

# MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE CYCLE FORUM

Tuesday 10 February 2015, Gateway, Shrewsbury

## 1. Present

Cllr Miles Kenny (Chair)  
Bill Dorrell  
Jenny Willmot  
Michael Willmot  
David Currant  
Phil Pool

Ray Hughes  
Emma Bullard  
Alex Ford  
Alex Grant  
Peter Mathison  
Peter Walden

Bill Craig  
Ian Gordon  
Martin Withington

## Apologies

Martin Beardwell  
Helen Gilmour  
[Will Baugh](#)

## 2. Previous minutes and matters arising

Amendment needed to attendance list – Alex Grant, Bill Dorrell and Helen Gilmour should be listed as ‘CTC Shropshire’.

MW gave Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Package (SITP) update. Marches LEP funding with focus on economic growth. 6 elements including way finding (part electronic) and walking/cycling network (tackling missing links and into urban extensions in south and west). Only a strategic plan at moment, detailed proposals in 6 to 12 months’ time with cost benefit justification needed to draw down funding.

Concerns expressed – car bias and focus on roundabouts (PP), signals systems need microwave detection – magnetic no longer appropriate for modern bikes (PM). Concern £10m won’t go far. Use of term ‘sustainability’. AG asked if a done deal? Essentially yes (see LEP consultation already taken place) but could influence the detail. Softer measures need to be linked to the new infrastructure – promotion of sustainable transport, training etc. Will cycling be given enough weight – probably not know until the detail comes out. EB said the challenge was for the comments to be made at the right time to the right people. MW share feedback with Andy Savage.

**Action:** MW to let members know timeframe for consultation on the detail.

Post – meeting information from Andy Savage in Highways Development Control:

He will shortly be submitting the Outline Business Case for SITP, to the LEP.

It is hoped that this will be accepted May/June and funding allocated for next year and beyond.

Once he is assured of the funding coming forward and when it can be drawn down (influencing the programme) he can then proceed with appropriate stakeholder and local member/community consultation.

This will probably start in the summer/autumn and continue on specific interventions based on the programme delivery.

DC asked if any plans for the other market towns. Place plans define infrastructure wish lists.

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/place-plans/>

DC not filled with confidence.

PM asked who was responsible for long term management of sustainable transport in Shropshire and who is the professional lead?

MW mentioned the scoring system for the capital programme under the Road Safety policy. There are three Area Transport Commissioners (Kevin Aitken – Central (old SABC area), Victoria Merrill - South and Matt Johnson - North).

These Transport Commissioners have a key role in prioritisation and scheme delivery. Officers with cycle infrastructure expertise have been lost e.g. Alison Kennedy and Jan Cook (left council) and Richard Harman (now in Development Control role).

PM asked if community cycling initiatives will be picked up beyond March. MW said that likely to be a drop in cycling softer measures though are looking at ways to find new funding including through the planning system and from housing developments. See contributions by developers through CIL. MW agreed that experienced cyclists need to be involved in capital infrastructure decisions.

### **3. Cyclist Provision on Emstrey Island (A5)**

A question had been asked about whether Shropshire Council had any input to the redesign of Emstrey Island. EB had asked how cyclists will get on and off the carriageway at Thieves Lane and Atcham Road. Jan Cook when in post had said Shropshire Council would help if Highways Agency didn't. Lights were switched on last week. Post scheme safety audits should identify such issues and the Sustainable Transport team will forward comments to HA.

### **4. Sustrans ranger requests for updates**

- NCNR45 cross town link at Bridgnorth – EB said no immediate prospect of building but still on the books.
- Signing of RR32 (alternative to A 49 between Craven Arms and Shrewsbury). This is currently an approved Sustrans regional route and is shown on the Six Castles leaflet (NCN 44) but not signed on-road. Will be useful for LEJOG riders and tourists so has safety and economic benefits which support the case for signage. *Use of See Sustrans NCN stickers* too. Hopefully go forward as a potential scheme in next year's programme.

As part of this route there is a long-standing request for cycle path on verge at Weeping Cross Island. MW said may be funded in future as part of local SAMDEV development.

### **5. Tourism**

- Visitor economy. Alison Patrick Tourism Officer at SC is helpful. Although only 2% who visit Shropshire say that cycling is the main reason for their visit, it is seen as a potential growth area for leisure cycling. There is a larger market for easier routes which would appeal to individuals and families who don't cycle regularly; this might be helped by more cycle hire businesses. The market for more challenging rides in hillier areas is smaller and more niche so easier to target. CTC have included Shropshire in their holiday programme in the past but not currently.
- Shropshire Cycleway – NEW. EB mentioned the new route which links up existing routes (NCN and market towns leisure rides) into a 185 mile round county route with an additional 40 mile Shrewsbury circular loop. This has been produced as a folder with 6 maps and will soon be available in Tourist Information Centres and libraries.
- Proposed Offa's Dyke cycle route – NEW. This is being designed by Transport Initiatives transport-initiatives.com for the Offa's Dyke Partnership and will be a challenging route.
- CTC: LEJOG route only; no touring holidays
- Self-guided tour companies: Wheely Wonderful, Byways Breaks

AG mentioned the Ellesmere CTC birthday ride routes (2012) which can be made available. The Travel Shropshire team has the information in the form of route descriptions but they haven't been designed as leaflets/maps for the general public.

## 6. Telford and Wrekin update

- BMX report from Derek Owen - No National race this year but planned for 2016. Midlands region race is programmed for August 2<sup>nd</sup> (Sunday). All welcome. Free entry for spectators.
- There was no update from Telford and Wrekin Council. Jill Henderson has now left T and W

## 7. Shropshire update – LSTF team

- 'Wheels for All' spring dates (see <http://www.travelshropshire.co.uk/cycle/wheels-for-all.aspx> ). Cycling Projects continue to offer weekend inclusive cycling sessions for children at sites around the county. Can help adults too but best to confirm in advance to ensure if right type of cycle can be made available. More details via contacting Ian Tierney [ian.tierney@cyclimg.org.uk](mailto:ian.tierney@cyclimg.org.uk)
- Discovery Centre, Craven Arms all-ability path. A project to provide an inclusive cycling facility at Craven Arms in partnership with Grow Cook Learn. Currently out for consultation - views to [ray.hughes@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:ray.hughes@shropshire.gov.uk) . DC said Ludlow 21 were fully supportive. CTC affiliated Cycling4All Shropshire acting as enabler for development of inclusive cycling in the county. See <http://www.ctc.org.uk/cycle-centre/cycling4all-shropshire>
- Spring Gardens, Shrewsbury design work. A shared use path on east side of Spring Gardens/ Ditherington Road between the Flax Mill and Comet Drive. Designed this year, built next.
- Shropshire Council contacts wef. 1 April.

### Area Transport Commissioners: (new schemes)

Matt Johnson, North [matt.johnson@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:matt.johnson@shropshire.gov.uk)

Kevin Aitken, Central (old SABC area) [kevin.aitken@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.aitken@shropshire.gov.uk)

Victoria Merrill, South [Victoria.merrill@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Victoria.merrill@shropshire.gov.uk)

### Area Highway Engineers: (maintenance, signs)

Dave Gradwell, North [david.gradwell@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:david.gradwell@shropshire.gov.uk)

Mike Davies, Central [Michael.davies@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.davies@shropshire.gov.uk)

Alice Dilly, South [Alice.dilly@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Alice.dilly@shropshire.gov.uk)

### Development Control (road layout and cycle facilities in new developments)

Mark Wootton North [mark.wootton@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:mark.wootton@shropshire.gov.uk)

Richard Harman Central [Richard.Harman@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.Harman@shropshire.gov.uk)

Gemma Lawley South [gemma.lawley@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.lawley@shropshire.gov.uk)

Kevin Aitken also has a sustainable transport policy role so is the best contact for general cycling issues. Kevin's role will be to bid for new cycling funding if becomes available in future. Cycling (promotion) portfolio holder is Cllr Karen Calder (public health lead) and Cllr Claire Wild for infrastructure. Reporting lines – Kevin/Chris Edwards Senior Commissioner/Clive Wright Chief Executive.

- Sustrans R81 work party (litter picking) Sat 7 March 10am-1pm meet Sports Village front entrance.

## 8. Shropshire Cycle Forum 1996 onwards - Philip Pool, founder member

Phil gave a speech asking what had changed since 1996. Gave example of town walls traffic calming which worked against helping cyclists by forcing them more into the road. Lots of positives. Shropshire successful in the past in getting funds. Number of cyclists cause for optimism. Bicycle still a wonderful form of transport which doesn't take up much room in busy town centres. Phil received a rapturous round of applause. Reflected on the fact that a number of previous Transport portfolio holders had been very supportive – Simon Jones, John Everall, Philip Engleheart. Advised running schemes past FOE to avoid mistakes being made. DC added his thanks to the support received from Ray in Ludlow for cycling promotion and community cycle rides. Felt it had been a positive two way relationship.

## 9. Next steps

Sustainable Transport Team receive redundancy notices from 5 March and little can be done after 1 April. Sustrans Travel Adviser team also finishing end of March. Not confirmed but possibility of Ray and Malcolm Farrar Road Safety Officer continuing with primary and secondary schools work (see statutory duties to provide road safety education and promote sustainable travel to school) but working for Mouchel consultants. Bike It officer (one remaining – Jo Morison) to finish in July at end of school term. Bikeability continuing (confirmed to March 2016) as separate funding stream from DfT.

Travel Shropshire cycling pages to be retained within Shropshire Council website and administered by Outdoor Recreation Team. Agreed we needed to retain the maps and other Travel Shropshire documents of value to the public looking for cycling information and suitable routes. Plan to continue arrangement for community to publicise cycle rides and events.

Future of Cycle Forum? Agreed there is an ongoing need for a lobby group. Could Telford keep it going? EB said in theory yes but they have not seen it a priority and have a local group TBUG – Telford Bicycle Users' group.

Mike W reflected on how the Community Rail Partnership had worked successfully but needed leadership. Martin W said Kevin Aitken could interact with a forum but not administer.

Felt a need for local issues and developments to be discussed perhaps in smaller groups in market towns. PM suggested ask each of the three commissioners to hold a cycle forum meeting for their respective areas and this was seen as a positive idea. Local cyclists would need to go to the commissioners with an agenda so would need to communicate with each other and reach some sort of consensus on priorities to ask for.

**Action:** Ask all attendees, past forum members if would be happy to share emails and join a virtual forum.

(Regarding planning and cycling, MW said training was being provided to highways and planning development control officers to support them in delivering more sustainable transport interventions from new developments.)

Bikefest – question asked could we still have one? The Community Council might want to get involved as a promotional opportunity for Wheels to Work. Would probably need to be a volunteer led event. JB mentioned Police Commissioner's Event on 5 July which Cycling4All Shropshire have been discussing with Christian Smith at SSV.

AG suggested any downloadable relevant documents on Travel Shropshire to be kept on own PCs so not lost.

**Action:** Bulk paper copies of route maps etc. are available on request – email [transport@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:transport@shropshire.gov.uk) or order from the website <http://www.travelshropshire.co.uk/cycle/cycle-routes.aspx> as soon as possible

Ray Hughes  
March 2015