11,800 has been established, with a gift of £2,000 already. Peter is liaising with Ramblers Holidays and the Meres and Mosses for funding. This budget includes £3,000 for new furniture, £600 for interpretation boards, website updates and a handbook. The next meeting is September 20th.

Henry V Pilgrimage update

Trevor and Jane reported this was a lovely occasion and went well, and Henry V seems to have been forgiven following him removing his outer garments and dipping into the Holy Well.

Trevor said the only issue along this route was a very boggy area around Montford Bridge. Once it was established this was not the river, he and Harvey will have future discussions as to what can be done.

AOB

None

Date of next meeting – Monday 24th October, 2pm, Ellesmere Town Hall.

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Notes from Shropshire Hills Forum meeting:

10 – 12.00: Friday 3rd June 2016, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre.

Welcome and Introductions

Feedback focused on the 3 priorities identified by members:

Promoted routes:

War Walks– feedback and future plans (Keith *Pybus*):

War walks progressing well. Average at 3-4 miles as they are interpretative walks. Aiming for better mix of Saturday / Sundays for future walks. Usual start time is 11am.

Themes useful way to get coverage for walks. Ludlow walk gained coverage in the Shropshire Magazine 'The Courage of Ludlow', (based on houses in the centre of town who lost men in the War). Good turnout.

Programme details fixed for this year. Rest of scheduled walks also mapped out. KP working with Brown Clee walkers and Ditton Priors History group on August walk, based on Conscientious Objectors camp and the Finnish Sailors at Burwarton. Sept walk – Much Wenlock.

Shropshire Way (*Clare Fildes and Keith Pybus*)

CF. Ramblers made request for a single Shropshire Way path. Currently rather a cobweb of routes. CF showed map of proposed main route, this is based on existing route, and achieve a single route for those who wish to walk as a long distance path. This route will be sent to OS mapping and feature on SGO (Shropshire's Great Outdoors) website. New clearer waymarks will replace old ones.

PJ and Clun P3 have volunteered to re-waymark route in Clun Parish. Group discussed need for arrow to be incorporated in the waymark version used. Colouring TBC- current favoured is a cerise pink. Rambler's paper on visibility would be useful to look at – **KP** to locate paper and provide to **CF**.

11 out of 12 at meeting in favour of white surround and enclosed arrow. 1 member in favour of WM minus the white surround.

ML to feedback to **Audrey Menhinick** (Shrewsbury Ramblers) the recommendation by the Forum is the waymark with the white outer circle and arrow within the white circle as the clearer image.

Suggestions made by the group: Mocking up a short section of route to check clarity, and printing arrow in line with the beak of the bird. HB: When logo and WM is located, the arrow should follow line of travel and the arrow should be at 12 o'clock to the design.

CF. Costs rise if have more than one colour. Key to main and minor routes will be indicated on rectangular signage located on posts. Timing for changes and OS mapping discussed. Digital OS has changed but current OS paper maps feature the previous version. Main route will be shown as SW on OS maps, the other minor branches off the SW will be shown on OS map as ROW, and will appear in publications and on the ground.

ML: Shropshire Way association (SWA) has been reformed. Proposal to be made at July's meeting to make SW a constituted group. This would enable group to apply for grants.

ML: At SWA's recent meeting it was agreed need to get WM's in place in one go - work planned for October 2016. Old waymarks to be removed. To minimise confusion Forum noted clear instructions needed to P3 groups and others involved. Hd'A: Could we use companies with social responsibility volunteering to assist? HB/ ML: Consideration how best to address crossover into Telford. Use of bands on lamp posts discussed. Telford use aluminium finger posts.

Mayflower project: (update from *Keith Pybus*)

He had approached our MP for help with where and how to obtain funding. This unfortunately was not forthcoming. CF will now follow up.

'Grow Cook Learn' plans for developing the Discovery Centre as a walking hub (SHDC)

CE/CC: Continuing to develop centre as a walking hub. Routes reced for leaflets, and centre selected by Mouchel but unfortunately no funding received. If anyone knows of alternative funding, contact CE or CC. ML- would Ramblers holidays funding be an option? CE to contact Peter Carr to investigate.

KP led recent bluebell walk. KP to work with Centre looking at further themed walks. Currently working on autumn walks programme. CC has wonderful photos of bluebells if anyone needs these for illustration on literature. Offa's Dyke Path talk by Rob Dingle 7th July 7.30pm. Walking for Health goes out on a walk from the centre each Wednesday and a Nordic walking leader also runs regular walks. Reminder centre is run by a charity 'Grow Cook Learn'. Visitor numbers up by 15%. Idea of food walks discussed. Wild food themed walks project done some years ago by AONB- CC to contact **NMcD** for details.

Volunteering updates:

P3 (*Helen Beresford*) -see attached notes

P3 distribution of groups is located on Shropshires Great Outdoors Website page.

TL: could we share our good work and achievements with other local councils? Some liaison with other counties has been taking place.

Walking for Health (Helen d'Albert) -see attached notes

Wild Team (Helen Beresford on behalf of Simon Brown)

Craven Arms and Oswestry groups going well, please contact if any works you would like Wild Teams to assist with. Transport volunteers needed. Contact SB if you know of anyone who would like to help with this.

Discovery Centre

Had Volunteer-drop-in-day on 27th April, interest received from 6-7 people, most wanted outdoor roles and were referred on to SB and the Wild Team. Walking for Health had a display. Looking for helpers in Café and those to talk to visitors about walks and what is available in the area if anyone knows of anyone please contact CC.

National Trust - no one present to feedback at meeting today.

Volunteer Celebration event: (Helen Beresford and Helen d'Albert)

End September? Date TBC. Venue: Nesscliffe village hall and surrounds.

Request made for photos of project work with few brief words from volunteers, to showcase achievements on display boards and appear on Photo slideshow through the lunch. Please **all** send photos and information to **Helen Beresford**.

Ideas floated for event: Having a P3 training session as part of the day? (Comment also made that it may be useful to run a P3 training course at Disco. Centre for brush cutting at some point). KP- 5 min First World War Centenary video including War Walks should be available by then. Themed walks?

Volunteer Supplement 'News from the Chair': (Hd'A, HB and KP)

'News from the chair' idea floated with the Forum. **KP** happy to provide a short piece for the publication, next issue due out in July. Bluebell walk has been used for the forthcoming publication. Aim is to show work carried out and the benefits. Quotes and feedback useful to include. KP wished to highlight the qualifications of the Forum present and gathered info from those present at the end of the meeting to put into the piece for the Volunteer supplement.

KP noted that all our themed walks are made possible by the work done to ensure paths stay accessible.

Bob Hockenhall Midlands today- looking for good news stories if anyone wishes to know details CF can put you in touch.

It was noted that there is a need to collect volunteer hours from others in the Forum, e.g. KP, to help highlight for funding: **KP / CF**

'The Walking Book group': (KP)

KP – highlighted there was a Walking book group started by Hd'A's predecessor Ian Permain. Mary Gill coordinates group which is going well.

Hedging and finger posts: (Ted Laidlar)

Problem with damage done to posts from Hedgers and farm contractors cutting too close to the post in Hopton Castle area. Metal finger posts suggested by DH Area officer. ML felt this would be backed by the Ramblers. HB recommended putting an insert at the top of post to make replacement easier. Suggestion from group: Could a higher flag post be attached to the top of posts painted white to highlight these and make more visible for the hedge cutters? Note made that if an area is particularly vulnerable with consistent incidents then a metal post can be put in. ML- landowners need to be aware of the preservation and care of the posts and thus advise their Hedge cutters to take appropriate care.

Council update: (Clare Fildes)

There has been a recent management restructure within Outdoor Partnerships Department. Manager Deb Hughes is taking voluntary redundancy and leaves at the end of June. An Enterprise Manager is the job role that will replace this in the structure- congratulations to CF who is taking up this role from July. CF will continue to lead on the Health and Economy Team, including Walking for Health, the Wild Teams and LEADER. The new management structure is attached.

Paul Butter has been promoted to the post of Contract Development Officer and will be leading on securing more commercial work through Shropshire Outdoor Contracting.

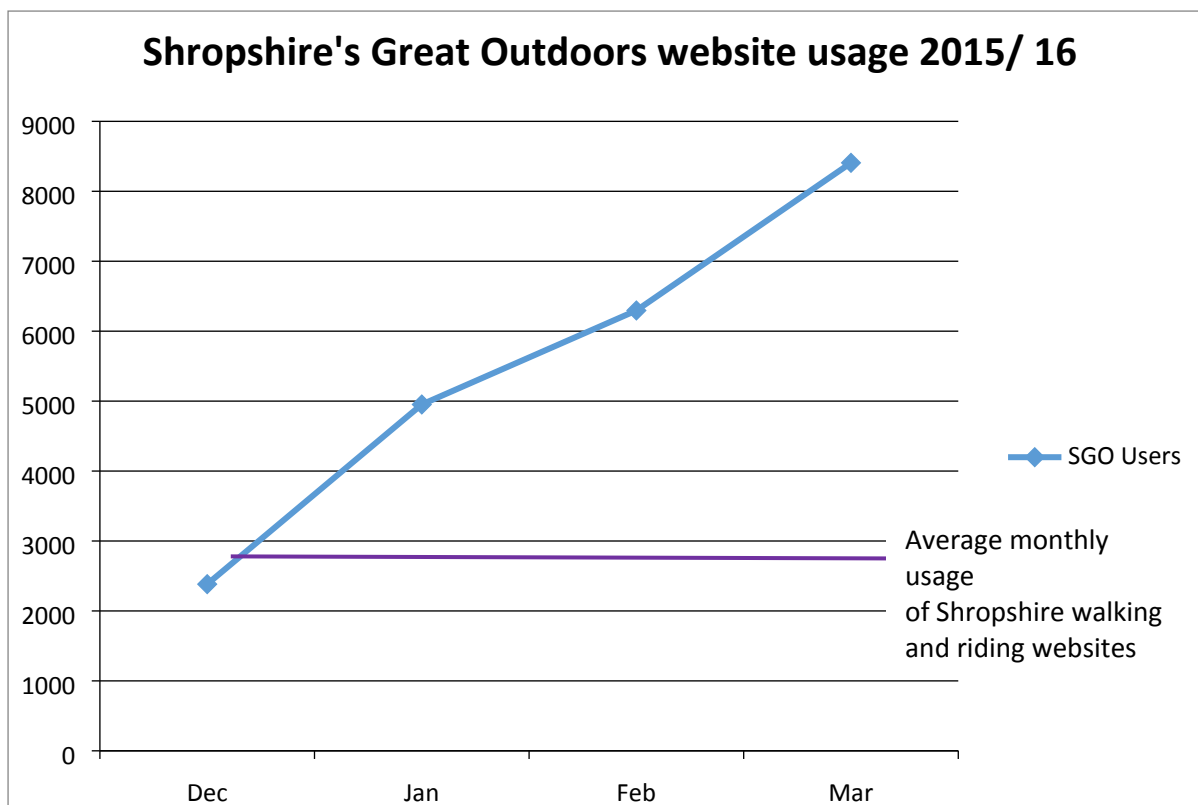
An Enterprise Plan for Country Parks and Countryside Heritage Sites has been agreed. The focus will be on income generation and an update on this and a map of the site are attached.

The health outcomes of the team are funded by Public Health until March 2017. There are concerns over funding from April 2017, when ring-fencing ebds and there will be pressures to spend elsewhere. A funding application for a 3-4 year Big Lottery funded project called Healthy Shropshire Outdoors is being developed. A summary of this project is attached.

Ploughing and cropping – Enforcement team leading a project on this at the moment, good progress made. New guidelines for Farmers leaflet – very positive feedback from members of the Forum to this.

Outdoor Partnerships survey results being collated and will be available soon.

Excellent results from Shropshire's Great Outdoors website, achieving great results- see graph below:



AONB update – (Nigel McDonald) – please see update sheet attached.

Caring for God’s Acre: Cherishing Churchyards Week (Keith Pybus)

Walk taking place on Sunday 5th – Halford and Stokesay.

AOB & reminder of next forum meeting date: 14th October– Venue TBC

Butterfly ID training workshop on 18th June 10-3 pm Discovery Centre.

Dates for your diary:



LED BY IWM

War Walks on the Home Front, Sat 23rd July. **Shropshire VCs** Hopesay to Sibdon circular walk – the eldest daughter of the Hancock family – designers and makers to this day of the Victoria Cross is buried at Sibdon – KP will tell the stories of Shropshire’s 4 VCs en route. To book contact KP.

Sun 7th August. Cleobury Mortimer **Simon Evans walk – second section** – see attached information sheet.

Sat 27th August. **From the Baltic to Burwarton** Rendez-vous Ditton Priors church.

How 100 Finnish Sailors worked in the woods and may have built the first sauna. The Conscientious Objectors' camp; they worked in the quarry on Brown Clee. In 1918 one of their huts was set alight – arson. Linear walk transport back to cars. To book contact KP.

Sat 10th Sept. War Walk on the Home Front **Wenlock's War Hits Home** Awaiting details from the organisers

SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING FORUM (SRCDF)

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 8th February 2016, at 5.30pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

1. Attendance:

John Gibson, British Driving Society, Chairman. Zia Robins, Shrewsbury & District RC A&BWO, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Linda Russell, South West Shrewsbury BW P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Mike & Jan Baldwin, Broseley Bridleways. Caroline Le Butt, Long Mynd Bridleways Assoc. Jan Mees Robinson, Telford Bridleways. Steve Benbow, Oswestry Riding Club. Shona Butter, Shropshire Council. Clare Fildes, Shropshire Council.

Apologies:

Andrew Kelly, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group. Pam Yuille, Underton, Bridgnorth. Mark Weston, BHS. Gill Eyre, BHS South East Shropshire, Cleobury Mortimer. Wendy Beaumont, Bridgnorth. Anthony Francis Jones Telford LAF. Gaynor Evans, Broseley & District BWA. Rosemary Pattenden, Worthen BWA

Prior to the start of the meeting Clare Fildes, Development Team Leader, Outdoor Partnerships, demonstrated the new <http://www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk/> Website. She explained that it replaced the three previous walking, riding and cycling websites, so the information was all in one place. All SC owned sites and promoted routes are on it, together with links to other providers, activities, and other relevant information, including links to legal information etc. on SC's website. She showed how each promoted riding route has its own page; with pdf's to print off routes; the information available on the new feature, the GIS based Interactive Mapping system, based on SC's mapping, and, as well as lots of other information, how all the different categories of Definitive Map ROW can be brought up separately or together, as well as UCR's, and how the base map can be changed to greyscale or to an aerial map; the later useful to see if the used line differs from the definitive. She showed how route reference numbers can be obtained, and explained other features of the site, such as Seasonal experiences and other outdoor Activities. She thanked Zia for her input for the website. The site is still under development; a next stage is to bring in partners information such as Wildlife Trust, Forestry Commission and National Trust. The previous websites were managed by Tourism, but the new site is now done in house, and Clare welcomed any suggestions, items, or suitable links for inclusion. Viewing results for the new website have been excellent. Clare was thanked for her helpful presentation.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5th October 2015 (paper A) were approved, and signed by the Chair.

3. Shropshire Council's Big Conversation and Financial Strategy

Clare Fildes informed the Forum that Shropshire Council has published the Financial Strategy for 2017/18 and 2018/19, which see a number of services under threat due to the Government Spending review. This aspires to Local Authority funding being dependent on Council Tax and Business Rates by 2020/21. The Council has got big decisions to make. The majority of funding in the County is required to support Adult Social Care and Children's Services, so have to cut other services. The worst case scenario will be the closure of parks and open public spaces along with other services. Other services such as ROW are seen as mandatory. The staffing and budgets have been reduced by over 50% in the past five years.. The ROW management team's importance is acknowledged, but they will have to do more outside work to bring in income. They are investigating the legalities of sites, and ways of raising income, and the development of sites will be looked at, and the possibility of a new membership scheme and corporate sponsorship. Zia

raised the importance of ROW and Countryside Sites to the rural economy, and the impact it had on a large number and variety of businesses, including many horse related ones, when ROW in Shropshire had to be closed because of Foot & Mouth. The Office of National Statistics 2015 quarterly review showed tourism to this country increased by 4.7%. World Heritage Sites encourage people into Shropshire and many came to enjoy the countryside. Cllr. Stuart West is the new portfolio holder, and the Director is George Candler. The Local MP is raising the issue of cutting funds with Parliament. The cuts will impact badly on Shropshire as it is such a rural area. Jan raised Statutory duties. These have to be maintained. Angela raised the increase in facilities for tourism, and bookings for them in the Ellesmere area. Shropshire is getting a lot of good publicity. We need visitors to bolster community services. Clare is looking at the pros and cons of charitable status and its potential.

4. Matters Arising

(a) Canal Towpaths

Zia reported that Wendy Capelle, Waterways Manager and Annie Sutton, Development & Engagement Manager, CART (Canal & River Trust), attended the last LAF meeting. They want to work with all users. Their presentation focused on walking, cycling etc. but did not mention horse riding. Mark Weston offered to be a contact for horse riding access. Angela raised the subject of filled in canals for riding routes. Zia confirmed that there is a section of filled in canal near Shrewsbury which is now a public bridleway.

(b) Deregulation Bill

It now seems likely that the regulations will not be out before July.

(c) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships annual public survey 2014-15

Members were reminded of the importance of filling in this year's survey and asking others to do likewise. The closing date is 21st March 2016.

(d) Solar Farm Applications

It was noted that the application for a Solar Park on land to the North of Moor Farm, Baschurch was granted.

(e) Level Crossings Review

The extract from the report in LAF News No 7 is noted together with the link to check local level crossings. Network Rail is to do a presentation to LAF on 11th February 2016. Members were asked to check any local crossings. It is noted that the rail crossing at Hanwood is a UCR leading to a BW, but it is not recognised as such by Network Rail

(f) Helicopters

It was noted that the BHS at their annual awards gave RAF Shawbury the Tarquin Award for making a significant contribution to equestrian safety. The Group agreed a letter of congratulations be sent from the Forum. High Vis Items could be ordered on the RAF website as more funding is due for 2016. It is important that we keep up the liaison as our big concern has been over landing sites which they agreed to consult on. John reported a big increase this year of complaints over helicopters by BDS members nationally, with the most in the Wiltshire and Somerset area

(g) Any other matters arising not on the Agenda

There were no other matters arising.

5. Shropshire Council

(a) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships

Shona reported that her team has produced a 12 page A5 booklet 'Guide for Landowners' available as a PDF and an A5 booklet will also soon be available. It is supported by the CLA and NFU who

will distribute copies electronically. It is a good clear document. There is a link to it, and to the Countryside Code, on the new www.shropshiregreatoutdoors website. They would like to do a similar one for users. They will get letters out earlier over cropping and ploughing. It is important that incidents are reported. If not complied with, they can go in and charge for clearing work. It was also raised that for a field edge bridleway, 3m of useable width should be left unploughed. Rural Payments Agency should be notified of bad offenders. Angela put forward that landowners should have the Landowner Guide information when filling in their forms.

(b) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Implementation Team

Following the very wet and windy conditions, Richard Knight's team has been very quick to respond to incidents of dangerous suspended and fallen trees, and large branches, both in the Nesscliffe Country Park area and Flanders Ford area at Adcote. The route problems on the Portway have been resolved with a link now cut through to the BW to Ratlinghope: it is not known if the part of the bridleway to Ratlinghope, which is on the wrong line is also to be moved by the National Trust. The current line has been in use for many years.

David Hardwick has reported that work is to be done on BW 104 for the Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Project as it is included in a new walking leaflet, and on BW10B through the Nature Reserve. The work will have to be to bridleway status. This is Rosemary Pattenden's area. She still wishes to be involved, but is now unable to drive to our meetings. Tim Simmonds is doing work in South Shropshire in the Kingswood, Wyre Forest area, and covers Newport, Weston Park, Cosford, Claverley, Alveley, Clee Hill and Much Wenlock areas. John Sutton Chairs the Clee Hills Bridleway P3 Group whose main focus is the area to the NE of Titterstone Clee Hill. Mark Weston is looking to do a P3 group in Weston Park area. Andy Lipa covers the Oswestry Area. Old Moors Lane UCR is now a legal through route but it is blocked at the east end. St Martins Parish has a million pound Lottery Grant for work in that area, so it is hoped that this will be looked at for inclusion. Harvey Morgan covers North East Shropshire and also the Nesscliffe Hills Country Park. The team at Nills are now looking to obtain private work to bring in money to invest into the ROW network. P3 Groups will still be supported, and work will still be done on the network. Work has already been done on Offa's Dyke, and they have been involved in project work at Corndon and Poles Coppice. It maintains the skills set and money earned will be put back into ROW.

(c) Shropshire Council Planning

Concern was again raised over planning. The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 allows Agricultural development on units of 5 hectares or more with no public consultation. Development is not permitted within 25 m of the metal part of a trunk road or classified road, but there is no consideration of ROW. In Ruyton XI Towns a new farm building was given permission in a prominent position, right alongside a public bridleway with access up the bridleway, which even the Parish Council was unaware of. There are bridleways in Shropshire blocked due to farm buildings, and other buildings being built over them. It was felt that Applicants should show the rights of way on their application plans. Shona confirmed that a large proportion of applications do not declare rights of way. They do pick up a lot, but some get through and they only find out due to users alerting them. Members felt that applicants should have to submit their plans showing the definitive rights of way, so there is no doubt over Rights of Way that will be affected by the development. Shona said that there is a local checking process by the planning team which should include the question 'have you checked the Definitive Map to see if you have any Rights of Way?' It is agreed that Zia will follow this up.

<http://planningpa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications>

(d) Shropshire Council Highways

It is confirmed that the old Highway maps are still with Highways. Shona reported that Lucy and Emily inspected them recently. Anita Corfield Jones who is with Highways Development Control, now works for Mouchel, but is still based in the Shirehall. She is very protective of the old maps, but there is concern if offices move, and staff change, that they could be misplaced, and there are

currently no other copies of them other than the photos that Zia has taken. The public can view them by appointment.

We are still waiting for the digitised list of UCR's that are now maintained by Rights of Way on behalf of Highways. They were conducting a 2nd survey of others. This is with Richard Knight. Zia to follow this up on behalf of the Forum.

Government's £3 million funded new digital road map OS ITN and Recording of White Roads by 30th March 2016.

Shona is concerned over where they are getting their information from. There are a large number of errors on this new mapping. The concern is over what they are intending it to be used for. It is unclear what is to happen to correct the errors. Some public roads are shown as private and there are a number of other mistakes.

6. Public Inquiries and Definitive Map Issues

Llanyblodwel BW– Andy Lipa is doing work on the opening up of the confirmed route.

Shawbury Restricted Byway 1A – This is now confirmed, but waiting for an adjoining landowner, who is a carriage driver, to open up his section of the Restricted Byway route. Jan understood that he has had two years to do this. SC will have to serve notice if he does not comply. The route needs to be correctly signed.

Shirlett – Shona reported that there are still ongoing problems here. Trees have been cut down to block the track, and broken glass has been put on the track, at the north end, which volunteers have cleared. It needs Richard's team to go in and sort it all out. Volunteers have had their vehicle tyres slashed. It needs surveillance put in to apprehend the culprit. John Gibson reported that when Carriage Drivers had an obstruction problem with gates being locked, they were advised by the police to photograph the offender. Shona will contact the local police, and write a strong letter to all the landowners highlighting the situation.

Adcote Bridge BW – Richard is still leading on the issue of the collapsed bridge. Two bridge arches have now collapsed. Costings on the different options are still awaited. He now has all the land ownership details. The ford should be opened up as it states in the order that it is available for use. The bridge is not listed; it is privately owned, and has private vehicular rights over it.

Broseley – BW addition Chapel Lane to Lodge Lane – Shona reported they have finally got agreement for the outlet. They are doing a Creation Order for the route available on the ground, and an extinguishment Order on the route originally claimed.

Oaks Wood – Still pending.

Frodesley Orders –Any rider evidence for the Frodesley Lodge claim should be sent to the Officers. They are currently working on the Statement of Case to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate. It is important that horse riders attend the PI to back up their evidence. Bentley Ford Farm claim is mostly historic evidence.

Drumbles Wood – this is next on the list for Emily to address, after Frodesley has been sent off.

Sutton Mill – With Lucy McFarlane.

Hilton – This is still waiting to be published.

Melverley – No Change. This is still waiting for enforcement of the correct width.

Purslow BW addition – looking to work with the Forestry to divert BW 10 to a useable route to link through.

Worfield BW 36 – Shona reported that they have moved the line at the north end so you can get out now, and an application for a diversion at the southern end had been put in today.

7. Stiperstones & Corndon Hill Project

Concern was raised that the Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Project, despite horse rider contact at an early stage, has produced routes for walkers and cyclists, which use a large proportion of bridleways, but with no inclusion of horse riders. Clare did not know why; she said it was funded by the Heritage Lottery and the access work was done by contract in the development phase and they are short on funding. Cross border routes were to be looked at. Zia confirmed that a linear

route across Stapeley Common is being looked at but this is not a gain as this is already well used. Zia has some circular riding routes, but it is very late in the project. There are things that could be resolved to make good routes, such as the status of Poker Lane, a UCR to the Powys border, but which has recently been gated off. It was a through route that led originally to just one property, a Beer House called the Powis Arms. There is also a gap in the network onto Stapeley from Rorrington which it is hoped can be resolved with this project, by dedicating it, as it is used as a riding route, and another public route which needs opening up work by Wilmington which would link heritage features that people do not perhaps know about. Horses are part of the heritage of the area. The feedback is that they have already decided on what they are doing. Shona suggested asking Jo Penfold how he is getting on. Clare said he was under a lot of pressure of work. Zia will send details and mapping of the proposed routes to Shona and Clare.

8. HM Government – Sporting Future a New Strategy for an Active Nation

The Report is noted, and the extracts by the BHS which are of general interest, some of which may assist when seeking new routes.

9. Minutes and Feedback from LAFs and other Forums

The minutes of the Local Access Forum Meeting held on 2nd July 2015 and meeting held on 15th October 2015 are noted, and that the next LAF meeting is on Thursday 11th February 2016 at 10am in the Shirehall. Agenda items include a presentation from British Rail, Southern Leader Programme on Rail Crossings, Bridges/large Structures on the Network, Landowner Leaflet. We have asked for Shooting over Rights of Way to be addressed by LAF and it is noted that an article on the Shropshire Star front page today states that Shropshire has more shoots per acre than any where else in the country. Landowners need reminding of the Shooting guidelines for ROW. The minutes of the Shropshire Hills Forum 9th October 2015, North Shropshire Walk Forum, 19th October 2015, and Central Walking Forum 27th November 2015 are noted, and that LAF Meeting papers are available on [Local Access Forum](#) go to 'browse meetings and agendas' for this committee. Cycle Forum - Zia had noted that in an email from SC notifying that the Cycle Forum was closing it told of a 'Countryside for all' 2 day event for the Corndon Hill Project which just said it was looking at walking and cycling routes. This could be why horse riding routes have not been addressed. A front page report in the Shropshire Star listed Nesscliffe Country Park as a good place for mountain bikers, but they are using routes there that are not legal routes for cycling, and are endangering other users. Concern was also raised by forum members over cyclists approaching horse riders from behind with no warning; some going past at speed. This is also a problem for walkers on tow paths. It is suggested that bells on bicycles would help. It just needs cyclists to call out 'Ok to come through' or even just 'Hallo' so that horse riders know they are there.

10. Any Other Business or items to Note

It is noted that BHS Access Week is 28th May – 5th June 2016.

It is noted that BHS Shropshire are holding a meeting on 'Claiming Lost Ways' at Dorrington Village Hall on Friday 11th March at 7pm when Mark Weston will be attending.

Angela raised the subject of roads shown with green dots, ORPA'S, and that there are Enclosure awards that confirm some of these are highways. Zia confirmed that all the ones she checked were UCR's, and many are shown on the 1929 Handover Map. Zia said some old roads were just scribbled out on Highways old maps. Shona confirmed that they are still legal routes unless there is evidence of a stopping up order.

11. Dates of the Next Meetings

The next meeting is to be held at the Shirehall on **Monday 6th June 2016 at 5.00pm for a prompt start at 5.30-7.30pm.**

The date of the following meeting is confirmed for **Monday 10th October 2016**

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SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING FORUM (SRCDF)

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 6th June 2016, at 5.30pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

1. Attendance:

John Gibson, British Driving Society, Chairman. Zia Robins, Shrewsbury & District RC A&BWO, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Linda Russell, South West Shrewsbury BW P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Gill Eyre, BHS South East Shropshire, Cleobury Mortimer. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Caroline Le Butt, Long Mynd Bridleways Assoc. Steve Benbow, Oswestry Riding Club. Shona Butter, Shropshire Council.

Apologies:

Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere. Andrew Kelly, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group. Pam Yuille, Underton, Bridgnorth. Wendy Beaumont, Bridgnorth. Anthony Francis Jones Telford LAF. Gaynor Evans & Mike & Jan Baldwin, Broseley & District. BWA. Rosemary Pattenden, Worthen BWA. Jan Mees Robinson, Telford Bridleways. Mark Weston, BHS.

2. Election of Chair, Vice Chair and Officers

As no nominations were received, and John, Zia and Linda are willing to stand, **it is agreed** by members that they be adopted en bloc. **It is agreed** by members that Angela should be asked if she will be willing to stand as Vice Chair.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8th February 2016 (paper A) were approved, and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

(a) www.shropshiregreatoutdoors website - Update

Zia reported that following Clare Fildes' presentation to us at our last meeting, she has notified that they are in the process of adding a plug in to the website to create a proper events calendar. Zia asked if they could list horse friendly pubs, of which there are a lot in Shropshire, and what facilities they provide for horses, but was told that they are not keen to add businesses to the site as they do not have the resources to update. Steve said it is very traditional that pubs are horse friendly. John reported that on organised events, when using facilities, risk assessments have to be produced, and that insurance can be an issue.

Zia reported that she has helped with the website providing the text for a large number of the 'Other Activities'. For Archery, Golf, Running etc. she did a list of clubs, but she recognised that it could be difficult with pubs as the site would have to list all of them, with the facilities for walkers, cyclists etc as well as horse riders. A lot of route leaflets on the site do list local pubs close to the routes, and a number of pubs provide parking for routes. Zia is hoping to expand the 'Carriage Driving' entry under the 'Other Activities' button, but she has been very busy.

(b) Council's Big Conversation and Financial Strategy.

The document on the Country Parks and Heritage Sites is noted. Shona confirmed that these are to be nil funded. The Council are looking to protect these within the Council, and safeguarding the sites for the future, by looking at ways of generating income, including parking, membership schemes, charitable and external funding, wood processing etc. and working towards a cost neutral position. A lot of money needs to be raised to maintain them. £115k by 2017-18 and £173k by 2019/20. They will be looking to ask Parish Councils to take some of these on.

(c) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships 2014-2015 annual public survey

The analysis of this has not been finalised, but there were only 493 responses. Most respondents stated they used outdoor facilities to improve their health and for exercise, and the responses showed that, a very large variety of different activities took place in addition to walking, horse riding and cycling, including:- running, photography, history, volunteering, climbing, nature study, bird watching, conservation, archaeology, archery, power gliding, guide dog training, fungi hunting etc. There were no responses from carriage drivers. The responses came from all over Shropshire and from members of lots of different groups and organisations, as well as individuals and visitors to the County. Reasons for use included for peace and quiet, and to explore wildlife and nature. The biggest off putting factor was vegetation, also intimidating live stock, lack of signs, ploughing and cropping, obstructions, stiles, dog mess, lack of parking, bad road crossings, lack of maintenance etc. Bridleways that end in footpaths were raised and also inconsiderate cyclists were raised by walkers and horse riders, and the lack of warning of their approach. A lot of respondents wanted circular walks and circular bridleways. 62% used Country Parks and Sites. The frequency of use has increased with many using at least once a week, with daily use increasing, and also 78% of respondents used for two hours or more.

John said that he understood that BDS members had not responded as it was felt that there were only a small number of people who responded to the surveys, and Carriage Driving involved the public roads more than other sports. John said that a horse drawn vehicle does not have to have to give an audible warning of approach unless it is a mail coach.

It was felt that the surveys are still not user friendly for horse riders to fill in.

Zia felt that with the survey being open from 2014 to 2015 people became confused as to whether they had already done a survey for that year if they had responded to the previous one in January, February or March 2014.

Shona said the survey is very important to their service to show both what the public wants and their concerns, and what their service should be focusing on.

(d) Level Crossings Review

Shona reported that they had been out with Network Rail to look at crossings, frequency of use, etc, but she has not had any recent contact on this. She understood that they do not want to close any in Shropshire, but do want to amalgamate or divert some crossings. Andrew Bound, the Route Level Crossing Manager for our area, did a presentation to the last LAF meeting. There are issues with crossings which Zia has raised with him, including provision for horse riders. Zia handed round photos of a bad crossing at Yockleton with self-closing gates with high handles to open them, very close to the line, and with poor sight lines. The BHS has recommendations that gates should be set back from the line and should not be self closing nor have high handles. Tack etc. can get caught on these trapping riders on the line. It is noted that the rail crossing at Hanwood is a UCR leading to a BW, but it is not recognised as such by Network Rail's website: only cyclists and pedestrians are acknowledged with signing, the main gates appear electric, but are locked, the side crossing is not suitable for horses riders, being narrow with side gates not well positioned for horse riders to open. There is a telephone there but it is not easy to operate on horseback. Andrew has asked Zia or the ROW team to send him any issues or comments with regard to rail crossings, but states that it can take a long time to improve their assets due to funding/resources.

(e) Helicopters

It is noted that as agreed at our last meeting congratulations on receiving the BHS Tarquin Award were sent to the RAF on behalf of the Forum. Kim Leach has sent an update to say that their recent Rider Awareness Day was attended by about 25 people including BHS representatives. Our Forum had not been notified of the Day. Zia was only contacted at the last moment as they were short on rider numbers, but members had other commitments. Kim said that it was clear from feedback on the day how much easier it was to see riders wearing high viz, as this was demonstrated by pilots wearing high viz on bicycles. Kim has given talks at Dolfor Riding Club and Country Treks Stottesdon, and just about all the hi viz kit ordered for 2016/17 is now spoken for. Linda reported she had heard Chinooks would be operating from Shawbury. Concern was raised that the RAF focus now seems to be on riders wearing high vis, but it is important that they still consult on landing sites and are aware of Public Rights of Way when carrying our airborne manoeuvres and landing. John is involved with the BDS on helicopters.

It is agreed it is important that we keep up the liaison, and invite the RAF to update us at 5.15pm prior to our October meeting.

(f) Stiperstones & Corndon Hill Project

Zia reported that she has now mapped out some routes for horse riders which she has sent to Joe Penfold and copied to Shona and Clare Fildes. These included a circular route used by riders via Rorrington to Stapeley Common, which needs a short section resolved. She is still waiting to hear back from Joe on any decisions on these routes. The Project has so far only published walking and cycling route leaflets which include a large percentage of bridleways, but with no mention of horse riding. An 'Aim' of The Project was to include access to and learning about heritage, and the access should also include horse riding routes which, with gates, can also be used by the disabled. Zia had requested to be involved on behalf of horse riders from the beginning, as had Sue Lee, on behalf of the Long Mynd BW Group, and Zia is liaising with Sue. Zia has been told that they are planning to do improvement works on bridleways for the walking routes, including surface work at Pontesford Hill, where bridleway gates are to be changed to oak ones, surface work at Poles Coppice, and gate improvements near Hogstow Hall where there is also a bridge safety issue which Zia reported years ago.

(g) Any other matters arising not on the Agenda

Cycling warnings

Members recently raised concerns over ongoing problems with cyclists not being heard when approaching horse riders from behind. A recent letter in the Shropshire Star highlighted that pedestrians encounter the same problem. We have in the past raised this with cycling organisations, suggesting they ask their members that, for the safety of the overtaking cyclist, as well as the horse rider being overtaken, they slow down and give an audible warning, such as calling out 'coming through'. John asked if there was no longer a legal requirement for cyclists to give an audible warning of their approach such as with a bell.

Another concern raised was that of the noiseless approach from behind of electric cars.

Natural England Dedication of Higher Access – Stiperstones

Nothing has been heard on the proposed dedication of Higher Access rights on the route up from Perkins Beach which branches north from the bridleway to the ridge route shown on CROW Section 16 Dedications Stiperstones NNR Higher Rights Map 10. Shona will follow up on this with Natural England.

5. Shropshire Council

(a) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships

It is noted that the 'Outdoor Partnerships Service Structure July 2016' document, sent by Clare Fildes, has been circulated by email to forum members today, and that Deb Hughes will be

retiring on 1st July, from which date Clare is appointed Outdoor Partnerships Enterprise Manager, and will act as a direct report to the Team Managers. Clare will also continue to manage the Health & Economy Team and provide a link between the Teams and the rest of the Commissioning Directorate. Paul Butter is now Contracts Development Officer involved in getting outside contracts for the Implementation Team, the funds from which will be used to supplement the ROW budget, His remit also includes looking after the Shropshire Way, Jack Mytton Way etc. Helen Beresford now looks after the P3 Groups.

It is noted that the Countryside Access Strategy for Shropshire 2008-2018 is due for renewal in 2018. Shona reported that she will be asking for views on it. There will need to be a number of updates.

(b) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Implementation Team

Shona reported that the main focus of her team recently has been on ploughing and cropping. Initial letters are sent out, then inspections done, and follow up letters are sent out. If works to reinstate are still not carried out then they will serve legal notice on the landowner. If the routes are still not reinstated, the team can go in and do the work, and charge the landowner. There have been some who have reinstated the wrong line, or not reinstated a useable surface, which then has to be resolved, but overall, feedback and compliance has been good with landowners. Shona reported that her team is also preparing for the revision of the Definitive Map. Revisions have not been formally done since 1st September 1965. This is a big undertaking.

Richard Knight has reported that his team are now doing summer clearing, and topping of some routes. News from P3 Groups:- The Long Mynd BW Group now has 2 strimmers, and Linda reported her group may soon have one, and that they have done work on gates and tree clearance. The Clee Hills Group is doing drainage work at Detton. The Tong group, which Mark Weston is involved with, had a meeting to look at sorting out drainage on a track. The Broseley BW Group is still involved with the Shirlett route. It is understood that the Volunteer Event will be held at Nesscliffe in September.

(c) Shropshire Council Planning

It was not known what the current situation is with regard to Planning and SAM Dev, as a Developer has now challenged SAM Dev on a planning application at Back Lane Ford. This application, if overturned, will impact on the Humphrey Kynaston routes at Ford.

Concern was raised over a Shropshire Star report that Government plans to fast track applications to help the planning process, with developers able to choose whether to submit their plans to the local authority, a rival council, or separate Government approved body, who will handle the administrative side of the application and the compiling of reports, but with the final decision still to be made by the local authority.

An Inspector has turned down an appeal on a site for two houses and a farm access up Bridleway 7 in Ford, part of the Humphrey Kynaston Way, over which the Applicant does not have any vehicular rights of access. The Inspector highlighting the impact on the views from the bridleway and the change of surroundings from open countryside to “a more urban appearance” and the “more frequent comings and goings of vehicular traffic along the bridleway likely to be associated with the introduction of two dwellings” also “walkers and riders are likely to be particularly appreciative of the existing rural character of this approach to the village which would be diminished by the appeal scheme”. This is a landmark planning decision as it recognises the importance of off road public riding routes.

It was reported that a planning application has been put in for holiday pods, toilet block and parking which will impact on public bridleways, and the Hill Fort at Nesscliffe Countryside Heritage Park. It is agreed that whilst holiday accommodation is important it should not impact on what visitors come to see.

<http://planningpa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications>

(d) Shropshire Council Highways

The subject of Quiet Lanes was raised. There are a number of these to the south of Shrewsbury, but Shropshire Council has said they are unable to take forward recent requests for them in Shropshire, including in the Nesscliffe area. It is noted that Telford & Wrekin are still putting these in as there was a recent newspaper report of one to be designated in Little Wenlock.

Zia reported that Peter Mackay, a member of LAF has put forward to The Local Access Forums a 'Blue Book for Roads' similar to the Blue Book for Rights of Way done some years ago and updated. It is important that white roads, dual registered roads etc are properly recorded.

Zia has followed up on when the digitised list of UCR's that are now maintained by Rights of Way on behalf of Highways will be available. Richard Knight reported that the 2nd Survey is done, but he has still to list them.

6. Public Inquiries and Definitive Map Issues

Llanyblodwel BW – Andy Lipa is still doing work on this.

Shawbury Restricted Byway 1A – The opening up of the confirmed route was being progressed, with signing, and the whole through route, including the forestry section, is being addressed.

Shirlett – Shona reported that here are still ongoing problems here, grass is being put on the surface, and the surface will need scraping to remove it, and private trees are being cut down to block the route. They are trying to get a security camera and may have to go to the police to resolve this. The southern end had been resolved, but then problems started at the northern end,

Adcote Bridge BW – Richard Knight has said that he does not want to open up the ford until he has resolved the issues on the bridge repair, but the Order states that the ford is open for use. This route is needed. It is understood RK has a meeting with Councillors over the bridge works.

Broseley – BW addition Chapel Lane to Lodge Lane – Shona reported that this is now all done, including the gates.

Oaks Wood – This is still pending. Linda said they put this in 20 years ago in 1996.

Frodesley Orders – is now with the Planning Inspectorate and they are awaiting a date for the Inquiry. It will be important to get people to the Inquiry to give their evidence of use of the claimed Frodesley Lodge BW route. It will help if they do a statement that they can present at the Inquiry. The definitive route runs right through Frodesley Lodge. Bentley Ford Farm upgrade of FP7 to BW is mostly Historical, but both routes interlink.

Drumbles Wood – will be addressed after Frodesley.

Weston Woods – The bridleway claims there are being addressed.

Sutton Mill – Lucy McFarlane is working on this.

Hilton – This is currently on hold. The outlet needs to be resolved.

Melverley – This is still waiting for enforcement of the correct width, when there is staff available to deal with it.

Purslow BW addition – The Order to divert BW 10 to a useable route to link through is ready to be published.

Worfield BW 36 – Shona reported that this is now ready to be published.

Montford outlet to BW – The Order to divert routes to enable the current permissive link to be dedicated as a Public Bridleway is next on the list to be done. Consultation has taken place.

7. Meres and Mosses Landscape Partnership Scheme – Restoring Marches Mosses

Luke Neal of the Wildlife Trust has approached Zia with regard to a proposed bid for HLF, which would include a ROW audit and evaluation of paths that could be upgraded to create

circular off-road riding routes around the mosses, and they wish to include horse riding groups. It was agreed that the Forum support this. When we previously addressed this for Natural England's dedication of higher access, information on riding and carriage driving routes was passed to Jim Stabler. It is not known where this now is. Shona said her contact at NE on Higher Level will know. She said Jim definitely put something in for this. Zia has passed the Wildlife Trusts request on to other parties including Andrew Kelly who may be able to help on the cross border routes, as the Meres and Mosses include parts of Wrexham County.

8. Minutes and Feedback from LAFs and other Forums

It is noted that the Local Access Forum Meeting to be held on 11th February was postponed until 21st April 2016 and the minutes are not yet available. Zia reported that the last LAF meeting addressed Rail Crossings, The National LAF Conferences, which Mark Weston and Jan Mees Robinson attended, Bridges and Bridge Repairs, with a report by Richard Knight which included mention of Adcote Bridge, and an update from Outdoor Partnerships.

The minutes of the North Shropshire Walk Forum, 25th January 2016, the Shropshire Hills (walking) Forum 5th February 2016, and Central Walking Forum 26th February 2016 are noted, and that LAF Meeting papers are available on [Local Access Forum](#) go to 'browse meetings and agendas' for this committee. There were no matters arising from these minutes that have not been addressed by our Forum.

9. Any Other Business or items to Note

It is noted - That BHS Shropshire held a meeting on 'Claiming Lost Ways' at Dorrington Village Hall on Friday 11th March at 7pm which Mark Weston attended.

It is Noted – That a follow up Seminar 'Have you lost your Way?' is to be held at Berriwood Farm, Condover, Shrewsbury SY5 7NN on Thursday 16th June 2016 at 7.30pm. People will be there to help and guide those attending as to the process for getting routes correctly recorded.

Dog attacks - these have been increasing, with many reports in the Shropshire Star of attacks on people as well as livestock. There has been a big problem on the Long Mynd with notices now put up there to warn dog owners following attacks on sheep. Horse riders are experiencing problems with loose dogs going for horses, and riders being injured.

A Bridleway is a Public Highway

Sue Evans had reported a dangerous incident between two riders and a vehicle driver with a trailer on a public bridleway, and queried what rights riders had whilst riding on a bridleway. Zia responded that a bridleway is a public highway, and recommended they contact Mark Weston of the BHS to get advice on the legal side.

Zia read from a newspaper report stating that a Horse Rider was awarded £12k compensation for injuries from the Motor Insurance Bureau after a motorbike with L plates, on a bridleway caused her horse to bolt. The case, and decision to award compensation, highlighted the fact that a bridleway is a public highway, and a public place.

10. Dates of the Next Meetings

The next meeting is to be held at the Shirehall on **Monday 10th October 2016 at 5.00pm for a prompt start at 5.30-7.30pm. To Note** -The RAF may attend at 5.15pm
The date of the following meeting is confirmed for **Monday 6th February 2017**