

The Shropshire Cycle Forum

7pm Wednesday 19 June 2013
Craven Arms Community Centre

Minutes

1. Attendance

Miles Kenny (MK)	Shropshire Council (Chair)
Prof Rod Thomson (RT)	Shropshire Council rod.thomson@shropshire.gov.uk
Ray Hughes (RH)	Shropshire Council
Jean Breakell (JB)	NHS
Fran Virden (FV)	NHS
Will Baugh (WB)	Shropshire Council
Ian Yarroll (IY)	Sustrans
Peter Mathison (PM)	CTC and SC
Martin Beardwell (MB)	CTC
Eliz-anne Williams (EW)	Ludlow Easy Riders & Breeze
Philip Pool (PP)	FoE
Sacha Lee (SL)	Sustrans
Peter Crofts (PC)	CTC
Louise Reynolds (LR)	SSHA
Mandy Watton	SSHA

2. Apologies Emma Bullard

3. Minutes of February meeting

A true record. MB said Julian Friars scheme should be commended, a great enhancement. PM felt there ought to be some give way lines at the edge of the car park.

4. Cycling and Public Health

Shropshire's Public Health Service

Rod has been Shropshire's Director of Public Health for 4 years. Since 1 April has moved from the PCT to Shropshire Council when the function of public health improvement was transferred over to Local authorities.

The LA is now responsible for all aspects of health promotion such as school health, sexual health and drug misuse services. Felt to be logical to bring the functions back into the LA given opportunities for a more joined up approach working alongside transport, planning and other LA functions (and wider determinants of health).

Rod mentioned the Longer Lives campaign. Shropshire has been rated green being 51 out of 152 authorities in terms of premature deaths and cancer and 24th for cardiovascular disease. But these rankings can hide the fact that certain sections of the community are more adversely effected and there is a general issue storing up problems for the future in physical inactivity through increasingly sedentary lifestyles.

Losing weight v being more active. New evidence gives greater importance to the importance of physical activity and suggests that it's better to be overweight but more active than not at all.

10% of children are obese on starting school at 5 with 17% still obese by Year 6 and a third overweight. A trend for the population getting heavier. Overweight and obesity is becoming the norm. Shropshire does have higher than average levels of self harm. Isolation and boredom and depression has a link with physical activity also. Physical activity is underrated as a significant

cancer protector. Cycling has an important role in addressing long term conditions. Aerobic activity must be promoted and cycling is an activity that can continue through life and be woven into everyday life. It is affordable and an inexpensive mode of transport.

Road traffic accidents red rated, safety fears are a barrier for some. Qn How do we give parents the confidence to get their children out cycling? Rod mentioned his own experience trying to get his wife and 14 year old daughter to use their bikes. Rod described how his interest in cycling has returned in recent years.

Those in the Shropshire pollution who report they meet the minimum levels of physical activity each week (3 x 30 minutes) tend to over report and actually don't do as much as they say. Scope of the challenge is huge.

Team have started a trial - the pebble. A small device which records a person's physical activity as they move around during the day. Involving PH team staff and volunteers from the LA.

Some options moving forward

Work in partnership with local agencies e.g. Canals Trust, Wildlife Trust. Be as collective as possible.

People like challenges but only some will respond to 50k and 100k bike ride challenges so try short events

Involve enthusiasts and champions such as those attending the forum

Tackle us and them attitudes and work towards a better mutual understanding – examples of both poor driving and cycling behaviour

PC asked if the pebble was available for the general public. After the pilot they might become issued to the over 40s after their health check. Something positive to help people.

MB commented that Shropshire had done well for cycling infrastructure but was now witnessing some poor maintenance of these facilities e.g. Nesscliffe to Montford Bridge and grass cutting issues. Also outside Farr House.

Action: Miles and Rod to pick up on outside Farr House. (Miles also suggested contact Clive Wright, Shropshire Council's Chief Exec). Ray to investigate Nesscliffe to Montford Bridge and vegetation issue.

LR said the Probation Service had supplied labour from Tern Hill low security unit for grounds maintenance and many volunteers improve paths in Minsterley and across Shropshire.

PM felt there was a lack of political will but hopes the latest information regarding the cost benefits and health gains (plus helpful NICE guidance) will raise interest in working to bring about healthier lifestyles through more cycling promotion.

JB is a physiotherapist working with adults with learning disabilities. Felt that adapted bikes at the Sports village were underused. Costs high and lots of bureaucracy to hire. £30 an hour for use of track, £15 per coach plus bike hire. Example of trike hire at Telford Town Park given, can we replicate here?

Action: Ray to find out more about these adapted bikes and Telford activities.

JB described how her 14 year old daughter had enjoyed riding along the cycle path near the village as part of the Bikefest (with a reward visit to shops built in!) and was now planning a 5k

run with her friend as part of Run for Life, something unimaginable until only recently. Having an achievable challenge and sharing the challenge with friends a useful model.

PS. See recent Times article -

http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/cyclesafety/article3789794.ece?CMP=OTH-gnws-standard-2013_06_12

Cycling and residents' health and well being.

Louise described South Shropshire Housing Association, a large support service to some 800 residents with some 30 workers in South Shropshire. Support workers play an important part in getting people healthier. Invited her team to take up cycle ride leader training provided by Ray and Emma at Travel Shropshire. 5 workers received training and are now keen to develop a programme of short, safe social cycle rides offered directly to their clients. Ride leaders to act as role models helping build confidence and self esteem. Described a ride in Ludlow with Ray, support worker Paul Roberts and two male adults with learning difficulties. Got them out of the house, a chance too to try something new, plus additional skill such as using money at a cafe on route. Helping tackle depression. Intergenerational too with link up with Foyer project (hostel for young people leaving care) for use of their bikes.

Would like to spread model further. Mandy in Craven Arms, Bishops Castle too. Aiming to have 4 bikes in each hub plus cycle storage. Looking for grant help here.

Would like to access a tandem to help a deaf resident. RH mentioned Bishops Castle Tandem Triathlon July 6 and opportunity to advertise for a second hand tandem.

<http://www.tandemtriathlon.org.uk>

Peter said he'd ask in the CTC and also felt such residents might also benefit from being able to care for bikes and learn some basics of maintenance and repair. LR said the Furniture Scheme offer training and again, cycle repairs could be another project possibility given funding.

National Updates

Get Britain Cycling

RH urged all to sign petition if haven't already at <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/49196>

20's Plenty

<http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk>

MK reported that although there is great interest in developing 20 mph speed limits in residential areas signage requirements need either 20mph repeater signs or calming devices to "warn" motorists that the normal limit does not apply. He shares the 20's Plenty campaign view that this imposes huge costs on local authorities for signage where they want to create a consistent speed limit of 20mph, when it would be far more cost effective to instead put repeater signs on the roads with a 30mph limit. This would still allow the placing of 20mph repeaters and calming devices where appropriate at the discretion of the local authority.

http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk/its_time_for_20.htm

RH said that communities call for more streets with 20 limits would be via local parish and town councils and at certain times of the year. Go to <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/highways-and-traffic/road-safety-in-shropshire/shropshire-council-road-safety-policy/>

CPS Guidance on dangerous driving

In early May 2013 new guidance from the Crown Prosecution Service on prosecuting acts of bad driving was published. It includes a potentially important addition in determining what should be charged as 'dangerous' rather than 'careless' driving.

One of the issues that CTC has been concerned about for years has been the downgrading of cases of bad driving from 'dangerous' to 'careless' driving.

Now a change in the prosecution guidance to explicitly mention vulnerable road users may help reduce this shift from dangerous to careless.

<http://www.ctc.org.uk/news/minor-win-for-cyclists-prosecution-guidance-shifts>

5. Shropshire updates (see pp slides)

RH reported that Kim Williams would be leaving next month but be replaced. A message of thanks from the Forum for all her excellent work promoting cycling to children and families in Shrewsbury. Richard Harman has moved into a more permanent job in Highways D&C. Alison Kennedy has not been replaced. Keith Jones is the Programme Manager for Shrewsbury and the Central Area, Richard Ayton for the north and Andy Wilde for the south. Martin Withington now part time manager of Sustainable Transport Project Team overseeing LSTF delivery with Jan Cook moving to a commissioning role.

Will Baugh described the new **Sustrans Roadshow team** comprising 10 Travel Advisers employed on a casual basis to attend events, festivals etc to promote all modes of sustainable transport, the Travel Shropshire website and the various cycling services, activities, training and rides.

Action: let Will/Ray know if have an event would like Travel Advisers to attend and support.

An option for Sustrans community volunteer training is available at The Lantern 1 August pm.

Action: contact Will if interested in this training.

Eliz-anne described the success of the new **Ludlow Easy Riders** group, a regular opportunity to take a short social cycle ride starting at 10am each Tuesday morning from outside the Castle in Castle Square. Local riders take it in turns to be leaders ensuring a programme of regular weekly rides. Contact eliz-anne for more details. smartycyclepants@gmail.com
See positive COG (Cycling Oswestry Gently) report below by Tim Rutherford.

"As to the COG rides, we are coming up to number 18. They are once a month, and still attract between 15 and 25 riders each time. A good day will get over 30, our poorest has been 9. Although we now always start from the same place, I don't think I've exactly repeated any routes, but that can't last. We always have a grub stop. The majority of our riders are over 45, and many are over 65. When we get children along, it tends to be with Dad rather than Mum, and everyone enjoys having the kids with us. It seems to lift everyone's spirits. Perhaps we've just been lucky with the kids we've attracted! I'd like to get more.

I realise there is a need to attract Mums and (young) women to cycling, but I do not think gender-specific rides are the answer, infrastructure provision, and over-coming fear are probably most important. Our distances have increased, (from 12miles to 18-ish) which is a problem. There is pressure on me to stretch it for the regulars, but that becomes daunting for newcomers or those who don't cycle at other times. I try to resist the pressure because the WHOLE point of a COG ride is to catch the beginners and the nervous returners.

This may be solved by finding a new leader, which might be about to happen. This would allow us to form an intermediate group to do 30-ish miles, which in itself should have less need of a leader anyway.

One other development is that we may get a grant to buy a trailer that could carry 20 bikes, to be towed behind a medium-sized bus. This would allow "away-days" and one-way outings, and could be hired out to others. I have high hopes of this, because it instantly makes a bike-ride into an "event", and gives the appearance of an association to join up with. But there are a lot of factors to consider, like storage and insurance..

*The main thing is that there are lots more bikes on our lanes than one, two or ten years ago. Even though I'm primarily a mountain biker, I know **any** use of a bicycle builds contentment and resilience in people and community.*

Spring into cycling

Saw 400 cycle repair kits issued and a variety of cycling events. See new cycling treasure hunt maps. <http://www.travelshropshire.co.uk/treasure-competition>

Some events in south Shropshire forthcoming include:

Tour de Ludlow 22 June

Basic Cycle maintenance 26 June at Rockspring CC

Oswestry Bikefest 29 June.

Food Chain 21 July

Green Festival and Family Cycle Ride 25 August

All at www.travelshropshireevents

Scheme updates and NCN changes

Regional Route 31 will become National Route 455 (this runs from Oswestry towards Whitchurch). Regional Route 75 will become National Route 552 (this runs from Newport northwards).

Connect 2 - opening of the installed Portrait Bench in Shrewsbury Tuesday 25 June, Chester Street now complete, Julian Friars pilot underway and being well received.

Request for 20 speed limit on Temeside in Ludlow.

New cycle parking at Craven Arms CC, Stone House (and lockers), the Foyer (lockers) and Whitcliffe Common near Dinham Bridge.

MB observed at Porthill Bridge in Shrewsbury no NCN R 81 sign. **Action:** Ray to report to relevant engineer/Sustrans.

PP concerned contraflow might disappear on Market Street (Has a TRO).

Action: Keep officers posted with observations as road works continue. Ray to raise with central programme manager Keith Jones.

PM reported that NCN R 81 under the railway bridge is a Network Rail sign saying will be closed for whole of July.

Action: Anna Morris to add map with alternative route options on Travel Shropshire website.

6. Telford and Wrekin

See Bike Month activities at:

http://www.telford.gov.uk/press/article/1874/bike_month_in_telford_and_wrekin

7. NCN Routes

NCN R 44 Pontesbury - Minsterley latest. Western Power have relocated cable. Erection of timber boundary fencing and more hedge removal next. In September works will begin on first section out of Pontesbury.

8. AoB

Getting women on bikes - see pp slides of Emma Bullard's talk at recent Cycle City conference in Birmingham. Emma also working on a Shropshire Cycleway launch later in year – a round Shropshire route.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 16 October, Wellington Library.