

SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING FORUM (SRCDF)

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 9th June 2014, at 7.45pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

At 7.15, before the start of the meeting, Squadron Leader Kim Leach, Corporate Engagement Relations Officer, and Squadron Leader Garry James, Station Flight Safety Officer from RAF Shawbury, came to inform us of a new safety campaign for Be Seen Be Safe. They outlined the approach that would be taken, and the scenario they would be following.

1. Attendance:

John Gibson, British Driving Society, Chair. Zia Robins, Shrewsbury & District RC A&BWO, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA Sue Evans, Beckbury, Ryton & Badger BWG. Gill Eyre, BHS South Shropshire East, South Shropshire. Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere. Carol Williams, Long Mynd & Dist BWA. Steve Benbow, Oswestry Riding Club.

Apologies:

Linda Russell, South West Shrewsbury BWG. Joint Secretary. Jan Mees Robinson, Telford Bridleways. Gaynor Evans, Jan Baldwin & Margaret Dutton, Broseley Bridleways. Anthony Francis-Jones, Telford BWA, Vice Chair. Andrew Kelly, Vrnwy & Dist. BWA. Pam Evans, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group. Rosemary Pattenden, Worthen BWA. Mark Weston, BHS. Pam Youille. Shona Butter, Shropshire Council.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 17th February 2014 (paper A) were approved, and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising

(a) Wind Turbines – update on applications.

It was noted that the application for a Wind Turbine at Conover has been refused. The Application for a 86.5m tip height wind turbine at The Hills, The Down, Bridgnorth 13/02194 /FUL is subject to an appeal. Representations can be made on the Planning Portal and the closing date is 26th June 2014. Our response will be carried forward.

Angela Williams explained the siting and setting of the family's planning application for a 327ft (99.7m) wind turbine at Tetchill, Ellesmere. 14/01777/FUL. She then left the room. As the lane is used by horse riders, and the turbine, at approximately 140m from the road, falls within the BHS guidance of 200m or 3 times the height, whichever is the greater, the Forum agreed that a letter should be sent to planning, expressing concern at the proximity to the highway. The standard Consultation expiry date is 24th June 2014.

(b) 'Paths for Communities' P4C.

Zia reported that the launch of the Humphrey Kynaston Way had taken place at Preston Montford Field Studies Council. The Field Studies Council has dedicated a section of new bridleway for HKW through their land, avoiding busy roads and giving a safe link from Bicton to the wider bridleway network. The route is open but there are some areas where improvement work has been delayed due to weather. This included a section of bridleway at Ford Heath where clearance and drainage work is still to be done. The two BOATS at Hinton/Polemere have been greatly improved. The overgrown water logged sections have been cleared, drained and stoned providing a safe useable surface. A number of gate improvements have now been carried out along the route, with some still outstanding. Catches have, where possible, been moved to the top of field gates,

and spring pull protruding bolts replaced with safe 'D' loop closures. The stock proof pull handle just below the top rail has been well received by the majority of horse riders. This is much easier to reach than a latch on the closing post, with nothing sticking up on the gate to get caught on. There may be places where a higher handle is needed. The whole project was done under tight deadlines with Zia having to research and write the leaflets and provide the photos. Shropshire Council and Zia were given BHS Access Achievement Awards and the landowners, including the Field Centre were given BHS Route Creation Awards. Zia had also been presented with a Volunteer of the Year Award by Shropshire Council. Members took copies of the HKW leaflets for their Groups.

Leaflets can be downloaded from the www.shropshireriding.co.uk website which is being upgraded as part of the Project. Zia is now collecting the details of businesses, pubs, accommodation providers etc. for the website.

(c) Helicopter Liaison Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th February 2014 are noted. The new Corporate Relations Officer, Squadron Leader Kim Leach, and Squadron Leader Garry James, Station Flight Safety Officer, RAF Shawbury updated us prior to this meeting.

(d) Dog Incidents

It was noted that a paper has been produced by Hampshire County Council and the Kennel Club 'Dogs on your land' available on www.hants.gov.uk/rh/row/dogs.pdf.

Zia reported that there are increasing reports of incidents of dogs on public routes not being under close control. Recently a dog caused two horses quietly walking on a bridleway on the Cliffe Common at Nesscliffe to bolt, chasing them until both riders were thrown, resulting in one rider being knocked unconscious and losing her memory for that time. The dog continued to chase the riderless horses. The owner was on a parallel track. A point raised was the problem when walkers with dogs step back to get off the track, but are hidden from the view of the approaching horse by bushes etc. and where dogs are allowed to run around in the undergrowth, which can spook a horse. Also, owners seem unaware that if they allow their 'just being friendly' dog to run around a horse's legs, the dog may get injured, as a horse will defend itself.

A point raised was that riders are having problems with the feral ponies on the Long Mynd, there has also been problems with colts corralled on a bridleway near Gatten.

It is important that all incidents are reported to the BHS website www.horseaccidents.org.uk

(e) Shropshire Highways

It is reported that there has been no progress on the digitising of the old Shropshire Highway maps.

(f) Any other Matters arising not on the Agenda

Natural England Higher Access – Mark Weston BHS has asked for input on this. Natural England land in Shropshire included the Stiperstones, the Meres & Mosses, and a small part of the Wyre Forest. This has been discussed previously and with Jim Stabler. Members were asked to consider any possible routes for higher access.

4. Shropshire Council

(a) Cuts and reorganization within Shropshire Council

Shona has reported to Zia that the new structure is in place, and that they are now called the Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Service. Jim Stabler is leaving at the end of October and Clare Fildes, who was with the AONB, has been appointed as the Outdoor Partnerships Development Team Leader, and will overlap with Jim from July. It is understood that Shona will be dealing with LAF. They are currently advertising to recruit a Shropshire Outdoors Development Officer, Active Volunteering, and a Recreation Maintenance Officer. They only have 3 Maintenance Officers at present, as Helen has moved to the Shirehall. They are Matt France, Steve Mayger and Rob

Purcell. There are no changes to the staff at the Shirehall, apart from the addition of Helen Beresford, who is now a Shropshire Outdoor Development Officer. Richard Knight still heads the Outdoor Partnership Team Right of Way, Mark Blount the Outdoor Partnerships Team Parks & Countryside, and Shona Butter the ROW Mapping & Enforcement Team with Lucy Mcfarlane, Mat Stephens, Jean Jones and Lucy Stanley.

(b) Outdoor Recreation Implementation Team

The Area Rights of Way Officers are David Hardwick for central Shropshire, Harvey Morgan for the north east, Andy Lipa for the north west, Tim Simmons for the south east and Paul Butter for the south west. Richard Knight has reported that they are currently doing their annual topping and clearing work but are short staffed due to Helen moving to the Shirehall. They have done a lot of work on improvements along the Humphrey Kynaston Way and Circular routes off and new gates are currently being put up near Longden Manor. Work has been done on a 24ft bridge on BW28 at Cleobury Mortimer. Negotiations are taking place over a flood damaged bridge on the bridleway by Adcote Mill, near Little Ness. A temporary closure notice is in place, but the ford alongside is legally still available. They have also worked with Powys on a £20,000 improvement work project on the Kerry Ridgeway. The department are now working with the Probation Service who have done excellent work clearing routes around the County. They did some of the clearing on the BOATs at Polemere/Hinton. Problems on a route near the big wood near Cheswardine were raised, John agreed to look into this.

(c) Shropshire Council Planning

Planning Applications are listed on: <http://planningpa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications>.

A lot of applications are being submitted for rural sites that would not normally be considered, but due to Shropshire not having their SAM DEV in place, many are being granted. This will impact on quiet country lanes, and on the route of the Humphrey Kynaston Way and Humphrey Kynaston circular routes. They include an application for 30 houses exiting onto a narrow single-track lane section of the HKW Ford Circular ride. ROW are not being shown on application maps, and applications are not being correctly advertised as affecting a ROW. This includes an application at Felton Butler for 3 new poultry sheds, with the access route going right across the end of the green lane bridleway that is part of the HKW. The new sheds if granted will result in the bridleway being sandwiched between two lots of poultry sheds. The weekly planning lists seem to miss off some applications which are shown under the Parish lists so it is important to check carefully and to make sure that ROW are aware of any application that will impact on a public ROW.

5. Public Inquiries and Definitive Map Issues

Shona has sent the following updates:-

Adcote Bridge – Following the temporary closure notice, which had to be issued due to flood damage to the bridge, which is in private ownership, they are currently seeking legal advice on how best to proceed. The closure does not apply to the ford adjacent to the bridge.

Broseley – BW addition Chapel Lane to Lodge Lane. There has been no change since the previous minutes.

Benthall Woods FP65 upgrade – The route is now open and available. This is excellent news.

Badger Wood – It was asked if riders could let Lucy know if they are still using this route. The Landowner has not responded to Officer contact. Also, is there any other evidence of usage by walkers and others. Sue agreed to follow up on this.

Oaks Wood – A Site Visit has taken place with Linda attending. They now need to re-consult as the used line on the ground is different to that which has been previously discussed.

Frodesley – There is no update on this. The Orders still have to be sent off.

Drumbles Wood – Shona reported that if they cannot negotiate with the Landowners, then this Order will have to be sent off to the Planning Inspectorate.

Sutton Mill – The Order need to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate.

Brogynryn – The correct line shown on the order is now being opened up and they are waiting for the physical works on the ground to be completed.

Llanyblodwel – The outstanding issues have been sent to the Planning Inspectorate.

Old Moors Lane – Zia to follow this up with Mat.

Hilton – This is still waiting to be published.

Lea Hall Quarry – They are awaiting an application from the Landowner. It is unlikely to be a Bridleway.

Melverley – There is still no change. The width confirmed by the Inspector is still to be enforced.

Duck Lane, Little Ryton to Ryton – There is no change. No claim has been submitted yet.

Welshampton FP addition – There was a claim that this route held higher rights, but the Order was confirmed as made as a footpath.

Pontesford Hill – A public Inquiry is to be held in November on claimed footpaths on the hill. The proposed development on the hill will impact on the bridleway. Angela had been sent details of the footpath claim.

Acton Round Shirlett – This is likely to be resolved in the near future. Further physical works are required on the northern end. They are liaising with Mike Baldwin.

Broseley Fish House Wood – Works have now been negotiated and the Officer will be opening this up in the near future.

Defra permissive routes were raised. Many are due to end soon, but there is no funding to renew them. Members are concerned at the loss of these valuable routes.

6. Canal Towpath Consultation

The British Horse Society response on the consultation by The Canal & River Trust on ‘Sharing Towpaths’, attached to the Agenda, which closed on 2nd May 2014, is noted. Zia did not know the BHS were including a list of canal towpaths that are or have been ridden as she could have added a number of routes to their listing. Angela was consulted by the BHS. 2,141 people responded to the Trust’s consultation. Zia did not have a contact address so had to do an online response. She highlighted that canal towpaths were built for horses to use. The old canal route from near the Maltings in Shrewsbury out to Uffington is now a public bridleway. Many canal side routes are ridden. Horses are being excluded from too many routes that are open to cyclists and walkers, whereas cyclists and walkers can use all the bridleways.

7. Rail Crossings and Public Rights of Way

Shona has reported that the Network Rail Officers covering Shropshire have made good contact with Officers within the Mapping and Enforcement Team, and Officers have attended site meetings with Network Rail to look at, and discuss, several crossings within the County. Final proposals will not be made until all areas have been assessed. As Lucy, Mat and Shona have been out with them on site, they are aware of who covers which areas. Due to this early liaison, Shona reported that Officers do not anticipate any major problems. It would be helpful if gated ROW crossings had a method of showing when the next train is due, or some sort of warning device.

8. Draft Deregulation Bill

Andrew asked for this to be put to the end of the Agenda as he hoped to speak on this subject but he has been unable to get to this meeting.

Shona has reported that the bill is now at the Report stage in the House of Commons. Day 1 of the Report stage was on the 14th May 2014 and Day 2 will be after the 4th June, the date on which the next session of Parliament starts. After the Report stage there is a Third Reading in the House of Commons, and then the Bill moves to the House of Lords. Details will be on the parliamentary website. It is not know if any changes have been put forward. The proposals for gates on Byways

was raised as a concern, especially if green lanes were gated and then used to graze stock. The County Council have to approve all new gates.

9. Minutes and Feedback from LAFs and other Forums (not already covered)

The minutes of the Local Access Forum held on 6th February 2014, attached to the Agenda, are noted. Zia takes our concerns forward to LAF. She reported that the meeting held on 1st May 2014 included European Funding and the Leader Programme, Local Nature Partnerships, the Humphrey Kynaston Way Launch, National Grid Power lines and Wind Turbines and their impact on tourism and Rights of Way. The proposed power line is shown as running along the line of a bridleway. Using volunteers is seen as the way forwards for Shropshire Council and the reason for the name change to Outdoor Partnerships.

It is noted that there is a LAF day out on 2nd July 2014 at Preston Montford Field Studies Centre and that the next full LAF meeting will be on 16th October 2014 at 10am in the Shirehall. LAF papers are available on <http://bit.ly/XNg7vP> go to 'archived list of all previous meetings' click on 'Agenda' and all Meeting reports are attached at the bottom.

10. Any Other Business

Zia attended the BHS Safety Conference, which covered some important subjects, including dangerous dog legislation and the equine transport rescue service. The importance of attaching a trailer brake cable to the tow vehicle and not round the tow bar was emphasised. Unfortunately one speaker, the British cycling Campaigns Manager, did not turn up

11. Dates of the Next Meetings

It was noted that the date of the next meeting is **Monday 6th October 2014 at 5.00pm for a prompt start at 5.30. The meeting must close at 7.30pm** due to evening closure of the Shirehall. It is agreed that we will see how the next meeting goes at the earlier time. It is confirmed that the following meeting will be held on **16th February 2015 at 5 for a prompt start at 5.30pm**

TO NOTE: All papers for SR&CDF meetings are now sent out by email.